

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



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2015 Yukon River Summer Salmon Fishery News Release # 3 Summer Announcement # 1, Coastal District and Districts 1, 2 and 3 Subsistence Fishing Schedules Districts Affected: Lower Yukon Area

The lower Yukon River and surrounding coastline is expected to be ice free slightly earlier than normal. Fishermen in the lower Yukon River are reporting that, following a brief ice jam, ice is now moving out of the delta. Preparations are being made for an early Chinook salmon run which is anticipated to be weak. Conservative management actions are being implemented in accordance with the preseason management considerations discussed at the preseason planning meeting and outlined in the 2015 Yukon River Salmon Fisheries Outlook.

Unfortunately, the 2015 season is expected to be another challenging year for Yukon River fishermen. ADF&G and USFWS would like to extend thanks and appreciation to the fishermen of the Yukon River for their continuing efforts to share the burden of conserving Chinook salmon when these run sizes have been well-below average.

Similar to 2014, a precautionary management approach is being taken early in the season by restricting gillnets to 6-inch or smaller mesh size. The intent is to have a gear restriction already in place when Chinook salmon begin their spawning migration while still providing an opportunity to fish for non-salmon species, such as sheefish, traditionally harvested in the Lower Yukon districts immediately following break up. Fishermen are strongly encouraged to avoid fishing in areas where Chinook salmon may be encountered and are urged to track their non-salmon subsistence harvest. Subsistence harvest and fishing effort reports will be important information for managers when considering early season management actions.

Subsistence fishing in the Coastal District and Districts 1, 2, and 3 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.

Coastal District: Effective 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 20, subsistence fishing will be 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.

District 1: Effective 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 20, subsistence fishing will be 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 farther than 1 mile offshore of District 1 are included in the Coastal District.

District 2: Effective 8:00 p.m. Wednesday, May 20, subsistence fishing will be open 7 days a week, 24 hours per day with gillnets restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size to conserve Chinook salmon.

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. Fishermen should anticipate fishing restrictions when Chinook salmon start moving into the lower river.

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 anticipate fishing restrictions when Chinook salmon start moving into the Innoko River.

Recorded fishery announcements and updates will be available 24 hours a day at 1-866-479-7387. 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.

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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