

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



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**Kuskokwim River Salmon Fishery Announcement #9
Emergency Order #3-S-WR-08-14**

This is an announcement from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Bethel for subsistence salmon fishermen in the Kuskokwim River Drainage.

Johnson River to the lower boundary of Subdistrict 1-B (southern tip of Eek Island):

Subsistence fishing for chum and sockeye salmon will be allowed with gillnets with 6-inch or less mesh, 50 fathoms in length, and 45 meshes in depth from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. Tuesday, June 24, 2014.

This area includes the waters of the Kuskokwim River drainage **between** the confluence of the Johnson and Kuskokwim rivers and a line from Apokak Slough to the southernmost tip of Eek Island to Popokamiut.

Tuluksak to Johnson River:

Subsistence fishing for chum and sockeye salmon will be allowed with gillnets with 6-inch or less mesh, **25 fathoms in length**, and 45 meshes in depth from 10:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Tuesday, June 24, 2014. A longer gillnet may be used as long as no more than 25 fathoms of the gillnet is in a fishing condition and the remainder of the gillnet is tied up or in a bag and secured out of the water.

This area is described as Kuskokwim River waters **between** the confluence of the Johnson and Kuskokwim rivers to a line between ADF&G regulatory markers located approximately half a mile upstream of the Tuluksak River mouth. This section includes the slough (locally known as

Utak Slough) on the northwest side of the Kuskokwim River adjacent to the Tuluksak River mouth.

Tributary Closures:

The following tributaries of the Kuskokwim River will remain open to the use of gillnets with 4-inch or less mesh not to exceed 60-feet in length;

- The Kwethluk River drainage including its confluence with Kuskokuak Slough and downstream to ADF&G regulatory markers located at the downstream mouth of the slough.
- The Kasigluk and Kisaralik river drainages including Old Kuskokuak Slough to ADF&G markers at the confluence of Old Kuskokuak Slough with Kuskokuak Slough.
- The Tuluksak River drainage including its confluence with the Kuskokwim River and downstream approximately 1-mile to ADF&G regulatory markers.

Current Management:

Subsistence fishing within the boundaries of the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge is still limited to federally qualified users of the Kuskokwim River drainage under Federal Special Action 3-KS-01-14.

Subsistence fishing upstream of the ADF&G regulatory markers located approximately half a mile upstream of the Tuluksak River mouth to the headwaters of the Kuskokwim River, remains restricted to gillnets with 4-inch or less mesh, 60 feet in length, 45 meshes in depth, fish wheels, and dip nets. Hook and line fishing for Chinook salmon remains closed Kuskokwim River drainage wide.

The current Bethel Test Fishery (BTF) data suggests the lower end Chinook salmon escapement goal range will be reached with continued conservative management approach to limit harvest of Chinook salmon while allowing for harvest of chum and sockeye salmon.

The run timing for Chinook salmon appears to have been early. This suggests that the majority of the Chinook salmon will move past the BTF in the next week. The current BTF data indicates the ratio of chum and sockeye salmon to Chinook salmon continues to increase. Chum and sockeye salmon ratios below Bethel are generally greater 2-4 days prior to arriving at the BTF. Harvest information from the June 20 period indicates that ratios were near 15:1 and in some cases 20:1 using 6-inch mesh nets. These ratios and the use of 6-inch mesh nets during a limited period will provide fishing opportunity to harvest chum and sockeye salmon while protecting Chinook salmon.

This management action is in line with the conservation plan discussed with ADF&G, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group, and the tribes of the Kuskokwim River in the previous 9 months. We recognize the users for their continued support and conservation efforts, and that the sustainability of these fisheries depends on our combined efforts.

Further announcements will be made from the Bethel Fish and Game office, on the State of Alaska web site (<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>), and local radio stations. News releases will be faxed to area villages and local fish processing companies.

For additional information concerning this news release:

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