

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



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**SUBSISTENCE AND COMMERCIAL SALMON OPENINGS FOR  
NORTON SOUND WEEK OF JUNE 30**

Chum and pink salmon runs throughout Norton Sound are showing strong early run strength. Chum salmon escapements to northern Norton Sound drainages are tracking well above average for late June with escapement goals either already achieved or projected to be easily reached. In southern Norton Sound, chum and pink salmon are just now moving upstream past escapement projects with large numbers milling in the lower reaches of major rivers. As planned, subsistence fishing restrictions and closures will be incrementally relaxed beginning July 1. Additionally, there are several directed pink and chum salmon commercial openings that will occur this week throughout Norton Sound. Fishermen must remain in contact with buyer to ensure there is ample tendering and processing capacity in the area to process their catch.

**Subdistrict 1: Eastern Nome Subdistrict commercial chum salmon openings**

There will be two 24-hour chum salmon directed commercial openings this week in the Nome Subdistrict marine waters from Cape Nome east to Topkok Head. Periods will be from 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, July 2 to 6:00 p.m. Thursday, July 3, and from 6:00 p.m. Saturday July 5 to 6:00 p.m. Sunday, July 6. Permit holders are limited to 100 fathoms of net in aggregate length and gillnets must have a mesh size of 6 inches or less. Escapement of chum salmon east of Cape Nome is assessed using counts from the Eldorado River weir operated by Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation. Through June 29, escapement of chum salmon is 1,604 fish, the highest on record for this date. Projections of chum salmon escapement based on early run timing models indicate the upper end of escapement goal range of 6,000–9,200 chum salmon will be exceeded for the 5<sup>th</sup> consecutive season.

**Subdistricts 2–4: Golovin, Elim, and Norton Bay**

There will be two 48-hour chum salmon directed openings this week in Subdistricts 2–4, the Golovin, Elim, and Norton Bay Subdistricts. Periods will be from 6:00 p.m. Monday, June 30 to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, July 2, and from 6:00 p.m. Friday, July 4 to 6:00 p.m. Sunday, July 6<sup>th</sup>. Permit holders are limited to 100 fathoms of gillnets with a mesh size of 6 inches or less. Escapement of chum salmon to Subdistricts 2 and 3 is being indexed using the department's Kwiniuk River tower which has been in operation since 1965. As of June 29, 12,000 chum salmon have been enumerated which is already above the lower end of the escapement goal

range of 11,500–23,000 chum salmon. So far, the chum salmon count is one of the best for this date in the project's 50-year history. Also, effective Tuesday, July 1, all Norton Bay Subdistrict marine waters and all freshwaters of the Inglutalik and Ungalik River drainages reopen to subsistence salmon fishing 7 days a week 24 hours a day for the remainder of the season.

### **Subdistricts 5 and 6: Shaktoolik and Unalakleet**

Subdistricts 5 and 6 marine waters will reopen for three subsistence and commercial fishing periods this week. Fishing times and gear restrictions by area are as follows:

#### ***Subdistricts 5 and 6, Shaktoolik and Unalakleet Subdistricts subsistence openings***

Marine waters from Cape Denbigh to Black Point will have three subsistence fishing periods beginning Tuesday, July 1. Period 1 will be from 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, July 1 to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, July 2 with gillnets restricted to a mesh size of 4.5 inches or less. Period 2 will be from 12:00 noon Thursday, July 3 to 12:00 noon Saturday, July 5 with gillnets restricted to a mesh size of 6 inches or less. Period 3 will be from 6:00 p.m. Sunday, July 6 to 6:00 p.m. Monday, July 7 with gillnets restricted to a mesh size of 4.5 inches or less.

Freshwater areas of Subdistricts 5 and 6 will reopen to subsistence salmon fishing with beach seines for two 36-hour periods this week. Beach seining periods will be from 12:00 noon Tuesday, July 1 to 12:00 midnight Wednesday evening, July 2 and from 12:00 noon Friday, July 4 to 12:00 midnight Saturday evening, July 5. Any king salmon captured incidentally in beach seines must be immediately returned to the water alive and unharmed.

#### ***Subdistricts 5 and 6, Shaktoolik and Unalakleet Subdistricts commercial openings***

On Tuesday, July 1, commercial salmon fishing will open in the Shaktoolik and Unalakleet Subdistricts for 24 hours from 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, July 1 to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, July 2. For the July 1 opener, permit holders may use 150 fathoms of net, but gillnets are restricted to a mesh size of 4.5 inches or less. On Thursday, July 3, commercial salmon fishing will reopen again for 48 hours from 12:00 noon Thursday, July 3 to 12:00 noon Saturday, July 5. Permit holders are limited to 100 fathoms of net with gillnets with a mesh size of 6 inches or less during the July 3 opener. A third period directed at pink salmon is scheduled on 6:00 p.m. Sunday, July 6. This period will be from 6:00 p.m. Sunday July 6 to 6:00 p.m. Monday, July 7. As with the July 1 opener, permit holders may use 150 fathoms of net in aggregate length but gillnets must have a mesh size of 4.5 inches or less. Any Chinook salmon incidentally caught during any commercial openings in Subdistricts 5 and 6 may not be sold for commercial purposes, but must be recorded in the personal use section of each fish ticket at the time of delivery.

Lastly, a reminder that on Tuesday, July 1, all marine waters from Black Point south to Wood Point will reopen to subsistence salmon fishing 7 days a week, 24 hours a day for the remainder of the season. The department appreciates the sacrifices made and hardships incurred by subsistence salmon users from Stebbins to Golovin this season. These measures were necessary to conserve Chinook salmon so that they may reach the spawning grounds in sufficient numbers to provide for future returns. If you have any questions about subsistence and commercial salmon fishing in Norton Sound, please contact Fish and Game at 1-800-560-2271 or 443-5167, or the Unalakleet field office at 624-3921.