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

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2018 Yukon River Fall Salmon Fishery News Release 57
Fall Update # 7, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery
Districts Affected: Yukon Area

The 2018 fall chum salmon inseason total run size projection is currently 1,300,000 fish based on late run timing. The estimated fall chum salmon run size as of September 3 (based on passage at the mainstem sonar near Pilot Station plus the harvest downstream of the sonar) is 1,184,000 fish, which is above the historical median of 790,000 fish for that date.

The peak of the first and second pulses of the fall season chum salmon are expected to be approaching the U.S./Canada border around September 10th and 16th, respectively. The third pulse is expected to be near Rampart around September 5, Fort Yukon around September 13, and the U.S./Canada border around September 23. The fourth pulse contained a good proportion of Tanana River stocks and is expected to be near Tanana/Huslia around September 6, Nenana around September 10, and the U.S./Canada border around September 26. The fifth pulse is expected to be near Kaltag around September 8, Tanana/Huslia around September 15, and the U.S./Canada border around October 5. A smaller sixth pulse entered the river on September 2 and is expected to be near Anvik on September 10, Tanana/Huslia around September 21, and the U.S./Canada border around October 11. The Tanana River should have fall chum salmon for the remainder of September.

The coho salmon were late in entering the Yukon River and inseason assessment is projecting the total run size of 271,000 fish which is above the average of 209,000 fish. The current coho salmon run size as of September 3 (based on the mainstem sonar near Pilot Station and the downstream harvest) is estimated to be 216,000 fish which is above the median of 193,000 fish for that date.

The second pulse of coho salmon that entered the Yukon River around August 18 is expected to be near Ruby around September 5, Tanana around September 9, Manley around September 11 and Nenana around September 14. The third pulse of coho salmon that entered the Yukon River on August 27 is expected to be near Galena around September 12, Tanana around September 18, Manley around September 20 and Nenana around September 23.

Fall Assessment Projects

Lower Yukon River Cooperative Fall Drift Test Fishing / ADF&G, YDFDA

The fall chum salmon cumulative CPUE for the project through September 3 was 2,865.82, which is above the historical median of 1,492.89 for this date. The coho salmon cumulative CPUE through September 3 was 359.98, which is below the historical median of 414.63 for this date.

Mountain Village Drift Test Fishing / Asacarsarmiut Traditional Council

The fall chum salmon cumulative CPUE for the project through September 3 was 2,947.88, which is above the historical median of 1,931.17 for this date. The coho salmon cumulative CPUE through September 3 was 603.18, which is below the historical median of 1,002.32 for this date.

Sonar Project near Pilot Station / ADF&G

The cumulative passage estimate through September 3 was 881,000 fall chum salmon, which is above the median passage of approximately 703,000 fish for that date. The cumulative passage estimate for coho salmon through September 3 was 126,000 coho salmon which is below the average of 146,000 for that date.

Chandalar River Sonar / USFWS

The cumulative passage attributed to fall chum salmon, beginning August 12 through September 3, is 12,889 fish which is well below the median of 63,000 for that date. The low passage to date is not unexpected given that the fall chum salmon run is late this season and the majority of the fish will not arrive until mid to late September.

Sonar Project near Eagle / ADF&G, DFO

The mainstem sonar operated near Eagle transitioned from Chinook to fall chum salmon beginning August 21. The cumulative fall chum salmon passage estimate through September 3 was 1,400, which is below the median passage of approximately 8,200 fish for this date. Given that the first major pulse of fall chum salmon will not reach this area of the river until mid-September this is not unexpected.

Age Composition Fall Season/ADF&G

The preliminary fall chum salmon age composition from the LYTF 6-inch drift gillnets indicates the run is dominated by age-4 fish, which is typical. This year's return included a higher than average age-5 component which was expected based on the strong age-4 return last season. The return of age-4 fall chum salmon was also respectable producing a larger run than the was projected preseason. As of September 3, female fall chum salmon represented 61% of the fish sampled (n=1,236), which is near the average of 58%. For coho salmon females represent 49% of the fish sampled in LYTF (n=261), which is near average as of September 3.

Chum Salmon Stock Identification

Genetic mixed stock analysis (MSA) on fall season chum salmon for the strata from August 16–23 that passed the mainstem sonar in two pulses in succession contained approximately 2% summer chum and 98% fall chum salmon. The fall chum salmon stocks in the sample consisted of 29% Border/US (Chandalar/Sheenjek), 30% Canadian and 39% Tanana Fall stocks. These proportions reflect that the upper stock components were approximately half each going to Canada and the Border/US (Chandalar/Sheenjek) along with a high proportion of stocks bound for the Tanana River. Genetic mixed stock analysis (MSA) on fall season chum salmon for the

strata from August 24–September 3 is on the way to the lab and results will be available later this week.

Fall Season Management Strategy:

Subsistence salmon fishing in all Alaska areas of the Yukon River are under fall season management. During the fall season, subsistence fishermen may use 7.5 inch or smaller mesh size gillnets and fish wheels. Because of the Chinook salmon restrictions put in place in the Yukon Area this season, the department increased the opportunity to harvest fall chum salmon for subsistence use to seven days per week, 24 hours per day in all of Districts 4 and 5.

In recent years, the abundance of fall chum salmon in the upper Porcupine River has been low when compared to other stocks in the Yukon River drainage. Fall chum salmon escapements into the Canadian Fishing Branch River, a tributary of the Porcupine River, have fallen short of meeting the escapement objective agreed upon by U.S. and Canadian representatives despite other Yukon River stocks meeting or exceeding their escapement goals or objectives. Like the action taken in previous years, to improve fall chum escapement to the spawning grounds in Canada, a subsistence salmon fishing schedule in the Alaska portion of the mainstem Porcupine River will be implemented. Managers will closely monitor inseason information at the mainstem Porcupine River sonar and the Fishing Branch River escapement monitoring projects to determine future management actions as appropriate.

Subsistence Fishing Schedule:

South Coastal District (Naskonat Peninsula to 1 mile south of Black River):

Subsistence fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

District 1 including the North Coastal District (1 mile south of Black River to Point Romanof):

Subsistence Fishing in District 1 is open for the fall season for 24 hours a day, seven days per week except for closures before, during, and after each commercial fishing period. Subsistence fishermen may use 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

District 2 (Mountain Village, St. Mary's, Pilot Station, Marshall)**:**

Subsistence Fishing in District 2 is open for the fall season for 24 hours a day, seven days per week except for closures before, during, and after each commercial fishing period. Subsistence fishermen may use 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets. For the announced commercial period, **subsistence salmon fishing closed at 2:00 a.m. Tuesday, September 4 and will reopen at 8 a.m. Wednesday, September 5.**

District 3 (Russian Mission, Paimiut, Holy Cross)**:**

Subsistence fishing in District 3 is open for the fall season 24 hours a day, seven days per week. Subsistence fishermen may use 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

Innoko River:

Subsistence fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

District 4 (from ¾ mile downstream of Old Paradise Village upstream to the westernmost edge of Illinois Creek, which includes all the communities between Anvik and Ruby):

Subsistence salmon fishing is open 24 hours per day, seven days per week. Subsistence fishermen may use 7.5-inch or smaller mesh size drift and set gillnets and fish wheels.

Koyukuk River:

Subsistence fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

District 5 (from Illinois Creek upstream to the U.S./Canada border, and including all adjacent tributaries, which includes all the communities between Tanana and Eagle):

Subsistence fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

Porcupine River:

Effective 12:00 noon, Thursday, September 6, subsistence salmon fishing will begin a 96-hour per week fishing schedule from 12:00 noon Thursdays to 12:00 noon Mondays in the Porcupine River. This includes those portions of the mainstem Yukon River around the 3 mouths of the Porcupine River.

A fishing permit is required to fish for all species in the following locations: the portions of Subdistricts 5-C and 5-D from the western most tip of Garnet Island upstream to the mouth of Dall River (Dalton Highway bridge area) and from the upstream mouth of 22 Mile Slough to the U.S./Canada border. Subsistence fishermen outside of the permit areas are encouraged to fill out their subsistence salmon catch calendars. Calendars and subsistence fishing permits are available from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in Fairbanks.

Subdistricts 6-A and 6-B (from the mouth of the Tanana River upstream to the regulatory marker at the mouth of Wood River, which includes the communities of Manley, Minto, and Nenana):

Subsistence fishing is open for two 42-hour periods per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels from:

6 p.m. Fridays to 12 noon Sundays

6 p.m. Mondays to 12 noon Wednesdays

A subsistence fishing permit is required to fish for salmon in the Tanana River drainage below the Wood River. Permits are available from the ADF&G office in Fairbanks. Subsistence salmon fishermen in the upper portion of Subdistrict 6-B, from three miles upstream of the mouth of Totchaket Slough to Wood River, are required to report their harvest catches to the department by 4:30 p.m. Thursday each week by reporting online at www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/PU/ or by calling (907) 459-7388. When you call, please provide your name, permit number, fishing location, and daily catch by species for that week.

Kantishna River:

The Kantishna River is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week. Fishermen may use fish wheels or gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or less.

Old Minto Area:

Subsistence fishing is currently open with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels on the regulatory schedule of five days per week from:

6 p.m. Fridays until 6 p.m. Wednesdays

Upper Tanana Area (the Tanana River from the confluence with the mouth of Volkmar River on the north bank and the mouth of the Johnson River on the south bank upstream to the Tanana River headwaters):

Subsistence fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh size gillnets and fish wheels. A subsistence fishing permit is required.

Personal Use Fishing:

Subdistrict 6-C (from the regulatory marker at the mouth of the Wood River upstream to the Salcha River, which includes the communities of Fairbanks, North Pole, and Salcha):

Personal use fishing is open for two 42-hour periods per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels from:

6 p.m. Fridays to 12 noon Sundays

6 p.m. Mondays to 12 noon Wednesdays

A personal use salmon fishing permit and sport fish license are required to fish in Subdistrict 6-C. Fishermen are required to report their harvest catches to the department by **4:30 p.m. Thursday** each week by reporting online at www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/PU/ or by calling **(907) 459-7388**. When you call, please provide your name, permit number, fishing location, and daily catch by species for that week.

Commercial Fishing:

In the Lower Yukon River, the fall chum directed commercial fishery ended by regulation on August 31. Based on inseason assessment, a limited surplus of coho salmon remains in addition to that harvested in the fall chum salmon directed commercial fishery. By regulation, effective Saturday, September 1, the coho salmon directed commercial fishing season opened in Districts 1 and 2 and management transitioned to the Yukon River Coho Salmon Management Plan. By regulation, the coho salmon fishing season ends by September 10.

Districts 4 and 6, and Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C are open to commercial fishing during the fall season. Currently, there are no registered buyers operating in Districts 4 or 5. Fishermen must confirm they have a buyer prior to fishing. Processors, catcher-sellers, or direct marketers are required to notify the department of their intent to operate by contacting the Fairbanks office at 459-7274.

Commercial Fishing Periods:

District 1 (including Black River) Commercial:

Fishermen should standby for announcements.

The preliminary cumulative commercial harvest through September 3 in District 1 is 196,667 fall chum salmon and 62,479 coho salmon.

District 2 Commercial:

Period 19: 2 p.m. until 8 p.m. Tuesday, September 4.

The preliminary cumulative commercial harvest through September 2 in District 2 is 161,184 fall chum salmon and 36,441 coho salmon.

Subdistrict 4-A Commercial (from ¾ miles downstream of Old Paradise Village to Cone Point):
The commercial fishing season is open for the fall season. Currently, there are no registered buyers operating in District 4. Processors, catcher-sellers, or direct marketers are required to notify the department of their intent to operate by contacting the Fairbanks office at 459-7274.

The preliminary cumulative commercial harvest through August 2 in Subdistrict 4-A is 596 fall chum salmon.

Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C Commercial (from Illinois Creek along the north bank of the Yukon River upstream the mouth of the Tanana River, and both along banks of the Yukon River upstream to the regulatory markers 2 miles below Waldron Creek, which includes the communities of Tanana and Rampart as well as the area near the Yukon River Bridge)**:**

Commercial fishing in Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C is open 24 hours per day, seven days per week until further notice. Fishermen may use fish wheels or set gillnets with a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller.

Commercial fishermen must confirm their buyer or market prior to commercial fishing. Processors, catcher sellers, or direct marketers are required to notify the department of their intent to operate by contacting the Fairbanks office at 459-7274.

The preliminary cumulative commercial harvest through August 20 in Subdistrict 5-B and 5-C is 896 fall chum salmon.

District 6 Commercial (from the mouth of the Tanana River upstream to the regulatory marker at the mouth of Wood River, upstream to the Chena River, which includes the communities of Manley, Nenana, and Fairbanks):

Commercial periods will open concurrent with subsistence and personal use fishing schedules in District 6 until further notice.

Commercial fishing is open for two 42-hour periods per week with 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels:

- **6 p.m. Fridays to 12 noon Sundays**
- **6 p.m. Mondays to 12 noon Wednesdays**

The preliminary cumulative commercial harvest through August 26 in District 6 is 150 fall chum salmon and 1 coho salmon.

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