
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



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P.O. Box 49
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Date: July 19, 2018
Time: 5:00 p.m.

YAKUTAT COMMERCIAL SET GILLNET OPENING ANNOUNCEMENT

Yakutat...The Alaska Department of Fish and Game today announced the following information concerning the Yakutat Area commercial set gillnet fishery.

Alsek River: will be open from 12:01 p.m., Sunday, July 22, through 12:00 noon, Monday, July 23. Salmon may be taken only with gillnets of six inches or smaller mesh. All live, healthy Chinook salmon must be released immediately.

Dangerous River: will be open from 6:00 a.m., Sunday, July 22, through 6:00 a.m., Monday, July 23.

Manby Shore-Inside Waters: will be open from 6:00 a.m., Sunday, July 22, through 6:00 a.m., Monday, July 23.

All Other Waters of the Yakutat District: will remain **closed** until further notice and may open on short notice once escapement counts have improved.

Inseason management for the Alsek and Dangerous rivers, and Manby Shore-Inside Waters are made by monitoring fishery performance data and comparing it to historical catch per unit effort (CPUE) for a given opening to adjust time and area openings. These three systems are glacial systems and aerial surveys are not an effective management tool. The department will receive valuable information such as run timing, run strength, and stock composition by allowing a one-day fishery.

An aerial survey of the East Alsek and Doame rivers was conducted on July 17, 2018, and sockeye salmon escapements into those systems have substantially improved; however, not enough to prosecute a commercial fishery at this time. The Malaspina drainage was surveyed Thursday, July 19, and sockeye salmon were abundant in some inlet streams to Malaspina Lake. The Akwe and Italio rivers will be surveyed on Friday, July 20. The Akwe River may open on short notice if escapement levels show harvestable surplus.

As of July 18, 2018, approximately 15,000 sockeye and 296 large Chinook salmon have been counted through the Situk River weir. The sockeye salmon count is still well below the long-term average of 55,000 fish for the date and continues to be the lowest count on record. Historical run timing data indicates 71% of the escapement past the weir by this time and the current projection suggests Situk River sockeye salmon escapement will fall well short of the BEG range of 30,000-70,000 fish if low abundance trends continue.

The Emergency Order corresponding to this announcement is EO 1Y0918.

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