



Advisory Announcement

Released: April 12, 2023

CONTACT:

Deena Jallen, Summer Season Area Management Biologist
Christy Gleason, Fall Season Area Management Biologist
907-459-7274 (Fairbanks)
Toll free fishing schedule and counts: 866-479-7387

2023 Yukon River Salmon Summer Fishery Announcement #1 **Board of Fisheries Actions: Yukon Area Regulatory Changes**

Districts Affected: Yukon Area

The Alaska Board of Fisheries met in Anchorage from January 14 to 18 and March 10 to 14 to consider proposals concerning the Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim area.

Public testimony and contributors to substitute language included fishermen and representatives from Yukon Area Fish and Game Advisory Committees, Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association, Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association, Tanana Chiefs Conference, and the Yukon River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission. The board also considered numerous written comments. Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) Yukon Area staff would like to thank everyone for their hard work on the proposals, thoughtful testimony, and efforts in building consensus on the substitute regulatory language.

The following is a brief summary of the regulatory changes that were adopted and will be effective for the 2023 fishing season in the Yukon Management Area.

YUKON AREA SUBSISTENCE PROPOSALS

Proposal 79 expanded the area where hook and line gear is legal year-round for salmon and nonsalmon subsistence fishing above the Nulato River and in the Koyukuk River drainage. Proposal 84 further expanded the area for this gear in Districts 4 and 5 (see Figure 1).

Proposal 84 was adopted as amended (substitute language found in RC 55 and verbally amended) to make the following changes to subsistence fishing:

- Remove the minimum distance required between subsistence gears other than set gillnets and fish wheels.
- Formally add eels sticks as a gear type for lamprey fishing, a traditional gear of the Yukon Area.
- Set a 7.5-inch maximum mesh size for gillnet fishing for salmon and nonsalmon.
- Set a 6-inch maximum mesh size for gillnet fishing during the fall chum and coho salmon season.
- Increase the maximum mesh size to 4-inch for gillnet fishing in portions of Beaver and Birch creeks.
- Expand the area where hook and line gear is legal year-round for salmon and nonsalmon to include all Yukon River districts, excluding some areas along the road system in the middle and upper Yukon Area and closed waters (see Figure 1). A sport fishing license is no longer required for Alaskan residents in areas where hook and line is legal for subsistence fishing. However, a subsistence permit is still required

in Yukon Area permit areas. Managers may still restrict or close salmon fishing with hook and line during times of conservation.

- During times of salmon conservation, by emergency order, managers can specify the following:
 - o Any salmon species may be specified for live-release from fishing gear types. Previously only chum and king salmon could be required for live-release.
 - o Gillnets may be restricted by length, distance from shore (100 feet from ordinary high-water mark), and may be required to be operated as a set net.
 - o Additional gillnet mesh size options include 4.75-inch or smaller (to target pink salmon) and exactly 7.5 inch (to target kings and to conserve chum salmon).

YUKON AREA PERSONAL USE PROPOSALS

Proposal 83 set a 6-inch maximum mesh size in the Yukon Area personal use salmon fishery after August 15, when fall season begins in that area.

Proposal 85 expanded the gear types and operation during times of salmon conservation for the Yukon Area personal use salmon fishery, by emergency order. Any salmon species may be specified for live-release from dip nets and manned fish wheels. Gillnets may be required to be operated as set gillnets within 100 feet from the ordinary high-water mark. For king salmon conservation, gillnets may be restricted to 4-inch or smaller mesh with a specified length and depth.

YUKON AREA COMMERCIAL PROPOSALS

Proposal 88 reduced the District 5 maximum mesh size to 6 inches or less for commercial fishing to align with the other Yukon Area districts. During times of salmon conservation, by emergency order, any salmon species may be specified for live-release from manned fish wheels, dip nets, and beach seines.

STATEWIDE BOARD OF FISHERIES PROPOSALS RELEVANT TO YUKON AREA

Proposal 82 was adopted as amended (substitute language found in RC 52 and verbally amended from the Statewide BOF meeting) for submerged gillnets and marking requirements. When fishing under the ice, submerged gillnets remain legal for subsistence, personal use, and commercial fishing.

- In the Coastal District and Districts 1 and 2, submerged gillnets are illegal during ice-free months for subsistence fishing.
- In Districts 1 and 2, submerged gillnets are illegal during ice-free months for commercial fishing.
- In Districts 3-6, submerged gillnets may be used for subsistence, personal use, and commercial fisheries during ice-free months, however nets must have a visible keg, buoy, or cluster of floats attached to both ends of the net, plus a third in the middle if the net is over 60 feet in length.

Proposal 87 formally added eel sticks, a traditional gear type, to the allowable subsistence and commercial gear types.

Proposal 165 was adopted as amended (substitute language found in RC 70 from the Statewide BOF meeting) to prohibit compensation for guide services in Alaska subsistence fisheries. Compensation for renting gear or transportation to and from sites remains legal.

Meeting summary, recorded audio, and meeting documents may be found on the Board of Fisheries website:

Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim Meeting:

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fisheriesboard.meetinginfo&date=01-14-2023&meeting=anchorage>

Statewide Meeting:

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fisheriesboard.meetinginfo&date=03-10-2023&meeting=anchorage>

The next Arctic/Yukon/Kuskokwim Finfish meeting will be in 2026.



ADF&G Advisory Announcements will be posted on www.cfnews.adfg.alaska.gov/ and shared on Facebook at www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG.

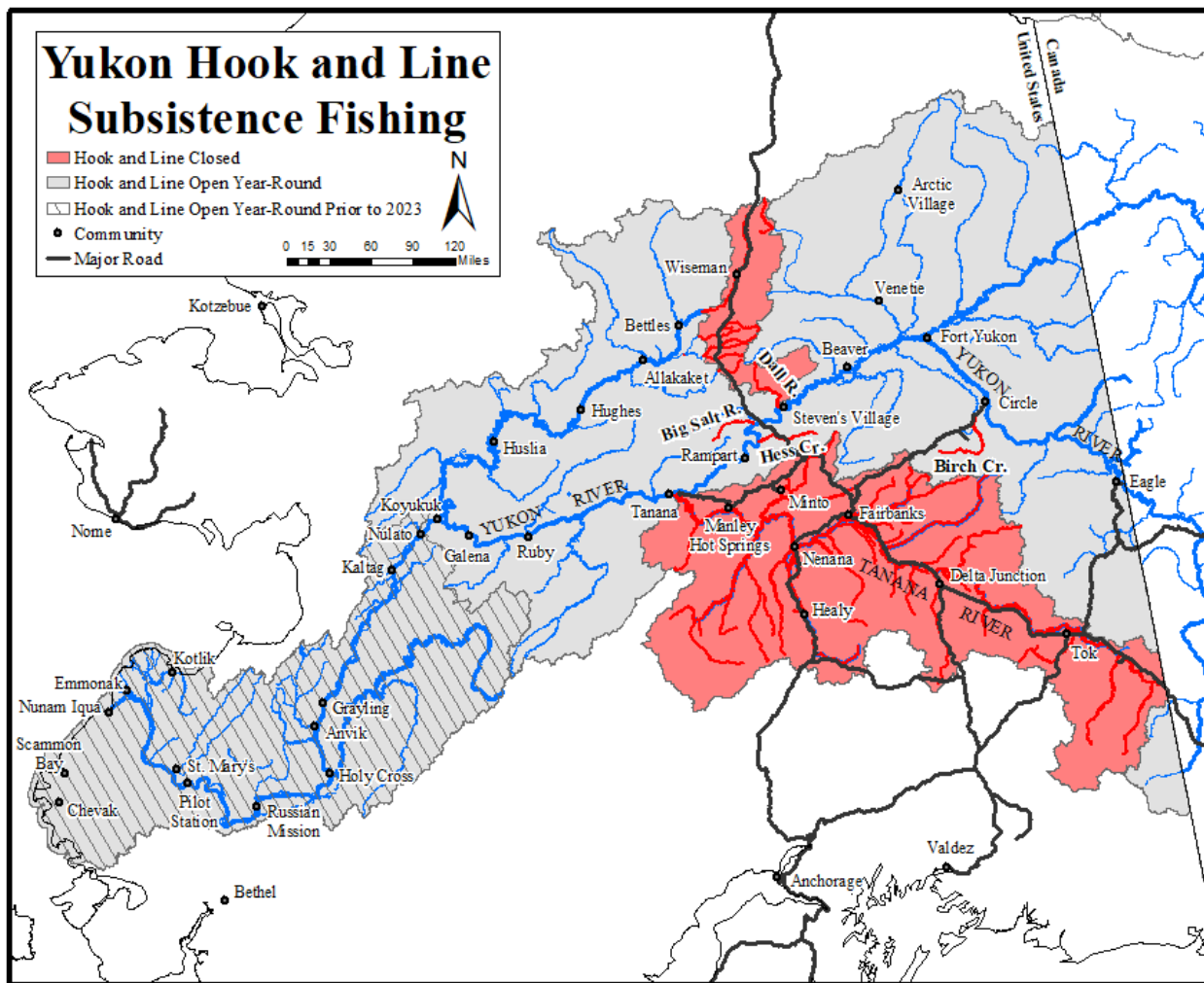


Figure 1. Areas where hook and line are legal as a subsistence fishing gear type in the Yukon Area (gray shaded areas). Closed areas for subsistence fishing with hook and line (red shaded areas) include the Tanana River drainage, Big Salt River, Hess Creek, Dall River drainage, Birch Creek upstream of the Steese Highway bridge, Fish Creek drainage upstream from the mouth of Bonanza Creek, Bonanza Creek drainage, Kanuti River drainage upstream from a point 5 miles downstream of the state highway crossing, and Jim River drainage.