

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



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**2016 Yukon River Fall Salmon Fishery News Release # 62
Fall Update # 11, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery
Districts Affected: Yukon Area**

Fall Season Assessment

The 2016 fall chum salmon total run size projection, based on inseason assessment, is for 1.5 million fish. Because of the large size and timing of the third pulse and a small pulse that occurred the first week of September, the overall run timing is later than average. The coho salmon run size projection is for an above average return. Coho salmon timing is 1-5 days later than average based on the lower river assessment projects.

The majority of the fall chum salmon run has peaked at both of the sonar projects operated at the Yukon River mainstem at Eagle and at the mainstem Porcupine River. In the Tanana River, the final pulse of fall chum salmon should be near Nenana on October 3 and the Salcha River on October 7. The last pulse of coho salmon bound for the Tanana River is expected to be nearing the communities of Tanana on October 10 and Nenana around October 18. Coho salmon typically travel at slower rate than fall chum salmon.

A reminder to fishermen that subsistence and personal use salmon fishing permits for the Yukon and Tanana river drainages expire on October 15 and are due back to the Fairbanks office by October 25. Reminder letters were sent out in the mail to permit holders on Friday, September 30. If you are not done fishing by October 15 or have lost your permit, please call the ADF&G Fairbanks office at 459-7274.

Fall Assessment ProjectsLower Yukon River Cooperative Fall Drift Test Fishing/ADF&G, YDFDA

The project completed operations for 2016 season on September 10. The cumulative fall chum salmon CPUE for the project through September 10 was 1,900.17, which is below the historical median of 2,098.98 for this date. The cumulative coho salmon CPUE for the project through September 10 was 528.14, which is near the historical median of 527.72 for this date.

Mountain Village Drift Test Fishing/Asacarsarmiut Traditional Council

The project completed operations for 2016 season on September 12. The cumulative fall chum salmon CPUE for the project through September 12 was 2,942.96, which is well above the historical median of 2,002.57 for this date. The cumulative coho salmon CPUE for the project through September 12 was 838.91, which is below the historical median of 1,086.98 for this date.

Sonar Project near Pilot Station/ADF&G

The mainstem sonar near Pilot Station completed operations for 2016 season on August 31. The cumulative fall chum salmon passage estimate through August 31 was 995,000 fish, which is above the median passage of approximately 669,500 fish for this date. The cumulative coho salmon passage estimate through August 31 was 168,000 fish, which is above the median passage of approximately 132,900 fish for this date. Run timing was six days late for fall chum salmon and two days late for coho salmon at this project.

Chandalar River Sonar/USFWS

The project completed operations for 2016 season on September 26. The cumulative fall chum salmon passage estimate through September 26 was 253,000 fish, which is above the median passage of approximately 198,000 fish for this date. The upper end of the escapement goal range of 74,000 to 152,000 fish was exceeded.

Upper Porcupine River Sonar/DFO

The cumulative chum salmon passage estimate through October 2 is 48,700 fall chum salmon which is well above the 2011 to 2015 average of 23,000 for this date.

Fishing Branch River Weir/DFO

The installation of the weir and operations have been hampered by high water much of the early season and again on September 15-19. Preliminary cumulative passage from October 1 is 17,200 fall chum salmon which is below the median passage of 21,300 for this date. Counts are expected to pick up when the late pulses arrive based on observations at the Upper Porcupine River sonar project and the lower end of the interim management escapement goal range of 22,000 to 49,000 fish is expected to be achieved.

Sonar Project near Eagle/ADF&G and DFO

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage estimate through October 2 was 125,000 fish, which is below the median passage of approximately 154,000 fish for this date. The interim management escapement goal range of 70,000 to 104,000 fish has been achieved. The last day of counts will be October 6 when the project will conclude for the season.

Fall Season Management Strategy

The Coastal District, Districts 1, 2, 3, and Subdistrict 5-D as well as the Innoko and Koyukuk Rivers have been on their full regulatory subsistence salmon fishing schedules of 24 hours per day, 7 days per week for the entire fall season. As a result of the Chinook salmon restrictions put in place in the Yukon Area this season, the department increased the opportunity to harvest fall chum salmon for subsistence use in most areas. Subsistence salmon fishing has been liberalized to 24 hours per day, seven days per week in Districts 4 and 6, and Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C. Subsistence fishermen may use gillnets with 7.5 inch mesh or smaller during the fall season.

Based on the current fall chum salmon passage and favorable projections at the Fishing Branch River weir and Porcupine River border sonar projects, the subsistence fishing time restriction was relaxed to the regulatory fishing schedule on the Porcupine River. Managers will continue to closely monitor fall chum escapement into the Fishing Branch River.

Current Subsistence Fishing Schedules

Coastal District (from the Naskonat Peninsula north to Point Romanof and including all state marine waters), and **Districts 1, 2, and 3**:

Subsistence fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

District 4 (from $\frac{3}{4}$ mile downstream of Old Paradise Village upstream to Illinois Creek, which includes all adjacent tributaries and the mainstem Yukon River communities of Anvik, Grayling, Kaltag, Nulato, Koyukuk, Galena and Ruby):

Subsistence fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

Drift gillnet fishing is open **only in the upper portion of Subdistrict 4-A upstream from the mouth of Stink Creek.** Drift gillnets may not exceed 25 fathoms in length.

District 5 (from the western edge of the mouth of Illinois Creek to the U.S./Canada border, including all adjacent tributaries and the communities of Tanana, Rampart, Stevens Village, Beaver, Venetie, Fort Yukon, Chalkyitsik, Circle, Eagle, and the Porcupine River):

Subsistence fishing is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

A subsistence fishing permit is required to fish for all species in the following locations:
Between the western tip of Garnet Island and the Dall River (Dalton Highway bridge area) and from the upstream mouth of 22 Mile Slough to the U.S./Canada border.

Subdistricts 6-A and 6-B (from the mouth of the Tanana River upstream to the regulatory marker at the mouth of Wood River, which includes the communities of Manley, Minto, Nenana, Kantishna River, and the Old Minto Area):

Subsistence salmon fishing is open 24 hours per day, 7 days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh size gillnets and fish wheels.

Subsistence fishermen are reminded that a subsistence fishing permit is required to fish for salmon in the Tanana River drainage. Permits are available from the ADF&G office in Fairbanks. Subsistence fishermen fishing in the upper portion of Subdistrict 6-B, from three miles upstream of the mouth of Totchaket Slough to Wood River, are required to report their harvest catches to the department by **4:30 PM Thursday** each week by contacting the department at **(907) 459-7388**. When you call, please provide your name, permit number, fishing location, and daily catch by species for that week.

Subdistricts 6-C (from the regulatory marker at the mouth of the Wood River upstream to the downstream mouth of the Salcha River, which includes the communities of Fairbanks, North Pole, and Salcha):

Personal use salmon fishing is open 24 hours per day, 7 days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh size gillnets and fish wheels.

A reminder to fishermen that a personal use salmon fishing permit and a sport fish license are required to fish in Subdistrict 6-C of the Tanana River. Fishermen are required to report their harvest catches to the department by **4:30 PM Thursday** each week by contacting the department at **(907) 459-7388**. When you call, please provide your name, permit number, fishing location, and daily catch by species for that week.

Upper Tanana Area (the Tanana River from the confluence with the mouth of Volkmar River on the north bank and the mouth of the Johnson River on the south bank upstream to the Tanana River headwaters, including the communities of Healy Lake, Dot Lake, Tanacross, Northway, and the Tok area):

Subsistence fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

A subsistence fishing permit is required to fish in the Upper Tanana River Drainage.

Commercial Fishing:

Fall Season Commercial Salmon Fishing

The commercial salmon fishing season closes by regulation on Wednesday, October 5 in Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C, and in District 6. Processors, catcher sellers, or direct marketers interested in operating in Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C must notify the department by contacting the Fairbanks office at 459-7274.

Subdistrict 5-B, and 5-C Commercial Fishing Schedule:

Commercial fishing in Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C is open 24 hours per day, seven days per week until 12:00 midnight Wednesday, October 5 when the commercial salmon fishing season closes by regulation. Fishermen may use fish wheels or gillnets with 6 inch or smaller mesh size.

The preliminary cumulative commercial harvest through October 3 is 2,106 fall chum salmon.

District 6 Commercial Fishing Schedule:

Commercial fishing in District 6 will be open for one last period this season from 6:00 p.m. Sunday, October 2 until 12:00 noon Wednesday, October 5.

The preliminary cumulative commercial harvest through October 3 is 14,779 fall chum and 13,485 coho salmon.

All Yukon Area commercial fishermen should confirm their market prior to commercial fishing. Processors, catcher sellers, or direct marketers must notify the department of their intent to operate by contacting the Fairbanks office at 459-7274. All salmon harvested during commercial fishing operations must be recorded on a fish ticket at the time of sale. All fish species harvested and not sold must be recorded on the fish ticket as “caught but not sold”.

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 **459-7387**.

If you have any questions regarding this report, please call the ADF&G office in Fairbanks at (907) 459-7274 or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Fairbanks at (907) 455-1849.

This is an announcement by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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