



Advisory Announcement

CONTACT:

Deena Jallen, Area Management Biologist
907-949-1320 (Emmonak)

Released: July 9, 2024

Toll free fishing schedule and counts: 866-479-7387

2024 Yukon River Salmon Summer Fishery Announcement #21

Summer Update # 6, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery

Districts Affected: Yukon Area

The Chinook salmon run is well below average and unlikely to meet escapement objectives or provide for harvest. The 2024 Chinook salmon run appears to be late, with a midpoint similar to last year of July 1 and tracking slightly above the poor runs from 2022 and 2023. Current projections indicate the Chinook salmon run will likely be near or above the upper end of the preseason forecast of 45,000 – 68,000 fish. The first batch of genetic samples from Chinook salmon at Pilot Station sonar has been analyzed and 54% of the sample was of Canadian-origin. Consistent with the preseason management strategy to take a conservative approach, subsistence fishing closures have been announced in all districts and subdistricts up to the U.S./Canada border.

To further protect Chinook salmon, all gillnets must be removed from the water for a two-week period in each district during the run. The closures of 4-inch and smaller mesh gillnets have been announced up through District 5 and the Tanana River. These closures are intended to protect all Chinook salmon stocks while they migrate upriver to spawning grounds in Alaska and Canada. In the Coastal District and Districts 1-3 these two-week closures have expired.

The 2024 summer chum salmon run appears to be within the preseason forecast and within the drainagewide escapement goal range (500,000 to 1.2 million fish). As of July 8, over 648,318 summer chum salmon have passed Pilot Station sonar. The recent inseason run size projections are for a run of 810,000 fish, with an 80% confidence interval of 761,000 to 862,000 fish. Due to the harvestable surplus for summer chum salmon, selective gear fishing for summer chum has been announced in most districts.

Assessment project and management updates will be published in weekly Advisory Announcements (Updates) and shared during the weekly YRDFA teleconferences on Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m. (Alaska time). Call in number: 1-800-315-6338, Passcode: 98566# (YUKON#)

The ADF&G Emmonak office is open regular hours; Mondays to Fridays 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Saturdays 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. (closed Sundays). ADF&G Emmonak office: 1-907-949-1320.

Please call the toll-free hotline number if you have any questions about fishing in your area: 1-866-479-7387. This hotline is updated after every announcement.

Assessment Projects

All assessment data is updated through July 8.

Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF)/ADF&G and YDFDA

Summer chum salmon drifts with 5.5-inch gillnets began on June 4 for both the Big Eddy and Middle Mouth sites. The first summer chum salmon were caught in Big Eddy on the morning of June 10. Drifts were

cancelled over several days late last week because of poor weather conditions. CPUE index values may not represent the true passage rate because of the missed drifts. As of July 1, the cumulative combined CPUE for both sites is 1,488.80 which is below the historic median cumulative CPUE of 2,575.49.

To reduce mortalities, LYTF will not operate for Chinook salmon this year. Any salmon healthy enough will be released alive from the test nets. Injured salmon and mortalities will be distributed to communities.

Data collected from summer chum salmon will include ASL (Age, Sex, and Length). A few summer chum salmon caught in LYTF will be sampled this year for other fish health research.

Pilot Station Sonar

Pilot Station Sonar began operation on June 5. Chinook salmon passage is estimated to be 58,725 ± 13,328 fish (90% Confidence Interval) which is below the historical cumulative average of 156,293 fish for this date, based on all years, and 118,950 fish based on late run timing years. Summer chum salmon passage is estimated to be 648,318 ± 35,915 fish (90% Confidence Interval), which is below the historical cumulative median of 1,440,358 fish for this date, based on all years, and 735,740 fish based on late run timing years.

All Chinook salmon captured in the Pilot Station Sonar test fishery (PSSTF) will be sampled for age, sex, length and genetics. Additional biological sampling will be conducted for all Chinook salmon test fish mortalities as part of a broad collaborative effort to better understand salmon health and potential drivers of *en route* mortality and low productivity. Additional samples will include otoliths, heart, kidney, liver, intestine, eggs, blood, muscle biopsy, and fat content. The PSSTF heart samples will be used by ADF&G and USFWS, along with samples from other locations, to investigate the potential for *Ichthyophonus* associated mortality. Kidney samples from PSSTF are being tested for proliferative kidney disease. Fish health results will be available post season.

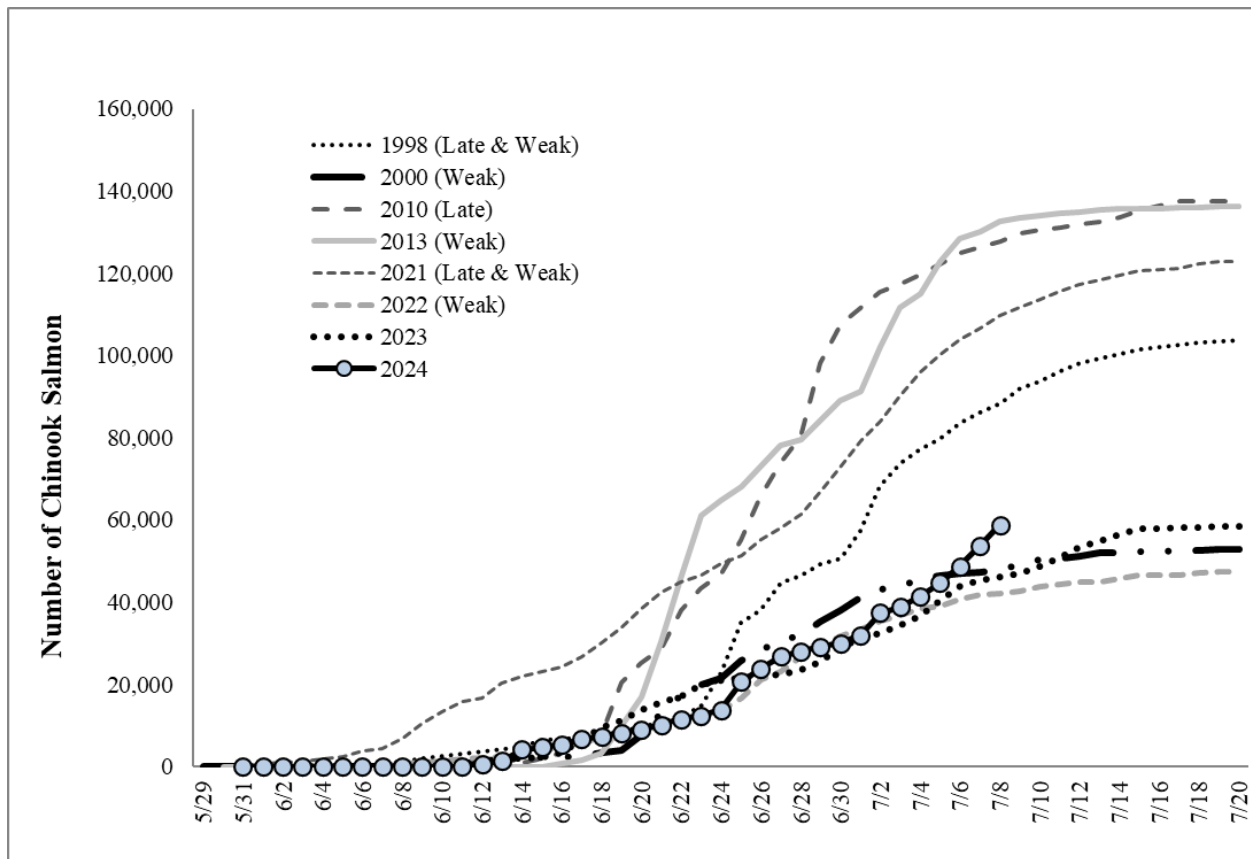


Figure 1. 2024 Cumulative passage of Chinook salmon at the Pilot Station sonar compared to late and/or weak years.

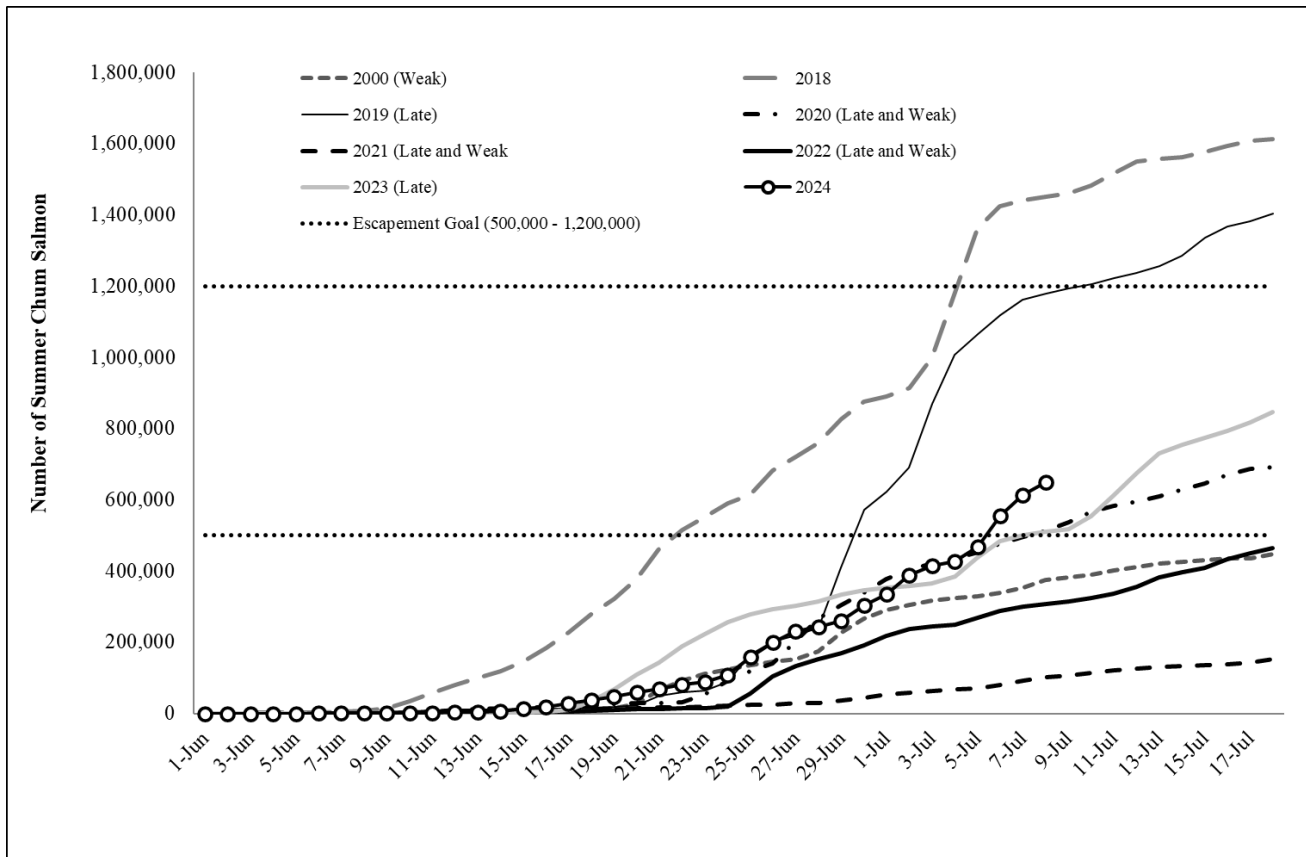


Figure 2. 2024 Cumulative passage of summer chum salmon at the Pilot Station sonar compared to late and/or weak years.

Chinook Radio Telemetry (ADF&G)

2024 is the second year of a three-year effort to capture and tag up to 500 Chinook salmon near Emmonak and track upriver migration to evaluate concerns for *en route* mortality. The first fish was tagged on June 10, and tagged fish are migrating upriver. Tagging has been successful to date and deployed tags appear to be proportional to the Canadian-origin run based on historical run timing. Each fish will be tagged with both an internal radio telemetry tag and an external spaghetti tag. **If you encounter a tagged fish this season and are successful at documenting the tag number, please call 1-877-467-2104 to report information about when and where the fish was observed.** As a thank you for voluntarily reporting the tag number and associated information, you will be automatically entered into the ADF&G salmon tag lottery. More information about the project can be found on posters in communities along the river or at the ADF&G offices in Anchorage, Fairbanks and Emmonak. Please contact Josh Clark at 907-267-2217 or Fred West at 907-267-2237 with any questions.

Andreafsky Weir (USFWS)

Counts began June 25. Cumulative passage is 18 summer chum salmon, which is below the cumulative median of 32,218. No Chinook salmon have been observed to date, which is below the cumulative median of 1,724 fish.

Anvik Sonar (ADFG)

Counts began on June 16. Cumulative passage is 35,917 summer chum salmon, which is below the cumulative median of 201,145 fish.

Chena River Tower/Sonar (ADFG)

Counts began June 26. Rising water levels over the weekend prevented visual counts and forced removal of the sonar. Counting has been suspended until water levels drop. Prior to project suspension, a total of 14 Chinook salmon and 12 summer chum salmon had been observed.

Salcha River Tower/Sonar (ADFG)

Counts began June 27. Rising water levels over the weekend prevented visual counts but the project has still been able to operate using sonar. The cumulative passage is 26 Chinook salmon and 18 chum salmon.

Eagle Sonar (ADFG)

Sonar units were deployed on both banks and operational on June 28 with 15 fish observed on the first day. Cumulative passage is 361 Chinook salmon \pm 33 fish (90% Confidence Interval) which is below the cumulative average of 1,536 fish.

Age, Sex, and Length Composition

The age composition of 81 Chinook salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the Pilot Station Sonar test fishery through July 1 was 3% age 3, 9% age-4, 36% age-5, 49% age-6 and 4% age-7 fish. The percentage of age-6 and age-7 fish were above average, while age-5 fish were below average. Chinook salmon within each age class were smaller than the recent 10-year average and the average length of 724 mm across all age classes is smaller than the recent 10-year average length of 733 mm.

The age composition of 589 summer chum salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the LYTF project through July 1 was 28% age-4, which compares to a historical average of 52%. The age-5 component made up 70% of the samples, which compares to a historical average of 46%. Of the samples, 3% were age-6 fish, which compares to the historical average of 2%. The age-4 fish average length of 544 mm and the age-5 average length of 559 mm are both smaller compared to average (2014–2023). Female summer chum salmon are similar at 55% compared to a historical average (2014–2023) of 56%.

Stock Identification

Genetic mixed stock analysis (MSA) on the early group of Chinook salmon (Stratum 1, sampled from the Pilot Station sonar test fishery June 6 to June 23) indicated that 54% \pm 8% (90% Credible Interval) of this group of fish were of Canadian-origin (this proportion is similar to historical Canadian proportions for this portion of the run. Currently the projections for the Canadian-origin run indicate a run size near the lower end of the preseason outlook of 19,000 to 28,000 fish.

The first stratum of chum salmon genetic samples from the Pilot Station sonar test fishery (from June 5 through June 23) consisted of 99% summer chum salmon, of which, 95% were lower river stocks, 5% were bound for the middle Yukon River, and less than 1% were bound for the Tanana River. The lower summer stocks are above average while the middle river and Tanana River components are below average for this time period.

The next batch of genetic tissue samples for both species will be arriving to the lab soon and recent genetic composition results should be available for the update next week.

Current Subsistence Management Actions

As a reminder, all gillnets must be marked with a buoy, float, or keg that has the fisherman's first initial, last name, and address. In Districts 3-6, submerged gillnets may be used for subsistence and personal use during ice-free months, however nets must have a visible buoy, keg, or cluster of floats attached to both ends of the net, plus a third in the middle if the net is over 60 feet in length.

Other gear types for nonsalmon species include hook and line with a rod or pole, dip net, beach seine, hand line, longline, fyke net, lead, and spear.

Coastal District and District 1 (from the Naskonat Peninsula to Point Romanof, including the Black River and communities of Chevak, Hooper Bay, Scammon Bay, Emmonak, Nunam Iqua, Alakanuk, and Kotlik):

Fishing with selective gear types (dip nets, beach seines, manned fish wheels, hook and line gear) is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week until further notice for summer chum, pink, and sockeye salmon. Chinook salmon must be released alive.

Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

District 2 (including Mountain Village, Pitkas Point, St. Mary's, Pilot Station, and Marshall):

Fishing with selective gear types (dip nets, beach seines, manned fish wheels, hook and line gear) is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week until further notice for summer chum, pink, and sockeye salmon. Chinook salmon must be released alive.

Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

District 3 (including Russian Mission and Holy Cross):

Fishing with selective gear types (dip nets, beach seines, manned fish wheels, hook and line gear) is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week until further notice for summer chum, pink, and sockeye salmon. Chinook salmon must be released alive.

Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

Innoko River (community of Shageluk):

Fishing with selective gear types (dip nets, beach seines, manned fish wheels, hook and line gear) is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week until further notice for summer chum, pink, and sockeye salmon. Chinook salmon must be released alive.

As announced previously, all gillnets, including 4-inch or smaller mesh, must be removed from the water until 8 p.m. Wednesday, July 10.

After 8 p.m. Wednesday July 10, gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

Subdistrict 4-A Lower (from $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile downstream from Old Paradise Village upstream to Stink Creek, including Grayling and Anvik):

Fishing with selective gear types (dip nets, beach seines, manned fish wheels, hook and line gear) is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week until further notice for summer chum, pink, and sockeye salmon. Chinook salmon must be released alive.

As announced previously, all gillnets, including 4-inch or smaller mesh, must be removed from the water until 8 p.m. Wednesday, July 10.

After 8 p.m. Wednesday, July 10, gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

Subdistrict 4-A Upper (from Stink Creek upstream to the tip of Cone Point, including Kaltag, Nulato, and Koyukuk):

Fishing with selective gear types (dip nets, beach seines, manned fish wheels, hook and line gear) is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week until further notice for summer chum, pink, and sockeye salmon. Chinook salmon must be released alive.

As announced previously, all gillnets, including 4-inch or smaller mesh, must be removed from the water for a two-week period until 8 p.m. Sunday, July 14.

After 8 p.m. Sunday, July 14, gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

Koyukuk River (including Huslia, Hughes, Allakaket, Alatna, Bettles, Wiseman, and Coldfoot):

Fishing with selective gear types (dip nets, beach seines, manned fish wheels, hook and line gear) is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week until further notice for summer chum, pink, and sockeye salmon. Chinook salmon must be released alive.

As announced previously, all gillnets, including 4-inch or smaller mesh, must be removed from the water for a two-week period until 8 p.m. Tuesday, July 16.

A subsistence fishing permit is required for all species in the Koyukuk River above Bettles including the community of Wiseman. Gillnet gear in the permit area may only be used from August 20 to June 30 and must be 3½ inches or smaller mesh size.

Subdistricts 4-B and 4-C (including Galena and Ruby):

Fishing with selective gear types (dip nets, beach seines, manned fish wheels, hook and line gear) is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week until further notice for summer chum, pink, and sockeye salmon. Chinook salmon must be released alive.

As announced previously, all gillnets, including 4-inch or smaller mesh, must be removed from the water for a two-week period until 8 p.m. Tuesday, July 16.

Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C (including Tanana and Rampart):

As previously announced, salmon fishing is closed and fish wheels are not allowed. All gillnets, including 4-inch or smaller mesh, must be removed from the water for a two-week period until 8 p.m. Friday, July 19.

Other legal gear types to take nonsalmon include hand line, longline, fyke net, dip net, beach seine, and spear. Chinook and chum salmon must be released alive from nonsalmon gears, except from gillnets.

Subdistrict 5-D Lower (from an ADF&G regulatory marker two miles downstream of Waldron Creek upstream to the Hadweenzic River and all other adjacent tributaries, including the communities of Stevens Village and Beaver):

As previously announced, salmon fishing is closed. Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length.

Effective 8 p.m. Tuesday, July 9 until 8 p.m. Tuesday, July 23, all gillnets must be removed from water for a two-week period.

A subsistence permit is required to fish for all species in the portion of Subdistrict 5-D Lower from an ADF&G regulatory marker two miles downstream of Waldron Creek upstream to the mouth of Dall River.

Subdistrict 5-D Middle (from the Hadweenzic River upstream to 22 Mile Slough, including the Porcupine River, all other adjacent tributaries, and the communities of Venetie, Chalkyitsik, Birch Creek and Fort Yukon):

Salmon fishing is closed. Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

Effective 8 p.m. Friday, July 12 until 8 p.m. Friday, July 26, all gillnets must be removed from the water for a two-week period.

Subdistrict 5-D Upper (from 22 Mile Slough to the U.S./Canada border, including all adjacent tributaries and the communities of Circle and Eagle):

Salmon fishing is closed. Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

As previously announced, from 8 p.m. Sunday, July 14 until 8 p.m. Sunday, July 28, all gillnets must be removed from the water for a two-week period.

A subsistence permit is required to fish for all species from the upstream mouth of 22 Mile Slough to the U.S./Canada border.

Subdistrict 6-A and Kantishna River (from the mouth of the Tanana River upstream to the eastern edge of the mouth of the Kantishna River, including the Kantishna River drainage, Lake Minchumina, and Manley):

As previously announced, salmon fishing is closed and fish wheels are not allowed. All gillnets must be removed from the water for a two-week period until 8 p.m. Sunday, July 21.

Other legal gear types to take nonsalmon include hand line, longline, fyke net, dip net, beach seine, and spear. Chinook and chum salmon must be released alive from nonsalmon gears, except from gillnets.

In Lake Minchumina subsistence fishing for nonsalmon is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

Subdistrict 6-B and Old Minto Area (from eastern edge of the Kantishna River upstream to the Wood River, including Minto and Nenana):

As previously announced, salmon fishing is closed. Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

Effective 8 p.m. Tuesday, July 9 until 8 p.m. Tuesday, July 23, all gillnets must be removed from the water for a two-week period.

Other legal gear types to take nonsalmon include hand line, longline, fyke net, dip net, beach seine, and spear. Chinook and chum salmon must be released alive from nonsalmon gears, except from gillnets.

In the Tolovana River drainage, including Minto Flats, subsistence fishing for nonsalmon is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets. A subsistence pike permit is required, see details below.

Upper Tanana Area (the Tanana River from the confluence with the mouth of Volkmar River on the north bank and the mouth of the Johnson River on the south bank upstream to the Tanana River headwaters, including Delta Junction area, Dot Lake, Tanacross, Tetlin, Tok, Northway, and Nabesna):

As previously announced, salmon fishing is closed. Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon and are restricted to 60-foot or less in length and must be operated as a set net. Nets should be set near shore.

Other legal gear types to take nonsalmon include hand line, longline, fyke net, dip net, beach seine, and spear. Chinook and chum salmon must be released alive from nonsalmon gears, except from gillnets.

A reminder to fishermen that a subsistence permit is required to fish for salmon in the Tanana River drainage up to the Wood River (Subdistrict 6-A, 6-B, and Kantishna River drainage), northern pike in the Tolovana River drainage (including Minto Flats), and all species in the Upper Tanana Area. A subsistence salmon permit is not required in Lake Minchumina.

All gillnets must be marked with a buoy, float, or keg that has the fisherman's first initial, last name, and address. In District 6, submerged gillnets may be used for subsistence fishing during ice-free months, however submerged nets must have a visible float attached to both ends of the net, plus a third in the middle if the net is over 60 feet in length.

Personal Use Management Actions

Subdistrict 6-C (Personal use fishery from the regulatory marker at the mouth of the Wood River upstream to the downstream mouth of the Salcha River, which includes the communities of Fairbanks, North Pole, and Salcha):

Personal Use salmon fishing is closed and periods are cancelled until further notice.

Personal Use Whitefish and Sucker Fishing

Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area (a portion of the Tanana River drainage from the Wood River upstream to the mouth of the Volkmar River on the north bank and the mouth of the Johnson River on the south bank, which includes Fairbanks, North Pole, Salcha, and Delta Junction):

Personal Use whitefish and sucker fishing with gillnets and fish wheels follows the Subdistrict 6-C Personal Use salmon fishing schedule and is closed until further notice. Fishing with other gear for whitefish and suckers in this area remains open 7 days per week, 24 hours per day, subject to permit stipulations.

A reminder to personal use fishermen that a personal use salmon permit is required to fish for salmon in Subdistrict 6-C and a personal use whitefish and sucker permit is required to fish for these species in the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area. Both permits require a valid sport fishing license. Subsistence harvest calendars and subsistence fishing permits are available from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Fairbanks office 907-459-7274 or online at www.adfg.alaska.gov/store/.

Federal Special Action

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) have coordinated on this advisory announcement. The USFWS Federal Inseason Manager has previously issued separate Federal special actions with the same fishing schedule that restricts fishing to federally qualified subsistence users in waters adjacent to Federal Land. To reach the USFWS Yukon River Subsistence Fishery Manager, call Holly Carroll at 907-351-3029.



This is an announcement by the ADF&G and the USFWS. Federal Special Actions will be posted on www.doi.gov/subsistence/fisheries-special-actions.

ADF&G Advisory Announcements will be posted on www.cfnews.adfg.alaska.gov/ and shared on Facebook at www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG.

