



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Land Management
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Federal Subsistence Board

1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121
Anchorage, AK 99503-6199



Forest Service

YUKON RIVER FALL CHUM SALMON FISHERY CLOSURE IN DISTRICT 4 and the KOYUKUK RIVER

EMERGENCY SPECIAL ACTION

Under Authority of: 36 CFR 242.10 and .19
50 CFR 100.10 and .19

Emergency Special Action No: 2-FC-02-22

Issued at: Fairbanks, Alaska, July 22, 2022

Effective Date: Thursday, July 28, 2022, 12:01 am for District Y-4 and the Koyukuk River.

Expiration Date: September 25, 2022, at 11:59 pm unless superseded by subsequent special action.

EXPLANATION: The Federal Subsistence Board closed Federal public waters of the Yukon River drainage to the harvest of Chinook, summer and fall Chum, and Coho salmon except by Federally qualified subsistence users, effective on June 1, 2022, through September 30, 2022, with specific Federal subsistence fishing schedules, openings, closures, and fishing methods to be determined by the Federal Fisheries Manager.

This Emergency Special Action closes the Federal public waters of Yukon District Y-4 and the Koyukuk River to the subsistence harvest and retention of fall Chum Salmon. This closure prohibits all directed subsistence fishing for fall Chum Salmon and closes Federal public waters in these districts to gill nets larger than 4-inch stretched mesh and longer than 60 feet. Previous closures of Chinook and summer Chum Salmon remain in effect. The use of manned fish wheels is being allowed during these salmon closures.

REGULATION:

50 CFR 100.27(e)(3) Subsistence taking of fish—Yukon-Northern Area is amended to read:(ii) *Federal public waters of the Yukon Northern Area and the Yukon River drainage are closed to the harvest of Chinook, summer and fall Chum, and Coho Salmon except by Federal qualified subsistence users, effective on June 1, 2022, through September 30, 2022. Federal subsistence fishing schedules, openings, closures, and fishing methods will be determined by the Federal in season Fisheries Manager.*

Federal public waters of Yukon River District Y-4 and the Koyukuk River are closed to the subsistence harvest and retention of fall Chum Salmon from 12:01 a.m. on July 28, 2022 until 11:59 p.m. on September 25, 2022.



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During salmon closures, all gillnets larger than 4-inches must be removed from the water. Fishing for non-salmon species with 4-inch or smaller mesh gill nets will be allowed during salmon fishing closures, however gillnets with 4-inch or smaller mesh are restricted to 60 feet. Live fall Chum salmon that are incidentally caught using this gear must be released, however, dead fish may be retained. Manned fish wheels may be used as well as dip nets, and other legal non-salmon gear, including hook and line, longline, jigging gear, hand line, beach seine, fyke net, spear, or lead. The retention of Coho Salmon, Pink Salmon and Sockeye Salmon are allowed from these gears.

Previous closures for Chinook and summer Chums Salmon remain in effect. Fishermen are reminded that summer and fall Chum Salmon and Chinook Salmon must be released from selective gears. If a Chum or Chinook salmon is caught in 4-inch mesh gillnets, it should be released alive if possible, or if dead, may be kept. If fishermen are encountering Salmon in a particular area, they should move their net to avoid harvesting those salmon species currently closed to harvest.

JUSTIFICATION:

The fall Chum Salmon run is projected to be less than 300,000 fish which is too small to meet minimum escapement goals. Therefore, closures are warranted until run projections indicate goals can be met. Pursuant to Section 816 of ANILCA, this Emergency Special Action (**2-FC-02-22**) closes fishing for fall Chum Salmon in the Federal public waters of the Yukon River District 4 and the Koyukuk River due to concerns about the viability of this population. Closures are required until inseason run strength estimates indicate a harvestable surplus above escapement needs. These closures will be implemented upriver based on fish migration timing. The Coho Salmon run is projected to be below average, but retention of Coho Salmon will be allowed unless inseason assessment data indicates restrictions for Coho Salmon harvest are necessary. Harvest of Coho Salmon is limited to Federally-qualified subsistence users in Federal public waters. For both Chinook and summer Chum salmon, the runs are too weak to meet escapement goals or to provide any directed harvest. Some of these species may continue to move through the river during the fall season, so previous closures remain in effect, and these species may not be harvested.

CONSULTATION AND OUTREACH:

The Yukon River salmon outlooks and management strategies were discussed this winter at the Eastern Interior, Western Interior, and Yukon Kuskokwim Delta Regional Advisory Council meetings; Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association (YRDFA) annual Preseason Fisheries Meeting; and at the Yukon River Panel.

The Federal manager held formal preseason management strategy Government-to-Government Tribal Consultation meetings with Yukon River drainage Tribal Governments on April 18, 19, and 20. Tribal Consultations will continue throughout the season when possible and when requested by Tribal Governments. Approximately 3,500 copies of the Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Preseason Outlook flier were mailed to Yukon River fishing households at the end of April.



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The ADF&G fishery managers have also closed fall Chum Salmon fisheries in the non-Federal public waters for Yukon River District 4 and the Koyukuk River effective July 28.

This action was taken following consultation with the ADF&G fishery managers. The Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council Chairs for the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta; Eastern Interior; Seward Peninsula; and Western Interior Regional Advisory councils were notified, and review was provided by the Office of Subsistence Management.

Federal Subsistence Board by delegation to: Holly Carroll

Holly Carroll
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Yukon River Inseason Fisheries Manager
Northern Alaska Fish and Wildlife Field Office

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