



Advisory Announcement

Released: September 10, 2024

CONTACT:

Christy Gleason, Area Management Biologist
Matt Olson, Asst. Area Management Biologist
Bonnie Borba, Fall Season Research Biologist
907-459-7274 (Fairbanks)

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

2024 Yukon River Salmon Fall Fishery Announcement #16

Fall Update # 8, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery

Districts Affected: Yukon Area

The fall chum and coho salmon runs are nearing completion in the lower Yukon River. The fall chum salmon run is the third lowest on record (1974–2023), and the coho salmon run is also the third lowest (1995–2023). The fall chum salmon run is projected to be 200,000 fish compared to a historical run size of 900,000 fish (Figure 1). The drainagewide goal of 300,000-600,000 fall chum salmon is unlikely to be met. The fall chum salmon Canadian treaty objectives and tributary escapement goals are not expected to be met. The coho salmon run size based on late run timing is projected to be 85,000 fish compared to a historical average run index of 222,000 fish (Figure 2). Fisheries for fall chum and coho salmon remain closed. Due to the poor salmon runs, nonsalmon subsistence fishing time with 4-inch gillnets was reduced to protect migrating salmon.

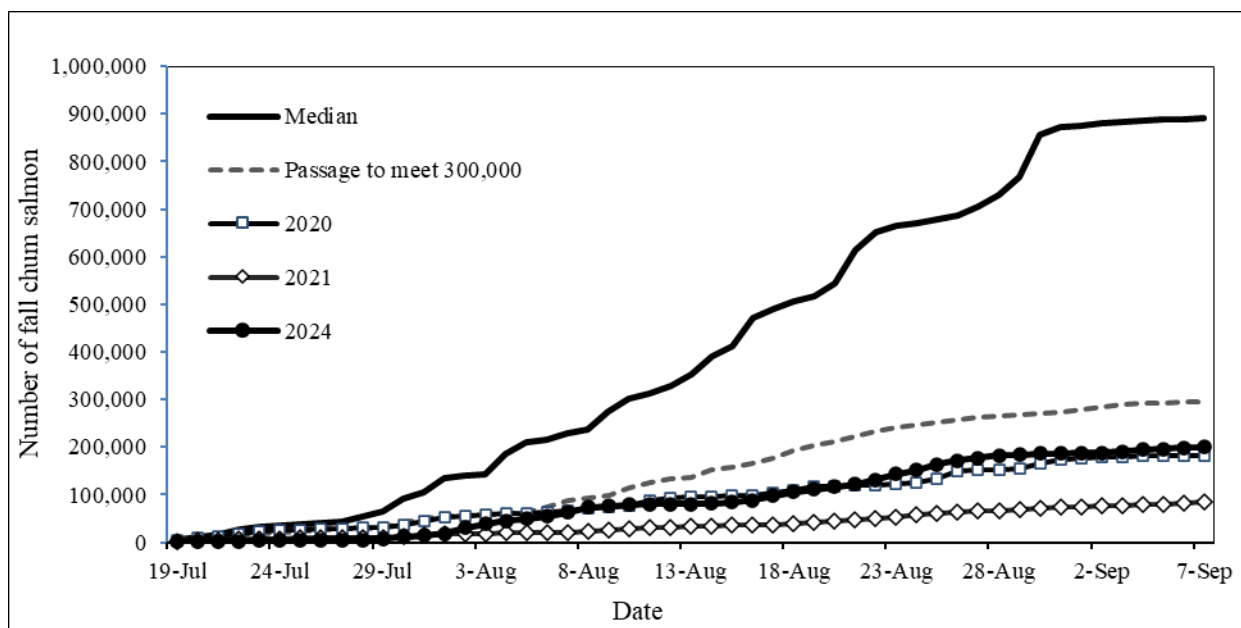


Figure 1. Cumulative passage of fall chum salmon using genetic mixed stock analysis applied to the mainstem Yukon River sonar estimates (Pilot Station), and includes estimates of downstream harvests, historical median and select years compared to 2024. The dashed line is the passage required to meet the lower end of the drainagewide escapement goal.

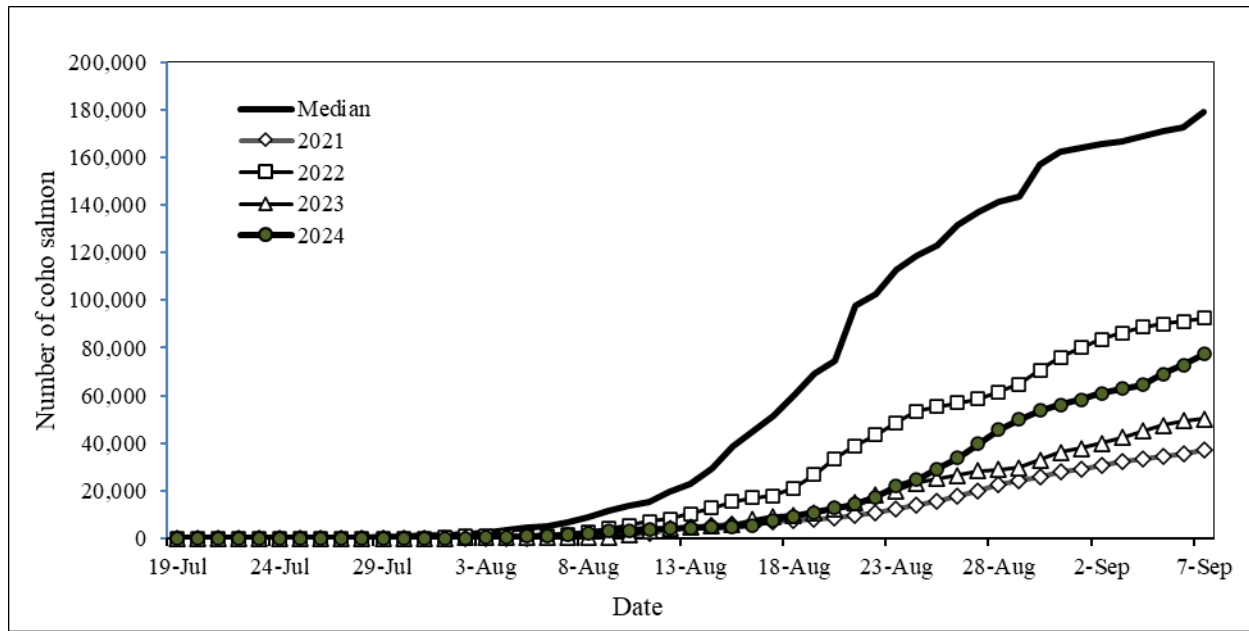


Figure 2. Cumulative passage of coho salmon based on the mainstem Yukon River sonar assessment project (Pilot Station), includes estimates of downstream harvests, historical median and select years compared to 2024.

Fall Assessment Projects

Daily, cumulative, and historical data for most of the assessment projects listed can be accessed online at www.adfg.alaska.gov/yukonfishcounts.

Lower Yukon River Cooperative Fall Drift Test Fishing / ADF&G, YDFDA

Fall season operations began on July 16 using 6-inch mesh gear to target fall chum and coho salmon. Through September 8, the fall chum salmon cumulative catch per unit effort (CPUE) was 1,062.01, which is below the historical median of 1,289.65 for this date. As of September 8, the coho salmon cumulative CPUE was 55.65, which is well below the historical median of 377.56 for that date. Coho salmon run timing this year is late compared to median.

Mountain Village Drift Test Fishing / Asacarsarmiut Tribal Council

Fall season operations began on July 18. As of September 8, the fall chum salmon cumulative CPUE was 1,656.88, which is below the historical median of 2,002.03 for that date. As of September 8, the coho salmon cumulative CPUE was 179.92, which is below the historical median of 963.15 for that date. Coho salmon run timing this year is late compared to median.

Sonar Project near Pilot Station / ADF&G

The sonar project operated near Pilot Station transitioned to fall season chum salmon counts on July 19 and concluded operations on September 7. The project reported a cumulative passage of approximately 246,000 chum salmon, which compares to a median cumulative passage of 669,000 fish for this date. Genetic mixed stock analysis was applied to the fish passage estimates at the Yukon River mainstem sonar and indicates 200,000 fall chum salmon are in the river (Figure 1). The cumulative passage of coho salmon is approximately 77,000 (Figure 2), which is below the median of 138,000 fish.

Teedriinjik (Chandalar) Sonar / USFWS

The sonar project began operations on August 5. As of September 8, the cumulative passage was 17,784 fall chum salmon, which is well below the median of 64,000 fish. The Teedriinjik escapement goal is 85,000–234,000 fall chum salmon. The mid point for fall chum salmon typically occurs on September 13, at this project.

Sheenjek River Sonar / ADF&G

The sonar project began operations on August 5. As of September 8, the cumulative passage was 4,074 fall chum salmon, which is well below the median of 24,000 fish. The first quarter point for fall chum salmon typically occurs on September 8, at this project.

Eagle Sonar / ADF&G and Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO)

This project transitioned to counting fall chum salmon on August 27. As of September 8, the cumulative passage was 1,594 fall chum salmon, which is well below the median of 10,500 fish.

Porcupine River Sonar / Yukon Territory Canada / DFO

The sonar project began counting fall chum salmon on August 11. As of September 8, the cumulative passage was 2,440 fall chum salmon which is below the historical average of 8,800 fish. The mid point for fall chum salmon typically occurs on September 14, at this project.

Fishing Branch River Weir/Sonar / Yukon Territory Canada / DFO

This project began operations on September 1. As of September 8, the cumulative passage was 147 fall chum salmon, which is below the median of 1,404 fish. The interim management escapement goal is 22,000–49,000 fall chum salmon for this system.

Age, Sex, and Length Composition

The age composition of 532 chum salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the LYTF project through August 31, consisted of 64% age-4 and 35% age-5 fish, which compared to the 2001–2023 historical averages of 69% age-4 and 28% age-5. The percentage of female chum salmon through September 8 was 44% which is below the 2001–2023 historical average of 59%. The average length from 596 fall chum salmon of 572 mm is well below the 2001–2023 historical average of 584 mm.

The age composition of 30 coho salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the LYTF project through August 30, consisted of 23% age-3 and 72% age-4 and 5% age-5 fish, which compared to the 2001–2023 historical averages of 18% age-3, 76% age-4, and 5% age-5. The percentage of female coho salmon through September 8 was 46%, which is comparable to the historical (2001–2023) average. The average length from 54 coho salmon was 549 mm which is below the 2001–2023 historical average of 562 mm.

Stock Identification

Genetic mixed stock analysis on chum salmon that passed the mainstem sonar from August 20 through August 26 indicated approximately 99% were fall chum salmon. In this group the fall chum salmon stocks consisted of 32% Border/US (Teedriinjik, Sheenjek, and Draanjik), 5% Canadian, and 62% Tanana Fall. For fall chum salmon this represented 94% U.S.-origin and 5% Canada-origin stocks. Overall fall chum salmon from the fall season (July 19 through August 26) represent 42% Border/US, 47% Tanana Fall, and 11% Canada. The 2024 level of Canadian contribution is well below the historical average of 25% and near the lower end of what has been observed from 2020–2023. The last stratum from August 27 through September 7 is on the way to the lab. When results are available, they will be provided in the following weekly advisory announcement or look for them in the ADF&G Yukon River daily update for those who subscribe: <http://list.state.ak.us/mailman/listinfo/yukonriverdailyupdate>.

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.

Due to the extremely poor salmon runs, subsistence fishing for chum, coho, and Chinook salmon is closed and nonsalmon subsistence fishing time with 4-inch gillnets is reduced to protect migrating salmon. Other legal gear types to take nonsalmon include hook and line with a rod or pole (excluding District 6), hand line, longline, fyke net, dip net, beach seine, manned fish wheel, and spear. If closures are in place for a salmon species, they must be released alive immediately from nonsalmon gear (other than 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets). There will be an announcement in late September providing dates that restrictions will be relaxed.

Coastal District, Districts 1-4, Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C, and the Innoko, Anvik, and Koyukuk River drainages (including Chevak through Rampart):

Subsistence fishing for chum, coho, and Chinook salmon is closed. Fishing with selective gear types (dip nets, beach seines, manned fish wheels, and hook and line gear) is open for nonsalmon and pink and sockeye salmon. Chum, coho, and Chinook salmon must be released alive immediately.

Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon **12:01 am Fridays through 11:59 p.m. Sundays. All gillnets will be closed Mondays through Thursdays likely for the remainder of the salmon season.** Nets are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net near shore.

A subsistence fishing permit is required for all species in the South and Middle forks of the Koyukuk River above Bettles, including the communities of Wiseman and Coldfoot. Gillnet gear for nonsalmon in this permit area may only be used from August 20 to June 30 and must be 3½ inches or smaller mesh size. A subsistence permit is also required to fish for all species in Subdistrict 5-C from the western most tip of Garnet Island upstream to the ADF&G regulatory marker two miles downstream of Waldron Creek (Dalton Highway bridge area).

Subdistrict 5-D (including Stevens Village through Eagle):

Subsistence fishing for chum, coho, and Chinook salmon is closed. Fishing with selective gear types (dip nets, beach seines, manned fish wheels, and hook and line gear) is open for nonsalmon. Chum, coho, and Chinook salmon must be released alive immediately.

Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon **12:01 am Fridays through 11:59 p.m. Sundays. All gillnets will be closed Mondays through Thursdays likely for the remainder of the salmon season.** Nets are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net near shore.

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 and from the upstream mouth of 22 Mile Slough to the U.S./Canada border.

Subdistricts 6-A, 6-B, and the Upper Tanana Area (including the Kantishna River drainage and Manley through Nenana) and the Upper Tanana Area (including the Delta Junction area through Nabesna):

Subsistence fishing for chum, coho, and Chinook salmon is closed. Fishing with selective gear types (dip nets, beach seines, manned fish wheels, and hook and line gear) is open for nonsalmon and pink and sockeye salmon. Chum, coho, and Chinook salmon must be released alive immediately.

Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon **12:01 am Fridays through 11:59 p.m. Sundays. All gillnets will be closed Mondays through Thursdays likely for the remainder of the salmon season.** Nets are restricted to 60-feet or less in length and must be operated as a set net near shore.

In Lake Minchumina and the Tolovana River drainage, including Minto Flats, subsistence fishing for nonsalmon will remain open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 6-inch or smaller mesh 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.

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.

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 fishwheels is closed. 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 personal use permit and fishing license are required to fish for whitefish and sucker in the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area. Permits and licenses are available from the ADF&G Fairbanks office or online at www.adfg.alaska.gov/store/.

Federal Special Action

ADF&G and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) have coordinated on this advisory announcement. The USFWS Federal Inseason Manager has issued separate Federal special actions with the same fishing schedule and gear restrictions 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.

