

FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF JUNE 26-July 2, 2023. Report #6
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Subsistence Management, USFWS.

The purpose of the weekly fisheries update is to provide the reader with an overall summary of the status of subsistence related fisheries throughout the state of Alaska. The target audience is the Federal Subsistence Board and its Staff Committee. The report was compiled with the assistance of the Federal in-season managers and OSM staff that provided weekly updated information by the close of business on Friday of the reporting week. My goal is to have the report sent by the close of business the following Monday. Web links have been included to provide additional information. You may obtain additional information on a fishery of particular interest by contacting the in-season manager, provided contacts, follow the provided web links, or contact me.

SOUTHEAST ALASKA

Yakutat

Susan Oehlers, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest, (907)784-3359;
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- **Situk River** – Remains closed to harvest of Chinook Salmon under both State and Federal regulations due to conservation concerns.

Juneau

- No Report

Sheet'ká and Xunaa (Sitka and Hoonah) Area

Ashley Bolwerk, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest, (907)747-4299;
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- **Herring** – A commercial herring fishery occurred in Sheet'ká X'áat'i (Sitka Sound) in 2023. Please see this [summary of Sitka Sound herring 2023](#). More information can be found on the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's ["Commercial Herring Fishery" homepage](#). Here is the [2023 summary of southeast Alaska herring](#).
- **Falls Lake** – The Falls Lake weir project was not funded in the latest FRMP cycle.
- **Chaas' Geeyí (Klag Bay)** - The Sitka Tribe of Alaska operates the sockeye salmon monitoring weir at Klag Bay which was operational as of June 25. As of June 29, 0 sockeye have entered the lake. In 2022, an estimated 90,005 Sockeye Salmon passed through the weir into Redoubt Lake. In 2022, approximately 2,029 Sockeye migrated past the weir while an estimated 1,960 were harvested in the marine terminal area subsistence and sport fishery. Subsistence harvest accounted for approximately 99% of terminal area harvest.

- **Redoubt Lake** - The Forest Service operates the Redoubt Lake weir which was operational as of June 12. As of June 29, 10,050 Sockeye have entered the lake. On June 28, the Alaska Department of Fish and game [announced a liberalization](#) of the state personal use and subsistence fishery at Redoubt would take effect on July 1. This emergency order changes the sockeye salmon limit, in both the state and federal subsistence fisheries, to 25 sockeye salmon per household with an annual limit of 100 sockeye salmon per household. In 2022, an estimated 90,005 sockeye salmon passed through the weir into Redoubt Lake. On July 9, in accordance with the Redoubt Lake Management Plan, the individual/household subsistence sockeye possession limit was set at 25 and the individual/household subsistence sockeye annual limit was set at 100. Preliminary personal use/subsistence harvest records indicate that 5,850 sockeye salmon were harvested from the Redoubt system under 246 subsistence/personal use permits. Approximately 5,549 Sockeye Salmon were harvested in Sitka Sound commercial fishery openings throughout the season. Most of these Sockeye are probably of Redoubt origin.

Admiralty

- No Report

Kaachxana.áak'w and Séet Ká Kwáan (Wrangell and Petersburg) Area

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- **Stikine River** – The 2023 Federal Stikine River Subsistence Sockeye Salmon Subsistence Fishery began on June 21 and ends July 31. As of June 30, a total of 66 subsistence permits have been issued for 2023 and users reported a cumulative harvest of 52 Sockeye (30 percent reporting). The estimated harvest as of June 28 was 172 Sockeye Salmon. This year's data from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Sockeye Salmon Assessment indicate the fishery is mirroring last year's, as does commercial fishery performance indicators for the past couple of weeks. The 2023 Stikine River pre-season Sockeye Salmon forecast is 86,000 fish, with 57,000 Tahltan and 29,000 Mainstem fish. The 2022 Sockeye Salmon estimate was 56,000 fish, which included 28,000 Tahltan Lake and 28,000 Mainstem Sockeye Salmon. The escapement objective for Tahltan-bound Sockeye Salmon is 18,000 fish and 30,000 for Mainstem fish.
- The 2023 pre-season terminal run forecast for large Chinook Salmon in the Stikine River is 11,700 fish. This forecast is below the bottom range of the 14,000 to 28,000 fish goal. The area's commercial, sport, and subsistence fisheries have been closed to protect this return.
- Water temperature for the 7-day average on the Stikine is 8.2 C which is slightly low compared to the 5-year average for this week. Gauge height on the Stikine River downstream of Shakes Slough ranged from 18.6 m to 20.5 for the week of June 23 which is above average.

Prince of Wales

- **Hetta Lake** – The Hetta Lake weir has passed 150 Sockeye Salmon as of June 28.

- **Eek Lake** – The Eek Lake weir has passed 16 Sockeye Salmon as of June 28.

Southeast Alaska Web Links

Tongass National Forest News Room <http://www.fs.usda.gov/news/tongass/news-events>

Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Southeastern Alaska Area
http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Southeast.pdf

ADF&G Sport and Personal Use Fishing News Release and Emergency Order Link
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/EONR/index.cfm?ADFG=region.RI>

ADF&G Commercial Fisheries News Release and Emergency Order Link
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>

Weekly ADF&G Sport Fishing Reports for Southeast Alaska
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishingReports/index.cfm?ADFG=RI.home>

Statewide ADF&G Fish counts
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishCounts/>

SOUTHCENTRAL ALASKA

Copper River, 7/03/2023 Update – Dave Sarafin, Copper River Federal Fisheries Management Biologist, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST), (907) 822-7281, dave_sarafin@nps.gov

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) has authorized 12 commercial fishing periods in the Copper River District through July 3. Total harvest through June 30 is reported as 577,000 Sockeye Salmon and 9,840 Chinook Salmon. The fishery opened today, July 3, for a 48-hour fishing period.

As of July 2, the ADFG sonar at Miles Lake (located just downstream of the Million Dollar Bridge in the Copper River) has estimated the passage of 566,000 salmon migrating upstream for the season. The cumulative passage is now 23% above the management objective of 461,093 for this date of the season. A daily estimate of 14,666 salmon migrated by the sonar on July 2.

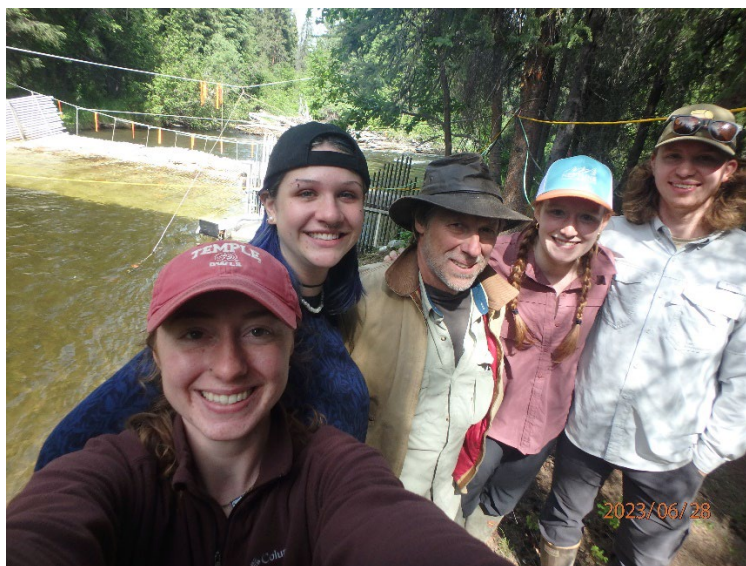
recapture project operated by the Native Village of Eyak (NVE). Recent data assessment by the State project an in-river abundance of 40,000 or more Chinook Salmon; at a level that should meet the sustainable escapement goal and continue to provide harvest opportunities throughout the drainage.

Federal managers will continue to monitor run strength indices to evaluate the need for appropriate fisheries management actions in the Copper River Drainage. No Federal Special Actions have been issued by the in-season manager this season.

The State subsistence fishery in the Glennallen Subdistrict opened June 1. After a delayed initial opening (June 15) of the State personal use fishery in the Chitina Subdistrict, the personal use fishery has since been opened periodically in association with the numbers of salmon estimated passing the Miles Lake sonar.

The Federal subsistence fisheries in the Chitina Subdistrict, the Glennallen Subdistrict, and the Batzulnetas vicinity opened on May 15 and are expected to remain open through September 30. Records of the Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) Federal subsistence permit website indicate that 164 Chitina Subdistrict, 233 Glennallen Subdistrict, and 1 Batzulnetas permits have been issued to date.

The Federal subsistence salmon fishery in the Lower Copper River near Cordova is open from June 1 through September 30. Salmon harvest is only allowed in the Copper River within ½ mile of the Copper River Highway, only by dip net or rod and reel, dip netting from boats is prohibited, and all salmon harvest must be reported within 48 hours. Permits are available at the Cordova Ranger Station (Chugach National Forest). To date, there have been 41 permits issued through the OSM database. Through June 22, a total of 38 Sockeye Salmon and 3 Chinook Salmon had been reported for the season. No reports have been received by the inseason manager since June 22.



Tanada Creek Salmon Weir and Crew, 2023

With funding through the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program (FRMP), WRST is again operating the Tanada Creek salmon weir located at Batzulnetas. Installation of the

weir was completed on June 22. Staff are in the process of reviewing video data since the weir was completed. Through June 30, staff have documented 24 Sockeye Salmon passing the weir.

Links:

ADFG Miles Lake daily sonar estimates

http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.salmon_escapement

ADFG Copper River Inseason Commercial Harvest Estimates

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.harvestsummary>

ADFG Sport Fish Emergency Orders and News Releases

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/EONR/index.cfm?ADFG=main.home>

PWS, Copper River Delta, Chugach – Dr. Andrew Sanders, Chugach National Forest, Cordova. May 29, 2023 Contact – (907) 250-0439 or Andrew.sanders@usda.gov

Prince William Sound / Copper River Delta: The lower Copper River dipnet fishery opened on June 1st. As of Monday morning 26JUN, 40 permits had been issued, and users reported a cumulative harvest of 59 Sockeye Salmon and 4 Chinook Salmon. The Copper River Highway is accessible to 36 Mile. For more information about conditions in the Copper River and the commercial drift gillnet fishery, please see the *Prince William Sound – Copper River* weekly update which can also be found in this report.

Salmon returns in the other streams of the Copper River Delta are still low, but increasing marine mammal activity near the mouths of many smaller streams and reports of jumpers in the Sound suggest that the Pink Salmon are beginning to move in. Jumpers have also been spotted in Eyak Lake. Stocked Chinook Salmon are returning to Fleming Spit, and anglers are seeing some success fishing from the beach there with lures and spears. Water levels in area streams are high from the persistent rains over the last couple weeks.

For further information about the federal subsistence fishery in the Lower Copper River, users can contact the US Forest Service Cordova District office by calling 907-424-7661 or Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve staff -- Dave Sarafin at 907-822-7281 or Barbara Cellarius at 907-822-7236. Updates regarding changes affecting the Federal subsistence fisheries in the Copper River are available by calling the Wrangell-St. Elias Visitor Center at 907-822-7250. More information regarding the federal subsistence fisheries in the remainder of the Copper River Delta area and Prince William Sound can be obtained by contacting the Chugach National Forest Subsistence Staff – Andrew Sanders at 907-424-4759

COOK INLET AREA – Kenneth Gates, Senior Fish Biologist, Kenai Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office Contact:(907)260-0126 or kenneth_gates@fws.gov

The 2023 Cook Inlet Federal subsistence fishing is underway beginning on the Kenai and Kasilof rivers June 15 and June 16, respectively. Regulatory dates for the Kasilof River community gillnet fishery are from June 16 through August 15. Regulatory periods for the Kenai River community gillnet fishery are from July 1 through August 15 and from September 10 – 30.

Seasons for subsistence fishing with rod and reel are the same as for the taking of fish under Alaska sport fishing regulations. Most of the initial rod and reel subsistence effort will be focused on Sockeye Salmon in the Upper Kenai and Russian Rivers which opened June 11.

Federal subsistence fishing permits have been issued to 461 residents of Cooper Landing, Hope, Ninilchik, and Moose Pass. Permit types include a general fishing, household, designated fisher, and community gillnet permits. Harvest has increased this past week over prior weeks by over 300%. To date, 2,157 Sockeye Salmon have been reported as being harvested in all fisheries between the Kasilof and Kenai rivers: 1,290 by gillnet in the Kasilof River and 867 by dipnet at the Russian River falls through 6/30/2023.

No special actions have been issued for Cook Inlet Federal fisheries. However, escapement remains very poor for Chinook Salmon returning to upper Cook Inlet. The early-run Chinook Salmon escapement was not met in the Kenai River with only 1,961 large fish passing the Alaska Department of Fish and Game sonar by June 30, 2023. We will be closely monitoring the late-run Chinook Salmon escapement and Federal harvest of Chinook Salmon in the Kenai River and will take necessary action if warranted. The late-run of Chinook Salmon returning to the Kenai River is currently not predicted to meet the established in-river escapement goal.

Fish counts at some Alaska Department of Fish and Game-operated assessment projects are available on-line at

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishCounts/index.cfm?ADFG=main.home>

**Kodiak Island Area – Michael Brady, Refuge Manager, - Kodiak NWR
(907) 487-2600/0230 michael_brady@fws.gov or
Kevin Van Hatten (907) 487-0230 Kevin_VanHatten@fws.gov**

The Buskin River sockeye salmon escapement started slow and continues to be poor. As of July 2, 2023, the escapement count is 1,333 fish. All fishing activities continue to be suspended within this drainage.

The Litnik (Afognak) Lake weir has recorded 29,938 sockeye as of July 2. This number is above the lower escapement goal and within 10,000 fish of the upper escapement goal.

As of July 2, the southern systems, Karluk (175,241 sockeye), Ayakulik (147,300 sockeye), and Upper Station (57,716 sockeye) have all met their lower escapement goals. There has been a commercial opening in these areas for the past 10 days to keep too many salmon from entering these systems.

The Karluk and Ayakulik River Chinook salmon escapement are very poor, 288 and 471 fish respectively. It is very unlikely that the lower escapement goals will be reached for both systems.

FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF July 3, 2023.

***BRISTOL BAY, CHIGNIK, ALASKA PENINSULA, and ALEUTIAN ISLANDS –
Jonathon Gerken Fisheries Branch Chief Anchorage Fish and Wildlife Field Office***

These areas support abundant returns of salmon, particularly Sockeye Salmon; as well as some of the largest commercial fisheries for salmon in Alaska. All of the assessments of salmon returns are conducted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG), and provide the basis for any inseason assessment and management. None of the adjustments in commercial fishing management throughout any of these areas are anticipated to affect subsistence fishing in waters under Federal subsistence fisheries jurisdiction.

Bristol Bay:

Current counts for Sockeye Salmon at installed escapement projects for July 2:

- Alagnak = No counts reported
- Egegik = 450,030
- Igushik = 162,594
- Kvichak = 78,876
- Naknek = 131,772
- Nushagak = 1,125,303; Chinook = 24,084
- Togiak = No counts reported
- Ugashik = 2,814
- Wood River = 1,693,626

The Sockeye Salmon sustainable escapement goals (SEG) for Bristol Bay systems are:

Escapement Goals:

- Kvichak SEG = 2,000,000 – 10,000,000
- Alagnak SEG = 320,000 minimum
- Naknek SEG = 800,000 – 2,000,000
- Egegik SEG = 800,000 – 2,000,000
- Ugashik SEG = 500,000 – 1,400,000
- Wood River SEG = 700,000 – 1,800,000
- Igushik SEG = 150,000 – 400,000
- Nushagak SEG = 370,000 – 900,000

Nushagak SEG = 55,000 – 270,000; Chinook Salmon = 55,000 – 120,000
 Togiak SEG = 120,000 – 270,000

Chignik:

The Chignik River cumulative weir count as of July 2 is 339,474 Sockeye Salmon. Early run Sockeye Salmon account for 316,348 fish and late run Sockeye Salmon account for 23,126 fish. The interim escapement objective for July 5 is around 237,000 – 377,000 early run fish and 8,000-29,000 late run fish.

There has been only 12 Chinook Salmon counted at the ADFG weir as of July 2. It is unlikely, based on the current rate of escapement, that the lower range (1,300) of the escapement goal for Chignik River Chinook salmon will be achieved. In an effort to conserve the Chinook salmon run, both state and Federal fisheries will be closed concurrently to maintain viability of the Chignik River Chinook salmon population. There is already non retention in the Chignik Bay and Central Districts, as well as the Castle Cape section of the Western District in the Chignik Management area this season. In an effort to conserve Chignik River Chinook salmon, in accordance with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game under the direction of the Alaska Board of Fisheries, beginning at 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, July 5, 2023, Chinook salmon in the Chignik Bay District 28 inches or greater in length may not be retained in the state subsistence fishery and must be returned to the water unharmed. In the Chignik River drainage, from Mensis Point upstream including Chignik Lake and its tributaries, all Chinook salmon may not be retained in the state subsistence fishery and must be returned to the water unharmed. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game, under the direction of the Alaska Board of Fisheries, manages sport, commercial, personal use, and state subsistence harvest on all lands and waters throughout Alaska.

Concurrent with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game closure of state subsistence Chinook salmon, the Federal In-season Manager, pursuant to delegated authority from the Federal Subsistence Board and Section 816 of Title VIII of ANILCA, will issue an emergency special action (8-KS-01-23) to close fishing for Chinook salmon by all users, effective 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, July 5, 2023. This emergency special action is necessary to ensure the continued viability of the Chignik River Chinook salmon population. This emergency special action prohibits all fishing for Chinook salmon, and they may not be retained or possessed. Chinook salmon incidentally caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately

Escapement Goals:

Early Run Sockeye Salmon/ Black Lake	BEG = 350,000 – 450,000
Late Run Sockeye Salmon/ Chignik Lake	SEG = 200,000 – 400,000
-In-river Goal	-10,000 in August and 10,000 in September in addition to minimum escapement objectives
Chinook Salmon	BEG = 1,300 – 2,700

research teams are headed out to Rampart Rapids area this week to begin to set up for Chinook sampling.

Assessment project and management updates will be given on the **YRDFA weekly teleconferences each Tuesday at 1:00 pm at the following number: 1-800-315-6338, Passcode: 98566#.**

Management Strategies based on the preseason outlooks and inseason assessment:

The Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) received special action request FSA23-02 asking the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) to close Federal public waters of the Yukon River drainage to the harvest of Chinook, Chum and Coho salmon except by federally qualified subsistence users from June 1 through September 30, 2023, and to require that Federal subsistence fishing schedules, openings, closures and methods be determined by the Federal Fisheries Manager. This request falls within the scope of authority of the Federal manager, Holly Carroll and has been transferred to her by the Board. Subsistence salmon fishery closures began in the lower river June 2, and will be announced moving upriver based on run timing. See detailed management strategy here: [2023 FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE FISHERY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR THE YUKON AREA \(doi.gov\)](#)

This week's Advisory Announcements co-authored by ADF&G and USFWS and distributed by ADF&G were:

- Yukon River Summer Update #4:
- <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/applications/dfnewsrelease/1491780798.pdf>
- Yukon River Subsistence fishing schedule District 4 (Advisory announcement #18):
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/applications/dfnewsrelease/1493126120.pdf>

Where to Find Yukon Fishery Information:

To hear the fishing schedule and fish counts please call the toll-free Fishing Schedule and Fish Counts hotline: 866-479-7387.

Recent Fishery special actions are posted here:

<https://www.doi.gov/subsistence/fisheries-special-actions>

For Federal News Releases and Special actions, like

www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska.

For detailed information on management actions and weekly assessment updates, subscribe to ADF&G advisory announcements at

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.search>

For daily counts and State Advisory announcements like the ADF&G Yukon River Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG/

If you'd like to receive emails and notifications on the Federal Subsistence Management Program you may subscribe for regular updates by emailing fws-fsb-subsistence-request@lists.fws.gov

In Season Manager – Boyd Blihovde, Refuge Manager, Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge Boyd_Blihovde@fws.gov; Contact Spencer Reardon (907)543-1023 or spencer_reardon@fws.gov

For the June 23 drift and set net opportunity, an estimated 21,175 (18,656-23,978) salmon were harvested: Of which 6,949 (5,871-8,121) were Chinook, 4,647 (3,915-5,428) were chum, 9,541 (8,274-10,943) were sockeye, and 38 (12-73) were coho.

The Bethel Test Fish and Kuskokwim River Sonar numbers for Chinook salmon (<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareakuskokwim.salmon#fishcounts>) continue to indicate relatively low numbers. Given that over 50% of the Chinook run is now past Bethel (area with the most harvest) and the relative low numbers of Chinook, the expected run size is likely near the low end, or below, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game 2023 run forecast of 115,000-170,000.

The USFWS and the Kuskokwim River Inter-tribal Fish Commission reviewed data and decided on a June 30 set net opener that lasts for 24 hours. This opener is to allow targeting of sockeye salmon.

Many fisherman believe that a set net opener, as opposed to a drift and set net opener, will reduce Chinook harvest but allow adequate opportunity for abundant sockeye harvest.

Yukon-Kuskokwim-Interior Alaska Web Links

Federal Subsistence Management Fisheries News Releases:

<http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/news/fishing/index.cfm>

Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Yukon–Northern Area

http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Yukon.pdf

Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Kuskokwim Area

http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Kusko.pdf

ADF&G Sport and Personal Use Fishing News Release and Emergency Order link:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/EONR/index.cfm?ADFG=region.R3>

ADF&G Commercial Fisheries News Release and Emergency Order Link:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>

Weekly ADF&G Sport Fishing Reports for Interior Alaska:
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishingReports/index.cfm?ADFG=R3.home>

Statewide ADF&G Fish counts:
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishCounts/>

Northwest Alaska – Ken Adkisson, National Park Service, Nome.
(907) 443-6104 Ken_Adkisson@nps.gov

Norton Sound District

Sport Fishing:

To help protect king salmon during periods of low abundance and provide future sport fishing opportunities, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game closed all fresh waters in Northwest Alaska from Bald Head to Point Romanof to sport fishing for king salmon effective 12:01 a.m. April 5, 2023. This closure includes, but is not limited to, the Unalakleet, Shaktoolik, Koyuk, Ungalik, Inglutalik, and Golsovia River drainages. In addition, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used in these drainages. Restricting fishing gear to one unbaited, single-hook artificial lure should minimize catch-and-release mortality for king salmon incidentally caught while sport fishing for other species. All king salmon caught incidentally may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately.

These temporary regulations will remain in effect through August 15, 2023, or until there are indications of a harvestable surplus of king salmon above escapement objectives. Escapements are determined by counts compiled at a counting tower on the North River, a tributary of the Unalakleet River, and counts at a floating weir located on the mainstem Unalakleet River.

The 2023 preseason outlook for the Unalakleet River drainage king salmon run is low, and the number of returning king salmon may be insufficient to meet escapement objectives and provide a moderate harvestable surplus for the subsistence fishery. According to the [Subdistricts 5 and 6 of the Norton Sound District and the Unalakleet River King Salmon Management Plan \(5 AAC 04.395\)](#), when the inriver subsistence fishery is closed to the retention of king salmon, sport fishing for king salmon will be closed.

Shaktoolik (5) and Unalakleet (6) Subdistricts

Subsistence Fishing:

The marine waters of Shaktoolik and Unalakleet (Subdistricts 5 and 6) opened for a 24-hr period from 6:00 p.m. Saturday, July 1, through 6:00 p.m. Sunday, July 2, with gillnet mesh size restricted to 6 inches or less. Dip nets and cast nets may be used in the North River, downstream of the North River, and Unalakleet River confluence; however, any king salmon

caught must be immediately returned to the water unharmed. Set gillnets with a mesh size of 4-inches or less may be used in the Unalakleet River upstream from its confluence with the North River.

Subdistricts 5 (Shaktoolik) and 6 (Unalakleet) have been managed as one fishery because past studies have shown salmon bound for these subdistricts intermingle and that harvests in one subdistrict likely will affect the other. No commercial fishing is expected for Chinook or chum salmon, but pink salmon will be targeted commercially depending on buyer interest and gillnet fishing would likely occur beginning in July.

Abundance of the Chinook salmon run will be monitored using passage estimates from the Unalakleet River weir and a counting tower on the North River, an important Chinook salmon spawning tributary in the Unalakleet River drainage. The escapement goal range for the North River is 1,200–2,600 Chinook salmon. However, for a Chinook salmon directed commercial fishery to occur, the department must project an escapement of a minimum of 1,900 Chinook salmon past the North River tower.

Commercial Fishing:

Commercial salmon fishing remains closed.

NORTON Bay Subdistrict (4)

Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence fishing is allowed 7 days per week.

Commercial Fishing:

The Subdistrict is currently closed to commercial fishing.

Elim Subdistrict (3)

The outlook for chum salmon in the northern sections of Norton Sound is expected to be similar to last year and for a harvestable surplus of chum salmon necessary for directed commercial fishing.

Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence fishing is allowed 7 days per week.

Commercial Fishing:

Commercial salmon gillnet fishing opened for 24 hours from 6 p.m. on Wednesday, June 28, until 6:00 p.m. Thursday, June 29. This commercial fishing period was a directed chum salmon commercial period with gillnet mesh size restricted to 6 inches or smaller.

Golovin Subdistrict (2)

The outlook for chum salmon in the northern sections of Norton Sound is expected to be similar to last year and for a harvestable surplus of chum salmon necessary for directed commercial fishing.

Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence fishing is allowed 7 days per week.

Commercial Fishing

Commercial salmon gillnet fishing opened for 24 hours from 6 p.m. on Wednesday, June 28, until 6:00 p.m. Thursday, June 29. This commercial fishing period was a directed chum salmon commercial period with gillnet mesh size restricted to 6 inches or smaller.

Nome Subdistrict (1)

The outlook for chum salmon in the northern sections of Norton Sound is expected to be similar to last year and for a harvestable surplus of chum salmon necessary for directed commercial fishing.

Subsistence Fishing:

The Nome Subdistrict remains on a subsistence fishing schedule in marine waters west of Cape Nome and in all fresh waters of the Nome Subdistrict from 6:00 p.m. Wednesdays till 6:00 p.m. Mondays. Marine waters of the Nome Subdistrict east of Cape Nome remain open 7 days per week.

Effective June 15, beach seines, dip nets, and cast net can be used for salmon and will be open in all subsistence areas of the Nome Subdistrict whenever subsistence gillnet fishing is open. Unless closed by emergency order, beach seining will remain open during gillnet fishing periods through August 15.

Commercial Fishing

Commercial salmon gillnet fishing opened for 24 hours in Nome Subdistrict from 9:00 p.m. Wednesday, June 28, until 9:00 p.m. Thursday, June 29. This commercial fishing period was a directed chum salmon commercial period with gillnet mesh size restricted to 6 inches or smaller.

Port Clarence District***Subsistence Fishing:***

The entire Pilgrim River and its tributaries as well as the lower Kuzitrin River 300 yards upstream from its mouth remain closed to all net fishing. Subsistence net fishing remains open 7 days per week outside of the Pilgrim River closed area.

Commercial Fishing:

No commercial fishing periods are expected due to lack of market interest and the likelihood of sockeye salmon escapement goals not being met. The Pilgrim River will be closed to subsistence net fishing. Escapement will be monitored and if run strength warrants it, restrictions may be relaxed.

Kotzebue District

The commercial salmon fishery is scheduled to open July 10 by regulation for the 2023 season. Chum salmon harvest is projected to be 300-400,000 fish.

No new information is currently available. If you read last week’s report, you can stop here. If not, read on.

the mouth of the Noatak River is closed to commercial fishing by regulation. Most fishing occurs in Subdistrict 1, which is subdivided into six statistical areas to help managers determine catch location. Within the Kotzebue District, chum salmon *Oncorhynchus keta* are the most abundant anadromous fish. Other salmon species (Chinook *O. tshawytscha*, pink *O. gorbuscha*, coho *O. kisutch*, and sockeye salmon *O. nerka*) occur in lesser numbers, as do Dolly Varden *Salvelinus malma*, and sheefish (inconnu) *Stenodus leucichthys*.

Management Area	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Summer Chum	Fall Cum
Kotzebue	0	0	0	0	0	300-400

*The 2023 all-salmon commercial harvest outlook by management area, in thousands of fish.

The Kotzebue District salmon fisheries management outlook is to inform fishermen, processors, and other interested people of the management strategies for the commercial salmon fishery. The Kotzebue District includes all waters from Cape Prince of Wales to Point Hope. The Kotzebue District is divided into three subdistricts. Subdistrict 2, near the mouth of the Noatak River is closed to commercial fishing by regulation. Most fishing occurs in Subdistrict 1, which is subdivided into six statistical areas to help managers determine catch location.

Within the Kotzebue District, chum salmon *Oncorhynchus keta* are the most abundant anadromous fish. Other salmon species (Chinook *O. tshawytscha*, pink *O. gorbuscha*,

coho *O. kisutch*, and sockeye salmon *O. nerka*) occur in lesser numbers, as do Dolly Varden *Salvelinus malma*, and sheefish (inconnu) *Stenodus leucichthys*.

Historical Fishing Effort

Subsistence Fishery

Subsistence fishing has long been an important food gathering activity for people of the Kotzebue Sound drainages. The most recent subsistence survey of salmon harvest is from 2014 that estimated a total of 30,640 chum salmon that were harvested from the Kobuk River, and 6,577 chum salmon that were harvested from the Noatak River and Kotzebue residents reported a harvest of 21,144 chum salmon with the majority harvested in marine waters. Over 90% of the subsistence salmon harvests are chum salmon.

Commercial Fishery

There have been two major buyers in the commercial fishery in recent years. In 2018, there was a record harvest of 695,153 chum salmon caught by 95 permit holders that sold chum salmon for an average price of \$0.40 per pound. The 2019 harvest was 494,593 chum salmon caught by 92 permit holders that sold chum salmon for an average price of \$0.39 per pound and in 2020 only 149,808 chum salmon were harvested by 68 permit holders for an average price of \$0.45 per pound. During the 2021 season, 96,492 chum salmon were harvested by 52 permit holders for an average price of \$0.46 per pound.

<http://alaska.fws.gov/asm/pdf/fishregs11/norton.pdf>