



## Advisory Announcement

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### **2022 Yukon River Salmon Summer Fishery Announcement #15**

#### **Summer Update #5, Yukon Area Salmon Fishery**

Districts Affected: Yukon Area

Chinook salmon counts at Pilot Station sonar are well below historical averages, below the preseason forecast and below the lowest cumulative counts that have been observed for this date. The Chinook salmon daily passage at Pilot Station sonar has been low enough that it has been difficult to reliably make any assessment on run or pulse timing, however even under late run timing scenarios these numbers are small in comparison to historical averages. The group of Chinook salmon currently passing the sonar will help to determine where we are in the run and how late the run is. Current projections are showing that the Canadian and drainage-wide Chinook salmon runs are below the lower end of the forecast ranges. These run sizes are so small that escapement goals are most likely not to be met.

The early Chinook salmon are making their way upriver and should be approaching Beaver. The first significant group of fish should be approaching Anvik. Consistent with the preseason management strategy to take a conservative approach this season, subsistence fishing will be closed as Chinook salmon migrate up stream.

At this time, few summer chum salmon have entered the Yukon River and the run appears to be late, similar to 2020 and 2021. As of June 26, the cumulative Pilot Station sonar counts for summer chum salmon are the second lowest on record for this date; only the counts observed in 2021 for this date were lower. Pilot Station sonar had increased daily counts of summer chum salmon on June 25 and 26, indicating a relatively large group of fish are making their way upriver. However, the run abundance is too low at this time to project whether escapement goals will be met.

The loss of food and annual traditional harvesting practices are recognized. Regulations require that subsistence salmon fishing opportunity is the last to be closed, only when escapement goals and future salmon returns are at risk. Sport, personal use, and commercial fishing opportunities are also closed this year at all locations on the Yukon River and its tributaries.

The inseason salmon management teleconferences hosted by the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association (YRDFA) are held Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m. This year the calls will focus on relaying assessment and management updates and local concerns. There is important fisheries research being done and the YRDFA teleconference is a great way to discuss all aspects of Yukon River fisheries and to connect with other communities, research projects, and managers all the way up the Yukon River. To participate, call 800-315-6338 and enter code: YUKON# (98566#).

#### **Assessment Projects**

All information is current through June 26.

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

LYTF operations for 2022 have been altered compared to previous years. The Middle Mouth set gillnet site is not being operated to reduce Chinook salmon mortalities, but drift gillnet operations using 8.25-inch mesh have been added to obtain Chinook salmon CPUE data from that location. In the South Mouth at Big Eddy, set gillnet operations for Chinook salmon and drift gillnet operations for summer chum and Chinook salmon are unchanged. The Big Eddy Chinook salmon drift CPUE values can be compared to historical averages but the set net data from Big Eddy should not be compared to historical data because they do not include any Middle Mouth set net data this season.

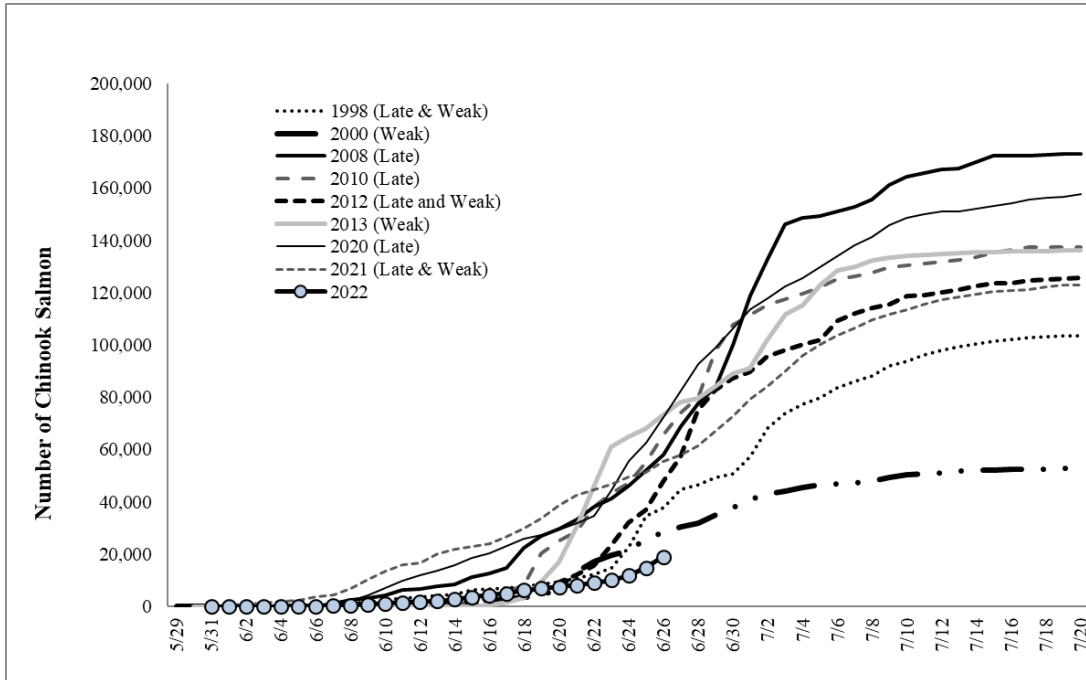
Chinook salmon test fish operations began early enough to evaluate the beginning part of the run but continue to encounter issues with high winds and debris. Big Eddy set net site was deployed June 5. The cumulative CPUE for the Big Eddy set net site is 4.75, which is lower than the 2015–2021 Big Eddy site only historical average for this date of 14.03.

LYTF drift gillnet operations began on May 26 at Big Eddy for Chinook and summer chum salmon. Middle Mouth Drifts began June 3. Drift sites continue to have issues with wind, rough water, and lots of debris. Some drifts have been cancelled due to poor fishing conditions. The Big Eddy cumulative Chinook salmon CPUE in the 8.25-inch drift gillnet is 77.12, which is below the historic average of 296.09. The Middle Mouth cumulative Chinook salmon CPUE for the 8.25-inch drift gillnet is 6.18, and the combined Chinook drift CPUE is 31.12. The cumulative CPUE for summer chum salmon in the 5.5-inch drift gillnet is 357.70, which is below the historical median of 3,417.12. While a few summer chum salmon are continuing to be caught in LYTF, no large groups have been detected since June 23. LYTF data indicates Chinook and summer chum salmon have been entering the lower river mostly in the South mouth, with just a few fish entering the Middle mouth so far.

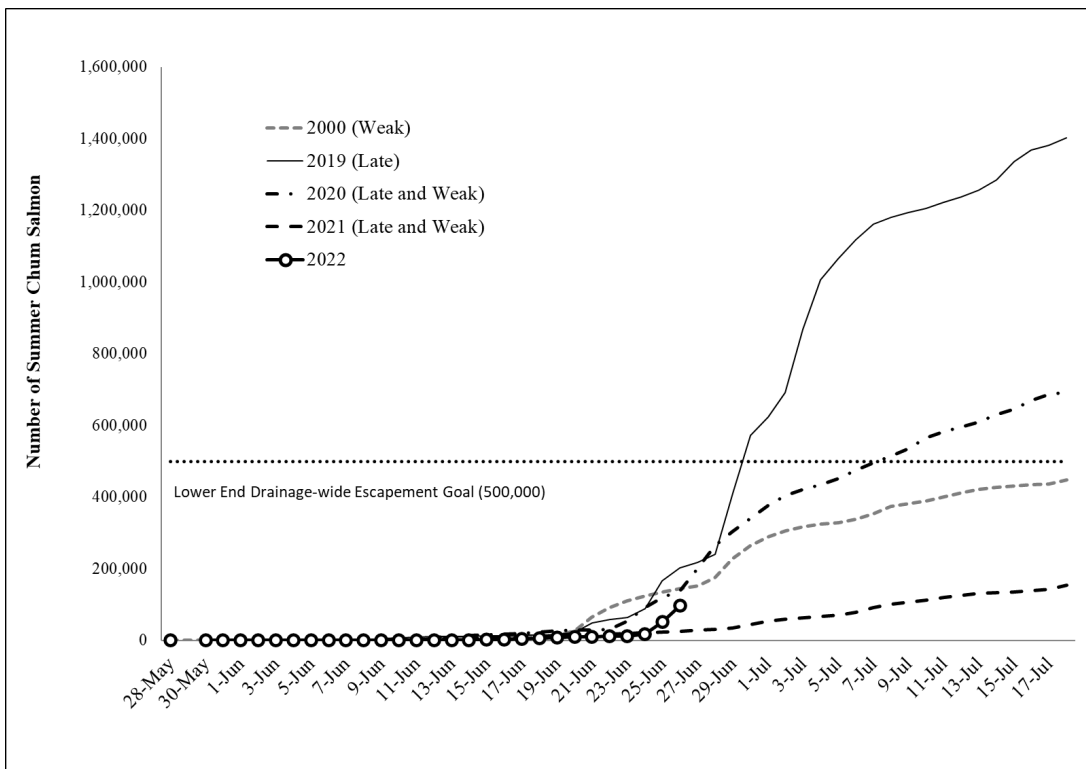
Any salmon healthy enough will be released alive from the test nets. Injured salmon and mortalities are distributed to community members by Tribal councils, or on a first come, first-served basis from a public dock. Chinook salmon test fish mortalities are sampled for genetics, otoliths, liver, stomach contents, intestine, eggs, and muscle biopsy. Measurements include age from scales, sex, length, and fat content. These samples and measurements will be sent to researchers working on understanding salmon health and body condition. In addition to LYTF, other test fish projects in collaboration with ADF&G and the USFWS are also collecting tissue samples (heart, kidney, eggs, blood draw) from Chinook salmon to test for fish diseases and other fish health related research. Heart tissues are being sampled to test for Ichthyophonus and kidney tissues are being tested for proliferative kidney disease (PKD). Results will be available post season.

Sonar Project near Pilot Station/ ADF&G

Water levels are slowly dropping with moderate debris. Sonar and test fishing operations have been proceeding as planned. Chinook salmon passage is estimated to be  $19,116 \pm 4,978$  fish (90% Confidence Interval), which is below the historical cumulative average of 110,069 based on normal run timing years, and 70,759 fish based on late run timing years. Summer chum salmon passage is estimated to be  $97,876 \pm 12,191$  fish (90% Confidence Interval), which is below the historical cumulative median of 699,265 fish based on normal run timing years, and 384,857 fish based on late run timing years.



**Figure 1.** 2022 Cumulative passage of Chinook salmon at the Pilot Station sonar compared to late and/or weak years.



**Figure 2.** 2022 Cumulative summer chum salmon passage at the Pilot Station sonar compared to 2019 and late and weak years. The horizontal dotted line represents the lower bound of the drainage-wide escapement goal for summer chum salmon.

East Fork Andreafsky Weir/ USFWS

Crew is on site setting up the weir, but high water is delaying installation and counts may not be available until later this week.

Anvik River Sonar Project/ ADF&G

Cumulative passage is 1,545 summer chum salmon, which is below the median cumulative passage of 12,352 fish for this date.

Gisasa Weir/ USFWS

Weir installation is in progress. Counts may start later this week.

Eagle Sonar/ ADF&G

Crew is on site and setting up camp. Sonar counts may be available starting on July 1.

ADF&G and USFWS projects that will begin operations later this season when fish arrive in the area:

Sheenjok Sonar, Salcha and Chena River Tower /Sonar (ADF&G); Teedriinjik (Chandalar) Sonar (USFWS).

Henshaw Weir (TCC) is not expected to operate this year due to necessary repairs.

**Current Subsistence Management Actions**

Subsistence salmon fishing has been closed to protect Chinook and summer chum salmon as they migrate upriver. The opportunity to harvest nonsalmon with 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets is available during salmon closures; however, 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets are restricted to 60 feet or shorter length. Fishermen should fish this nonsalmon gear in areas where resident species are more likely to be encountered.

Due to the low run sizes, we are encouraging fishermen to target nonsalmon and to release Chinook and summer chum salmon alive from nonsalmon gear types to protect future salmon runs. Pink and sockeye salmon may be retained. Other legal gear types to take nonsalmon include hook and line with a rod or pole, up to and including the Nulato River, while all Yukon River districts may use hand line, longline, fyke net, dip net, and spear.

**Coastal District, Districts 1, 2, and 3, Subdistrict 4-A, and the Innoko River** (from the Naskonat Peninsula north to Point Romanof and upstream to Cone Point, which includes the Black River and the communities of Chevak, Hooper Bay, Scammon Bay, Emmonak, Nunam Iqua, Alakanuk, Kotlik, Mountain Village, Pitkas Point, St. Mary's, Pilot Station, Marshall, Russian Mission, Holy Cross, Shageluk, Anvik, Grayling, Kaltag, Nulato, and Koyukuk):

**Salmon fishing is closed.** Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch mesh are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon but are restricted to 60 feet or shorter length. Dip nets and hook and line gear may be used for nonsalmon, pink and sockeye salmon; however, Chinook and summer chum salmon must be released alive. **Hook and line gear may be used up to and including the Nulato River.**

**Subdistricts 4-B, 4-C, 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C** (including Galena, Ruby, Tanana, and Rampart):

**Salmon fishing is closed.** Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch mesh are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon but are restricted to 60 feet or shorter length. Dip nets may be used for nonsalmon, pink and sockeye salmon; however, Chinook and summer chum salmon must be released alive.

A subsistence permit is also required to fish for all species in Subdistrict 5-C from the westernmost tip of Garnet Island upstream to ADF&G regulatory markers located two miles downstream of Waldron Creek (Dalton Highway bridge area).

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

**Salmon fishing is closed.** Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch mesh are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon but are restricted to 60 feet or shorter length. Dip nets may be used for nonsalmon; however, Chinook and summer chum salmon must be released alive.

A subsistence fishing permit is required for all species in the South and Middle forks of the Koyukuk River above Bettles including the community of Wiseman. **Currently, in the permit area, gillnets must be 3½ inches or smaller mesh size. By regulation, gillnet gear in the permit area is closed for all species from July 1 to August 19.** If you are outside the permit area, contact the Fairbanks office at 907-459-7274 for a subsistence harvest calendar.

**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):

**Salmon fishing is closed.** Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch mesh are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon but are restricted to 60 feet or shorter length. Dip nets may be used for nonsalmon; however, Chinook salmon must be released alive.

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):

**Effective today, Tuesday, June 28 at 8:00 p.m., salmon fishing will close. Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch mesh will not be allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon but are restricted to 60 feet or shorter length. Dip nets may be used for nonsalmon; however, Chinook salmon must be released alive.**

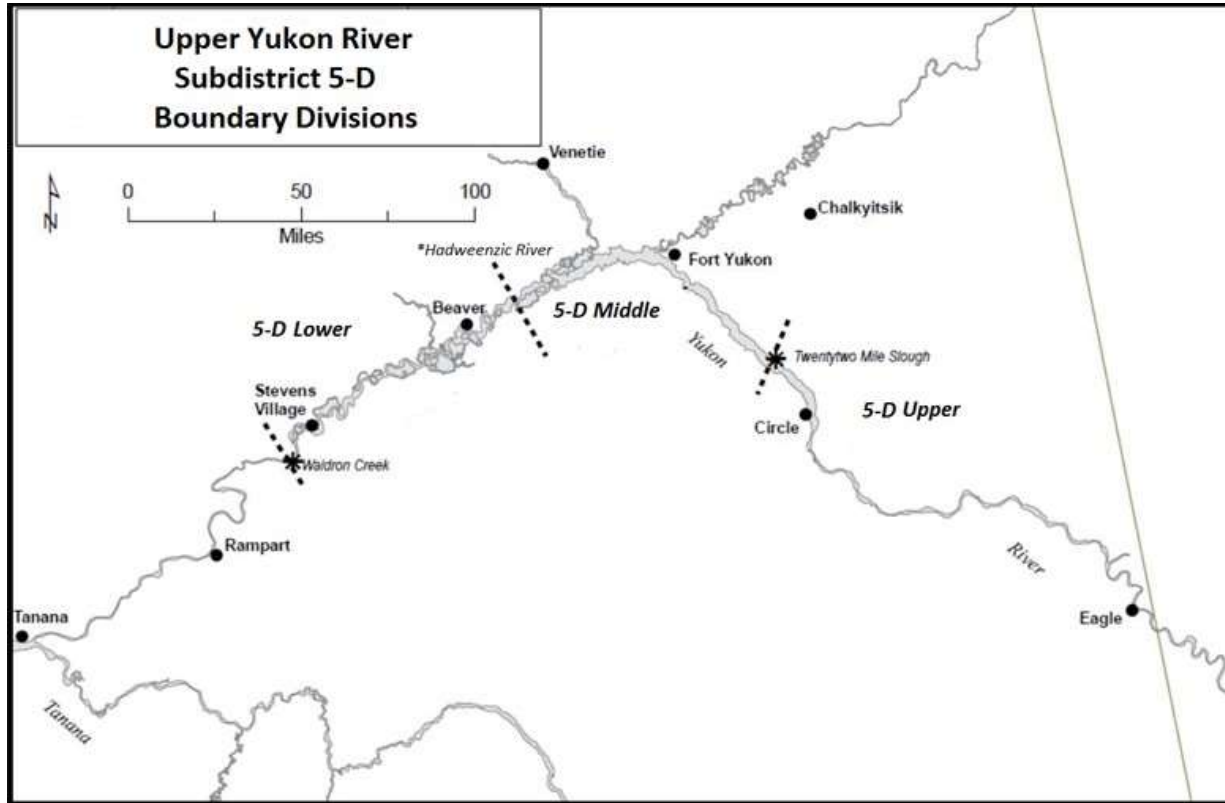
In Birch Creek, and the subsistence area of Beaver Creek below Moose Creek, gillnet mesh size may not exceed 3 inches.

**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):

Subsistence fishing is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

**Effective 8 p.m. Thursday, June 30, salmon fishing will close. Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch mesh will not be allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon but are restricted to 60 feet or shorter length. Dip nets may be used for nonsalmon; however, Chinook salmon must be released alive.**

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



**Subdistricts 6-A and Kantishna** (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):

**Salmon fishing is closed.** Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch mesh are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon but are restricted to 60 feet or shorter length. Dip nets may be used for nonsalmon; however, Chinook and summer chum salmon must be released alive. Subsistence fishing for nonsalmon within Lake Minchumina is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

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

**Salmon fishing is closed.** Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch mesh are not allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon but are restricted to 60 feet or shorter length. Dip nets may be used for nonsalmon; however, Chinook and summer chum salmon must be released alive.

Subsistence fishing for nonsalmon is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets in the Tolovana River drainage, including Minto Flats. Note, 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):

Subsistence fishing is currently open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 7.5-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and fish wheels.

**Effective today, Tuesday, June 28 at 8 p.m., salmon fishing will close. Fish wheels and gillnets larger than 4-inch mesh will not be allowed. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh may be used to target nonsalmon but**

**are restricted to 60 feet or shorter length. Dip nets may be used for nonsalmon; however, Chinook and summer chum salmon must be released alive.**

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

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/](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/store/).

### **Personal Use Management Actions**

**Subdistrict 6-C Salmon** (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 for whitefish and suckers in this area with other gear types remains open 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, subject to permit stipulations.

A reminder to personal use fishermen that a personal use whitefish and sucker permit and current sport fishing license are required to fish for these species in the Fairbanks Nonsubsistence Area. Permits and licenses are available from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Fairbanks office or online at [www.adfg.alaska.gov/store/](http://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 weekly update announcement. For information regarding Federal subsistence fishing regulations contact Holly Carroll at 907-351-3029.



This is an announcement by the ADF&G in cooperation with the USFWS.

The Emmonak USFWS office is not open. To reach the USFWS Yukon River Subsistence Fishery Manager call Holly Carroll at 907-351-3029.

Federal Special Actions will be posted on [www.doi.gov/subsistence/fisheries-special-actions](http://www.doi.gov/subsistence/fisheries-special-actions) and shared on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska](https://www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska).

ADF&G Advisory Announcements will be posted on [www.cfnews.adfg.alaska.gov/](http://www.cfnews.adfg.alaska.gov/) and shared on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG](https://www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG).

