

FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF JULY 29 – AUGUST 4, 2019. Report #10

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The purpose of the weekly fisheries update is to provide the reader with an overall summary of the status of subsistence related fisheries throughout the state of Alaska. The target audience is the Federal Subsistence Board and its Staff Committee. The report was compiled with the assistance of the Federal in-season managers and OSM staff that provided weekly updated information by the close of business on Friday of the reporting week. My goal is to have the report sent by the close of business the following Monday. Please keep in mind, many of the authors do not have alternates or are deployed in the field on occasion and do not have access to communications to submit a weekly report. 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, justin.koller@usda.gov

Falls Lake - The Forest Service and the Organized Village of Kake operate the Falls Lake trap and video net weir which was operating as of June 26. Sockeye Salmon began entering the lake on July 23, which is over a week later than usual. The water temperature peaked at 19C (66F) on July 14, which may have delayed escapement. The temperature has been fluctuating between 17-18C recently. As of August 4, 174 Sockeye have been counted above the fish pass. Total escapement is probably about 500 because some use the falls to enter the lake and are counted on the net weir video. About 450 have been harvested in the subsistence fishery. The final escapement estimate in 2018 was 2,261 Sockeye Salmon while the final subsistence and sport harvest in the marine terminal area was 720. Subsistence harvest accounted for 90% of terminal area harvest.

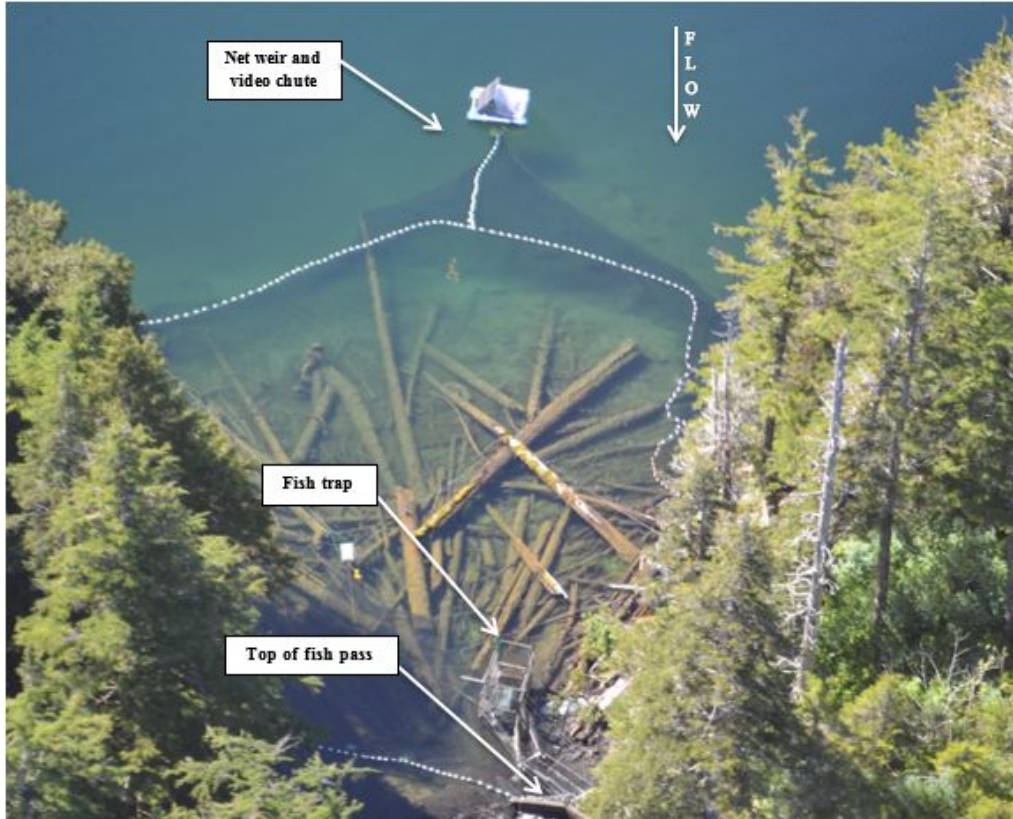


Figure 1. Aerial photo of the Falls Lake outlet illustrating the typical location of weir equipment.

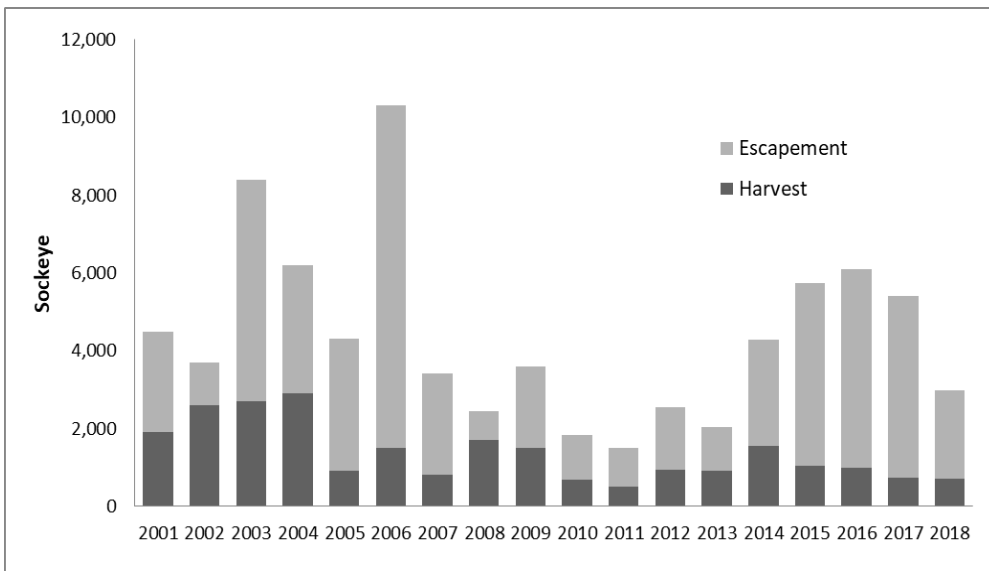


Figure 2. Escapement plus harvest equals total terminal run of Sockeye Salmon at Falls Lake, 2001-2018.

Klag Bay - The Sitka Tribe of Alaska operates the Sockeye Salmon monitoring weir at Klag Bay which was operational the last week in June. As of August 4, 1,432 Sockeye Salmon have been counted at the weir and 1,301 have been harvested in the State

subsistence fishery in Klag Bay. In 2018, approximately 2,444 sockeye migrated past the weir while an estimated 1,387 were harvested in the marine terminal area subsistence and sport fishery. Subsistence harvest accounted for over 99% of terminal area harvest.

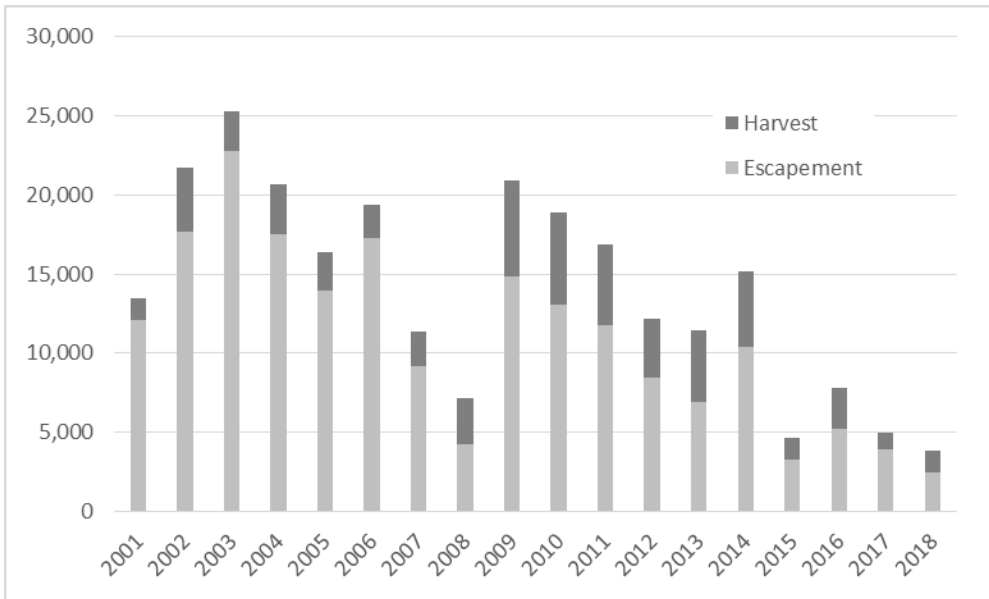


Figure 3. Reported harvest, escapement, and exploitation rate for Klag Lake Sockeye Salmon, 2001-2018.

Redoubt Lake - The Forest Service operates the Redoubt Lake weir which was operational June 15. As of August 4, 41,641 Sockeye Salmon have been counted which is above average. On July 9, in accordance with the Redoubt Lake Management Plan, the individual/household subsistence sockeye possession limit was set at 25 and the individual/household subsistence sockeye annual limit was set at 100. There are many people catching Sockeye Salmon at Redoubt Lake outlet and almost all reports indicate excellent fishing opportunity. Over 5,000 Sockeye Salmon have been caught in Redoubt Bay during recent commercial seine openings.

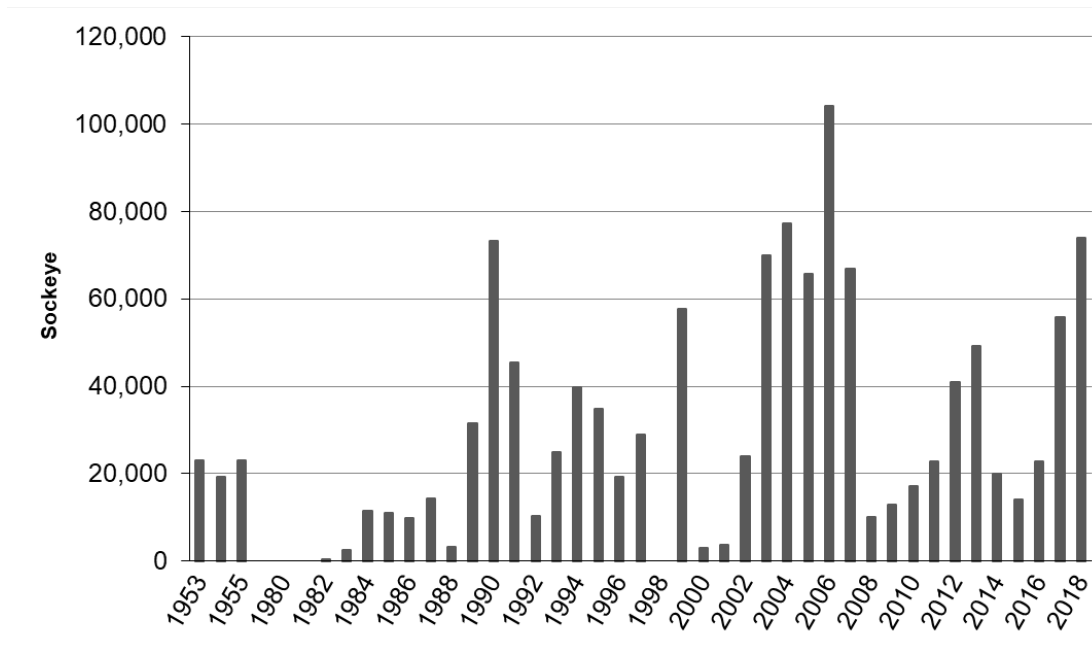


Figure 4. Annual Sockeye Salmon expanded escapement into Redoubt Lake for years with data: 1953 to 1955, 1982 to 1997, and 1999 to 2018. The weir was not operated in 1998.

Gut Bay - The Forest Service and the Organized Village of Kake began monitoring escapement and harvest of Gut Bay Sockeye Salmon this year. Gut Bay is located south of Falls Lake on Baranof Island and is an important source of Sockeye Salmon for the village of Kake. Very little is known about the magnitude of this run. The weirs were installed on June 20 and as of August 4, 501 Sockeye Salmon have been counted. About 200 have been harvested in the State subsistence fishery in Gut Bay. The water temperature was 9C during project setup on June 20. The water temperature peaked at 15C on July 18 and is now about 12C. This drainage is probably one of the cooler Sockeye Salmon systems because the lake is small and does not receive much solar energy.

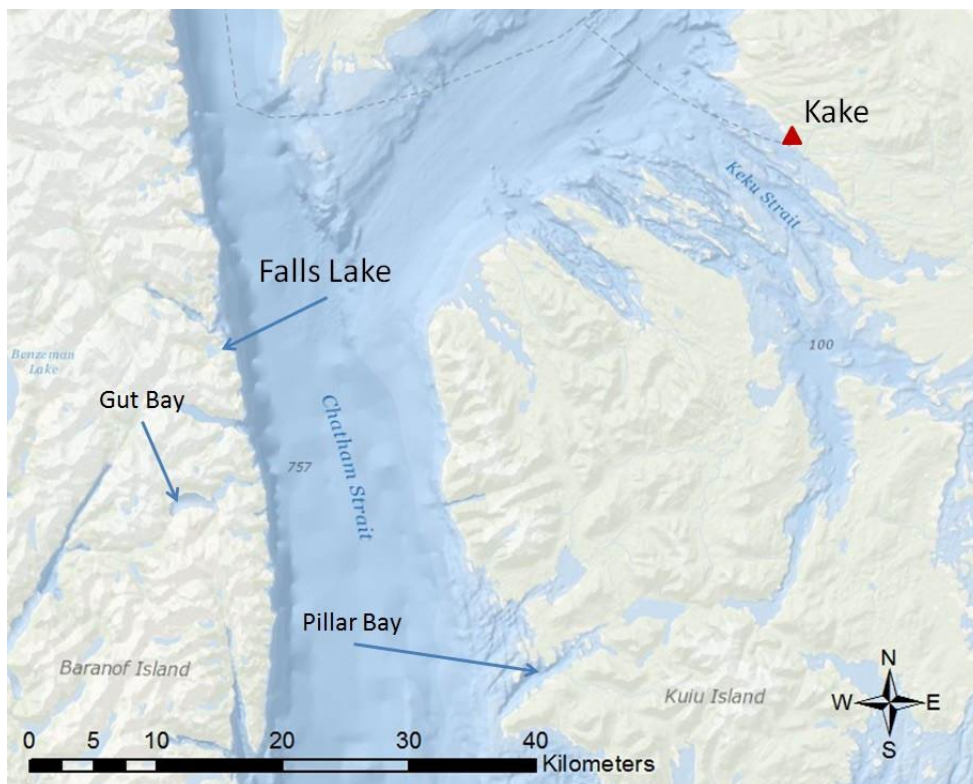


Figure 5. Location of Gut Bay in relation to Falls Lake and the village of Kake

Sitka Sound Pacific Herring – The commercial, subsistence, and spawning season for Pacific Herring in Sitka Sound occurs about mid-March through mid-April. The commercial sac roe herring fishery did not occur in 2018. The guideline harvest level (GHL) was 12,869, however, marketable size fish could not be located in high enough quantity to warrant a fishery. Accounts from the Sitka Tribe of Alaska and other harvesters indicate good quantity and quality of subsistence roe harvest. Miles of shoreline receiving herring spawn indicates the spawning season was about average. However, preliminary estimates of spawn-extent from shore, and deposition are encouraging and may bolster the post spawn biomass population estimate. This estimate will be available this Fall.

[Alaska Department of Fish and Game news release with a synopsis of the commercial season](#)

Petersburg and Wrangell Area – Robert Cross, Forest Service Tongass National Forest, Robert Cross, (907)772-5944, robert.cross@usda.gov

This year’s run of Chinook Salmon to the Stikine River is weak, forecasted at 8,250 fish. This forecast is well below the bottom range of the 14,000 to 28,000 fish goal. Directed commercial, sport, and subsistence fisheries in the area have been closed to protect this return.

Due to a low forecast for the Mainstem portion of the Stikine River Sockeye Salmon run, the Federal subsistence Sockeye Salmon fishery was closed. The closure was effective Monday, July 22 through July 31. The estimated cumulative subsistence salmon harvest from 115 fishing permits is 20 large Chinook, and 1,800 Sockeye Salmon. The Stikine River subsistence Coho Salmon season opened August 1. Sockeye are beginning to be harvested in Kah Sheets River according to reports from subsistence harvesters. Harvest estimates are not available.

There is a restricted purse seine fishery opening in Districts 6-D and 7-B. The fisheries will be open to purse seining from 5:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Sunday, August 4, 2019. More information can be found at [ADF&G press release](#). The total commercial purse sein harvest estimate in district 7 (Anita Bay) is 30,000 chum salmon. Commercial purse seine harvest estimates for statistical week 31 are below:

	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
District 7	50	900	300	130,000	25,000	156,250

There will be a restricted drift gillnet opportunity in Districts 6 and 8 open from 12:01 p.m., Sunday, August 4, through 12:00 noon, Wednesday, August 7, 2019. More details can be found in the [ADF&G press release](#). The total commercial drift gillnet harvest estimate in Anita Bay (District 7) is 25,000 chum salmon. Commercial drift gill net harvest estimates for statistical week 31 are below:

	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
District 6	20	3,300	1,800	41,500	14,500	61,120

Yakutat, Juneau, and Admiralty areas of Northern Southeast Alaska - Jake Musslewhite (907-789-6256; jacob.g.musslewhite@usda.gov), Forest Service, Tongass National Forest

Sitkoh Lake sockeye salmon: The Sitkoh Lake video weir (Figure 1) was installed on July 6 by project personnel from the Forest Service and the Angoon Community Association (ACA). The project uses a pair of remotely monitored video net weirs to count fish entering Sitkoh Lake, on the southeast corner of Chichagof Island. Video from the site is streamed to the ACA office, where it is recorded on a computer. Live video feed and clips from the weir can be accessed over the internet at <http://sitkohlake.ddns.net:81>.

A large beaver dam downstream of the Sitkoh Lake outlet has been impeding passage to the lake since 2018. As of July 31, no sockeye had managed to make it over the dam to enter the lake. On August 1, a combined crew from the Juneau and Sitka Ranger Districts

removed the dam to restore fish passage to the lake. A large number of sockeye were observed moving upstream within an hour of the dam being breached. The counts aren't in yet, but several hundred fish are thought to have passed through the video weirs immediately after removal of the dam.



Figure 1. A beaver dam downstream of the Sitkoh Lake outlet, which was preventing sockeye salmon from entering the lake to spawn.



Figure 2. The beaver dam site downstream of Sitkoh Lake, after the dam was removed.



Figure 3. Video capture of a sockeye salmon passing through the Sitkoh Lake video weir, shortly after the beaver dam was removed.

Neva Lake sockeye salmon: A crew from the Forest Service and the Hoonah Indian Association (HIA) installed the Neva Lake weir near Excursion Inlet on June 19. This swim-through video weir is remotely monitored and maintained by a HIA crew living in Excursion Inlet. Live video from the weir is available on the internet at <http://nevalake.ddns.net:81>. Viewers can see underwater views of the video chute, site views from the surveillance cameras, and view recent motion-triggered clips. As of August 1, a total of 916 sockeye have been counted passing through the weir.



Figure 4. Video capture of a sockeye salmon passing through the Neva Lake video weir.

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

To date, the 2019 Federal subsistence salmon fishery for Southeast Alaska and Yakutat areas has had 200 permits issued to Federally-qualified subsistence users for the fishery. Many subsistence users are now currently engaging in subsistence fishing for Sockeye Salmon within State managed portions of Klawock Inlet, Sarkar/Deweyville, Hetta Inlet and Karta. Most of these fisheries, with exception to Hetta Inlet, will close July 31,

Although the Chinook Salmon abundance index was estimated to be very low this year, Chinook Salmon are still present in the local Craig and Klawock area resulting in many subsistence users actively fishing under sport fishing regulations. Coho Salmon numbers are slowly building in outside marine water areas. Halibut, Lingcod and other bottom

fish are also being harvested by local subsistence users under Sport fishing regulations. A closure to demersal rockfish on the outside of coast of Prince of Wales was implemented on July 25th.

The commercial troll fishery in a portion of southern Southeast Alaska closed for 10 days to all salmon species on July 28 based on provisions of the 2019–2028 Pacific Salmon Treaty. If the Alaska Fisheries Performance Data Area 6 troll fishery statistical weeks 27–29 average catch per boat day (CPUE) is between 15 and 22 Coho Salmon, Alaska will close its troll fishery beginning in statistical week 31 for 10 days in specified waters of the boundary area. The 2019 troll coho salmon CPUE in Area 6 during this time period was 16 Coho Salmon per day. Concurrent to Alaska's boundary area troll closure, Canada also closed its Northern troll fishery during the same time period. This closure is separate from the region-wide normal conservation closure that begins on August 4 to the taking of all salmon except within the enhanced Chum Salmon and terminal harvest areas noted below. On August 13, 2019, the troll fishery will open for the retention of Chinook Salmon until closed by emergency order to harvest the remaining estimated 25,000 Chinook Salmon left from the original allocation. ADF&G anticipates a relatively short opening, with the harvest target estimated to be taken in two to four days.

Commercial seine fishing effort targeting Pink Salmon has resumed in District 4, as well as ADF&G managers allowing for retention of Chinook Salmon as the gear type was allocated 5900 fish. The Kendrick Bay terminal seine fishery for Chum Salmon has been occurring weekly. The District 1 drift gillnet fishery is ongoing with weekly openings. The Neets Bay terminal harvest area has been closed to commercial fishing for Chum Salmon in order to allow for brood stock needs to be met.

Estimated commercial harvests of salmon in Districts 1-4 are: 15,790 Chinook, 61,975 Sockeye, 34,450 Coho, 2,380,600 Pink and 569,450 Chum Salmon.

Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program (FRMP) funded monitoring projects for 2019 Sockeye Salmon returns are happening at Hetta Lake and Eek Lake. Cumulative escapement at Hetta Lake is: 2765 Sockeye Salmon. At Eek Lake, the total cumulative counts is: 93 Sockeye and 12 Coho Salmon.

The Klawock Lake weir has been operational since July 19th. To date, the following number of fish have been passed: 78 Sockeye and 6 Coho Salmon.



Photograph of successful subsistence salmon harvests on deck of author's boat.

Southeast Alaska Web Links

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

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

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

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

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

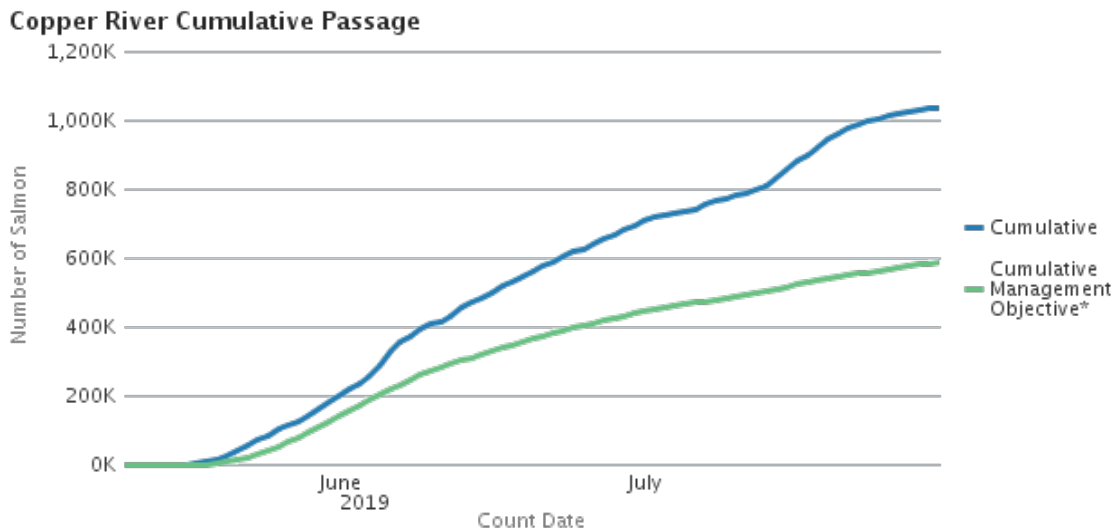
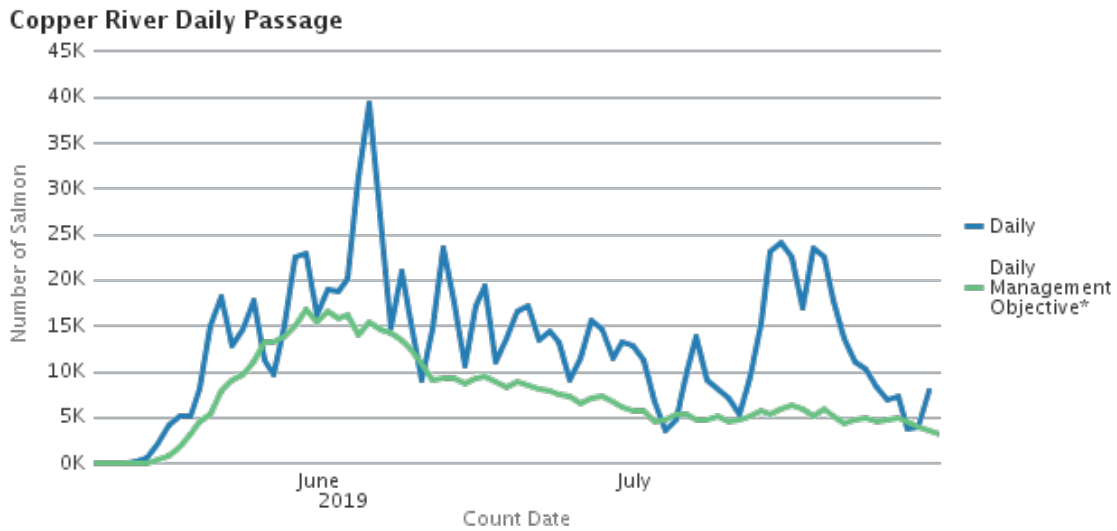
Statewide ADF&G Fish counts
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishCounts/>

SOUTHCENTRAL ALASKA

PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND – COPPER RIVER

The ADFG sonar at Miles Lake (located just downstream of the Million Dollar Bridge in the Copper River) discontinued data collection for the season on July 28 and provided a season passage estimate of 1,039,354 salmon for the 2019 season. This estimate is above the upper bound of the in-river goal for the season (618,000 to 1.01 million salmon) and is 77% above the projected passage of 588,185 for this date.

2019 Upper Copper River Salmon Passage at Miles Lake Sonar.



Source:

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

The total Copper River District commercial harvest reported for the season through August 2 is 1,243,247 Sockeye Salmon, 17,823 Chinook Salmon, 1,076 Coho Salmon, 124,308 Pink Salmon, and 24,870 Chum Salmon.

Both the State subsistence fishery in the Glennallen Subdistrict and the State personal use fishery in the Chitina Subdistrict are scheduled to remain open through September 30.

The Federal subsistence fishery in the Chitina Subdistrict is expected to remain open through September 30. One hundred and eighty (180) Federal Chitina Subdistrict permits have been issued on the FWS 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 Federal subsistence fishery in the Glennallen Subdistrict is expected to remain open through September 30. Three hundred and thirty-three (333) Federal Glennallen permits have been issued on the FWS 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 Batzulnetas fishery is scheduled to remain open through September 30. One (1) Federal permit has been issued.

The Native Village of Eyak Baird Camp fish wheels captured and tagged 4,946 Chinook Salmon for the season. Tagging operations were discontinued on July 2. The upriver fish wheels at Canyon Creek captured and examined 2,727 Chinook Salmon for the season, of which, 307 were recaptured fish that had been tagged at the downstream wheels.

Due to a lack of funding, the fish weirs at Tanada Creek and Long Lake are not being operated this year.

The ADFG counting tower in the Gulkana River was set up for operation on May 31. The reported cumulative passage estimate through August 1 is 7,992 Chinook Salmon.

No Federal Special Actions have been issued by the in-season manager this season.

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/Summary/DailySummary.aspx>

ADF&G Copper River In-season Commercial Harvest Estimates

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

ADF&G Gulkana River counting tower

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishCounts/index.cfm?ADFG=main.displayResults&COUNTLOCATIONID=6&SpeciesID=410>

ADF&G Emergency Orders and News Releases

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/EONR/index.cfm?ADFG=area.list&Year=2018&AreaID=33>

PWS and Copper River Delta – Milo Burcham, Chugach National Forest, Cordova. 6 June 2017.

(907) 424-4759 mburcham@fs.fed.us

A total of 46 Federal Subsistence fishing permits have been issued for freshwaters within the Chugach National Forest portion of the Prince William Sound area of to date. Harvest by this year's permit holders will not be known until reports are returned this winter. Ninety-seven permits were issued in 2018 resulting in the reported harvest of 255 coho and 96 sockeye from fresh waters of the Copper River Delta.

COOK INLET AREA – Jeff Anderson, Field Supervisor, Kenai Fish and Wildlife Field Office (907) 260-0132 Jeffry_Anderson@fws.gov

A total of 347 permits for Cook Inlet Federal subsistence fisheries have been issued to qualified rural residents through August 3. This includes 256 Household Annual permits (KKTCI3), 81 General Subsistence Fishing permits (KKTCI2), and 10 Designated Fisher permits.

The 2019 subsistence dip net fisheries for salmon began on the Kenai and Kasilof rivers June 15 and June 16, respectively. Harvest reported through August 3 in the dip net fishery at Russian River Falls is 1,220 Sockeye Salmon. Harvest reported through August 3 in the Kasilof River dip net fishery is 28 Sockeye Salmon.

The Kasilof River experimental community gillnet fishery began on June 16 and continues through August 15. Harvest reported through August 3 includes 553 Sockeye Salmon and 6 Pink Salmon.

Regulatory periods for the Kenai River community gillnet fishery are from July 1 through August 15 and from September 10 – 30. Harvest reported through August 3 includes 2,832 Sockeye, 6 Coho, and 1 Pink salmon.

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

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

Kodiak Island Area – Michael Brady, Refuge Manager, - Kodiak NWR
(907) 487-0226 or michael_brady@fws.gov or Kevin Van Hatten (907) 487-0230
Kevin_VanHatten@fws.gov

No report submitted for period.

Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Kodiak Area
<http://alaska.fws.gov/asm/pdf/fishregs13/kodiak.pdf>

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

All of the assessments of salmon returns are conducted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), and provide the basis for any inseason assessment and management.

Bristol Bay:

All rivers have met escapement goals.

Sockeye Salmon escapement counts for the date of August 4 are:

- 820,458 fish on the Alagnak River (weir pulled on July 24)
- 2,326,176 fish on the Egegik River (weir pulled on July 23)
- 256,074 fish on the Igushik River (weir pulled on July 27)
- 2,371,242 fish on the Kvichak River (weir pulled on July 25)
- 2,911,470 fish on the Naknek River (weir pulled on July 23)
- 699,595 fish on the Nushagak River, 44,434 Chinook Salmon.
- 340,884 fish on the Togiak River
- 1,547,748 fish on the Ugashik River (weir pulled on July 28)
- 2,073,276 fish on the Wood River (weir pulled on July 21)

The preliminary commercial harvest estimate for July 27 is 44.3 million, with Sockeye Salmon accounting for 97% of the harvest.

Chignik:

The cumulative weir count as of August 4 is 581,771 Sockeye Salmon with 345,918 fish attributed to the early run and 235,853 attributed to the late-run. The early-run nearly met the escapement goal of 350,000 fish. The late-run appears to be above average and as of August 4 has met the lower end of the escapement goal of 200,000 fish. There is an in-river goal of 20,000 additional fish for late run subsistence needs, 10,000 in August and 10,000 in September. The August in-river goal has also been met.

There are no restrictions on federal waters within the Chignik Management Area.

Chinook Salmon counts enumerated at the ADF&G weir as of August 4 are 1,493 fish. The Chinook Salmon run has met the lower end of the escapement goal, which has not been met since 2016.

The ADFG has scheduled commercial periods in all Chignik Management Area districts to target the late-run Sockeye Salmon, Pink, and Chum Salmon. The current harvest estimate through July 31 is 777,813 fish; 340,010 Chum Salmon and 314,240 Sockeye Salmon composing the majority of the catch.

Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Islands:

There are numerous salmon stocks and fisheries throughout the Alaska Peninsula. Federal waters are primarily located on upper headwater portions of the streams flowing on the North Peninsula, whereas Federal waters on those streams flowing on the South Peninsula are more encompassing within each watershed.

Sockeye Salmon escapement count for the date of July 27 are:

- 110,102 fish on the Nelson River, 11,653 Chinook Salmon (weir pulled July 28)
- 333,821 fish on the Bear River
- 74,345 fish on the Ilnik River (weir pulled on July 18).
- 4,229 fish on Orizinski River (south peninsula)
- 67,509 fish on the Sandy River (weir pulled on July 24).

Commercial periods have been scheduled and implemented with the total commercial harvest as of August 3 at 16.2 million fish, with Pink Salmon accounting for 71% of the harvest.

Aleutian Island fisheries are projected to provide for escapement and subsistence harvests.

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.

Gerald_Maschmann@fws.gov or

Fred Bue Fredrick_Bue@fws.gov

The Emmonak Field Office is open for the fall season. You can contact the Emmonak Field Office at 907-949-1798.

Summer Season Summary

The preliminary Summer Chum Salmon run size is projected to total about 1.75 million fish for the season. This includes the number estimated to have passed the Pilot Station sonar, the Andreafsky River, and harvest below the sonar. Although below average and below the preseason outlook, a run of this size is large enough to provide for escapement, subsistence harvests, and other uses. The Chinook Salmon run is projecting a near average size (1995-2018) of 220,000 fish at this time. This is just below the upper end of the preseason forecast of 168,000 to 241,000 fish and is better than 2018. Based on the Chinook Salmon passage past the Pilot Station sonar and the harvest restrictions that were implemented early in the season, managers were anticipating that the 2019 Chinook Salmon run should be adequate to meet escapement goals and the Canadian border passage objective.

Unfortunately, both Chinook and Summer Chum Salmon escapement projects are not showing the returns expected for runs of these sizes, with the exception of the East Fork Andreafsky weir. One thought is that near record high water temperatures in the Yukon drainage may be having a negative impact on Chinook and Summer Chum salmon migration. Fishermen in tributaries, particularly the Koyukuk River, have been reporting dead, pre-spawn Summer Chum Salmon floating in the rivers. Additionally, with the Andreafsky River faring slightly better, it could be that lower Yukon tributary stocks travel a shorter distance and spend less time in the mainstem Yukon and thus experience a lower mortality rate due to heat stress.

Summer Season Escapement Information

Through July 30, the East Fork Andreafsky River weir has passed 5,111 Chinook Salmon, well above the average for this date and just above the top end of the escapement goal range of 2,100-4,900. The Summer Chum Salmon passage of 49,881 is below the median of 55,955 for this date, but above the escapement goal of 40,000. The Anvik Sonar has ceased operations and has a preliminary end of season passage of 249,013 Summer Chum Salmon, well below the median of 545,720, and well below the minimum escapement goal range of 350,000-700,000. The Gisasa River weir has passed 1,328 Chinook Salmon, below the average of 2,087, and 19,099 Summer Chum Salmon, well below the median of 46,257. The E.F. Andreafsky and Gisasa River weirs ceased operations on July 30. The Henshaw Creek weir ceased operations on August 3 and has passed 438 Chinook Salmon, well below the average of 1,131, and 34,342 Summer Chum Salmon, below the median 189,319. The Chena River tower has passed 1,992 Chinook Salmon, well below the average of 6,361, and below the minimum escapement

goal range of 2,800-5,700, and 1,880 Summer Chum Salmon, well below the average of 5,644. The Chena River Chinook Salmon run is not expected to meet its minimum escapement goal. The Salcha River tower has passed 4,277 Chinook Salmon, well below the average of 9,091, but within the escapement goal range of 3,300-6,500, and 1,727 Summer Chum Salmon, well below the average of 17,073. The Eagle sonar has passed an estimated 38,425 Chinook Salmon through August 3, well below the average of 51,251 for this date. The third and final pulse should have passed this week and passage is expected to continue to drop off. The minimum escapement goal into Canada should be met within the next few days, but it's likely the run will be short in meeting its harvest sharing objectives into Canada.

The three Canadian escapement projects reporting at this time are the Upper Porcupine River, Big Salmon River, and Pelly River sonars. The Porcupine River sonar is slightly above average, while the Big Salmon and Pelly River sonars are just below the average.

The preliminary summer season commercial harvest from fifteen periods is 225,000 Summer Chum Salmon and 2,569 Chinook Salmon. 870 Chinook Salmon are estimated to have been harvested and taken home for subsistence purposes.

Fall Season Outlook

The latest 2019 Fall Chum Salmon preseason run projection, based on the summer chum to fall chum salmon relationship, is for a run size range of 700,000 to 800,000 fish. This level of abundance is typically sufficient to meet escapement and subsistence needs with a surplus available for commercial and personal use purposes. The Yukon River Drainage Fall Chum Salmon Management Plan went into effect for Districts 1 through 4. Districts 5 and 6 will switch to fall season management as the Fall Chum Salmon migration reaches those areas. The Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF) began fall season operations on July 16 and is slightly below average. The Mountain Village Test Fishery (MVTF) began on July 18 and is slightly above average. The Pilot Station sonar began reporting all chum salmon as Fall Chum Salmon for management purposes on July 19. The estimated passage past the sonar through August 3 is 286,000 Chum Salmon, above the median of 210,000. However, genetic analysis of the first fall season strata shows that it was made up of 88% Summer Chum Salmon. This is the highest proportion of Summer Chum Salmon on record for the first fall season strata. This is corroborated by observations by the LYTF crews who indicated that most of the test fishery catches up to now appear to be Summer Chum Salmon.

Fall Season Management Actions

Subsistence salmon fishing in the Coastal District and District 1-3 is open 7 days per week except for 12 hours before, during, and 12 hours after commercial fishing periods. Subsistence salmon fishing in District 4 has been relaxed from 5-days per week to 7 days per week. District 5 is anticipated to be relaxed, as per regulation, to 7 days per week, once Fall Chum Salmon begin reaching the district.

Two fall season commercial periods have occurred in District 1, and three have occurred in District 2. Preliminary harvest estimates are 50,000 Chum Salmon, 300 Coho

Salmon, and 350 Chinook Salmon. As stated above, most of these commercially harvested Chum Salmon are genetically Summer Chum Salmon.

Consultation

Extensive public outreach and consultation was performed during the fall of 2018 and spring of 2019 to inform and seek input from Yukon River fishermen and stakeholders. Outreach has continued through the summer via the YRDFA weekly teleconferences. The ninth teleconference occurred on July 30. Fishermen in Districts 1-4 are waiting for fall chum. Most fishermen in Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C are done or just finishing up Chinook Salmon fishing and noted that the fish condition was showing signs of being near the end of the run. Subdistrict 5-D fishermen in Fort Yukon are also nearly done and also noted that the run appears to be nearing the end. Fishermen in upper 5-D near Eagle reported being about 80-90% done with summer fish and are looking forward to fall season

KUSKOKWIM RIVER

In Season Manager – Vernon “Ray” Born, Refuge Manager, Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge Contact Vernon_Born@fws.gov (907) 543-3151 or Lewis_Coggins@fws.gov

Summary:

The Kuskokwim River main stem currently has no restrictions. All tributaries of the Kuskokwim River area still closed to the retention of Chinook Salmon until further notice.

As of July 28, 2019 the escapement of Chinook salmon at the Kwethluk weir has met its lower end of its escapement goal at 6,322. Chum salmon counts are at 22,341 and Sockeye salmon counts are at 20,671.

Test Fisheries:

As of July 27, 2019 the CPUE for Chinook at the Bethel test fish is at 844. The 2018 and 2017 Chinook CPUE for this day were at 660 and 364, respectively.

As of July 27, 2019 the CPUE for Chum at the Bethel test fish is at 4,036. The 2018 and 2017 Chum CPUE for this day were at 7,824 and 6,594, respectively.

As of July 27, 2019 the CPUE for Sockeye at the Bethel test fish is at 1,550. The 2018 and 2017 Sockeye CPUE for this day were at 2,072 and 2,554, respectively.

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/>

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

Norton Sound District

Commercial Fishing: The commercial catch to Tuesday morning July 30 was 1,250 kings, 5,100 sockeyes, 74,000 pinks, 136,000 chums and 9,700 silvers. The king harvest is the highest in 20 years. The sockeye harvest is a record. The commercial catch for kings, sockeyes and pinks were within the department forecast. The chum catch has been strong and has surpassed the 10-year average, but will fall short of the above average forecast of 170,000 to 220,000 fish. The silvers are showing on schedule, but not as strong as forecast.

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Other Coastal Waters (Stebbins and St. Michael)

Subsistence Fishing: The coastal waters are open to subsistence fishing 7 days a week.

Subdistricts 6 (Unalakleet)

Federal Closure: The federal closure of the Federal public waters of the Unalakleet River upstream from the Chirosky River to the taking of Chinook salmon by all users expired by regulation Wednesday, July 31.

Subsistence Fishing: Net fishing is open seven days a week. Gillnet length allowed is 50 fathoms except in the Unalakleet River only 25 fathoms is allowed.

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catch was 800 kings, 2,500 sockeyes, 29,000 pinks, 49,000 chums and 4,800 silvers by 60 permit holders. The silver catch was slightly above average.

Commercial salmon fishing in the subdistrict opened for two 48-hour periods from 6 PM Tuesday, July 30 until 6 PM Thursday, August 1 and from 6 PM Friday, August 2 until 6 PM Sunday, August 4. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of net in aggregate length.

Unalakleet River Floating Weir — A cooperative project of Fish and Game, Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation (NSEDC), Native Village of the Unalakleet and BLM, with major funding provided by the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Subsistence Management. Escapement goals for the weir have not yet been established. The cumulative counts to July 30 were 6,600 kings, 59,000 chums, 1,000 sockeyes, 1 million pinks* and 6.500 silvers. The silver count is average

*Picket spacing at the Unalakleet weir allows most pinks to pass through without being counted.

North River Tower — Camp J. B. — A Cooperative Project of NSEDC with assistance from ADF&G. The project 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 cumulative counts to July 30 were 3,300 kings, 10,200 chums, 2.0 million pinks and 950 Silvers. The silver count is average.

Subdistrict 5 (Shaktoolik)

Subsistence Fishing: Net fishing is open seven days a week.

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catch was 280 kings, 1,700 sockeyes, 19,000 pinks, 37,000 chums and 3,900 silvers by 25 permit holders. The silver catch was average.

Commercial salmon fishing in the subdistrict opened for two 48-hour periods from 6 PM Tuesday, July 30 until 6 PM Thursday, August 1 and from 6 PM Friday, August 2 until 6 PM Sunday, August 4. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of net in aggregate length.

Shaktoolik Sonar/Tower – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game has no escapement goals established. The cumulative counts to July 30 were 2,700 kings, 24,000 chums, 160 sockeyes, 4.1 million pinks and 3,800 silvers. The silver count is average.

Subdistrict 4 (Norton Bay)

Subsistence Fishing: Subsistence fishing is open 7 days a week.

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catch was 8 kings, 97 sockeyes, 1,800 chums, 1,100 pinks and 100 silvers by 7 permit holders. All catches were well below average.

Commercial salmon fishing in the subdistrict opened for two 48-hour periods from 6 PM Tuesday, July 30 until 6 PM Thursday, August 1 and from 6 PM Friday, August 2 until 6 PM Sunday, August 4. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of net in aggregate length.

Inglutalik River Tower – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from ADF&G. No escapement goals have been established. The cumulative counts to July 30 were 168 kings, 23,000 chums, 36 sockeyes, 170,000 pinks and 500 silvers. The silver count was slightly below average.

Ungalik River Tower – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance of ADF&G. No escapement goals yet established. The cumulative counts to July 30 were 27 kings, 14,200 chums, 18 sockeyes, 1.9 million pinks, and 3,300 silvers. This is the first year for the project.

Subdistrict 3 (Elim)

Subsistence Fishing: Subsistence fishing is open seven days a week

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catch was 96 kings, 400 sockeyes, 12,000 chums, 13,000 pinks and 530 silvers by 20 permit holders. The silver catch was average.

Commercial salmon fishing in the subdistrict opened for two 48-hour periods from 6 PM Tuesday, July 30 until 6 PM Thursday, August 1 and from 6 PM Friday, August 2 until 6 PM Sunday, August 4. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of net in aggregate length.

Kwiniuk River Tower-Camp Joel – A Fish & Game project with assistance from NSEDC has escapement goals of 250 kings, 11,500 – 23,000 chums, 8,400 pinks and 650-1,300 silvers (aerial survey goal). The cumulative counts to July 30 were 108 kings, 17,000 chums, 563,000 pinks and 600 silvers. The silver count is average.

Subdistrict 2 (Golovin)

Subsistence Fishing: Subsistence fishing is open seven days a week.

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catch was 30 kings, 120 sockeyes, 24,000 chums, 7,500 pinks and 130 silvers by 11 permit holders. The chum harvest was the second highest since fishing resumed in 2008 and might finish highest.

Commercial salmon fishing in the subdistrict opened for two 48-hour periods from 6 PM Tuesday, July 30 until 6 PM Thursday, August 1 and from 6 PM Friday, August 2 until 6 PM Sunday, August 4. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of net in aggregate length.

Fish River Tower - A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game. No escapement goals have been established. Counting began July 20 and the cumulative counts to July 30 were 26,000 chums, 786,000 pinks, and 3,100 silvers. The silver count is above average.

Subdistrict 1 (Nome)

Subsistence Fishing: Effective June 15, the Nome Subdistrict was placed on a subsistence salmon fishing schedule of from 6 PM Wednesday until 6 PM Monday for the marine and fresh waters, except that the marine waters east off Cape Nome will remain open 7 days a week. Beach seines, cast nets and dip nets can be used during the net fishing schedule but only in the subsistence areas.

Subsistence salmon fishing permits are required, and stream specific harvest limits are listed on the permit. These include: Cripple River - no chum catch allowed; Penny River - no chum catch allowed; Nome River - 100 coho per household; Salmon River - 40 chum per household and 20 coho per household. There are no catch limits in the marine waters.

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catch was 21 kings, 330 sockeyes, 12,000 chums, 4,200 pinks and 270 silvers by 5 permit holders. The chum catch to date has been the second highest since fishing resumed in 2013. Chums are on track for the highest harvest since fishing resumed in 2013.

Commercial salmon fishing in the subdistrict opened for two 48-hour periods from 9 PM Tuesday, July 30 until 9 PM Thursday, August 1 and from 9 PM Friday, August 2 until 9 PM Sunday, August 4. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of net in aggregate length.

Solomon River Weir – A Fish & Game project, has no escapement goals yet established. The cumulative counts to July 30 were 590 chums and 35,000 pinks and 24 silvers.

Bonanza River Weir – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game. No escapement goals have yet been established. The cumulative counts to July 30 were 8 kings, 8 sockeyes, 7,800 chums, 149,000 pinks and 120 silvers.

Eldorado River Weir – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game has an escapement goal of 6,000 – 9,200 chum salmon. The cumulative counts to July 30 were 15 kings, 29,000 chums, 57,000 pinks, 36 sockeyes,

Nome River Weir - A Fish and Game project with assistance from NSEDC. It has escapement goals of 1,600 – 5,300 chum salmon and 3,200 pink salmon. The cumulative

counts to July 30 were 5 kings, 2,700 chums, 553,000 pinks, 8 sockeyes and 150 silvers. The historical average third-quarter point of chum passage at the weir is July 30.

Snake River Weir – A cooperative project between Fish & Game and NSEDC has an escapement goal of 2,000 – 4,200 chum salmon. The cumulative counts to July 30 were 2,000 chums, 11 sockeyes, 93,000 pinks and 81 silvers. The historical average third-quarter point of chum passage at the Weir is July 28.

Port Clarence District

Subsistence Fishing: Gillnet and beach seining are open seven days a week. Subsistence salmon fishing permits are required for the Port Clarence District, Pilgrim River drainage and Salmon Lake. Catch limits are listed on the subsistence permits. These are: Pilgrim River - 3 king salmon per household; the department waived the sockeye limit on Tuesday, July 16; Salmon Lake - open by emergency order only - 200 sockeye salmon per household. The department waived the sockeye limit.

Commercial Fishing: The department expects the commercial fishery to remain closed because of a lack of buyer interest despite the in-river goal of 30,000 sockeye salmon in the Pilgrim River being expected to be reached.

Pilgrim River Weir – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish and Game. It has an escapement goal of 4,000-8,000 sockeyes based on aerial survey at Salmon Lake & the Grand Central tributary to Salmon Lake. The cumulative counts to July 30 were 140 kings, 8,000 chums, 21,400 sockeyes and 302,000 pinks. The historical average third-quarter point of sockeye passage at the Weir is July 29.

Kotzebue District

ADF&G issued a reminder to all subsistence and commercial fishers that the area offshore or the Kotzebue airport's main runway to one mile out in the ocean is closed to all commercial and subsistence fishing. Fishing boats and other marine vessels may still transit through the closed fishing area, but no fishing gear can be in the water within the closed area. The reason for the closure is that fishing often attracts birds that can create a hazardous situation for aircraft arriving at or departing from Kotzebue. The closure will remain in effect until mid-October.

Subsistence Fishing: No other subsistence fishing restrictions are expected in 2019.

Commercial Fishing: The catch through Tuesday, July 30 was 113,000 chum salmon by 71 permit holders. Catches have been slightly below average; however, the catch rates have improved recently.

Commercial salmon fishing opened for 12 hours daily from 8 AM until 8 PM Sunday, July 28 through Friday, August 2 in the Kotzebue District.

Kobuk River Test Fish - a Fish and Game project. The test fish crew began fishing at Kiana on Wednesday, July 17. Catches have been slightly below average, but have improved in the past few days.

Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for the Kotzebue Area
<http://alaska.fws.gov/asm/pdf/fishregs11/norton.pdf>