

FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF JUNE 15-21, 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

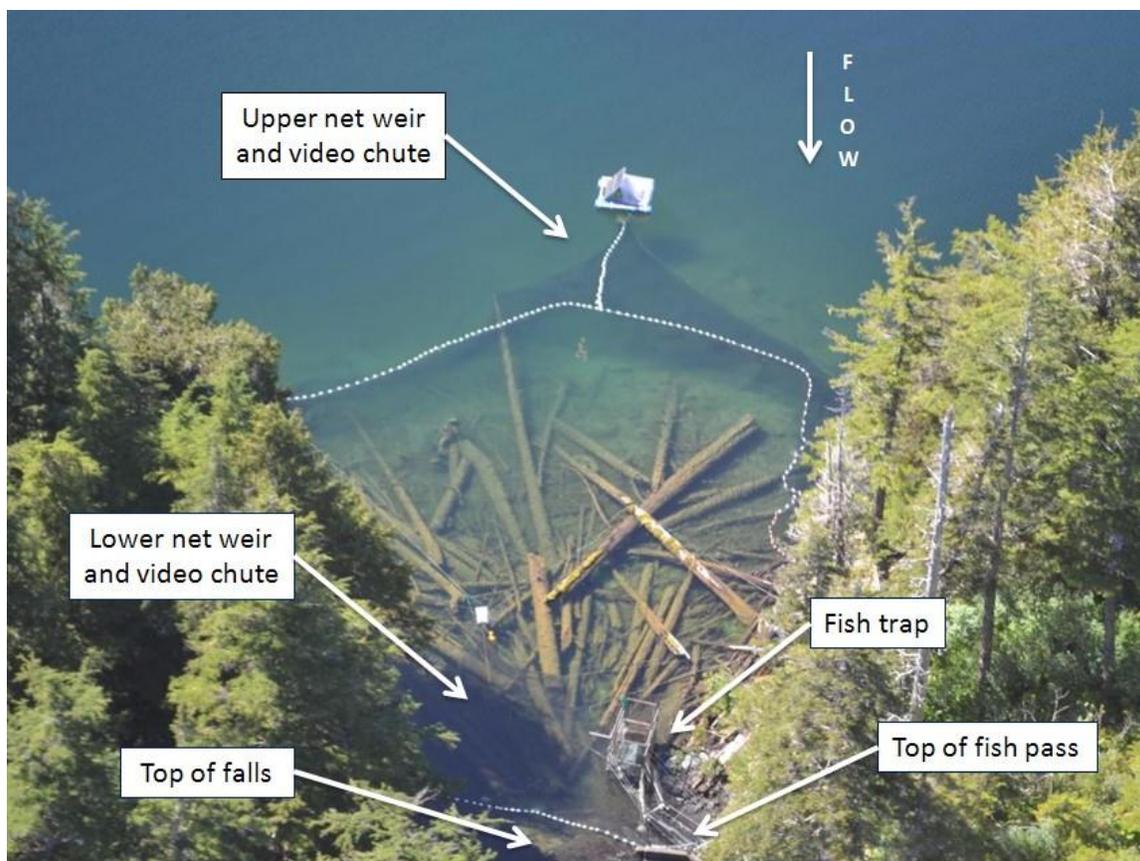
Sitka and Hoonah Area – Justin Koller, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest
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Sockeye

The Forest Service operates the picket weir and video-equipped net weir at Redoubt Lake. The picket weir was fish tight the evening of June 16th. On June 17th 19 sockeye salmon passed the weir and as of June 20th 306 sockeye salmon have been counted. In 2013, an estimated total of 49,124 sockeye salmon migrated into Redoubt Lake. The video equipped net weir will be installed beginning Tuesday June 24th. An aerial photo of the Redoubt Lake weir follows:



The Forest Service and the Organized Village of Kake operate the Falls Lake trap and video net weirs which will be operational the first week of July. The final escapement in 2013 was estimated at 1,120 while the final subsistence and sport harvest in the marine terminal area was 880. Subsistence harvest accounted for over than 98% of terminal area harvest. An aerial photo of the Falls Lake trap and net weirs follows:



The Sitka Tribe of Alaska operates the sockeye salmon monitoring weir at Klag Bay which is scheduled to be operational the last week in June. In 2013, a total of 6,896 sockeye salmon migrated past the weir while an estimated total of 4,550 sockeye salmon 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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Week ending June 21, 2014; statistical week 25

The Stikine River Chinook salmon in-season abundance estimate for this week increased to 26,000 large Chinook salmon, approximately the same as the preseason forecast of 26,050. This abundance results in a 150 large Chinook salmon allowable catch for the U.S. and 1,350 large Chinook salmon for Canada (managing for the point escapement goal of 17,400). There have been 35 Federal subsistence fishing permits issued to date but there has been little known fishing effort. The total subsistence harvest estimate is 3 Chinook salmon and 35 sockeye salmon. The Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans has reported that the recent rockslide on the Tahltan River (a major spawning

tributary on the Stikine River) is holding firm with only minor changes due to erosion. The DFO is not clear whether the slide serves as a barrier to migration yet. A test fishery conducted this week above the slide did not produce any salmon. The following link provides a summary of Southeast Alaska and Yakutat commercial fisheries:

http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareasoutheast.salmonfishery_updates

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

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The sockeye salmon runs and subsistence fisheries are just starting in the Admiralty and Juneau areas. Project personnel have been counting fish through the double-redundant video net weirs at Neva Lake since June 16 and Kook Lake since June 19. We plan to install the redundant video net weirs at Sitkoh Lake in July.

The Southeast Alaska purse seine fishery began in the area with a 15-hour opening on Sunday June 15 at Point Augusta and in the Hidden Falls Hatchery area. No boats fished at Point Augusta and only 10 boats fished at Hidden Falls. On Thursday, June 19, there was another 15-hour opening in the Hidden Falls Hatchery area and on Sunday, June 22, there were 15-hour openings at both Point Augusta and Hidden Falls. The Purse Seine Fishery Management Plan does not indicate that the State is planning to take any new or additional management actions to reduce harvests of sockeye salmon bound for bays and streams in the Angoon and Kake area. Special restrictions will probably not be needed in 2014 since the seine effort reflects the pink return and the pink salmon return is anticipated to be relatively small as it has been in recent odd years. The escapements of pink salmon were low and below goals in the northern inside area in 2012. ADF&G biologists anticipate that 892,000 hatchery chum salmon will be available for harvest in the Hidden Falls hatchery area this season.

In the Yakutat area, the sockeye salmon runs usually begin in earnest in mid-June. The Situk River Chinook salmon run is anticipated to be relatively low again this season. The State closed subsistence fishing for Situk River Chinook salmon on May 18. A news release was released on June 6 informing Federal subsistence users that the Forest Service will not be issuing Federal subsistence fishing permits to take Chinook salmon in the Situk River unless ADF&G personnel count enough Chinook salmon through the Situk weir to justify reopening the State's subsistence fishery for Chinook salmon. As of July 22, there have been 96 large Chinook salmon counted through the Situk River weir and the projected escapement for the season is around 700 fish which will be within ADF&G's 450 to 1,050 biological escapement goal range for large Chinook salmon. To date, there have been 10,177 sockeye salmon and 5,529 steelhead kelts counted through the Situk weir.

Prince of Wales and Ketchikan District Area – Jeff Reeves, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest.

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Permits continue to be returned from the Prince of Wales/Kosciusko Spring Federal Subsistence Steelhead fishery. A total of 63 permits were issued to Prince of Wales Island residents during this fishery. Permits from this fishery being returned and are not due back until June 15. The total reported harvest from permits returned to date is at 10 with 4 from the Thorne River and 6 from Staney Creek.

The 2014 General salmon permits for Southeast Alaska are valid through the end of the year. Currently, 158 permits have been issued for this fishery.

Most subsistence users are actively fishing marine waters for Chinook salmon and halibut under sport fishing regulations. Although a couple of Prince of Wales Island streams have June returns of sockeye, most subsistence users are in preparation for subsistence harvest in July.

A sockeye salmon weir is currently active and fishing at Hatchery Creek. To date 391 sockeye have been counted at this project. Totals at the Hetta Lake weir are 23 sockeye.

The first commercial seine opening targeting hatchery chum will commence this coming weekend within District 2.

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.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

As of June 19, 2014 the ADF&G sonar at Miles Lake (located just downstream of the Million Dollar Bridge in the Copper River) estimated that 709,821 salmon had migrated upstream. This estimate is 177% of the projected escapement objective of 400,060 for this date, or 309,761 more salmon. An estimate of 14,649 salmon migrated by the sonar counter on June 19th.

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 June 19 are:

- 9,214 Chinook
- 1,408,210 sockeye
- 182 coho
- 31 pink
- 37,404 chum

The Chitina Subdistrict opened this week on June 16 and is scheduled to remain open all week through June 22. It is scheduled to re-open on June 23 and remain open the entire week. The state and federal fisheries in this subdistrict usually follow identical fishing schedules which are set by the state. Fifty-two 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 15th and is expected to remain open until September 30th. 209 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 1st.

The Batzulnetas fishery is open - no permits have been issued so far.

The Tanada Creek weir was operational on May 23. The watershed received some rain over the weekend and there is now flow from Tanada Lake to the Copper River. Both water flow and salmon showed up at the weir on June 17 and by June 19, 2,685 sockeye have been counted through the weir.



The water was up to .75 on the staff gauge at the Tanada Creek weir, 6/17/14

As of June 19, 1,684 Chinook have been tagged at the two project fishwheels in Baird Canyon operated by the Native Village of Eyak and 128 tagged and 2002 untagged have been captured at the Canyon Creek wheels.

ADF&G's counting tower in the Gulkana River was installed on June 4. As of June 19, 270 Chinook and 8,406 sockeye have been counted.

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.

Two Special Actions have been issued by the park so far this season:

- setting the tentative preseason schedule for the Chitina subdistrict.
- delaying the starting date of the Chitina Subdistrict federal salmon fishery

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

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

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

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The Copper River District will open at 7:00 am for a 36-hour commercial fishing period on Monday, June 23. Waters within the Chinook salmon inside closure area will be open during this period. Cumulative sonar count to date is 724,000 fish whereas the anticipated count for this date is 408,000 fish. For the week ending June 21, the actual Copper River delta survey count was 11,715 sockeye salmon versus a minimum anticipated goal of 14,273. An aerial survey of the Copper River delta is anticipated to be flown next week. Hatchery contributions from the period that closed on June 14 were 19% Gulkana Hatchery and 9% Main Bay. Harvest from the period that closed Friday, June 20 was 74,600 sockeye salmon and 137 Chinook salmon with 423 deliveries reported.

A total of 31 Federal Subsistence fishing permits have been issued to residents of Cordova for fresh waters of the Copper River Delta. Harvest is not reported until after fish reports are returned at the end of the season. Sixty-five permits were issued for the 2013 season with a reported harvest of 358 coho salmon and 102 sockeye salmon.

Cook Inlet Area – Jeff Anderson, Field Supervisor, Kenai Fish and Wildlife Field Office (907) 260-0132 Jeffry_Anderson@fws.gov

The 2014 subsistence dip net fisheries for salmon began on the Kenai and Kasilof rivers 15 June and 16 June, respectively. Subsistence users have reported good success to date and a harvest of 436 sockeye salmon has been reported for the Russian River Falls dip net fishery through 19 June. Totals of 85 Kenai River permits and 8 Kasilof River permits have been issued through 19 June.

An emergency Special Action was issued to close all Federal public waters in the Kenai River drainage to subsistence fishing for Chinook salmon downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake beginning 12:01 a.m., Thursday, June 19, through 11:59 p.m., Monday, July 14, 2014. As of June 16, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game estimates that only 3,533 Chinook salmon have passed their DIDSON sonar site in the lower Kenai River. The run to date is likely showing early timing as are other Chinook salmon stocks throughout the state. Projections using early run-timing models indicate the early-run of Kenai River Chinook salmon will be near or below the minimum escapement goal of 5,300 fish by the end of the season on June 30. Therefore, it was warranted to close the Federal subsistence fishery for early-run Chinook salmon. The sport fishery has been closed by the Department through Emergency Order since May 1.

Fish Counts through June 18:

Russian River early-run sockeye (weir)	11,450 (counts end on 14 July)
Russian River late-run sockeye (weir)	(counts begin on 15 July)
Kenai River late-run sockeye (sonar)	(counts begin on 1 July)
Kasilof River sockeye (sonar)	34,446 (counts begin on 15 June)
Kenai River early-run Chinook (sonar)	3,533 (counts through 16 June)

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

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Sockeye salmon returns continue to be strong along the west side of Kodiak Island. As of Thursday, June 19, 2014, the Karluk, Afognak, and Buskin River systems have met their lower escapement goals for sockeye salmon (147,772 fish; escapement goal range: 110,000 to 250,000 fish; 225,633 fish; escapement goal range: 20,000 to 50,000 fish; and 8,882 fish; escapement goal range: 5,000 to 8,000 fish respectively). Buskin River returns have been sufficiently strong enough to warrant a special action opening the river mouth area to subsistence gillnetting. Effective at noon on Thursday June 19, 2014, closed waters under Federal subsistence fisheries jurisdiction of Women’s Bay near the mouth of the Buskin River will be reduced to the stream terminus at the ocean shoreline at Buskin River in the Northeast Kodiak District to provide additional subsistence opportunity to residents.

Chinook salmon returns on the other hand have been disappointing with only 365 Chinook counted at Ayakulik River weir and 297 at the Karluk River weir as of June 18. It is unlikely, based on the current rate of escapement, that the lower range of the escapement goals (4000 and 3000 respectively) will be achieved. In an effort to conserve Chinook salmon, a special action was issued for both rivers. Effective at 12:01 a.m. Friday, June 20 Chinook salmon in the Ayakulik and Karluk River drainages may not be retained in the subsistence fishery. Chinook salmon escapement will continue to be

monitored daily. Subsistence salmon fishing opportunities may be adjusted based on changes in the run strengths. If these runs sufficiently improve, the subsistence fishing restriction could be lifted to provide additional opportunity.

Subsistence salmon fishing around Kodiak is in full swing with efforts being made to harvest sockeye on the Buskin River, Litnik, Port Lions and smaller areas in between as well as around individual villages. Gillnetters at the mouth of the Buskin River are reporting good catches with 7 – 10 boats fishing at a time. Litnik salmon numbers up river have slowed this week but additional fishing activity is expected there over the weekend. At Port Lions, gillnetters are still making steady effort to fish in the lagoon, although reports are that this run is slowing down.

The community of Port Lions completed their local subsistence harvest camp last weekend, with local youth learned to how to harvest and process salmon. Residents of Larsen Bay and the village of Karluk are gillnetting in Karluk Lagoon. Akhiok residents have been getting their subsistence salmon around Trappers Point or Kempf Bay. Commercial salmon fishing is delayed in the Alitak Bay District giving subsistence harvesters who normally commercial fish, more free time to engage in subsistence harvests.

Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Kodiak Area

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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These areas support abundant returns of salmon, particularly sockeye; as well as some of the largest commercial fisheries for salmon in Alaska. All of the assessments of salmon returns are conducted by the State of Alaska, and provide the basis for any inseason assessment. None of the adjustments in commercial fishing management throughout any of these areas are anticipated to affect subsistence fishing in Federally-managed waters, and these subsistence fisheries commence later in June and July.

Bristol Bay:

Preseason forecasts for sockeye salmon run returns to Bristol Bay, Chignik, and the Alaska Peninsula predict that there will be harvestable surpluses in all districts, and that escapement goals will be achieved in all systems.

For Bristol Bay, the forecast for total return of sockeye salmon is similar to 2014 at approximately 26 million, and escapement goals total ~ 8.5 million sockeye, leaving ~ 17 million sockeye available for harvest. Harvestable surpluses are projected for all systems. The largest returns are predicted for the Egegik, the Naknek/Kvichak, and

Nushagak districts. ADFG Commercial Fisheries Division has strategies in place for all mixed stock districts to address differential run strength should that occur. Test fishing to estimate total run strength into Bristol Bay continues at Port Moller. Commercial harvests and escapements of sockeye are still very small but should increase substantially very soon. In most districts, commercial fishing is now controlled by Emergency Order. In Naknek/Kvichak, there is insufficient information for a commercial opening and subsistence fishing has been extended to June 20. Some commercial fishing is taking place in Egegik and Nushagak districts. The Togiak section of the Togiak District was closed this past week and will be further restricted next week.

Chinook salmon returns have been poor to moderate in recent years throughout most of Alaska, including Bristol Bay. In 2013, there was one directed opening for Chinook salmon in the Nushagak District. Inriver return into the Nushagak River is ~ 31,000 and there is some directed commercial fishing in the Nushagak District with large mesh gear. Mesh size is restricted to 5 ½ inches through mid-July in the Togiak District.

Gillnets are the primary gear used for most subsistence fishing for salmon. A permit is required for subsistence harvest of salmon.

Chignik:

For Chignik, the forecast for total return of sockeye salmon is approximately 0.8 million early run and 0.9 million late run fish. The early-run SEG was reclassified to a BEG starting in 2014. The late-run SEG includes an additional 50,000 sockeye for additional subsistence harvest opportunity. Commercial fishing management is based on early run assessment until July 4; then late run assessment after that. Test fishing indicates that there is not a buildup of sockeye in Chignik Lagoon and no commercial fishing is scheduled. Age and size composition are less than anticipated. Sockeye escapement to date is 137,389.

The escapement goal for Chinook salmon is 1,300 fish. Projected commercial harvest in the Chignik Management Area is 5,000 Chinook salmon and is based upon anticipated fishing time for sockeye. In 2013, all inriver Chinook salmon fisheries, including the new Federal subsistence fishery, were closed by E.O. (State fisheries) or Special Action (Federal fishery closed effective July 27). No Federal subsistence harvest was realized for 2013. The Federal subsistence fishery for Chinook is currently open until August 9 with rod and reel from a point 300 feet upstream of the ADFG weir to Chignik Lake with no daily harvest or possession limit under the authority of a Federal subsistence fishing permit. Most of the Chinook return occurs in July. The Chinook run has barely begun. Federal subsistence fishing permits are available in four communities through village or tribal administrators.

Select tributaries to Chignik Lake are open to subsistence fishing. Gillnets and seines are the primary gear used for most subsistence fishing. A permit is required for subsistence harvest of salmon.

Alaska Peninsula:

There are numerous salmon stocks and fisheries throughout the Alaska Peninsula, as well as the Aleutian Islands. Several sockeye escapements (mostly on the north peninsula) are monitored with weirs including Nelson, Bear, Sandy, Ilnik, McLees, and Orzinski rivers. Preseason forecasts are made for only the Nelson (500 thousand) and late-run Bear (400 thousand) river sockeye stocks. The largest fisheries are managed under management plans. Management objectives vary by district and time; and include: local sockeye escapements; more distant sockeye returns to Bristol Bay or Chignik; and local pink, chum, or coho returns. Commercial fishing periods targeting Bristol Bay sockeye have been established during June for the South Unimak fishery. Sockeye returns to Alaska Peninsula systems have just begun and escapements for select systems are: Nelson River (26,717); Bear River (31,843, and McLees (1,696).

A permit is required for subsistence harvest of salmon.

Stock Assessment funded under the Subsistence Fishery Resource Monitoring Program:
For 2014, there are no stock assessment projects funded under the Subsistence Fishery Resource Monitoring Program.

Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Bristol Bay Area
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

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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Emmonak Summer Office (907) 949-1798

The Emmonak Field Office is operational for the 2014 field season and can be contacted by calling (907) 949-1798.

Assessment Information

Ice out on the lower Yukon River was one of the earliest on record with the ice going out at Alakanuk on May 9, fourteen days earlier than average. Assessment information and subsistence fishing reports are confirming an early entry timing of both Chinook and summer chum salmon.

The Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF) consists of the Big Eddy and Middle Mouth Chinook drift and set net fisheries and chum salmon drift net fishery. To conserve Chinook salmon, Chinook salmon test fishery operations have been reduced, and an effort is being made to release alive as many Chinook salmon as possible caught in the drift fishery. The LYTF Chinook salmon assessment is not comparable to historical averages due to reduced operations, however the test nets are providing useful information for detecting pulses and relative run strength.

The LYTF detected an early group of Chinook salmon passing at the end of May and the first pulse of Chinook salmon on June 6. A second pulse of Chinook salmon was detected by the LYTF on June 13. Test fish and Pilot Station sonar estimates are holding up, possibly indicating the beginning of a third pulse blending into the back end of the second pulse. Additionally, test fish numbers have been increasing in Middle Mouth which is typical for second pulse Chinook. The first pulse of Chinook typically contains the $\frac{1}{4}$ point of the Chinook run and the second pulse typically contains the mid-point of the Chinook run. The average first $\frac{1}{4}$ point of the Chinook salmon run in Emmonak is June 16, and the average first $\frac{1}{4}$ point for early Chinook salmon runs is June 8.

Combining the test fish information, the historical early Chinook run timing, and NOAA's Chinook salmon run timing model, managers are predicting that the $\frac{1}{4}$ point of this year's Chinook salmon run is on or near June 8. With an average of eleven days between the $\frac{1}{4}$ point and the $\frac{3}{4}$ point, that would put the $\frac{3}{4}$ point of the Chinook run at the LYTF on or near June 19. The Lower Yukon chum salmon drift net test fishery also detected a group of early chum at the end of May and the first pulse of summer chum on June 7. A second pulse was detected on June 14 and a third pulse was detected on June 19. The summer chum run appears to be early, however it is still too early to be confident in run timing. The average first $\frac{1}{4}$ point of the summer chum run in the LYTF in recent years is June 19. The Pilot Station sonar crew has been test fishing since June 4 and began estimating salmon passage on June 5. The sonar has detected the first two pulses of Chinook salmon and possibly the third pulse blended into the second. Two pulses of summer chum have been detected by the sonar and pulse three is expected to

arrive at the sonar June 23. Estimated passage through June 21 is 87,325 Chinook salmon, and 845,099 summer chum salmon.

Pilot Station sonar Chinook salmon genetic stock ID program estimates that the first pulse of Chinook salmon was approximately 50% Canadian origin and 50% Alaskan origin. The second pulse of Chinook salmon was 52% Canadian origin and 48% Alaskan origin. The Rapids test fish wheel began operations on June 9 and has detected a few early Chinook salmon. Managers are anticipating the first pulse of Chinook to hit the Rapids on June 24. The Andrafsky weir and Anvik River sonar are just getting started, and the Gisasa River and Henshaw Creek weirs will start operations as soon as high waters at the weir sites recede.

Subsistence fishermen catch reports indicate that whitefish harvests were good in the two weeks after ice out. Subsistence fishermen along the coast in Scammon Bay and Hooper Bay have reported good chum catches with some nearly finishing their subsistence chum harvests. Chum salmon subsistence reports in the lower Yukon have indicated good catches with dip nets when summer chum have been available in large enough numbers to make dip nets effective. Subsistence fishermen in District 3 and the lower section of Subdistrict 4A reported good catches of summer chum salmon this week. Summer chum salmon abundance is expected to continue rising in District 4 in the coming week.

Summer Season Outlook and Management Strategies

The summer chum run is projected to be average to above average and to provide for escapement and subsistence uses. A surplus of 300,000 to 500,000 summer chum is anticipated to be available for commercial harvest. However, commercial fishing opportunity will depend upon available markets and the strength of the overlapping Chinook salmon run. It's too early in the summer chum run to estimate an inseason run projection. The Chinook salmon pre-season outlook has been for a run size ranging between 64,000 to 121,000 Chinook salmon with managers anticipating the run near the low end, based upon recent productivity. However, at this time, based upon the Pilot Station sonar and other assessment information, the Chinook salmon run is coming well above the low end of the projected range. The current preliminary in-season run projection is for a Chinook salmon run approaching 120,000 salmon. Managers are remaining cautious and the projection could go up or down depending upon the strength the Chinook salmon passage this coming week. Regardless, the Chinook salmon run remains poor, and subsistence conservation measures will be required to share the available subsistence harvest and meet escapement goals including our border passage objective into Canada. No directed Chinook salmon commercial or subsistence fishery is anticipated.

Management Actions

Managers have been instituting actions consistent with the preseason management plan. On May 16 the Coastal District and Districts 1 & 2 were restricted to 6-inch or less mesh gear to protect early run Chinook salmon while providing fishermen the opportunity to harvest whitefish. On May 26, subsistence salmon fishing was closed in the northern portion of the Coastal District and Districts 1, 2, and 3 to conserve Chinook salmon.

Subsistence fishing utilizing 4-inch or less mesh gear is still allowed 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Subsistence chum salmon fishing with dip nets was opened in Districts 1, 2, and 3 on June 1. Subsistence fishermen utilizing dip nets are required to release all Chinook salmon back into the river. On June 10, Districts 1 and 2 were put on a concurrent subsistence/commercial fishing schedule with dip nets and beach seines targeting chum salmon with Chinook salmon released alive back into the river. In District 1 subsistence and commercial fishing is open concurrently Sunday-Friday from noon until midnight and subsistence only is open Saturdays from 6:00 a.m. until midnight. In District 2 subsistence and commercial fishing is open concurrently Sunday-Friday from noon until 10:00 p.m. and subsistence only is open Saturdays from 6:00 a.m. until midnight.

The sequential subsistence salmon fishing closures initiated in Districts 1, 2, and 3 continued upstream in the lower Subdistrict 4A on May 31, on June 2 in upper Subdistrict 4A, on June 4 in Subdistricts 4B/C, and on June 7 in Subdistricts 5A/B/C. Subsistence fishing in the lower section of Yukon River Subdistrict 5D closed on June 11, in the middle section of Subdistrict 5D on June 15, and the upper section of Subdistrict 5D on June 17. The Koyukuk and Innoko Rivers were closed to subsistence salmon fishing on June 18 and June 19, respectively. The lower section of Subdistrict 4A was opened to subsistence chum salmon fishing utilizing dip nets and fish wheels (with live release of Chinook salmon) on June 18. The upper section of Subdistrict 4A and Subdistrict 4B/C will open to subsistence salmon fishing utilizing dip nets and live release fish wheels on June 23 and June 26, respectively. The Anvik River was opened to subsistence chum salmon fishing utilizing dip nets and beach seines under the *Anvik River Special Management Area* plan. District 6 is open on the normal subsistence fishing schedule of two 42-hour periods with gillnets restricted to 7.5 inch or less mesh size, however fishermen should expect closures beginning the week of June 22. Subsistence fishing with 4-inch or less mesh gear is allowed 24/7 throughout the drainage during closures.

Commercial fishing for summer chum salmon has been ongoing in Districts 1 and 2 since June 9. Commercial fishing gear has been restricted to dip nets and beach seines only with live release of Chinook salmon. A total of 131,394 summer chum salmon have been harvested in the 11 openings in each of Districts 1 and 2, and a total of 3,454 Chinook salmon have been caught and released. Seven, 24 hour summer chum commercial fishing periods will be opened in Subdistrict 4A starting Monday, June 23. These will be fish wheel only openings utilizing “fish friendly” fish wheels, with fish wheels manned at all times and all Chinook salmon caught required to be released alive directly back into the water.

Kuskokwim River – Brian McCaffery, Refuge Manager, Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge Brian McCaffery@fws.gov or Robert Sundown (907) 543-1007 Robert_Sundown@fws.gov

Kuskokwim River

Summary:

The Refuge along with the Alaska Department of Fish & Game with information from the Bethel Test Fishery determined that an adequate ratio of (chum/sockeye):Chinook salmon existed to announce a 4 hour opening on Friday, June 20th. The Kuskokwim Salmon Management Working Group met earlier in the week and voted to support manager's ability to make decisions later that week for openings. Weirs are still in the process of being installed and weirs on the Refuge are expected to be fish tight this week. The ratios of chum and sockeye to Chinook were at 7:1 at the end of this week and are expected only to improve for the rest of the season

Bethel Test Fish:

- Through the evening tide on June 20th the cumulative index was 440. At this time last year, the cumulative index was 100; a year escapement was not achieved.
- Through the evening tide on June 20th the cumulative chum index was 648, at this time last year the cumulative index was 139 .
- Sockeye salmon have an index of 221 through June 20th. At this time last year the cumulative index was 179.

Management Actions:

A Special Action was announced to open the Kuskokwim River to subsistence fishing with 6" gillnets for 4 hours on Friday, June 20th downriver of the Johnson River on the lower Kuskokwim. Another opening was announced over the weekend to allow fishing with 6" gillnets from Tuluksak downriver on Tuesday, June 24th. The time and gear will be split at the Johnson River, with downriver of having an 8 hour and 300' (50 fathom net) opportunity and upriver of having a 4 hour and 150' (25 fathom) opportunity. The Refuge also issued a special action 3-KS-07-14 to begin the transition of management to the State of Alaska this week as we are having gillnet opportunity for chum and sockeye salmon. Special actions 3-KS-01-14 and 3-KS-04-14 will remain in effect through this week. The first limits the fishery to Federally Qualified Users and the second allows the Social and Cultural Fishing Opportunity to run its course through the end of the month.

Subsistence Fishing:

Information from the June 20 period indicates that a total of 198 boats were estimated to have participated in the 4 hour subsistence opening downriver of the Johnson River. Ratios were near 15:1 and in some cases 20:1 using 6-inch mesh nets. The range of observed harvest was from 4 fish to 124 fish from 60 vessels sampled by law enforcement. A fair estimate of average harvest was about 50 fish per vessel. An

estimation of total harvest is approximately 9,800 fish with 660 of them being Chinook salmon. Another opening has been called for June 24, 2014 from 8:00am to 4:00pm.

Law Enforcement Actions:

Through the end of the week, Federal officers seized approximately 31 nets and issued 8 citations and 7 warnings for fishing gear greater than 4 inches or longer than 60 feet. The total number of nets checked by law enforcement officers has been approximately 342 nets. The offense charged has been 50 CFR 100.19(g) and the bail schedule for the offense is \$250 with a \$25 court fee for a total of \$275, with the net returned.

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

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

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/>

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Norton Sound

Management focus this season continues on conserving Chinook salmon for escapement needs, and focusing harvest pressure on the more numerous chum and pink salmon. The installation of salmon enumeration projects in eastern Norton Sound has begun but has been hampered by high water levels. Commercial salmon openings in the Norton Bay Subdistrict will index early run strength of pink salmon and utilize pink salmon harvest surpluses.

All waters from Rocky point to Point Romanof remain closed to sport fishing for Chinook salmon until August 15 unless superseded by subsequent emergency order. Use of bait is prohibited and any Chinook salmon incidentally caught while sport fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be immediately released alive.

Other Southern Norton Sound Waters (Black Point to Point Romanof)

All marine waters from Black Point south to Wood Point, east of St. Michael remain closed to subsistence salmon fishing through June 30, 2014 in order to protect Chinook salmon migrating through southern Norton Sound. Subsistence salmon fishing in these marine waters will revert back to 24 hours a day 7 days a week on July 1. For all the waters from Wood Point to Point Romanof, subsistence salmon fishing is open 7 days a week but fisherman are requested to use set gillnets with a mesh size of 6 inches or less to minimize incidental harvests of Chinook salmon.

Unalakleet (Subdistrict 6)

The marine waters of the Subdistrict reopened to subsistence salmon fishing with set gillnets for 30 hours between 6 p.m. Wednesday, June 18 to 12 midnight, Thursday, June 19. Gillnets were restricted to a mesh size of 6 inches or less. Freshwater areas remain closed to subsistence salmon fishing and only set gillnets with a mesh size of 4 inches or less may be used in freshwater.

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. Counts started on June 14 but no salmon were sighted through June 18. The earliest king spotted in the last 10 years was June 21 and the earliest chum was June 16. 2 million plus pinks were counted past the tower in the record year of 2006 with the first pink spotted on June 19.

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. High water is delaying installation. In the four year history of the project, the earliest king (Chinook) was spotted on June 21, the earliest chum on June 18, and the earliest pink on June 21.

Shaktoolik (Subdistrict 5)

The marine waters of the Subdistrict reopened to subsistence salmon fishing with set gillnets for 30 hours between 6 p.m. Wednesday, June 18 to 12 midnight, Thursday, June 19. Gillnets were restricted to a mesh size of 6 inches or less. Freshwater areas remain closed to subsistence salmon fishing, and only set gillnets with a mesh size of 4 inches or less may be used in freshwater.

Shaktoolik Sonar/Tower – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game. It has no escapement goals established. Counts began on June 17 with 2 kings and 1 chum being counted before high and turbid water resulted in counts being suspended. The sonar began operations on June 16 and has counted 4 fish.

Norton Bay (Subdistrict 4)

The marine waters eastward of a line from Bald head south to Point Dexter and the Inglutalik River and Ungalik River drainages reopened to subsistence salmon fishing with set gillnets for one 48-hour period from 10 a.m. Thursday, June 19 to 10 a.m. Saturday, June 21. The Koyuk River remains open to subsistence salmon fishing for 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

Additionally, one commercial salmon fishing period was opened from 12 noon, Thursday, June 19 to 12 midnight, Friday June 20. This commercial opening was directed at pink salmon, and commercial permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of gear in aggregate and gillnets were restricted to a mesh size of 4.5 inches or less.

Inglutalik River Tower – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game. No escapement goals have been established. The crew has started setting up camp. The earliest counts in the three year project history have been June 22 for kings, June 21 for chums, and June 26 for pinks.

Elim (Subdistrict 3)

For subsistence fishing, the retention of king salmon is prohibited and the use of bait when using hook and line is banned until August 15 or subsequent emergency order. Any king salmon incidentally hooked must be immediately released in the water.

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). Counts began on June 15. Cumulative counts through June 18 are 42 chums and 33 pinks.

Golovin (Subdistrict 2)

For subsistence fishing, the retention of king salmon is prohibited and the use of bait when using hook and line is banned until August 15 or subsequent emergency order. Any king salmon incidentally hooked must be immediately released in the water.

Fish River Tower – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish and Game. No escapement goals established. The crew has set up the camp, and is in the process of getting a partial weir and second tower set up.

Nome (Subdistrict 1)

The Nome Subdistrict subsistence salmon gillnet fishing schedule went into effect June 15, 2014. A Nome Subdistrict subsistence permit is required to harvest salmon when subsistence fishing.

The weekly schedule for all marine waters west of Cape Nome is from 6 p.m. Wednesday until 6 p.m. Saturday. The marine waters east of Cape Nome will remain open seven days a week for subsistence gillnet fishing. Gillnets up to 300 feet in length are allowed in the marine waters. Drift netting is not allowed.

The schedule for all fresh waters in the Subdistrict is from 6 p.m. Monday until 6 p.m. Wednesday and from 6 p.m. Thursday until 6 p.m. Saturday. Specific fresh waters open to gillnet fishing are listed on the permit. Gillnets up to 50 feet in length are allowed, but no more than one-half of any channel may be blocked by gillnets. Drift netting is not allowed.

Beach seining is allowed during subsistence gillnet fishing periods from June 15 through July 25.

Subsistence hook and line fishing is open at all times. Sport fish bag limits apply when using hook and line outside of Nome Subdistrict subsistence areas.

The Penny and Cripple rivers are closed to both sport and subsistence chum salmon fishing.

Solomon River Weir – A Fish & Game project has no escapement goals established. Set up is scheduled for next week.

Eldorado River Weir – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game has an escapement goal of 6,000 – 9,200 chum salmon. Work setting up the weir is scheduled to begin this coming weekend.

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. Setting up the camp began Thursday, June 19.

Snake River Weir – A cooperative project between Fish & Game and NSEDC has an escapement goal of 1,600 – 2,500 chum salmon. Set up is scheduled for July.

Glacial Lake Weir – A cooperative project between and Fish & Game and NSEDC has an escapement goal of 800 – 1,600 sockeyes based on aerial survey. Set up is scheduled for the end of June.

Port Clarence District

Sockeye and chum salmon are beginning to show up in Grantley Harbor and folks are looking forward to subsistence fishing and getting out to their camps.

Pilgrim River Weir – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game has an escapement goal of 4,000 – 8,000 sockeyes based on aerial survey at Salmon Lake & Grand Central tributary to Salmon Lake. Weir set up is scheduled for the last week of June.

Kotzebue District

Commercial salmon fishing is expected to open July 10 with the possibility this year of three buyers.

Kobuk River Test Fish - Fish & Game project.

The project is scheduled to begin in mid-July.

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/Norton.pdf