



Advisory Announcement

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2026 Yukon River Salmon Summer Fishery Announcement #1

Yukon River Salmon Fisheries Outlook

Districts Affected: Yukon Area

Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) research and management staff have worked closely with US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) staff to develop this year’s management strategy. Feedback has been sought from community members, partner organizations, agency staff and leadership. Fishery outlooks and management strategies have been discussed in depth at the Yukon River Panel spring meeting, Yukon River Drainage Fishermen’s Association public preseason meeting, the Federal Special Action Hearing, as well as other preseason meetings.

The drainagewide Chinook salmon outlook is for a run of 64,300 fish with a range of 52,000 to 79,000 fish (Figure 1), and the Canada-origin Chinook salmon outlook is for a run of 22,000 to 33,000 fish. The number of fish expected at the US-Canada border is predicted to be between 11,000 to 31,000 fish; this is based on recent trends in fish making it upriver. These run sizes are well below average and it is likely that escapement goals will not be met in any river system in Alaska or Canada this year. Fishing for Chinook salmon will be closed to help conserve fish for escapement during these low runs.

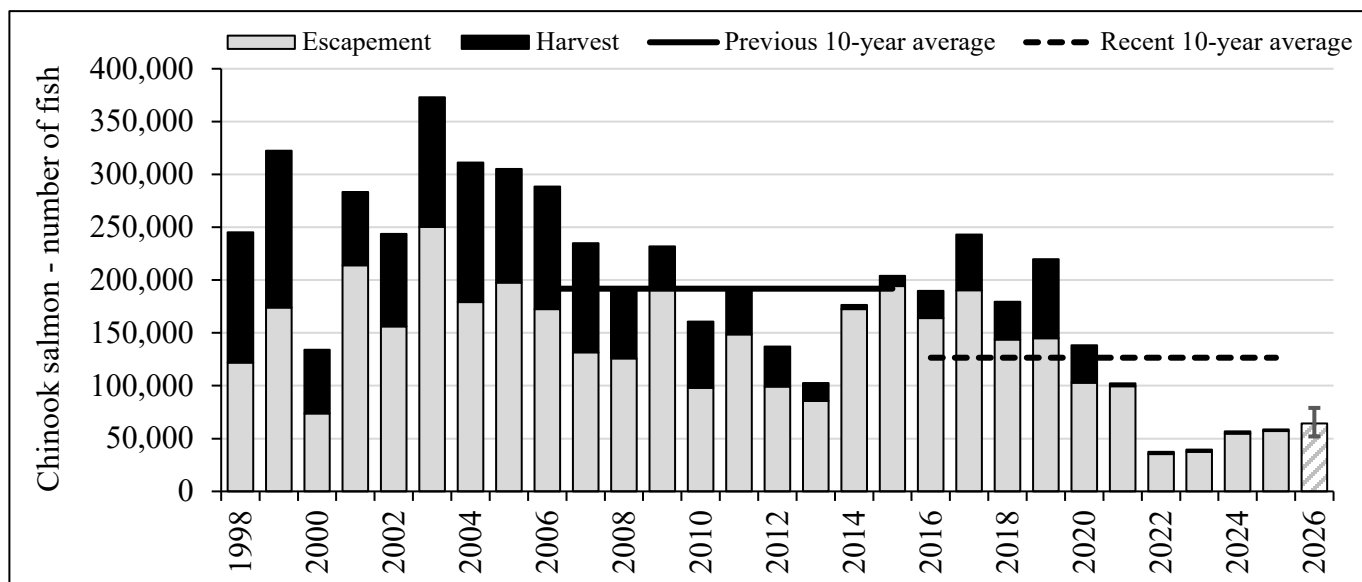


Figure 1. Chinook salmon total run. The dashed line is the recent 10-year average run size of ~126,500 Chinook salmon and the solid line is the previous 10-year average of ~191,850 fish. The 2026 striped bar represents the approximate midpoint of the drainagewide outlook range (64,300 fish). At run sizes below 150,000 fish, escapement goals tend not to be met.

The drainagewide summer chum salmon outlook is for a run size of 345,600 fish, with a range of 160,000 to 580,000 fish (Figure 2). Last year, the summer chum salmon run was below the drainagewide escapement goal with a total run near 400,000 fish. Summer chum salmon mostly come back as 4- and 5-year old fish with the 2026 parent years from 2021 and 2022. These runs were the lowest and third lowest on record, respectively. Fishing for summer chum salmon will likely remain closed all season.

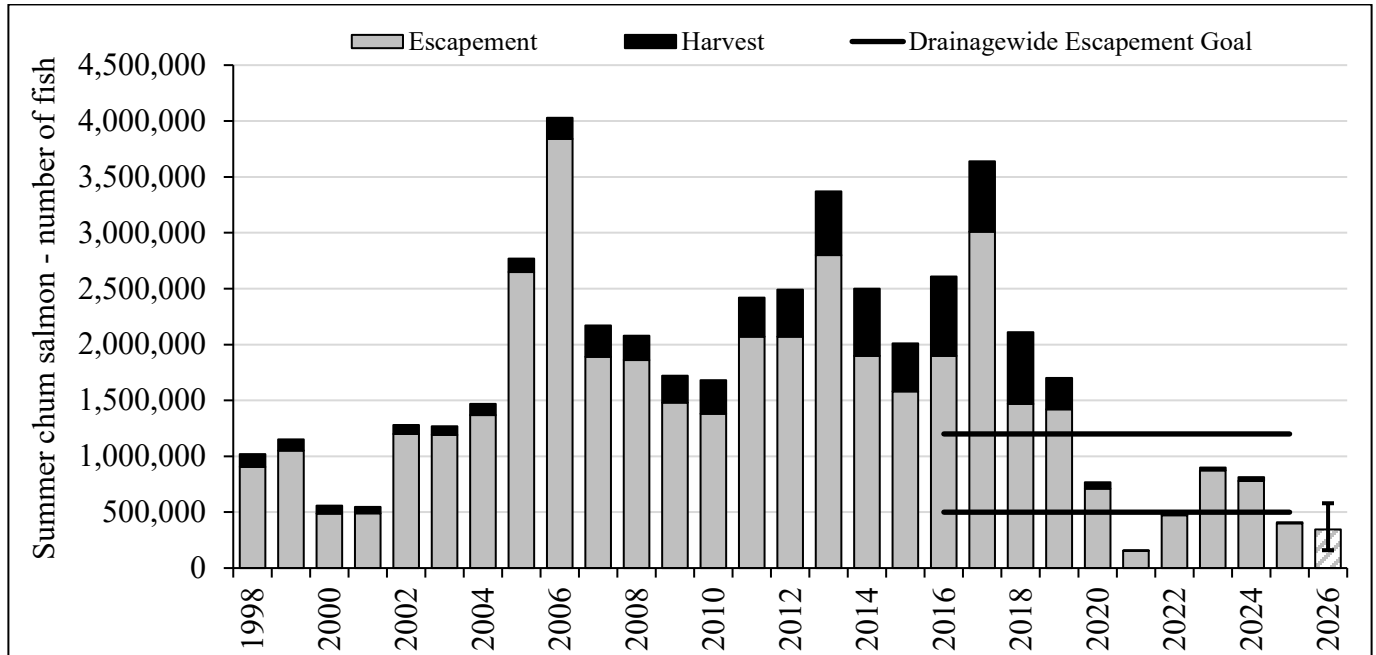


Figure 2. Summer chum salmon total run with drainagewide escapement goal range shown in the solid black lines. The 2026 striped bar represents the approximate midpoint of the outlook range (345,600 fish).

The drainagewide fall chum salmon outlook is for a run size of 311,000 fish, with a range of 209,000 to 415,000 fish (Figure 3).

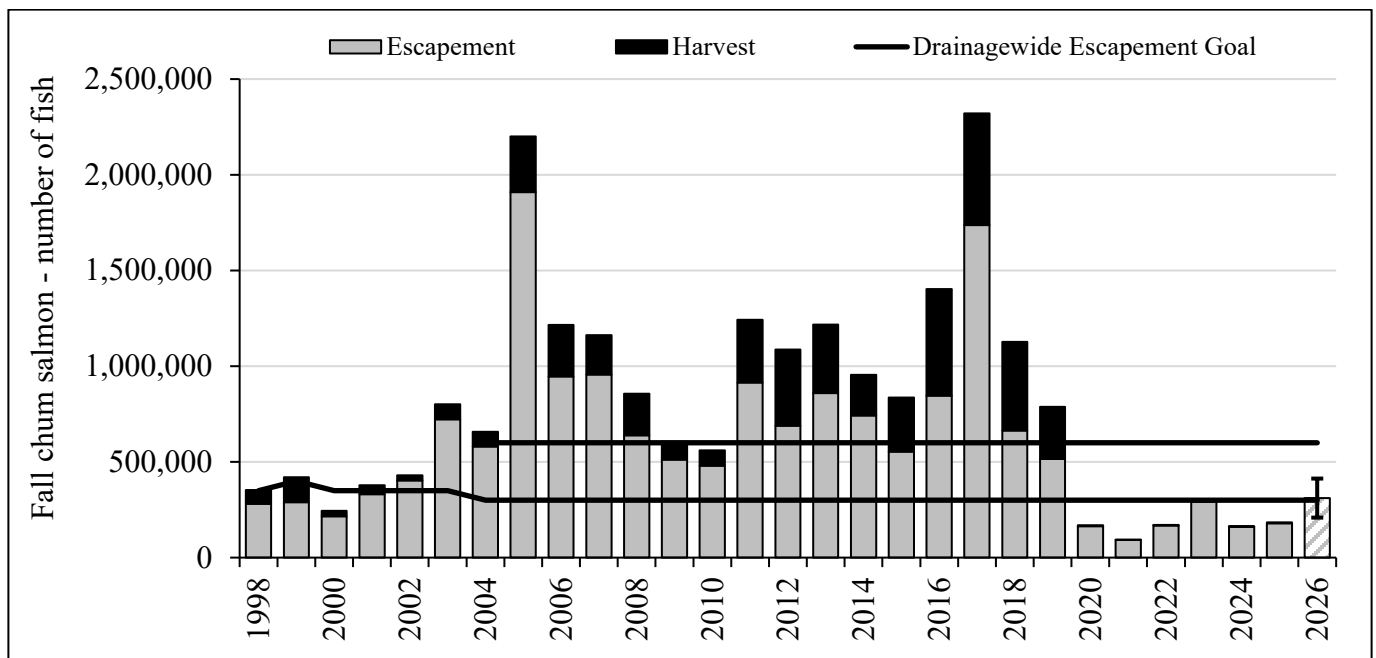


Figure 3. Fall chum salmon total run with drainagewide escapement goal ranges shown in the solid black lines. The 2026 striped bar represents the approximate midpoint of the outlook range (311,000 fish).

Management Strategies based on the preseason outlooks and inseason assessment:

- Starting on June 1 in District 1 and the Coastal District, subsistence salmon fishing will close. Closures in upriver districts will coincide with Chinook salmon travel time.
- Fishing for nonsalmon species with 4-inch or smaller mesh set gillnets will be allowed during salmon fishing closures; however, nets are limited to 60-feet in length. Fishermen should set their 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets in nonsalmon harvest locations and avoid incidental harvest of salmon.
- To further conserve Chinook salmon, all gillnets, including 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets, must be removed from the water from the first quarter point to the third quarter point of the Chinook salmon run. Closures to nonsalmon gillnets are meant to reduce incidental catch of salmon, and the timing of this closure in each area will be based on Chinook salmon run timing. Nonsalmon fishing opportunities will be provided in fall to offset this loss of fishing time in the summer season.
- Other nonsalmon gear types, including hook and line, longline, jigging gear, hand line, beach seine, fyke net, or spear may be used to fish for nonsalmon species all year, even during gillnet closures. Chinook and chum salmon must be released alive if incidentally caught.
- Pink and sockeye salmon may be retained from selective gear types. This is an even year, and the pink salmon run is expected to be higher than in odd years. All Chinook and chum salmon must be immediately released alive from selective gear types.
- The sport fishery for Chinook salmon is closed throughout the Tanana River drainage and the U.S. portion of the Yukon River drainage (Sport Fishery Emergency Orders published February 18, 2026).
- During the fall season, it is likely both U.S. and Canadian-origin fall chum salmon runs will be below the escapement objectives. Coho salmon runs are also projected to be below average. Subsistence users can expect drainagewide salmon closures to protect fall chum and coho salmon.
- To reduce incidental harvest of fall chum salmon in gillnets, 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets must be removed from the water 4 days each week. They will be allowed for nonsalmon fishing only from noon Thursday to noon Sunday.
- To increase harvest opportunities for large whitefish, designated nonsalmon lakes and rivers will be announced and opened for 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets at the transition to fall season in each district.
- If run sizes are poor, subsistence salmon fishing restrictions may remain in effect until early October in the lower river. This date will be transitioned upriver based on salmon migration timing. In the upper river restrictions may remain in effect until late October, and in some key spawning tributaries through December.

The management team recognizes the severe hardship of another season of closures for Chinook and chum salmon. The Board of Fisheries listed Chinook and fall chum salmon as Stocks of Management concern during the winter meetings; closures will help salmon get to their spawning ground and recover for the future. We encourage fishermen to harvest more abundant nonsalmon species when available.

Yukon Area Educational and Ceremonial, Funerary or Memorial Permits

In recognition of the persistent decline of Canadian-origin Chinook salmon, Alaska and Canada entered into a 7-year agreement from 2024 through 2030 which focuses on efforts to conserve and rebuild Chinook salmon runs. A component of the agreement also recognizes the importance of Chinook salmon for

ceremonial use and the transmission of cultural knowledge. In Alaska, new regulations were adopted allowing a small amount of harvest in times of salmon conservation, following a process to provide the preservation of culture in communities, balanced with the need to ensure salmon return to their spawning grounds. 5 AAC 93.212. Yukon Management Area educational fishing permit for customary and traditional harvest of salmon was finalized in June 2025. It includes regulations for the long-standing practice of issuing fishing permits for funerals and memorials and creates a permit for educational gatherings. This is in recognition of the importance of allowing a small number of salmon to be harvested for preserving traditions, while protecting low salmon runs when they are below escapement goals.

Ceremonial, Funerary, and Memorial Permits

People interested in a permit are encouraged to contact fishery managers (Deena Jallen, Matt Olson, Holly Carroll) before the desired fishing time to discuss harvest plans and to share information needed to issue the permit. The permit includes the name of the fishermen responsible for the allowed gear, name of the deceased person or people being honored, fishing dates and times, and a table for recording harvest. Typically, a funerary permit harvest limit is 5 Chinook, 10 summer chum, 10 fall chum, or 10 coho salmon per event or community. The permit must be in the possession of the fishermen during fishing activities. All harvests must be reported after fishing is completed. Salmon harvested under a ceremonial, funerary, and memorial permit are intended to be shared at an event in honor of the deceased.

Educational Permits

An interested person, household, village or tribal council, community, or similar organization must contact ADF&G at least 15 days in advance. Information needed includes description of the planned educational activities, requestors name, contact information, harvest location, fishermen names, and estimated number of participants. Harvest limits for educational permits are 10 Chinook, 50 summer chum, 25 fall chum, and/or 25 coho salmon. The combined annual harvest limit for educational permits is 300 Chinook salmon, 1,000 summer chum, 500 fall chum, and/or 500 coho salmon. Fish must be shared with the participants or community. After completion of the educational event, information about the completed activities, number of attendees, number and use of the salmon harvested must be reported.

These permits are issued in coordination with Federal managers. Once issued, state and federal enforcement staff will be notified so they are aware of the planned fishing activities. For more information, please contact the ADF&G offices in Fairbanks or Emmonak.

Contact Information, Updates, and Outreach

Announcements and daily test fishery counts will be posted on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG/

Toll-free Fishing Schedule and Fish Counts hotline: 1-866-479-7387

Inseason counts from some projects are also available on the ADF&G website:

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareayukon.salmon#fishcounts>

Weekly inseason teleconferences hosted by YR DFA: starting on June 2 every Tuesday at 1pm (AK time) 1-800-315-6338. Participant code: 98566# (YUKON#)

The ADF&G Emmonak office will be open in the first week of June (likely June 3) with hours of operation from Mon to Fri 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (closed Sat. and Sun.). **ADF&G Emmonak office: 1-907-949-1320.**

ADF&G: Summer Season Area Manager, Deena Jallen; Fall Season Area Manager, Matt Olson.
ADF&G Fairbanks office: 1-907-459-7274.

USFWS: Yukon River Subsistence manager, Holly Carroll, 1-907-351-3029.

If you see an odd disease or parasite in your fish, please contact the **Fish Pathology** lab. Pictures are helpful. Please contact Jayde Ferguson (jayde.ferguson@alaska.gov) or call: 907-267-2394.

Information about common fish diseases can be found in this publication:

https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/species/disease/pdfs/fish_disease_book.pdf

For commercial fishery permit questions please see the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission website here: www.cfec.state.ak.us/.



This is an announcement by the ADF&G and the USFWS. Federal Special Actions will be posted on www.doi.gov/subsistence/fisheries-special-actions.

ADF&G Advisory Announcements will be posted on www.cfnews.adfg.alaska.gov/ and shared on Facebook at www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG.

