

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES NEWS RELEASE



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2016 Yukon River Summer Salmon Fishery News Release # 11 District 4 Subsistence Fishing Schedule Districts Affected: Upper Yukon Area

The preseason outlook for Chinook salmon is for a run size similar to last year of 130,000 to 175,000 fish. A precautionary management approach is being taken to restrict the harvest of Chinook salmon until inseason assessment indicates that escapement goals will be met and a reduced subsistence harvest can be supported. The department closed subsistence gillnet fishing in the Northern Portion of the Coastal District, Districts 1–3, and Subdistrict 4-A Lower to protect the early trickle and the first pulse of Chinook salmon. Districts 1–3 and Subdistrict 4-A were then reopened with selective gear types to target summer chum salmon. Fishermen using selective gear are required to release all Chinook salmon alive immediately.

The preseason outlook for the 2016 summer chum salmon run is projected to be 1.3 to 1.8 million fish and is anticipated to provide for escapement, a normal subsistence harvest, and a commercially harvestable surplus range of 450,000 to 950,000 summer chum.

Chinook salmon have been counted in sufficient numbers at the sonar project near Pilot Station to warrant closing Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C to subsistence salmon fishing with gillnets when Chinook salmon are expected to enter the subdistricts. However, given the presence of summer chum salmon, the subsistence fishery for summer chum salmon with selective gear in Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C will open 24 hours after the gillnet closure. Selective gear includes dip nets, beach seines, and live-release fish wheels which allow the safe release of Chinook salmon. Not all of these gear types may be efficient or effective for your particular area of the river. Fishermen should be aware that the use of selective gear is being offered early in the season to

help fishermen prepare, but catches may be low until summer chum numbers increase significantly.

The department encourages subsistence fishermen to report their harvest information as well as their encounter rates with Chinook salmon while fishing for summer chum. These reports are useful for managing the early portion of the summer season.

Management Actions

General Reminders:

- When subsistence gillnet fishing for salmon is closed, fishermen are required to immediately release Chinook salmon alive from dip nets, beach seines, and fish wheels. Fishermen must closely attend the fish wheel and Chinook salmon must be immediately released alive from the livebox. The requirement to release Chinook salmon alive will be strictly enforced. Great care must be taken to assure Chinook salmon are released quickly and 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.
- Fishermen are reminded that beach seine gear may not exceed 150 fathoms in length, 100 meshes in depth, and 4-inches stretched measure. Additionally, beach seines may not be constructed of monofilament webbing.
- During subsistence salmon fishing closures in the Yukon Area, gillnets 4-inch or smaller mesh of 60 feet or shorter length may be used for non-salmon species. All salmon caught in 4-inch gillnets may be retained, but fishermen are reminded not to target salmon as this gear is intended for non-salmon species.

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) and the **Anvik Special Management Area** (which includes the lower 12 miles of the Anvik River):

Subsistence salmon fishing is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with dip nets, beach seines and live-release fish wheels to target summer chum salmon.

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 open 24 hours a day, seven days per week and fishermen may use fish wheels and 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

Effective 6:00 p.m. Friday, June 10, subsistence salmon fishing with gillnets is closed to protect Chinook salmon.

Effective 6:00 p.m. Saturday, June 11, subsistence fishing will reopen with dip nets, beach seines, and live-release fish wheels for 24 hours a day, seven days per week to target summer chum salmon.

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 open 24 hours a day, seven days per week and fishermen may use fish wheels and 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

Effective 6:00 p.m. Sunday, June 12, subsistence salmon fishing with gillnets is closed to protect Chinook salmon.

Effective 6:00 p.m. Monday, June 13, subsistence fishing will reopen with dip nets, beach seines, and live-release fish wheels for 24 hours a day, seven days per week to target summer chum salmon.

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 **(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 (907) 949-1320 or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Fairbanks at (907) 949-1798.

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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