

**FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF August 24 – August 30, 2014.**

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Office of 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 posted on the Office of Subsistence website 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***

**Sitka and Hoonah Area – Justin Koller, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest**  
**Justin Koller, (907)747-4297 [jpkoller@fs.fed.us](mailto:jpkoller@fs.fed.us)**

This is my final report for the season

**Redoubt Lake**

On August 31<sup>st</sup>, 126 sockeye passed the weir bringing the season total to 18,694. The in-season model is predicting the final sockeye escapement to be around 19,000. The weirs will be removed this week.

**Falls Lake**

The Forest Service and the Organized Village of Kake operate the Falls Lake trap and video net weirs. As of September 1<sup>st</sup>, 1,632 sockeye have been trapped and about 1,300 sockeye have been harvested in the subsistence fishery. Preliminary estimates indicate that there are about 3,300 sockeye in the lake. The trap and weirs will be removed this week.

**Klag Bay**

The Sitka Tribe of Alaska operates the sockeye monitoring weir at Klag Bay. As of August 31<sup>st</sup>, 3,118 sockeye have been counted at the weir and 3,253 have been harvested in the subsistence fishery. The weir was inoperable due to high water between 8/18-8/20 and during that time it is thought that several thousand sockeye entered the system uncounted. In 2013, a total of 6,896 sockeye migrated past the weir while an estimated total of 4,550 sockeye were harvested in the marine terminal area subsistence and sport fishery. Subsistence harvest accounted for over 99% of terminal area harvest.

**Wrangell/Petersburg Area – Bob Larson, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest**  
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Reporting completed for 2014 season.

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareasoutheast.salmonfisheryupdates>

**Yakutat, Juneau, and Admiralty areas of Northern Southeast Alaska - Ben Van Alen, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest**

(907)-789-6257 [bvanalen@fs.fed.us](mailto:bvanalen@fs.fed.us) or Jake Musslewhite (907) 789-6256

This will be my last summary for the season.

In the Yakutat area, a strong return of coho salmon is developing. This past week 43 permit holders harvested 14,000 coho salmon in the Situk-Ahrnklin Inlet and 11 permit holders harvested 5,200 coho salmon in the Tsiu River. Forest Service personnel operated a pair of video net weirs at Italio this summer and counted 3,801 sockeye salmon and 905 Dolly Varden above the falls and into the lake between July 10 and August 9.

In the Northern Inside area of Southeast Alaska, the pink salmon run was extremely weak this year. There have not been any commercial purse seine openings in the northern inside waters (Districts 110, 111, 112, and 114) in recent weeks. Returns of hatchery chum salmon have also been relatively low and below forecasted levels in northern inside waters. Sockeye salmon escapements to Chilkat Lake and Speel Lake are at the lower end of ADF&G's escapement goal ranges.

Project personnel have been using double video net weirs to get validated counts of fish into Neva Lake since June 16 and Kook Lake since June 19. As of August 31, 2,928 sockeye salmon have entered Neva Lake and 7,591 have entered Kook Lake.

Project personnel counted 3,796 sockeye salmon into Sitkoh Lake through a double video net weir operated at the outlet of Sitkoh Lake from August 8 to 16. This site is being remotely monitored over the web using IP camera feeds through a mountaintop cellular router from cameras above and below water. At present there is public access to real time video feed from an above water IP camera looking at the project site - solar panels, DVR system box, PTZ camera with stream and net weir in the background. **To look at this “project site” camera, day or night, go to 166.130.28.12:8090, username = public, password = (no password, leave blank).** On our Forest Service network we use Google Chrome and the “server push mode” option to view the video. **There is also public access to real time video (about one frame-per-second) from a video camera in the upper video chute (Figure 2) that can be viewed, day or night, via 166.130.28.12:8093, username = public and password = public.** Project personnel plan to do the first of four mark-recapture trips into Sitkoh Lake on September 8.

**Prince of Wales and Ketchikan District Area – Jeff Reeves, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest.** (907) 826-1649 [jreeves@fs.fed.us](mailto:jreeves@fs.fed.us)

Reporting completed for 2014 season.

### **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](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.R1>

#### ***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=R1.home>

#### ***Statewide ADF&G Fish counts***

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishCounts/>

### **SOUTHCENTRAL ALASKA**

**Prince William Sound – Copper River – Molly McCormick, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park/Preserve.** (907) 822-7280 [Molly\\_McCormick@nps.gov](mailto:Molly_McCormick@nps.gov)

### **Updated Information**

The ADF&G sonar at Miles Lake (located just downstream of the Million Dollar Bridge in the Copper River) was shut down on July 28, 2014. By that date an estimated 1,177,005 salmon had migrated upstream. This estimate is 169% of the projected escapement objective of 696,799 for this date, or 480,206 more salmon. An estimate of 6,678 salmon migrated by the sonar counter on July 28<sup>th</sup>.

**MILES LAKE SONAR ESTIMATES (TOTAL SALMON)**

Year	Estimate	Year	Estimate	Year	Estimate	Year	Estimate
1978	107,011	1987	483,478	1996	906,867	2005	854,268
1979	237,173	1988	488,398	1997	1,148,079	2006	959,731
1980	276,538	1989	607,797	1998	866,957	2007	926,438
1981	535,263	1990	581,895	1999	848,921	2008	614,999
1982	467,306	1991	579,435	2000	587,592	2009	709,330
1983	545,724	1992	601,952	2001	833,569	2010	924,010
1984	536,806	1993	797,902	2002	819,000	2011	914,285
1985	436,313	1994	715,181	2003	695,233	2012	1,271,354
1986	509,275	1995	599,265	2004	669,646	2013	1,267,060

**Commercial harvests in the Copper River District of Prince William Sound as of August 28 are:**

- **9,626 Chinook**
- **2,068,256 sockeye**
- **112,101 coho**
- **11,607 pink**
- **42,610 chum**

The Chitina Subdistrict will remain open for the rest of the season – through September 30. Eighty-one Federal Chitina Subdistrict permits have been issued on FWS's online data base. Additional permits for this subdistrict have been issued in Chitina and Kennecott, NPS ranger stations that do not have internet connectivity. Starting on June 16, 2014, the state personal use fishery in the Chitina Subdistrict was closed to the retention of Chinook salmon for the remainder of the season, by Emergency Order from ADFG.

The Glennallen Subdistrict opened for Federal subsistence users on May 15<sup>th</sup> and is expected to remain open until September 30<sup>th</sup>. Two hundred eighty six Federal Glennallen permits have been issued on FWS's online data base. Additional permits for this subdistrict have been issued in Chitina and Kennecott, NPS ranger stations that do not have internet connectivity. The state subsistence fishery in the Glennallen Subdistrict opened on June 1<sup>st</sup>.

The Batzulnetas fishery is open. Two permits have been issued so far this year.

**The Tanada Creek weir was operational on May 23. As of August 28th, 28,002 sockeye and 5 Chinook have been counted through the weir.**

**The Long Lake weir, on the McCarthy Road was installed and operational on July 25. As of August 28, 8,757 sockeye have been counted through the weir.**

1,938 Chinook were tagged at the two project fishwheels in Baird Canyon operated by the Native Village of Eyak: and 180 tagged and 2,368 untagged were captured upriver at the Canyon Creek wheels. July 27, 2104 was the final day of this project.

ADF&G's counting tower in the Gulkana River was installed on June 4. Its final day of operation was August 12. The final count at the tower for 2014 was 2,598 Chinook and 22,920 sockeye. The tower is located approximately 9 miles upstream of the Sourdough boat launch.

**The 2<sup>nd</sup> sampling trip of a mark/recapture burbot project in Grizzly Lake took place last week. Results are still being analyzed.**



**Grizzly Lake in the Yukon River drainage, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park, photo courtesy of National Park Service**

By Emergency Order of the state of Alaska starting June 14, 2014, Chinook salmon harvest in the upper Copper River drainage sport fisheries was reduced from 4 to 1 Chinook 20 inches or more in length.

Six Special Actions relating to fisheries have been issued by the park so far this season:

- setting the tentative preseason schedule for the Chitina Subdistrict and delaying the starting date of the Chitina Subdistrict federal salmon fishery
- amending the preseason schedule for the Chitina Subdistrict for the week of June 30 – July 6 and providing the tentative schedule for future fishing periods.

- amending the preseason schedule for the Chitina Subdistrict for the week of July 7 – July 13, allowing a full week (168 hours) of fishing.
- amending the preseason schedule for the Chitina Subdistrict for the week of July 14 – July 20, allowing a full week (168 hours) of fishing
- amending the preseason schedule for the Chitina Subdistrict for the week of July 21 – July 27, increasing the number of fishing hours allowed to 156 hours
- amending the preseason schedule for the Chitina Subdistrict for the week of July 28 – August 3, allowing a full week (168 hours) of fishing.

#### Links

##### ***ADF&G Miles Lake daily sonar estimates***

[http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.salmon\\_escapement](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareacopperriver.salmon_escapement)

##### ***NVE's Chinook Escapement Monitoring project in the Copper River***

<http://eyak.fishscan.com>

##### ***ADF&G Copper River Inseason Commercial Harvest Estimates***

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

##### ***Gulkana River counting tower – ADF&G***

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

##### ***Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve Subsistence User's Guide***

<http://www.nps.gov/wrst/historyculture/upload/Subsistence%20brochure.pdf>

##### ***Prince William Sound Federal Subsistence Regulations including Copper River.***

[http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish\\_shell/upload/Prince.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Prince.pdf)

##### **PWS and Copper River Flats – Milo Burcham, Forest Service, Cordova.**

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Reporting completed for 2014 season.

##### **Cook Inlet Area – Jeff Anderson, Field Supervisor, Kenai Fish and Wildlife Field Office (907) 260-0132 [Jeffrey\\_Anderson@fws.gov](mailto:Jeffrey_Anderson@fws.gov)**

Reporting completed for 2014 season.

##### **Kodiak Island Area – Anne Marie LaRosa, Refuge Manager, - Kodiak NWR**

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Reporting completed for 2014 season.

##### ***Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Kodiak Area***

[http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish\\_shell/upload/Kodiak.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Kodiak.pdf)

**Bristol Bay and Chignik – Doug McBride Fisheries Branch Chief Anchorage Fish and Wildlife Field Office**

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Reporting completed for 2014 season.

***Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Bristol Bay Area***

[http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish\\_shell/upload/Bristol.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Bristol.pdf)

***Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Chignik Area***

[http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish\\_shell/upload/chignik.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/chignik.pdf)

**Southcentral Alaska Web Links*****Federal Subsistence Management Fisheries News Releases***

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

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

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishingSportFishingInfo.R2>

***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 Southcentral Alaska***

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishingReports/index.cfm?ADFG=R2.Home>

***Statewide ADF&G Fish counts:***

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishCounts/>

**Yukon River – Gerald Maschmann, Fish Biologist USFWS Fairbanks Office.**

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Fred Bue [Fredrick\\_Bue@fws.gov](mailto:Fredrick_Bue@fws.gov)

Emmonak Summer Office (907) 949-1798

The Emmonak Field Office is closed for the season.

**Fall Season Outlook**

The fall chum run in the lower Yukon is nearing the end of the season, and at this time the in-season assessment is projecting a run size of 785,000 to 854,000 based upon the reconstructed Pilot Station sonar estimate. The drainage wide escapement goal for fall chum is between 300,000 and 600,000 fall chum. This season's fall chum run should meet escapement goals, provide for a normal subsistence harvest, and provide for commercial fishing opportunities. Although nearing the end in the lower Yukon, fall chum take 30 days to travel to the Canadian border so managers will be monitoring the fall chum run into October.

**Fall Season Assessment**

Projects in the lower Yukon are past the  $\frac{3}{4}$  point of the fall chum run. The Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF) is tracking well above average while the Mt. Village Test Fishery (MVTF) is tracking below average. The Pilot Station sonar is tracking above average and through August 29 has passed 632,596 fall chum. The LYTF, MVTF, and Pilot Station have detected six pulses of fall chum entering the lower Yukon with the fifth pulse passing over 250,000 fall chum salmon. The final day of sonar operations is August 31.

The Rapids test fish wheel project in the upper Yukon is just past the mid-point and is tracking near average. The Chandalar River sonar began on August 6. The estimated passage of 64,000 fall chum is well above average; however it's still early for this project with the  $\frac{1}{4}$  point for this project on September 1. The Tanana River test fish wheel at Manley began on August 9 and is near average; however it's still early for this project. The Eagle sonar switched to fall chum assessment on August 13 and is tracking above average; however, it's still very early for this project.

Subsistence fishermen in upriver districts have reported good harvests of "red fleshed" chum early in the season, and increasing numbers of "water marked" chum during the second half of the season. "Red fleshed" chum are desired for human consumption, while the "water marked" chum are used primarily for dog food and are not desired for human consumption due to poor quality.

**Fall Season Management Actions**

In Districts 1 and 2 the combined commercial harvest through August 30 is 106,000 fall chum salmon and 87,000 coho salmon. Fall chum directed commercial fishing will close on September 1 in the lower Yukon, when commercial fishing for fall chum closes by regulation. Additional commercial fishing opportunities are expected in District 1 after September 1 directed at the above average coho salmon run, which closes by regulation on September 10. Commercial fishermen in Subdistrict 5-B and 5-C harvested 1,264 fall chum. Commercial fishermen in District 6, near the village of Nenana, harvested 3,543 fall chum and 137 coho.

Subsistence fishing was returned to the normal regulatory schedules at the end of the summer season. To allow additional opportunity on the projected surplus of fall chum and to make up for missed opportunity on Chinook salmon, subsistence salmon fishing in District 4 and Subdistrict 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C was relaxed to 24 hours per day, seven days per week. Additionally, upper Subdistrict 4-A was opened to drift gill net fishing six days early.

**Coho Salmon**

Coho salmon overlap the second half of the fall chum run, and is coming in well above average at this time. The LYTF is above average and the Mt. Village Test Fishery is below average at this time. The Pilot Station sonar has an estimated passage of 192,000 coho salmon through August 29, which is almost twice the average. The reconstructed

Pilot Station sonar passage through August 29 is 263,000 coho. The 2014 coho salmon run is near the largest on record.

**Kuskokwim River – Neil Lalonde, Refuge Manager, Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge** Brian [McCaffery@fws.gov](mailto:McCaffery@fws.gov) or Robert Sundown (907) 543-1007  
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## Season Summary

The Kuskokwim salmon season saw a mixed level of successes. There was a concerted effort to work with the villages on a preseason conservation strategy for Chinook salmon. The strategy took shape preseason during two working group meeting and numerous village meeting and consultations with various tribes along the Kuskokwim. The consultations and preseason strategy worked well in that a cohesive plan was in place preseason for management of Chinook. By the end of June, a smooth transition to State management occurred. While there were some violations that occurred, there was no organized protest of chinook conservation regulations and it appeared that the conservation effort was accepted by residents. OSM also went through great efforts to provide a permitting system that succeeded in issuing and making permits available. There seemed to be some reluctance in accepting the permits in multiple villages as there was a perception that this was going to be a permanent method of restricting chinook take as opposed to an allowance outside escapement needs to recognize a cultural and tradition harvest.

Despite the conservation efforts for Chinook salmon, it appears that we will not make escapement in two of the three escapement projects with Chinook goals. The final in river escapement is yet to be calculated and will take place later this winter. There will be further discussion this winter on the growing use of 4" gillnets to harvest salmon and how to manage its use during Chinook conservation years. The value of the Bethel Test Fishery continues to take scrutiny on predictive value for total run size estimation. ADF&G is interested in adding a sonar to the in season management toolbox to better predict the total run as the season progresses.

There are some indications that we had a relatively poor year for chum salmon as well, with many project counting the lowest or near lowest figures in recent history. Coho however saw some of the best returns in recent history in the escapement projects.

## Escapement Projects

*Bethel Test Fish: Through August 24<sup>th</sup> (final operation day)*

- Chinook salmon had a cumulative season index of 650.
- Chum salmon had a cumulative season index of 6,345.
- Sockeye salmon had a cumulative season index of 1,367.
- Coho salmon have an index of 4,697.

*Kwethluk River Weir: Through August 28<sup>th</sup>*

- Cumulative king salmon counts total 3,183. **Did not make escapement.**
- Cumulative chum salmon counts total 17,861.
- Cumulative sockeye salmon counts total 3,726.
- Cumulative coho salmon counts total 24,100.

*Tuluksak River Weir: Through August 28<sup>th</sup>*

- Cumulative king salmon counts total 320.
- Cumulative chum salmon counts total 8,690. **Lowest in last 7 years.**
- Cumulative sockeye salmon counts total 520.
- Cumulative coho salmon counts total 10,124. **Highest in last 7 years.**

*Salmon River Weir: Through September 1<sup>st</sup>*

- Cumulative king salmon counts total 1,698.
- Cumulative chum salmon counts total 2,678. **Lowest in 3 years of operation.**
- Cumulative sockeye salmon total 745. **Lowest in 3 years of operation.**
- Cumulative coho salmon counts total 4,023.

*George River Weir: Through September 1<sup>st</sup>*

- Cumulative king salmon counts total 2,678. **Made escapement.**
- Cumulative chum salmon counts total 16,455. **Second lowest in last 7 years.**
- Cumulative coho salmon counts total 25,741. **Highest in last 7 years.**

*Tatlawiksuk River Weir: Through September 1<sup>st</sup>*

- King salmon cumulative count total 1,897. **Highest in last 7 years.**
- Cumulative chum salmon counts total 12,050. **Lowest in last 7 years.**
- Cumulative coho salmon counts total 18,253. **Highest in last 7 years.**

*Kogrugluk River Weir: Through September 1<sup>st</sup>*

- Cumulative king salmon counts total 3,721. **Did not make escapement.**
- Cumulative chum salmon counts total 30,161. **Lowest in last 7 years.**
- Sockeye escapement to date total 6,411. **Lowest in last 7 years.**
- Cumulative coho salmon counts total 12,010.

*Telequana Lake Weir: Through August 10<sup>th</sup>*

- Cumulative sockeye salmon counts total 23,820.

**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](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Yukon.pdf)

***NEW = Kuskokwim River Updates Hosted on OSM Website***

<http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/kuskokwim.cfm>

***Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Kuskokwim Area***

[http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish\\_shell/upload/Kusko.pdf](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>

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<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.**

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This may well be the last report for this year from Northwest Alaska as the season is coming to a close and I have a heavy travel schedule over the next two weeks.

## **Norton Sound**

The Norton Sound silver run is much better than forecast and has been showing great strength on the backside of the run. The ADG&G silver salmon forecast for the commercial fishery harvest was 60,000 to 90,000. Preliminary Norton Sound commercial salmon harvest figures this season are 280 kings, 104,000 chums, 180,000 pinks, 370 reds and 102,000 silvers. The silver salmon harvest has exceeded 100,000 silvers for the first time since 2008 and only the sixth time in history. The silver harvest may finish as fourth greatest.

### ***Unalakleet (Subdistrict 6)***

The commercial harvest through late August was 60 kings, 146 reds, 32,500 chums, 82,200 pinks and 57,000 silvers. All kings harvested were not sold, but kept for personal use. The silver harvest ranks ninth best. The commercial fishing season in the Subdistrict closes by regulation Sunday, September 7.

**North River Tower** – A cooperative project of Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation (NSEDC) with assistance from Fish & Game. It has escapement goals of 1,200-2,600 kings; 25,000 pinks; 550-1,100 silvers (aerial survey); and no goal yet established for chums. The tower crew was unable to count for 12 days because of high water and resumed counting on July 26 with half day counts and full day counts beginning on July 29. Cumulative counts through August 23 should be considered minimal for all species and were 2,300 kings, 11,500 chums, 144,000 pinks and 3,000 silvers. Cumulative counts through August 28 were 2,300 kings, 11,700 chums, 144,000 pinks and 4,300 silvers. The average historical 90% point of the silver run past the tower has been August 31.

**Unalakleet River Floating Weir** – A cooperative project of Fish & Game, Native Village of Unalakleet, United States BLM and NSEDC with major funding provided by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Subsistence Management. There are no weir escapement goals yet. The weir crew was unable to count for nearly six days in late July because of high water and full day counts resumed on July 27. Cumulative counts through August 23 should be considered minimal for all species and were 1,000 kings, 54,000 chums, 1.2 million pinks, 200 reds and 40,000 silvers. Last year was the only year counting continued that late in August and the count was 25,500 silvers. Project operations were completed August 27 and cumulative counts were 1,000 kings, 54,500 chums, 1.2 million pinks, 200 reds and 44,000 silvers.

#### *Shaktoolik (Subdistrict 5)*

Commercial harvest through late August was 16 kings, 39 reds, 28,700 chums, 33,000 pinks and 18,000 silvers. All kings harvested were not sold, but kept for personal use. The silver harvest ranks seventh highest. The commercial fishing season in the Subdistrict closes by regulation Sunday, September 7.

**Shaktoolik Sonar/Tower** – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game. It has no escapement goals established. The tower crew was unable to count since July 13 due to high water, but did get the sonar unit set back up to count on August 4. Cumulative counts through August 21 should be considered minimal for all species and were 2,000 kings, 53,000 chums, 423,000 pinks and 5,500 silvers. Sonar counts have not yet been apportioned by species for the last week of August.

#### *Norton Bay (Subdistrict 4)*

The commercial harvest through late August was 70 kings, 15 reds, 13,000 chums, 28,000 pinks and 9,000 silvers. The silver harvest is a record and nearly two-thirds above the previous record of 5,485 silvers harvested last year. The commercial fishing season in the Subdistrict closes by regulation Sunday, September 7.

#### *Elim (Subdistrict 3)*

The Commercial harvest through late August was 98 kings, 129 reds, 16,800 chums, 28,200 pinks and 14,500 silvers. The silver harvest is a record surpassing the previous record harvest of 10,180 silvers in 2010. The commercial fishing season in the Subdistrict closes by regulation Sunday, August 31.

**Kwiniuk River Tower** – A Fish & Game project with assistance from NSEDC. It has escapement goals of 300-550 kings, 11,500 – 23,000 chums, 8,400 pinks, and 650-1,300 silvers (aerial survey goal). Cumulative counts through August 23 were 429 kings, 40,000 chums, 326,000 pinks and 11,600 silvers. Cumulative counts through August 28 were 429 kings, 40,000 chums, 326,000 pinks and 12,700 silvers. The silver count only trails the record run of 2006 by 3,000 silvers and there was no commercial fishing in 2006 because of a lack of a market. The average historical third quarter point for silvers past the tower is August 27.

### *Golovin (Subdistrict 2)*

Commercial harvest through late August was 28 kings, 44 reds, 13,500 chums, 7,900 pinks and 3,600 silvers. The silver harvest ranks fourth greatest. The record harvest was 5,586 silvers in 2010 and last year's harvest was second best with 5,362 silvers. The commercial fishing season in the Subdistrict closes by regulation Sunday, August 31.

**Fish River Tower** – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish and Game. No escapement goals established. The tower crew was unable to count for 11 days because of high water and resumed counting on July 26. Cumulative counts through August 23 should be considered minimal for all species and were 900 kings, 45,000 chums, 220,000 pinks, 15 reds and 16,500 silvers. Cumulative counts through August 28 were 900 kings, 45,000 chums, 220,000 pinks, 15 reds and 17,000 silvers.



The Fish River Counting Project – Taken during an Aerial Survey on August 29  
Courtesy of Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Nome, Alaska

### *Nome (Subdistrict 1)*

The latest subsistence set gillnet fishing period in fresh waters closes at 6 p.m. Saturday, August 30. Effective September 1, all fresh water subsistence areas are open to set gillnetting 7 days a week. Fishermen need to check the back of the Nome Subdistrict subsistence salmon permit for the subsistence areas where set gillnetting is allowed and the catch limits by river. Beach seining is not allowed.

In the marine waters subsistence set gillnet fishing is open 7 days a week with no catch limits.

**Solomon River Weir** – A Fish & Game project has no escapement goals established. The project finished for the season. The last day of counts was August 20. Cumulative counts were 1 king, 1,502 chums, 20,691 pinks and 79 silvers. Last year, counting ended on August 26 with a cumulative count of 1,377 chums, 2,733 pinks and 168 silvers.

**Nome River Weir** – A Fish & Game project with assistance from NSEDC has an escapement goal of 2,900 – 4,300 chum salmon and 3,200 pink salmon. Cumulative counts through August 23 were 6 kings, 5,500 chums, 95,000 pinks, 25 reds and 750 silvers. An aerial survey showed good numbers of silvers below the weir. Cumulative counts through August 28 were 6 kings, 5,500 chums, 96,000 pinks, 25 reds and 1,000 silvers. The silver count is in the bottom third of the 14 years since the project was extended to count the silver run, but over 1,000 silvers were observed by an aerial survey estimate on August 29. The average historical midpoint is August 28.

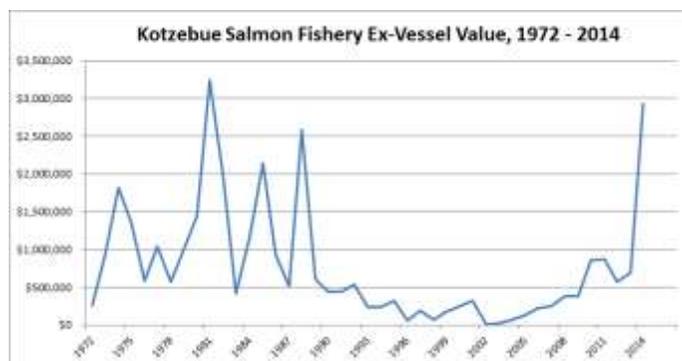
**Snake River Weir** – A cooperative project between Fish & Game and NSEDC has an escapement goal of 1,600 – 2,500 chum salmon. Cumulative counts through August 23 were 9 kings, 3,900 chums, 19,500 pinks, 80 reds and 220 silvers. The silver count was in the bottom third of the 13 years of weir counts. However, an aerial survey did show silvers below the weir, but with the nice weather and lower water levels there likely has been little interest by the silvers to move upriver. Cumulative counts through August 28 were 10 kings, 4,000 chums, 19,500 pinks, 80 reds and 430 silvers. The silver count remains in the bottom third of the 13 years of weir counts. But, again, hundreds of silvers were observed below the weir in an aerial survey estimate on August 29. The average historical midpoint is August 26.

### **Port Clarence District**

**Pilgrim River Weir** – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game has an escapement goal of 4,000 – 8,000 sockeyes (reds) based on aerial survey at Salmon Lake & Grand Central tributary to Salmon Lake. Cumulative counts through August 23 were 48 kings, 25,000 chums, 4,100 pinks, 9,700 reds and 350 silvers. The silver count was the third best in the 12 years of weir operation. Project operations were completed on August 27. Cumulative counts were 50 kings, 25,500 chums, 4,200 pinks, 9,700 reds and 430 silvers. The red run this year was comprised of an early surge that had a majority of 6-year-old fish and a late surge that had a majority of 4-year-old fish. One possible explanation may have been that the 6-year-olds (2008 escapement - 20,452 reds) had good survival and the 5-year-olds (2009 escapement - 953 reds) did not do well as fry in Salmon Lake competing with the likely much more numerous and larger fry from the preceding year. Although the 4-year-olds (2010 escapement – 1,654 reds) did not come from a much larger escapement than the 5-year-olds they obviously had much better survival rates. Likely there were fewer fry from the preceding year in Salmon Lake to compete with the 2010 brood year.

## Kotzebue District

The 2014 Kotzebue commercial salmon finished with the second greatest harvest and ex-vessel value. Preliminary harvest figures were 633,000 chum salmon and an ex-vessel value of 2.93 million dollars. The 2014 season trailed only the 1981 harvest of 677,000 chum salmon and an ex-vessel value of 3.25 million dollars. In 1981 there were 187 permit holders participating in the fishery, but in 2014 there were only 95 permit holders. This was the first time since 1988 that the ex-vessel value was above one million dollars.



Courtesy of Alaska Department of Fish and Game --- Nome, Alaska

This year's run was powered by the incredible Kobuk River chum salmon run that came early and strong and finished late and strong. The Noatak River chum salmon run comes in later than the Kobuk River run and was a good run also, but did not finish out as strong. Age composition of samples taken from the chum salmon commercial catch and test fishing catch showed a huge run of 4-year-olds.

### ***Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for the Kotzebue and Norton Sound Areas***

[http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish\\_shell/upload/Kotz.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Kotz.pdf)

[http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish\\_shell/upload/Norton.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Norton.pdf)