

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



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2015 Yukon River Summer Salmon Fishery News Release # 15

Summer Announcement # 11, Yukon River District 4 Subsistence Fishing Schedules

Districts Affected: Upper Yukon Area

The preseason outlook for the 2015 summer chum salmon run is projected to be 1.8 to 2.4 million fish and is anticipated to provide for escapement, a normal subsistence harvest level, and a commercially harvestable surplus in the range of 800,000 to 1,400,000 fish. Initial management of the summer chum salmon run will be based on the expectation that the 2015 run size will likely be near the upper end of this range, similar to recent years.

Subsistence fishing with dip nets only opened in Districts 1 and 2 on June 6 and in District 3 on June 10. Subsistence fishermen in Districts 1 and 2 have reported that catches of summer chum salmon have been low since the opening, however, assessment information from the cooperative Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF) program indicated that summer chum salmon numbers are building in the lower river.

The sonar project near Pilot Station estimated approximately 13,092 summer chum salmon passing by the sonar on June 8; 15,982 on June 9; and 11,168 on June 10. These summer chum salmon are expected to reach Anvik approximately June 15–17. Therefore, subsistence salmon fishing opportunity is being provided District 4-A with dip nets and live-release fish wheels to begin harvesting this early portion of the summer chum salmon run as the stocks migrate into the area.

Fishermen should be aware that this subsistence salmon opening is still early in the summer chum salmon run and catches may initially be low. On average, the first quarter point of the summer chum salmon run passes the Pilot Station sonar project on June 21. The department encourages subsistence fishermen to report their harvest information. These reports are useful for managing this early portion of the summer chum salmon run.

District 4 Subsistence Fishing Schedules:

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):

Subsistence salmon fishing is currently closed to conserve Chinook salmon.

Effective 6:00 p.m. Monday, June 15, subsistence salmon fishing will be open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with dip nets and live-release fish wheels.

Effective 6:00 p.m. Monday, June 15, subsistence salmon fishing for summer chum salmon in the **Anvik River Special Management Area** (which includes the lower 12 miles of the Anvik River) will be open 7 days a week, 24 hours per day with dip nets and beach seine gear only.

Subsistence dip net and beach seine fishermen are required to immediately release Chinook salmon alive from these gear types. Fish wheels must be manned at all times of operation, or be equipped with a live box that must be checked at least once every six hours. All Chinook salmon must be released alive from fish wheels. The requirement to release Chinook salmon alive from these gear types will be strictly enforced.

Great care must be taken to assure Chinook salmon are released unharmed so that they can swim the long distance upriver and spawn successfully. Fishermen are also strongly encouraged to avoid fishing where Chinook salmon may be encountered.

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

Subsistence salmon fishing is currently closed to conserve Chinook salmon.

Effective 6:00 p.m. Thursday, June 18, subsistence fishing will be open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with dip nets and live-release fish wheels. Fish wheels must be manned at all times of operation, or be equipped with a live box that must be checked at least once every six hours. All Chinook salmon must be released alive from both dip nets and fish wheels. The requirement to release Chinook salmon alive from these gear types will be strictly enforced.

Great care must be taken to assure Chinook salmon are released unharmed so that they can swim the long distance upriver and spawn successfully. Fishermen are also strongly encouraged to avoid fishing where Chinook salmon may be encountered.

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

Subsistence salmon fishing is currently closed to conserve Chinook salmon. All gillnets greater than 4-inch mesh size must be removed from the water. Gillnets 4-inch or smaller mesh size not exceeding 60-feet in length may be used during the closure to harvest non-salmon species. If a salmon is caught in this gear type, it is legal to retain it. However, this opportunity to harvest non-salmon species may be reduced or discontinued if found that this gear is being used to target Chinook salmon. Fishermen are strongly encouraged to avoid fishing where Chinook salmon may be encountered.

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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