

# **ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES NEWS RELEASE**



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## **2014 Yukon River Summer Salmon Fishery News Release # 6 Summer Announcement # 2, Districts 1, 2, and 3 Subsistence Fishing Schedules Districts Affected: Lower Yukon Area**

The first Chinook salmon harvested on the Yukon River was reported to have been caught on May 19. This is the earliest reported Chinook salmon subsistence harvest in a decade. More recently, subsistence fishermen have reported that a few additional Chinook salmon have been caught, thus indicating that the 2014 Chinook salmon run is just beginning to migrate upriver.

A very conservative management approach is being taken early in the season to protect the 2014 Chinook salmon run, which is anticipated to be the worst on record. Further conservative management actions are now being implemented in accordance with the preseason management plan outlined in the 2014 Yukon River Salmon Fisheries Outlook.

Effective 8:00 p.m. Monday, May 26, subsistence fishing for salmon will close. All gillnets greater than 4-inch mesh size must be removed from the water in the Northern Portion of the Coastal District, and Districts 1-3. This closure is expected to be in place for most of the Chinook salmon run through each section of river. However, management strategies may change based on inseason run assessment information.

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. Fishermen are strongly encouraged to avoid fishing where Chinook salmon may be encountered and are urged to track their non-salmon subsistence harvest.

Subsistence fishing opportunities to harvest summer chum salmon with dip nets will be provided in Districts 1-3 later, when their abundance increases.

The 2014 season will undoubtedly be another challenging year for Yukon River fishermen. ADFG and USFWS would like to extend thanks and appreciation to the fishermen of the Yukon River for their subsistence fishing reports and their continuing efforts to conserve Chinook salmon.

### **Current Management**

The subsistence fishing schedule and recorded fishery announcements will be available 24 hours a day at **1-866-479-7387** (toll free outside of Fairbanks); in Fairbanks, call **(907) 459-7387**.

The current subsistence fishing schedules are as follows:

**Coastal District:** Subsistence fishing is currently open 7 days a week, 24 hours per day with gillnets restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size to conserve Chinook salmon. Fishermen are reminded that state waters beyond 1 mile offshore of District 1 are included in the Coastal District.

As in recent years, the Coastal District will be further subdivided into two management areas to allow for more management precision and flexibility.

Effective 8:00 p.m. Monday, May 26, in the northern portion of the Coastal District from 62 degrees North latitude to Point Romanof and 3 miles offshore, subsistence salmon fishing will be closed until further notice. Management actions taken in the northern portion of the Coastal District will be coordinated with actions taken in District 1 to provide protection to Chinook salmon prior to entering the river.

In the southern portion of the Coastal District, from the Naskonat Peninsula north to 62° North latitude, the current subsistence salmon fishing schedule remains unaltered and is open 7 days per week, 24 hours a day with gillnets restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size.

However, subsistence fishermen in the southern portion of the Coastal District should be prepared for management actions that will close subsistence salmon fishing when the first pulse of Chinook salmon is expected to be passing through the coastal area.

**District 1 (including the Black River) and District 2:** Subsistence fishing is open 7 days a week, 24 hours per day with gillnets restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size to conserve Chinook salmon.

Effective 8:00 p.m. Monday, May 26, subsistence fishing for salmon will close. All gillnets greater than 4-inch mesh size must be removed from the water.

**District 3:** Subsistence fishing is currently open 7 days a week, 24 hours per day and fishermen may use gillnets with mesh size of 7.5 inches or less.

Effective 8:00 p.m. Monday, May 26, subsistence fishing for salmon will close. All gillnets greater than 4-inch mesh size must be removed from the water.

**Innoko River:** Subsistence fishing is currently open 7 days a week, 24 hours per day and fishermen may use gillnets with mesh size of 7.5 inches or less. Fishermen should be prepared for management actions that will close subsistence salmon fishing when the first pulse of Chinook salmon is expected to be migrating into the Innoko River.

The subsistence fishing schedule and recorded fishery announcements will be available 24 hours a day at **1-866-479-7387** (toll free outside of Fairbanks); in Fairbanks, call **(907) 459-7387**.

If you have any questions regarding this report, please call the ADF&G office in Anchorage at 267-2217 or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Fairbanks at 455-1849. The Emmonak ADF&G office is expected to be open by May 30.

This has been an announcement by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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