



2018 Yukon River Salmon Fisheries Outlook

The 2018 drainage-wide Chinook salmon outlook is for a run size of 173,000 to 251,000 fish. The upper end of this range is less than the total run observed in 2017. The 2018 run may be large enough to provide for normal subsistence harvests, however, a cautionary approach will be taken early in the season, and inseason management strategies will be based on run assessment information once fish begin entering the river. If assessment indicates the Chinook salmon run size is near the upper end of the range, and goals are projected to be met, subsistence fishing restrictions would likely be relaxed. If that occurs, commercial chum fishermen may be given the opportunity to sell Chinook salmon incidentally-caught in the chum fishery, but this would likely be at the tail end of the run, when the majority of Chinook salmon have passed upriver for escapement and subsistence harvest purposes.

2018 Run and Harvest Outlook for Yukon River Salmon

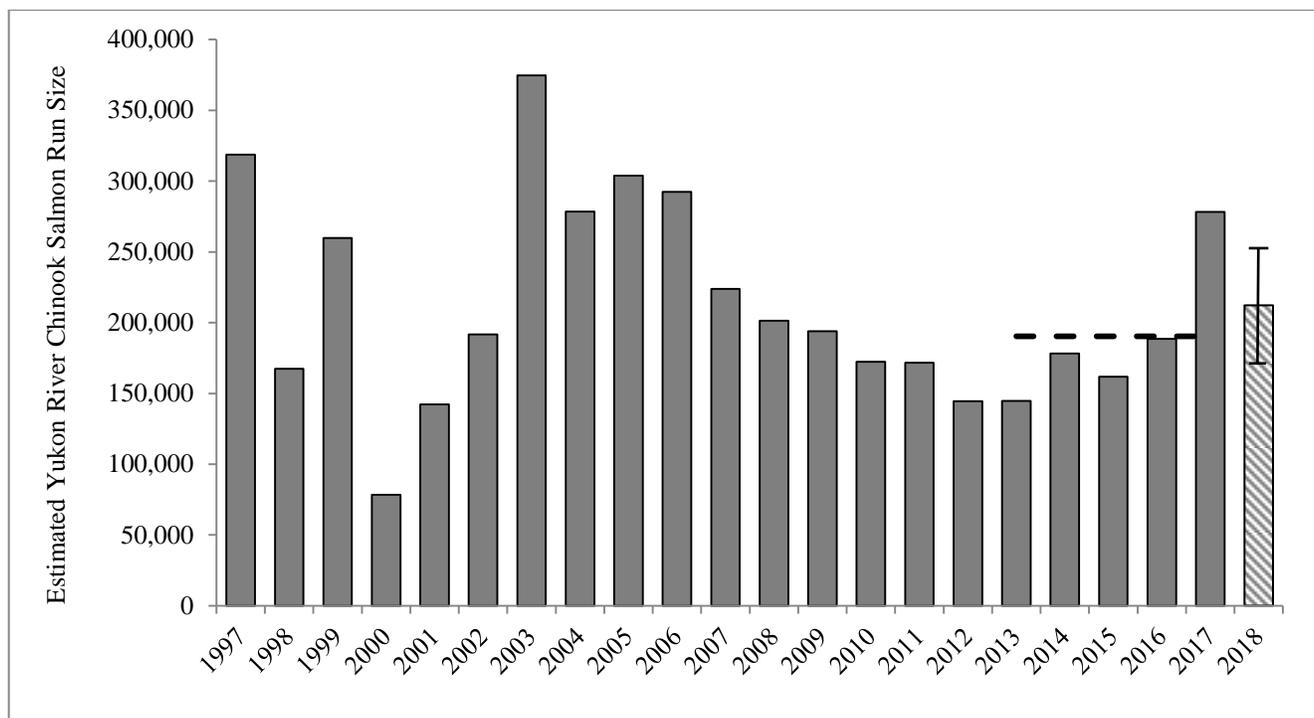
	Chinook	Summer Chum	Fall Chum*	Coho
Projection:	Below Average	Above average	Above average	Average
Escapement:	Potential to meet goals	Expect to meet goals	Expect to meet goals	Expect to meet goals
Subsistence:	Some restrictions	Expect to provide for normal harvest	Expect to provide for normal harvest	Expect to provide for normal harvest
Commercial:	No directed fishery	Up to 1.4 million available	Up to 1.2 million available	60,000 to 200,000 available

* Fall Chum projection and harvestable surplus totals will be revised in early July based on summer chum salmon run size.

Management Strategies

- Before Chinook salmon enter the river, subsistence fishing will be open 24 hours per day, 7 days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets. Fishermen are reminded that whenever gillnets are allowed, they may choose to use *smaller* mesh gillnets than specified.
- As Chinook salmon enter each district, subsistence salmon fishing will be provided on a reduced regulatory schedule with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets during the early part of the run.
- Commercial fishing for summer chum will begin with selective gear, based on inseason run assessment.
- When confidence is high that the Chinook salmon run is adequate and escapement goals are likely to be met, the use of 7.5-inch gillnets on a full regulatory schedule will be considered. If inseason assessment indicates a poorer than anticipated run, subsistence fishing time may be reduced or gear may be limited to selective gear types with no retention of Chinook salmon allowed.
- The sport fishery for Chinook salmon will begin the season closed (effective May 11) throughout the U.S. portion of the Yukon River drainage, excluding the Tanana River drainage. Chinook salmon may not be retained or possessed. Management actions for the Tanana River drainage will be announced in early June.

The following chart shows the historical estimated Chinook salmon total run size in the Yukon River.



Note: Total run size is measured at Pilot station sonar and includes escapement and harvest below the sonar. The 2018 shaded bar represents the approximate midpoint of the projected outlook range of 173,000 to 251,000 Chinook salmon. The dashed line is the recent 5-year average run size.

The U.S./Canada Yukon River Panel has established Canadian Interim Management Escapement Goals (IMEG) of 42,500–55,000 Chinook salmon and 70,000–104,000 fall chum salmon. These goals are assessed at the mainstem sonar program operated near Eagle. The Fishing Branch River IMEG of 22,000–49,000 fall chum salmon is based upon the historical weir data. Porcupine River chum salmon production has been consistently underperforming compared to other Yukon River fall chum salmon stocks. Management of the Porcupine River will be based on inseason run assessment and may include subsistence fishery restrictions similar to 2017.

For additional information:

Toll-free Fishing schedule and fish counts hotline: (866) 479-7387; in Fairbanks: (907) 459-7387.

News releases and daily test fishery counts will be posted on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG/

ADF&G:

Holly Carroll (Chinook and summer chum), Anchorage office: (907) 267-2324;

Jeff Estensen (fall chum and coho), Fairbanks office: (907) 459-7217;

The Emmonak ADF&G office will open June 4: (907) 949-1320.

USFWS:

Fred Bue, Fairbanks: (907) 455-1849 or (800) 267-3997