

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



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2015 Kuskokwim River Salmon Fishery News Release #4 **Emergency Order #3-S-WR-04-15**

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

Federal Special Action

Management of the Chinook salmon fishery from the mouth of the Kuskokwim River to the Yukon Delta NWR boundary at Aniak (defined as the Federal Conservation Unit) is under authority of the Federal Inseason Manager. For information regarding subsistence fishing within this area please contact Neil Lalonde at 907-543-3151.

State Kuskokwim River Subsistence Salmon Fishing Management

Subsistence salmon fishing on the Kuskokwim River will be closed early in the season for the conservation of Chinook salmon. Closures will be based on the migratory timing of Chinook salmon. During salmon fishing closures the use of gillnets with 4-inch or less size mesh, not exceeding 60 feet in length, and 45 meshes in depth are allowed for the harvest of non-salmon species such as whitefish. The targeting of Chinook salmon with this gear type will not be allowed. This opportunity to harvest non-salmon species will be limited if this gear is used to target Chinook salmon.

Currently, subsistence fishing above the Holitna River mouth is open 7 days per week with no gear restrictions.

The Holitna River mouth to the Headwaters of the Kuskokwim River: Section 5

Effective 6:00 a.m. Thursday, June 11, 2015 from the Holitna River mouth to the headwaters of the Kuskokwim River, subsistence salmon fishing will close and subsistence fishing will be restricted to the use of set gillnets with 4-inch or less mesh size not to exceed

60 feet in length and 45 meshes deep no part of which may be operated more than 100 feet from the ordinary high water mark (Figure 1) during the following dates and times:

- 6:00 a.m. Thursday, June 11 until 6:00 a.m. Sunday, June 14;
- 6:00 a.m. Thursday, June 18 until 6:00 a.m. Sunday, June 21;
- 6:00 a.m. Thursday, June 25 until 6:00 a.m. Sunday, June 28;
- 6:00 a.m. Thursday, July 2 until 6:00 a.m. Sunday, July 5.

This schedule may be amended as the season progresses.

Subsistence fishing with hook and line for Chinook salmon will close at 6:00 a.m. Thursday, June 11, 2015 until further notice. Any Chinook salmon caught must be returned alive to the water.

Subsistence fishing with dip nets will be allowed from 6:00 a.m. Thursday, June 11, 2015 until further notice. Any Chinook salmon caught in a dip net must be returned immediately to the water alive.

Subsistence fishing with fish wheels will be allowed from 6:00 a.m. Thursday, June 11, 2015 until further notice. Fish wheels are required to have a live box with no less than 45 cubic feet of water, must be checked at least every 6 hours. Fish wheels can be equipped with a chute and must be closely attended while in operation. All Chinook salmon must be returned alive to the water.

Subsistence fishing periods to harvest chum and sockeye salmon with gillnets restricted to 6-inch or less mesh size, will be announced at a later date. These fishing periods will be based on Chinook, chum, and sockeye salmon abundance. Period scheduling, length of gillnets and duration for this gear type will be based on inseason run assessment and may be limited in time to reduce incidental harvest of Chinook salmon.

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.

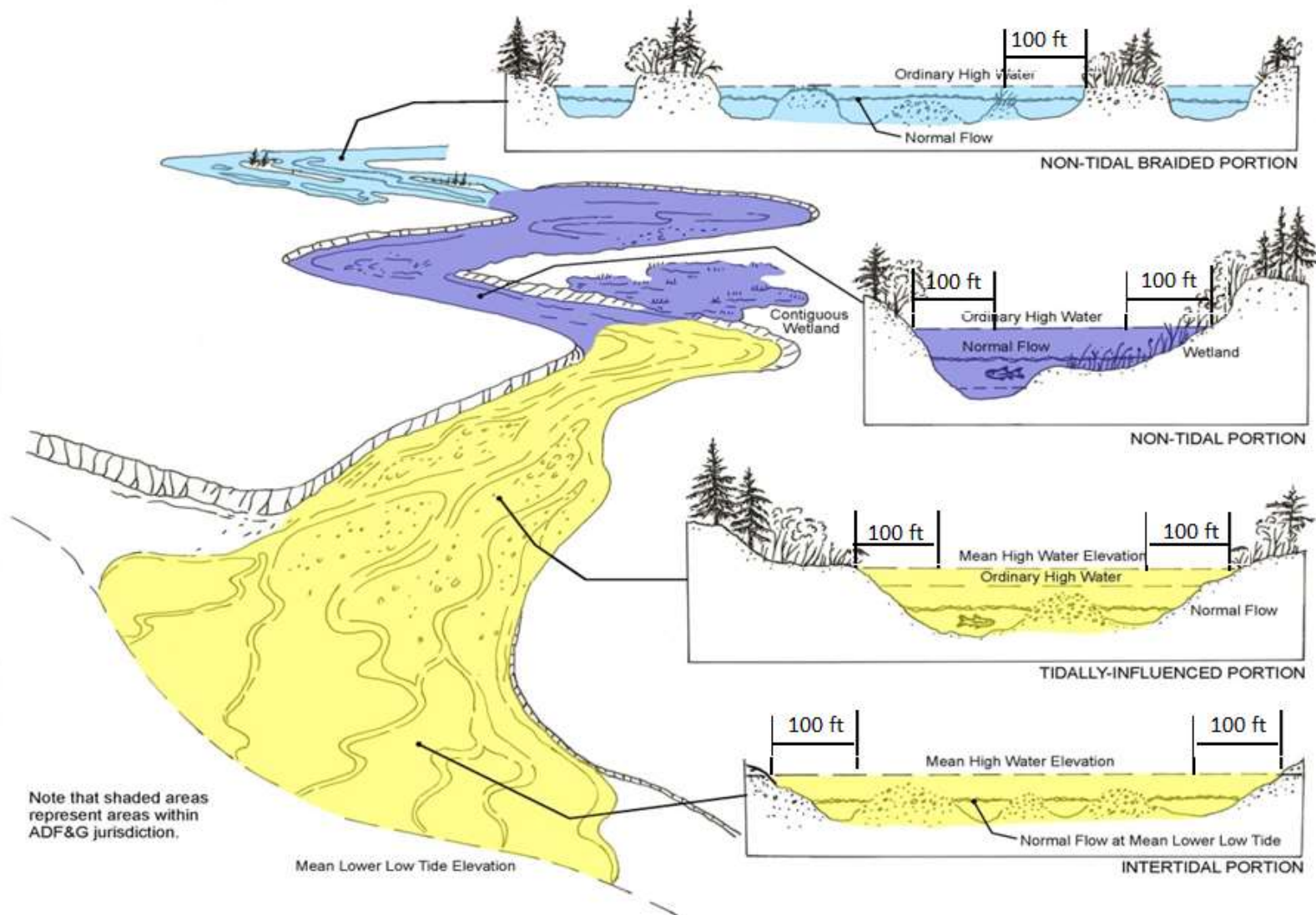


Figure 1.— Ordinary high water mark diagram.