



Cordova Area Office
401 Railroad Ave.
Cordova, AK 99574

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

Advisory Announcement

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CONTACT: Todd Johnson and Jeremy Botz
Finfish Area Management Biologists
(907) 424-3212

Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery Announcement #3

COPPER RIVER DISTRICT: The Copper River District will open at 7:00 am on Thursday, May 28 for a 24-hour commercial drift gillnet fishing period. Waters within the **intermediate Chinook salmon closure area** (see map in updated Figure 1) will be **CLOSED** during this period.

The **intermediate Chinook salmon closure area** will be defined as waters north of a line connecting the following points:

<i>Point</i>	<i>Latitude</i>	<i>Longitude</i>
Pt. Bentinck	60° 23.80' N.	146° 06.04' W.
Egg Is. Channel West	60° 21.98' N.	145° 45.33' W.
Egg Is. Channel East	60° 21.32' N.	145° 41.14' W.
Pete Dahl Channel West	60° 18.36' N.	145° 35.32' W.
Pete Dahl Channel East	60° 18.11' N.	145° 30.45' W.
Grass Is. Channel West	60° 15.10' N.	145° 19.64' W.
Grass Is. Channel East	60° 14.65' N.	145° 15.83' W.
Kokenhenik Channel West	60° 13.40' N.	145° 09.98' W.
Kokenhenik Channel East	60° 13.28' N.	145° 05.46' W.
Softuk Channel West	60° 12.83' N.	144° 57.21' W.
Softuk Channel East	60° 13.36' N.	144° 53.71' W.
Little Softuk Channel East	60° 12.64' N.	144° 40.21' W.

The subsistence fishery will be open concurrent in time and area with the Copper River District commercial fishery in addition to waters west of a line from 60° 19.23' N., 145° 37.03' W. to 60° 22.87' N., 145° 33.50' W. This Egg Island channel area is open to subsistence users only to provide access to sheltered inside waters for small boat subsistence users (see map in updated Figure 1). Additionally, waters of the Copper River District, excluding the expanded Chinook salmon inside closure area, will open to subsistence fishing from 6:00 am to 10:00 pm on all Saturdays from May 23 through October 31.

Forecast, harvest, sonar apportionment, and fish wheels indicators of Chinook salmon abundance all suggest a potentially weak Copper River Chinook salmon run. Chinook salmon abundance in the commercial fishery peaks during the end of May through early June, and the commercial fishery is continuing to be managed conservatively to limit harvest. The new intermediate closure line is part of an effort to increase Chinook salmon inriver abundance while providing sockeye salmon harvest opportunity. This management strategy is being implemented to ensure the achievement of the 21,000–31,000 Chinook salmon sustainable escapement goal while providing fishing opportunity on more abundant sockeye salmon.

The grass bank marker line is defined in 5 AAC 24.350(1)(A) with the exception of this year’s extension of the closure line across Little Softuk (**see bold font below**). This closure line is defined with the following points:

<i>Point</i>	<i>Latitude</i>	<i>Longitude</i>
Point Whitshed South	60° 26.49’ N.	145° 52.86’ W.
Alaganik Slough North	60° 24.65’ N.	145° 36.70’ W.
Pete Dahl East	60° 20.44’ N.	145° 29.14’ W.
West Kokenhenik	60° 14.88’ N.	145° 10.01’ W.
East “East Side”	60° 14.83’ N.	145° 03.36’ W.
Coffee Creek East	60° 14.19’ N.	144° 58.01’ W.
Charlie Mohr North	60° 15.15’ N.	144° 56.43’ W.
Martin River North	60° 15.29’ N.	144° 52.52’ W.
Strawberry Reef	60° 13.93’ N.	144° 50.66’ W.
Little Softuk	60° 13.16’ N.	144° 41.38’ W.

Waters north of this line, within sloughs, and in Boswell Bay within the bay (5 AAC 24.350 (1)(A)) are closed to commercial and subsistence salmon fishing during all periods.

Cumulative sonar count through 5/26 is 11,902 fish whereas 35,129 fish would be expected by this date based on historical timing applied to the 2026 inriver goal. The 0600 count for 5/27 is 662 fish. North bank sonar has been deployed 24 hours per day since May 22 and south bank sonar has been deployed since May 24. South Bank sonar has not yet been deployed 24 hours per day and apportionment is only occurring on the north bank. The 0600 count for 6/2 is 2,760 fish. Preliminary harvest estimates from the 12-hour period that occurred on Tuesday, May 26 were 258 Chinook and 34,100 sockeye salmon with 173 deliveries reported. This compares to a projected harvest of 55,000 sockeye salmon for this period based on the preseason forecast. The cumulative commercial harvest to date is 1,200 Chinook and 73,200 sockeye salmon.

BERING RIVER DISTRICT: Bering River District, west of a longitude line at 144° 28.20’ W., will open at 7:00 am on Thursday, May 28 for a 24-hour commercial drift gillnet fishing period. The intent of this opening is to target Copper River sockeye salmon that are traveling through the western portion of this district. As overlap with the Bering River sockeye salmon run timing increases, the likelihood of future early season opening in the Bering River District will diminish. Additionally, future openings of the Bering River District will be contingent on accurate reporting of harvest from within this district.

COGHILL DISTRICT: The Coghill District, excluding the Wally Noerenberg Hatchery (WNH) SHA, will open to commercial drift gillnet harvest for a 36-hour fishing period starting at 8:00 am on Monday, June 1.

PWSAC requests that the WNH SHA remain closed for the entirety of the 36-hour commercial fishing period commencing on Monday, June 1. Cost recovery harvests will commence at WNH as run entry and hatchery escapement warrants. A total run of 1.87 million WNH chum salmon are projected to return to the hatchery. Historical harvest timing for these chum salmon is from June 1 – July 27. A total of 104,000 Coghill Lake sockeye salmon are projected to be available for common property harvest. The harvest timing for these sockeye salmon is from June 1 – August 1.

ESHAMY DISTRICT: The Eshamy District, excluding the MBH AGZ, will open to commercial gillnet harvest for a 36-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Monday, June 1. The 2026 sockeye salmon run to MBH is forecast to be 431,000 fish. The historical harvest timing for these sockeye salmon is from June 1 – August 1.

PWSAC recommends a 36-hour fishing period in the Main Bay Subdistrict, excluding waters of the AGZ.

SEINE FISHERIES: D boat permit holders are asked to have the primary permit holder record their permit card first when delivering fish to a tender. Swapping the order of permit cards on fish tickets leads to double reporting and requires considerable post-season error checking.

MONTAGUE DISTRICT: The Port Chalmers Subdistrict, east of Green Island, north of a line from 60° 9.52'N., 147° 22.38'W. to 60° 13.58'N., 147° 29.29'W. and south of a line from 60° 18.22'N., 147° 20.46'W to 60° 20.00'N., 147°13.25'W., will open for the 2026 season to purse seine fishing for 48 hours starting at 8:00 am on Monday, June 1, for a 36-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, June 4, and a 36-hour period starting on 8:00 am on Saturday, June 6. Regulatory closed waters and anadromous stream closures within the Port Chalmers Subdistrict will not be in effect until further notice. A total of 840,000 chum salmon are forecast to return to Port Chalmers Subdistrict. Historical harvest timing for these chum salmon is from June 1 – July 27.

SOUTHWESTERN DISTRICT: The AFK Hatchery THA and SHA will open for the 2026 season to purse seine fishing for 48 hours starting at 8:00 am on Monday, June 1, for a 36-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, June 4, and a 36-hour period starting on Saturday, June 6. Anadromous stream closures within the AFK Hatchery THA and SHA will not be in effect until further notice. A total of 330,000 chum salmon are forecast to return to AFK Hatchery. Historical harvest timing for these chum salmon is from June 1 – July 27.

Copies of the regulation booklet, *2025-2028 Commercial Salmon Fishing Regulations for Prince William Sound*, are available in the Cordova ADFG office.

ALL buyers purchasing fish in the PWS Management Area are required to complete a Processor Registration Form. Contact the Cordova office for any questions regarding registration.

The next scheduled salmon fisheries announcement is anticipated to be at 2:00 pm Saturday, May 30.

Announcement recordings are available for gillnet fisheries at 907-424-7535 and seine fisheries at 907-424-7345. In addition, announcement recordings are available in Anchorage at 907-267-2843.

Additionally, announcements, inseason harvest data, and escapement data are available at the following web address: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.main> (Prince William Sound and Copper River homepage).

Unless otherwise specified, all openings are clock openings based on Alaska Daylight Time, which is based on Coordinated Universal Time and may be obtained by calling 303-499-7111.

The department encourages commercial permit holders to renew their licenses early and to check their CFEC vessel registration stickers to make sure they are current.

The department also encourages permit holders to report observed violations to Wildlife Safeguard at 800-478-3377. Reports are anonymous and cash rewards may be paid for successful prosecution of violations.

Figure 1.- Copper River District Chinook salmon outside closure and subsistence only areas.

