

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



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**2017 Yukon River Fall Salmon Fishery News Release # 33
Fall Update # 4, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery
Districts Affected: Yukon Area**

Fall Season Assessment

The 2017 fall chum salmon inseason projection is for a run size greater than 1.1 million fish. This level of abundance is sufficient to provide for escapement, subsistence harvest, with a surplus available for commercial and personal use purposes. The estimated fall chum salmon run size through August 13 (based on the mainstem sonar near Pilot Station and the downstream harvest) is estimated to be 715,000 fish, which is above the historical median of 401,000 fish for that date. The first pulse of fall chum salmon entered the Yukon River on July 17 and is expected to be near Fort Yukon at this time, and the Canadian border around August 20. The second pulse of fall chum salmon entered the Yukon River on July 27 and is expected to be near Tanana/Huslia around August 15, Rampart around August 17 and the Canadian border around August 30. A small group entered the Yukon River on August 1 and is expected to be near Galena around August 15, Tanana/Huslia around August 20, Rampart around August 22, and the Canadian border around September 5. An extremely large pulse of fall chum salmon has been entering the Yukon River over the last four days and is beginning to pass the sonar project near Pilot Station where the size of the pulse will be estimated. This current pulse is expected to be near Anvik around August 20, Nulato around August 25, Tanana/Huslia around August 31, Fort Yukon around September 8 and the Canadian border around September 15.

The coho salmon outlook is for an average return. The primary parent year for coho salmon this year is from the escapements of 2013. Coho salmon have been slow to date but began picking up with the latest pulse of fish moving into the Yukon River.

Fall Assessment Projects

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

The cumulative CPUE for the project through August 13 was 2,007.39 fall chum salmon, which is above the historical median of 804.79 for this date. The index is at the average mid-point of the fall chum salmon run at this project.

The cumulative CPUE for coho salmon as of August 13 was 58.05, which is below the historical median of 107.27 for this date. The coho salmon run is at the average first quarter-point.

Mountain Village Drift Test Fishing/Asacarsarmiut Traditional Council

The cumulative CPUE for the project through August 13 was 3,371.88 fall chum salmon, which is above the historical median of 1,246.87 for this date. The average three-quarter point is on August 18 for fall chum salmon run at this project.

The cumulative CPUE for coho salmon as of August 13 was 49.17, which is well below the historical median of 184.69 for this date. The coho salmon run is approaching the first quarter-point at this project.

Sonar Project near Pilot Station/ADF&G

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage estimate through August 13 was 531,281, which is above the median passage of approximately 369,363 fish for this date. The fall chum salmon run is currently between the average mid-point and three-quarter point of passage.

The cumulative coho salmon passage estimate through August 13 was 12,872, which is below the median passage of approximately 28,224 fish for this date. The coho salmon run is currently approaching the average first-quarter point of passage.

Chandalar River Sonar / USFWS

The Chandalar River sonar became operational on August 8. The cumulative fall chum salmon passage estimate through August 13 was 6,125, which is above the median passage of approximately 3,729 fish for this date.

Age Composition Fall Season/ADF&G

The preliminary fall chum salmon age composition from the LYTF 6-inch drift gillnets indicates the run is dominated by age-4 fish, which is typical. The 2017 preliminary proportion of age-4 and age-5 fish is 76% and 24% respectively compared to the average of 63% age-4 and 36% age-5 fish based on a samples size of 548. Females represent 60% of 697 fish sampled which is above the average is 56%. Preliminary age samples from the commercial test fishery indicate similarly high proportions of age-4 fish at 75% and age-5 fish at 24%.

Stock Identification

Genetic mixed stock analysis (MSA) on chum salmon for the strata from July 19–22 that passed the mainstem sonar, included the first large pulse, contained approximately 62% summer chum and 38% fall chum salmon. The summer chum salmon components contained Lower summer stocks at 25%, Tanana summer at 21%, and middle Yukon stocks at 16%. The fall chum salmon stocks in the sample consisted of 25% Border/US (Chandalar/Sheenjok), 12% Canadian and less than 1% Tanana stocks. The second pulse to pass the mainstem Yukon River sonar from July 23 through August 2 contained 27% summer stocks and 73% fall stocks. The fall chum salmon stocks in the samples consisted of 41% Border/US (Chandalar/Sheenjok), 23% Canadian and 9%

Tanana stocks. The next strata representing chum salmon passage from August 3–12 should be available later this week.

Fall Season Management Strategies

Subsistence salmon fishing in all Alaska areas of the Yukon River are under fall season management. The subsistence fishing schedules in District 4 and Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C have been liberalized to seven days per week, 24 hour per day. Subsistence fishermen may use 7.5 inch or smaller mesh size gillnets and fish wheels.

Summer Assessment Projects

Eagle Sonar / ADF&G and DFO

As of August 13, approximately 72,098 Chinook salmon have been estimated past the sonar project near Eagle, which is above the historical average of approximately 55,690 fish for this date. Through August 10, approximately 51%, or 36,000 fish, of the Chinook salmon passage at the Eagle sonar were female. On average, about 41% of the passage at the Eagle sonar consists of female Chinook salmon. The 2017 Chinook salmon run surpassed the upper end of the Interim Management Escapement Goal into Canada with sufficient surplus for the Canadian harvest share of the Total Allowable Catch.

Age Composition

The age composition of 536 Chinook salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the Pilot Station test fishery through July 19 was 8% age-4, 54% age-5, 36% age-6, and 3% age-7 fish. About 53% of the fish sampled were female. Age-5 fish and females were above average, age-6 fish were average, and age-4 fish were below average.

The age composition of 271 Chinook salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the Eagle test fishery through July 20 was 2% age-4, 48% age-5, 49% age-6, and 1% age-7 fish. About 43% of the fish sampled were female. Age-5 fish and females were above average, age-6 fish were average, and age-4 fish were below average.

Current Management

Coastal District (from the Naskonat Peninsula to 1 mile south of Black River, including the communities of Hooper Bay and Scammon Bay):

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

District 1 (including the area 1 mile south of Black River north to Point Romanof and waters up to 3 miles offshore, including the communities of Nunam-Iqua, Alakanuk, Emmonak, and Kotlik):

Subsistence salmon fishing is open 24 hours per day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets, except for closures before, during, and after each commercial fishing period.

District 2:

Subsistence salmon fishing is open 24 hours per day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets, except for closures before, during, and after each commercial fishing period.

District 3:

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

Innoko River:

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

Subdistrict 4-A (from $\frac{3}{4}$ mile downstream of Old Paradise Village upstream to Cone Point, which includes the mainstem Yukon River communities of Anvik, Grayling, Kaltag, Nulato, and Koyukuk):

Subsistence fishing in Subdistrict 4A is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

Drift gillnet fishing is open in the upper portion of Subdistrict 4-A only (Stink Creek to the tip of Cone Point and includes Kaltag, Nulato, and Koyukuk) for the remainder of the fall season.

Drift gillnets may not exceed 150 feet in length.

Koyukuk River:

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

Subdistrict 4-B and 4-C (from Cone Point upstream to the westernmost edge of Illinois Creek, which includes the communities of Galena and Ruby):

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

Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B and 5-C (from Illinois Creek upstream to regulatory markers two miles downstream of Waldron Creek which includes the communities of Tanana, Rampart, and the Yukon River Bridge area):

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

Subdistrict 5-D (from an ADF&G regulatory marker two miles downstream of Waldron Creek upstream to the U.S./Canada border and including all adjacent tributaries, which includes the communities of Stevens Village, Beaver, Venetie, Chalkyitsik, Fort Yukon, Circle, and Eagle):

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

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

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

Subsistence fishing is open on the regulatory fishing schedule of two 42-hour periods per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels:

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

Kantishna River:

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

Old Minto Area:

Subsistence fishing is on the regulatory subsistence fishing schedule of 5 days per week from 6 p.m. Fridays until 6 p.m. Wednesdays with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

Subsistence fishermen are reminded that a subsistence fishing permit is required to fish for salmon in the Tanana River drainage. Permits are available from the ADF&G office in Fairbanks. Subsistence fishermen fishing in the upper portion of Subdistrict 6-B, from three miles upstream of the mouth of Totchaket Slough to Wood River, are required to report their harvest catches to the department by **4:30 PM Thursday** each week by contacting the department at **(907) 459-7388**. When you call, please provide your name, permit number, fishing location, and daily catch by species for that week.

Upper Tanana Area (the Tanana River from the confluence with the mouth of Volkmar River on the north bank and the mouth of the Johnson River on the south bank upstream to the Tanana River headwaters, including the communities of Healy Lake, Dot Lake, Tanacross, Northway, and the Tok area):

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

A subsistence fishing permit is required to fish in the Upper Tanana River Drainage.

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

Personal use fishing is open on the regulatory fishing schedule of two 42-hour periods per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels:

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

A reminder to fishermen that a personal use salmon fishing permit and a sport fish license are required to fish in Subdistrict 6-C of the Tanana River. Fishermen are required to report their harvest catches to the department by **4:30 PM Thursday** each week by contacting the department at **(907) 459-7388**. When you call, please provide your name, permit number, fishing location, and daily catch by species for that week.

Fall Season Commercial Salmon Fishing

In the Lower Yukon, the fall chum salmon commercial fishing season is open in Districts 1, 2, and 3. Fishermen in Districts 1 and 2 should stand by for announcements concerning commercial periods. All commercial fishermen must make sure they have a buyer before fishing each opening. Commercial fishermen may use gillnets restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size.

In the Upper Yukon, the fall chum salmon commercial fishing season is open in District 4, Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C, and District 6. All commercial fishermen must make sure they have a buyer before fishing each opening. Commercial fishermen may use fish wheels and gillnets restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size.

The sale of incidentally caught Chinook salmon in the fall chum salmon directed commercial fisheries is prohibited. Commercial gillnet fishermen can release live Chinook salmon or use them for subsistence purposes. Chinook salmon retained from commercial gear must be recorded on a fish ticket as retained but not sold.

Processors, catcher sellers, or direct marketers intending to operate in the Yukon Area must notify the department of their intent prior to operating by contacting the Fairbanks office at 459-7274.

District 1, including the Set Net Only Area:

There are no commercial announcements at this time. Stand by for announcements.

Verbal reports from District 1 period #9 commercial opening on August 12 indicate a preliminary harvest of 42,420 fall chum and 2,766 coho salmon from 215 deliveries. The preliminary cumulative commercial harvest through August 12 in District 1 is 233,299 fall chum and 7,277 coho salmon.

District 2:

There are no commercial announcements at this time. Stand by for announcements.

Verbal reports from District 2 period #7 commercial opening on August 13 indicate a preliminary harvest of 10,033 fall chum and 75 coho salmon from 60 deliveries. The preliminary cumulative commercial harvest through August 13 in District 2 is 51,743 fall chum salmon and 1,216 coho salmon.

Subdistrict 4-A Commercial (from $\frac{3}{4}$ miles downstream of Old Paradise Village upstream to Cone Point including the communities of Anvik, Grayling, Kaltag, Nulato, and Koyukuk):

Commercial fishing closes at 11:59 p.m. August 14. Fishermen may use 6-inch or smaller mesh size set gillnets or fish wheels. Fish wheels do not need to be manned during the fall season commercial fishery. Commercial fishermen should confirm their market before they fish.

The preliminary cumulative commercial harvest through August 12 in Subdistrict 4-A is 7,304 fall chum salmon.

Subdistrict 5-B, and 5-C Commercial Fishing Schedule:

Commercial fishing in Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C, is open 24 hours per day, seven days per week until further notice. Each commercial fishing period will be 7-days and will end at 12:00 p.m. Mondays each week until further notice. Fishermen may use fish wheels or gillnets with 6 inch or smaller mesh size. Commercial fishermen should confirm their market before they fish.

The preliminary cumulative commercial harvest through August 14 is 944 fall chum salmon.

Subdistrict 6-A, 6-B, and 6-C (from the mouth of the Tanana River upstream to the downstream mouth of the Salcha River, which includes the communities of Manley, Minto, Nenana, Fairbanks, North Pole, and Salcha):

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

- **6 p.m. Fridays, until noon Sundays**
- **6 p.m. Mondays, until noon Wednesdays**

Commercial fishermen should coordinate with the buyer on a daily basis regarding scheduling deliveries. Commercial fish wheels in District 6 are not required to be manned. All salmon harvested during commercial fishing operations must be recorded on a fish ticket at the time of sale. Chinook salmon may not be sold. All Chinook salmon caught but not sold must also be recorded on the fish ticket. Other fish species caught but not sold must also be recorded on the fish ticket. Processors, catcher-sellers, or direct marketers should notify the department of their intent to operate by contacting the Fairbanks office at 459-7274.

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 (907) 949-1320, the ADF&G office in Fairbanks at (907) 459-7274 or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Fairbanks at (907) 455-1849.

This is an announcement by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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