

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



Sam Cotten, Commissioner
Scott Kelley, Director



Contact:

Holly Carroll, Area Management Biologist
Deena Jallen, Assistant Area Management Biologist
Toll free fishing schedule hotline: (866) 479-7387
Fishing schedule hotline in Fairbanks: 459-7387

Lower Yukon Area Office
P.O. Box 127
Emmonak, Alaska 99581
Phone: (907) 949-1320
Fax: (907) 949-1830
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2018 Yukon River Summer Salmon Fishery News Release # 44
Summer Update # 6, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery
Districts Affected: Yukon Area

The estimated Chinook salmon passage at the Pilot Station sonar is below average. The Chinook salmon run appears to have normal run timing, which indicates that the drainage-wide run will likely come in below the lower end of the preseason projection range of 173,000 to 251,000 fish (Figure 1). The projected season total passage at the Pilot Station sonar is approximately 165,000 Chinook salmon. The summer chum salmon run is also below average and will likely come in below the preseason forecast of 2.5 million fish with an inseason projection of approximately 1.7 million fish. As of July 8 at the Pilot Station sonar project, the Chinook salmon run is approximately 93% complete and the summer chum run is approximately 89% complete. The Eagle sonar recently began operations and is counting small numbers of early Chinook salmon.

As of July 8, the first pulse of Chinook salmon (~27,000 fish) should be near Circle. A second pulse of Chinook salmon (~27,000 fish) should be between Rampart and Stevens Village as of July 8. A third pulse of Chinook salmon (~55,000 fish) should be between Ruby and Tanana. A fourth pulse of Chinook salmon (~24,000 fish) was recently counted at the Pilot Station sonar and should be near Grayling as of July 8. Early summer chum salmon should be passing into the upper reaches of the Koyukuk and Tanana rivers and the first group of summer chum salmon (~203,000 fish) should be passing Tanana as of July 8. A second group of summer chum salmon (~292,000 fish) should be near Ruby. A third group of summer chum salmon (~276,000 fish) should be approaching Kaltag. A fourth, very large, group of summer chum salmon (~552,000 fish) was recently counted at the Pilot Station sonar and should be near Holy Cross.

Genetic mixed stock analysis (MSA) on the early group and first pulse of Chinook salmon sampled at the Pilot Station sonar project (June 2 to June 19) indicated that 56% of the fish sampled were of Canadian-origin. Genetic MSA on the second and part of the third pulse of Chinook salmon (June 20 to June 29) indicated that 47% of the fish sampled were of Canadian-origin. The age composition of 362 Chinook salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the Pilot Station test fishery, through June 29, was 11% age-4, 49% age-5, 38% age-6, and 1% age-7 fish. The proportions of fish that were age-5 and age-7 were below average, while the proportions of

fish that were age-4 and age-6 were above average. The proportion of fish that were female, 51%, was well above average.

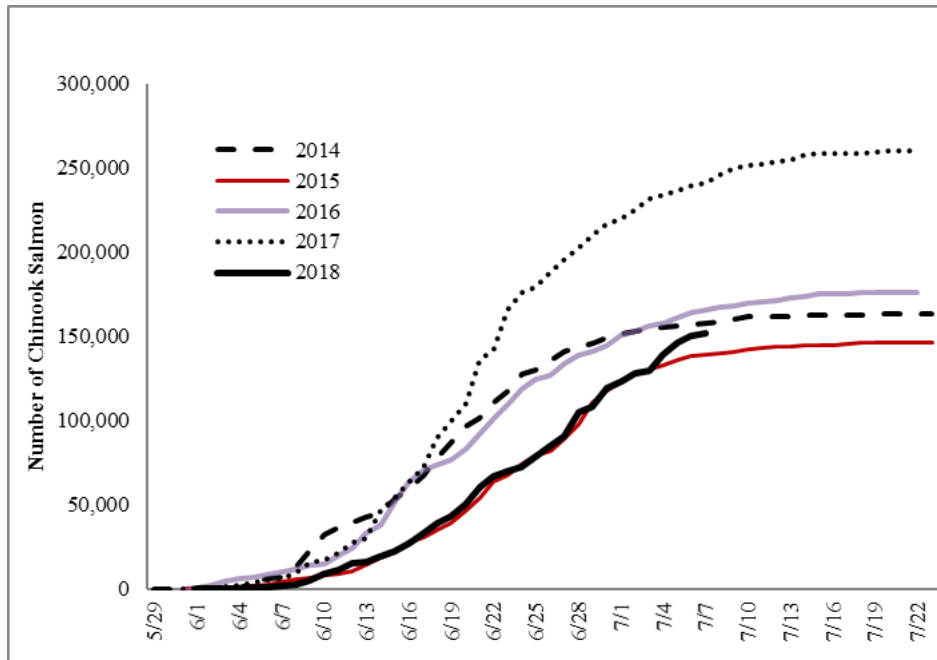


Figure 1. Cumulative Chinook salmon passage at the Pilot Station sonar project, 2013 – 2018.

Assessment Projects

Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF)/ ADF&G and YDFDA

The combined cumulative Chinook salmon CPUE for the 8.5-inch set gillnet at the Big Eddy and Middle Mouth sites, as of July 8, is 23.25, which is slightly below the historical average of 23.92. However, operations may not be comparable to previous years because fishing duration and net locations have been affected due to high water and large amounts of woody debris. The cumulative Chinook salmon CPUE in the 8.25-inch drift gillnet at the Big Eddy site, as of July 8, is 428.99, which is above the historical average of 390.66. As of July 8, the combined cumulative summer chum salmon CPUE for the 5.5-inch drift gillnet at the Big Eddy and Middle Mouth sites is 16,527.76, which is well above the historical median of 6,010.18 for this date.

Sonar Project Near Pilot Station/ ADF&G

The sonar project near Pilot Station began operations on June 1. Chinook salmon passage, as of July 8, is estimated to be 153,260 fish, which is below the historical cumulative average of 169,933 Chinook salmon for this date. Summer chum salmon passage, as of July 8, is estimated to be 1,452,197 fish, which is below the historical cumulative median of 1,611,439 fish for this date.

East Fork Andreafsky River Weir / USFWS

The East Fork Andreafsky River weir began operations on June 25. As of July 8, the estimated cumulative Chinook salmon passage is 2,064 fish, which is above the historical cumulative average of 1,682 Chinook salmon for this date. As of July 8, the estimated cumulative summer chum salmon passage is 18,666 fish, which is below the historical median of 36,528 fish for this

date. The sustainable escapement goals are 2,100–4,900 Chinook salmon and greater than 40,000 summer chum salmon past the weir project.

Anvik River Sonar / ADF&G

The Anvik River sonar began operations on June 15. Summer chum salmon passage, as of July 8, is 135,064 fish, which is below the historical cumulative median of 300,485 fish for this date. The biological escapement goal is 350,000–700,000 summer chum salmon past the sonar project.

Salcha River Tower / ADF&G

The Salcha River tower/sonar project began operations on June 27. As of July 8, 111 Chinook salmon has been observed. This is considered an incomplete count because high water levels prevented visual counting for several days; however, the sonar has remained operational. Season total counts using the sonar will be provided postseason. The biological escapement goal for Chinook salmon is 3,300–6,500 past the tower.

Sonar Project Near Eagle / ADF&G

The sonar project near Eagle began operations on July 4. Chinook salmon passage, as of July 8, is estimated to be 524 fish, which is below the historical cumulative average of 1,942 Chinook salmon for this date. The Interim management escapement goal for Chinook salmon at the Eagle sonar is 42,500-55,000.

Management Strategy

The Chinook salmon run mostly complete in the Lower Yukon. During the tail end of the run, subsistence fishing is transitioning to the regulatory schedule with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets or is open around commercial summer chum periods. District 1 will transition to fall season management on July 16.

As the Chinook salmon run passes through the Upper Yukon, fishing time is limited to half of the regulatory schedule and gear will remain restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

Subsistence Fishing Schedule:

South Coastal District (from the Naskonat Peninsula north to 62 degrees North latitude including the marine waters near Hooper Bay and Scammon Bay):

Subsistence fishing is open 24 hours a day, 7 days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

District 1 (including the Black River and North Coastal District):

Subsistence fishing will be open for 9 hours each day with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets from 6 a.m. until 3 p.m. until further notice.

District 2:

Subsistence fishing is open effective 2 p.m. Monday, July 9 with **7.5-inch** or smaller mesh gillnets for three 18-hour periods from:

- **2 p.m. Monday, July 9 to 8 a.m. Tuesday, July 10**
- **2 p.m. Thursday, July 12 to 8 a.m. Friday, July 13**
- **2 p.m. Monday, July 16 to 8 a.m. Tuesday, July 17**

District 3:

Subsistence fishing is open effective 2 p.m. Monday, July 9 for one 18-hour period.

- **7.5-inch or smaller mesh: 2 p.m. Monday, July 9 to 8 a.m. Tuesday, July 10**

Effective 8 p.m. Wednesday, July 11, fishing will reopen on the regulatory schedule of two 36-hour periods per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets:

8 p.m. Wednesdays to 8 a.m. Fridays

8 p.m. Sunday to 8 a.m. Tuesdays

Innoko River:

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

District 4 (including the Anvik River and the communities of Anvik, Grayling, Kaltag, Nulato, Koyukuk, Galena, and Ruby):

Effective 6 p.m. Wednesday, July 11, fishing will open with set gillnets, drift gillnets, and fishwheels for a 24-hour period with **6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets from 6 p.m. Wednesday, July 11 to 6 p.m. Thursday, July 12**

Effective 6 p.m. Sunday, July 15, fishing will reopen on the regulatory schedule of two 48-hour periods per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets:

6 p.m. Sundays to 6 p.m. Tuesdays

6 p.m. Wednesday to 6 p.m. Fridays

Koyukuk River:

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

Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C (including the communities of Tanana and Rampart)

Effective 6 p.m. Tuesday, July 10, fishing will open for two 24-hour periods per week with **6-inch or smaller mesh set gillnets** and fish wheels from:

6 p.m. Tuesdays to 6 p.m. Wednesdays

6 p.m. Fridays to 6 p.m. Saturdays

A fishing permit is required to fish for all species in the following locations: the portions of Subdistricts 5-C and 5-D from the western most tip of Garnet Island upstream to the mouth of Dall River (Dalton Highway bridge area) and from the upstream mouth of 22 Mile Slough to the U.S./Canada border. Subsistence fishermen outside of the permit areas are encouraged to fill out their subsistence salmon catch calendars. Calendars and subsistence fishing permits are available from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in Fairbanks.

Subdistrict 5-D (from an ADF&G regulatory marker two miles downstream of Waldron Creek upstream to the U.S./Canada border, including the Porcupine River and all other adjacent tributaries, and the communities of Stevens Village, Beaver, Venetie, Chalkyitsik, Fort Yukon, Circle and Eagle):

Subsistence fishing is currently **closed**.

Effective 10 a.m. Thursday, July 12, subsistence salmon fishing will reopen for 3.5 days (84 hours) per week with **6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets** and fish wheels:

10 a.m. Thursdays to 10 p.m. Sundays

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, and Nenana):

Effective 6 p.m. Friday, July 13, subsistence fishing will be open for two 42-hour periods per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels from:

6 p.m. Fridays to 12 p.m. noon Sundays

6 p.m. Mondays to 12 p.m. noon Wednesdays

A subsistence fishing permit is required to fish for salmon in the Tanana River drainage below the Wood River. Permits are available from the ADF&G office in Fairbanks. Subsistence salmon fishermen 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 p.m. Thursday each week by reporting online at www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/PU/ or by calling (907) 459-7388. When you call, please provide your name, permit number, fishing location, and daily catch by species for that week.

Kantishna River:

The Kantishna River is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week. Fishermen may use fish wheels or gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or less.

Old Minto Area:

Subsistence fishing is currently open with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels on the regulatory schedule of five days per week from:

6 p.m. Fridays until 6 p.m. Wednesdays

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):

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

Personal Use Fishing:

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

Effective 6 p.m. Friday, July 13, personal use fishing will be open for two 42-hour periods per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels from:

6 p.m. Fridays to 12 p.m. noon Sundays

6 p.m. Mondays to 12 p.m. noon Wednesdays

A personal use salmon fishing permit and sport fish license are required to fish in Subdistrict 6-C. Fishermen are required to report their harvest catches to the department by **4:30 p.m. Thursday** each week by reporting online at www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/PU/ or by calling **(907) 459-7388**. When you call, please provide your name, permit number, fishing location, and daily catch by species for that week.

Commercial Fishing:

The summer chum salmon commercial fishery in Districts 1 and 2 has transitioned to gillnet commercial periods, as the Chinook salmon run is winding down in the lower river. Chinook salmon may be kept for personal use in the summer chum gillnet fishery and must be recorded on a fish ticket as kept, not sold. In Subdistrict 4-A, commercial fishing is limited to manned fishwheels. **All Chinook salmon caught in selective gear must be released alive immediately and recorded on a fish ticket.** Commercial fishing will open in District 6 for fish wheels and gillnets. Fishermen must confirm they have a buyer prior to fishing.

Commercial Fishing Periods:**District 1 (including Black River) Commercial:**

Commercial fishing will open for 9 hours each day from 6 p.m. until 3 a.m. the following day with 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets until further notice.

District 2 Commercial:

Commercial fishing will open for 12-hour periods with 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets:

- Noon to midnight Tuesday, July 10
- Noon to midnight Wednesday, July 11
- Noon to midnight Friday, July 13
- Noon to midnight Saturday, July 14
- Noon to midnight Sunday, July 15
- Noon to midnight Tuesday, July 17

Subdistrict 4-A Commercial (from $\frac{3}{4}$ miles downstream of Old Paradise Village to Cone Point):

Commercial fishing is open for 24-hours a day, seven days a week until further notice.

Fishermen must use commercial fish wheels that are manned at all times of operation. All Chinook salmon caught in commercial fish wheels must be immediately returned to the water alive and recorded on a fish ticket.

District 6 Commercial (from the mouth of the Tanana River upstream to the regulatory marker at the mouth of Wood River, upstream to the Salcha River, which includes the communities of Manley, Minto, Nenana, Fairbanks, North Pole, and Salcha):

Commercial periods will open concurrent with subsistence and personal use fishing schedules in District 6 until further notice. Commercial fish wheels are not required to be manned.

Effective 6 p.m. Friday, July 13, commercial fishing will open for two 42-hour periods per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels:

- **6 p.m. Fridays to 12 p.m. noon Sundays**
- **6 p.m. Mondays to 12 p.m. noon Wednesdays**

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