

Division of Sport Fish

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News Release

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COPPER RIVER PERSONAL USE DIP NET SALMON FISHING OPENS

The Chitina Subdistrict will open for an 84-hour period from 12 noon Thursday, July 12 through 11:59 p.m. Sunday, July 15.

The 2018 Copper River sockeye salmon run has improved, allowing opening of the Chitina Subdistrict personal use dip net fishery. The 2018 Copper River sockeye salmon run has required the department to modify management strategies to compensate for low sockeye salmon wild stock abundance, a stronger than projected hatchery stock run, and management of Copper River Delta sockeye salmon wild stock escapement in order to provide harvest opportunity and still achieve the wild sockeye salmon sustainable escapement goal. The personal use fishery will continue to be managed weekly through the end of August with any potential fishing opportunity dependent upon sonar passage and further adjustments needed to ensure wild sockeye salmon escapement.

As a reminder, the Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan and the Statewide Personal Use Fishing Regulations state that:

- The annual limit is 25 salmon for the head of household and 10 salmon for each dependent of the permit holder.
- Of the total limit only one king salmon may be retained per household.
- Personal use fishers must possess **both** their Chitina Personal Use fishery permit and a valid resident sport fishing license when fishing. **Steelhead cannot be kept**, and must be returned to the water unharmed.
- Harvest must be recorded on the permit **immediately**.
- The tips of the tail of personal use caught fish must be clipped **immediately** upon landing a fish.
- **Immediately** is defined as before concealing the salmon from plain view or transporting the salmon from the fishing site. **Fishing site** means the location where the fish was removed from the water and became part of the permit holder's bag limit.

The Copper River personal use fishery is managed under direction of the *Copper River Personal Use Dip Net Salmon Fishery Management Plan* (5 AAC 77.591). The plan establishes the season from June 7 through September 30, and directs the department to establish weekly periods based

on Miles Lake sonar counts. During June 18 – July 1, there were 86,348 salmon counted past the Miles Lake sonar. The preseason projection for this period was 57,165 salmon, which results in a surplus of 29,182 salmon. Copper River sockeye salmon migratory timing and the previous five-year average harvest and participation rates indicate sufficient numbers of salmon available to justify 84 hours of fishing time during the week of July 9 – July 15.

Information regarding the fishery can be found at the ADF&G web site: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=PersonalUsebyAreaInteriorChitina.main>. This site provides information regarding the Upper Copper River fisheries including: fishery descriptions and summaries, maps of the subdistricts, a listing of vendors that carry the permits, and links to the sonar numbers and fishing schedule emergency orders.

Any changes on the status of this fishery will be announced on the Chitina Fishery information line at 822-5224 (Glennallen), 459-7382 (Fairbanks), and 267-2511 (Anchorage). Please contact an information phone line prior to planning your trip to Chitina to ensure that the fishery will be open when you arrive. If you have any questions regarding the Chitina Subdistrict personal use fishery, please contact the ADF&G office in Glennallen at (907) 822-3309.

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