

Division of Commercial Fisheries  
Sam Rabung, Director

Kuskokwim Area Office  
P.O. Box 1467  
Bethel, AK 99559



Alaska Department of Fish and Game  
Doug Vincent-Lang, Commissioner

PO Box 115526  
Juneau, AK 99811-5526  
www.adfg.alaska.gov

**Advisory Announcement**  
*For Immediate Release: June 10, 2024*  
Time: 4:00 p.m.

**CONTACT: Sam Decker**  
**Kuskokwim Area Management Biologist**  
**(907) 543-2709**

## **Kuskokwim River Fishery Announcement #2**

### **Emergency Order #3-S-WR-02-24**

This is an announcement from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) in Bethel for subsistence fishermen in the Kuskokwim Area.

**Subsistence Sections 4 and 5:** From a line between the regulatory markers at the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge boundary near Aniak upriver to the headwaters):

Currently fishing with gillnets is closed and king salmon must be released alive from fishwheels, dipnets, beach seines, and hook and line gear:

- Effective **12:01 a.m. Wednesday, June 12**, subsistence fishing with set or drift gillnets will open. Gillnets shall be 6-inch or less mesh and must not exceed 25 fathoms in length and 45 meshes in depth.
- Effective **12:01 a.m., Wednesday, June 12**, all salmon species may be retained in all legal subsistence gear, which include gillnets, fish wheels, dip nets, beach seines, and hook and line.

**In the Aniak River:** from the Yukon Delta Refuge boundary near the Buckstock River to the headwaters:

As previously announced, the following subsistence management actions will remain in effect until further notice:

- **Subsistence gillnet fishing (drift and set) is closed.**
- **Subsistence fishing with hook and line for king salmon is closed.** Any king salmon caught must be returned alive to the water. All other fish species may be retained.
- **Subsistence fishing with fish wheels for all fish species except king salmon will be allowed until further notice.** Fish wheels are required to have a live box with no less than 45 cubic feet of water, must be checked at least every 6 hours. Fish wheels may be equipped with a chute and must be closely attended while in operation. All king salmon must be returned to the water alive and all other fish species may be retained.
- **Subsistence fishing with beach seines and dipnets will be allowed until further notice.** All king salmon must be returned to the water alive and all other fish species may be retained.

The department manages Kuskokwim River salmon fisheries as directed by the Alaska Board of Fisheries under 5 AAC 07.365 Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan. The plan provides management direction to achieve salmon run abundance large enough to meet escapement goals and provide for sustainable fishing in the long-term. The department uses the best available data, including preseason and inseason run projections, test fishing indices, age and sex composition, harvest reports, sonar estimates, and recognized data uncertainty, to assess run abundance for the purpose of implementing the plan. Kuskokwim River salmon stocks shall be managed in a

conservative manner consistent with the Policy for the Management of Sustainable Salmon Fisheries under 5 AAC 39.222 to meet escapement goals and the subsistence harvest priority on the identified surplus.

The preseason forecast of Kuskokwim River king salmon is for a range of 108,000 to 160,000 fish. Current assessment and harvest reports indicate that the king salmon run is just beginning to build in the lower Kuskokwim River, which is similar to recent years. As of June 9, the Bethel test fishery cumulative CPUE for king salmon was 13. Bethel test fishery CPUE are tracking the 2018 and 2020–2022 king salmon runs, which had total runs of approximately 133,000, 124,000, 130,000, and 142,000 fish, respectively. Drainage-wide escapement in 2018 and 2020–2022 was around 110,000, 88,000, 101,000, and 108,000 fish, respectively.

In subsistence sections 4 and 5 of the Kuskokwim River, the annual harvest of king salmon in 2023 was about 800 fish, less than 7 king salmon per household. Given the current assessment of the king salmon run and the ability to provide for the additional harvesting of non-salmon species, providing king salmon fishing opportunity in subsistence sections 4 and 5 is warranted.

### **Kuskokwim River Salmon Working Group:**

The next Working Group meeting is scheduled for **June 14, 2024, at 10:00 a.m.**, by teleconference or in-person, at the Bethel ADF&G office. This meeting is open to the public. Please call 1-800-315-6338, passcode: 58756#, to attend via teleconference.

Further announcements will be made from the Bethel Fish and Game office, on the State of Alaska web site (<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>), local radio stations, and Kuskokwim River Facebook Page (<https://www.facebook.com/KuskoRiverFishingADFG/>). Advisory Announcements will be faxed to area villages. For additional information or questions regarding Kuskokwim Area fisheries, contact the Alaska Department of Fish and Game office in Bethel at 543-2433 or toll free at 1-855-933-2433.

For information regarding federal subsistence fishing regulations and any announcements, please contact the Yukon Delta NWR at (907) 543-3151 or (907) 543-1021.

**For additional information concerning this advisory announcement:  
ADF&G: Sam Decker 907-543-2709 or Dave Runfolo 907-543-2331**

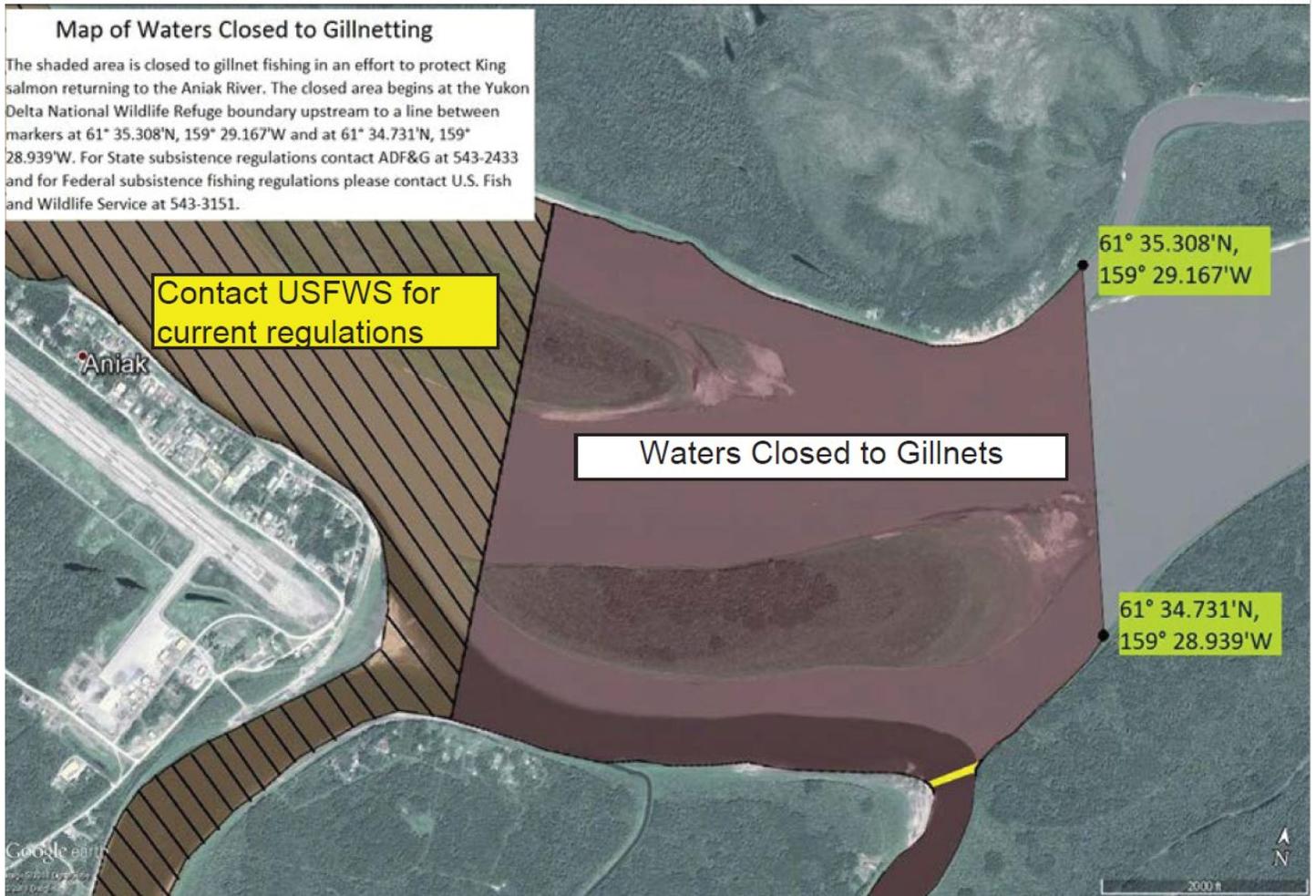


Figure 1.— Map of Aniak area closed waters.

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