

# ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

## DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



### NEWS RELEASE

*Cora J. Campbell, Commissioner*  
*Jeff R. Regnart, Director*



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**Contact:**

Jeremy Botz, Gillnet Area Management Biologist  
Tommy Sheridan, Seine Area Management Biologist  
Amanda Wiese, Asst. Area Management Biologist  
Phone: (907) 424-3212 Fax: (907) 424-3235

Prince William Sound Area Office  
401 Railroad Avenue, PO Box 669  
Cordova, AK 99574-0669  
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### **Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery News Release #45**

**COPPER RIVER DISTRICT:** The Copper River District will open at 7:00 am on Monday, August 4 for a 36-hour commercial fishing period. The last day of sonar operation for the 2014 season was July 28. The cumulative sonar count through July 28 was 1.22 million fish whereas the anticipated count for this date is 697,000 fish. For the week ending August 2, the actual Copper River delta aerial survey count was 34,825 sockeye salmon versus an anticipated range of 32,568–76,979. An aerial survey of the Copper River delta is anticipated to be flown next week. Hatchery contributions from the period that closed on July 25 were 40% Gulkana Hatchery. Harvest from the period that closed Friday, August 1 was 8,660 sockeye and 630 coho salmon with 80 deliveries reported.

During the commercial fishing season subsistence harvest may occur in the Copper River District concurrent with commercial periods until the Copper River District is closed at the end of the season. Subsistence users may obtain subsistence permits during regular business hours. The Cordova ADF&G office is open to the public Monday– Friday, 8:00 am–12:00 pm and 1:00 pm– 5:00 pm. **Subsistence permits are not available outside of regular office hours.**

**BERING RIVER DISTRICT:** The Bering River District will open at 7:00 am on Monday, August 4 for a 36-hour commercial fishing period. For the week ending August 2, the actual Bering River District aerial survey count was 6,310 versus an anticipated range of 8,409–18,499 sockeye salmon. The next aerial survey of the Bering River District is anticipated to be flown next week. No harvest was reported from the period that closed Friday, August 1.

**ESHAMY DISTRICT:** The Main Bay Subdistrict, excluding the AGZ, will open at 8:00 am on Monday, August 4 for a 36-hour commercial gillnet fishing period. The AGZ will open to **SET GILLNET** permit holders only during this fishing period. The Eshamy River video monitoring project started enumerating salmon on July 17, with 1,157 sockeye salmon counted through July 26. The anticipated range for sockeye salmon escapement on July 26 was 2,160–4,652. Harvest from the period that closed Friday, August 1 was 2,930 sockeye, 950 coho, 89,800 pink and 420 chum salmon with 192 deliveries reported.

**SEINE FISHERIES:** VFDA reports up to 325,000 pink salmon staged at the head of Port Valdez. VFDA's broodstock needs are approximately 346,000 pink salmon. Eggtakes are underway at SGH, with approximately 20% of the final goal completed through August 1. VFDA has recommended a closure of Port Valdez to ensure that brood goals will be met. PWSAC began its pink salmon cost recovery program on July 23, and has collected approximately 79% of the assigned pink salmon revenue goal through August 1. Cost recovery fishing continues today, and it is possible that the revenue goal will be met this afternoon. **PWSAC has provided area recommendations in hatchery subdistricts for purse seine fisheries targeting PWSAC pink salmon on Sunday, August 3, and Monday, August 4. Fishing opportunity targeting PWSAC pink salmon may occur again on Tuesday, August 5, with details being provided at 2 pm on Monday, August 4.**

ADF&G sampling of cost recovery pink salmon harvested at AFK on July 30 resulted in an average weight of 3.93 pounds per fish. ADF&G sampling of CPF pink salmon harvested in Unakwik Inlet on July 31 resulted in an average weight of 3.77 pounds per fish. ADF&G sampling of July 30 cost recovery harvest from AFK resulted in an estimated sex ratio of 30% female. ADF&G sampling of July 31 CPF harvest from Unakwik Inlet resulted in an estimated sex ratio of 31% female.

ADF&G otolith contribution estimates for the Southwestern District CPF opener that took place on Monday, July 28 result in a harvest composition of 74% hatchery and 26% wild stock pink salmon, with a wild stock harvest of approximately 228,000 pink salmon. Of the estimated 652,000 hatchery fish harvested on this date, the hatchery composition is as follows: 35% AFK, 28% CCH, 25% WNH, and 12% SGH.

An aerial survey of the Eastern and Northern districts was flown yesterday under good conditions. Eastern District stream escapements were less than anticipated for the date, although within escapement goals. Stream escapements elsewhere in PWS are near anticipated numbers for the date.

**COGHILL DISTRICT:** Waters of the Coghill District, **excluding the WNH SHA**, will open to commercial DRIFT GILLNET and PURSE SEINE fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Sunday, August 3, and Monday, August 4. Harvest from the July 31 period is estimated to be 26,400 pink, 326 sockeye, and 163 chum salmon, with 27 deliveries reported.

**EASTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Eastern District south of Black Point will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Sunday, August 3, and Monday, August 4. Harvest from the August 1 period is likely incomplete at the time of this announcement; however, it is estimated that 246,000 pink salmon were harvested on Monday, July 28, with 49 deliveries reported; 57,200 on July 29, with 25 deliveries; 74,800 on July 30, with 16 deliveries; 78,400 on July 31, with 13 deliveries; and at least 23,900 on August 1, with 9 deliveries. Harvest reporting available at the time of this announcement shows very little in the way of pink salmon harvests in Port Valdez on July 31 and August 1.

**MONTAGUE DISTRICT:** Waters of the Montague District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Sunday, August 3, and Monday, August 4. No harvest was reported for the July 31 period.

**NORTHERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Northern District, **excluding the CCH SHA and CCH THA**, will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Sunday, August 3, and Monday, August 4. Harvest from the July 31 period is estimated to be 661,000 pink salmon, with 78 deliveries reported.

Waters inside of the following Northern District Salmon Harvest Task Force (SHTF) markers are closed to commercial fishing during these periods:

- (1) **Long Bay:** north of a line from a shore marker at approximately 60°57.63' N. lat., 147°13.50' W. long. to a shore marker at approximately 60°57.01' N. lat., 147°15.47' W. long.;
- (2) **Granite Bay:** north and east of a line from a shore marker at approximately 60°55.02' N. lat., 147°27.61' W. long. to a shore marker at approximately 60°54.66' N. lat., 147°26.72' W. long.;
- (3) **Cedar Bay:** north and east of a line from a shore marker at approximately 60°56.46' N. lat., 147°27.03' W. long. to a shore marker at approximately 60°56.03' N. lat., 147°26.39' W. long.;
- (4) **Wells Bay:** north of a line from a shore marker at approximately 60°56.75' N. lat., 147°29.92' W. long. to a shore marker at approximately 60°57.08' N. lat., 147°28.14' W. long.;
- (5) **Siwash Bay:** west of a line from a shore marker at approximately 60°58.26' N. lat., 147°37.32' W. long. to a shore marker at approximately 60°56.96' N. lat., 147°36.02' W. long.;
- (6) **Jonah Bay:** west of a line from a shore marker at approximately 61°01.17' N. lat., 147°35.07' W. long. to a shore marker at approximately 61°00.40' N. lat., 147°35.93' W. long.;
- (7) **Eaglek Bay:** north of a line from a shore marker at approximately 60°50.66' N. lat., 147°40.27' W. long. to a shore marker at approximately 60°50.56' N. lat., 147°44.57' W. long.;

**NORTHWESTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Northwestern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Sunday, August 3, and Monday, August 4. Harvest from the July 31 period is confidential.

**SOUTHEASTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Southeastern District will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Sunday, August 3, and Monday, August 4. No harvest was reported for the July 31 period.

**SOUTHWESTERN DISTRICT:** Waters of the Southwestern District, **excluding the AFK SHA**, will open to commercial purse seine fishing for 14-hour fishing periods beginning at 6:00 am and ending at 8:00 pm on Sunday, August 3, and Monday, August 4. **Waters north of the latitude of Squire Point and west of the longitude of Herring Point will be CLOSED to commercial fishing during these periods. These waters are being closed to allow for passage of Eshamy Lake sockeye salmon.** Harvest from the July 31 period is estimated to be 995,000 pink salmon, with 130 deliveries reported.

**The next scheduled salmon purse seine fisheries announcement is anticipated to be at 2:00 pm Monday, August 4.**  
**The next scheduled salmon gillnet fisheries announcement is anticipated to be at 2:00 pm Wednesday, August 6.**

Permit holders are advised that unscheduled announcements based on current escapement data may occur at any time inseason either establishing an additional period or extending an open period.

Announcement recordings are available for **gillnet fisheries at 907-424-7535 and seine fisheries at 907-424-7345. In addition, announcement recordings are available in Anchorage at 267-2843.**

Additionally, announcements, inseason harvest data, and escapement data are available at the following web addresses:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.main> (Copper River homepage) or  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.main> (Prince William Sound homepage).

Unless otherwise specified, all openings are clock openings based on Alaska Daylight Time, which is based on Coordinated Universal Time and may be obtained by calling 303-499-7111.

The department encourages commercial permit holders to renew their licenses early and to check their CFEC vessel registration stickers to make sure that they are current. The department also encourages permit holders to report observed violations to Wildlife Safeguard at 800-478-3377. Reports are anonymous and cash rewards may be paid for successful prosecution of violations.

PWS commercial fishers are reminded that area fisheries often necessitate fishing in close proximity to marine mammals. Under the Marine Mammals Protection Act (MMPA), the PWS drift gillnet fishery is classified as a Category II fishery. Participants in Category I and II fisheries must be registered in the Marine Mammal Avoidance Program (MMAP) to be authorized for lawful incidental, but not intentional, marine mammal takes during fishing. However, this authorization explicitly does **not** exempt holders of commercial fishing permits from the MMPA prohibition on takes of marine mammals listed as endangered or threatened under the Endangered Species Act. As a participant in the PWS drift gillnet fishery you are automatically registered in the Marine Mammal Authorization Program (MMAP) by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). As a participant in a Category II fishery, you must:

- Maintain an MMAP Authorization Certificate, or a photocopy, on board the vessel while engaging in any of the fisheries identified on the reverse side of the certificate. For non-vessel or set net fisheries, the enclosed Certificate, or a photocopy, must be in the possession of the permit holder during fishing operations. This Certificate, in combination with a current, valid state or Federal fishing permit, will serve as your authorization to incidentally take non-endangered or non-threatened marine mammals in the course of commercial fishing operations.
- Report all injuries and mortalities of marine mammals within 48 hours of returning from the trip during which these takes occurred using the MMAP Mortality/Injury Reporting Form (visit [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap\\_reporting\\_form.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/interactions/mmap_reporting_form.pdf) for a copy).
- If so requested, take an observer aboard your vessel.

Purse seine and set gillnet gear are classified as a category III fisheries under the MMPA. Category III fishery participants are automatically exempted from the incidental take prohibition in the MMPA. Therefore, you do not need to maintain the MMAP certificate aboard your vessel, but must report any incidental takes of marine mammals within 48 hours of the incident or your return to port. Such reports must be made on the Marine Mammals Authorization Program Mortality/Injury Reporting Form.

Because some marine mammals are also listed under the Endangered Species Act, incidental takes are also regulated under that act and are not authorized. **All** MMPA category fisheries are liable for incidentally taking ESA listed species.

Please reference [http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa\\_factsheet.pdf](http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/pr/pdfs/esa_factsheet.pdf) for a list of marine mammals currently listed under the ESA (you should periodically check with the National Marine Fisheries Service for any changes in listed species).

Under the ESA, “take” means to “harass, harm, pursue, hunt, shoot, wound, kill, trap, capture, or collect, or to attempt to engage in any such conduct.” “16U.S.C. 1532(19); and “harass” means an “intentional or negligent act or omission which creates the likelihood of injury to the wildlife by annoying it to such an extent as to significantly disrupt normal behavioral patterns which include, but are not limited to, breeding, feeding, or sheltering.” (50 C.F.R. 17.3).

To reduce the possibility of incidentally taking an ESA listed species and its associated liability ADF&G recommends that:

- Fishermen participating in area fisheries remain vigilant in monitoring gear when marine mammals may be present.
- Fishermen use avoidance measures (e.g., not fishing or relocating fishing activities when marine mammals are present or likely to be present) to minimize interactions with marine mammals.
- Avoid fishing in areas where marine mammals are likely to be present at night or when visibility or weather conditions make it difficult to spot marine mammals.

For further questions concerning marine mammal regulations call NMFS at 907-271-5006.