

**FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF AUGUST 17-23, 2020.** Report #13  
Compiled by George Pappas - (907) 786-3822, [George\\_Pappas@fws.gov](mailto:George_Pappas@fws.gov) Office of  
Subsistence Management, USFWS.

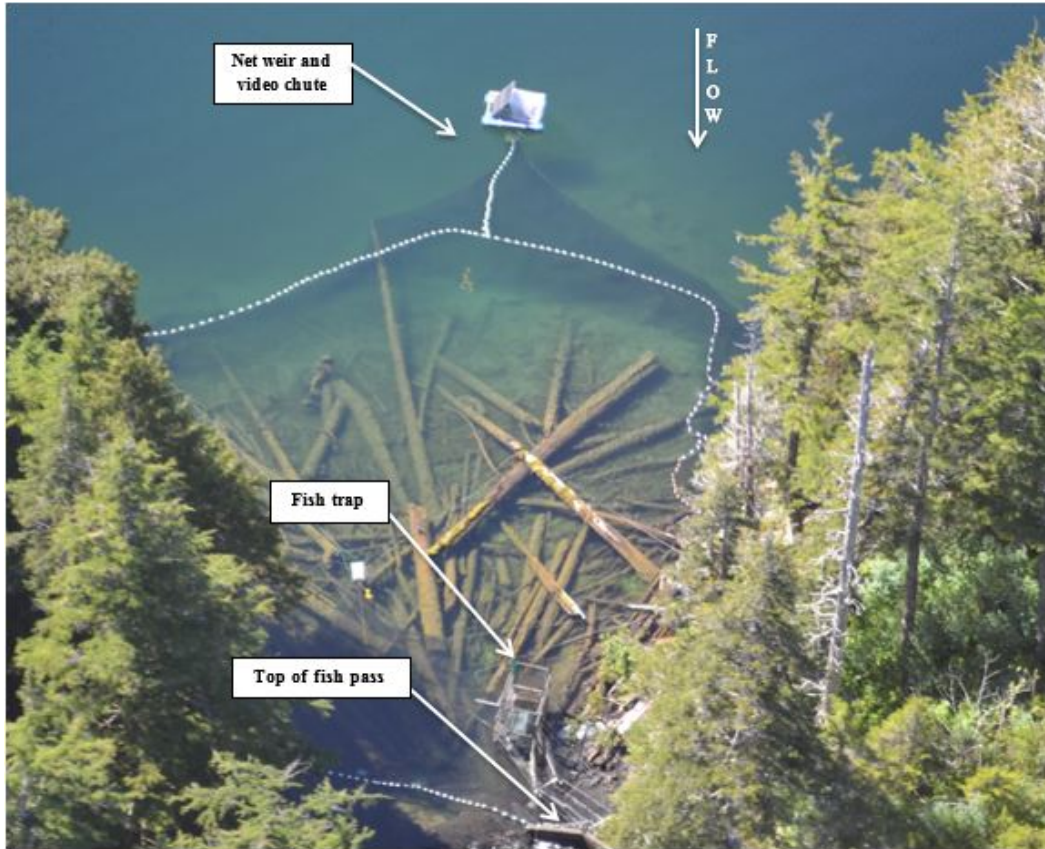
The purpose of the weekly fisheries update is to provide the reader with an overall summary of the status of subsistence related fisheries throughout the state of Alaska. The target audience is the Federal Subsistence Board and its Staff Committee. The report was compiled with the assistance of the Federal 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. 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**

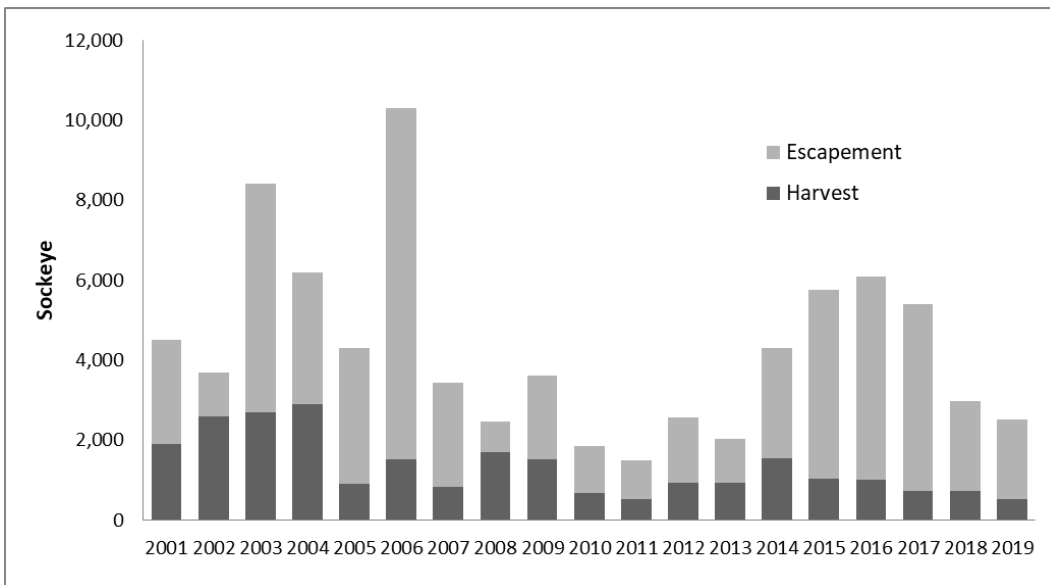
**Sitka and Hoonah Area – Justin Koller, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest**  
Justin Koller, (907) 747-4297 [justin.koller@usda.gov](mailto:justin.koller@usda.gov)

**Herring** – There was no commercial herring fishery in Sitka Sound in 2020. Please see this [summary of Sitka Sound herring 2020](#). Also, [summary of southeast Alaska herring 2020](#).

**Falls Lake** - The Forest Service and the Organized Village of Kake operate the Falls Lake trap and video net weir which were installed June 25. The first Sockeye Salmon was counted on July 3, which is about a week earlier than average. As of August 23, 300 Sockeye Salmon have been counted and about 250 have been harvested. The run this year appears to be the worst since 2001 when monitoring began. The final escapement estimate in 2019 was 1,983 while the final subsistence and sport harvest in the marine terminal area was 528. Subsistence harvest accounted for 92% of terminal area harvest.



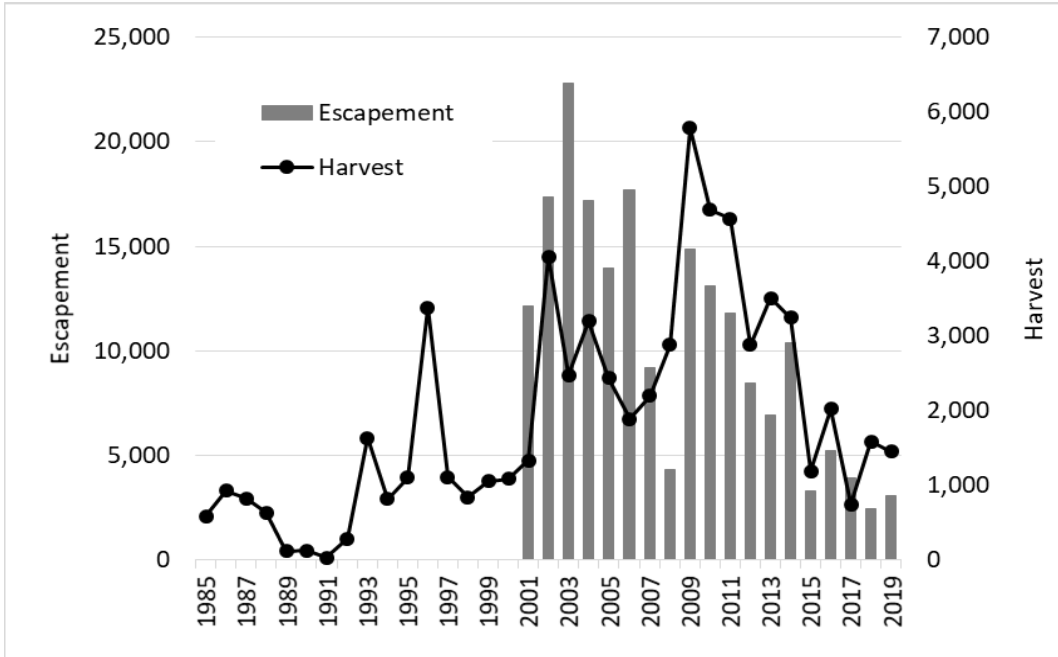
**Figure 1.** Aerial photo of the Falls Lake outlet illustrating the typical location of weir equipment.



**Figure 2.** Escapement plus harvest equals total terminal run of Sockeye Salmon at Falls Lake, 2001-2019.

**Klag Bay** - The Sitka Tribe of Alaska operates the Sockeye Salmon monitoring weir at Klag Bay which was installed the week of June 22. As of August 23, 3,600 Sockeye

Salmon have been counted and at least 1,457 have been harvested. The run appears to be below average this year. In 2019, approximately 3,036 Sockeye Salmon migrated past the weir while an estimated 1,450 were harvested in the marine terminal area subsistence and sport fishery. Subsistence harvest accounted for over 99% of terminal area harvest.

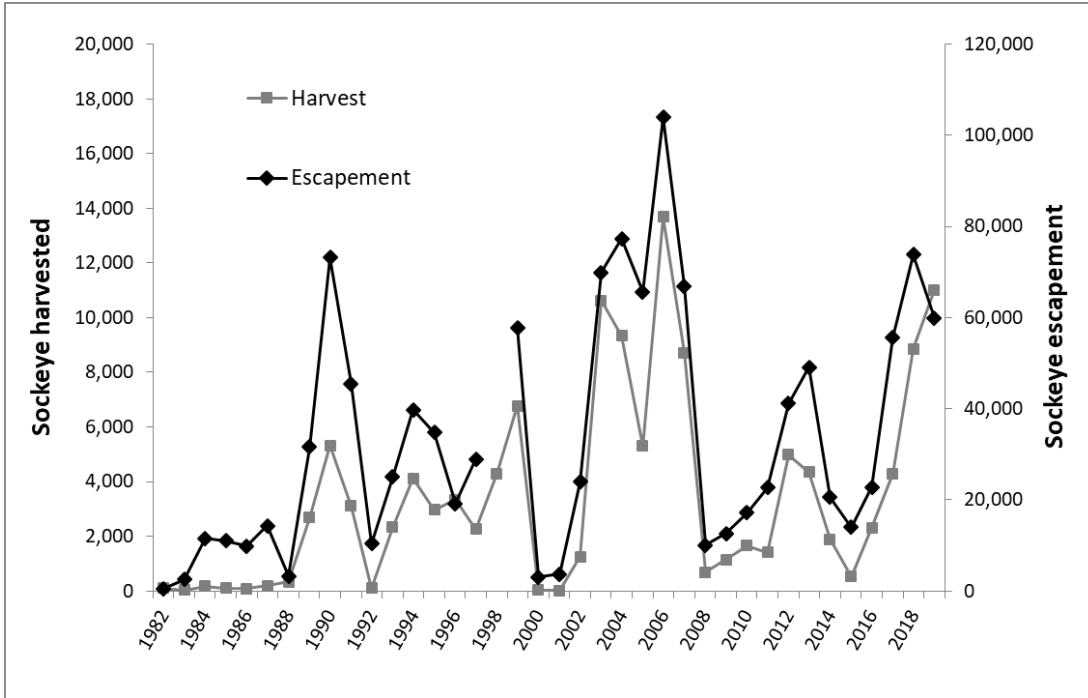


**Figure 3.** Reported harvest and escapement for Klag Lake Sockeye Salmon, 2001-2019.

**Redoubt Lake** - The Forest Service operates the Redoubt Lake weir which was operational as of June 13. As of August 23, 37,929 Sockeye Salmon have been counted. The prediction model was estimating that about 40,000 Sockeye Salmon will enter Redoubt Lake this year. The late run has caused the run to outperform the model prediction this year. On July 22, in accordance with the Redoubt Lake Management Plan, the individual/household subsistence possession limit was set at 25 and the individual/household subsistence annual limit was set at 100.

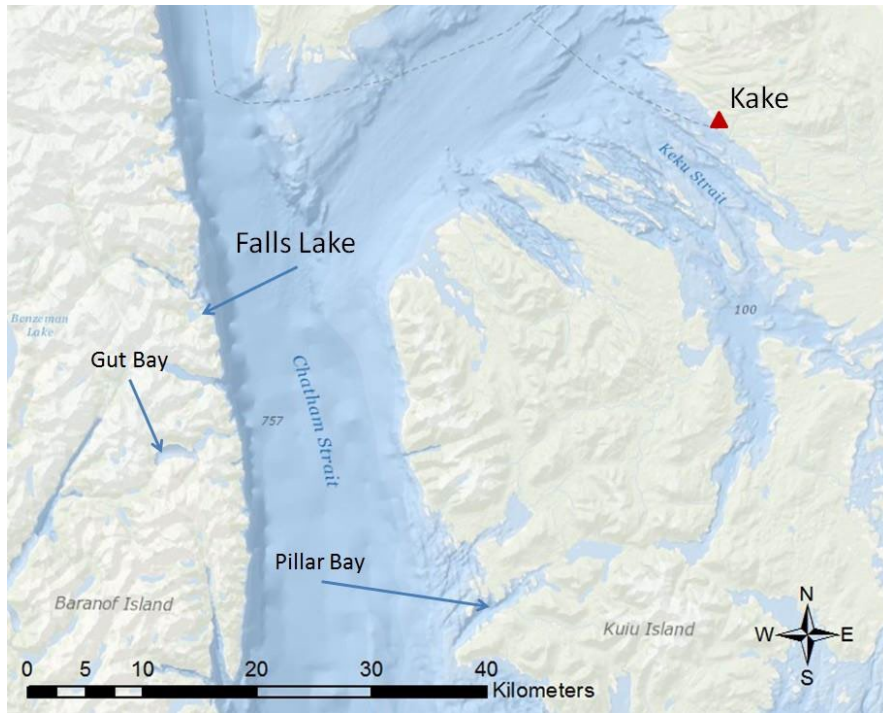
In 2019, an estimated 59,917 Sockeye Salmon passed through the weir into Redoubt Lake and about 11,000 were harvested. On July 3, in accordance with the Redoubt Lake Management Plan, the individual/household subsistence possession limit was set at 25 and the individual/household subsistence annual limit was set at 100. Almost 30,000 Sockeye Salmon were harvested in commercial fishery openings throughout the season.

[News release, Sockeye Salmon limits 2020](#)



**Figure 4.** Annual Sockeye Salmon expanded escapement into Redoubt Lake and subsistence harvest for years with data: 1953 to 1955, 1982 to 1997, and 1999 to 2019. The weir was not operated in 1998.

**Gut Bay** - The Forest Service and the Organized Village of Kake monitor escapement and harvest of Gut Bay Sockeye Salmon. Gut Bay is located south of Falls Lake on Baranof Island and an important source of Sockeye Salmon for the village of Kake. Very little is known about the magnitude of this run. In 2019, 881 Sockeye Salmon were counted at the weir and about 200 were harvested in the state subsistence fishery which was open until July 20. The camp and equipment installation was completed on June 18. As of August 23, about 60 sockeye have been counted and at least 150 have been harvested. The run appears to be very weak this year. Recent high flows damaged the weir and we are not sure how many Sockeye Salmon passed undetected. Underwater video footage should reveal if a sizable number passed undetected.



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

**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)**

*Reporting concluded for the 2020 season.* Please feel free to contact author for more information or details about the subsistence fisheries in Robert's area.

The 2020 Federal Stikine River Chinook subsistence fishery was closed by the in-season manager. The Chinook run was stronger than predicted, indicating the potential for a future Chinook Salmon season on the Stikine River. The Federal Stikine River Sockeye Salmon subsistence fishery began Sunday, June 21 and ended July 31. Despite the river being high, the participation in the fishery was high but harvest remained low throughout the season. The Tahltan Lake portion of the Stikine River Sockeye Salmon run was strong, however, the Mainstem component of the run was weak which resulted in a poor overall Sockeye harvest. Harvesters are beginning to return Sockeye harvest reports, so a final harvest number will be available soon.

The Stikine River Coho Salmon season is underway with harvesters reporting high numbers of Pink Salmon in their nets. Coho are returning in decent numbers to local streams all around the Petersburg and Wrangell Ranger Districts. A total of 129 Stikine River Federal subsistence salmon permits (FFSE07) and 38 General Fish permits (FFSE04) have been issued for residents in the Wrangell and Petersburg Districts.

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

*No report submitted for this reporting period. Author indicated an improved report will be submitted next week.*

**Report from August 17, 2020**

**Neva Lake Sockeye Salmon:** A crew from the Forest Service installed the Neva Lake weir near Excursion Inlet on June 23 (Figure 1). This swim-through video weir is remotely monitored and maintained by a Hoonah Indian Association crew living in Excursion Inlet. With the shutdown of the Ocean Beauty plant, the crew has moved back to Hoonah, and will complete the season counting from there. With the computer now installed at the Hoonah Indian Association office, the live feed will no longer be publically available.

As of August 13, a total of 2,852 Sockeye Salmon have been counted through the Neva weir. That keeps us on pace for a total escapement of about 4,000 fish, based on historical run timing. In addition to sockeye, we have also counted 2,681 Dolly Varden, as well as over 600 Pink Salmon in the past week.



*Figure 1. The video weir at Neva Lake, June 24, 2020.*

Sitkoh Lake Sockeye Salmon: The Sitkoh Lake video weir was installed on July 6-8 by a Forest Service biologist with the help of Student Conservation Association interns. The project uses a pair of remotely monitored video net weirs to count fish entering Sitkoh Lake, on the southeast corner of Chichagof Island (Figures 3 and 4). Video from the site is streamed to the Angoon Community Association office, where it is recorded on a computer. Personnel from the ACA will monitor the weir and use video to count fish entering the lake. Live video feed and clips from the weir can be accessed over the internet at <http://sitkohlake.ddns.net:81> . However, recent issues with the mountaintop repeater have temporarily cut the live video feed until it can be repaired.



*Figure 3. The video weir at the outlet of Sitkoh Lake, July 9, 2020.*



*Figure 4. Video capture of a Sockeye Salmon passing through the Sitkoh Lake weir, August 17, 2020.*

mon fisheries throughout Northern Southeast inside waters this year. The hatchery chum salmon return has been dismal, and DIPAC is struggling to meet brood stock goals. Pink salmon returns have also been poor, and purse seine fisheries have been limited to the Point Augusta index fishery. However, the District 13 (outside coast) fisheries are just beginning, and they have been somewhat stronger in recent years. On the gillnet front, sockeye catches in District 11 (Taku and Stephens Passage) are setting record lows. It's a similar story in District 15 (Lynn Canal), with poor sockeye and chum salmon harvests throughout the season. The closest thing to a bright spot is at Chilkoot Lake, where the escapement has reached the lower bound of the escapement goal.

**Yakutat:** Things are a little better in the Yakutat neighborhood. At the Situk weir, high water prompted the removal of the weir after over 55,000 sockeye had been counted through the weir. This count was well within the escapement goal of 30,000 – 70,000 fish. The actual escapement was likely a little higher, as there have been plenty of days when the weir was under water. There were also 1,129 Chinook counted through the weir, exceeding the escapement goal of 450 – 1,050 large fish, which is great news for a stock that has struggled in recent years. The commercial gillnet fishery has been hampered by storms, so effort has been low.

**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)**



The 2020 subsistence salmon fishery for Southeast Alaska and Yakutat areas has had 170 permits issued to date for the fishery.

All State managed Sockeye Salmon fisheries in the area are closed now, except Hetta and Eek (August 31). Additional opportunity for directed Coho Salmon fishing at Klawock will begin in the next several weeks.

The troll fishery closed for a week on August 7 as mandated in the yearly troll management plan to allow for Coho Salmon escapement into area streams. The second directed Chinook Salmon fishery began on August 15, however low numbers of Chinook Salmon are being harvested in Districts 1-4. Coho Salmon numbers are also very low in these districts as catch per boat/day (<30 fish) is well below the 20-year average (~75 fish).

Directed seine fisheries for Pink Salmon are now closed in all districts in Southeast Alaska due to weak returns. Limited opportunity is being allowed for surplus hatchery production Chum Salmon at some terminal release sites.

Estimated commercial harvests for Districts 1-4 are: 17,430 Chinook Salmon, 219,600 Sockeye Salmon, 65,100 Coho Salmon, 4,443,650 Pink Salmon and 542,200 Chum Salmon.

There are two Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program funded projects funded on Prince of Wales Island this season. The Hetta Lake weir became operational on June 8 and has passed 1594 Sockeye Salmon, 1160 Pink Salmon and 24 Coho Salmon to date. The Eek Lake weir became operational on June 15 and has passed 7 Sockeye Salmon and 2 Coho Salmon to date.

Although there is not a project funded under the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program, the Klawock River fish hatchery installed weir pickets on July 1. The first Sockeye Salmon counted through the weir was on July 18. Total counts into Klawock Lake are: 3083 Sockeye Salmon, 4726 Pink Salmon, 2 Chum Salmon and 285 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.RI>

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

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

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

## **SOUTHCENTRAL ALASKA**

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

**Copper River, 8/10/2020 Update – Dave Sarafin, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST), (907) 205-0544, [dave\\_sarafin@nps.gov](mailto:dave_sarafin@nps.gov)**

*Reporting concluded 8/20/20 for the 2020 season.* Please feel free to contact author for more information or details about the subsistence fisheries in Dave's area.

The commercial fishery in the Copper River District was limited in response to a weak salmon return. Total commercial harvest reported for the season was 97,360 Sockeye Salmon and 5,845 Chinook Salmon. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) reports this to be the 4th lowest commercial harvest to date in the last 50 years for the district.

The ADFG sonar at Miles Lake (located just downstream of the Million Dollar Bridge in the Copper River) recorded salmon passage from May 19 through July 28; providing a season total estimate of 530,313 salmon migrating upstream. This estimate is 85% of the cumulative management objective of 624,709 salmon for this date. The ADFG reports this to be the 12<sup>th</sup> lowest season estimate to date on record (1978-2020).

The Native Village of Eyak Baird Canyon fish wheels captured and tagged a total of 2,466 Chinook Salmon for the season. The upriver fish wheels at Canyon Creek captured and examined 1,203 Chinook Salmon for the season, of which, 119 were recaptured fish that had been tagged at the downstream wheels.

Performance in the commercial fishery and in-river sonar salmon passage estimates are the primary in-season assessments of the salmon return to the Copper River. The overall returns of both Sockeye and Chinook Salmon have been weak. In-river assessments of the Chinook Salmon return, along with assumptions of up-river harvests, indicate that the sustainable escapement goal (SEG) of 24,000 fish will likely not be met for this season. As well, the minimum threshold 360,000 fish of the wild stock Sockeye Salmon SEG range of 360,000 to 750,000 may not be achieved this season. This includes assumptions of the additional factors of up-river harvests, hatchery stock contribution, and the non-Sockeye Salmon component of the sonar passage estimates. No Federal Special Actions have been issued by the in-season manager this season.

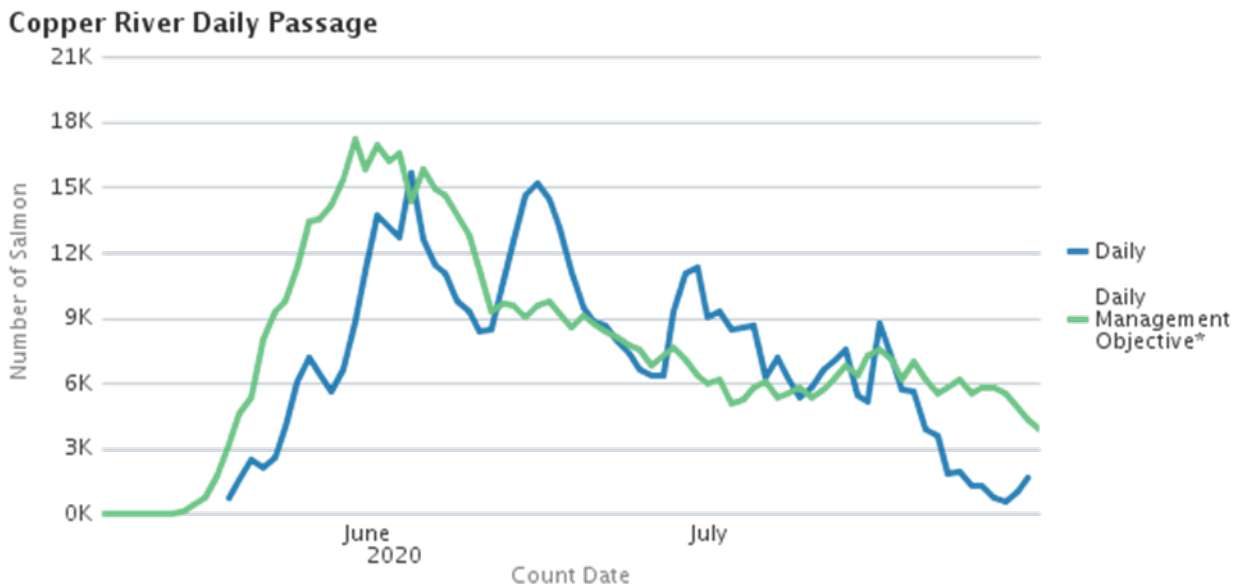
The State subsistence fishery in the Glennallen Subdistrict has been open since June 1. Effective June 20, the State sport fishery annual limit was reduced from 4 to 1 Chinook Salmon for the Upper Copper River drainage. Effective August 3, the Sockeye Salmon sport fisheries of the Upper Copper River drainage closed for the remainder of the

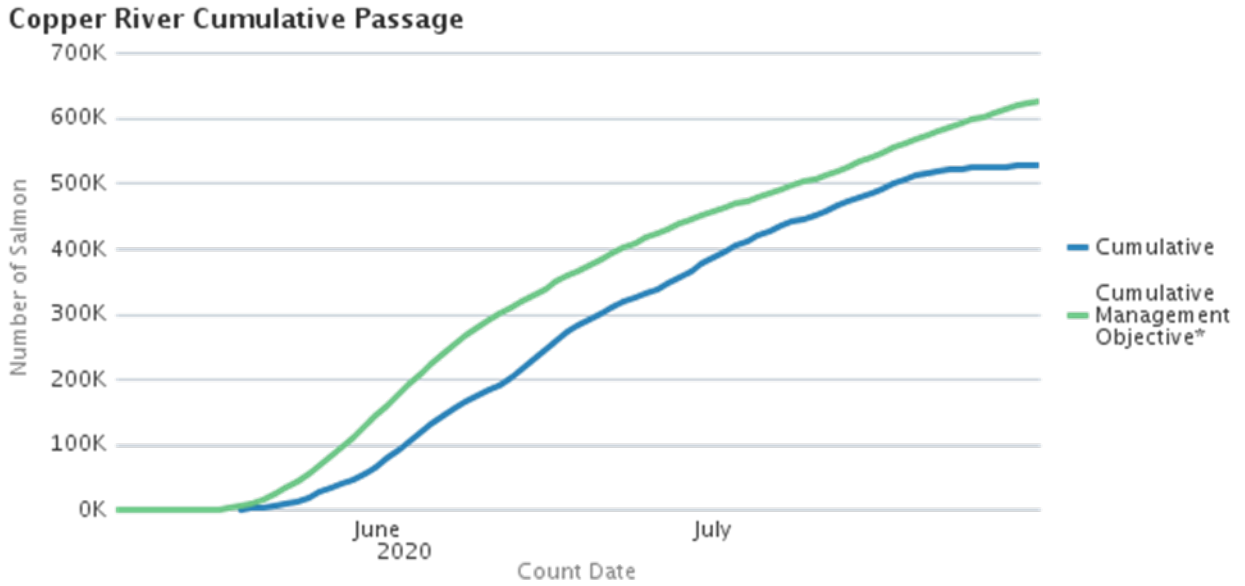
season. Effective June 22, the Chitina personal use fishery was closed to the retention of Chinook Salmon. The personal use fishery in the Chitina Subdistrict is currently closed and will remain closed for the remainder of August to conserve Sockeye Salmon for escapement.

The Federal subsistence fisheries in the Chitina Subdistrict, the Glennallen Subdistrict, and the Batzulnetas area opened on May 15 and are expected to remain open through September 30. Through the Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) Federal subsistence permit website, two hundred and twelve (212) Chitina Subdistrict permits, three hundred and seventy-one (371) Glennallen Subdistrict permits, and one (1) Batzulnetas area permits have been issued to date.

The ADFG counting tower in the Gulkana River began operation on June 2. The reported cumulative passage estimate through August 9 is 2,406 Chinook Salmon. This is approximately 29% of the 2019 season count of 8,310 fish through this date of the season; however, periods of high water and associated turbidity limited counts on some days of the 2020 season.

**2020 Upper Copper River Salmon Passage at Miles Lake Sonar through July 28 (end of season)**





Source:

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

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 Inseason Commercial Harvest Estimates

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

ADF&G Emergency Orders and News Releases

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

ADF&G Gulkana River counting tower

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

**PWS and Copper River Delta – Milo Burcham, Chugach National Forest, Cordova.**

(907) 424-4759 [mburcham@fs.fed.us](mailto:mburcham@fs.fed.us)

**21 August 2020**

A total of 63 Federal Subsistence fishing permits have been issued for freshwaters within the Chugach National Forest portion of the Prince William Sound area of to date. Silvers

are showing up in good numbers in Copper River Delta streams, and successful harvest by permit holders is being reported. Harvest statistics of this year's permit holders will not be known until reports are returned this winter. One-hundred and twenty permits were issued in 2019 resulting in the reported harvest of 617 coho and 116 sockeye from fresh waters of the Copper River Delta.

**COOK INLET AREA – Kenneth Gates, Acting Delegated Official, Kenai Fish and Wildlife Field Office (907) 260-0132 [Kenneth\\_Gates@FWS.GOV](mailto:Kenneth_Gates@FWS.GOV)**

The 2020 subsistence dip net fisheries for salmon began on the Kenai and Kasilof rivers June 15 and June 16, respectively. Harvest reported through August 22 in the dip net fishery at Russian River Falls is 1,102 Sockeye Salmon. Forty-one Sockeye Salmon have been harvested in the Kasilof River dip net fishery. The rod and reel fishery on the Kenai River also opened on June 11 with the same seasons and areas as for the taking of fish under Alaska sport fishing regulations. To date, 30 sockeye salmon have been taken by rod and reel from the Russian River.

The Kasilof River experimental community gillnet fishery began on June 16 and closed on August 15. Harvest reported through July 25 includes 621 Sockeye Salmon.

Regulatory periods for the Kenai River community gillnet fishery are from July 1 through August 15 and from September 10 – 30. Harvest of sockeye salmon in this fishery began on July 19. This fishery is currently closed and reported harvest to date in this fishery totals 3,163 Sockeye Salmon and 18 Coho Salmon. Three Pink Salmon and 1 Dolly Varden were caught and released in this fishery.

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)

*Reporting concluded 8/23/20 for the 2020 season.* Please feel free to contact author for more information or details about the subsistence fisheries in Kevin's area.

Subsistence fishing has pretty much been completed for the 2020 season and this will be the final report from the Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge. The Olga Bay area continues to be utilized by subsistence users during non-commercial fishing openings. It has been reported that villagers from Ahkiok have been traveling to the mouth of Olga Creek to harvest salmon.

Any additional information that will be received will be forwarded to the Office of Subsistence Management office.

***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***

(907) 271-2776 Jonathon\_Gerken@fws.gov

Reporting completed for season on August 3, 2020. Please feel free to contact author for more information or details about Jon's fisheries.

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

The ADFG issues information for COVID-19: Under Alaska's Health Mandates 10, 17, and 18, Subsistence fishing is Essential and is part of Alaska's Essential Services and Critical Infrastructure. Subsistence fishermen should ensure that all travel and other activities follow protocols in Alaska COVID-19 Health Mandates. COVID-19 Health Mandates may be found here: <https://gov.alaska.gov/home/covid19-healthmandates/>

Bristol Bay:

The 2020 Bristol Bay Sockeye Salmon run was forecast to be approximately 48 million fish for the nine river systems: Kvichak, Alagnak, Naknek, Egegik, Ugashik, Wood, Igushik, Nushagak, and Togiak.

The Sockeye Salmon sustainable escapement goals (SEG) for Bristol Bay systems are:

Escapement Goals (current Sockeye Salmon escapement for August 2): All Sockeye Salmon escapement goals were met. The Nushagak Chinook Salmon escapement goal did not meet the lower end of the goal.

Kvichak	SEG = 2,000,000 – 10,000,000, current escapement = 4,030,968
Alagnak	SEG = 320,000 minimum, current escapement = 2,383,062
Naknek	SEG = 800,000 – 2,000,000, current escapement = 4,112,160
Egegik	SEG = 800,000 – 2,000,000, current escapement = 2,389,728
Ugashik	SEG = 500,000 – 1,400,000, current escapement = 1,745,940
Wood River	SEG = 700,000 – 1,800,000, current escapement = 2,243,886
Igushik	SEG = 150,000 – 400,000, current escapement = 317,844
Nushagak	SEG = 370,000 – 900,000, current escapement = 1,228,504
Nushagak (Chinook)	SEG = 55,000 – 270,000, current escapement = 42,721

Togiak SEG = 150,000 – 270,000, current escapement = 207,870

All areas will provide subsistence harvest opportunity.

The total commercial harvest for Sockeye Salmon as of August 2 is approximately 39.2 million fish.

Chignik:

The 2020 Sockeye Salmon forecasted run size for the Chignik River Management Area (CMA). The CMA is composed of five fishing districts: Eastern, Central, Chignik Bay, Western, and Perryville. The Sockeye Salmon run is composed of an early run (June 1 – July 31) and late run (July 31 – September). These dates generally describe the run-timing and overlap between runs occurs.

As of August 2, approximately 138,448 early run Sockeye Salmon have been enumerated. The early run will not make the lower end of the escapement.

Subsistence harvest reports indicate minimal harvests.

The late run Sockeye Salmon count for August 2 is 112,052 fish. The escapement objective for this time period is 160,000 – 290,000 fish. It is unlikely that the late run will make the lower end of the escapement goal.

The Chinook Salmon count for August 2 is 1,099 fish. Restrictions to Chinook Salmon fishing in the sportfish (Emergency Order # 2-KS-4-38-20), State subsistence Emergency Order #4-FS-L-SUB-02-20, and Federal subsistence (Emergency Special Action #08-KS-01-20) fisheries was restricted on July 18 due to the low numbers of fish enumerated at the weir and are in place until August 9. These actions were taken collaboratively with the ADFG commercial and sportfish division. Subsistence users throughout the Chignik area also voiced concerns about the low Chinook Salmon return and requested additional restrictions. It is unlikely that the Chinook Salmon return will make the lower end of the escapement goal.

Escapement Goals:

Early Run Sockeye Salmon/ Black Lake	BEG = 350,000 – 450,000
Late Run Sockeye Salmon/ Chignik Lake	SEG = 200,000 – 400,000
-In-river Goal	-10,000 in August and 10,000 in September in addition to minimum escapement objectives
Chinook Salmon	BEG = 1,300 – 2,700
Pink Salmon – Even year	SEG = 170,000 – 280,000
Chum Salmon	SEG = 45,000 – 110,000

Alaska Peninsula:

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. Subsistence fisheries in both North and South Peninsula areas take place in marine environments under State of Alaska subsistence fishing permits. Annual subsistence harvest for all species in all areas is typically around 10,000 fish.

North Peninsula: The 2020 Sockeye Salmon run size projections are 362,000 fish for the Nelson River and 408,000 fish for late-run Bear Lake. The cumulative commercial harvest as of August 2 is approximately 1.5 million fish with Sockeye Salmon being the predominant species harvested.

North Peninsula Management Area Escapement Goals (current Sockeye Salmon escapement for August 2):

Nelson River	BEG = 97,000 – 219,000, current escapement = 162,164
Late-run Bear Lake	BEG = 117,000 – 195,000, current escapement = 317,095

South Peninsula: Commercial fishing has occurred on the South Peninsula in the Shumagin Islands and South Umiak Districts. Fishing in the Dolgoi District has not occurred due to low escapement number enumerated in Chignik River weir. The cumulative commercial harvest as of August 2 is approximately 4.0 million with pink salmon being the predominant species harvested.

South Peninsula Management Area Escapement Counts (current Sockeye Salmon escapement for August 2):

Ilnik River current escapement = 40,019  
 Orzinski River current escapement = 6,174  
 Sandy River current escapement = 55,898  
 McLees River current escapement = 5,037 – McLees River counts are lower than the 2017 to 2011 average of 21,882 fish.

#### Aleutian Islands.

All fisheries are forecast to meet escapement goals and provide subsistence harvest opportunity.

***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.**

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### **Summer Season Summary**

The summer season for Yukon River fisheries has ended throughout the Alaskan portion of the drainage and all districts are under fall season management. The Eagle sonar is still assessing Chinook Salmon passage and will continue to do so until Fall Chum Salmon arrive in greater numbers. Managers are disappointed in the estimated passage of Chinook Salmon past the Eagle sonar. Through August 22, only 32,773 Chinook Salmon have been estimated passing the sonar and daily passage appears to be down to a final trickle. Passage to date is far below the average of 56,892 and will likely end up as the second lowest passage since 2005. It appears that our border obligations into Canada will not be met this year. The Chinook Salmon passage at Eagle was far less than projected based on the Pilot Station sonar estimate of approximately 160,000 Chinook Salmon, and the reasons are unclear. Unfortunately, the Chena River sonar and counting tower was ended early due to flooding hindering the operation of the project, so we have essentially no estimates of escapement in U.S. tributaries this year.

### **Fall Season Outlook**

The 2020 fall Chum Salmon preseason projection based on the relationship between summer Chum Salmon and fall Chum Salmon was for a run size of less than 450,000 fish. At this time, in-season projections are putting the run under 300,000. This projection does not meet the threshold of fish needed to allow any fishing. A run of this size requires full closures in attempt to meet escapement and treaty objectives, but still may not be adequate to meet these objectives.

### **Fall Season Assessment Information**

Through August 21, the Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF) has a cumulative CPUE of 857, slightly below the average of 1,305. The Mt. Village Test Fishery (MVTF) has a cumulative CPUE of 475, below the average of 1,622. The cumulative count of fall season Chum Salmon at the Pilot Station sonar was 194,967 through August 20; far below the median on this date of 543,363 fish. The typical third quarter point of the Fall Chum Salmon run at the Pilot Station sonar is approximately August 19.

Coho Salmon typically overlap the second half of the fall Chum Salmon run. The Coho Salmon run is near its typical midpoint date in the lower Yukon. Through August 21, the Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF) has a cumulative CPUE of 56, below the average of 271. The Mt. Village Test Fishery (MVTF) has a cumulative CPUE of 60, below the average of 488. The cumulative count of Coho Salmon at the Pilot Station sonar was 28,168 through August 20; well below the median on this date of 67,046 fish.

### **Fall Season Management Actions**

Subsistence salmon fishing in most Yukon River drainage districts, including the Koyukuk River, is **closed**. Fishermen may use 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnet gear to target non-salmon species throughout the Alaskan portion of the drainage. Since Fall Chum Salmon do not use the Innoko River drainage, subsistence salmon fishing in the Innoko River is open 24-hours per day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnet gear.

### **Consultation**

Extensive public outreach and consultation was performed during the fall of 2019 and spring of 2020 to inform and seek input from Yukon River fishermen and stakeholders through the various State, Federal, and stakeholder organizations. On May 12, a pre-season planning teleconference lead by YR DFA was held that brought together representatives from most Alaskan Yukon River communities to discuss the run outlook and management options. The fifteenth weekly YR DFA teleconference was held on August 18. Reports were similar to the previous week in that fishermen throughout the Yukon River indicated they had mostly stopped fishing. Many had shifted to hunting and other subsistence activities. Fishermen were disappointed in the performance of the run, but most seemed understanding of the need for the closures. Managers will continue to seek input from fishermen through the fall season during the weekly YR DFA teleconferences and other discussions. Assessment project and management updates will continue to be given on the **YR DFA weekly teleconferences each Tuesday at 1:00 pm at the following number: 1-800-315-6338, Passcode: 98566#**. Fishermen are encouraged to continue their participation and the managers thank them for their informative reports to date.

## **KUSKOKWIM RIVER**

**In Season Manager – Boyd Blihovde, Refuge Manager, Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge Contact [Boyd bilhovde@FWS.GOV](mailto:Boyd_bilhovde@FWS.GOV); (907) 543-3151 or [Aaron\\_moses@fws.gov](mailto:Aaron_moses@fws.gov)**

**No summary submitted for this reporting period.**

### **Summary:**

The Kuskokwim River main stem currently has no restrictions. All previous restrictions were lifted 11:59 p.m. August 1<sup>st</sup>. Gillnets in tributaries of the Kuskokwim River are still prohibited.

**YDNWR fisheries project:**

In the summer of 2020, Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge, Orutsararmiut Native Council (ONC) fisheries staff, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game collaborated on a Chinook Salmon fecundity project. Fifty-one female Chinook Salmon from the Bethel Test Fishery were sampled for eggs by ONC and USFWS staff during the month of June and July 2020. The objective of the study was to explore the relationship between body size and the number of eggs in Kuskokwim River Chinook Salmon. This project is part of a larger project to understand how the decline in fish sizes may be affecting the number and quality of salmon returning in future runs.

**Escapement:**

As of August 14, 2020. The escapement for Chinook Salmon in the following tributaries:

Salmon River (ANIAK): 1,079 (Average count: 2,547, 5 year average: 1,942)

George River: 2,400 (Average count: 3,360, 5 year average: 3,068)

Kogruklu River: 5,193 (Average count: 8,505, 5 year average: 7,728)

Takotna River: 216 (Average count: 362)

Salmon River (Pitka Fork): 4,825 (Average count: 6,235)

**Test Fisheries:**

As of August 16, 2020 the CPUE for Chinook at the Bethel test fish is at 488. The 2019 and 2018 Chinook CPUE for this day were at 848 and 667, respectively.

As of August 16, 2020 the CPUE for Chum at the Bethel test fish is at 1,440. The 2019 and 2018 Chum CPUE for this day were at 6,369 and 8,212, respectively.

As of August 16, 2020 the CPUE for Sockeye at the Bethel test fish is at 1,056. The 2019 and 2018 Sockeye CPUE for this day were at 2,674 and 2,275, respectively.

As of August 16, 2020 the CPUE for Coho at the Bethel test fish is at 1,215. The 2019 and 2018 Sockeye CPUE for this day were at 1,291 and 901, 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**

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### **Norton Sound District**

#### **Assessment:**

In a flip to the longtime script, the silver run has been doing better in northern Norton Sound than in southern Norton Sound. This year the average weight of silvers has been a record low of 5.5 pounds.

#### ***Other Coastal Waters (Stebbins and St. Michael)***

#### **Subsistence Fishing:**

Subsistence fishing remains open 7 days a week.

#### ***Subdistricts 6 (Unalakleet)***

#### **Subsistence Fishing:**

Subsistence fishing remains open 7 days a week.

Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 475 kings, 300 sockeyes, 3300 pinks, 2600 chums and 1,750 silvers by 50 permit holders the silver catch has been well below average.

Silver salmon escapement has been below average in the Subdistrict and the usual two 48-hour commercial fishing periods each week have been reduced to one 24-hour fishing period each week.

Commercial salmon fishing opened in the Subdistrict for 24 hours from 6 p.m. Saturday, August 15 until 6 p.m. Sunday, August 16. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and gillnets must have a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller.  
Silver

Historically mid-August has had the peak commercial silver catches in the Subdistrict and this 24-hour commercial fishing period will help to determine if there is any improvement in the silver run.

**North River Tower — Camp J. B.** — A NSEDC project. 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. All counts except silvers should be considered minimal because of the late project start due to high water. Cumulative counts through August 17 were 1,071 kings, 120 sockeyes, 1,100 chums, 657,000 pinks and 870 silvers. The silver count is the lowest for this date in project history the historical midpoint of silver passage is August 18.

**Unalakleet River Floating Weir** — The weir was not operated this year because high water prevented installation.

***Subdistrict 5 (Shaktoolik)***

Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence fishing remains open 7 days a week.

Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 240 kings, 300 sockeyes, 1,300 pinks, 4,000 chums and 700 silvers by 24 permit holders. The silver catch has been well below average.

Commercial salmon fishing opened in the Subdistrict for 24 hours from 6 p.m. Saturday, August 15 until 6 p.m. Sunday, August 16. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and gillnets and a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller.

Historically mid-August has had the peak commercial silver catches in the Subdistrict and this 24-hour commercial fishing period will help to determine if there is any improvement in the silver run. The silver run throughout Norton Sound has been much lower than expected

**Shaktoolik Sonar/Tower** – An NSEDC project with no escapement goals yet established. All counts except silvers should be considered minimal because of the late project start date due to high water. The cumulative counts through August 17 were 933 kings, 117 sockeyes, 9,400 chums, 1.97 million pinks and 1,800 silvers. The silver count is the lowest for this date in project history.

#### ***Subdistrict 4 (Norton Bay)***

##### Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence fishing remains open 7 days a week.

##### Commercial Fishing:

The catch is confidential because of only to permit holders fishing for most periods this year..

**Inglutalik River Tower** – A NSEDC project. Project Started July 30. The cumulative counts through August 17 were 2,100 chums, 6 sockeyes, 52,000 pinks and 1,100 silvers. The silver count is the second lowest in project history.

**Ungalik River Tower** – A NSEDC project. No escapement goals yet established. The cumulative counts through August 17 were 135 kings, 220 sockeyes, 7,900 chums, 972,000 pinks and 1,200 silvers.

#### ***Subdistrict 3 (Elim)***

##### Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence fishing remains open 7 days a week.

##### Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 128 kings, 90 sockeyes, 330 pinks, 820 chums and 560 silvers by 15 permit holders. The silver catch at the last opening was below average.

Commercial salmon fishing opened in the Subdistrict for 48 hours beginning Tuesday evening, August 18 at 6 p.m. until 6 p.m. Thursday, August 20. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller.

**Kwiniuk River Tower-Camp Joel** – A Fish & Game project. Escapement goals were 250 kings, 9,100 – 32,600 chums, 8,400 pinks and 650-1,300 silvers (aerial survey goal).

The cumulative counts through August 17 were 411 kings, 87 sockeyes, 4,900 chums, 1.75 million pinks and 3,000 silvers. The silver count is slightly below average the average historical midpoint of Tower passage is August 22.

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

#### Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence fishing remains open 7 days a week.

#### Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 43 kings, 150 sockeyes, 1,600 pinks, 10,500 chums and 1,000 silvers by 16 permit holders. The silver catch at the last opening was average.

Commercial salmon fishing opened in the Subdistrict for 48 hours beginning Tuesday evening, August 18 at 6 p.m. until 6 p.m. Thursday, August 20. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller.

### ***Subdistrict 1 (Nome)***

#### Subsistence Fishing:

The summer subsistence salmon gillnet fishing schedule for the Nome Subdistrict is in effect. The marine waters east of Cape Nome will continue to be open 7 days a week. All Nome Subdistrict freshwater subsistence areas and the marine waters west of Cape Nome are open to gillnet fishing for five days each week from 6 p.m. Wednesday until 6 p.m. Monday. There are no catch limits when fishing in the marine waters. There are catch limits in the fresh water subsistence areas that vary by river and are shown subsistence fishing permits which are required. Beach seining for salmon is no longer allowed after August 15. Dip nets and cast nets can be also be used in the subsistence are whenever gillnet fishing is open.

Stream-specific harvest limits are listed on the subsistence salmon fishing permits. There are no catch limits in marine waters.

#### Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 39 kings, 520 sockeyes, 7,100 chums, 700 pinks and 2,400 silvers by 6 permit holders. The silver catch the last opening was above average.

Commercial salmon fishing opened in the Subdistrict for 48 hours beginning Tuesday evening, August 18 at 9 p.m. until 9 p.m. Thursday, August 20. Permit holders were limited to 100 fathoms of gillnet in aggregate length and a mesh size of 6 inches or smaller.

**Solomon River Weir** – A Fish & Game project, has no escapement goals yet established.

The cumulative counts through August 17 were 10 kings, 134 sockeyes, 830 chums, 473,000 pinks and 370 silvers. Pink and silver counts are a record this year. The cumulative counts through August 10 were 7 kings, 68 sockeyes, 756 chums, 450,000 pinks and 200 silvers. The pink count is on track to break the 2918 record count.

**Nome River Weir** – A Fish & Game project with escapement goals of 1,600 – 5,300 chum salmon and 13,000 pink salmon. The Cumulative counts through August 17 were 8 kings, 220 sockeyes, 2,340 chums, 2.1 million pinks and 550 silvers. The silver count is average, and the average historical 1st quarter point is August 25.

**Snake River Weir** – A NSEDC project has an escapement goal of 2,000 – 4,200 chum salmon. The cumulative counts through August 17 were 7 kings, 280 sockeyes, 670 chums, 370,000 pinks and 210 silvers. The silver count is average and the average historical first quarter point is August 26.

## **Port Clarence District**

### Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence gillnet and beach seining are open 7 days a week. The subsistence seasonal king salmon limit is 3 fish per season. The sockeye seasonal catch limit has been raised to 50 fish. Although the Pilgrim River weir is no longer operating, an aerial survey has shown sockeye salmon continuing to move upriver into Salmon Lake, and the Pilgrim River weir count would have likely surpassed 15,000 sockeyes this year. Although the chance getting 50 sockeye salmon this late in the season may be difficult, raising the limit will allow permit holders who have reached the previous limit of 25 sockeyes to get a few more fish if they so desire. Commercial Fishing:

Commercial salmon fishing remains closed in the Port Clarence Subdistrict due to lack of buyer interest.

**Pilgrim River Weir** – A NSEDC project. It has an escapement goal of 6,800-36,000 sockeyes. The cumulative counts through August 10 were 64 kings, 12,900 sockeyes, 5,000 chums, 100,000 pinks and 180 silvers. At this time, the sockeye subsistence limit will remain at 25 fish for the season for each household and give those households that have not reached the limit a chance to get more sockeyes. If the count at the weir reaches 15,000 sockeyes, the department would consider raising the household limit. However, unless there is a late surge of sockeyes the department does not expect the run to reach the 15,000 sockeyes threshold.

## **Kotzebue District**

### Subsistence Fishing:

No subsistence fishing restrictions are expected in 2020.



### Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 125,000 chums by 65 permit holders. Compared to the same time last year, this year's catch is less than half of last year's catch. Last week was likely the peak week of the commercial catch.

Commercial salmon fishing opened for 8 hours on Sunday, August 16, from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. in the Kotzebue District; and again for 8 hours on Tuesday, August 18, from 12 p.m. until 8 p.m. Commercial fishing then reopened for 8 hours on Thursday, August 20, from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m. in the Kotzebue District.

**Kobuk River Test Fish - Fish & Game project.** The chum catches have picked up with the reduction in commercial fishing time but are less than half compared to last year, and the chum salmon catch index is still the second lowest in the 28-year project history. The expected midpoint of the chum catch was late last week.

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