

FINAL REPORT FOR 2021 SEASON

FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF AUGUST 31 – SEPTEMBER 6, 2021.

Report #15 – final report for 2021 season.

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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

This will be the final report for the 2021 season. Please contact author if you have questions.

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 June 25 and were removed last week. As of August 30, 445 sockeye have been counted in the trap and about 300 have been harvested. The estimated escapement is about 1,200. 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.

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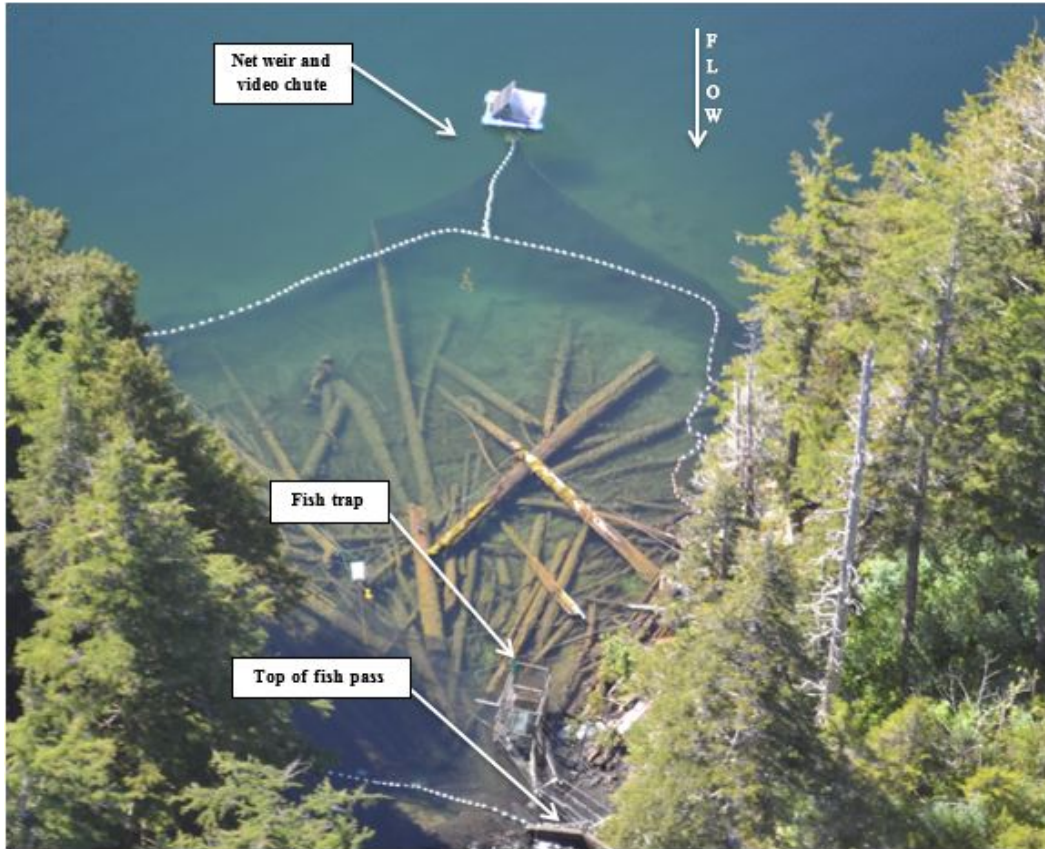


Figure 1. Aerial photo of the Falls Lake outlet illustrating the typical location of weir equipment.

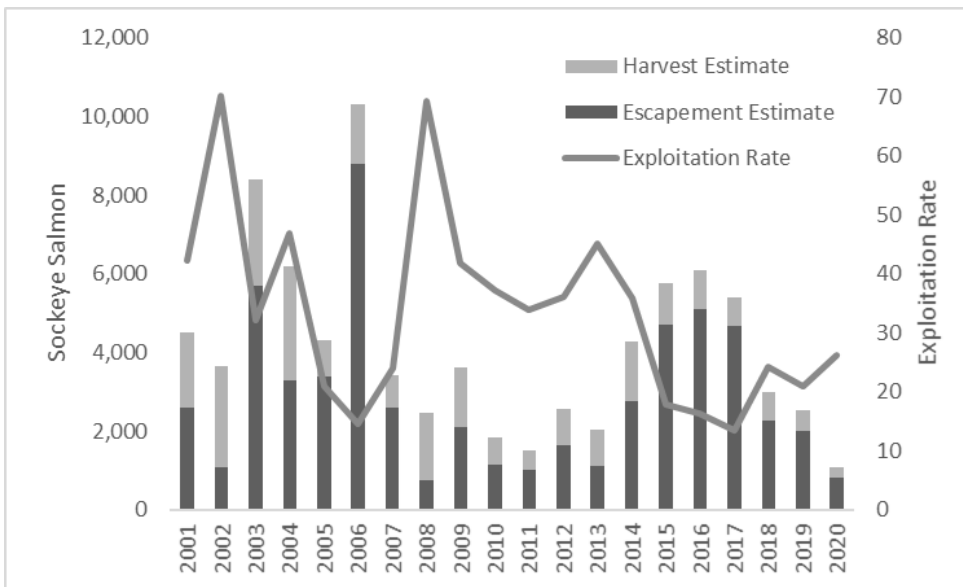


Figure 2. Escapement plus harvest equals total terminal run of Sockeye Salmon at Falls Lake, 2001-2020.

Klag Bay - The Sitka Tribe of Alaska operates the Sockeye Salmon monitoring weir at Klag Bay which was installed June 30 and will be removed this week. As of September 2,

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7,453 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.

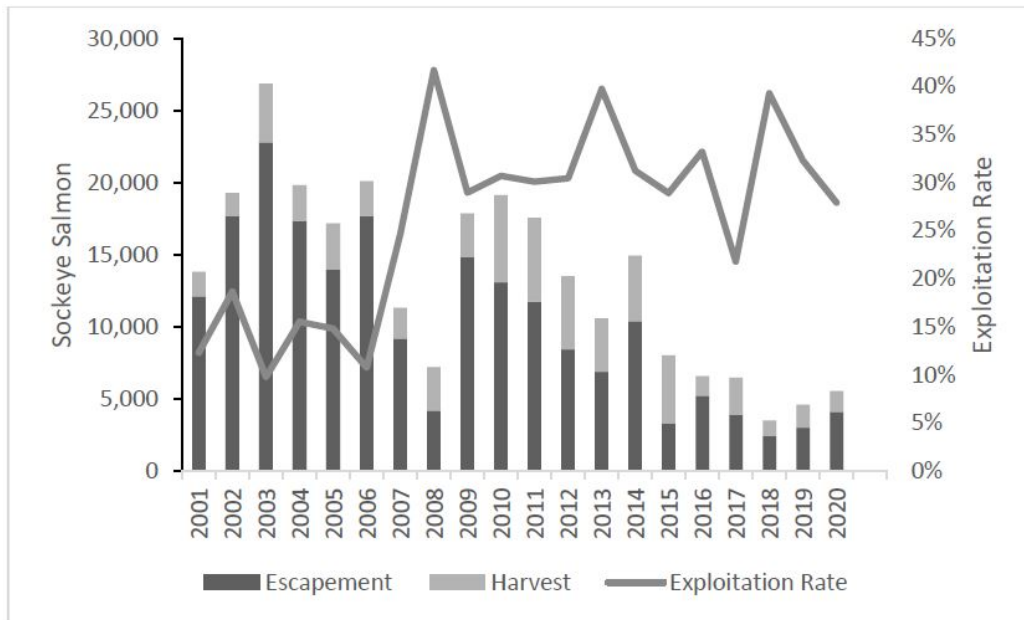


Figure 3. Creel survey harvest and escapement for Klag Lake Sockeye Salmon, 2001-2020.

Redoubt Lake - The Forest Service operates the Redoubt Lake weir which was operational as of June 15 and is being removed this week. As of September 3, just over 60,000 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](#)

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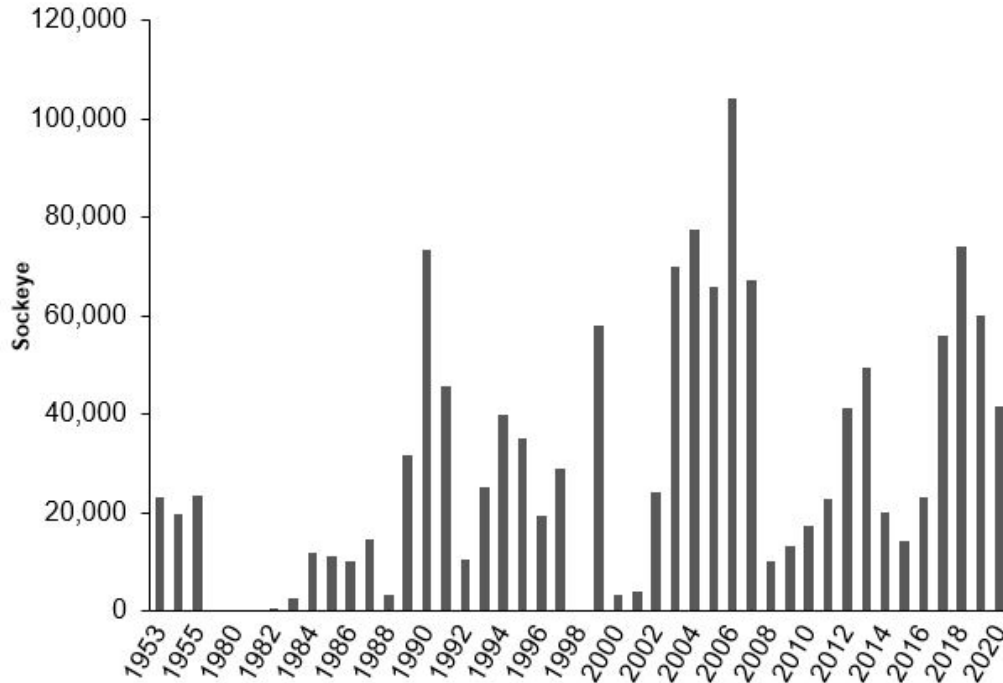


Figure 4. Annual Sockeye Salmon expanded escapement into Redoubt Lake for years with data: 1953 to 1955, 1982 to 1997, and 1999 to 2019. The weir was not operated in 1998.

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.

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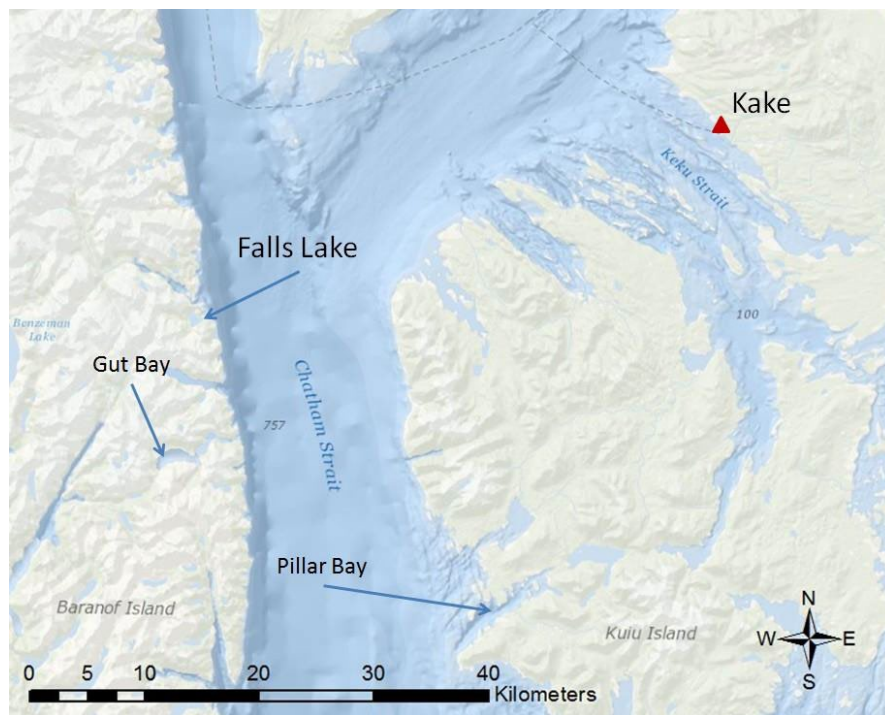


Figure 5. Location of Gut Bay in relation to Falls Lake and the village of Kake

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

Reporting complete for 2021 season.

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>

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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.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, – 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

Reporting complete for this season. Please contact author with questions.

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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 29 – September 4, 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

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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 September 2 is 31,957 Chinook Salmon, the lowest since 2013. 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 when the test fishery begins catching fall Chum Salmon.

The fall Chum Salmon run is nearing the end of the run in the lower Yukon. The fall Chum Salmon abundance at LYTF and Mt. Village Test Fishery (MVTF) are well below average. Through September 3, the Yukon River mainstem sonar near Pilot Station estimated 138,356 Chum Salmon (summer and fall) have passed upriver. This is well below the median passage of approximately 721,000 fish we'd normally see. 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 of the typical large pulses of chum salmon. Genetic mixed stock analysis of the fall run through August 5 indicates that about 2/3 were summer Chum Salmon while only about 1/3 were fall Chum Salmon. The current projection of total run size indicates a fall Chum Salmon run size of near 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. The current run size will not 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 weak. 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 September 2 is 28,152 fish. This is well below the median passage for this time of 137,353 fish. The Coho Salmon run is past the median $\frac{3}{4}$ point of the in the lower Yukon.

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

Management Actions

Unfortunately, due to the historically low numbers of both fall Chum and Coho salmon, subsistence salmon fishing is closed in the Yukon River management area. Subsistence fishing for non-salmon with 4-inch or less mesh gillnets has also been reduced to protect salmon that may be incidentally caught in this gear. The opportunity to harvest non-salmon with manned fishwheels has been provided. All salmon caught in fish wheels need to be returned to the water alive. Salmon fishing closures may extend longer this season than usual to protect incoming fall Chum and Coho salmon, as getting every fish to the spawning grounds is important.

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For additional details 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 final YRDFA inseason teleconference occurred on Tuesday, August 31. YRDFA, YDFDA, and the ITFC are working together to get village families relief through the disaster declaration process.

The federal manager will continue communication efforts this fall by providing a season summary to the Region Advisory Councils and scheduling formal Tribal consultations with Yukon River Tribal Governments.

This will be the final weekly report to OSM for the 2021 season. Please feel free to get in touch with the management team with any questions or concerns.

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>

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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

This will be the last report of the 2021 season from Northwest Alaska as commercial fishing winds down. End of season final reports will be carried over to next year's reports and used to provide a comparison with the 2022 season forecast.

Salmon Assessment:

The cumulative commercial fishing catch is 14 kings, 6,200 chums, 261,000 pinks, 465 sockeyes and 6,400 silvers.

Commercial salmon fishing closed the evening of September 2. 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 there 5 years of chum harvests lower than this year. This year's silver harvest was the poorest since 2002 and the 15th lowest on record. Pinks were the only bright spot this year with a record harvest for an odd-numbered year and the 5th highest harvest on record for all years.

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, 850 chums, 166,000 pinks, 100 sockeyes and 2,100 silvers caught by 40 permit holders.

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 2,400 silvers caught by 22 permit holders.

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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.

Subdistrict 3 (Elim)Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence fishing is open 7 days a week.

Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch is 1 king, 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).

Counting resumed last Wednesday and 600 silvers have passed the tower since then. Historically over 90% of the silver run is by the tower the first week of September.

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:

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Subsistence fishing 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.

The department was able to aerial survey the rivers last week and all rivers had well below average numbers of silvers.

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 August 23 and 79 silvers passed the weir in 7 days, and the weir was knocked out again by high water. The weir has been pulled for the season.

Port Clarence DistrictSubsistence Fishing:

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

Kotzebue District.Subsistence Fishing:

Subsistence net fishing is open seven days a week.

Commercial Fishing:

The cumulative catch was 96,500 chums by 50 permit holders. The fishery closed after last Friday's opening. This year's harvest was well below last year's harvest of 150,000 chums and was the lowest harvest since the early 2000's.

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