

FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF AUGUST 24-30, 2021.

Report #14

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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

Herring – A commercial herring fishery occurred in Sitka Sound in 2021. Please see this [summary of Sitka Sound herring 2021](#). Also, [summary of southeast Alaska herring 2021](#).

Falls Lake - The Forest Service and the Organized Village of Kake operate the Falls Lake trap and video net weir which were operational as of June 25 and will be removed on this week. As of August 29, 442 sockeye have been counted in the trap and about 300 have been harvested. The current estimated escapement to-date is about 800. The final escapement estimate in 2020 was 800 Sockeye Salmon while the final subsistence and sport harvest in the marine terminal area was estimated to be 253. Subsistence harvest accounted for 96% of terminal area harvest.

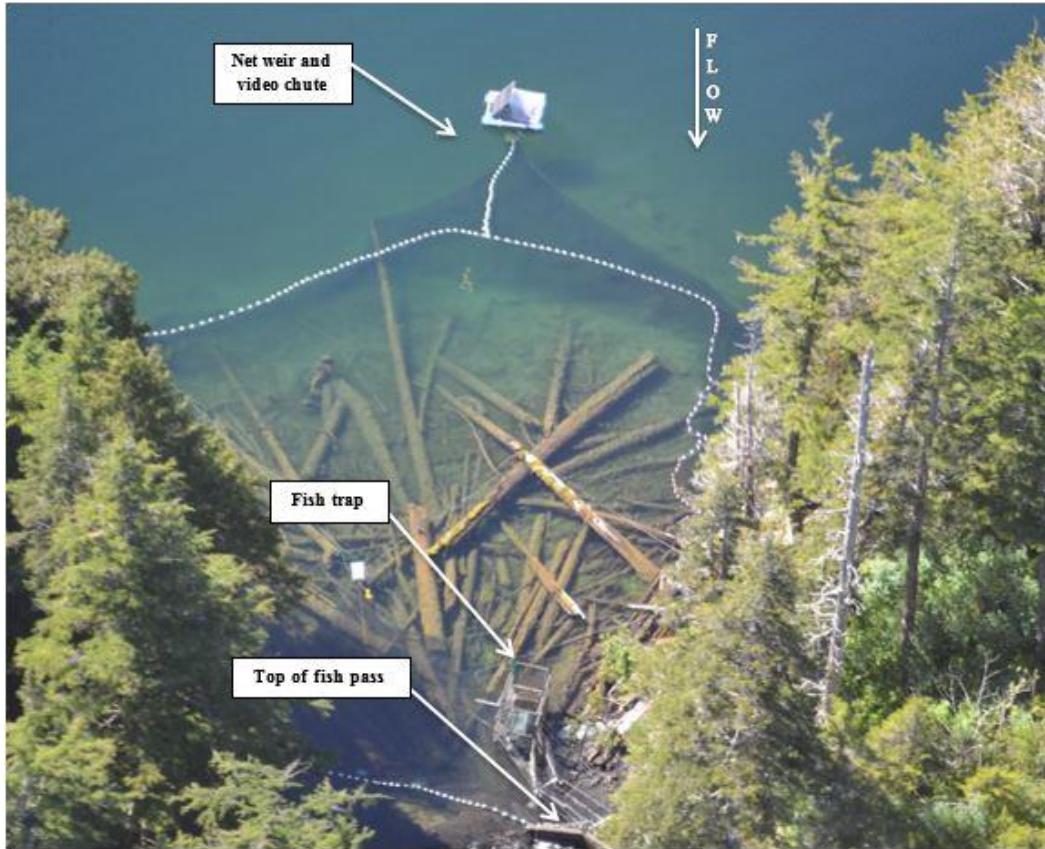


Figure 1. Aerial photo of the Falls Lake outlet illustrating the typical location of weir equipment.

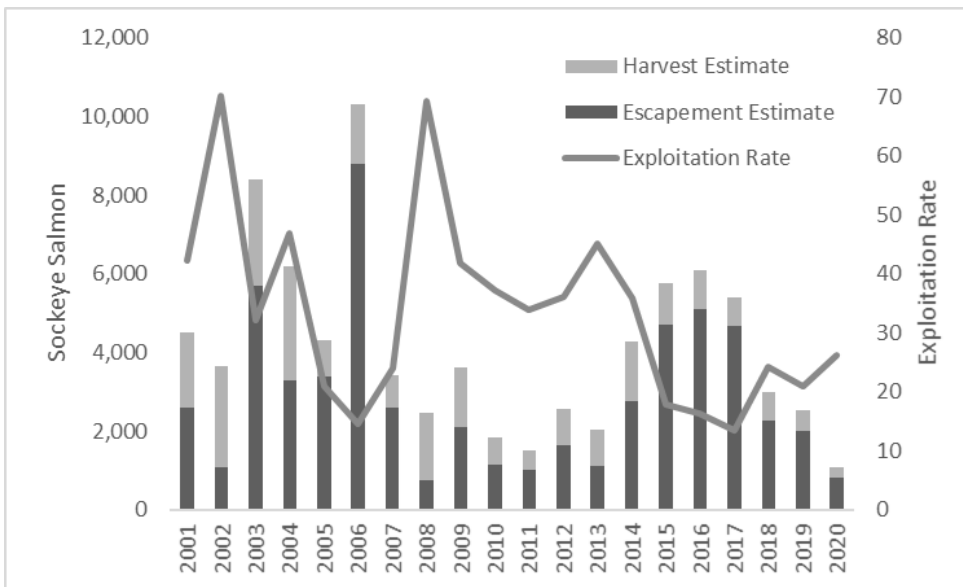


Figure 2. Escapement plus harvest equals total terminal run of Sockeye Salmon at Falls Lake, 2001-2020.

Klag Bay - The Sitka Tribe of Alaska operates the Sockeye Salmon monitoring weir at Klag Bay which was installed June 30. As of August 29, 7,361 sockeye have been

counted at the weir and 1,636 have been harvested. ADF&G [closed the Klag Bay subsistence and sport sockeye fisheries](#) on August 5 due to low escapement and few fish in the bay. In 2020, approximately 4,122 sockeye migrated past the weir while an estimated 1,599 were harvested in the marine terminal area subsistence and sport fishery. Subsistence harvest accounted for over 99% of terminal area harvest.

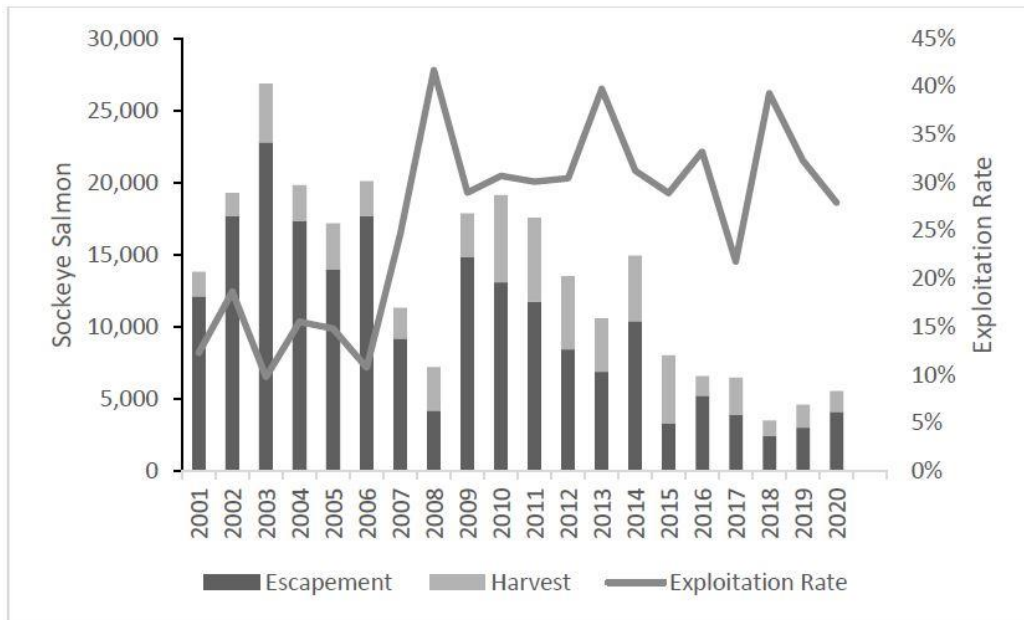


Figure 3. Creel survey harvest and escapement for Klag Lake Sockeye Salmon, 2001-2020. **Redoubt Lake** - The Forest Service operates the Redoubt Lake weir which was operational as of June 15. As of August 29, 58,084 sockeye have entered the lake. On July 10, in accordance with the Redoubt Lake Management Plan, the individual/household subsistence sockeye possession limit was set at 25 and the individual/household annual limit was set at 100. Many people are fishing for sockeye in Redoubt Bay and reporting good success. There have been several commercial seine openings in Redoubt Bay but no participation. In 2020, an estimated 41,279 Sockeye Salmon passed through the weir into Redoubt Lake. Over 40,000 sockeye were harvested in Sitka Sound commercial fishery openings throughout the 2020 season. Most of these sockeye are probably of Redoubt origin.

[News release, sockeye limits 2021](#)

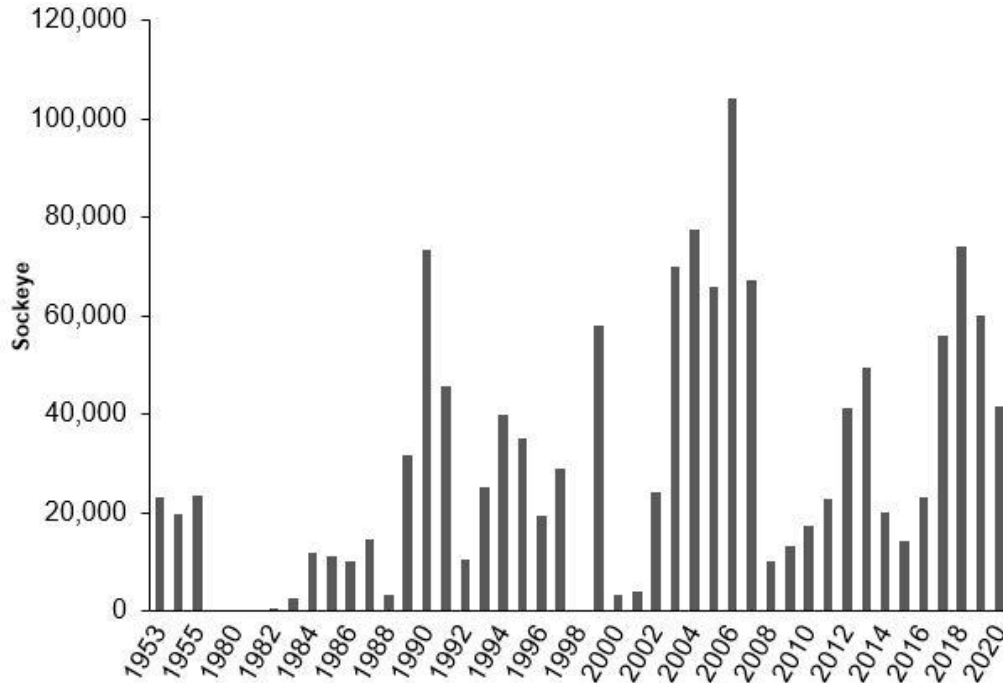


Figure 4. Annual Sockeye Salmon expanded escapement into Redoubt Lake for years with data: 1953 to 1955, 1982 to 1997, and 1999 to 2019. The weir was not operated in 1998.

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 for the village of Kake. Very little is known about the magnitude of this sockeye run. In 2019, 881 sockeye were counted at the weir and about 200 were harvested in the state subsistence fishery. The Gut Bay project has been postponed until 2022 due to staffing shortages. Word is harvesters are catching a good amount of sockeye this year at Gut Bay.

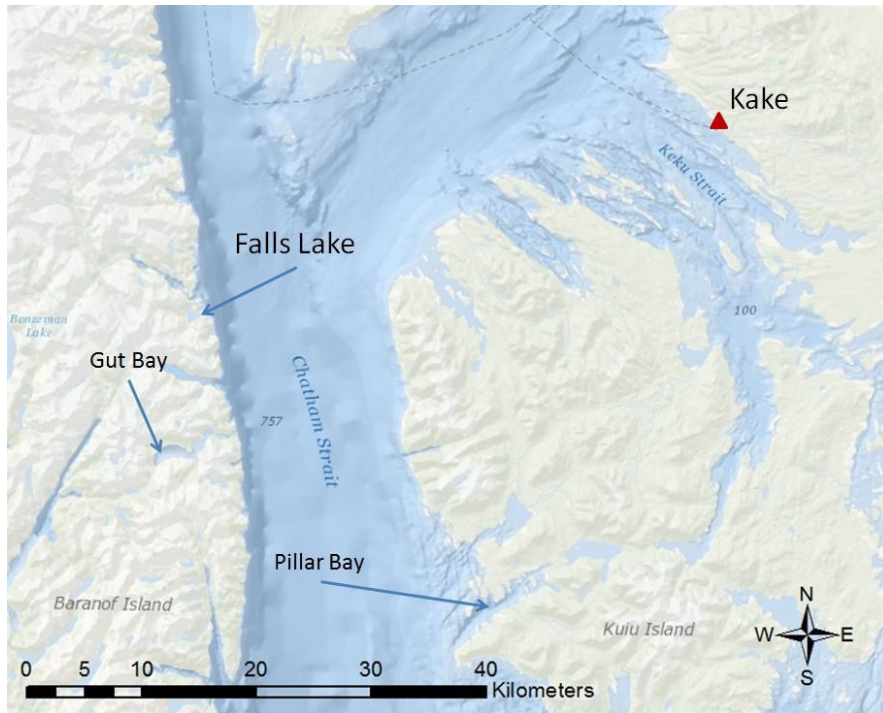


Figure 5. Location of Gut Bay in relation to Falls Lake and the village of Kake

Petersburg and Wrangell Area – Robert Cross, Forest Service, Tongass National Forest Robert Cross, (907)772-5944 robert.cross@usda.gov

Reporting complete for 2021 season.

Yakutat, Juneau, and Admiralty areas of Northern Southeast Alaska - Jake Musslewhite (907-789-6256; jgmusslewhite@fs.fed.us), Forest Service, Tongass National Forest
August 30, 2021

Neva Lake Sockeye Salmon: A Forest Service crew installed the Neva Lake weir on June 18, 2021. This swim-through video weir is located near Excursion Inlet, and is maintained by a Hoonah Indian Association crew living onsite. As of August 21, the Sockeye weir count is up to 3,069 fish. With about 85% of the historical run timing completed, the total escapement is projected to be roughly 3,600 Sockeye Salmon. We have also counted almost 10,000 Pink Salmon passing through the weir, which is a welcome improvement from recent years, but makes life difficult for the crew counting the fish. With the seasonal closure of the Ocean Beauty plant last week, the crew has returned to Hoonah and will continue to count fish from there using video feed from the weir site.



Figure 1. Live video capture of the Neva Lake weir site, August 23, 2021.



Figure 2. Video capture of a Sockeye Salmon passing through the Neva Lake video weir, August 23, 2021.

Sitkoh Lake Sockeye Salmon: The Sitkoh Lake weir was installed by a Forest Service crew over July 6-8, 2021 (Figure 2). The weir project is a partnership between the USFS and the Angoon Community Association (ACA). Normally, video from the site is transmitted to the ACA office in Angoon, where it is reviewed by ACA personnel. This year, due to a damaged mountaintop repeater, video is being recorded at the weir site and periodically retrieved by USFS crews for review. Counts from the weir will be available as video is reviewed. Based on preliminary counts, the Sitkoh Lake Sockeye return appears to be weak this year, but video from the peak of the run is still being processed and reviewed, so it's too early to tell.



Figure 3. The Sitkoh Lake weir, located at the outlet of Sitkoh Lake.

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

USFS Weekly Summary Author position vacant - TBA.

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

Copper River, – Dave Sarafin, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST), (907) 822-7281, dave_sarafin@nps.gov

Reporting complete for season. Please contact above author for clarification.

Links:

ADFG 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/Summary/DailySummary.aspx>

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>

ADFG 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

30 August 2021

A total of 59 Federal Subsistence fishing permits have been issued for freshwaters within the Chugach National Forest portion of the Prince William Sound area of to date. Coho Salmon have arrived and the break in the weather,

local streams have been fishable. Harvest statistics of this year's permit holders will not be known until reports are returned this winter. Most harvest under these permits takes place during the Coho Salmon fishery in fresh waters of the Copper River Delta in August and September. Ninety permits were issued in 2020

This will be the final report for the season, Please contact author with questions.

COOK INLET AREA – Kenneth Gates, Senior Fish Biologist, Kenai Fish and Wildlife Conservation Office (907) 260-0132 Kenneth_Gates@FWS.GOV

Reporting complete for 2021 season.

Kodiak Island Area – Michael Brady, Refuge Manager, - Kodiak NWR (907) 487-2600/0230 michael_brady@fws.gov or Kevin Van Hatten (907) 487-0230 Kevin_VanHatten@fws.gov

Reporting complete for 2021 season.

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

FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF AUGUST 16, 2021.

BRISTOL BAY, CHIGNIK, ALASKA PENINSULA, and ALEUTIAN ISLANDS – Jonathon Gerken Fisheries Branch Chief Anchorage Fish and Wildlife Field Office

Reporting complete for 2021 season.

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, Biologist USFWS Fairbanks Office. August 22-29, 2021

Federal Manager, Holly Carroll (907) 351-3029, holly_carroll@fws.gov, Keith Herron Ivy, (907) 312-3397, keith_ivy@fws.gov, Gerald Maschmann, (907) 456-0406, Gerald_Maschmann@fws.gov

Assessment Information

The Chinook and summer Chum salmon runs are essentially over in the Alaskan portion Yukon River drainage and management has transitioned to the fall Chum and Coho salmon season. Chinook Salmon escapements were all well below average and no escapement goals were met. The Chinook Salmon run at the Eagle Sonar is 99% complete based on late run timing and passage through August 19 is 30,425 Chinook Salmon, the lowest since 2000. The interim management escapement goal of 42,500-55,000 will not be met. The Eagle Sonar will be transitioning to estimating fall Chum Salmon passage any day now.

The fall Chum Salmon run is approaching the median $\frac{3}{4}$ point of the run. The fall Chum Salmon abundance at LYTF and Mt. Village Test Fishery (MVTF), are well below average. As of August 19, the Yukon River mainstem sonar near Pilot Station estimated 90,933 Chum Salmon (summer and fall) have passed upriver. This is well below the median passage of 323,415 fish. Fall Chum Salmon typically enter the Yukon in distinct pulses with short periods of high passage and longer periods of low passage. This season, we did not see any typically large pulses of chum salmon. Genetic mixed stock analysis of the fall run through August 5 indicates that about $\frac{2}{3}$ were summer Chum Salmon while only about $\frac{1}{3}$ were fall Chum Salmon. The current projection of total runs size indicates a fall Chum Salmon run size of approximately 100,000 fish. According to the Fall Chum Salmon Management Plan, the projection does not meet the threshold of 300,000 fish needed to allow subsistence fishing. In addition, the current run size is unlikely to meet the drainage wide escapement goal of 300,000-600,000 fall Chum Salmon, tributary escapement goals and Canadian treaty objectives.

The Coho Salmon run typically enters the Yukon during the second half of the fall Chum Salmon run. Unfortunately, the Coho Salmon run is also coming in very low. The abundance of Coho Salmon at LYTF and Mt. Village Test Fishery (MVTF), is well below average. The estimated passage of Coho Salmon past the Pilot Station Sonar through August 19 is 8,466 fish, the lowest passage on record. This is well below the median passage for this time of 59,865 fish. The usual mid-point of the Coho Salmon run in the lower Yukon is approximately August 22.

The latest fish passage and escapement estimates can be found at ADF&G's website at www.adfg.alaska.gov/yukonfishcounts

Management Actions

The Alaskan portion of the Yukon drainage has transitioned to fall season management.

Subsistence fishing is open to the use of dip nets and hook and line gear to target non-salmon and salmon species other than Chinook and Chum Salmon (such as Pink, Sockeye and Coho Salmon) for **Yukon River Coastal District, Districts 1, 2, 3, Innoko River and lower Subdistrict 4-A**. All Chinook and Chum Salmon caught using selective gear must be released alive immediately. Subsistence salmon fishing with other gear types remain closed.

Subsistence salmon fishing is closed in **Yukon River Subdistrict 4-A Upper, Subdistrict 4-B, 4-C, Koyokuk River, District 5, District 6 and Upper Tanana Area**. Pink and Sockeye Salmon are not present in these districts, and selective gear opportunities are expected when or if Coho Salmon are more abundant.

During subsistence salmon fishing closures, 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets are restricted to a maximum length of 60 feet. This gear may be used to target non-salmon species. Fishermen are reminded to use this gear in areas where non-salmon species are abundant to avoid incidentally harvesting Chinook and Chum salmon.

For detailed information on management actions and assessment, subscribe to ADF&G advisory announcements at <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.search>

Inseason Outreach

The twelfth YR DFA teleconference occurred on August 17. Public participation is waning as fishermen participate in other subsistence activities such as hunting and preparing for winter. Participants expressed gratitude for receiving additional donated fish from Bristol Bay.

Call in to the YR DFA weekly teleconferences each Tuesday at 1:00 pm at the following number: 1-800-315-6338, Passcode: 98566#.

Get announcements and more by liking the ADF&G Yukon River Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG/

KUSKOKWIM RIVER

In Season Manager – Boyd Blihovde, Refuge Manager, Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge Contact Boyd_Blihovde@fws.gov; (907) 543-3151 or spencer_rearden@fws.gov

Reporting complete for 2021 season.

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) 443-6104 ken_adkisson@nps.gov

Norton Sound District

Salmon Assessment:

The commercial salmon fishing cumulative catch is 14 kings, 6,000 chums, 261,000 pinks, 465 sockeyes and 5,500 silvers.

Three commercial silver salmon openings in Norton Sound had poor catches and there may or may not be another opening this season in some of the subdistricts. This season the chum and silver runs were very poor, and the pink run, although much lower than the record runs of the last 5 years was average for an odd-numbered year. Only in the early 2000's were the chum harvests lower than this year. This year's silver harvest is the poorest since 2002 and ranks 12th lowest on record. Pinks were the only bright spot this year with the 5th highest harvest on record. The water levels have been dropping and the department and NSEDC plans to get some of the escapement counting projects operational if the water levels continue to drop.

Subdistricts 6 (Unalakleet)

Subsistence Fishing:

Gillnet fishing is open 7 days a week, but beach seining is closed.

Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 6 kings, 780 chums, 166,000 pinks, 100 sockeyes and 1,500 silvers caught by 40 permit holders.

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.

North River Tower the project may be operational next week if the water levels drop. The usual third-quarter point of silver passage is the last week of August.

Subdistrict 5 (Shaktoolik)

Subsistence Fishing:

Gillnet fishing is open 7 days a week, but beach seining is closed.

Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 5 kings, 1,000 chums, 63,000 pinks, 120 sockeyes and 2,000 silvers caught by 22 permit holders.

Shaktoolik Sonar/Tower – An NSEDC project with no escapement goals yet established.

The project may be operational later in the week or next week if the water levels drop.

Subdistrict 4 (Norton Bay)

Subsistence Fishing:

Net fishing is open 7 days a week.

Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 50 chums, 10,000 pinks, 8 sockeyes and 160 silvers by 6 permit holders.

Inglutalik River Tower – A NSEDC project. No escapement goals yet established.

The Inglutalik tower is finished for the season.

Ungalik River Tower – A NSEDC project. No escapement goals yet established.

The Ungalic tower is finished for the season.

Subdistrict 3 (Elim)**Subsistence Fishing:**

Subsistence fishing is open 7 days a week.

Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 450 chums, 7,000 pinks, 40 sockeyes and 900 silvers by 12 permit holders.

Kwiniuk River Tower-Camp Joel – A Fish & Game project with assistance from NSEDC has escapement goals of 250 kings, 9,100 – 32,600 chums, 8,400 pinks and 650-1,300 silvers (aerial survey goal).

The project may be operational later in the week if water levels drop. The usual third-quarter point of silver passage is the last week of August.

Subdistrict 2 (Golovin)**Subsistence Fishing:**

Subsistence fishing is open 7 days a week.

□

Commercial Fishing:

Commercial fishing: The cumulative catch is 3,500 chums, 14,000 pinks, 175 sockeyes and 500 silvers by 8 permit holders.

Subdistrict 1 (Nome)**Subsistence Fishing:**

Subsistence fishing: the subsistence net fishing schedule in all freshwater subsistence areas is from 6 PM Wednesday until 6 PM Monday. The marine waters are open 7 days a week. Beach seines are no longer a legal gear to harvest salmon.

Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 3 kings, 250 chums, 50 pinks, 30 sockeyes and 400 silvers by 6 permit holders.

Nome River Weir – A Fish & Game project with escapement goals of 1,600 – 5,300 chum salmon and 13,000 pink salmon.

The project may be operational next week if water levels drop and the upcoming rains end this weekend.

Snake River Weir – A NSEDC project has an escapement goal of 2,000 – 4,200 chum salmon.

The weir was fish tight Monday afternoon, and 9 pinks were counted. The last time the weir was fish tight was July 26. The annual midpoint of silver passage is the end of August.

Port Clarence District

Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence fishing is open 7 days a week except all net fishing is closed on the Pilgrim River.

Pilgrim River Weir – A cooperative project of NSEDC with assistance from Fish and Game. It has an escapement goal of 4,000-8,000 sockeyes based on aerial survey at Salmon Lake & the Grand Central tributary to Salmon Lake.

The weir was pulled out for the season on August 18. The cumulative counts were 13 kings, 2,618 chums, 749 pinks, 3,721 and 54 silvers. There were no counts for 11 days when the weir was submerged starting in late July, and maybe 500 sockeyes passed. Aerial surveys of Salmon Lake have confirmed the number of sockeyes fell well short of the low end of the escapement goal.

Kotzebue District.

Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence net fishing is open seven days a week.

Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 81,000 chums by 50 permit holders. The commercial fishery will end after Friday's fishing. This year's harvest is well below last year's harvest of 150,000 chums and is the lowest harvest since the early 2000's.

Kobuk River Test Fish - Fish & Game project.

The project was pulled on August 10. The test fish crew was not able to catch any fish since July 28 because of high water.

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