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Advisory Announcement
For Immediate Release: May 9, 2025
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Kuskokwim River Fishery Announcement #1

Kuskokwim River Subsistence Fishery Outlook and Preliminary Management Strategy

Emergency Order #3-S-WR-01-25

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

2025 Run and Harvest Outlook for Kuskokwim River Salmon:

	Chinook	Chum	Sockeye	Coho
Projection:	Recent Average	Near Average	Above Average	Average
Escapement:	Expect to meet goals	Expect to meet goal	Expect to meet goals	Expect to meet goals
Subsistence:	Limited to Normal Harvest	Normal Harvest	Normal Harvest	Normal Harvest
Commercial:	None	None	None	Limited Harvest

Chinook Salmon Forecast

The 2025 Kuskokwim River Chinook salmon forecast is for a range of 136,000–217,000 fish. The drainagewide Chinook salmon escapement goal is 65,000–120,000 fish and the Chinook salmon ANS of 67,200–109,800 fish for the Kuskokwim River drainage.

If the run returns as projected, unrestricted subsistence fishing on Chinook salmon is biologically justified. However, to account for uncertainty with preseason forecasts, ADF&G plans to begin the season with a conservative approach until inseason assessment information becomes available. The 2025 season will be managed in accordance with the *Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan* (5 AAC 07.365). ADF&G will also receive input from the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (Working Group) on management strategies and inseason management actions over the course of the 2025 fishing season. ADF&G anticipates regular announcements of subsistence openings for Chinook, chum, and sockeye salmon. It is the intent of ADF&G that all 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 priority.

Based on the *Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan* (5 AAC 07.365) and the 2025 Chinook salmon forecast, the following preliminary management strategies will advise fishers on inseason management expectations and objectives for the 2025 salmon season.

ADF&G's preliminary management strategy for the Kuskokwim River drainage, which includes management Sections 1-5:

- Front end closure will start June 1 (lower river) through June 11, with at least one 4-inch setnet opportunity during this closure consistent with the *Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan*. This front-end closure is put in place to allow upriver stocks to move through the lower river prior to the start of the subsistence fishing season.
- Beginning June 12, ADF&G plans to provide at least one 6-inch mesh drift gillnet opportunity per week, additional harvest opportunities may be warranted based on inseason run assessment.
- Tributary closures and restrictions will be similar to previous seasons.
- Subsistence harvest opportunities with selective gear types such as hook and line, fishwheels, dipnets and beach seines will be similar to previous seasons, Chinook retention will not be allowed. Retention could be warranted later in the season based on inseason run assessment

Management strategy options will be discussed at the upcoming Working Group meeting, which is scheduled for Wednesday, May 28, 2025, at 9:00 a.m. This will provide area stakeholders a forum to provide input prior to finalizing the early season management. Management strategy options discussed at the meeting will be subject to all department regulations as determined through the public process of the Board of Fisheries.

Subsistence opportunities on chum and sockeye are anticipated and openers will be based on inseason run assessment and stakeholder input from weekly meeting of the Working Group discussions.

Kuskokwim River Salmon Working Group:

The pre-season Working Group meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 28, 2025, at 9:00 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 website (<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 concerning this advisory announcement:

ADF&G: Sam Decker 907-543-2709

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