

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



*Cora Campbell, Commissioner  
Jeff Regnart, Director*



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P.O. Box 1467  
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Date Issued: July 20, 2014  
Time: 11:00 a.m.

**Kuskokwim River Salmon Fishery Announcement #17  
Emergency Order #3-S-WR-17-14**

This is an announcement from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in Bethel for subsistence fishermen in the Kuskokwim Area.

**Subdistrict 1-B**

**Subdistrict 1-B will open to commercial salmon fishing for 6 hours from 12:00 p.m. until 6:00 p.m. Monday, July 21, 2014.** This area is defined as that portion of District 1 downstream of regulatory markers located at Bethel to the lower boundary of District 1, defined as a line from Apokak Slough to the southernmost tip of Eek Island to Popokamiut.

**Coastal Village Seafoods has agreed to not purchase king salmon during this commercial period. King salmon caught, but not sold must be reported on fish tickets.**

The hours for subsistence closures adjacent to periods of commercial fishing on the Kuskokwim River are 6 hours before, during, and 3 hours after commercial fishing. The area closed to subsistence fishing includes the subdistrict open to commercial fishing and a buffer area of the adjacent subdistrict. **Therefore, from 6:00 a.m. until 9:00 p.m. Monday, July 21, subsistence salmon fishing in the Kuskokwim River will be closed from the upper end of Straight Slough downstream to the mouth,** defined by a line from Apokak Slough to the southern-most tip of Eek Island to Popokamiut.

Following the *Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan* (5 AAC 07.365), the department manages for established escapement goals, subsistence priority, and allows for other uses when there is a surplus.

Based on historical Bethel Test Fishery (BTF) data, 98% of the king salmon and 97% of the sockeye salmon runs are through the lower river. Escapements of king salmon at weir projects show improvement over recent poor years. The BTF data indicates that the chum salmon run is tracking slightly below average and that historically 80% of the chum salmon run is through the lower river to date. The Kogrukluuk chum salmon goal is expected to be achieved in the next day or two.

Coho salmon are beginning to enter the Kuskokwim River and it is too early to assess the strength of the run. The Department will continue to manage on the basis of chum salmon abundance until such time as coho salmon abundance exceeds that of chum salmon as indicated by harvest reports and BTF.

The outlook is for below average to average coho salmon run and a commercial harvest ranging from 80,000–140,000 fish. The coho salmon run will be managed with the expectation that the subsistence harvest will be larger than average because of conservation actions taken in June for king salmon.

The Department will closely monitor commercial fishing periods to assess fishery performance and to assess the coho salmon run to meet escapement goals and provide for subsistence uses. 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 or questions regarding Kuskokwim Area fisheries, contact the Alaska Department of Fish and Game office in the Bethel at 543-2433 or toll free at 1-855-933-2433.