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Advisory Announcement
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SOUTHERN NORTON SOUND SUBSISTENCE SALMON FISHING TO CLOSE

The department is suspending subsistence salmon fishing schedule in Subdistricts 5 and 6 on Saturday evening, June 25. Effective 6 p.m. Saturday, June 25, the subsistence salmon fishing period in marine waters Subdistricts 5 and 6, Shaktoolik and Unalakleet Subdistricts, will close as scheduled and not reopen until further notice. The marine water fishing closure is from Cape Denbigh south to Black Point. Effective at 8 p.m. Saturday, June 25, in Subdistricts 5 and 6 subsistence salmon fishing in fresh waters will close and not reopen until further notice.

The past two years the king salmon escapement goal range of 1,200 to 2,600 fish has not been reached at the North River counting tower. And last year the Unalakleet River weir had the lowest king salmon passage since counting began in 2010. This year's king salmon run is not expected to reach the escapement goal range unless subsistence salmon fishing time is reduced. The last time the escapement goal range was met was in 2018 and 2019 and limited subsistence fishing time occurred in both years.

Although the subsistence salmon fishing schedule is being suspended the department does plan to have one marine fishing period and one freshwater fishing period in Shaktoolik and Unalakleet Subdistricts next week. The department will try to schedule the next fishing period during favorable weather conditions.

Both the NESDC North River counting tower and the cooperative Unalakleet River weir are operational. Although early in the season no king salmon have been counted past the projects. The department thanks Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation for over two decades of supporting adult salmon counting operations.

Specific strategies vary for each subdistrict depending on expected fishing effort and recent harvest patterns based on the expected run size of king salmon. Restrictions for each subdistrict are as follows:

Shaktoolik Subdistrict

Effective June 25 at 6 p.m. all marine waters of Norton Sound Subdistrict 5, the Shaktoolik Subdistrict, will close to subsistence salmon fishing. All fresh waters of Norton Sound Subdistrict 5 will close to subsistence salmon fishing effective June 25 at 8 p.m. Next week the department plans to have one subsistence fishing period in the marine waters with gillnet mesh size restricted to 6 inches or smaller during favorable weather conditions. Fresh waters including the Shaktoolik River drainage will remain closed to subsistence salmon fishing until next week's announced fishing period. Gillnets used to target trout and whitefish in the Shaktoolik River, and all other freshwater areas of Subdistrict 5 must have a mesh size no greater than 4 inches. Dip nets and cast nets may also be used, but any king salmon captured must be immediately released unharmed in the water.

Unalakleet Subdistrict

Effective June 25 at 6 p.m. all marine waters of Norton Sound Subdistrict 6, the Unalakleet Subdistrict, will close to subsistence salmon fishing. All fresh waters of Norton Sound Subdistrict 6 will close to subsistence salmon fishing effective June 25 at 8 p.m. The North River and the Unalakleet River drainage downstream of the North River including the marine waters within 500 yards is closed to all net fishing. However, dip nets and cast nets

may be used, but any king salmon captured must be immediately released. Next week the department plans to have a subsistence fishing period in the marine waters during favorable weather conditions with gillnet mesh size restricted to 6 inches or smaller and one fishing period in the freshwater areas of Subdistrict 6.

Beach seining for salmon in all Subdistricts 5 and 6 waters is closed until July 1, and then will be open through August 10 with mesh size restricted to 4 ½ inches, or smaller, and all king salmon must be released to the water immediately unharmed.

For any questions regarding this announcement please call Fish & Game in Nome at 907-443-5167 or 1-800-560-2271 or the Unalakleet office at 907-624-3921.