

**FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF JUNE 28-July 4, 2021.** Report #6  
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.

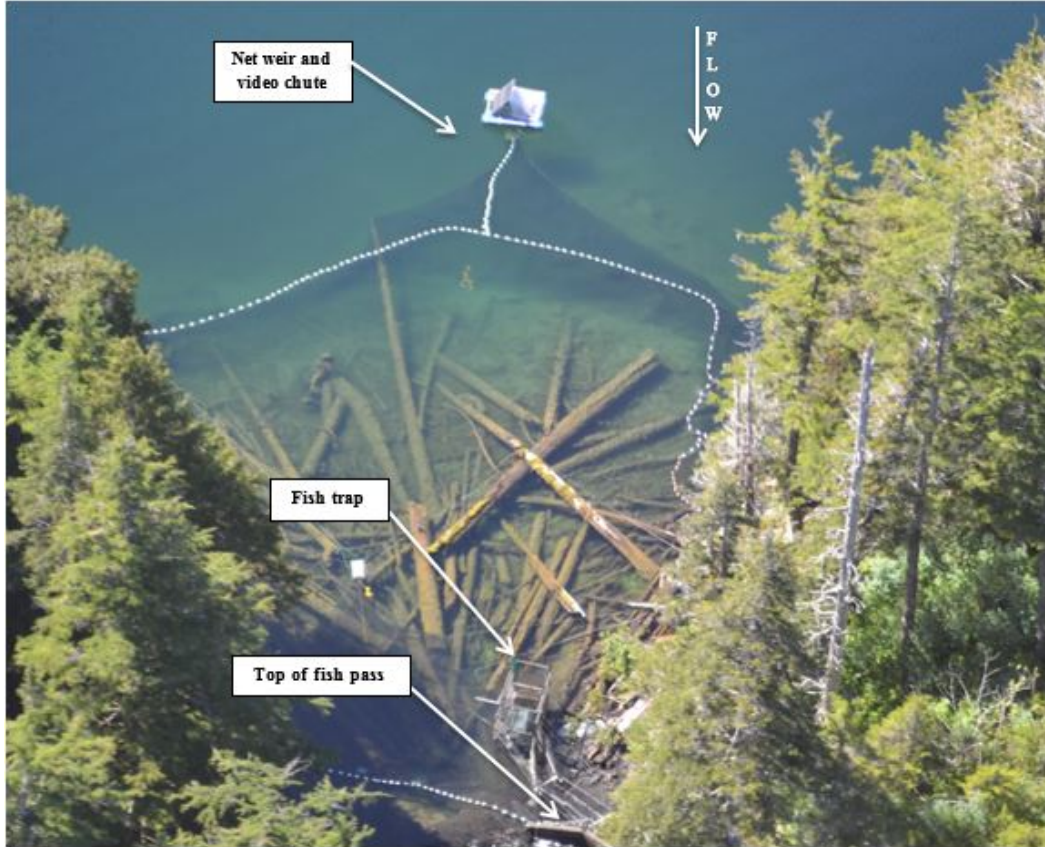
## **SOUTHEAST ALASKA**

**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)

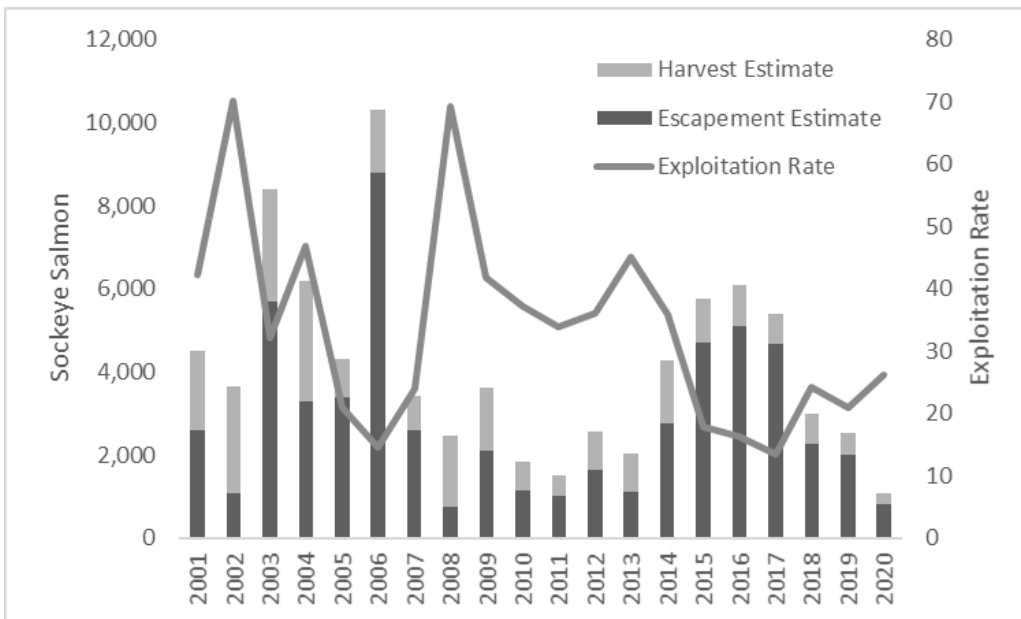
**Herring** – A commercial herring fishery occurred in Sitka Sound in 2021. Please see this [summary of Sitka Sound herring 2021](#). Also, [summary of southeast Alaska herring 2021](#).

**Falls Lake** - The Forest Service and the Organized Village of Kake operate the Falls Lake trap and video net weir which was operational as of June 25. A single Sockeye Salmon has been counted this far, they usually begin entering the lake around July 10.

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.

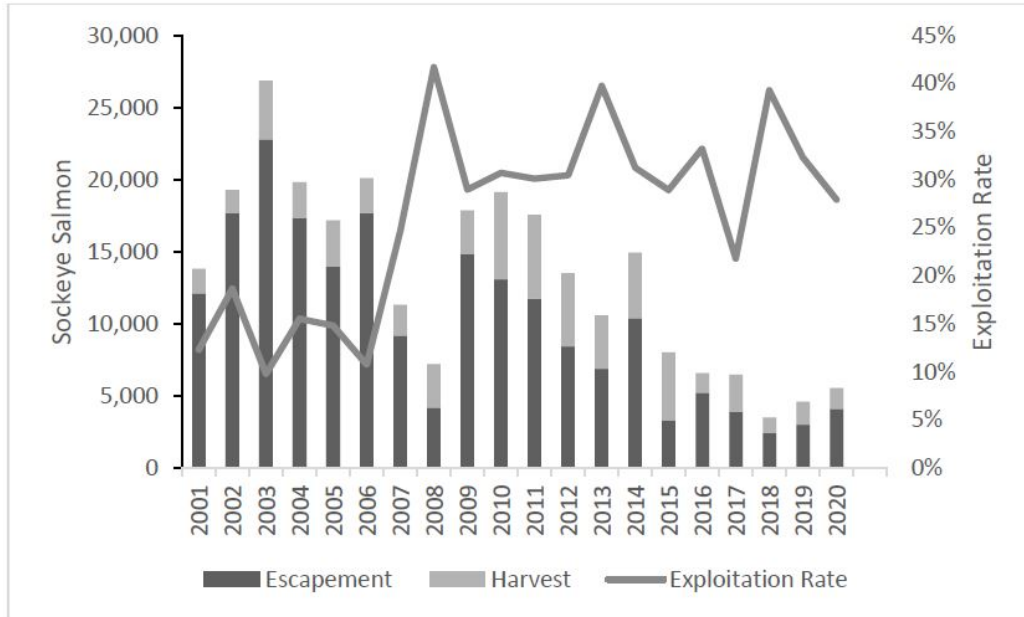


**Figure 1.** Aerial photo of the Falls Lake outlet illustrating the typical location of weir equipment.



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

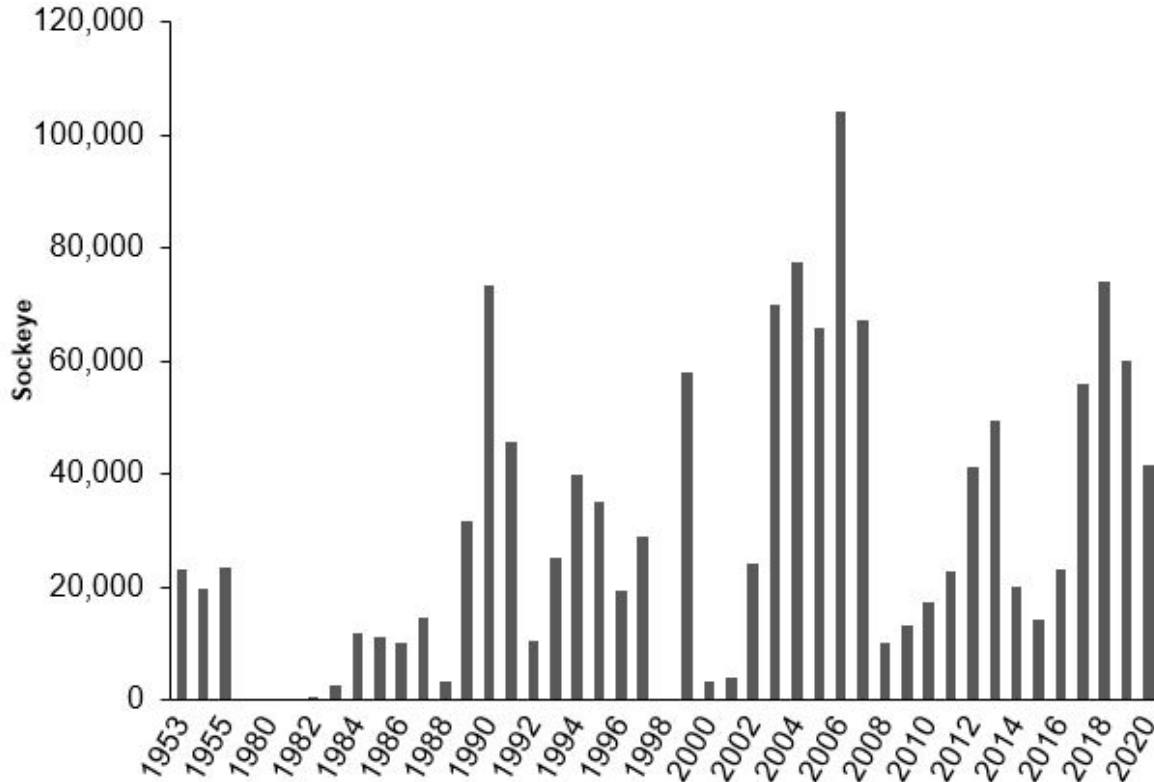
**Klag Bay** - The Sitka Tribe of Alaska operates the Sockeye Salmon monitoring weir at Klag Bay which is scheduled to be operational the last week in June. In 2020, approximately 4,122 sockeye migrated past the weir while an estimated 1,599 were harvested in the marine terminal area subsistence and 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.

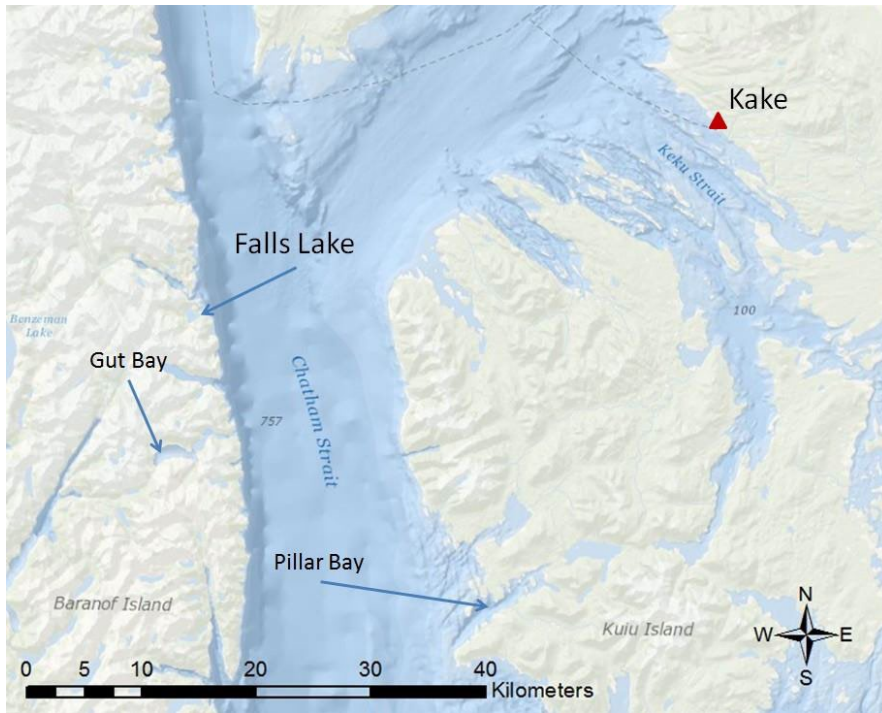
**Redoubt Lake** - The Forest Service operates the Redoubt Lake weir which was operational as of June 15. As of July 3, 2,490 sockeye have entered the lake. In 2020, an estimated 41,279 Sockeye Salmon passed through the weir into Redoubt Lake. On July 22, in accordance with the Redoubt Lake Management Plan, the individual/household subsistence sockeye possession limit was set at 25 and the individual/household subsistence sockeye annual limit was set at 100. Over 40,000 sockeye were harvested in Sitka Sound commercial fishery openings throughout the season. Most of these sockeye are probably of Redoubt origin.

[News release, sockeye limits 2020](#)



**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.



**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)

The pre-season terminal run forecast for large Chinook Salmon in the Stikine River is 9,900 fish. This forecast is below the bottom range of the 14,000 to 28,000 fish goal. Directed commercial, sport, and subsistence fisheries in the area have been closed to protect this return. Currently, all drift gillnet, purse seine and non-terminal harvest area troll fisheries are closed in district 8.

The 2021 Stikine River pre-season Sockeye Salmon forecast is 56,000 fish, with 28,000 Tahltan and 28,000 Mainstem fish. The 2020 Sockeye Salmon forecast was 103,400 fish, which included 64,500 Tahltan Lake and 38,900 Mainstem Sockeye. The escapement objective for Tahltan bound Sockeye Salmon is 18,000 and 30,000 for Mainstem fish. The 2021 forecast is below the escapement objective for the mainstem and may result in a season closure.

The 2021 Federal Stikine River Sockeye Salmon subsistence fishery began June 21. High water has likely slowed harvest effort during the first two weeks of the fishery. One net was counted during the last 4 surveys (2 weeks). A total of 66 permits have been issued for the Stikine fishery and no harvest estimate is available at this time.

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

No summary submitted for current reporting period.

**June 21, 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. Sockeye have started showing up at the weir, with a total of 9 counted through June 26, and a few more since then. Live video and clips from the weir can be accessed at <http://nevalake.ddns.net:81>.



*Figure 1. The first Sockeye of 2021 counted through the Neva Lake weir, June 22, 2021.*





*Figure 2. A Cutthroat Trout passing through the Neva Lake weir.*

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

First weekly report will be in mid-June.

### **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, 7/1/2021 Update – Dave Sarafin, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST), (907) 822-7281, dave\_sarafin@nps.gov**

Management actions of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) have limited commercial fishing in the Copper River District in response to low numbers of returning salmon. The season total commercial harvest for the Copper River District through June 29 is reported as 221,837 Sockeye Salmon and 6,790 Chinook Salmon.

The ADFG sonar at Miles Lake (located just downstream of the Million Dollar Bridge in the Copper River) is currently in operation. After a relatively slow start to begin the season, sonar passage improved substantially during the last few weeks. As of June 30, 477,907 salmon have been estimated migrating upstream for the season. This estimate is 14% above the cumulative management objective of 419,443 for this date of the season. A daily estimate of 9,422 salmon migrated past the sonar on June 30.

The Native Village of Eyak (NVE) Baird Canyon fish wheels captured and tagged 1,840 Chinook Salmon through June 29. This total capture number for this date of the season is very low, relative to historical levels. The upriver fish wheels at Canyon Creek have captured and examined 1,188 Chinook salmon through June 29, of which, 101 were recaptured fish that had been tagged at the downstream wheels.

Performance in the commercial fishery and inriver sonar salmon passage estimates are the primary early season assessments of the Sockeye Salmon return to the Copper River. Although fishing opportunities and harvest in the commercial fishery were limited in the early part of the season, based on long-term average run timing, the assessment of inriver Sockeye Salmon run strength is presently on track to meet ADFG management objectives, which are designed to provide harvest opportunities to both Federal subsistence and other State upriver users, as well as to achieve the sustainable escapement goal for Sockeye Salmon.

As with Sockeye Salmon, fisheries managers also monitor assessments of the Chinook Salmon run strength; primary indicators are commercial harvest rates and data from the Chinook Salmon inriver abundance project operated by NVE. Additional insight is gained from the recent application of updated technology at the Miles Lake sonar site to provide species apportionment data. Inriver assessments to date are indicative of a weak return and managers believe that the Chinook Salmon sustainable escapement goal (SEG) will likely not be met.

In response to this assessment of the Chinook Salmon return, the ADFG closed the personal use fishery of the Chitina Subdistrict to the retention of Chinook Salmon (effective June 21) and has recently issued Advisory Announcements for Chinook

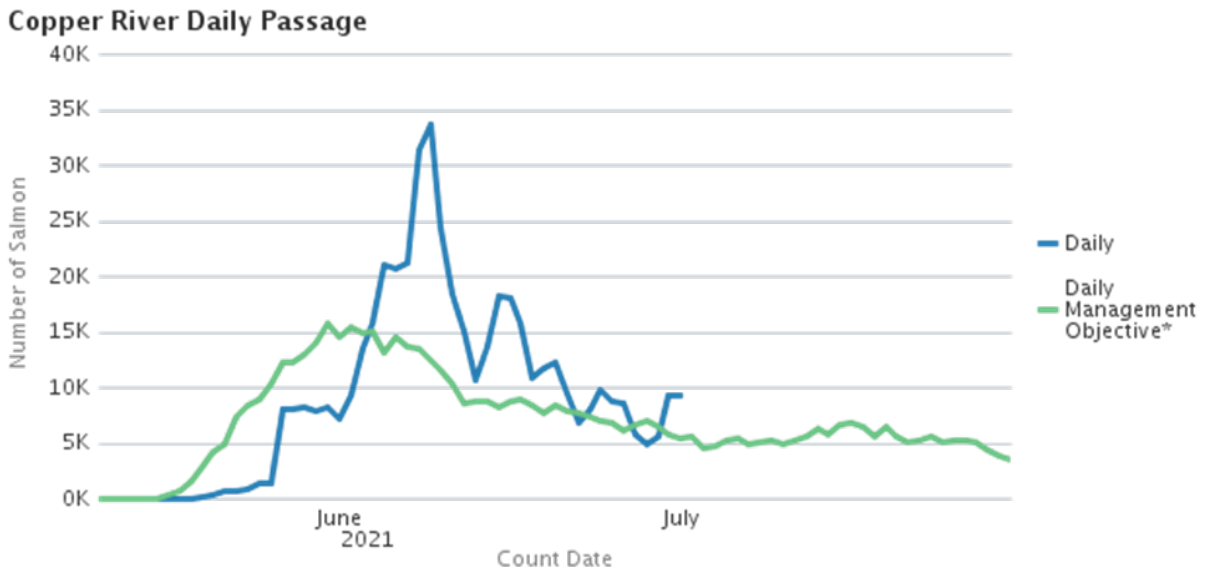


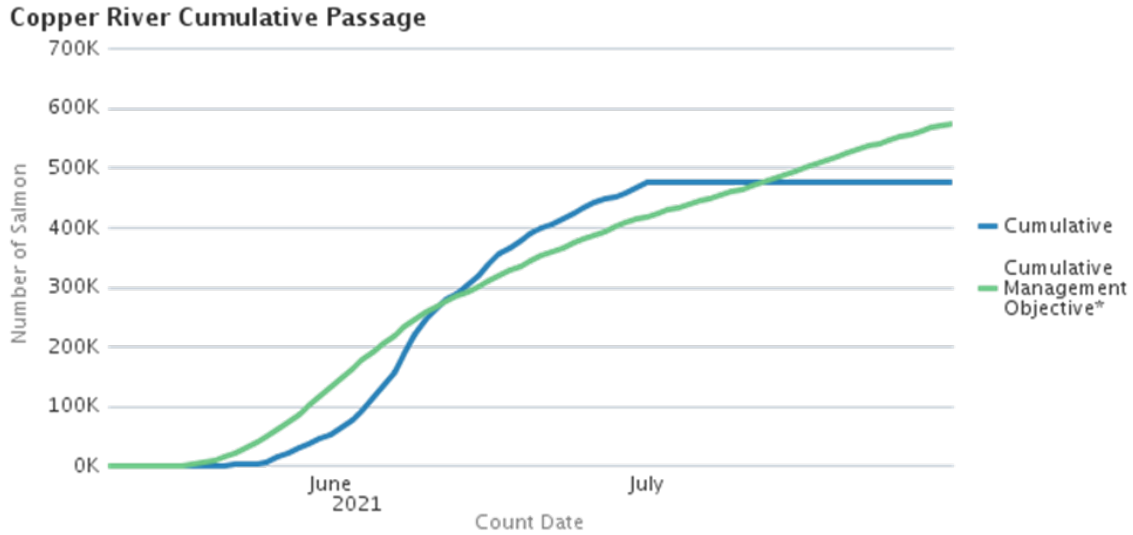
Salmon closures in both the sport (effective June 26) and State subsistence (effective June 28 through July 31) fisheries of the Upper Copper River drainage. Concurrent with these closures, including that of the upper river subsistence fishery, the ADFG has authorized periodic openings of the commercial fishery of the Copper River District to continue (within the expanded Chinook Salmon closure area). The most recent commercial opening that closed on June 29 reported a harvest of 69 Chinook Salmon.

The Chinook Salmon closures do not affect those fishing under Federal subsistence regulations. Harvest by Federal users through the remainder of the season is not expected to be high enough to have a significant impact on the sustainability of the stocks. At this time, no Federal Special Action has been issued by the inseason manager to restrict the harvest of Chinook Salmon, or for any other purpose, in the Federal fisheries of the Upper Copper River. Federal managers will continue to monitor run strength indices to evaluate the need for appropriate fisheries management actions in the Copper River Drainage.

Although Federal actions have not been taken, Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve (WRST) prepared and distributed an advisory announcement intended to inform all subsistence users of the present concerns for Copper River Chinook Salmon. This announcement was sent to all Upper Copper River District Federal subsistence fishing permit holders with email addresses on record. In the announcement, WRST requested that users consider voluntarily releasing healthy Chinook Salmon that may be beyond their subsistence needs.

**2021 Upper Copper River Salmon Passage at Miles Lake Sonar through June 30**





\*Management objectives are based on historical run-timing to achieve the in-river goal.

Source:

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

The State subsistence fishery in the Glennallen Subdistrict opened on June 1 (closed to Chinook Salmon, effective June 28 through July 31). The State Chinook Salmon sport fisheries closed beginning June 26. The State personal use fishery in the Chitina Subdistrict is open through Sunday, July 4. It is then scheduled to be open for total of 144 hours during the week of July 5.

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 database website, one hundred and seventy-four (174) Chitina Subdistrict permits, three hundred and six (306) Glennallen Subdistrict permits, and one (1) Batzulnetas area permit have been issued to date.

The ADFG counting tower in the Gulkana River began operation on June 9. The reported cumulative passage estimate through June 29 is 354 Chinook Salmon. This is a relatively very low estimate for this date in the season and is near the 2020 season count of 306 through this date.

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)

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.  
28 June 2021.**  
(907) 424-4759 [mburcham@fs.fed.us](mailto:mburcham@fs.fed.us)

No updated summary submitted for this reporting period.

28 June 2021

A total of 22 Federal Subsistence fishing permits have been issued for freshwaters within the Chugach National Forest portion of the Prince William Sound area of to date. 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 fishery in fresh waters of the Copper River Delta in August and September. Ninety permits were issued in 2020

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

The 2021 subsistence dip net fisheries for salmon is underway on the Kenai and Kasilof rivers. Each fishery began on June 15 and June 16, respectively. Regulatory dates for the Kasilof River community gillnet fishery are from June 16 through August 15. Regulatory periods for the Kenai River community gillnet fishery are from July 1 through August 15 and from September 10 – 30.

Seasons for subsistence fishing with rod and reel are the same as for the taking of fish under Alaska sport fishing regulations. Most of the initial rod and reel subsistence effort will be focused at Sockeye Salmon in the Upper Kenai and Russian Rivers which opened on June 11.

A total of 424 permits have been issued to date to residents of Cooper Landing, Hope, and Ninilchik. Permit types include a general fishing permit and household permit. All permits were issued through the U.S. Postal Service.

No special actions have been issued to date. The early-run escapement of Chinook Salmon returning to the Kenai River was 4,131 large fish which is just above the minimum OEG of 3,900.

To date, 864 Sockeye Salmon have been harvested from the Kasilof River in the Community Gillnet Fishery of which only 690 have been reported as being received on a federal subsistence permit. A total of 626 Sockeye Salmon have been reported as being harvested to date in the dip net fishery at the Russian River falls. Ninety Sockeye Salmon have been harvested on the Kasilof River in the Federal dip net 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) 487-2600/0230 michael\_brady@fws.gov or

Kevin Van Hatten (907) 487-0230 [Kevin\\_VanHatten@fws.gov](mailto:Kevin_VanHatten@fws.gov)

The Sockeye Salmon escapements for Buskin and Litnik systems started out slow. The Litnik sockeye salmon escapement counts have increased over the past couple of weeks with a cumulative count to date of 24,142 fish and thus passing the lower escapement goal. The Buskin River sockeye salmon escapement strength is very weak, with only 827 fish counted to date. An Emergency Special Action was published on June 14, 2021 closing the taking of sockeye salmon in the subsistence fishery.

The Karluk and Ayakulik River Sockeye Salmon escapements have been strong the past few weeks, with both systems meeting their lower escapement goals. As of Wednesday, June 30, 2020, the Karluk River Sockeye Salmon escapement count was 1112,854 fish and 213,319 fish for the Ayakulik River Sockeye Salmon. Discussions with villagers from Karluk and Larsen Bay have indicated catch per unit effort for subsistence harvest to be medium to strong.

The Alitak bay district has seen the return of sockeye salmon in strong numbers, with Upper Station easily exceeding its lower escapement goal of 43,000 fish, 100,962 fish counted to date. Akalura video monitoring project has been setup and recording since June 13, 2021. Any data collected from this project will be added to the weekly report as needed.

Any additional information pertaining to subsistence harvest will be amended to this report.

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

**FISHERIES UPDATE FOR THE WEEK OF June 27, 2021.**

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

These areas support abundant returns of salmon, particularly Sockeye Salmon; as well as some of the largest commercial fisheries for salmon in Alaska. All of the assessments of salmon returns are conducted by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, and provide the basis for any inseason assessment and management.

Bristol Bay:

Subsistence fishing is open in all districts but will close around commercial fishing openings, commercial fishing openings have been announced for the Igushik Section of the Nushagak District, Naknek-Kvichak, Egegik, and Ugashik Districts.

Escapement projects are being installed throughout the region. The Sockeye Salmon sustainable escapement goals (SEG) for Bristol Bay systems are: The current count as of July 4 are noted.

Escapement Goals:

Kvichak	SEG = 2,000,000 – 10,000,000 / current escapement = 416,982
Alagnak	SEG = 320,000 minimum / current escapement = 257,292
Naknek	SEG = 800,000 – 2,000,000 / current escapement = 780,132
Egegik	SEG = 800,000 – 2,000,000 / current escapement = 864,366
Ugashik	SEG = 500,000 – 1,400,000 / current escapement = 30,114
Wood River	SEG = 700,000 – 1,800,000 / current escapement = 2,304,150
Igushik	SEG = 150,000 – 400,000 / current escapement = 218,382
Nushagak	SEG = 370,000 – 900,000 / current escapement = 3,169,490
Nushagak	SEG = 55,000 – 270,000 Chinook Salmon / current escapement = 36,783
Togiak	SEG = 150,000 – 270,000 / Installed July 5 – current escapement = 4,830

The cumulative commercial Sockeye Salmon catch is 14,186,932 fish.

Chignik:

The cumulative weir count as of July 5 is 192,403 early-run and 15,861 late-run Sockeye Salmon resulting in a total of 208,264 fish. The interim escapement objective for July 5 is 300,000 – 390,000 fish. The early-run is approaching the average three-quarter point which occurs during the week of July 5. There is concern that the early-run will not make the escapement goal. As such, the Federal Inseason manager has been speaking with Chignik Area villages to understand how subsistence fishing has progressed. Chignik Lake subsistence fishing



was characterized as slow with 50% harvest completed on July 1. An additional meeting with the Chignik Lagoon subsistence fishing community will occur on July 6.

The ten-year average (2010 – 2019), genetic proportions of early-run and late-run Sockeye Salmon for July 5 are 70% early-run and 30% late-run. It is typical for the late-run Sockeye Salmon run to be a larger proportion during the week of July 19.

The cumulative weir count as of July 5 for Chinook Salmon is 37 fish. However, it is early in the Chinook Salmon run, typical mid-point of the Chinook Salmon run is July 20.

**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:

Several Sockeye Salmon escapements (mostly on the north peninsula) are monitored with weirs including Nelson, Bear, Sandy, Ilnik, McLees, and Orzinski systems. Preseason forecasts are made only for the Nelson River and late-run (post July 31) Bear Lake stocks. The 2021 Sockeye Salmon run size projections are 333,000 fish for the Nelson River and 363,000 fish for late-run Bear Lake. Commercial fishing openings were announced for the South Unimak and Shumagin Islands.

**North Peninsula Management Area Escapement Goals and Counts for July 5:**

Nelson River	BEG = 97,000 – 219,000, current escapement = 32,872
Bear River	BEG = 117,000 – 195,000, current escapement = 136,319

**South Peninsula Management Area Escapement Counts for July 5:**

Ilnik River current escapement = 57,609
Orzinski River current escapement = 3,254
Sandy River current escapement = 24,461
McLees River current escapement = 7,472

**Aleutian Islands.**

All fisheries are forecast to meet escapement goals and provide 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 – Keith Herron Ivy, Biologist USFWS Fairbanks Office. June 20– June 26, 2021**

Federal Manager, Holly Carroll (907) 351-3029, [holly\\_carroll@fws.gov](mailto:holly_carroll@fws.gov), Keith Herron Ivy, (907) 312-3397, [keith\\_ivy@fws.gov](mailto:keith_ivy@fws.gov), Gerald Maschmann, (907) 456-0406, [Gerald\\_Maschmann@fws.gov](mailto:Gerald_Maschmann@fws.gov)

**Assessment Information**

To date the Chinook Salmon run is past the average late year  $\frac{3}{4}$  point at the Pilot Station sonar. The Summer Chum Salmon numbers are the lowest on record, and no large pulses have been detected in Lower Yukon Test Fishery. Pilot Station sonar cumulative passage through July 1 for Chinook Salmon is estimated to be 79,242, which is below the historical cumulative average of 144,670 fish. Summer Chum Salmon passage is estimated to be 53,479, which is well below the historical cumulative of 839,727 fish based on late run timing years.

The 2021 drainage-wide Chinook Salmon outlook is for a run size of 102,000 to 189,000 fish. Inseason data indicates the run is coming in at the lower end of the preseason forecast. Unless abundance improves, there may not be any harvestable surplus of Chinook Salmon above what is needed to meet escapement goals.

The Summer Chum Salmon outlook is for a below average run size; however, inseason data indicates the run may come in far below the preseason forecast. Because of the low abundance of both Chinook and Summer Chum, salmon fishing remains closed throughout the drainage.

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

### **Management Actions**

Subsistence salmon fishing was closed early in the season to protect the early fish and first pulse of Chinook Salmon. Salmon fishing has been closed as fish continue to swim into the river and will remain closed until we can determine if there is any harvestable surplus. Subsistence salmon fishing is closed in the Coastal District, District 1, District 2, District 3, Innoko River, District 4, Koyokuk River, District 5, and District 6.

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.

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 Yukon River Intertribal Fish Commission's Executive Committee shared their management recommendations which align with the current conservative management approach: "the Executive Council believes that any fishing on the runs with these numbers would jeopardize the health of future salmon runs." The fifth YR DFA teleconference occurred on June 29. Some fisherman reported catch of non-salmon species such as whitefish, sheefish and pike. Many fishermen continue to share the hardship of not fishing and many on the call expressed desire for more action to reduce salmon bycatch in the Area M, False Pass and Bering Sea commercial fisheries. **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/](http://www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG/)

## **KUSKOKWIM RIVER**

**In Season Manager – Boyd Blihovde, Refuge Manager, Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge Contact [Vernon Born@fws.gov](mailto:Vernon_Born@fws.gov) (907) 543-3151 or Aaron Mosses [Aaron Moses@fws.gov](mailto:Aaron_Moses@fws.gov) (907) 545-3252**

No updated summary submitted for this reporting period.

### **Summary:**

In consultation with the Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (KRITFC), the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge (YDNWR) in-season manager has decided to not announced a fishing opportunity within the YDNWR from the boundary at the mouth of the Kuskokwim River upriver to the boundary above the village of Aniak.

Chinook Salmon retention using dip nets, beach seines, fish wheels, and rod and reel on federal public waters of the main stem of the Kuskokwim River and non-salmon tributaries is allowed even when gillnets are closed.

The following areas are closed to all methods and means of Chinook Salmon harvest effective June 1, 2021:

- The Eek River;
- The Kwethluk River drainage at its confluence with Kuskokuak Slough
- The Kasigluk and Kisaralik river drainages including Old Kuskokuak Slough to ADF&G regulatory markers at the confluence of Old Kuskokuak Slough with Kuskokuak Slough;
- The Tuluksak River drainage including its confluence with the Kuskokwim River and downstream approximately 1-mile to ADF&G regulatory markers; and
- The Aniak River drainage to ADF&G regulatory markers at its confluence with the Kuskokwim River;
- The Aniak Box described as waters of the Kuskokwim River main stem from the Yukon Delta NWR boundary at Aniak downstream to a line formed from the northwest corner of the runway (latitude 61° 35' 16" N, longitude 159° 33' 28" W), due north to a point on the southeast corner of the sandbar (latitude 61° 35' 37" N, longitude 159° 33' 16" W)

These harvest opportunities are to provide for the continuation of subsistence uses of Chinook Salmon that are critical to cultural and traditional needs. While the Chinook run is expected to be smaller than average, it is strong enough to allow limited opportunities for a directed harvest for federally qualified subsistence users and with consultation, a future opportunity will be announced.

These limited opportunities have been implemented by Federal Emergency Special Actions (3-KS-02-21) under the delegated authority of the Federal Subsistence Board.

#### **Test Fisheries and Harvest Estimate:**

As of June 27, 2021 the CPUE for Chinook at the Bethel test fish is at 296. The 2020 and 2019 Chinook CPUE for this day were at 274 and 640, respectively.

Harvest estimate for Chinook salmon on the June 19<sup>th</sup> was 3,220 Chinook salmon. Harvest on the 15<sup>th</sup> of June has a preliminary harvest number of 6,780. Harvest Estimate on June 19 was 6,190 Chinook salmon

Cumulative harvest of Chinook salmon on the Kuskokwim as of 6/21 is currently at 17,010.

As of June 27, 2021 the CPUE for Chum at the Bethel test fish is at 33. The 2020 and 2019 Chinook CPUE for this day were at 169 and 266, respectively.

As of June 27, 2021 the CPUE for Sockeye at the Bethel test fish is at 275. The 2020 and 2019 Chinook CPUE for this day were at 168 and 272, 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 – Ken Adkisson, National Park Service, Nome.**

(907) 443-6104 [ken\\_adkisson@nps.gov](mailto:ken_adkisson@nps.gov)

### **Norton Sound District**

High water has caused delays in getting the salmon escapement counting projects operational, particularly in northern Norton Sound. Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation (NSEDC) crews have been able to count salmon passage for over a week now at the Ungalik, Inglutalik, and Shaktoolik counting towers. King counts are little below average, but chum counts have been very poor. The department thanks NSEDC for operating salmon counting projects for over two decades and aiding with department counting projects in Norton Sound.

The NSEDC weir at Eldorado River and the cooperative Fish & Game, NSEDC, and BLM floating weir on Unalakleet River are now fish tight and began counting operations on June 30.



Here are the salmon escapement counts through Tuesday, June 29.

Inglutalik River: 60 kings

Ungalik River: 78 kings, 30 chums

Shaktoolik River: 129 kings, 45 chums, 84 pinks, 3 sockeyes

#### Commercial Fishing:

Based on poor early season salmon escapement counts the department does not expect any commercial fishing in Norton Sound this week.

#### ***Southern Norton Sound Subdistricts 6 (Unalakleet) and 5 (Shaktoolik)***

Subsistence Fishing: By Board of Fisheries regulation, the King Salmon Management Plan for Subdistricts 5 and 6, the Shaktoolik and Unalakleet Subdistricts, and the Unalakleet River is in effect. From July 1 through August 10 beach seining is allowed 7 days a week unless changed by emergency order. Beginning July 1, in all waters of Subdistricts 5 and 6, salmon other than king salmon may be kept when beach seining. All king salmon caught when beach seining must be returned immediately to water unharmed. Beach seines must have a mesh size of 4 ½ inches or smaller.

The subsistence gillnet fishing schedule remains the same through July 15 unless changed by emergency order. The marine water subsistence fishing schedule for Shaktoolik and Unalakleet Subdistricts is from 6:00 p.m. Mondays until 6:00 p.m. Wednesdays and from 6:00 p.m. Thursdays until 6:00 p.m. Saturdays. There are no gillnet mesh size restrictions. The southern boundary of the Unalakleet Subdistrict is Black Point and south of Black Point to Point Romanof subsistence fishing remains open 7 days a week with no mesh size restrictions. In the Unalakleet River the subsistence gillnet fishing schedule is from 8 a.m. Mondays until 8 p.m. Tuesdays and from 8 a.m. Fridays until 8 p.m. Saturdays. There are no gillnet mesh size restrictions.

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

#### Subsistence Fishing:

By Alaska Board of Fisheries regulation, the summer subsistence salmon gillnet fishing schedule is in effect in the Nome Subdistrict from June 15. 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 will be open to gillnet fishing for five days each week from 6 p.m. Wednesday until 6 p.m. Monday. Effective June 15, beach seining for salmon will be open in all subsistence areas of the Nome Subdistrict whenever subsistence gillnet fishing is open. Unless closed by emergency order beach seining will remain open during gillnet fishing periods through August 15. Dip nets and cast nets can also be used any time gillnet fishing is open.

The first-time nets must be removed from all fresh-water Nome Subdistrict subsistence areas was at midnight on Monday evening, June 14. Likewise, all nets had to be removed from Nome Subdistrict marine waters west of Cape Nome on Monday evening, June 14, at midnight.

Also, effective June 15 all gillnet and beach seine fishing upstream of Boulder Creek on the Sinuk River was closed. This closure is in effect to protect migrating sockeye salmon that hold in the Sinuk River bridge area before reaching the spawning grounds.

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