

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



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**2017 Yukon River Summer Salmon Fishery News Release # 12
Summer Update # 2, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery
Districts Affected: Yukon Area**

Catch rates have increased for Chinook and summer chum salmon in the Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF) program. This indicates that daily Chinook and summer chum passage at the sonar near Pilot Station should increase during the next several days. As of June 12, early summer chum salmon should be near Kaltag and the early Chinook salmon should be between Koyukuk and Galena.

Chinook salmon daily passage at the sonar near Pilot Station exceeded 6,600 fish on June 9, likely indicating the start of the first pulse passing the sonar. Passage rates over the next several days will help determine the strength and duration of this first pulse. As of June 12, the start of the first pulse of Chinook salmon should be between Russian Mission and Holy Cross. Although it is too early to determine run timing, the date of the first quarter point for Chinook salmon at the sonar near Pilot Station is, on average, between June 14 (for an early run) and June 19 (for an average run). The average date of the first quarter point for summer chum salmon at the sonar near Pilot Station is June 22.

The Yukon River Inseason Salmon Management Teleconferences hosted by the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association will be held every Tuesday, beginning at 1:00 p.m. Alaska time. Dial (800) 315-6338, and enter participant code: YUKON #. Fishermen are encouraged to call in and share information about their fishing and local river conditions which helps with run assessment.

Assessment Projects

Lower Yukon Test Fishery/ ADF&G and YDFDA

The combined cumulative Chinook salmon CPUE for the 8.5-inch set gillnet at the Big Eddy and Middle Mouth sites, as of June 11, is 4.23, which is above the historical average of 3.40. The cumulative Chinook salmon CPUE in the 8.25-inch drift gillnet at the Big Eddy site, as of June 11, is 66.15, which is slightly above the historical average of 65.54. As of June 11, the combined cumulative summer chum salmon CPUE for the 5.5-inch drift gill net at the Big Eddy and Middle Mouth sites is 872.67, which is well above the historical median of 70.01 for this date.

Operations at the LYTF for both Chinook and summer chum salmon have been altered from previous years so caution should be taken when comparing current catch rates to historical catch rates. Any Chinook salmon healthy enough will be released alive from the test nets and any dead or injured salmon will be distributed to village elders by the Tribal Councils.

Sonar Project near Pilot Station/ ADF&G

The sonar project near Pilot Station has been fully operational since June 1, which is one of the earliest start dates since 1995. The project is operating well and has not experienced any issues from debris or equipment malfunction. As of June 11, estimated passage is 21,635 Chinook salmon, which is above the historical cumulative average of 15,508 Chinook salmon for this date. As of June 11, estimated summer chum passage is 89,148 fish, which is well above the historical cumulative median of 23,016 summer chum salmon for this date.

Management Strategy

A precautionary management approach is being taken this season given the trend of below-average returns of Chinook salmon. The first pulse of Chinook salmon, which is typically dominated by stocks bound for Canada, has entered the lower river. Management actions have been taken in Districts 1 through 3 to close salmon fishing with gillnets and re-open with selective gear. Selective gear includes dip nets, beach seines, and manned (live-release) fish wheels, which allow harvest of summer chum and the safe release of all Chinook salmon.

Current Management

As a reminder, during salmon fishing closures, fishermen may use gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh of 60 feet or shorter length.

All Chinook salmon must be released alive from dip nets, beach seines, and live-release fish wheels during openings with selective gear.

South Coastal District (from the Naskonat Peninsula north to 62 degrees North latitude):

Subsistence fishing is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week, with 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

District 1 (including Black River and North Coastal District):

Subsistence fishing is open with dip nets and beach seines on the following schedule:

- **4 a.m. Sundays until 2 p.m. Mondays (34-hour period); and**
- **4 a.m. until 2 p.m. Tuesdays through Saturdays (10-hour period each day)**

District 2:

Subsistence fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with dip nets and beach seines.

District 3:

Subsistence fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with dip nets, beach seines, and live-release fish wheels.

Innoko River:

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

Subdistrict 4-A Lower:

Subsistence fishing is open with 6-inch or smaller mesh set and drift gillnets and fish wheels from 6 p.m. Sunday June 11, until 6 p.m. Tuesday June 13.

Effective 6 a.m. Wednesday, June 14, subsistence salmon fishing will re-open with dip nets, beach seines, and live-release fish wheels only to target summer chum salmon 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Subdistrict 4-A Upper:

Subsistence fishing is open with 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets for the following two periods:

- **6 p.m. Sunday, June 11, to 6 p.m. Tuesday, June 13**
- **6 p.m. Wednesday, June 14, to 6 p.m. Friday, June 16 when salmon fishing with gillnets will close.**

Effective 6 a.m. Saturday, June 17, subsistence salmon fishing will re-open with dip nets, beach seines, and live-release fish wheels only to target summer chum salmon for 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Koyukuk River:

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

Subdistrict 4-B and 4-C:

Subsistence fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh size gillnets and fish wheels until the first pulse of Chinook salmon arrives.

Effective 6 p.m. on Sunday, June 18, subsistence salmon fishing will close. This includes drift gillnet fishing in Federal public waters.

Effective 6 p.m. Monday, June 19, subsistence salmon fishing will re-open with dip nets, beach seines, and live-release fish wheels only to target summer chum salmon for 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

District 5:

Subsistence fishing is expected to remain open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh size gillnets and fish wheels until the first pulse of Chinook salmon arrives.

Subdistricts 6-A and 6-B:

Subsistence fishing is expected to remain open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh size gillnets and fish wheels until the first pulse of Chinook salmon arrives.

Subdistricts 6-C (Personal use fishery):

Personal use salmon fishing is open for two 42-hour fishing periods per week, from 6:00 p.m. Friday until 12:00 noon Sunday, and from 6:00 p.m. Monday until 12:00 noon Wednesday. Fishermen may use fish wheels or 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

Old Minto Area and Tanana Areas:

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

Commercial Fishing:

Commercial fishing has begun in District 1 with selective gear and will be provided in District 2 based on buyer capacity. All commercial fishermen must make sure they have a buyer before fishing each opening.

District 1 (including Black River) Commercial:

Commercial fishing is open on a schedule of six 12-hour periods per week with dip nets and beach seines from 3 p.m. each day to 3 a.m. the following day Monday thru Saturday.

All Chinook salmon caught in dip nets and beach seine gear must be released alive immediately and recorded on your fish ticket.

Subsistence fishing is closed one hour before, during and one hour after commercial openings.

Fishing schedules, test fish catches and sonar counts are available 24 hours a day at (866) 479-7387 (toll free outside of Fairbanks); in Fairbanks, call (907) 459-7387.

If you have any questions, please call ADF&G in Emmonak at 949-1320, or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Emmonak at 949-1798.

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