

# ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

## DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

### NEWS RELEASE



*Sam Cotten, Commissioner*  
*Jeff Regnart, Director*



Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Stephanie Schmidt, Area Management Biologist  
Sabrina Garcia, Asst. Area Management Biologist  
Lower Yukon Area Office  
P.O. Box 127  
Emmonak, AK 99581  
Phone: (907) 949-1320  
Fax: (907) 949-1830

U.S. Department of Interior  
Fish and Wildlife Service  
Federal Subsistence Board  
Geoffrey L. Haskett, Regional Director  
Gene Peltola, Asst. Regional Director Subsistence  
Fred Bue, Yukon Area Inseason Manager  
Fairbanks Fish and Wildlife Field Office  
101 12<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Rm 110  
Fairbanks, AK 99701  
Phone: (907) 455-1849 or 1-800-267-3997  
Fax (907) 455-1853

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#### **2015 Yukon River Summer Salmon Fishery News Release # 10**

#### **Summer Announcement # 7, Yukon River District 4 Subsistence Fishing Schedule**

Districts Affected: Upper Yukon Area

A very conservative management approach is being taken early in the season to protect the 2015 Chinook salmon run, which is anticipated to be weak. Fishery management actions are being implemented in accordance with the preseason management plan discussed at the preseason planning meeting and outlined in the 2015 Yukon River Salmon Fisheries Outlook. Subsistence fishing closures have been initiated in the Northern Portion of the Coastal District, Districts 1–3, and Subdistrict 4-A. Districts 1 and 2 have recently re-opened to subsistence salmon fishing with dip nets only to target summer chum salmon. Subsistence fishermen using dip nets are required to release all Chinook salmon alive immediately.

Following the precautionary management actions that have been taken this season in lower river districts, subsistence salmon fishing is now being closed in Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C because early Chinook salmon are beginning to migrate through this section of the river. In areas where subsistence salmon fishing is closed, gillnets greater than 4-inch mesh size must be removed from the water. Fishermen may use 4-inch or smaller mesh size gillnets not exceeding 60 feet in length to target non-salmon species while avoiding Chinook salmon. Fishermen are strongly encouraged to avoid fishing in areas where Chinook salmon may be encountered. Fishery managers appreciate any subsistence harvest and fishing effort reports as they provide important information when considering early season management actions.

Subsistence fishing opportunities to harvest summer chum salmon with dip nets and manned fish wheels equipped with a chute or live box will be provided in District 4 when summer chum salmon abundance increases.

### **Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C Drift Gillnet Fishing in Federal Public Waters**

Federal regulations allow the use of drift gillnets for the subsistence harvest of Chinook salmon in Federal public waters in Yukon River Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C from June 10 through July 14 during open subsistence fishing periods. At this time, no drift gillnet fishing in the Federal public waters of Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C for Chinook salmon is anticipated for the 2015 season.

The 2015 season will undoubtedly 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 subsistence fishing reports and their continuing efforts to share in Chinook salmon conservation when these run sizes are well-below average.

### **District 4 Subsistence Fishing Schedules:**

**Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C** (from Cone Point to Illinois Creek, which includes the mainstem Yukon River communities of Galena and Ruby):

Subsistence fishing is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week and fishermen may use fish wheels or gillnets restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size to conserve Chinook salmon. Additionally, fish wheels must be manned at all times of operation or be equipped with a live box that is checked at least once every six hours and all Chinook salmon must be released alive immediately.

Effective 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, June 10, subsistence salmon fishing will be closed until further notice. All gillnets greater than 4-inch mesh size must be removed from the water. Gillnets with 4-inch or smaller mesh size may be used during the closure, but may not exceed 60-feet in length. Use of drift gillnet fishing gear in Federal public waters of Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C will not be allowed in order to conserve Chinook salmon.

**Subdistrict 4-A Lower** (from  $\frac{3}{4}$  miles downstream of Old Paradise Village upstream to Stink Creek, which includes the mainstem Yukon River communities of Anvik and Grayling):

Currently, subsistence salmon fishing is closed until further notice. All gillnets greater than 4-inch mesh size must be removed from the water. Gillnets with 4-inch or smaller mesh size may be used during the closure, but may not exceed 60-feet in length.

**Subdistrict 4-A Upper** (from Stink Creek upstream to Cone Point, which includes the mainstem Yukon River communities of Kaltag, Nulato, and Koyukuk):

Currently, subsistence fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week and fishermen may use gillnets restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size to conserve Chinook salmon. Fishermen may use fish wheels, however, fish wheels must be manned at all times of operation and Chinook salmon must be released alive immediately.

Effective 6:00 p.m. Monday, June 8, subsistence salmon fishing will be closed until further notice. All gillnets greater than 4-inch mesh size must be removed from the water. Gillnets with 4-inch or smaller mesh size may be used during the closure, but may not exceed 60-feet in length.

**Koyukuk River:** Subsistence fishing is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week and fishermen may use gillnets with mesh size of 7.5 inches or less. Fishermen should be prepared for management actions that will close subsistence salmon fishing when the first pulse of Chinook salmon is expected to be migrating into the Koyukuk River.

The subsistence fishing schedule and recorded fishery announcements will be available 24 hours a day at **1-866-479-7387** (toll free outside of Fairbanks); in Fairbanks, call **(907) 459-7387**.

If you have any questions regarding this report, please call the ADF&G office in Emmonak at 949-1320 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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