

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



Sam Cotten, Commissioner
Jeff Regnart, Director



Contact:
Jim Menard, Area Management Biologist
Scott Kent, Assistant Management Biologist
Phone: (907) 443-5167
Fax: (907) 443-5893

Norton Sound Area Office
Pouch 1148
Nome, AK, 99762
Date Issued: May 20
Time: 11:00 a.m.

KOYUK, SHAKTOOLIK AND UNALAKLEET COMMUNITY MEETINGS

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game will be holding community meetings in the villages of Koyuk, Shaktoolik, and Unalakleet beginning the week of May 18 to discuss the upcoming salmon season. The primary purpose of these meetings is to inform residents about the 2015 Chinook salmon run forecast that is expected to be poor. The department will discuss management options for the 2015 season with village residents to gather input on preferred management options. Affected communities provided valuable input to fishery managers last season that contributed to the achievement of escapement goals. The Shaktoolik community meeting will be held at the corporation annex building at 11:30 a.m. Friday, May 22. The Koyuk Community meeting will be held at the city office building at 11:30 a.m. Friday, May 29. The last meeting will be held in Unalakleet at 6:00 p.m. Monday, June 1 at the IRA memorial hall.

Ten years have passed since the last Chinook salmon directed commercial fishing periods occurred in southern Norton Sound. Chinook salmon runs have continued to be poor and the department developed a suite of possible management options implemented this season to ensure more Chinook salmon reach the spawning grounds.

Another early arrival of Chinook salmon is expected this season and the department is planning to implement restrictions to subsistence fishing as early as June 8 in southern Norton Sound. Like last season, restrictions may include a combination of temporary closures to marine and freshwater areas, mesh-size restrictions, and fishing time reductions.

The department expects the recent trend of poor Chinook salmon runs to continue this season based on juvenile indices and returns from the 2009 and 2010 brood years. However, juvenile Chinook salmon abundance and size condition indices from the 2013–2014 Northern Bering Sea survey were some of the largest ever. This suggests good ocean survival for at least the 2011–2012 brood years and the possibility of improved adult Chinook salmon returns beginning in 2016 when these fish return as 4- and 5-year olds.

If you have any questions regarding these upcoming meetings please contact Fish and Game at 1-800-560-2271 or 443-5167.