

**FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF MAY 21-29, 2023.** Report #1  
Compiled by George Pappas - (907) 317-2165, [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. 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.

**For the first weekly report for the 2023 season, not all authors have information to report as the fisheries in their areas may not commence until a later date. In addition, we have a few new members to the reporting team who will getting up on step in the coming weeks.**

## **SOUTHEAST ALASKA**

**Sheet'ká and Xunaa (Sitka and Hoonah) Area – Ashley Bolwerk, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest Ashley Bolwerk, office: (907)747-4299; work cell: (907)738-3461; [ashley.bolwerk@usda.gov](mailto:ashley.bolwerk@usda.gov)**

Herring – A commercial herring fishery occurred in Sheet'ká X'áat'i (Sitka Sound) in 2023. Please see this summary of Sitka Sound herring 2023. More information can be found on the Alaska Department of Fish and Game's "Commercial Herring Fishery" homepage. The 2023 summary of southeast Alaska herring is not yet available.

**Wrangell Area, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest Kevin Kocarek - [Kevin.kocarek@usda](mailto:Kevin.kocarek@usda) (907)772-3871**

**Summary of the 2022 Federal Subsistence Salmon Fishery on the Stikine River**  
According to the Federal Subsistence Permit Database, the U.S. Forest Service issued Stikine River subsistence fishing permits (FFSE07) to 102 households during the 2022 season. Federal subsistence fishers harvested 30 large Chinook ( $\geq 30$  inches total length), 47 small Chinook ( $< 30$  inches total length), 33 Chum, 6 Coho, 58 Pink, and 1,127 Sockeye Salmon in 2022. The Chinook Salmon season was closed prior to the start of the season by the Federal in-season manager due to a low pre-season return estimate. All Chinook Salmon were incidentally harvested by Federal subsistence users during the Sockeye Salmon season. All Chinook, Chum, and Pink Salmon were harvested during the

Sockeye Season (June 21 through July 31) and 18 Sockeye Salmon were harvested during the Coho Salmon season. Federal subsistence harvest in the Stikine River decreased in 2022 compared to 2021 by 21 percent for large Chinook, 43 percent small Chinook, 9 percent for Sockeye and 45 percent for Pink Salmon. Federal Subsistence harvest remained the same for Coho Salmon when comparing the 2 years. Federal subsistence harvest increased in 2022 by 15 percent for Chum Salmon in 2022.

### **2023 Stikine Chinook Fishery is Closed**

Wrangell District Ranger Victoria Houser, under authority delegated by the Federal Subsistence Board, has closed the Federal subsistence Chinook Salmon fishery in the Stikine River May 15–June 20, 2023. The preseason forecast for the Stikine River is 11,700 large Chinook Salmon (greater than 28 inches in total length), which is below the escapement goal range of 14,000 to 28,000 large Chinook Salmon. The closure of the Chinook Salmon fishery does not affect other Stikine River Federal subsistence fisheries beginning June 21, 2023.

### **2023 Stikine Sockeye and Coho Salmon**

The Stikine River forecast is for an 86,000 Sockeye Salmon run which includes 57,000 Tahltan and 29,000 mainstem fish. This forecast results in a U.S. AC of 17,500 Tahltan and zero mainstem fish. The Federal Subsistence Sockeye Fishery on the Stikine is from June 21 through July 31. The Subsistence Coho Salmon Fishery on the Stikine is from August 1 through October 1.

### **North Zone Tongass National Forest - Juneau, Hoonah, Admiralty Area and Yakutat – Forest Service, -Jake Musslewhite, 907-789-6256**

[jacob.g.musslewhite@usda.gov](mailto:jacob.g.musslewhite@usda.gov)

### **May 30, 2023**

**Sockeye Salmon** - Sockeye Salmon fisheries in the area have not begun for the season. Most subsistence fisheries begin in late June, as returning fish start to show up at the mouths of streams.

*Sitkoh Lake* – The Sitkoh Lake weir is a cooperative project between the Forest Service and the Angoon Community Association, and monitors Sockeye Salmon escapement to the lake using a remotely monitored video weir. In 2022, beavers chewed through camera and light cables during the peak of the run, preventing us from making a complete escapement estimate. However, the 2022 return appeared stronger than expected based on partial counts and observations on the spawning grounds. The Sitkoh Lake project will continue to operate in 2023, with the weir to be installed in early July. Returns are likely to be on the low side, based on the lower escapements in parent years.

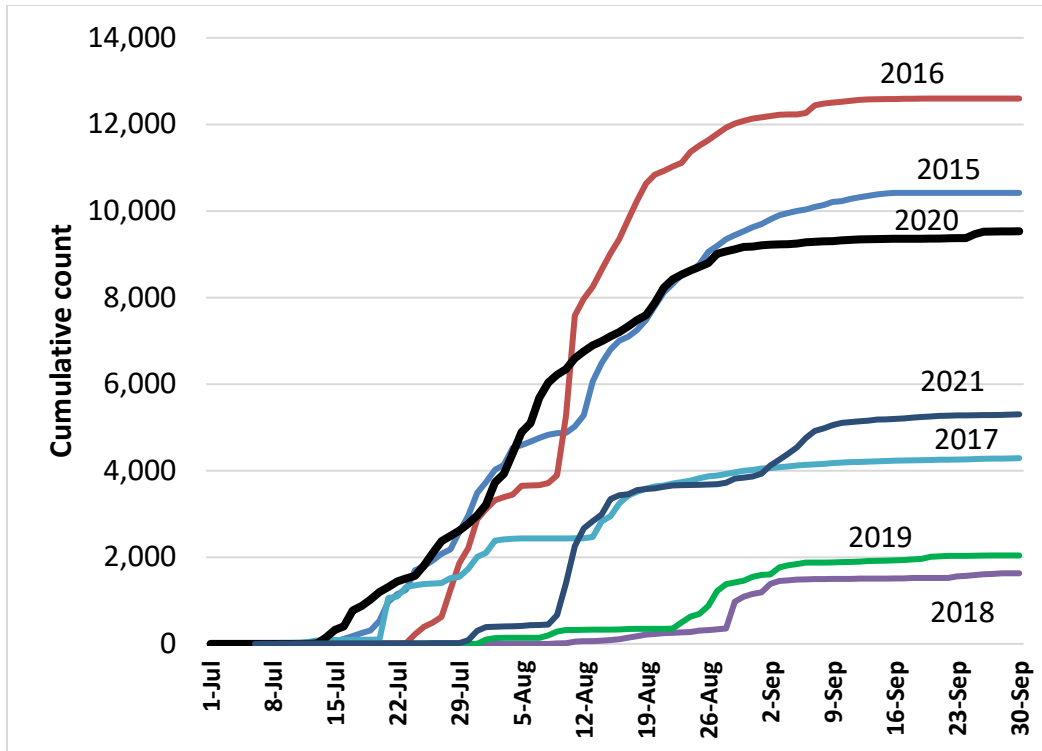


Figure 1. Estimated cumulative escapement of Sockeye Salmon into Sitkoh Lake through video weirs, 2015 to 2021.

*Neva Lake* – The Neva Lake weir is a cooperative project operated by the Forest Service and the Hoonah Indian Association, and uses a video weir to count Sockeye Salmon entering Neva Lake, near the community of Excursion Inlet. In 2022, we counted a total of 4,621 Sockeye Salmon through the weir. Escapements have generally improved since a low point in 2015 (Figure 2). The annual subsistence harvest limit at Neva/South Creek has been increased to 20 Sockeye in response to improved returns. Fishermen are reminded that the Federal waters (i.e. fresh water) of Neva and South Creeks are closed to Sockeye harvest by non-Federally qualified users, which includes non-residents and residents of the Juneau area. The Neva Lake project will continue to operate in 2023, with the weir to be installed in mid- June.

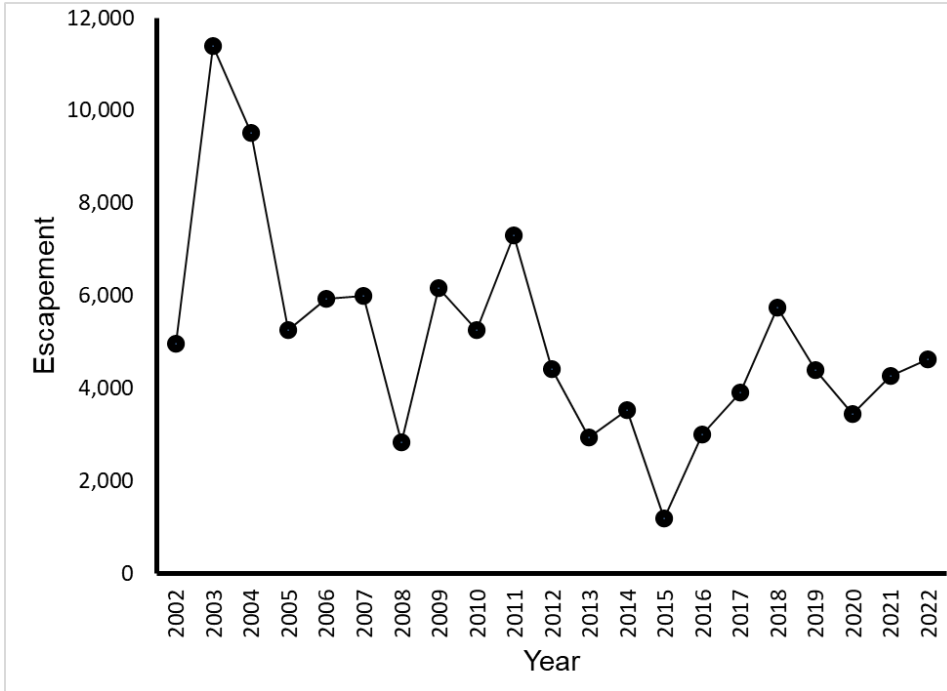


Figure 2. Estimated escapement of Sockeye Salmon at the Neva Lake weir, 2002-2022.

*Yakutat-* The pre-season forecast for Situk River Chinook Salmon is 450 large fish, and the escapement goal range is 450 – 1,050 fish. In order to ensure that the escapement goal is met, subsistence and commercial fisheries on the mouth of the Situk have been closed until further notice (Figure 3). Escapement of Chinook Salmon will be monitored at the Situk weir, and fisheries may reopen if adequate escapement is seen through the weir. Subsistence fishermen are reminded that when fishing in the Situk River they are required to attend their gillnet at all times when it is being used to take salmon. If a Chinook salmon is found dead in a subsistence net, fishermen are to report it and turn it over to the Yakutat Fish and Game.



Figure 3. Situk-Ahrnklin Inlet waters closed to commercial and subsistence fishing in 2023.

**Prince of Wales and Ketchikan District Area – TBA, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest. (907) 826-1649**

USFS Weekly Summary Author position vacant - TBA. Reports expected soon this season once staffing is complete.

**Petersburg - Tongass National Forest. Robert Cross – Contact (907-723-8653 Or robert.cross@usda.gov**

No report submitted this week – USFS organizing new reporting zones among new and existing staff.

**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, 5/29/2023 Update – Dave Sarafin, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST), (907) 822-7281, dave\_sarafin@nps.gov**

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) provided preseason total run forecasts of 53,000 Chinook Salmon and 1,695,000 Sockeye Salmon in the Copper River. Relative to recent 10-year averages, these forecasts are 15% above average for Chinook Salmon and 14% below average for Sockeye Salmon. In early May, Federal and State fisheries managers met to discuss this forecast, regulatory changes, anticipated early season management strategies, and plans for maintaining communications with local stakeholders throughout the season.

The commercial fishery in the Copper River District has been limited to five 12-hour fishing periods, through May 29. The cumulative harvest (preliminary) through May 29 is reported as 256,205 Sockeye Salmon and 5,870 Chinook Salmon. The most recent fishing period closed on May 29; preliminary harvest for this 12-hour period was 138,240 Sockeye Salmon and 1,117 Chinook Salmon. The Copper River District is currently closed.

The ADFG sonar at Miles Lake (located just downstream of the Million Dollar Bridge in the Copper River) began limited operation of only the North Bank sonar on May 22. Salmon passage was first recorded on May 25. Early season ice flow has delayed the operation of the South Bank sonar, which began operation on May 25. As of May 29, 11,663 salmon have been estimated migrating upstream past the North Bank for the season. A daily estimate of 4,581 salmon migrated by the sonar on May 29.

Performance in the commercial fishery and in river sonar salmon passage estimates are the primary early season assessments of the Sockeye Salmon return to the Copper River. The initial early season commercial fishing periods resulted in relatively low harvest in comparison to projected levels. The most recent harvest in the commercial fishery indicates a significant increase from the earlier fishing periods of the season. Daily sonar estimates are also relatively low; however, it is important to keep in mind that the Copper Basin experienced record snowfalls during the winter of 2023 (similar to the conditions of 2022). This and a delayed timing of the melt off could be associated with a delayed start to the salmon return. It is too early to differentiate the low numbers in the return from a delay in run timing. Federal managers will continue to monitor run strength indices to evaluate the need for appropriate fisheries management actions in the Copper River Drainage. No Federal Special Actions have been issued by the in-season manager this season.

The State subsistence fishery in the Glennallen Subdistrict is scheduled to open June 1. The State personal use fishery in the Chitina Subdistrict is tentatively scheduled to open for a 24-hour fishing period on June 7. However, this initial open period may be delayed due to poor early season run assessments.

The Federal subsistence fisheries in the Chitina Subdistrict, the Glennallen Subdistrict, and the Batzulnetas vicinity opened on May 15 and are expected to remain open through September 30. Data from the Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) Federal subsistence permit website indicate that 64 Chitina Subdistrict permits, 84 Glennallen Subdistrict permits, and zero Batzulnetas permits have been issued to date.

The Federal subsistence salmon fishery in the Lower Copper River near Cordova is scheduled to be open from June 1 through September 30. Salmon harvest is only allowed in the Copper River within ½ mile of the Copper River Highway, only by dip net or rod and reel, dip netting from boats is prohibited, and all salmon harvest must be reported within 48 hours. Permits are available at the Cordova Ranger Station (Chugach National Forest). Fifteen (15) permits have been issued through the OSM database, to date.

With funding through the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program (FRMP), WRST is planning to operate the Tanada Creek salmon weir located at Batzulnetas. Due to record winter snowfall and delayed warming this spring, groundwater and creek level conditions have limited our ability to access the site to initiate the project. A site visit is planned in early June to begin installation.

#### Links:

ADFG 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)

ADFG Copper River Inseason Commercial Harvest Estimates

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

ADFG Sport Fish Emergency Orders and News Releases

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

**PWS, Copper River Delta, Chugach – Dr. Andrew Sanders, Chugach National Forest, Cordova. May 29, 2023 Contact – (907) 250-0439 or [Andrew.sanders@usda.gov](mailto:Andrew.sanders@usda.gov)**

PWS & Copper River Delta: Hooligan (Ouligan/Eulachon) are running in the lower Copper River and Alaganik Slough. Users report that it is a strong run and they are having an easy time harvesting fish. Remains of bear killed hooligan have been seen on the banks. The Lower Copper River dipnet fishery opens next week on June 1<sup>st</sup>. A total of 13 permits for the fishery had been issued by the end of the week. The forecast for the Copper River Chinook run is 15% above the 10-year average, and the forecast for the Sockeye run is 9% below the 10 year average. Escapement is forecast to support expected subsistence harvest in the Copper River Delta area.

Kenai Peninsula Zone: Hooligan are also running in the Twentymile River and subsistence users are successfully harvesting fish.

**COOK INLET AREA – Kenneth Gates, Senior Fish Biologist, Kenai Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office Contact:(907)260-0126 or [kenneth\\_gates@fws.gov](mailto:kenneth_gates@fws.gov)**  
No summary submitted for this reporting period.

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) 487-2600/0230 [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)

First weekly summary of season will likely be next week.

***BRISTOL BAY, CHIGNIK, ALASKA PENINSULA, and ALEUTIAN ISLANDS –  
Jonathon Gerken Fisheries Branch Chief Anchorage Fish and Wildlife Field Office  
Contact (907) 271-2776 or [jonathon\\_gerken@fws.gov](mailto:jonathon_gerken@fws.gov)***

No summary submitted for this reporting week.

**Yukon River –USFWS Fairbanks Office. May 22-29, 2023**  
Federal Manager, Holly Carroll (907) 351-3029, [holly\\_carroll@fws.gov](mailto:holly_carroll@fws.gov)

The USFWS Emmonak Field Office will be **closed** again this season. Essential services will be provided to fishermen online and over the phone. ADF&G management staff plan to open the Emmonak Field Office on June 5 and USFWS will continue to work closely with their management and research staff daily.

### **Summer Season Outlook**

The Chinook Salmon drainage wide forecast is for a range of 62,000 to 104,000 with a midpoint forecast of 82,000 fish. A Chinook Salmon run of this size is not expected to meet escapement goals. Additionally, Canadian-origin Chinook Salmon are forecasted to be below the Interim Management Escapement goal of 42,500 to 55,000 fish.

The preliminary summer Chum Salmon forecast is for a run size of 557,000 fish with a range of 280,000 to 900,000 fish. Although the upper half of the forecast is within the drainage wide escapement goal range of 500,000 to 1.2 million summer Chum Salmon, managers are uncertain what effects the extreme water temperatures seen in 2019 had on this year's expected 4-year-old age class.



The preliminary fall Chum Salmon forecast is for a run size of 251,000 fish with a range of 112,000 to 602,000 fish. The drainage wide escapement goal for fall Chum Salmon is 300,000 to 600,000 fish. Like the summer Chum Salmon run, managers are uncertain regarding the strength of this year's returning 4-year-old component. Unless the run comes in near the upper end of the forecast, a run of this size is unlikely to meet escapement goals including the 70,000 to 104,000 Canadian Interim Management Escapement Goal. The Coho Salmon run is forecasted to be below the average of 222,000 fish.

### **Management Strategies based on the preseason outlooks and inseason assessment:**

The Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) received special action request FSA23-02 asking the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) to close Federal public waters of the Yukon River drainage to the harvest of Chinook, Chum and Coho salmon except by federally qualified subsistence users from June 1 through September 30, 2023, and to require that Federal subsistence fishing schedules, openings, closures and methods be determined by the Federal Fisheries Manager. This request falls within the scope of authority of the Federal manager, Holly Carroll and has been transferred to her by the Board. See detailed management strategy here:

[2023 FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE FISHERY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY FOR THE YUKON AREA \(doi.gov\)](#)

Fishing closures begin June 2, in the Coastal District and Y1, and Y2, these will be announced by Advisory Announcements co-authored by ADF&G and USFWS and distributed by ADF&G. See the announcement here:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/applications/dfnewsrelease/1474955552.pdf>

### **Consultation**

Extensive public outreach and Tribal Consultation meetings were held during the fall of 2022 and spring of 2023 to inform and seek input from Yukon River Tribal Governments, fishermen and stakeholders regarding Yukon River fisheries and fisheries management. Run outlooks and possible management strategies were discussed at Federal RAC meetings and State AC meetings, the Yukon River Panel meeting, the the annual Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association (YRDFFA) meeting, and a public hearing about the Federal Special action request (FSA 23-02).

Management strategies and recommendations were incorporated into a bright pink information sheet which outlined the preseason outlooks and management strategy. This information was distributed as a cooperative ADF&G and USFWS Advisory Announcement.

### **Assessment Information**

Assessment projects in the lower river will be launching the first week of June, but could be delayed by high water and flooding. Beginning June 6, assessment project and

management updates will be given on the **YR DFA weekly teleconferences each Tuesday at 1:00 pm at the following number: 1-800-315-6338, Passcode: 98566#.**

**Where to Find Yukon Fishery Information:**

To hear the fishing schedule and fish counts please call the toll-free Fishing Schedule and Fish Counts hotline: 866-479-7387.

Recent Fishery special actions are posted here:

<https://www.doi.gov/subsistence/fisheries-special-actions>

For Federal News Releases and Special actions, like

[www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska](http://www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska).

For detailed information on management actions and weekly assessment updates, subscribe to ADF&G advisory announcements at

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

For daily counts and State Advisory announcements like the ADF&G Yukon River Facebook page at: [www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG/](http://www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG/)

If you'd like to receive emails and notifications on the Federal Subsistence Management Program you may subscribe for regular updates by emailing [fws-fsb-subsistence-request@lists.fws.gov](mailto:fws-fsb-subsistence-request@lists.fws.gov)

**In Season Manager – Boyd Blihovde, Refuge Manager, Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge** [Boyd\\_Blihovde@fws.gov](mailto:Boyd_Blihovde@fws.gov); Contact Spencer Reardon (907)543-1023 or [spencer\\_reardon@fws.gov](mailto:spencer_reardon@fws.gov)

Similarly to recent past years, Federal management on the lower Kuskokwim River within the Yukon Delta NWR will begin June 1<sup>st</sup>. Closures and opportunities for Federally Qualified Users have been announced and can be found at:

<https://www.doi.gov/subsistence/fisheries-special-actions>.

The main difference this year (2023) from recent years is that Federal management will continue till August 31, 2023 to include Chinook, Chum, and Coho salmon as all three species were low last year.

**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)

There is still considerable pack ice north of the Seward Peninsula. The ice is breaking up and moving in the Bering Strait and southward. First year, medium thick ice can be found as far south as Nunivak Island. Many of the more northern communities are engaged in marine mammal hunting. Residents are also hoping for a good summer of fishing.

Sea Ice Conditions Between Big and Little Diomedes With Ice Moving Out  
Saturday, May 27, 2023



Photo courtesy of Odges Ahkinga

The area covered in these weekly Fisheries Updates for Northwest Alaska include two federal subsistence management regions (the Seward Peninsula and the Northwest Arctic) and three State of Alaska districts (Norton Sound, Port Clarence and Kotzebue). The Seward Peninsula Region (Federal) contains two of the State districts: Norton Sound and Port Clarence. In turn, the Norton Sound District includes six numbered subdistricts: Unalakleet (6), Shaktoolik (5), Norton Bay (4), Elim (3), Golovin (2) and Nome (1). The Port Clarence District also includes the Pilgrim River and Salmon Lake. The Northwest Arctic Region contains one district (Kotzebue). The districts and subdistricts are based on the Alaska Department of Fish and Game organizational structure for the management of commercial and subsistence fisheries. Two other references a reader might encounter are Northern Norton Sound and Southern Norton Sound. Northern Norton Sound includes all marine and fresh waters of Subdistricts 1 through 3 (Nome, Golovin and Elim) as well as the Cape Wooley area of the Norton Sound District, and the Port Clarence District. Southern Norton Sound waters include the Norton Bay Subdistrict beginning at Bald Head, between Elim and Koyuk, to the southern Norton Sound District boundary at Point Romanof. This area includes Subdistricts 4 (Norton Bay), 5 (Shaktoolik) and 6 (Unalakleet). Report updates will generally begin with the southernmost areas, then move progressively northwards.

Since we are so far north, our commercial fishing seasons tend to trail behind those in the more southerly areas so that we currently are seeing very little activity. Therefore, we will begin this year's reports with snapshot summaries of the 2022 season followed by the 2023 season forecasts for a comparative starting point. As the season progresses and activity increases, we will add in new events.

**Norton Sound District**

2022 Season Summary:

Poor runs of chum and coho salmon in 2022 resulted in low commercial salmon harvest for those species. The pink salmon run was near average; however, limited buyer interest and capacity resulted in pink salmon harvest less than one-third of the 2021 season harvest. Escapement goal ranges were reached for 4 of 5 chum salmon stocks, 2 of 3 coho salmon stocks, and all 3 pink salmon stocks. Escapement goals were not attained for Chinook or sockeye salmon. There were 108 commercial permits fished in 2022, slightly below the recent 5-year (137 permits) and 10-year (133 permits) averages. Total commercial salmon harvests in 2022 were approximately 1,000 sockeye, 13,000 coho, 84,000 pink, and 31,000 chum salmon (Table 6). In addition to the commercial harvest, 29 Chinook, 55 sockeye, 30 coho, 63 pink, and 102 chum salmon commercially harvested were retained for personal use.

**Chinook Salmon**

*Harvest Summary:* Commercial fishing targeting Chinook salmon was prohibited during the 2022 season. Although better than last year, the runs remain below historical averages.

**Sockeye Salmon**

*Harvest Summary:* Although sockeye salmon harvest accounts for a small portion of the overall harvest in Norton Sound, the 2022 commercial harvest of 1,233 fish, not including personal use, was less than one-half of the record harvests from recent years.

**Coho Salmon**

*Harvest Summary:* The 2022 coho salmon harvest of 13,464 fish, not including personal use, was 11% of the recent 5-year average (122,676 fish). Like last year, the average weight of coho salmon (5.7 lbs.) was the lowest on record.

**Pink Salmon**

*Harvest Summary:* The pink salmon run was average, unlike the 5 previous years of record runs in Norton Sound. Limited buyer interest resulted in an odd-numbered year harvest of 84,261 pink salmon in 2022, which does not include fish retained for personal use.

**Chum Salmon**

*Harvest Summary:* The 2022 chum salmon harvest of 31,249 fish (not including personal use) was 26% of the recent 5-year average (118,392 fish).

2023 Season Outlook:\*

<b>Management Area</b>	<b>Chinook</b>	<b>Sockeye</b>	<b>Coho</b>	<b>Pink</b>	<b>Summer Chum</b>	<b>Fall Cum</b>
<b>Norton Sound</b>	<b>0-1</b>	<b>0-1</b>	<b>25-75</b>	<b>50-100</b>	<b>25-50</b>	<b>0</b>

\*The 2023 all-salmon commercial harvest outlook by management area, in thousands of fish.

## **KOTZEBUE DISTRICT**

### 2022 Season Summary:

There were 65 permit holders that commercially harvested fish in the Kotzebue Sound Area in 2022. The highest fishing effort this season occurred on August 12 when 44 permit holders made landings.

#### **Chinook Salmon**

*Harvest Summary:* Fewer than 3 commercial permit holders retained Chinook salmon for personal use in 2022.

#### **Sockeye Salmon**

*Harvest Summary:* Buyers in the Kotzebue Sound Area purchased 6 sockeye salmon in 2022. Permit holders retained 24 sockeye salmon for personal use.

#### **Coho Salmon**

*Harvest Summary:* Permit holders retained 16 coho salmon for personal use in 2022.

#### **Pink Salmon**

*Harvest Summary:* Permit holders retained 95 pink salmon for personal use in 2022.

#### **Chum Salmon**

*Run and Escapement Summary:* No aerial surveys were flown in 2022. The Kobuk River test fish project was ineffective in catching fish because of flooding conditions.

*Harvest Summary:* The Kotzebue Sound chum salmon harvest of 475,624 fish was the 8th highest harvest in the 61-year history of the fishery and well above the forecast of 100,000–200,000 fish.

### 2023 Season Outlook:\*

The Kotzebue District salmon fisheries management outlook is to inform fishermen, processors, and other interested people of the management strategies for the commercial salmon fishery. The Kotzebue District includes all waters from Cape Prince of Wales to Point Hope. The Kotzebue District is divided into three subdistricts. Subdistrict 2, near the mouth of the Noatak River is closed to commercial fishing by regulation. Most fishing occurs in Subdistrict 1, which is subdivided into six statistical areas to help managers determine catch location. Within the Kotzebue District, chum salmon *Oncorhynchus keta* are the most abundant anadromous fish. Other salmon species (Chinook *O. tshawytscha*, pink *O. gorbuscha*, coho *O. kisutch*, and sockeye salmon *O. nerka*) occur in lesser numbers, as do Dolly Varden *Salvelinus malma*, and sheefish (inconnu) *Stenodus leucichthys*.

<b>Management Area</b>	<b>Chinook</b>	<b>Sockeye</b>	<b>Coho</b>	<b>Pink</b>	<b>Summer Chum</b>	<b>Fall Cum</b>
<b>Kotzebue</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>300-400</b>

\*The 2023 all-salmon commercial harvest outlook by management area, in thousands of fish.

<http://alaska.fws.gov/asm/pdf/fishregs11/norton.pdf>