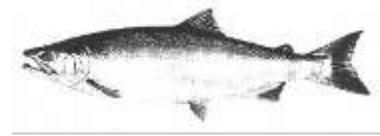


**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE**



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P.O. Box 1148
Nome, AK, 99762
Date Issued: July 8, 2019
Time: 10:30 a.m.

SUBDISTRICTS 2-6 COMMERCIAL FISHING OPENS TUESDAY

Commercial salmon fishing will be open for 24 hours in Norton Sound Subdistricts 2—6, Golovin, Elim, Norton Bay, Shaktoolik and Unalakleet Subdistricts, from 6 p.m. Tuesday until 6 p.m. Wednesday. Gillnets are limited to 100 fathoms of net in aggregate length. Permit holders can use larger than 6-inch mesh size if they want to try to avoid loading up on pink salmon.

The department has been receiving reports of large die-offs of pink salmon in the Koyuk, Shaktoolik and Unalakleet area rivers. The lower water levels combined with water temperatures reported as high as 70 degrees at some locations is most likely resulting in oxygen deprivation in shallow areas of the rivers. This would be expected to continue with temperatures forecasted to be 80 degrees for the next few days. The die-off is a natural occurrence when there are low waters levels combined with the huge numbers of pink salmon crowding into the rivers.

Water levels are starting to drop at northern Norton Sound escapement counting projects and the department and Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation (NSEDC) expects to be able to start getting weirs fish tight and the Fish River tower project counting sometime later this week. The department thanks NSEDC for over two decades of support at salmon counting projects.

Here are the escapement counts from operational projects:

Unalakleet River: 5,300 kings, 19,000 chums, 350 sockeyes, 250,000 pinks*
North River: 2,500 kings, 4,000 chums, 270,000 pinks
Shaktoolik River: 2,500 kings, 10,000 chums, 550,000 pinks
Inglutalik River: 140 kings, 6,000 chums, 10,000 pinks
Kwiniuk River: 33 kings, 7,000 chums, 13,000 pinks

* Picket spacing at Unalakleet weir allows most pinks to pass through without being counted.