

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



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**2018 Yukon River Fall Salmon Fishery News Release # 23
Fall Update # 3, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery
Districts Affected: Yukon Area**

The 2018 fall chum salmon preseason run projection is for a run size of 700,000 to 900,000 fish. Inseason run assessment indicates that the 2018 fall chum salmon run is tracking within the preseason projection range. The estimated fall chum salmon run size through August 5 (based on the mainstem sonar near Pilot Station and the downstream harvest) is 275,000 fish, which is below the historical median of 306,000 fish for that date. The front of the fall season chum salmon migration is expected to be near Kaltag around August 2, Galena around August 4, and Tanana/Huslia around August 10, Rampart around August 12 and the Canadian border around August 31. The peak of the 2nd pulse of fall chum salmon passed the mainstem sonar near Pilot Station on August 2, and is expected to be near Anvik around August 10, Kaltag around August 14, Galena around August 16, and Tanana/Huslia around August 21, Rampart around August 23, Fort Yukon around August 31 and the Canadian border around September 10.

The coho salmon outlook is for an average to above average run size (average is 206,000). Coho salmon have begun entering the Yukon River but the majority of the run does not arrive until mid-August.

Fall Assessment Projects

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

The cumulative CPUE for the project through August 5 was 536.67 fall chum salmon, which is slightly below the historical median of 561.61 for this date.

Mountain Village Drift Test Fishing / Asacarsarmiut Traditional Council

The cumulative CPUE for the project through August 5 was 634.18 fall chum salmon, which is below the historical median of 777.10 for this date.

Sonar Project near Pilot Station / ADF&G

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage estimate through August 5 was 200,000, which is below the median passage of approximately 246,000 fish for this date. Though early in the coho salmon run the passage estimate through August 5 was 1,000 coho salmon which is below the average of 4,600 for this date.

Age Composition Fall Season/ADF&G

The preliminary fall chum salmon age composition from the LYTF 6-inch drift gillnets indicates the run is dominated by age-4 fish, which is typical. As of August 4, the 2018 preliminary proportion of age-4 and age-5 fish is 56% and 42% respectively compared to the average of 61% age-4 and 38% age-5 fish based on a samples size of 270. Females currently represent 53% of the fish sampled (n=355), which is near the average of 55%, as of August 5.

Fall Season Management Strategy:

The Coastal District, and Districts 1 through 4, Innoko and Koyukuk rivers, and Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C subsistence fishing are under fall season management. Subdistricts 5-D Lower and Middle will transition to fall management on Thursday, August 9 and Subdistrict 5-D Upper will transition on Thursday, August 16. During the fall season, subsistence fishermen may use 7.5 inch or smaller mesh size gillnets and fish wheels.

Summer Season Assessment

As of August 5, the cumulative Chinook salmon passage at the sonar project near Eagle is approximately 51,800, which is similar to the historical average of approximately 52,200 fish for this date. Based on passage at the Pilot Station sonar and inseason genetic mixed stock analysis, the Canadian-origin Chinook salmon run size likely exceeded the lower end of the preseason outlook of 71,000 to 103,000 fish. The escapement goal for Chinook salmon on the East Fork Andreafsky River was met on July 11. Due to high water, the Henshaw Creek weir did not operate during 2018 and the Chena and Salcha river towers will not have complete salmon counts until post season. The drainage-wide escapement goal of 500,000 to 1.2 million summer chum salmon was met in 2018.

Summer Assessment Projects

Sonar Project Near Pilot Station/ ADF&G

The sonar project near Pilot Station began operations on June 1. Chinook salmon passage, as of August 5, is estimated to be 161,900 fish, which is below the historical cumulative average of 182,381 Chinook salmon for this date. Summer chum salmon passage was estimated to be 1,613,076 fish, which is below the historical cumulative median of 1,898,620 fish.

Chena River Tower / ADF&G

The Chena River tower began operations on July 3. As of August 5, 943 Chinook salmon and 9,088 summer chum salmon have been observed. These are incomplete counts because high water levels prevented visual counting for multiple days; however, a sonar at the project has remained operational. Season total counts using the sonar will be provided post season. The BEG for Chinook salmon is 2,800–5,700 past the tower site.

Salcha River Tower / ADF&G

The Salcha River tower project began operations on June 27. As of August 5, 3,295 Chinook salmon and 22,782 summer chum salmon have been observed. These are incomplete counts

because high water levels prevented visual counting for multiple days; however, a sonar at the project has remained operational. Season total counts using the sonar will be provided post season. The BEG for Chinook salmon is 3,300–6,500 past the tower site.

Sonar Project Near Eagle / ADF&G

The sonar project near Eagle began operations on July 4. Chinook salmon passage as of August 5, is estimated to be 51,769 fish, which is similar to the historical cumulative average of 52,172 Chinook salmon for this date. The Interim Management Escapement Goal for Canadian-origin Chinook salmon is 42,500-55,000 fish which is assessed by estimating the passage at the mainstem sonar project near Eagle and then subtracting the estimated harvested fish removed upstream of the sonar.

Chinook Age and Stock Composition

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 503 Chinook salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the Pilot Station test fishery, through July 16, was <1% age-3, 12% age-4, 50% age-5, 37% age-6, and <1% age-7 fish. The proportions of Chinook salmon 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.

The age composition of 257 Chinook salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the Eagle sonar test fishery, through July 25, was 8% age-4, 42% age-5, 48% age-6, and 2% age-7 fish. The proportions of Chinook salmon that were age-5 and age-7 were slightly below average, while the proportions of fish that were age-4 and age-6 were slightly above average. The proportion of fish that were female, 45%, was above average.

Chum Salmon Stock Identification

Genetic mixed stock analysis (MSA) on fall season chum salmon for the strata from July 19–25 consisted of 82% summer chum and 18% fall chum salmon. The summer chum salmon stocks in the sample contained primarily Tanana summer stocks at 37%. The fall chum salmon stocks in the sample consisted of 8% Border/US (Chandalar/Sheenjok) and 10% Canadian stocks.

Summer Season Management Strategy

Almost all districts and subdistricts have transitioned to fall season management. As the final portion of the Chinook salmon run passes through Subdistrict 5-D Upper, fishing time will remain limited to half of the regulatory schedule and gear will remain restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fishwheels. Fish in the tail end of the run will increase Border passage towards the upper end of the escapement goal and help meet harvest share objectives.

Subsistence Fishing Schedule:

South Coastal District (Naskonat Peninsula to 1 mile south of Black River):

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

District 1 including the North Coastal District (1 mile south of Black River to Point Romanof):

Subsistence Fishing in District 1 is open for the fall season for 24 hours a day, seven days per week except for 12 hours before, during, and 12 hours after each commercial fishing period. Subsistence fishermen may use 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

During the current commercial period, subsistence salmon fishing in District 1, including the Pastolik and Pastoliak Rivers, **closed at 3:00 a.m. Monday, August 6, and will reopen at 12:00 noon Tuesday, August 7.** Additionally, during subsistence salmon closures, subsistence fishing in the Pastolik and Pastoliak Rivers (including 500 yards around the mouths) is closed for all gillnet fishing, including gillnets with 4-inch mesh or less, is closed in these waters 12 hours before, during, and 12 hours after each commercial opening.

District 2 (Mountain Village, St. Mary's, Pilot Station, Marshall):

Subsistence Fishing in District 2 is open for the fall season for 24 hours a day, seven days per week except for 12 hours before, during, and 12 hours after each commercial fishing period. Subsistence fishermen may use 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

District 3 (Russian Mission, Paimiut, Holy Cross):

Subsistence fishing in District 3 is open for the fall season 24 hours a day, seven days per week. Subsistence fishermen may use 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

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.

Subdistrict 4-A (from $\frac{3}{4}$ mile downstream of Old Paradise Village upstream to Cone Point, and includes the communities of Anvik, Grayling, Kaltag, Nulato, and Koyukuk):

Subsistence fishing is open five days per week from 6 p.m. Tuesdays until 6 p.m. Sundays with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh size drift and set gillnets and fish wheels.

At a recent Board of Fisheries meeting in Anchorage on July 17, emergency regulations were adopted that allow subsistence salmon fishing with drift gillnets in that portion of Subdistrict 4-A below Stink Creek after August 2. Subsistence fishermen in Subdistrict 4-A, including those fishing in the lower portion of Subdistrict 4-A below Stink Creek (includes the communities of Anvik and Grayling) may continue using drift gillnet gear for the remainder of the fall season.

Subdistrict 4-B and 4-C (from Cone Point upstream to the westernmost edge of Illinois Creek, which includes the communities of Galena and Ruby):

Subsistence fishing is open five days per week from 6 p.m. Sundays until 6 p.m. Fridays with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh size drift and set gillnets and fish wheels.

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 and Yukon Bridge Area):

Subsistence fishing is currently open on the regulatory fishing schedule of two 48-hour periods per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh set gillnets and fish wheels:

- 6 p.m. Tuesdays until 6 p.m. Thursdays
- 6 p.m. Fridays until 6 p.m. Sundays

Effective 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, August 7, subsistence fishing will be open 5 days per week from 6:00 p.m. Tuesdays until 6:00 p.m. Sundays with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh size set gillnets and fish wheels.

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 Lower & Middle (from an ADF&G regulatory marker two miles downstream of Waldron Creek upstream to 22 Mile Slough, and including all adjacent tributaries, which includes the communities of Stevens Village, Beaver, Venetie, Chalkyitsik, and Fort Yukon):

Fishing is currently closed. Effective 10 a.m. Thursday, August 9, subsistence fishing will be open 24 hours per day, 7 days per week for the fall season. Subsistence fishermen may use 7.5-inch or smaller mesh size set gillnets and fish wheels.

Subdistrict 5-D Upper (from 22 Mile Slough upstream to the U.S./Canada border, and including all adjacent tributaries, which includes the communities of Circle and Eagle):

Subsistence fishing is currently closed and will open for one 3.5-day period with **6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets** and fish wheels **from 10 a.m. Thursday, August 9 to 10 p.m. Sunday, August 12.**

Effective 10 a.m. Thursday, August 16, subsistence fishing will open for 24 hours per day, 7 days per week for the fall season. Subsistence fishermen may use 7.5-inch or smaller mesh size set gillnets and fish wheels.

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):

Subsistence fishing is 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 noon Sundays

6 p.m. Mondays to 12 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):

Personal use fishing is 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 noon Sundays

6 p.m. Mondays to 12 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 sale of incidentally caught Chinook salmon is prohibited. Chinook salmon may be kept for personal use in the summer chum and fall chum gillnet fishery and must be recorded on a fish ticket as kept, not sold. Commercial fishermen in Districts 1 and 2 can expect to continue on a 2-period per week schedule. District 4 is open to commercial fishing during the fall season. Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C will open at 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, August 7. Fishermen must confirm they have a buyer prior to fishing. Processors, catcher-sellers, or direct marketers are required to notify the department of their intent to operate by contacting the Fairbanks office at 459-7274.

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

Fall Period 7:

District 1 Set Net Only Area is open from 3:00 p.m. until 12:00 midnight on Monday, August 6. The remainder of District 1 is open 6:00 p.m. until 12:00 midnight on Monday, August 6. Fishermen may use 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

The preliminary cumulative commercial harvest through August 2 in District 1 is 52,471 fall chum salmon and 1,488 coho salmon.

District 2 Commercial:

Commercial fishermen should standby for announcements.

The preliminary cumulative commercial harvest through August 5 in District 2 is 31,905 fall chum salmon and 447 coho salmon.

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

Commercial fishing is open for the fall season for 24-hours a day, seven days a week until further notice. However, the only registered buyer has ceased operations until later in August. Commercial fishermen should confirm their buyer prior to fishing. Fishermen may use fish wheels or set gillnets with a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller.

Chinook salmon may not be sold. Fishermen may release Chinook salmon immediately alive or retain them for personal use. All salmon harvested during commercial fishing must be recorded on a fish ticket at the time of sale. Salmon kept for personal use will be recorded on the fish ticket as “not sold.” Any salmon that have been released alive should be recorded on the fish ticket as “released alive”.

The preliminary cumulative commercial harvest through August 5 in Subdistrict 4-A is 596 fall chum salmon.

Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C Commercial (from Illinois Creek along the north bank of the Yukon River upstream the mouth of the Tanana River, and both along banks of the Yukon River upstream to the regulatory markers 2 miles below Waldron Creek, which includes the communities of Tanana and Rampart as well as the area near the Yukon River Bridge):

Effective 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, August 7, commercial fishing in Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C, will be open 24 hours per day, seven days per week until further notice. Fishermen may use fish wheels or set gillnets with a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller.

Commercial fishermen must confirm their buyer or market prior to commercial fishing. Processors, catcher sellers, or direct marketers are required to notify the department of their intent to operate by contacting the Fairbanks office at 459-7274.

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

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.

Commercial fishing is 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 noon Sundays**
- **6 p.m. Mondays to 12 noon Wednesdays**

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