



2014 Yukon River Salmon Fisheries Outlook



The 2014 Chinook salmon run is expected to be extremely poor and could be the worst on record. Drastic conservation measures are necessary in an attempt to meet escapement objectives. This information sheet describes the anticipated management strategies for the 2014 salmon fishing season.

Run and Harvest Outlook

	Chinook	Summer Chum	Fall Chum	Coho
Projection:	Extremely poor	Average to above average	Average to above average	Average to below average
Escapement:	Insufficient to meet all goals	Expect to meet goals	Expect to meet goals	Expect to meet goals
Subsistence:	No fishery anticipated	Expect to provide for normal harvest	Expect to provide for normal harvest	Expect to provide for normal harvest
Commercial:	No fishery anticipated	300,000 to 500,000 potentially available for harvest	300,000 to 540,000 potentially available for harvest	40,000 to 80,000 potentially available for harvest

Management Strategies

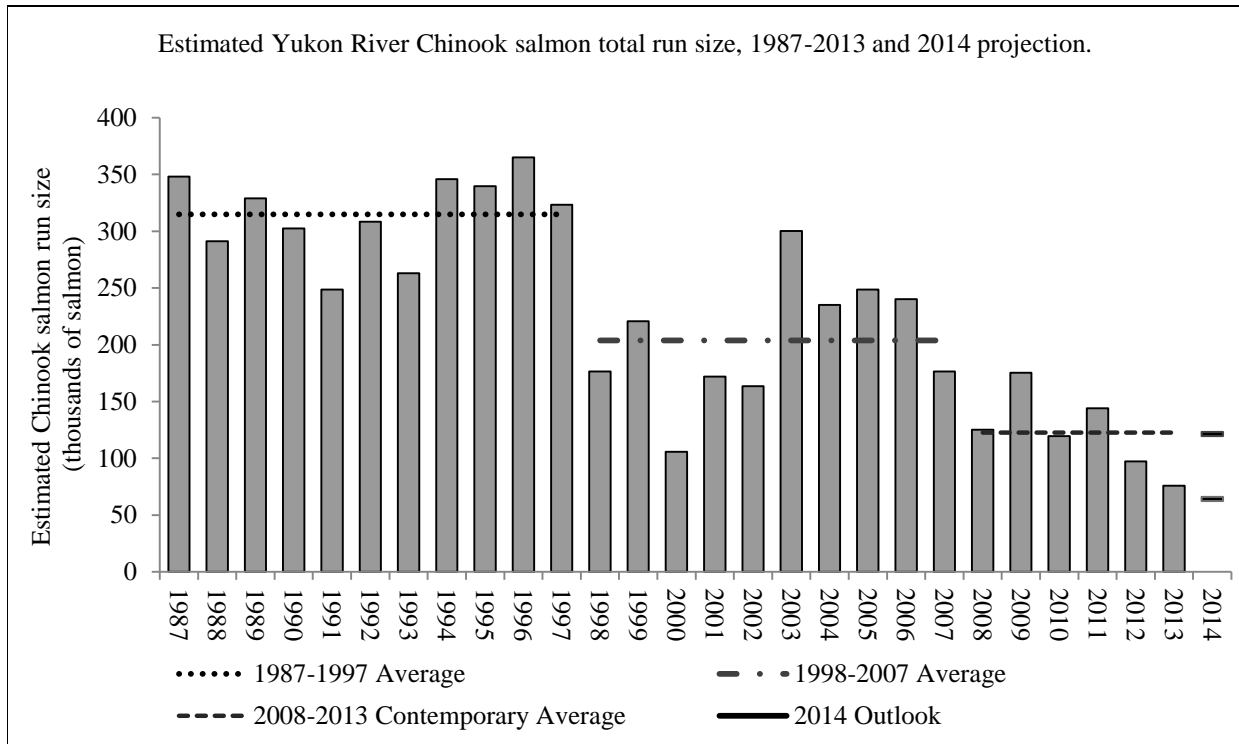
- Before Chinook salmon enter the river, subsistence fishing opportunity for non-salmon species will be provided and gillnets may be restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size.
- As Chinook salmon arrive in each district, subsistence fishing for Chinook salmon will be closed. The closure is expected to be in place for most of the run through each section of river. Fishermen in the Coastal District, Koyukuk, Innoko, and Tanana Rivers should expect some closed fishing time to protect Chinook salmon in those areas. Closures will be initiated in the Coastal District and District 1 when assessment information indicates that the first Chinook salmon have begun their migration along the coast and into the river. This closure will be similarly implemented in upriver fishing districts and subdistricts based on migratory timing.
- During subsistence salmon fishing closures, non-salmon species may be harvested using 4-inch or smaller mesh size gillnets not exceeding 60-feet in length. However, no targeting of Chinook salmon with this gear type will be allowed. This opportunity to harvest non-salmon will be discontinued if this gear is used to target Chinook salmon.
- When summer chum salmon become abundant, subsistence and commercial fishing opportunities will be provided with selective gear such as dip nets, beach seines, and manned fish wheels. Fishermen must carefully and immediately release Chinook salmon alive when encountered in these gear types.
- Fishermen are strongly encouraged to avoid fishing when and where Chinook salmon may be encountered.
- Subsistence restrictions will be relaxed after the Chinook salmon run has passed through each section of river. If confidence is high that the Chinook salmon run is much better than anticipated, the use of 6-inch gillnets may be considered to allow for summer chum salmon harvest.
- The sport fishery for Chinook salmon will be closed in the U.S. portion of the Yukon River drainage (including the Tanana River drainage). Sport fishing for Chinook salmon, including catch-and-release fishing will be prohibited. Chinook salmon may not be retained or possessed.
- The fall chum salmon run is anticipated to be of sufficient size to provide for full subsistence opportunity and a surplus for commercial harvest.
- The fall chum commercial salmon fishery is expected to begin in the Lower Yukon in the middle of July.



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The 2014 Chinook salmon outlook is for a run size range of 64,000 to 121,000. The lower end of this range is slightly below the run size observed in 2013 and would not provide any available surplus for subsistence harvest. As in recent years, initial management will be based on the expectation that the 2014 Chinook salmon run size will likely be near the lower end of this range. However, management strategies may change based on inseason run assessment information.

The following chart shows the historical estimated Yukon River Chinook salmon total run size, illustrating the drastic decline in production beginning in 1998. The cause of this drop in production remains largely unknown.



For 2014, the US/Canada Yukon River Panel agreed to continue Interim Management Escapement Goals (IMEG) in Canada of 42,500-55,000 Chinook salmon and 70,000-104,000 fall chum salmon based upon the Eagle sonar program. If escapement objectives are expected to be met and there is a surplus of Chinook salmon and fall chum salmon, additional Chinook salmon and fall chum salmon will need to cross the border to fulfill harvest sharing commitments specified in the US/Canada Yukon River Agreement. The Fishing Branch River IMEG of 22,000-49,000 fall chum salmon is based upon the historical weir data and the Porcupine River chum salmon fishery will likely be unrestricted unless the run comes in lower than expected.

For additional information:

Subsistence fishing schedule: 1-866-479-7387 (toll free outside of Fairbanks); in Fairbanks, call 907-459-7387.

ADF&G: Eric Newland, Anchorage 907-267-2217; Jeff Estensen, Fairbanks 907-459-7217; or contact the Emmonak office 907-949-1320. The Emmonak ADF&G office is expected to be open by May 30.

USFWS: Fred Bue, Fairbanks 907-455-1849 or 1-800-267-3997; or contact the Emmonak office 907-949-1798.