

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



NEWS RELEASE

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Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery News Release #45

COPPER RIVER DISTRICT: The Copper River District will open at 7:00 am on Thursday, August 9 for a 12-hour commercial fishing period. The Copper River District will open to subsistence fishing from 7:00 am to 7:00 pm on Mondays and Thursdays through August 16. Additionally, waters of the Copper River District will open to subsistence fishing from 6:00 am to 10:00 pm on all Saturdays between June 16 and October 31. Copper River District is switching to coho salmon management starting Thursday, August 16. The standard management strategy for coho salmon is one or two 24-hour periods per week depending on escapement and harvest levels.

For the week ending August 4, the Copper River Delta survey count was 26,945 sockeye salmon versus a projected range of 24,976–59,034. This aerial survey was flown under poor observational conditions in some index systems. Peak counts from delta index systems to date show 58,020 sockeye salmon versus and escapement goal range of 55,000–130,000 fish. The next aerial survey will be flown as flights are available and weather permits.

BERING RIVER DISTRICT: The Bering River District will remain closed. Bering River District is switching to coho salmon management starting Thursday, August 16. The standard management strategy for coho salmon is one or two 24-hour periods per week depending on escapement and harvest levels. An aerial survey of Bering River sockeye and coho salmon index systems will be flown as flights are available and weather permits.

ESHAMY DISTRICT: The Eshamy District will remain closed. The next commercial opening of the Eshamy District is expected to be concurrent with the next opening of the Coghill District. This fishing opportunity in the Eshamy District could occur as early as Friday, August 10. Harvest estimates from the 24-hour period that began on Monday, August 6 are 4,900 sockeye and 35,000 pink salmon with 117 deliveries reported.

SEINE FISHERIES: Prince William Sound seine fisheries will be closed on Thursday, August 9 to allow for PWSAC broodstock acquisition and further evaluation of fishery performance data.

PWSAC is recommending a closure for Wednesday, August 8 in the AFK, CCH, and WNH SHAs, THAs, and corresponding hatchery subdistricts in order to start building broodstock. ADF&G sampling of fish caught within the AFK THA on Monday, August 6 indicated 45% female. Industry sampling of CPF from CCH on Monday, August 6 indicated 39% female.

PWSAC currently estimates there are approximately 30,000–40,000 pink salmon within the AFK SHA and needs approximately 350,000 pink salmon for broodstock; 30,000–35,000 pink salmon within the CCH SHA and needs approximately 360,000 pink salmon for broodstock; 50,000–75,000 pink salmon within the WNH SHA and needs approximately 300,000 pink salmon for broodstock.

Preliminary contribution estimates from the 14-hour period that began on Monday, August 6 in the Southwestern District are 61% AFK, 7% CCH, 9% WNH, and 22% wild pink salmon.

VFDA began egg takes on Monday, July 30 and has collected 73 million eggs (27%) of a 270 million egg take goal through August 7.

Aerial surveys of all districts are expected to be conducted this week, weather depending, to further assess the strength of wild stock returns throughout PWS.

The next salmon fisheries announcement is scheduled for 2:00 pm Thursday, August 9.

Copies of the updated regulation booklet, *2015-2018 Commercial Salmon Fishing Regulations for Prince William Sound*, can be found under the 'Regulations' heading at the following web address:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishregulations.commercial>

Announcement recordings are available for gillnet fisheries at 907-424-7535 and seine fisheries at 907-424-7345. In addition, announcement recordings are available in Anchorage at 267-2843.

Additionally, announcements, inseason harvest data, and escapement data are available at the following web address:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.main> (Prince William Sound and Copper River homepage).