

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 M. Kent, Asst. Area Management Biologist
Phone: (907) 443-5167
Fax: (907) 443-5893

Nome Area Office
P.O. Box 1148
Nome, Alaska 99762
Date Issued: 8/14/2015
Time: 3:00 p.m.

AUGUST 12th PERIOD EXTENDED IN SUBDISTRICTS 5 & 6

Over 89,000 silver salmon have been harvested in the Norton Sound commercial fishery this season. Commercial harvest of silver salmon in Norton Sound is well above average for mid-August and will exceed the upper bound of the preseason forecast of 90,000 silvers later today. This year's harvest currently projects out at being the 4th best on record, but could possibly approach the record harvests of the 2006–2008 seasons when 120,000–130,000 silvers were caught annually. Hazardous marine surf conditions had recently curtailed fishing effort throughout much of Norton Sound and at the request of the buyer the department will extend the ongoing period in Subdistricts 5 and 6, the Shaktoolik and Unalakleet Subdistricts, by an additional 24 hours. This action creates a 72-hour period that will now conclude at 6:00 p.m. Saturday evening, August 15. Additional 48-hour openings will also be set beginning this weekend in Subdistricts 2–6. Permit holders in all subdistricts are limited to 100 fathoms of net in aggregate length and gillnets must have a mesh size of 6 inches or less. Fishing times by subdistrict are as follows:

Subdistricts 2, 3, and 4: Golovin, Elim, and Norton Bay Subdistricts

Subdistricts 2–4 will reopen for two 48-hour periods from 6:00 p.m. Saturday, August 15 to 6:00 p.m. Monday, August 17, and from 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 19 to 6:00 p.m. Friday, August 21. Commercial harvests of silver salmon through August 13 in Subdistricts 2–4 are projected to be the 2nd best on record. Projections of Niukluk River and Kwiniuk River silver salmon escapements based on current tower counts indicate escapement goals and inriver subsistence uses of silver salmon will be met.

Subdistricts 5 and 6: Shaktoolik and Unalakleet Subdistricts

Subdistricts 5 and 6 will reopen for two 48-hour periods from 6:00 p.m. Sunday, August 16 to 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, August 18, and from 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 19 to 6:00 p.m. Friday, August 21. Silver salmon counts at the Unalakleet River weir continue to be strong for early August with over 36,000 silvers counted through August 13. Additionally, projections of escapement to the North River based on 3,300 silvers counted through August 13 range between 7,000–9,000 silvers. This range of projected escapements indicate the North River aerial survey SEG range of 550–1,100 silver salmon will be exceeded and inriver abundance of silver salmon will provide for subsistence uses of silver salmon.