

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



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UPCOMING KOTZEBUE COMMERCIAL SALMON FISHING OPENINGS

The 2017 commercial harvest for 23 fishing periods this season has been 265,000 chum salmon. Last year's commercial fishing harvest was 203,000 chum salmon at this same point. The number of permit holders fishing daily has been 25% higher this year and hours fishing has been open is 20% higher than last year. The department forecast this season was for a harvest of 250,000 to 450,000 chum salmon.

The department test fish crew in Kiana has reported decreasing chum salmon catches and this season's catch ranks 15th highest in the 25-year project history. The midpoint of the chum run at Kiana is usually the end of the first week of August. Test net catches have been dropping since peaking on July 28. However, high water levels in Kiana the last several days may also have contributed low catches in the test net drifts and based on historical catches in Kiana the test net catch should rebound.

Commercial fishing will be open from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. on Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday.

A third buyer has registered to buy fish in Kotzebue and may be ready to buy on Monday. The buyers may set their own hours during the 14-hour fishing periods so permit holders will need to check with their buyer to make sure they are buying for the entire fishing period.

If you have any questions concerning the fishery you can call the Kotzebue office at 442-3420, or the Commercial Fisheries office in Nome at 1-800-560-2271.