

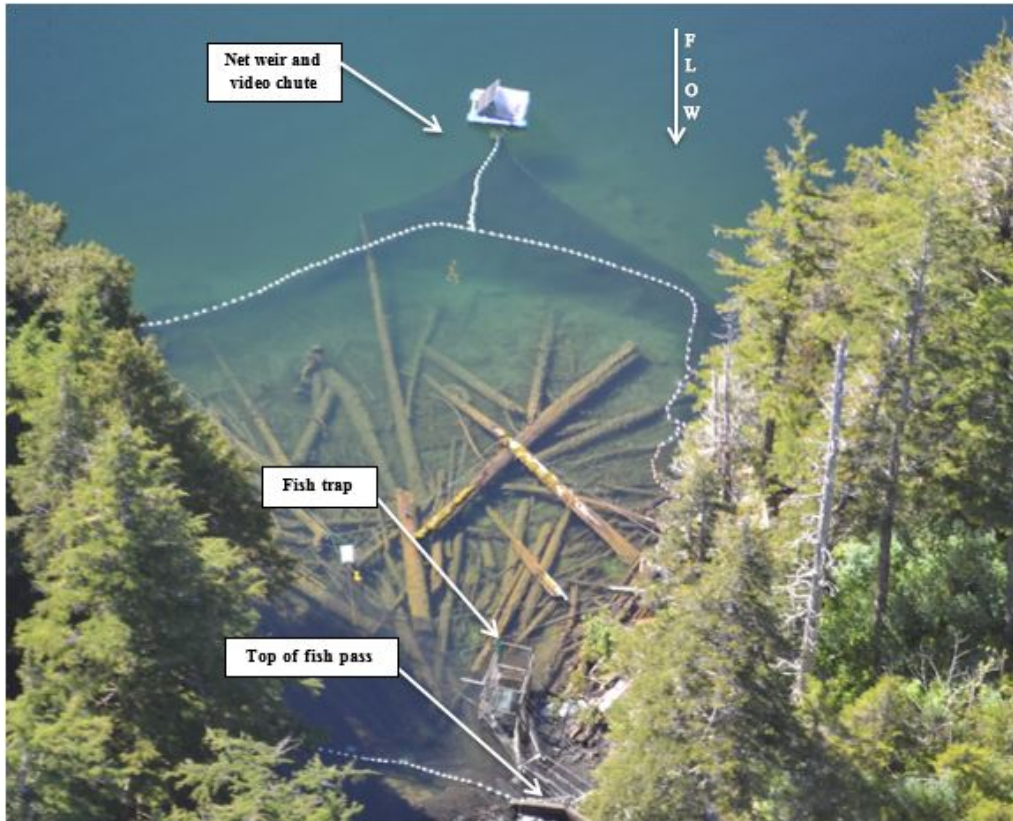
**FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF AUGUST 5-11 2019.** Report #11  
Compiled by George Pappas - (907) 786-3822, [George\\_Pappas@fws.gov](mailto:George_Pappas@fws.gov) Office of  
Subsistence Management, USFWS.

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 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.

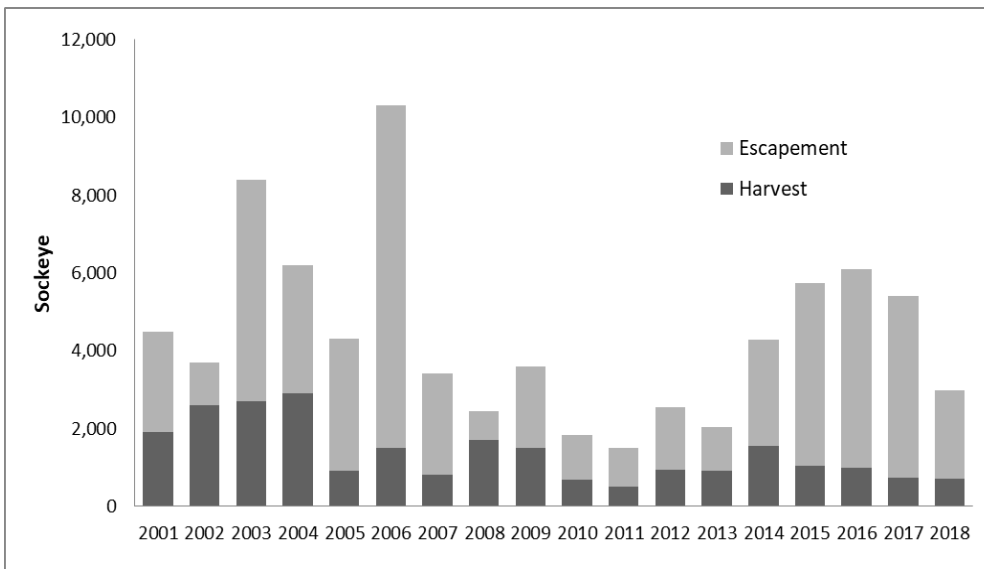
## **SOUTHEAST ALASKA**

**Sitka and Hoonah Area – Justin Koller, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest**  
Justin Koller, (907)747-4297, [justin.koller@usda.gov](mailto: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 11, 240 sockeye have been counted using the fish pass which is below average for this date. Total escapement is probably about 600 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.



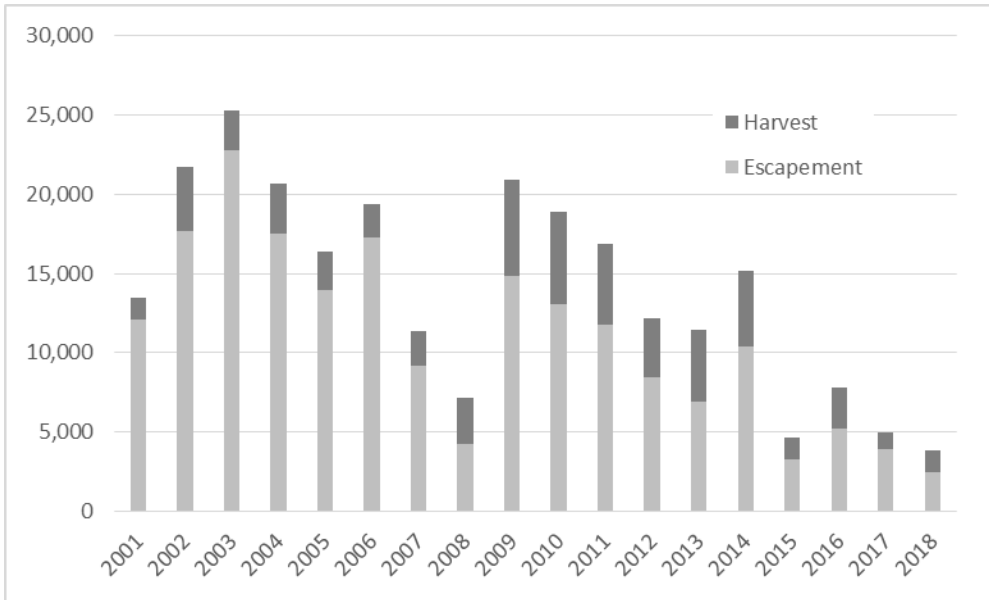
**Figure 1.** Aerial photo of the Falls Lake outlet illustrating the typical location of weir equipment.



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

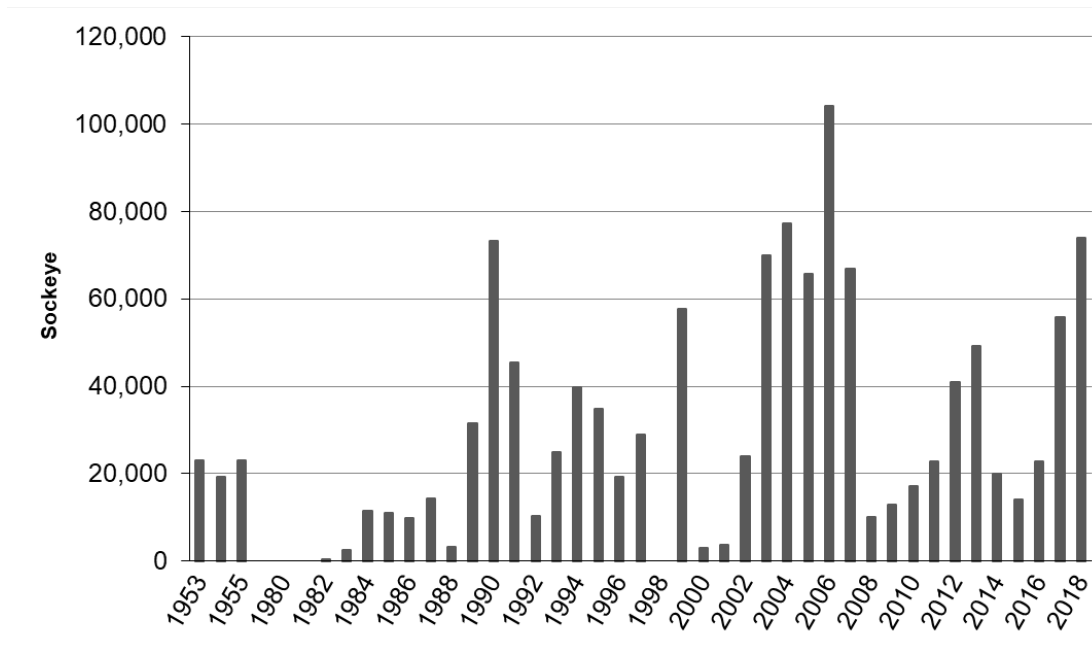
**Klag Bay** - The Sitka Tribe of Alaska operates the Sockeye Salmon monitoring weir at Klag Bay which was operational the last week in June. As of August 11, 1,484 Sockeye Salmon have been counted at the weir, which is below average for this date. The State

subsistence fishery in Klag Bay has harvested 1,302 sockeye. 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.



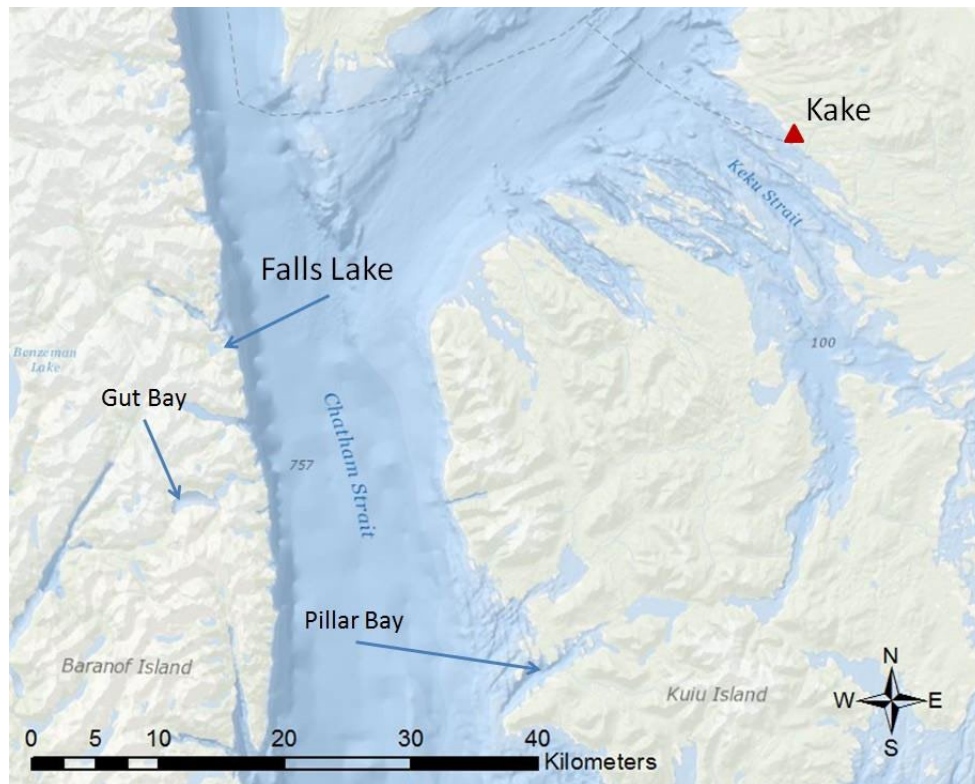
**Figure 3.** Reported harvest, escapement, and exploitation rate for Klag Lake Sockeye Salmon, 2001-2018.

**Redoubt Lake** - The Forest Service operates the Redoubt Lake weir which was operational June 15. As of August 11, 49,431 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 11, 609 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](mailto:robert.cross@usda.gov)**

Report not updated for the week. 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](mailto:jacob.g.musslewhite@usda.gov)), Forest Service, Tongass National Forest**

**Sitkoh Lake sockeye salmon:** The Sitkoh Lake video weir 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. Despite the beaver dam removal, only 140 sockeye have been counted passing through the weir into the lake as of August 6. The run should be at its peak, but weir counts have been a small fraction of normal. The low, warm water continues to be a major problem, so the rain forecast for later in the week will be welcome.



*Figure 1. A brown bear is caught on camera as it passes the Sitkoh Lake weir in the early morning of August 11, 2019.*



*Figure 2. Video capture of a sockeye salmon passing through the Sitkoh Lake video weir.*

**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 11, a total of 1,411 sockeye have been counted passing through the weir. Despite the extremely low water levels, the sockeye appear to be reaching the lake on a daily basis, though weir counts are lower than we would like to see.





Figure 3. Low water levels at the Neva Lake video weir.



Figure 4. A black bear takes a selfie at the repeater station for 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](mailto:jreeves@fs.fed.us)

To date, the 2019 Federal subsistence salmon fishery for Southeast Alaska and Yakutat areas has had 208 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 are closed, with exception to Hetta Inlet that will close at the end of the month.

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 25<sup>th</sup>.

The commercial troll fishery is currently closed to allow for Coho Salmon escapements to build, except within terminal harvest areas. 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 continues both offshore in District 4, as well as inside areas in Districts 1 and 3. 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: 21,230 Chinook, 187,475 Sockeye, 77,750 Coho, 8,118,600 Pink and 841,550 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 19<sup>th</sup>. To date, the following number of fish have been passed: 842 Sockeye and 70 Coho Salmon.

### **Southeast Alaska Web Links**

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

*Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Southeastern Alaska Area*  
[http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish\\_shell/upload/Southeast.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Southeast.pdf)

*ADF&G Sport and Personal Use Fishing News Release and Emergency Order Link*  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/EONR/index.cfm?ADFG=region.R1>

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

*Weekly ADF&G Sport Fishing Reports for Southeast Alaska*  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishingReports/index.cfm?ADFG=R1.home>

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

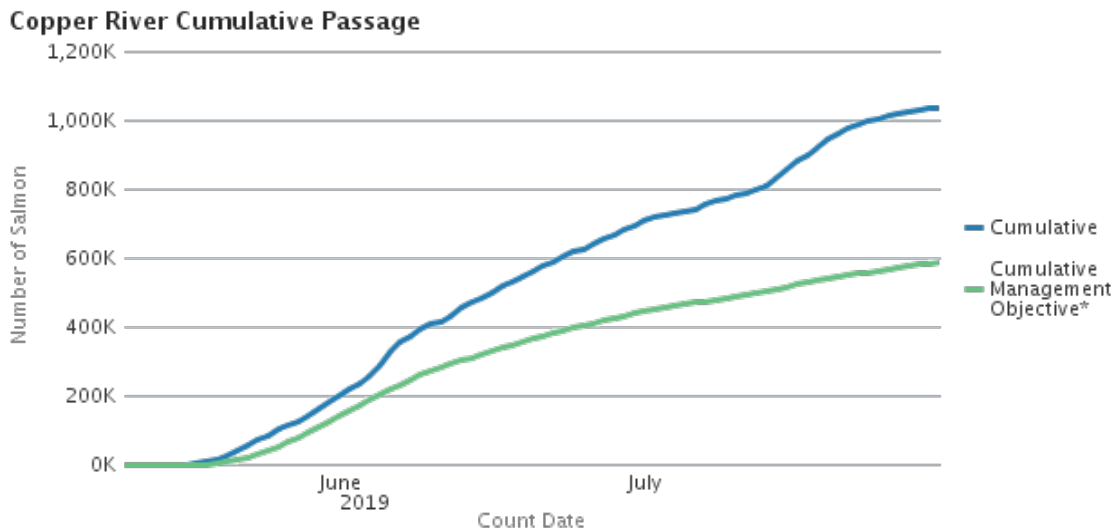
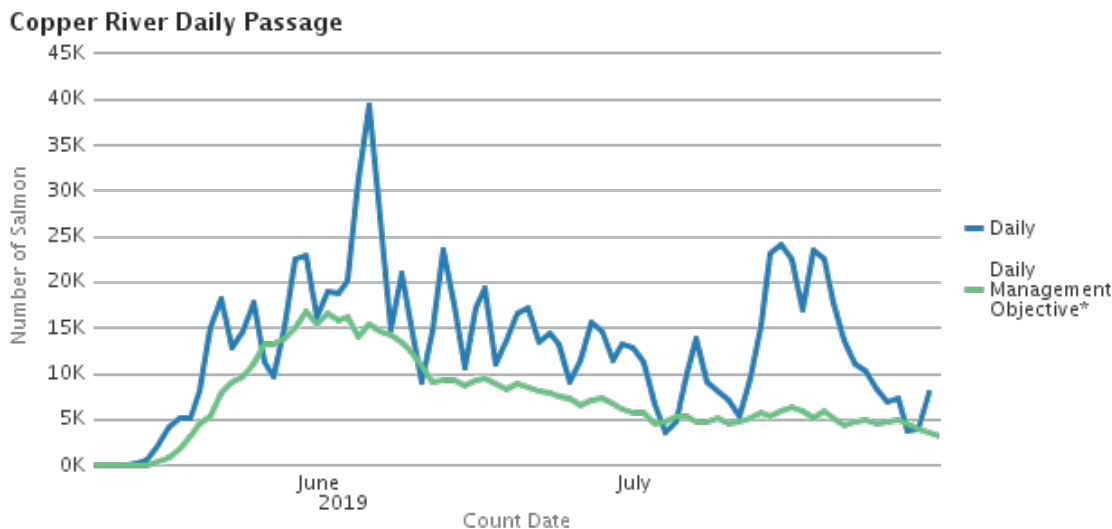
## **SOUTHCENTRAL ALASKA**

### **PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND – COPPER RIVER**

**Copper River, 8/11/2019 Update – Dave Sarafin, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park/Preserve, (907) 822-7281, [dave\\_sarafin@nps.gov](mailto:dave_sarafin@nps.gov)**

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

The total Copper River District commercial harvest reported for the season through August 9 is 1,261,374 Sockeye Salmon, 17,826 Chinook Salmon, 2,432 Coho Salmon, 175,436 Pink Salmon, and 24,977 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-eight (338) 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 11 is 8,334 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](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.** Milo Burcham (907) 424-4759 [mburcham@fs.fed.us](mailto:mburcham@fs.fed.us)

A total of 50 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. Silvers are beginning to show up in streams of the Copper River Delta and Prince William Sound

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

A total of 347 permits for Cook Inlet Federal subsistence fisheries have been issued to qualified rural residents through August 9. 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 9 in the dip net fishery at Russian River Falls is 1,349 Sockeye Salmon. Harvest reported through August 9 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 9 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 9 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](mailto:michael_brady@fws.gov) or Kevin Van Hatten (907) 487-0230  
[Kevin\\_VanHatten@fws.gov](mailto: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 7 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)
- 700,978 fish on the Nushagak River, 47,763 Chinook Salmon.
- 348,486 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 August 7 is 44.4 million, with Sockeye Salmon accounting for 97% of the harvest.

Chignik:

The cumulative weir count as of August 7 is 593,505 Sockeye Salmon with 345,918 fish attributed to the early run and 247,587 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.

Chinook Salmon counts enumerated at the ADF&G weir as of August 7 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 August 7 is 1.1 million fish; 534,811 Pink Salmon and 420,950 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 August 7 are:

- 110,102 fish on the Nelson River, 11,653 Chinook Salmon (weir pulled July 28)
- 367,199 fish on the Bear River
- 74,345 fish on the Ilnik River (weir pulled on July 18).
- 4,308 fish on Orzinski 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 7 at 17.6 million fish, with Pink Salmon accounting for 72% 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](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Bristol.pdf)

***Federal Subsistence Fisheries Regulations for Chignik Area***  
[http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish\\_shell/upload/chignik.pdf](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/chignik.pdf)

### **Southcentral Alaska Web Links**

***Federal Subsistence Management Fisheries News Releases***  
<http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/news/fishing/index.cfm>

***ADF&G Sport and Personal Use Fishing News Release and Emergency Order link***  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishingSportFishingInfo.R2>

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

***Weekly ADF&G Sport Fishing Reports for Southcentral Alaska***  
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/FishingReports/index.cfm?ADFG=R2.Home>

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

### **Yukon River**

**Gerald Maschmann, Fish Biologist USFWS Fairbanks Office.**

[Gerald\\_Maschmann@fws.gov](mailto:Gerald_Maschmann@fws.gov) or

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

The Emmonak Field Office is closed for the season. You can contact staff at the Fairbanks Office at 907-456-0406.

### **Summer Season Summary**



The summer season is essentially over in the Alaskan portion of the drainage. The Summer Chum passage at Pilot Station through July 18 was 1.4 million, just below the median of 1.9 million. 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. The Chena River did not meet its minimum escapement goal, while the Salcha River did meet its minimum escapement goal, but its return was still below average. 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.

Chinook Salmon passage past the Eagle sonar is winding down and will likely switch to fall chum assessment by the end of the week. At this time 44,237 Chinook Salmon have been estimated to have passed the sonar. This is enough to meet the lower end of the Canadian escapement goal range of 42,500 – 55,000, but not enough to meet our harvest sharing commitments.

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 sonar is below average, and Pelly River sonar is about average.

### **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 most of the Alaskan portion of the Yukon drainage. 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 10 is 452,000 Chum Salmon, above the median of 323,000. However, genetic analysis of the first fall season strata of 208,000 Chum Salmon shows that it was made up of 88% Summer Chum Salmon. The

second fall season strata is being analyzed, however observations by the test fish crew and local fishermen indicate that the Chum Salmon in the second strata are predominately Fall 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 Districts 4 and 5 have been relaxed to 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

Four fall season commercial periods have occurred in District 1, and five have occurred in District 2. Preliminary harvests estimates are 88,000 Chum Salmon, 4,200 Coho Salmon, and 442 Chinook 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 YR DFA weekly teleconferences. The tenth 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 with a few still fishing for dog food. Subdistrict 5-D fishermen are nearly done with their summer season harvests and are waiting for Fall Chum Salmon.

## **KUSKOKWIM RIVER**

**In Season Manager – Vernon “Ray” Born, Refuge Manager, Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge Contact [Vernon\\_Born@fws.gov](mailto:Vernon_Born@fws.gov) (907) 543-3151 or [Lewis\\_Coggins@fws.gov](mailto: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 August 10, 2019 the escapement of Chinook salmon at the Kwethluk weir has met its lower end of its escapement goal at 6,855. The 2018 and 2017 Kwethluk weir counts for this day for Chinook Salmon were 2,404 and 7,315 respectively.

Chum salmon counts at the Kwethluk weir are at 38,303. The 2018 and 2017 Kwethluk weir counts for this day for Chum salmon were 28,541 and 51,579 respectively.

Sockeye salmon counts at the Kwethluk weir are at 25,420. The 2018 and 2017 Kwethluk weir counts for this day for Sockeye salmon were 5,568 and 27,864 respectively.

**Test Fisheries:**

As of August 11, 2019 the CPUE for Chinook at the Bethel test fish is at 850. The 2018 and 2017 Chinook CPUE for this day were at 663 and 371, respectively.

As of August 11, 2019 the CPUE for Chum at the Bethel test fish is at 4,815. The 2018 and 2017 Chum CPUE for this day were at 8,186 and 6,756, respectively.

As of August 11, 2019 the CPUE for Sockeye at the Bethel test fish is at 1,738. The 2018 and 2017 Sockeye CPUE for this day were at 2,267 and 2,678, respectively.

As of August 11, 2019 the CPUE for Coho at the Bethel test fish is at 793. The 2018 and 2017 Sockeye CPUE for this day were at 552 and 1,395, 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](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Yukon.pdf)

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

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

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

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

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

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/EONR/index.cfm?ADFG=region.R3>

***ADF&G Commercial Fisheries News Release and Emergency Order Link:***

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>

***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](mailto:ken_adkisson@nps.gov)**Norton Sound District**

**Counting Projects:** High water has knocked out all salmon counting projects throughout Norton Sound. On Friday, August 2, Nome's 2.47 inches of rainfall set an all-time record for rainfall in a 24-hour period in the community since record keeping began in 1907.

**Commercial Fishing:** The commercial catch through Tuesday morning August 6 was 1,300 kings, 5,500 sockeyes, 75,000 pinks, 146,000 chums and 22,000 silvers. The king harvest is the highest in 20 years. The sockeye harvest is a record. The tail end of the chum run was well above the recent 5-year average of 141,000 chums, but will fall short of the forecast of 170,000 to 220,000 chums. The silver catch has slowed because of weather but has been average.

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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)***

**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 is 865 kings, 2,700 sockeyes, 29,000 pinks, 54,000 chums and 13,000 silvers by 60 permit holders. The silver catch is average.

Due to bad weather, the commercial salmon fishing period in the Subdistrict that closed at 6 PM Sunday, August 4 was extended for 24 hours until 6 PM Monday, August 5. Commercial salmon fishing then reopened in the Subdistrict for two 48-hour periods from 6 PM Tuesday, August 6 until 6 PM Thursday, August 8 and from 6 PM Friday, August 9 until 6 PM Sunday, August 11. 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 (NSEDCC), 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 weir has been out since August 3. The cumulative counts prior to the project becoming compromised is 6,400 kings, 1,100 sockeyes, 64,000 chums, 11,000 silvers and 1.1 million pinks\*. The silver count is the third highest to that date.

\*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 tower has been out since August 2. The cumulative counts prior to the project becoming compromised were 3,300 kings, 11800 chums, 2.1 million pinks and 1,500 silvers. The silver count was above average for that date.

### ***Subdistrict 5 (Shaktoolik)***

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

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catch was 290 kings, 1,800 sockeyes, 19,000 pinks, 40,000 chums and 7,500 silvers by 25 permit holders. The silver catch was average.

Due to bad weather, the commercial salmon fishing period in the Subdistrict that closed at 6 PM Sunday, August 4 was extended for 24 hours until 6 PM Monday, August 5. Commercial salmon fishing then reopened in the Subdistrict for two 48-hour periods from 6 PM Tuesday, August 6 until 6 PM Thursday, August 8 and from 6 PM Friday, August 9 until 6 PM Sunday, August 11. 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 tower has been out since August 1. The cumulative counts prior to the project becoming compromised were 2,700 kings, 170 sockeyes, 29,000 chums, 4.2 million pinks and 5,100 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 7 kings, 100 sockeyes, 1,900 chums, and 1,100 pinks by 7 permit holders. The sockeye catch was average. The other catches were well below average.

Due to bad weather, the commercial salmon fishing period in the Subdistrict that closed at 6 PM Sunday, August 4 was extended for 24 hours until 6 PM Monday, August 5. Commercial salmon fishing then reopened in the Subdistrict for two 48-hour periods from 6 PM Tuesday, August 6 until 6 PM Thursday, August 8 and from 6 PM Friday, August 9 until 6 PM Sunday, August 11. 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 tower only counted for two days this past week and may be out for the season. The cumulative counts prior to the

project becoming compromised were 171 kings, 24,600 chums, 36 sockeyes, 207,000 pinks and 900 silvers.

**Ungalik River Tower** – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance of ADF&G. No escapement goals yet established. The tower has been out since August 2. The cumulative counts prior to the project becoming compromised were 30 kings, 15,000 chums, 18 sockeyes, 2.0 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 95 kings, 480 sockeyes, 12,300 chums, 13,500 pinks and 1,000 silvers by 20 permit holders. The silver catch has been below average.

Due to bad weather, the commercial salmon fishing period in the Subdistrict that closed at 6 PM Sunday, August 4 was extended for 24 hours until 6 PM Monday, August 5. Commercial salmon fishing then reopened in the Subdistrict for two 48-hour periods from 6 PM Tuesday, August 6 until 6 PM Thursday, August 8 and from 6 PM Friday, August 9 until 6 PM Sunday, August 11. 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 tower has been out since August 3. The cumulative counts prior to the project becoming compromised were 111 kings, 18,000 chums, 664,000 pinks and 1,600 silvers. The silver count is above average.

### ***Subdistrict 2 (Golovin)***

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

Commercial Fishing: The cumulative catch was 31 kings, 115 sockeyes, 24,000 chums, 7,500 pinks and 280 silvers by 12 permit holders. The silver catch has been average.

Due to bad weather, the commercial salmon fishing period in the Subdistrict that closed at 6 PM Sunday, August 4 was extended for 24 hours until 6 PM Monday, August 5. Commercial salmon fishing then reopened in the Subdistrict for two 48-hour periods from 6 PM Tuesday, August 6 until 6 PM Thursday, August 8 and from 6 PM Friday, August 9 until 6 PM Sunday, August 11. 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 lasted six days

before counting was suspended because of high water. The cumulative counts prior to the project becoming compromised were 26,200 chums, 800,000 pinks, and 3,200 silvers.

### ***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, 350 sockeyes, 12,700 chums, 4,800 pinks and 400 silvers by 5 permit holders. The silver catch has been average to above average.

Due to bad weather, the commercial salmon fishing period in the Subdistrict that closed at 9 PM Sunday, August 4 was extended for 24 hours until 9 PM Monday, August 5. Commercial salmon fishing then reopened in the Subdistrict for two 48-hour periods from 9 PM Tuesday, August 6 until 9 PM Thursday, August 8 and from 9 PM Friday, August 9 until 9 PM Sunday, August 11. 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 weir has been out since August 2. The cumulative counts prior to the project becoming compromised were 27 sockeyes, 764 chums and 40,000 pinks and 45 silvers.

**Bonanza River Weir** – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game. No escapement goals have yet been established. The weir has been out since July 31. The cumulative counts prior to the project becoming compromised were 8 kings, 9 sockeyes, 8,800 chums, 167,000 pinks and 150 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 crew declared victory on July 30 before the high water hit, and pulled the weir out for the season. The cumulative counts prior to the project becoming compromised were 15 kings, 36 sockeyes, 28,000 chums and 57,000 pinks. The chum count is the fourth highest in over 20 years of counting.

**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 weir has

been out since August 2. The cumulative counts prior to the project becoming compromised were 6 kings, 9 sockeyes, 3,000 chums, 600,000 pinks, and 216 silvers.

**Snake River Weir** – A cooperative project between Fish & Game and NSEDC has an escapement goal of 2,000 – 4,200 chum salmon. The weir has been out since August 1. The cumulative counts prior to the project becoming compromised were 1 king, 11 sockeyes, 2,100 chums, 100,000 pinks and 81 silvers.

### **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 weir has been out since August 3. The cumulative counts prior to the project becoming compromised were 164 kings, 25,000 sockeyes, 11,000 chums, 355,000 pinks and 99 silvers.

### **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 Monday August 5 was 157,000 chum salmon by 65 permit holders. Catch rates in the Kotzebue area have been below average throughout the season.

Commercial salmon fishing will be opened for 14 hours daily from 8 a.m. until 10 p.m. Sunday, August 4, through Friday, August 9, in the Kotzebue District.



**Kobuk River Test Fish** - a Fish and Game project. The Kobuk River test fish crew in Kiana began fishing on Wednesday, July 17. The test fish crew has been hampered by extremely high water. Catches have been below average, but above the threshold to allow commercial fishing to continue. If commercial catch rates continue to lag or if the Kobuk River Test Fish starts to look like it will not meet catch objectives, fishing time may be shortened later in the week.

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