

FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF JULY 19- JULY 25, 2015.

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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. 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 jpkoller@fs.fed.us

Klag Bay - The Sitka Tribe of Alaska operates the Sockeye Salmon monitoring weir at Klag Bay which is operational as of July 1st. As of 7/26, 1,247 sockeye have passed the weir while approximately 975 have been harvested in the subsistence fishery. In 2014, approximately 10,400 sockeye migrated past the weir while an estimated 4,729 sockeye were harvested in the marine terminal area subsistence and sport fishery. Subsistence harvest accounted for over 99% of terminal area harvest.

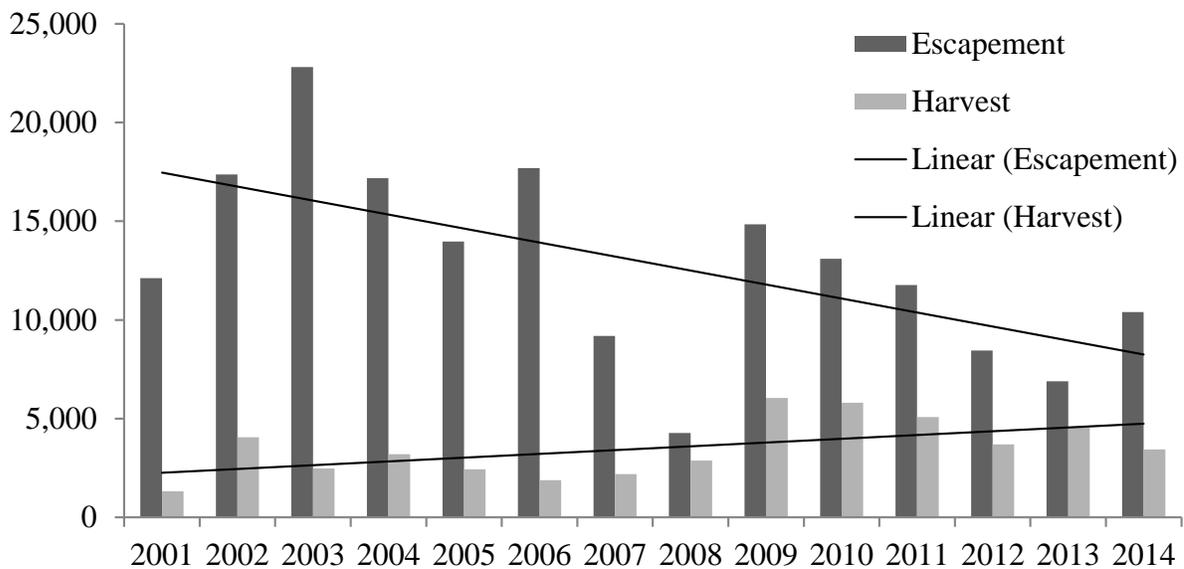


Figure 1. Escapement and harvest of sockeye at Klag Bay, 2001-2014 (Sitka Tribe of Alaska).

Redoubt Lake - The Forest Service operates the Redoubt Lake weir and video-equipped net weir which were operational June 16th. On July 26th, 102 sockeye entered the lake bringing the season total to 5,534. The in-season model is predicting that 10,922 will return this season. In 2014, an estimated total of 20,549 Sockeye Salmon passed through the weir into Redoubt Lake. The preliminary subsistence sockeye harvest was 1,313.

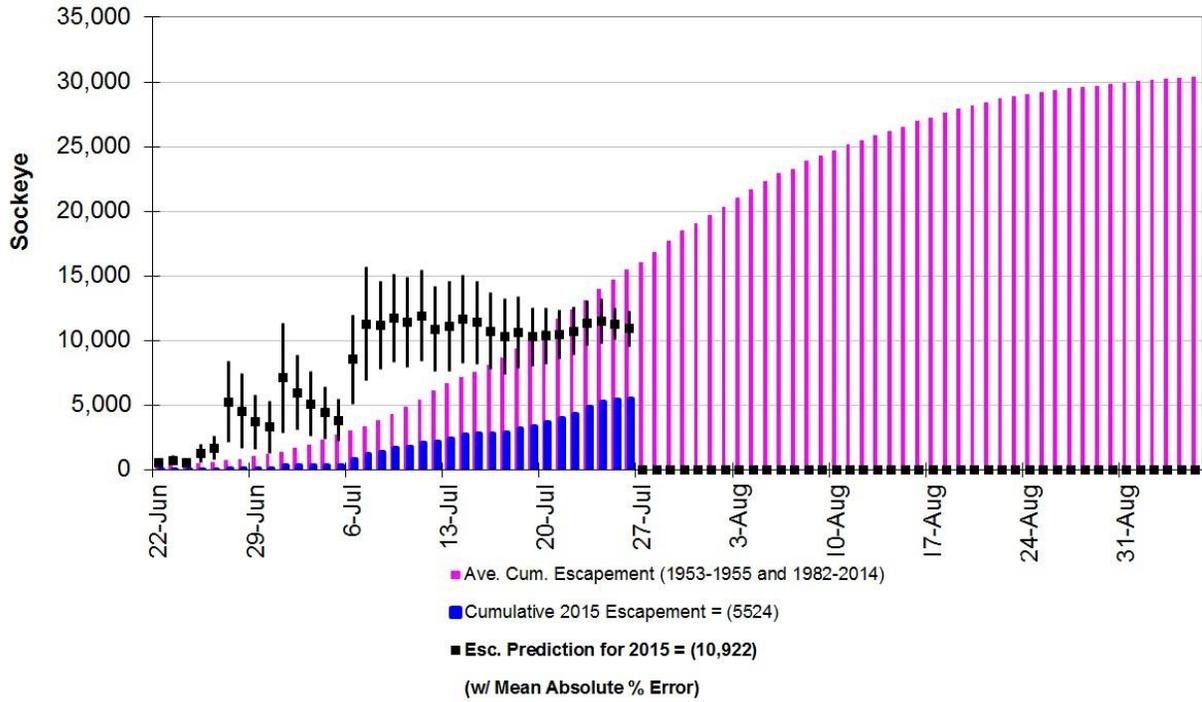


Figure 2. In-season predictions of the final Redoubt Lake sockeye escapement, 2015. Based on weir counts through 7/26/2015.

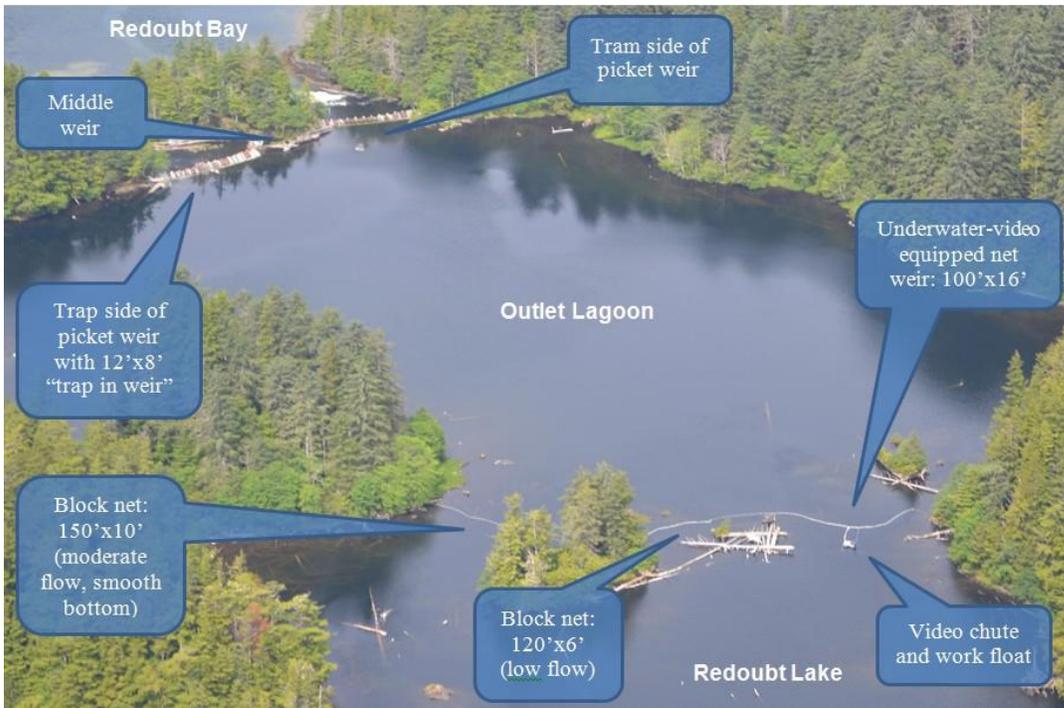


Figure 3. Aerial view (2013) of the outlet lagoon of Redoubt Lake showing the typical locations of the picket weir, net weir and block nets.

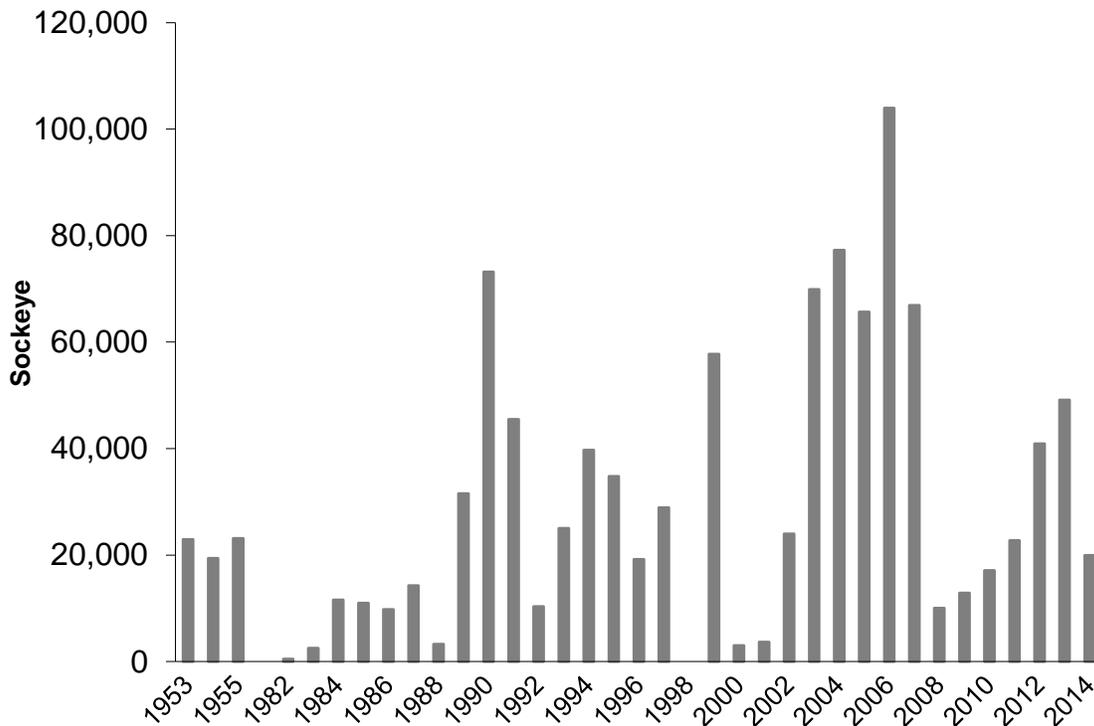


Figure 4. Annual sockeye expanded escapement into Redoubt Lake for years with data: 1953 to 1955, 1982 to 1997, and 1999 to 2014. The weir was not operated in 1998.

Falls Lake - The Forest Service and the Organized Village of Kake operate the Falls Lake trap and video net weir which were operational June 30th. As of July 26th, 808 sockeye have been trapped above the fish pass while about 700 have been harvested in the subsistence fishery. Based on the average annual percentage of fish using the fish pass we estimate that the total escapement to date is around 1,757. The subsistence fishery is closed annually from July 14-22 to protect the early portion of the run. The final escapement estimate in 2014 was 2,748 Sockeye Salmon while the final subsistence and sport harvest in the marine terminal area was 1,542. Subsistence harvest accounted for over 95% of terminal area harvest.

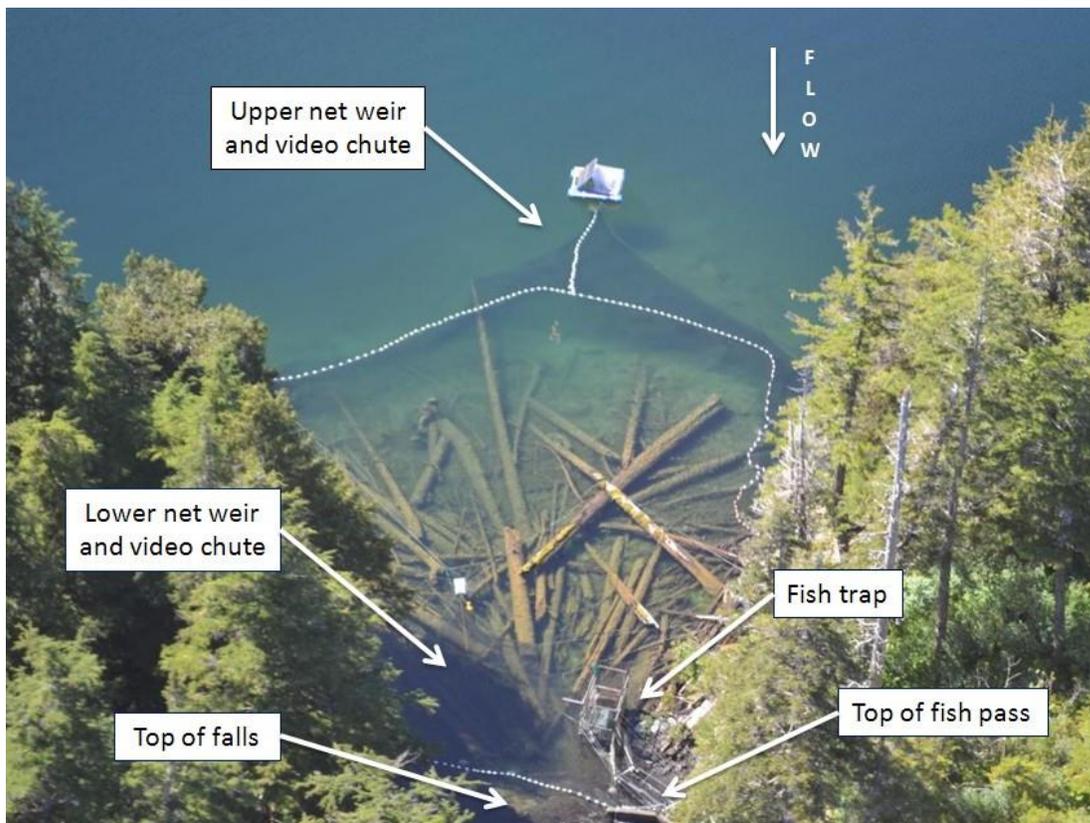


Figure 5. Aerial photo (2013) of the Falls Lake outlet illustrating the typical location of weir equipment.

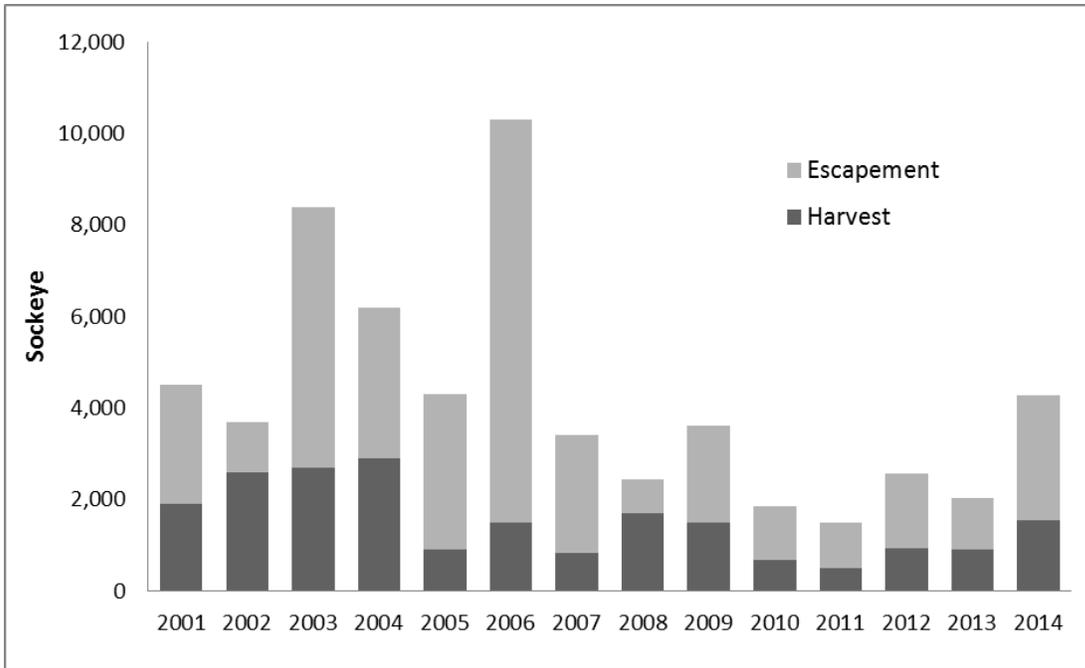


Figure 6. Escapement and harvest of Sockeye Salmon at Falls Lake, 2001-2014.

Wrangell/Petersburg Area – Bob Larson, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest
 (907) 772-5930, robertlarson@fs.fed.us

Stat Week 30, ending July 25

There have been 109 fishing permits issued for the Stikine River subsistence salmon fishery. Weather, river conditions and catch per unit of effort continue to be good. The estimated cumulative subsistence harvest is 45 Chinook, no Coho and 1,300 Sockeye Salmon. There have been 132 Chinook (avg. 2,757) and 2,230 Sockeye Salmon (avg. 9,823) past the slide area on the Tahltan River. Local Sockeye Salmon streams appear to have adequate escapements and the sport fisheries for halibut and salmon are good. The Region’s pink salmon return will likely result in a catch somewhere in the lower portion of the forecasted range of 37 to 79 million fish.

The following link is the ADF&G weekly salmon commercial fishery update for Yakutat and Southeast Alaska.

http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareasoutheast.salmonfishery_updates

Yakutat, Juneau, and Admiralty areas of Northern Southeast Alaska - Ben Van Alen, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest
 (907)-789-6257 bvanalen@fs.fed.us or Jake Musslewhite (907) 789-6256

In the Yakutat area, as of July 23, ADF&G personnel have counted 70,341 sockeye salmon and 169 large Chinook salmon through their weir on the lower Situk River. Compared with historical weir counts, the sockeye run is about 81 percent over and the Chinook run is about 91 percent over. The sockeye escapement is at the upper end of ADF&G's 30,000 to 70,000 biological escapement goal range and the Chinook escapement is, and will be, well below their 450 to 1,050 large Chinook salmon escapement goal range. ADF&G has not allowed retention of Chinook salmon in their sport and commercial set gillnet fisheries and the Forest Service has not issued permits for the subsistence take of Chinook salmon. ADF&G has also moderated fishing times in the set net fishery and closed waters near the mouth of the Situk River in an effort to protect Chinook salmon. This is the sixth season that we have taken management actions to protect Chinook salmon returning to the Situk River. The broad overlap in timing of these two species through the set gillnet fishery makes it difficult to harvest sockeye without catching Chinook salmon.

In the northern inside waters of Southeast Alaska, the sockeye run past the fish wheels in the lower Chilkat River is above average but the count into Chilkat Lake is still below goal. The sockeye count though the Chilkoot River weir is within goal ranges. Catches of sockeye salmon in the Taku River fishwheels have been near historical averages and the Taku/Snettisham drift gillnet fishery was open for three days this week. The commercial purse seine fishery fished Sunday and Thursday openings again this week – the fifth week of the season. The Whitestone/Augusta and West Admiralty areas had reasonably strong harvests of pink salmon. The Hidden Falls hatchery area is still closed due to low returns of hatchery chum salmon this season. Chum, coho, pink, and sockeye salmon harvested in northern seine fisheries have been selling for \$0.51, \$0.17, \$0.20, and \$1.13 per pound, respectively, this season.

As of July 23, project personnel from the Hoonah Indian Association have counted 630 sockeye salmon through the video weirs at the outlet of Neva Lake. About 35% of the sockeye salmon have now escaped into Neva Lake based on weir counts from the past eleven seasons. At Kook Lake, Angoon Community Association employees have counted 2,016 sockeye salmon through the pair of video weirs as of July 23.

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

There have been 230 permits issued for the 2015 Federal subsistence salmon fishery in the Southeast Alaska and Yakutat areas. Most effort typically occurs on Prince of Wales Island and is directed at Coho Salmon.

Subsistence effort for Sockeye Salmon has now begun. State managed fisheries typically begin in July with several locations having seasons running through August.

Sockeye Salmon weirs are currently active and fishing at Hatchery Creek and Hetta. To date 4,567 Sockeye Salmon have passed through at Hatchery Creek. Total count at the Hetta weir is 200 Sockeye Salmon.

Commercial fisheries within Districts 1-4 have begun. The first District 4 seine opening was July 5th, however harvest estimates are not available yet. The commercial troll fishery for Chinook Salmon opened July 1, but no closure date for Chinook has been determined. Total estimated harvests in these districts to date are: 93,725 Sockeye, 49,175 Coho, 928,600 Pink and 985,900 Chum 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

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 – Molly McCormick, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park/Preserve. (907) 822-7280 Molly_McCormick@nps.gov

As of July 23, 2015 the ADF&G sonar at Miles Lake (located just downstream of the Million Dollar Bridge in the lower Copper River) estimated that 1,299,798 salmon had migrated upstream. This estimate is 194% of the projected escapement objective of 669,544 for this date, or 630,254 more salmon. It is the highest escapement counted at the Miles Lake sonar since it started in 1978. An estimate of 16,119 salmon migrated by the sonar counter on July 23rd.

MILES LAKE SONAR ESTIMATES (TOTAL SALMON)

Year	Estimate	Year	Estimate	Year	Estimate	Year	Estimate
1978	107,011	1988	488,398	1998	866,957	2008	614,999

1979	237,173	1989	607,797	1999	848,921	2009	709,330
1980	276,538	1990	581,895	2000	587,592	2010	924,010
1981	535,263	1991	579,435	2001	833,569	2011	914,285
1982	467,306	1992	601,952	2002	819,000	2012	1,271,354
1983	545,724	1993	797,902	2003	695,233	2013	1,267,060
1984	536,806	1994	715,181	2004	669,646	2014	1,218,418
1985	436,313	1995	599,265	2005	854,268		
1986	509,275	1996	906,867	2006	959,731		
1987	483,478	1997	1,148,079	2007	926,438		

Commercial harvests in the Copper River District of Prince William Sound so far are:

- 22,760 Chinook
- 1,426,447 sockeye
- 6,017 coho
- 19,514 pink
- 14,638 chum

The Chitina Subdistrict is open and scheduled to remain open until midnight on July 26. The fishery will immediately reopen at 12:01 July 27 and remain open for the entire week. The state and federal fisheries in the Chitina Subdistrict usually follow identical fishing schedules which are set by the state. Seventy-seven Federal Chitina Subdistrict permits have been issued on FWS's 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 Glennallen Subdistrict opened for Federal subsistence users on May 15th and is expected to remain open until September 30th. 285 Federal Glennallen Subdistrict permits have been issued on FWS's 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 state subsistence fishery in the Glennallen Subdistrict opened on June 1st.

The Batzulnetas Area fishery opened on May 15 and is expected to remain open until September 30, 2015. Three permits have been issued so far.

The Tanada Creek weir was operational on May 27. Since last weekend there has finally been a small flow of water in Tanada Creek and the crew has counted 1,402 sockeye salmon migrating through the weir as of July 24.

As of July 24th 2,626 Chinook had been tagged at the two project fishwheels in Baird Canyon operated by the Native Village of Eyak and 128 had been recaptured at the Canyon Creek wheels. The Baird Canyon wheels stopped operating for the season on July 10.

ADF&G's counting tower in the Gulkana River was installed on June 2. As of July 23, 2,910 Chinook and 21,108 sockeye have been counted.

Effective June 20, 2015, by emergency order of ADF&G, the bag and possession limit for sport-caught sockeye salmon 16 inches or longer in the Copper River drainage increased from 3 to 6.

Five Special Actions have been issued by the park so far this season:

- delaying the starting date of the Chitina River federal salmon fishery and setting the pre-season schedule for the fishery
- amending the preseason schedule for the Chitina Subdistrict for the week of July 6 – July 12, allowing a full week (168 hours) of fishing, and providing the tentative schedule for future fishing periods
- amending the preseason schedule for the Chitina Subdistrict for the week of July 13-19, allowing a full week (168 hours) of fishing
- amending the preseason schedule for the Chitina Subdistrict for the week of July 20-26, allowing a full week (168 hours) of fishing
- amending the preseason schedule for the Chitina Subdistrict for the week of July 27- August 2, allowing a full week (168 hours) of fishing

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>

ADF&G Copper River Inseason Commercial Harvest Estimates

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

Gulkana River counting tower – ADF&G

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

Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve Subsistence User's Guide

<http://www.nps.gov/wrst/historyculture/upload/Subsistence%20brochure.pdf>

Prince William Sound Federal Subsistence Regulations including Copper River.

http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/regulation/fish_shell/upload/Prince.pdf

Gulkana River counting tower – ADF&G

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

Link to article in the Peninsula Clarion about the smaller-than-average trend for sockeye salmon this season

<http://peninsulaclarion.com/news/2015-06-25/across-state-early-salmon-catches-underweight>

PWS and Copper River Flats – Milo Burcham, Forest Service, Cordova.
 (907) 424-4759 mburcham@fs.fed.us

Copper River District opened at 7:00 am on Thursday, July 16 for a 36-hour commercial fishing period. Cumulative sonar count through July 14 was 1.17 million fish, whereas the anticipated count for this date is 591,000 fish. The 0600 count for July 15 was 2,310 fish. For the week ending July 11, the actual Copper River delta survey count was 45,960 sockeye salmon versus an anticipated range 30,055 – 71,040. Hatchery contributions from the period that closed on July 7 were 25% Gulkana Hatchery and 0% Main Bay.

A total of 38 Federal Subsistence fishing permits have been issued for freshwaters within the Prince William Sound of Chugach National Forest to date. Ninety-one permits were issued last season. Harvest by this year’s permit holders will not be known until reports are returned this winter. In 2014, 630 coho and 76 sockeye were harvested on Copper River Delta fresh waters in this fishery.

Cook Inlet Area – Jeff Anderson, Field Supervisor, Kenai Fish and Wildlife Field Office (907) 260-0132 Jeffrey_Anderson@fws.gov

Subsistence users have started to harvest late-run Sockeye Salmon in the subsistence dip net fishery at the Russian River Falls and harvest of 837 Sockeye Salmon has been reported through July 23. Harvest of 65 Sockeye Salmon has been reported in the Kasilof River subsistence dip net fishery and harvest of 146 Sockeye Salmon has been reported in the Kasilof River experimental community gillnet fishery through July 23. Totals of 127 Kenai River permits, 29 Kasilof River permits, and 13 Designated Fisher permits have been issued through July 23.

Emergency Special Action 10-KS-01-15 remains in effect which closed the Federal subsistence fishery for Chinook Salmon in the Kenai River downstream from the outlet of Skilak Lake through Saturday, August 15, 2015. This closure prohibits all subsistence fishing for Chinook Salmon, including dip net, rod and reel, and community gillnet fisheries. Because of poor recent returns, the declining size and age structure of the run, and uncertainty in estimates of mainstem spawning fish that may be impacted with harvest, it is warranted to keep the Federal subsistence fishery closed to ensure that early-run Chinook Salmon management goals are achieved.

Fish Counts through July 22:

Russian River early-run sockeye (weir)	50,226	(count ended on July 14)
Russian River late-run sockeye (weir)	7,101	(count began on July 15)
Kenai River late-run sockeye (sonar)	412,825	(counts began on July 1)
Kasilof River sockeye (sonar)	335,015	(counts began on June 15)
Kenai River early-run Chinook (sonar)	6,190	(counts ended on June 30)
Kenai River late-run Chinook (sonar)	11,079	(counts began on July 1)

Kodiak Island Area – Anne Marie LaRosa, Refuge Manager, - Kodiak NWR
(907) 487-2600/0230 AnneMarie_LaRosa@fws.gov or
Kevin Van Hatten (907) 487-0230 Kevin_VanHatten@fws.gov

Summary expected next week.

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

Bristol Bay and Chignik – Doug McBride Fisheries Branch Chief Anchorage Fish and Wildlife Field Office
(907) 271-2871 Doug_McBride@fws.gov

The inseason manager has taken a new position and weekly summaries for the Bristol Bay and Chignik Areas have likely concluded for the 2015 season.

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](mailto:Gerald_Maschmann@fws.gov) or
Fred Bue [Fredrick Bue@fws.gov](mailto:Fredrick_Bue@fws.gov)
Emmonak Summer Office (907) 949-1798

Fall Season Outlook and Management Actions

The 2015 fall chum salmon preseason run projection, based on the summer chum to fall chum salmon relationship, is for a run size between 700,000 and 800,000 fish. This level of abundance should be sufficient to provide for escapement, an above average subsistence harvest, and a surplus available for commercial and personal use purposes. The Yukon River Drainage Fall Chum Salmon Management Plan went into effect beginning July 16 in the Lower Yukon River Districts. Districts 1, 2, and 3 transitioned to fall season management on July 16, 18, and 20 respectively. Upriver districts will transition to fall season management, chronologically, as the fall chum salmon run migrates upriver. Subsistence salmon fishing has been relaxed in Districts 1, 2, and 3 to 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, restricted to 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnet gear. Subsistence salmon fishing will be closed 12-hours before, during, and 12-hours after commercial fishing. Commercial fishing for fall chum has begun in Districts 1 and 2. Two periods have been opened in District 1 and one period has been opened in District 2. The preliminary commercial harvest is 15,909 fall chum and 251 coho.

Fall Season Assessment Information

The Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF) shifted to fall season assessment on July 16. At this time the cumulative CPUE is 111.13, slightly below the average of 163.22. The Mt. Village Test Fishery (MVTF) began operations on July 18 and has a cumulative CPUE of 351.36, above the average at this time of 231.09. The Pilot Station sonar shifted to fall season assessment on July 19 and has a cumulative estimated passage of 131,738 fall chum above the median estimated passage of 57,581. The first pulse of approximately 100,000 fall chum passed the sonar on July 20 and 21.

Summer Season Outlook and Management Strategies

The current in season projection is for a poor Chinook salmon total run size of just above the lower end of the preseason projection range of 118,000 to 140,000 fish. The current in season summer chum salmon run projection is for a run of approximately 1.8 million, at the low end of the pre-season projection of 1.8-2.4 million chum, enough to provide for escapement needs, normal subsistence harvest levels, and a surplus for other uses.

Summer Season Assessment Information

The Chinook and summer chum salmon runs are over in the lower Yukon. The final day of summer season passage estimates at the Pilot Station sonar was July 18. The cumulative Pilot Station sonar Chinook salmon passage of 115,497 through July 18 is below the average passage of 140,899. The estimated passage of summer chum past the sonar through July 18 is 1,384,218, below the median of 1,665,667. The Rapids test fish wheel began on June 13, but was halted on June 23 due to fires in the Tanana area. The Rapids test fish wheel resumed operations on July 16 just after the average $\frac{3}{4}$ point and appears to have detected passage of the fourth and final pulse of Chinook salmon. The Eagle sonar began 5 days early on June 30 and has an estimated Chinook salmon passage

of 44,361 fish through July 23. This is well above the average of 25,119 for this date even taking into account the early start date of the project, and above the minimum Canadian escapement goal of 42,500.

Most escapement projects are past their peak passage dates. Information presented is through July 23. The E.F. Andreafsky weir has an estimated passage of 5,241 Chinook salmon, above the average and above the upper end of the escapement goal of 4,900. The observed total passage of summer chum salmon through July 23 is 47,668, above the median of 46,506 fish, and above the minimum escapement goal of 40,000 summer chum. The Anvik sonar has an estimated passage of 365,568 summer chum, below the median of 460,295. The Anvik sonar is within its escapement goal of 350,000-700,000 summer chum. The Gisasa River weir has an observed total passage of 1,064 Chinook salmon, below the median of 1,716, and 39,281 summer chum, above the median of 35,198. The Henshaw Creek weir has an observed total passage of 2,087 Chinook, above the median of 690, and 176,438 summer chum, above the median of 72,198. The Chena River tower started on June 30, however operations were suspended due to high water from June 3-7. Estimates at this time are 3,815 Chinook salmon, which is above the median for this date and exceeds the minimum escapement goal of 2,800, and 1,883 summer chum, which is above the median of 889. The Salcha River tower began operations on July 12, and 3,583 Chinook have been estimated to have passed this project at this time, above the low end of the escapement goal, and 903 summer chum salmon have estimated to have passed the project, above the median of 396.

Summer Season Management Actions

Conservative management actions implemented so far have been in accordance with the preseason management plan outlined in the 2015 Yukon River Salmon Fisheries Outlook. As planned, subsistence salmon fishing has been restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnet gear early in the season, closed to protect the first pulse, and opened with selective gear, such as dip nets, beach seines, and live release fish wheels to harvest abundant chum salmon. As the last of Chinook salmon pass through each district, subsistence salmon fishing is being relaxed to allow more fishing time with gear restricted to 6-inch or smaller mesh size and fish wheels with the intent to focus harvest on smaller Chinook salmon as a way to maintain quality of escapement.

Fifty-three commercial salmon fishing periods have been scheduled in Districts 1 and 2 restricted to dip nets and beach seines, early in the season, and restricted to 5.5-inch and 6-inch gillnet gear later in the season when the majority of Chinook salmon had passed through the lower Yukon. The preliminary commercial harvests for the summer season are 354,402 summer chum, 2,767 Chinook salmon caught but not sold, and 9,515 Chinook salmon caught and released.

Consultation

Federal and State managers have visited the upriver communities of Beaver, Venetie, Chalkyitsik, Circle and Fort Yukon, and lower river communities of Pilot Station and Anvik to discuss management strategies and address fishermen's concerns. Additional visits to other communities are anticipated this season. Weekly YR DFA teleconferences

began on June 2, and a YAG (Yukon Advisory Group) meeting was held on June 18. Another YAG meeting was held, Monday, July 13, to discuss subsistence fishing opportunities for District 5 and review the fall season management.

Kuskokwim River – Neil Lalonde, Refuge Manager, Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge Neil_Lalonde@fws.gov or
Robert Sundown (907) 543-1007 Robert_Sundown@fws.gov

No report for last week. Report expected next week.

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) 443-2522 Ken_Adkisson@nps.gov

Norton Sound District

The low end of all king salmon escapement goal ranges have been exceeded for the second year in a row, likely as a result of subsistence users working with the ADF&G to curtail the king salmon harvests this year. The strong chum salmon run continues and the commercial catch has blown past the department forecast of 70,000 to 100,000 chums.

The harvest is now over 115,000 chum salmon and will easily exceed 120,000 fish, making it the best chum harvest since 1986. The upcoming commercial silver salmon fishery forecast of 60,000 to 90,000 may be exceeded with decent weather. Pink salmon look to be within the forecast range of 25,000 to 75,000 fish, even without a directed fishery. This year's catch of 2,700 sockeye salmon doubles the previous record of 1,252 sockeyes caught in 1988.

The preliminary commercial salmon catches this season are 900 kings, 115,000 chums, 2,700 sockeyes, 50,000 pinks and 300 silvers by 110 permit holders.

All the subdistricts from Nome to Unalakleet have been placed on a commercial fishing schedule through July of two 48-hour periods per week.

Sport Fishing: All waters from Bald Head to Point Romanof remain closed to sport fishing for Chinook salmon.

Unalakleet (Subdistrict 6)

The Federal public waters of the Unalakleet River upstream of the Chirosky River remain closed to the taking of Chinook salmon by all users from July 1 to July 31 under Federal subsistence regulations.

Commercial Fishing: The subdistrict has been placed on a commercial fishing schedule through July of two 48-hour periods per week. Gillnets are restricted to a mesh size of 6 inches or less. The commercial catches this season have been 170 kings, 285 sockeyes, 26,350 pinks, 25,600 chums and 260 silvers. All kings caught were required to be retained and not sold. The chum catch has been average,

Subsistence Fishing: The marine waters are open seven days a week to set gillnets. The fresh waters are open to two 36- hour periods a week with set gillnets and beach seines with a mesh size of 4 ½ inches or less. Any king salmon captured in beach seines must be immediately released.

North River Tower – Camp J.B. - A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game 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. Cumulative counts through July 18 were 1,700 kings, 13,000 chums and 110,000 pinks. The average historical third quarter for kings. For chums and pinks, the midpoint for pinks is July 22.

Unalakleet River Floating Weir – A cooperative project of Fish & Game, Native Village of Unalakleet, United States BLM and NSEDC with major funding provided by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Subsistence Management. There are no weir escapement goals yet. Cumulative counts through July 18 were 2,600 kings, 63,000 chums, 295,000 pinks, 740 sockeyes and 370 silvers. The project began in 2010, and for this date, the king, sockeye, silver and odd-year pink counts are the highest in project history, and chum counts are close to the best.

Shaktoolik (Subdistrict 5)

Commercial Fishing: The subdistrict has been placed on a commercial fishing schedule through July of two 48-hour periods per week. Gillnets are restricted to a mesh size of 6 inches or less. The commercial catch this season has been 34 kings, 44 sockeyes, 10,300 pinks, 22,000 chums and 60 silvers. All kings caught were required to be retained and not sold. The chum catch has been average.

Subsistence Fishing: The marine waters are open seven days a week to set gillnets. The fresh waters are open to two 36- hour periods a week with set gillnets and beach seines with a mesh size of 4 ½ inches or less. Any king salmon captured in beach seines must be immediately released.

Shaktoolik Tower – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game has no escapement goals yet established. Cumulative counts through July 18 were 600 kings, 21,000 chums, 200,000 pinks, and 250 silvers. King and chum counts are well below last year up to mid-July.

Norton Bay (Subdistrict 4)

Commercial Fishing: The subdistrict has been placed on a commercial fishing schedule through July of two 48-hour periods per week. Gillnets are restricted to a mesh size of 6 inches or less. The commercial catch this is 190 kings, 180 sockeyes, 8,600 pinks and 19,000 chums. The chum catch is the fourth best all-time.

Inglutalik River Tower – A cooperative project of NSEDC and ADF&G. No escapement goals have been established. Cumulative counts through July 18 were 1,400 kings, 29,000 chums, 29,000 pinks and 100 silvers. Counts appear to be average compared to previous years, except silvers are lagging.

Elim (Subdistrict 3)

Commercial Fishing: The subdistrict has been placed on a commercial fishing schedule through July of two 48-hour periods per week. Gillnets are restricted to a mesh size of 6 inches or less. The commercial catch this season is 440 kings, 1,370 sockeyes, 3,000 pinks, 31,000 chums and 10 silvers. The king catch is the best since 1997, the sockeye catch is a record, and the chum catch is the best since 1983.

Kwiniuk River Tower – A Fish & Game project with assistance from NSEDC has escapement goals of 300-550 kings; 11,500 – 23,000 chums; 8,400 pinks; and 650-1,300 silvers (aerial survey goal). Cumulative counts through July 18 were 309 kings, 35,000 chums, 136,000 pinks and 12 sockeyes.. The average historical 90% point of passage for kings and chums is July 21, and the midpoint for pinks is July 22.

Golovin (Subdistrict 2)

Commercial Fishing: The subdistrict has been placed on a commercial fishing schedule through July of two 48-hour periods per week. Gillnets are restricted to a mesh size of 6 inches or less. The commercial catch this season is 55 kings, 785 sockeyes, 900 pinks, 15,000 chums and 2 silvers. The king and sockeye catch is the best since 1988. The chum catch is the third best since 1988.

Fish River Tower - A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game. No escapement goals have been established. Cumulative counts through July 18 were 2,100 kings, 120,000 chums and 80,000 pinks. No comparisons are possible with last year's Fish River counts because only one counting tower of the two towers was operational last year until mid-July. Past radio telemetry projects show approximately one-third of the chum salmon would be bound for the Niukluk River, and the previous Niukluk River tower chum salmon escapement goal of 23,000 chums would have been reached this year.

Nome (Subdistrict 1)

For the sixth consecutive year the Nome Subdistrict escapement goal range of 23,000 to 35,000 chum salmon will be greatly exceeded and chum escapement goal ranges for individual rivers are projected to be met or exceeded.

Commercial Fishing: There are two 48-hour periods open weekly through July with gillnets restricted to 6 inches or less mesh size. The commercial catch this season is 3 kings, 40 sockeyes, 300 pinks and 3,000 chums. Commercial salmon fishing has returned after no fishing since 1996. The chum salmon catch is the best since 1987.

Subsistence Fishing: The subsistence set gillnet schedule in the marine waters west of Cape Nome is from 6:00 p.m. Monday until 6:00 p.m. Saturday. The marine waters east of Cape Nome are open seven days a week. There are no catch limits when fishing in marine waters. The fresh water subsistence areas gillnet schedule is from 6:00 p.m. Monday until 6:00 p.m. Wednesday, and from 6:00 p.m. Thursday until 6:00 p.m. Saturday. Beach seining is allowed at the same time as gillnetting is allowed both in marine and fresh waters subsistence areas. Fishermen need to check the backs of their subsistence permits since catch limits vary by river. The chum salmon limit for the Nome and Snake rivers has been waived. The Penny and Cripple Rivers remain closed to subsistence fishing for chum salmon by regulation.

Solomon River Weir – A Fish & Game project, has no escapement goals yet established. The weir was fish tight on June 26. The cumulative count through July 18 were 350 chums and 500 pinks. The chums are lagging compared to the previous two years.

Eldorado River Weir – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game has an escapement goal of 6,000 – 9,200 chum salmon. Cumulative counts through July 18 were 12 kings, 20,500 chums and 800 pinks. Chum escapement has exceeded the goal range for six consecutive years.

Nome River Weir – A Fish & Game project with assistance from NSEDC has an escapement goal of 2,900 – 4,300 chum salmon and 3,200 pink salmon. The cumulative counts through July 18 were 3 kings, 2,200 chums, 15,000 pinks, 7 sockeyes, and 12 silvers. The average historical first quarter point is July 22 for pinks and the midpoint for chums is July 21.

Snake River Weir – A cooperative project between Fish & Game and NSEDC has an escapement goal of 1,600 – 2,500 chum salmon. The cumulative count through July 18 was 2,100 chums, and 1,600 pinks. The average historical first quarter point is July 22 for pinks, and the midpoint for chums is July 21.

Glacial Lake Weir – A cooperative project between and Fish & Game and NSEDC has an escapement goal of 800 – 1,600 sockeyes based on aerial survey. A video system is used. The salmon count to July 2 was 1,600 sockeyes and 12 river otters. It is believed that the same river otters are walking back downstream and swimming upstream to get on t.v.

Port Clarence District

All subsistence sockeye salmon limits at Pilgrim River have been waived. Fishermen need to check the back of their permit for limits on other salmon.

Pilgrim River Weir –A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish & Game has an escapement goal of 4,000 – 8,000 sockeyes based on aerial survey at Salmon Lake & Grand Central tributary to Salmon Lake. The cumulative counts through July 18 were 63 kings, 6,100 chums, 250 pinks, and 13,600 sockeyes. The average historical midpoint for sockeyes is July 18. This is the best sockeye passage for the same date since 2007

Kotzebue District

Commercial salmon fishing reopened Monday, July 20 for 8 hours. The catch was approximately 9,000 chum salmon. A second commercial opening of 8 hours occurred on July 21. Effective July 22, the commercial schedule was shifted to a daily 8 hour period between July 22 and July 24. However, having only one buyer presented capacity challenges that tended to somewhat restrict fishing. The catch through the first two weeks of fishing is nearly 106,000 chum salmon, compared to the 153,000 chum salmon harvested last year during the first two weeks of fishing. Historically, the last week of July and the first week of August produce the highest catches of the season.

Kobuk River Test Fish - Fish & Game project. The project became operational with above average catches; however the total this season is about 60% of last year's catch.

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