



## Advisory Announcement

## CONTACT:

**Deena Jallen and Christy Gleason**  
**Summer and Fall Yukon Area Management Biologists**  
**Fairbanks: 907-459-7274**  
**Toll free fishing schedule and counts: 866-479-7387**

**Released: May 8, 2023**

### 2023 Yukon River Salmon Summer Fishery Announcement #2

#### Yukon River Salmon Fisheries Outlook

Districts Affected: Yukon Area

Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) research and management staff have worked closely with United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) staff to develop this year’s management strategy. Feedback has been sought from stakeholders, agency staff and leadership, and this strategy has been discussed in depth at the Yukon River Drainage Fishermen’s Association (YRDFA) public preseason fishermen’s meeting, and at the Yukon River Panel April meeting.

The drainagewide Chinook salmon outlook is for a run size of 62,000 to 104,000 fish, and the Canada-origin Chinook salmon run size outlook is for a run of 26,000 to 43,000 fish. Because of the poor projected run size, salmon fishing closures are required. Due to expected low Chinook salmon run size and escapement numbers in Canada and Alaska, there will be closures through at least the midpoint of the run and a harvestable surplus of Chinook salmon is not expected this year.

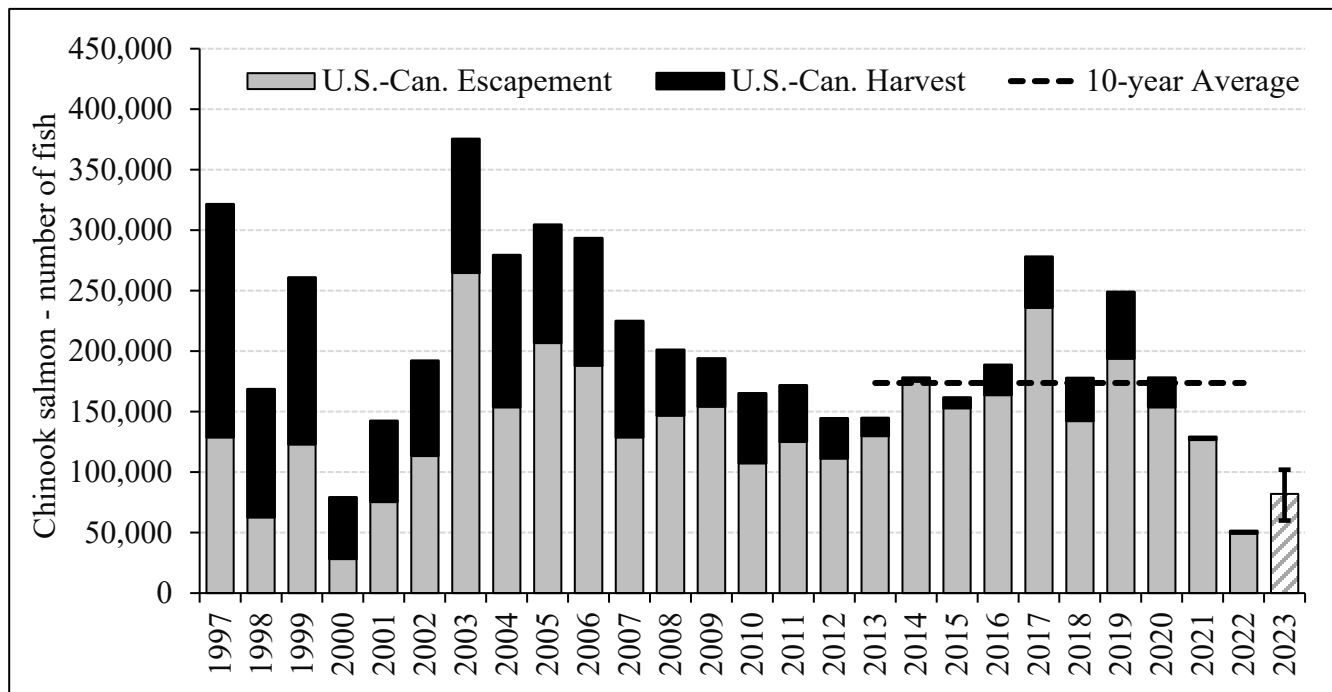


Figure 1. Chinook salmon total run. The dashed line is the recent 10-year average run size of ~174,000 Chinook salmon. The 2023 striped bar represents the approximate midpoint of the drainagewide outlook range of 62,000 to 104,000 fish. At run sizes below 150,000 fish we tend not to meet escapement goals.

Summer and fall chum salmon runs in 2021 were the lowest on record and no escapement goals were met in 2021 or 2022. The outlooks for 2023 have a wide degree of uncertainty, and the runs may not come in above the lower bound of the escapement goals.

The drainagewide summer chum salmon outlook is for a run size of 557,000 fish, with a range of 280,000 to 900,000 fish as shown in Figure 2 on the next page.

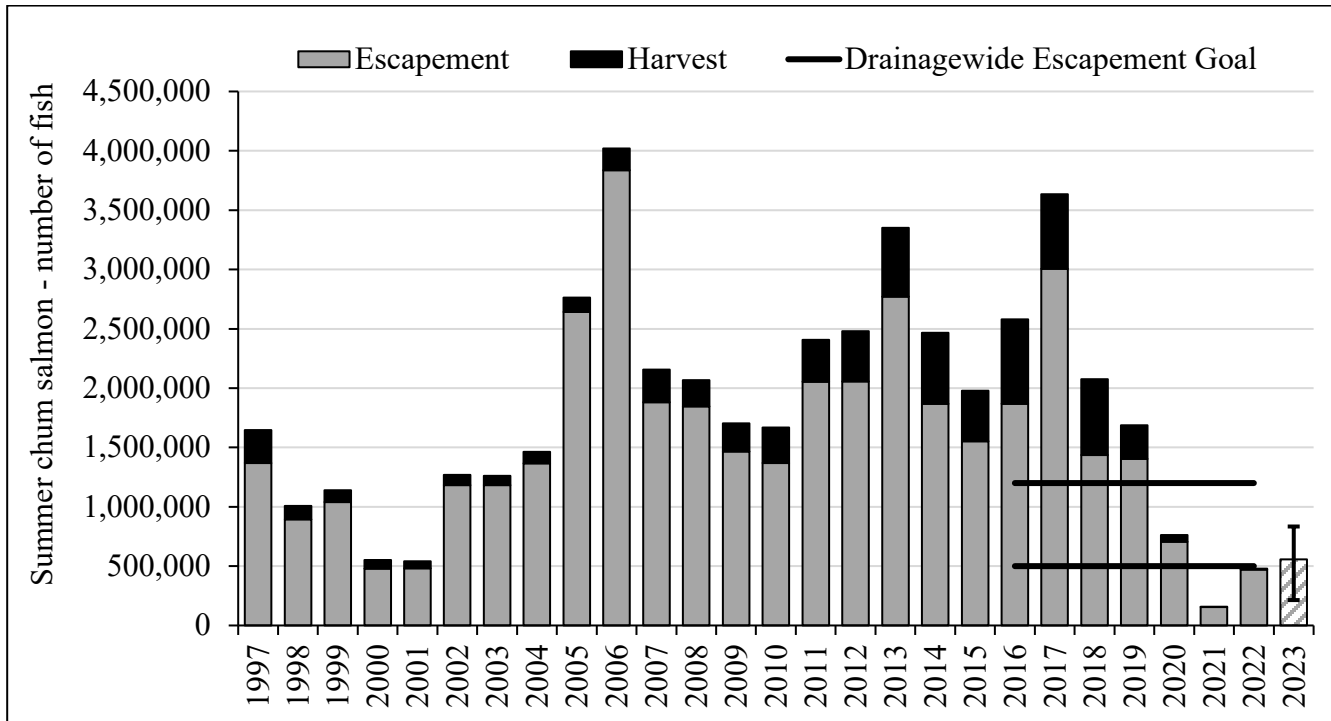


Figure 2. Summer chum salmon total run with drainagewide escapement goal range shown in the solid black lines. The 2023 striped bar represents the approximate midpoint of the outlook range of 280,000 to 900,00 fish.

The drainagewide fall chum salmon outlook is for a run size of 251,000 fish, with a range of 112,000 to 602,000 fish (Figure 3).

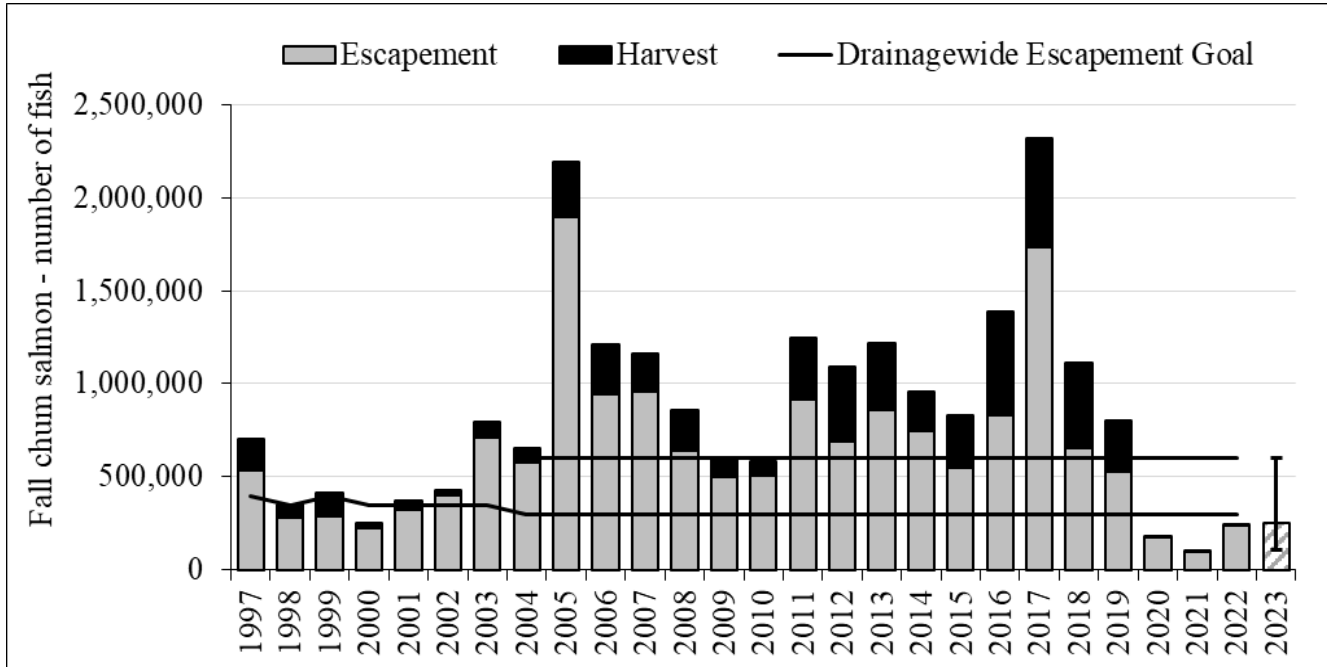


Figure 3. Fall chum salmon total run with drainagewide escapement goal ranges shown in the solid and dashed black lines. The 2023 striped bar represents the approximate midpoint of the outlook range.

**2023 Run and Harvest Outlook for Yukon River Salmon**

	Chinook	Summer Chum	Fall Chum*	Coho
<b>Outlook:</b>	Poor	Poor	Poor	Below average
<b>Escapement:</b>	Unlikely to meet goals	Potential to meet goals	Unlikely to meet goals	No goal
<b>Subsistence:</b>	Fishing Closure	Fishing Closures and Restrictions	Fishing Closures and Restrictions	Fishing Closures and Restrictions
<b>Commercial:</b>	None expected	None expected	None expected	None expected

\* Fall chum salmon projection will be revised in mid-July based on summer chum salmon run size.

**Management Strategies based on the preseason outlooks and inseason assessment:**

- Starting on June 2 in District 1 and the Coastal District, subsistence salmon fishing will close. Closures in upriver districts will be announced based on salmon travel time.
- These closures are expected to be weeks long until the midpoint of the summer chum salmon run is assessed at Pilot Station sonar. Subsistence fishing for summer chum salmon will remain closed unless the run is projected to meet the drainagewide goal. Fishing for Chinook salmon is expected to remain closed all season.
- If confidence is high that the summer chum salmon run is projected to meet the drainagewide escapement goal, subsistence fishing opportunities with selective gear (dip nets, beach seines, and manned fish wheels) may be allowed.
- Pink and sockeye salmon may be targeted by hook and line gear. Hook and line gear may be used for subsistence for salmon and nonsalmon throughout the Yukon River drainage, except for the Tanana River (sport fish license required) and closed waters near the road system. Chinook and chum salmon must be released alive.

- Fishing for nonsalmon species with 4-inch or smaller mesh gill nets will be allowed during salmon fishing closures; however, net length will be reduced to a maximum of 60 feet at the start of the season. Gillnets may be required to be operated close to shore within 100 feet of the ordinary high-water mark. If there are indications that Chinook and chum salmon are being targeted with this gear, this gear may be discontinued.
- Other nonsalmon gear types, including hook and line, longline, jigging gear, hand line, beach seine, fyke net, spear, or lead may be used to fish for nonsalmon species all year, even during salmon fishing closures. Chinook and chum salmon should be avoided and released alive if incidentally caught.
- The sport fishery for Chinook and chum salmon is closed throughout the U.S. portion of the Yukon River drainage (Sport Fishery Emergency Orders published March 29, 2023).
- During the fall season, if there is a need to continue conservation measures for chum or Chinook salmon, these species will be required to be released alive from selective gear types while targeting other species of fish for harvest. Subsistence fishing restrictions may be in place until October 1 in the Lower Yukon and this date will be transitioned upriver to fishing districts based on salmon migration timing. Important fall chum spawning tributaries may remain closed through December (Koyukuk, Teedriinjik, Porcupine, and District 6 tributaries of Tanana River).

The management team recognizes the severe hardship of another anticipated season of salmon closures. Our outlooks show that incremental improvements in the chum salmon runs may be occurring, and we are confident that the sacrifices we’re making now will help them to recover.

**Nonsalmon harvest information**

We have heard some concerns about the harvest of nonsalmon species for subsistence. Estimated harvests of nonsalmon species were below average last year (from September 2021 to September 2022; Figure 4). This may be due to numerous factors, including reduced fishing due to salmon closures, lack of fishing gear, high gas prices, etc.

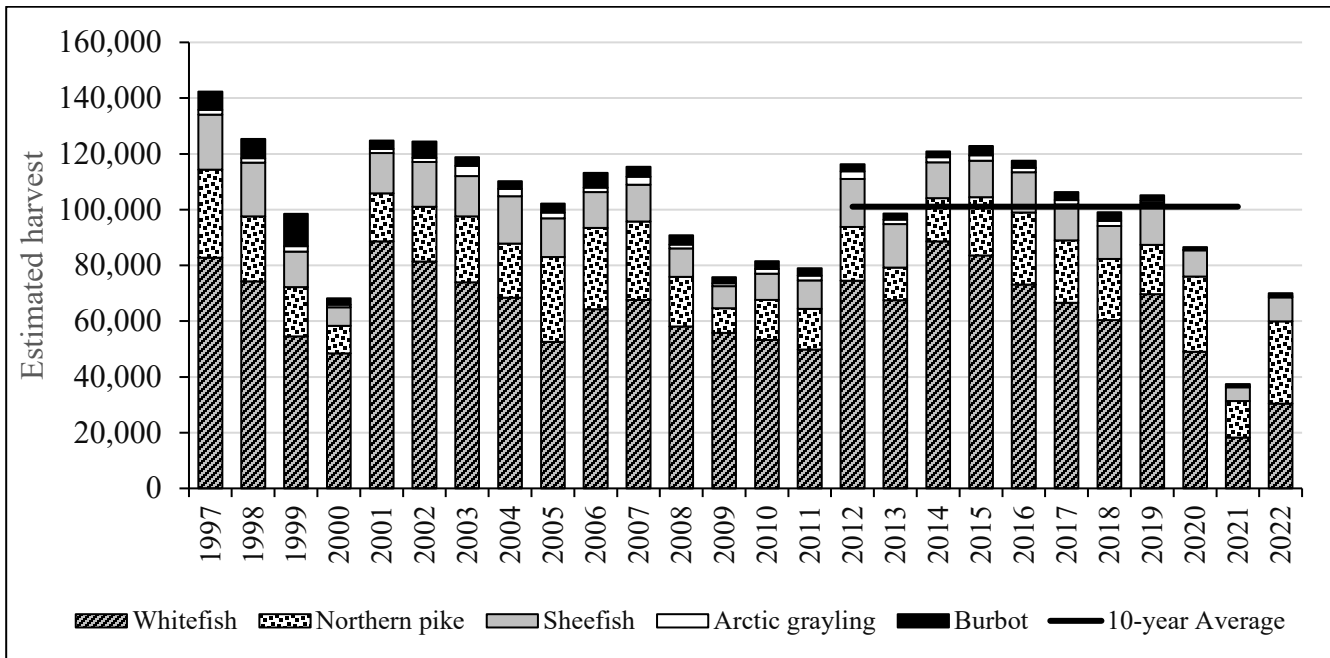


Figure 4. Nonsalmon harvest from permits and the post season subsistence harvest survey that occurs in the fall of each year. ‘Whitefish’ includes broad, humpback, and round whitefish and least and Bering cisco. Other nonsalmon species not shown on the figure include tomcod, grayling, blackfish, and lamprey.

**Contact Information, Updates, and Outreach**

**Announcements and daily test fishery counts will be posted on Facebook:**

[www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG/](http://www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG/)

**Toll-free Fishing Schedule and Fish Counts hotline: 1-866-479-7387**

Assessment project and management updates will be shared during the **YR DFA weekly teleconferences**. During weekly meetings we would like to hear about local conditions on the river from participants. **Starting June 6, join us on Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m. (Alaska time).**

**Call in number: 1-800-315-6338, Passcode: 98566#**

The ADF&G Emmonak office will be open regular hours beginning on June 5; Mondays to Fridays 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturdays 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. (closed Sundays). **ADF&G Emmonak office: 1-907-949-1320.**

ADF&G: Summer Season Area Manager, Deena Jallen; Fall Season Area Manager, Christy Gleason. **ADF&G Fairbanks office: 1-907-459-7274.**

Up to 500 Chinook salmon will be tagged near Emmonak this year with a pink spaghetti tag on the back behind the dorsal fin and a radio tag in the stomach. If you find a tagged Chinook salmon, or have questions about the project, please contact Josh Clark ([joshua.clark@alaska.gov](mailto:joshua.clark@alaska.gov)) or call: **1-877-467-2104**

**USFWS Yukon River Subsistence manager, Holly Carroll, 1-907-351-3029.**

For commercial fishery permit questions please see the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission website here:

[www.cfec.state.ak.us/](http://www.cfec.state.ak.us/)



This is an announcement by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

Announcements will be shared on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG](http://www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG)

