

Division of Commercial Fisheries
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Advisory Announcement

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SILVER SALMON COMMERCIAL FISHING TO OPEN IN NORTON SOUND

Commercial salmon fishing will be open for 24 hours in Subdistricts 1 through 6. Golovin, Elim, Norton Bay, Shaktoolik and Unalakleet Subdistricts will be open from 6 p.m. Tuesday, August 3 until 6 p.m. Wednesday, August 4. Nome Subdistrict will open from 9 p.m. Tuesday, August 3 until 9 p.m. Wednesday, August 4. In all subdistricts, permit holders are limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and gillnets must have a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller.

Silver salmon catches in the commercial fishery have started to surpass chum salmon catches in southern Norton Sound and an opening with larger mesh gillnets will be an early index of silver salmon run strength. The weather forecast is for a period of calmer weather on Tuesday and Wednesday and even some sunshine.

Over a week of inclement weather has resulted in extremely high water and all salmon escapement counting projects being unable to operate. Until counting projects are operational the department will use harvest-based management to determine future silver salmon fishing periods. The department will compare the silver harvest with historical harvests from the same period and the catch per unit of effort (CPUE) to determine whether additional commercial fishing time is warranted.

COVID-19

Under Alaska's Health Mandates 10, 17, and 18, commercial fishing is an Essential Business and is part of Alaska's Essential Services and Critical Infrastructure. Commercial fishermen should ensure that all travel and other activities in support of commercial fishing operations follow protocols in Alaska COVID-19 Health Mandates. COVID-19 Health Mandates may be found here: <https://gov.alaska.gov/home/covid19-healthmandates/>