

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: June 22, 2015

Time: 11:30 a.m.

SOUTHERN NORTON SOUND SUBSISTENCE SALMON OPENINGS

As planned, subsistence salmon fishing opportunity will be gradually increased this week in Southern Norton Sound. Fishing times and gear restrictions are as follows:

Shaktoolik and Unalakleet Subdistricts

Norton Sound Subdistricts 5 and 6, the Shaktoolik and Unalakleet Subdistricts will have one 30-hour period from 4:00 p.m. today, June 22 to 10:00 p.m. Tuesday, June 23. This period applies only to the marine waters from Cape Denbigh south to Black Point and fishermen are restricted to set gillnets with a mesh size of 6 inches or less. An additional marine fishing period ranging from 24-30 hours is expected later in the week or during the weekend. However, high surf conditions are expected until Saturday for the Subdistricts 5 and 6 coastal waters so the department will hold off on announcing the next opening until the forecast improves.

Norton Bay Subdistrict

Norton Sound Subdistrict 4, the Norton Bay Subdistrict, will reopen for two 48-hour subsistence openings from 6:00 p.m. Monday, June 22 to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, June 24, and from 6:00 p.m. Thursday June 25 to 6:00 p.m. Saturday, June 27. This period applies to all marine waters from Bald Head to Point Dexter and all waters flowing into the Norton Bay except for the Koyuk River. The Koyuk River is not affected by this action and will remain open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. There are no gear restrictions during these openings but fishermen are encouraged to use gillnets with a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller to conserve Chinook salmon for escapement needs.

Commercial fishing will commence later this week in the Norton Bay Subdistrict with an announcement expected soon. Fishermen should be on stand by and be ready for the announcement.

The first Chinook salmon were enumerated at the North River tower a few days ago and Unalakleet River weir is expected to observe Chinook salmon passage in the coming days. The department will evaluate escapement and subsistence catch information this week to determine if subsistence fishing opportunities can be increased next week.