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

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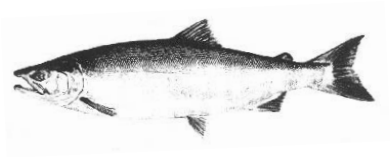

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2015 Yukon River Fall Salmon Fishery News Release # 45
Fall Update # 6, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery
Districts Affected: Yukon Area

Fall Assessment

The 2015 fall chum salmon inseason run projection is for a run size between 700,000 and 800,000 fish. This level of abundance is adequate to meet escapement and subsistence needs and provide for a commercial harvest. Inseason assessment is currently in line with the estimated run size for fall chum salmon. The coho salmon inseason run projection is for a run size greater than 200,000 fish which is above average.

As of September 8, the pulses should be at the following locations. The first fall chum salmon pulse should be approaching the spawning grounds in the Yukon Territory after entering the Yukon River on July 18 and was estimated to be 118,000 fish in size. Two smaller groups of approximately 44,000 and 31,000 fall chum salmon passed the mainstem sonar by July 31 and August 6, respectively, and should be approaching White River and Klondike on the Yukon River and Old Crow on the Porcupine River. The fourth and largest pulse was estimated to be 127,000 fall chum salmon and should be approaching Fort Yukon. A fifth pulse of approximately 52,300 fall chum salmon is approaching Rampart-Rapids, and a sixth pulse of 52,400 fall chum salmon is approaching Galena.

The fall season is drawing to a close in the lower river. However, the fall chum salmon run is well under way in the upper portion of Yukon River as the Rapids test fish wheel approaches the three quarter point of the run, fall chum salmon passage past the Chandalar River sonar approaches the mid-point, and fall chum salmon passage is a week away from the average first quarter point at the mainstem Yukon River sonar near Eagle.

Fall Season Assessment Projects/Operators

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

The cumulative CPUE for the project through September 7 was 1,274.42 for fall chum salmon, which is near the historical median of 1,284.40 for this date. The cumulative CPUE for coho salmon was 510.74, which is above the historical median of 388.31 for this date.

Mountain Village Drift Test Fishing/Asacarsarmiut Traditional Council

The cumulative fall chum salmon CPUE for the project through September 7 was 1,785.55, which is below the historical median of 2,034.01 for this date. The cumulative coho salmon CPUE for the project through September 7 was 1,618.53, which is above the historical median of 1,057.56 for this date.

Sonar Project near Pilot Station/ADF&G

The cumulative fall chum salmon passage estimate through August 31 was 547,257, which is below the median passage of approximately 622,000 fish for this date. The cumulative coho salmon passage estimate through August 31 was 97,582, which is below the median passage of approximately 121,000 fish for this date. This was the last day of sonar operations and the overall run timing for this project was three days late for fall chum salmon and average for coho salmon.

Rapids Video Test Fish/Zuray

The cumulative CPUE from July 21 through September 7 is 31,868 chum salmon which is above the historical median of 19,206 fish for this date. Currently the middle Yukon River is going through a high water event which will possibly slow down migration rates and affects counts therefore adjustments based on water level is used at this site. The estimate index adjusted for water levels is below average for this date.

Chandalar River Sonar/USFWS

The project began counting on August 8 and the cumulative fall chum salmon passage estimate through September 7 is approximately 60,014 fish which is below the median of 76,588 fish for this date.

Mainstem Sonar at Eagle/ADF&G and DFO

The project transitioned to counting fall chum salmon as of August 13. Passage through September 7 is 9,240 fall chum salmon which is below the median of 16,563 for this date.

Upper Porcupine River Sonar/DFO

The sonar project began operations on August 10, the estimated chum salmon passage is a minimum of 5,851 through September 6 as some of the estimates consist of right bank only operations. This project has reached the average first quarter point on September 6.

Stock Identification/USFWS

The genetic strata from August 25-31, representing the sixth group of chum salmon to enter the river contained approximately 17% Border/US (Chandalar/Sheenjek), 23% Canadian and the Tanana fall component increased to 54%. Overall, for the fall season July 19-August 31, summer chum salmon stocks represented 22%, while fall chum salmon stocks were comprised of 29% Border/US (Chandalar/Sheenjek), 27% Canadian and 22% Tanana River.

Age Composition Fall Season/ADF&G

The preliminary fall chum salmon age composition from the LYTF 6-inch drift gillnets indicates the fish are dominated by age-4 fish, which is typical, however the age-4 component is weaker than expected this year. The proportion of age-4 and age-5 fish to date is 58% and 31% respectively compared to the average of 66% age-4 and 32% age-5 fish. Females represent 63% of the fish sampled, which is above the average of 58% through August 31. The sample size is 896 fish for ages and 917 for sex. The proportion of females in the District 1 commercial catch samples through August 30 was 50% and included 7% 3-year olds, 53% 4-year olds, and 38% 5-year olds. The sample size was 750 fish for ages and 746 for sex from the commercial catch.

Subsistence Fishing Schedules:

Coastal District:

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

District 1 (including the Black River):

Subsistence salmon fishing is currently open with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh size gillnets 24 hours a day, seven days per week except for 12 hours before, during, and 12 hours after a commercial fishing period.

District 2:

Subsistence salmon fishing is currently open with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh size gillnets 24 hours a day, seven days per week except for 12 hours before, during, and 12 hours after a commercial fishing period.

District 3:

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

Innoko River:

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

Subistrict 4-A (from ¾ mile downstream of Old Paradise Village upstream to the tip of Cone Point, which includes the mainstem Yukon River villages of Anvik, Grayling, Kaltag, Nulato, and Koyukuk):

Subsistence fishing in Subdistrict 4-A is open seven days per week, 24 hours per day and fishermen may use gillnets with mesh size up to 7.5 inches. Subsistence fishermen fishing in the upper portion of Subdistrict 4-A (upstream from the mouth of Stink Creek) can continue using drift gillnet gear during fall season.

Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C (from Cone Point upstream along the north bank of the river to the westernmost edge of Illinois Creek, which includes the mainstem Yukon River communities of Galena and Ruby):

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

Koyukuk River:

Subsistence salmon fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week and fishermen may use gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or less.

Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C (from the western edge of the mouth of Illinois Creek to the ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately two miles downstream of Waldron Creek, including the communities of Tanana and Rampart as well as the area near the Yukon River bridge area):

Subsistence fishing is open seven days per week, 24 hours per day, with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh size 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, Fort Yukon, Chalkyitsik, Circle and Eagle):

Subsistence salmon fishing in Subdistrict 5-D is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week and fishermen may use gillnets with mesh size up to 7.5 inches.

Subsistence salmon fishing in the mainstem Porcupine River is closed for the remainder of the fall season. During this closure, fishermen may fish for **non-salmon species** using gear with a mesh size of 4 inches or less. Tributaries such as the Sheenjek, Black, Coleen, and Salmon Trout Rivers remain open.

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 salmon fishing is open for two 42-hour fishing periods per week from 6:00 p.m. Mondays until 12:00 p.m. noon Wednesdays and from 6:00 p.m. Fridays until 12:00 p.m. noon Sundays. The Kantishna River is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week for subsistence salmon fishing.

Fishermen in Subdistricts 6-A, including the Kantishna River, and 6-B may use fish wheels or gillnets with mesh size of 7.5 inches or less.

Old Minto Area:

Subsistence salmon fishing is open five days per week from 6:00 p.m. Fridays until 6:00 p.m. Wednesdays with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh size gillnets or fish wheels.

Subdistrict 6-C (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 salmon fishing is currently open for two 42-hour periods each week, from 6:00 p.m. Fridays until 12:00 p.m. noon Sundays and from 6:00 p.m. Mondays until 12:00 p.m. noon Wednesdays. Fishermen may use 7.5-inch or smaller mesh size gillnets or fish wheels. Chinook salmon caught in gillnets or fish wheels may be retained for personal use.

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): Subsistence fishing is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week. Fishermen may use fish wheels or gillnets with a mesh size of 7.5 inches or less.

Fall Season Commercial Salmon Fishing

The fall season commercial salmon season in Districts 1 and 2 closes by regulation after September 10. However, the department does not anticipate any addition commercial openings for the remainder of the 2015 season.

The commercial fishing season is open in Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C, and in District 6. Processors, catcher sellers, or direct marketers interested in operating in Subdistricts 5-B and 5-C should notify the department by contacting the Fairbanks office at 459-7274.

District 1 including the Set Net Only Area Commercial Fishing Schedule:

Period #13: 6-hour period in the drift area and set net only area, September 2, with a harvest of 388 fall chum and 842 coho salmon.

Period #14: 6-hour period in the drift area and set net only area, September 4, with a harvest of 262 fall chum and 741 coho salmon.

The cumulative commercial harvest in District 1 through September 8 is 100,552 fall chum salmon and 65,915 coho salmon.

District 2 Commercial Fishing Schedule:

Period #13: 6-hour period, September 2, with a preliminary harvest of 1,234 fall chum salmon and 2,133 coho salmon.

Period #14: 6-hour period, September 4, with a preliminary harvest of 748 fall chum salmon and 1,234 coho salmon.

The preliminary cumulative commercial harvest in District 2 through September 8 is 75,524 fall chum salmon and 53,341 coho salmon.

District 6 Commercial Fishing Schedule:

Period #4: 42-hour period August 31-September 2, No harvest reported.

The preliminary cumulative commercial harvest in District 6 through September 8 is 606 fall chum salmon and 28 coho salmon.

This will be the last fall season update for 2015. You can continue following the run by subscribing to News Releases at: Subscribe to notification lists for other areas or species or Yukon River Daily Update at: http://list.state.ak.us/soalists/yukonriverdailyupdate/jl.htm

The subsistence fishing schedule and recorded fishery announcements are available 24 hours a day at **1-866-479-7387** (toll free outside of Fairbanks); in Fairbanks, call **(907) 459-7387**. If you have any questions regarding this report, please call the ADF&G office in Anchorage for summer season questions at 267-2217.

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