

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE**



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P.O. Box 1148
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Date Issued: 7/24/2018
Time: 12:00 p.m.

**2018 Kotzebue News Release #4
KOTZEBUE COMMERCIAL SALMON OPENINGS**

Through Monday there have been 120,000 chum salmon caught by 72 permit holders. The harvest is 20% higher than last year for the first 12 fishing periods.

Commercial fishing will continue to be open daily from 8 a.m. until 8 p.m. through Friday, July 27. Fishermen are reminded to keep in close contact with the buyers in case they need to reduce the hours they can buy because of capacity concerns.

Last year was the sixth highest chum salmon harvest in the Kotzebue fishery with 463,000 chum salmon caught and the department has forecast a Top 10 harvest again this season. Another Top 10 harvest this year will be dependent on the forecasted return of large numbers of 4-year-old chum salmon expected to return in early August.

The Kobuk River test fish crew chum catches are slightly ahead of last year's catches.

A reminder to fisherman that the area offshore of the airport's main runway to one nautical mile out in the ocean is closed to both commercial and subsistence fishing. The reason for the closure is that fishing often attracts birds that can create a hazardous situation for airplanes. The closed area is a rectangular area defined from the Weather Service Dome south of the main runway at the Kotzebue airport to the NANA building north of the same runway and extending westerly one nautical mile out into the ocean approximately perpendicular to the beach. Fishing boats and other marine vessels may still transit through the closed fishing area.

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.

Good Luck and Good Fishing!