



## Advisory Announcement

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### **2022 Yukon River Salmon Fall Fishery Announcement #10**

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

Districts Affected: Yukon Area

The 2022 fall chum salmon run size is critically low. Genetic mixed stock analysis applied to the passage estimates at the Yukon River mainstem sonar near Pilot Station indicate 194,000 fall chum salmon are in the river as of August 21 (Figure 1). The fall chum salmon run is near the third-quarter point. The projection based on inseason assessment projects indicates the run size below 300,000 fish. The projection does not meet the threshold of 300,000 fish needed to allow subsistence fishing according to the Fall Chum Salmon Management Plan. In addition, the projection is unlikely to meet the drainagewide escapement goal of 300,000–600,000 fall chum salmon, tributary escapement goals, and Canadian treaty objectives. Therefore, subsistence, personal use, and commercial fishing for fall chum salmon remains closed.

Coho salmon have arrived slightly later than average in all the Lower Yukon River assessment projects. At the mainstem Yukon River sonar project near Pilot Station, 39,000 coho salmon have been counted as of August 21, compared to a historical cumulative of 68,000 for this date (Figure 2). The coho salmon run is past the first quarter-point. The primary parent year for coho salmon this year is from the escapements of 2018. This year's coho run size is anticipated to be below average to average (average is 233,000 fish).

Alaska Department of Fish and Game, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association are conducting a cooperative radio tagging project on coho salmon operated out of the community of Russian Mission. Please report any tagged coho salmon observed or harvested within the Yukon River drainage to help us all gain knowledge on their migration. Contact [andrew.padilla@alaska.gov](mailto:andrew.padilla@alaska.gov) or call (907) 459-7274.

The inseason salmon management teleconferences hosted by the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association (YRDFA) are held Tuesdays at 1:00 p.m. The calls 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#).

### **Fall Assessment Projects**

All projects that handle fish (fall season Lower Yukon Test Fishery, Mt. Village Test Fishery, Pilot Station, and Eagle sonar) are making efforts to reduce salmon mortality and distribute test fish catches to community members. Healthy salmon are 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.

Daily, cumulative, and historical data for most of the assessment projects listed in this section can be accessed online at [www.adfg.alaska.gov/yukonfishcounts](http://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. As of August 21, the fall chum salmon cumulative catch per unit effort (CPUE) was 444.82, which is below the average of 1,226.42 for this date. The cumulative CPUE for coho salmon was 12.81, which is well below the median of 247.61. The three-quarter point of the coho salmon run is typically around August 25 at this project.

Mountain Village Drift Test Fishing / Asacarsarmiut Tribal Council

Fall season operations began on July 18. As of August 21, the fall chum salmon cumulative CPUE was 457.27, which is below the average of 1,575.50 for this date. The cumulative CPUE for coho salmon was 80.77, which is well below the median of 447.83. The mid-point of the coho salmon run is typically around August 22 at this project.

Sonar Project near Pilot Station / ADF&G

The sonar project operated near Pilot Station transitioned to fall season counts on July 19. As of August 21, the cumulative passage was approximately 277,000 chum salmon. This compares to a median cumulative passage of 606,000 chum salmon for this date. Chum salmon genetic stock proportions were applied to the sonar passage counts and resulted in an estimate of 194,000 fall chum salmon that have come into the river since July 19 (Figure 1). The three-quarter point of the Mixed Stock Analysis (MSA) fall chum salmon run at the mainstem sonar operated near Pilot Station typically occurs on August 20. As of August 21, the cumulative passage of coho salmon is approximately 39,000 fish, which is below the median of 68,000 fish through this date (Figure 2).

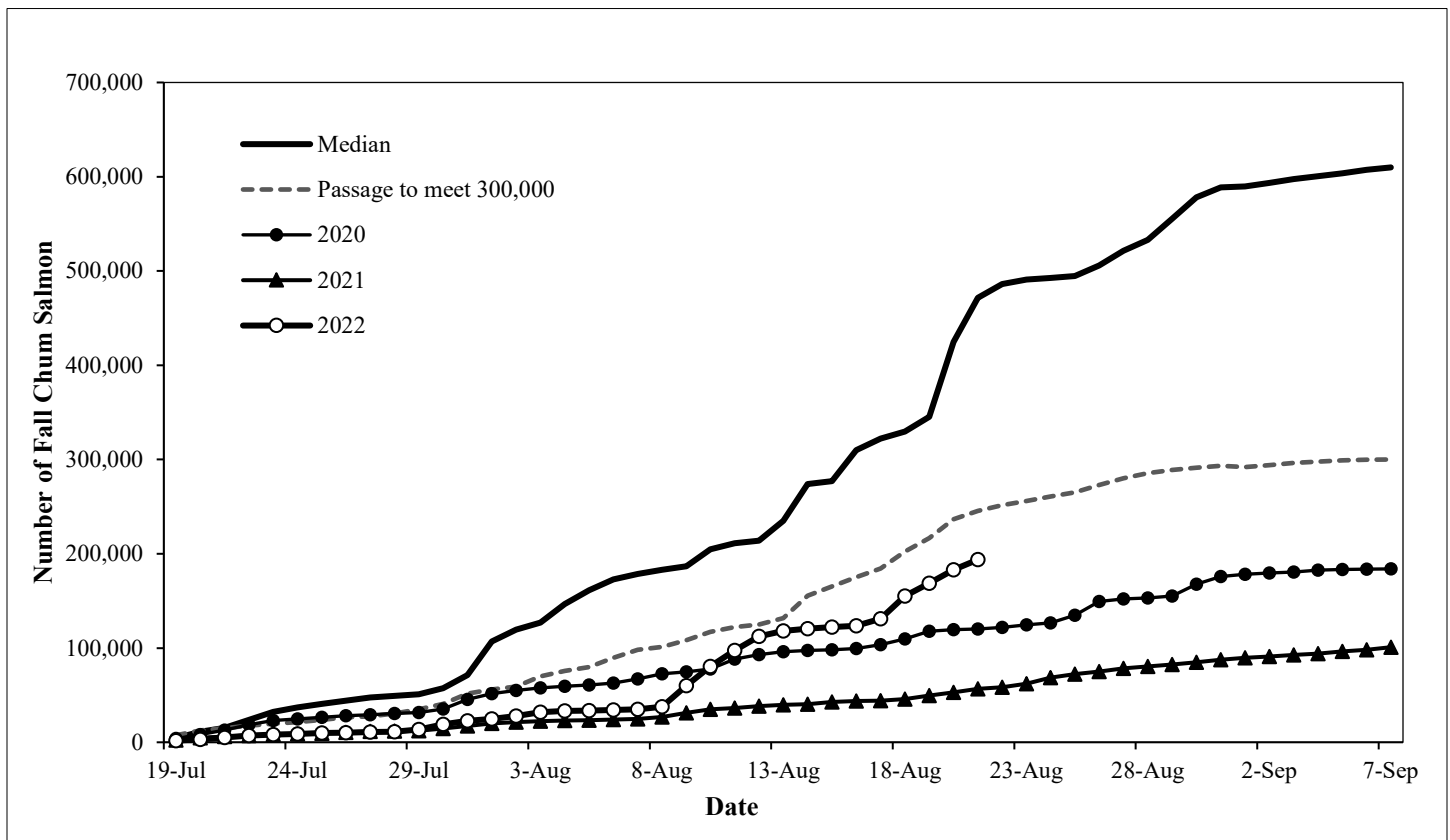


Figure 1. Cumulative passage of fall chum salmon at the mainstem Yukon River sonar project (Pilot Station) in 2022 compared to historical median, 2020, and 2021. The dashed line is the passage required to meet the minimum management requirement of 300,000 fish to allow subsistence fishing.

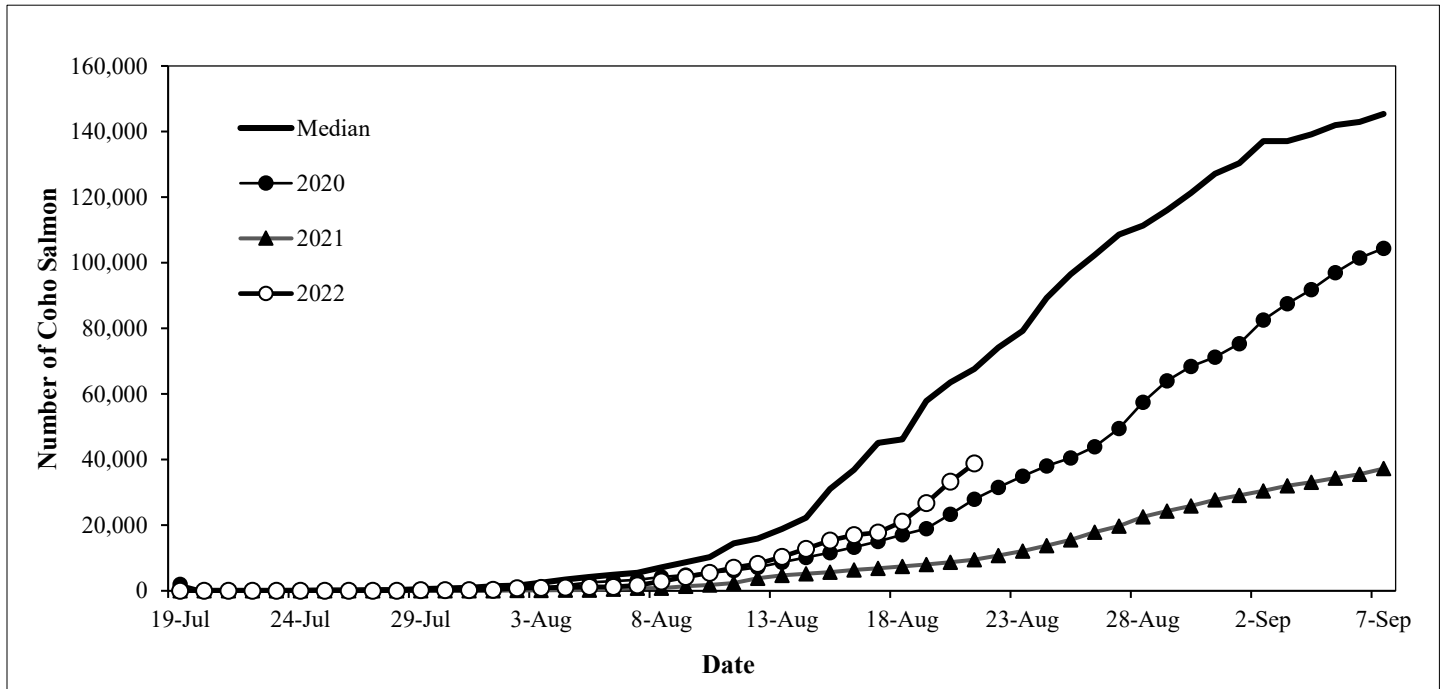


Figure 2. Cumulative passage of coho salmon at the mainstem Yukon River sonar project (Pilot Station) in 2022 compared to historical median, 2020, and 2021.

Teedriinjik (Chandalar) Sonar / USFWS

The sonar project began counting fish on August 8. Due to high water, crew had to pull the sonars on 5 days, so current cumulative counts are considered partial estimates and may be adjusted post season. As of August 21, the estimated cumulative passage of fall chum salmon is 2,101 fish, which is below the median passage of 12,984 for this date.

Sheenjek River Sonar / ADF&G

The sonar project began operations on August 8 and through August 21 has a cumulative passage of 617 fall chum salmon, which is below the median passage of 3,168 for this date.

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

This project will transition from counting Chinook to fall chum salmon later in August.

Porcupine River Sonar / Yukon Territory Canada / DFO

This project transitioned to counting fall chum salmon on August 7. The cumulative passage of fall chum salmon as of August 21 is 361 fish, which is well below the average passage of 975 fish for this date.

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

This project will count fall chum salmon sometime in late August or early September.

**Fall Season Management Strategy**

The 2022 fall chum salmon projection remains critically low and below the 300,000 threshold in the Fall Chum Salmon Management Plan to allow any subsistence fishing at this time. Subsistence fishermen should plan for continued fishing closures to conserve fall chum salmon. Every subdistrict except Subdistrict 5-D Upper has transitioned to fall season management. Subdistrict 5-D Upper will transition to fall season management as the fall chum salmon migration reaches that area. Subsistence salmon fishing is closed, except for the use of selective

gear to target nonsalmon and salmon other than chum and Chinook salmon. The coho salmon run continues to arrive in the Lower Yukon Area. Nonsalmon subsistence fishing gears remain open.

### **Summer Assessment Projects**

#### Salcha Tower / ADF&G

Operations ended on August 18. Cumulative passage was 1,130 Chinook salmon, which was below the average of 8,163 fish for this date; and 1,982 summer chum salmon, which was below the median cumulative passage of 22,484 fish for this date. Counts were visual due to issues with the sonar unit.

#### Eagle Sonar / ADF&G

As of August 21, cumulative passage is 12,023 Chinook salmon, which is below the average cumulative passage of 53,939 fish for this date. The Interim Management Escapement Goal for Canada-origin Chinook salmon is 42,500–55,000 fish. The goal is assessed post-season using the Eagle sonar count minus the estimated U.S. and Canadian harvest of Chinook salmon above the sonar site. It is not expected that border passage objectives will be achieved.

### **Stock Identification**

Genetic mixed stock analysis on chum salmon that passed the mainstem sonar from July 29–August 14 indicated approximately 10% were summer chum and 90% were fall chum salmon. The fall chum salmon stocks consisted of 38% Border/US (Teedriinjik, Sheenjok, and Draanjik), 9% Canadian, and 44% Tanana Fall stocks. For fall chum salmon this represented 90% U.S.-origin and only 10% Canadian-origin stocks. The proportions of Canada-origin stocks are extremely weak for this point in the run.

### **Age, Sex, and Length Composition**

The age composition of 136 chum salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the LYTF project through August 12, consisted of 66% age-4 and 34% age-5 fish, which compared to the 1983–2021 historical averages of 64% age-4 and 35% age-5. The percentage of female chum salmon through August 20 was 53% which is below the historical average (1986–2021) of 56%. The average length of 566 mm is well below the historical average of 592 mm from 1981–2021.

The age composition of the 54 Chinook salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the Eagle test fishery through July 31 was 6% age-4, 32% age-5, 57% age-6 and 6% age-7 fish. The percentage of age-6 and age-7 fish and the percentage of females (48%) were above average. Chinook salmon within each age class were smaller than the recent 10-year average. However, the average length of 774 mm across all age classes was the same as the recent 10-year average length of 774 mm because of the above average proportion of age-6 and age-7 fish increasing the overall average length.

### **Current Subsistence Management Actions**

Subsistence salmon fishing has been closed to protect Chinook, summer chum, and fall 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 chum salmon alive from nonsalmon gear types to protect future salmon runs. Pink and sockeye salmon may be retained. As districts transition to fall season management, coho salmon may be retained and manned fish wheels may be used while releasing chum and Chinook salmon alive. Other legal gear types to take nonsalmon include hook and line with a rod or pole, up to and including the Nulato River. All Yukon River districts may also use hand line, longline, fyke net, dip net, beach seines, and spear.

The USFWS Federal Inseason Manager has concurrently issued Emergency Special Actions 2-FC-01-22, 2-FC-02-22, and 2-FC-03-22 to close Federal public waters to the harvest of fall chum in the Coastal District and Districts 1, 2, 3, 4 and Subdistrict 5-A, 5-B, and 5-C. Emergency special action 2-FC-04-22 announced the transition dates for subdistricts 5-D Lower, Middle, and Upper, and 2-FC-05-22 announced the transition dates for District 6. Fishermen must be Federally-qualified subsistence users to harvest coho salmon in Federal public waters. The Federal Emergency Special Actions can be found online at <https://www.doi.gov/subsistence/fisheries-special-actions>.

**Coastal District, District 1, District 2, District 3, and the Innoko River** (including Chevak, Hooper Bay, Scammon Bay, Emmonak, Nunam Iqua, Alakanuk, Kotlik, Mountain Village, Pitkas Point, St. Mary's, Pilot Station, Marshall, Russian Mission, Holy Cross, and Shageluk):

**The transition to fall season management is complete, and fishing for chum and Chinook salmon is closed.** 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. Manned fish wheels, dip nets, and hook and line gear may be used for nonsalmon and pink, sockeye, and coho salmon; however, chum and Chinook salmon must be released alive. While using manned fish wheels, chum and Chinook salmon may not enter a livebox.

**District 4 and Koyukuk River** (including Anvik, Grayling, Kaltag, Nulato, Koyukuk, Galena, Ruby, Huslia, Hughes, Alatna, Allakaket, and Bettles):

**The transition to fall season management is complete, and fishing for chum and Chinook salmon is closed.** 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. Manned fish wheels, dip nets, and hook and line gear may be used for nonsalmon and pink, sockeye, and coho salmon; however, chum and Chinook salmon must be released alive. While using manned fish wheels, chum and Chinook salmon may not enter a livebox. Hook and line gear may be used up to and including the Nulato River.

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. By regulation, gillnet gear in the permit area may not have mesh in excess of 3-½ inches. If you are outside the permit area, contact the Fairbanks office at 907-459-7274 for a subsistence harvest calendar.

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

**The transition to fall season management is complete, and fishing for chum and Chinook salmon is closed.** 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. Manned fish wheels and dip nets may be used for nonsalmon and coho salmon; however, chum and Chinook salmon must be released alive. While using manned fish wheels, chum and Chinook salmon may not enter a livebox.

A subsistence permit is 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).

**Subdistricts 5-D Lower and Middle** (from an ADF&G regulatory marker two miles downstream of Waldron Creek upstream to 22 Mile Slough and all other adjacent tributaries, including the communities of Stevens Village, Beaver, Venetie, Chalkyitsik, Birch Creek, and Fort Yukon):

**The transition to fall season management is complete, and fishing for chum and Chinook salmon is closed.** 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. Manned fish wheels and dip nets may be used for nonsalmon and coho salmon; however, chum and Chinook salmon must be released alive. While using manned

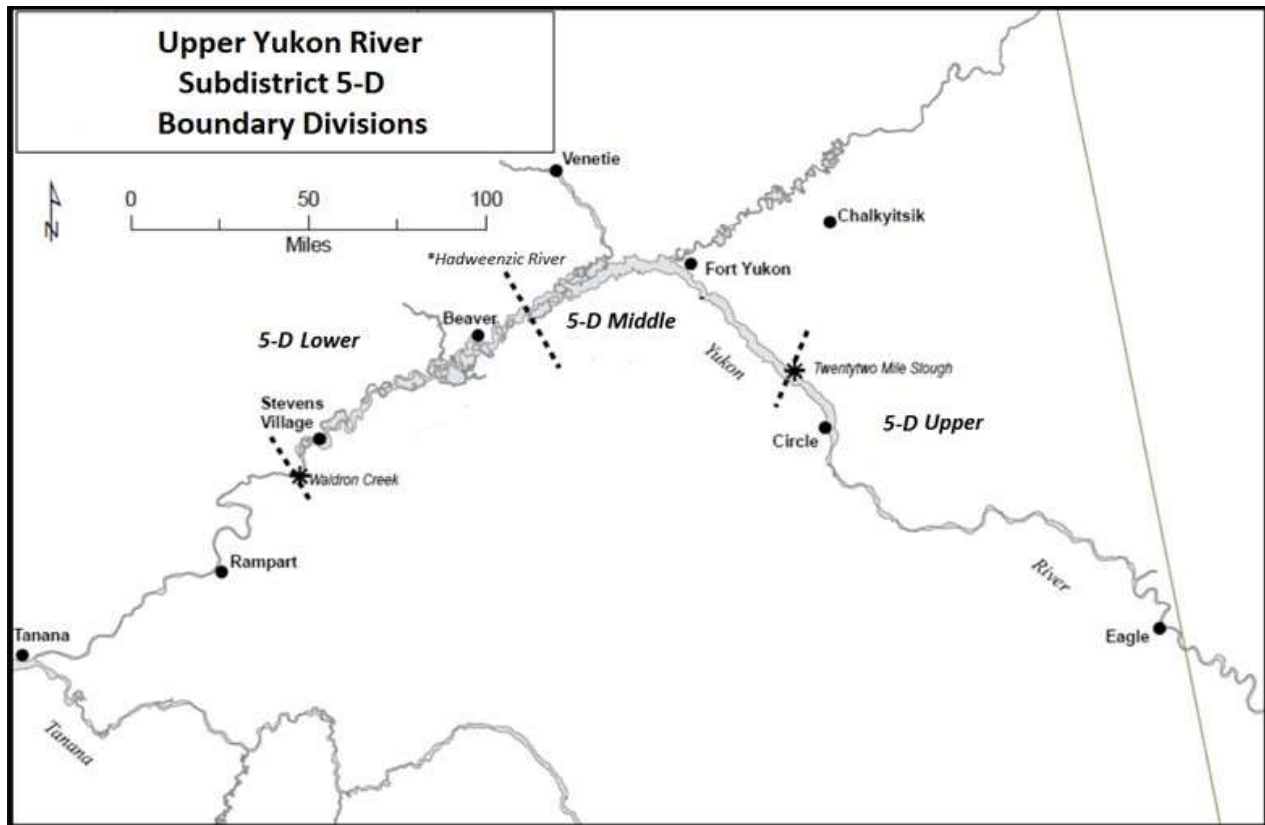
fish wheels, chum and Chinook salmon may not enter a livebox. In Birch Creek, and the subsistence area of Beaver Creek below Moose Creek, gillnet mesh size may not exceed 3 inches.

A subsistence permit is also 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. If you are outside the permit area, contact the Fairbanks office at 907-459-7274 for a subsistence harvest calendar.

**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):

**The transition to fall season management begins 12:01 a.m. Friday, August 26. Chum and Chinook salmon fishing will remain closed.** Dip nets may be used for nonsalmon. However, chum and Chinook salmon must be released alive. **Once fall season management begins, manned fish wheels and dip nets may be used for nonsalmon and coho salmon. While using manned fish wheels, chum and Chinook salmon must be released alive and may not enter a livebox.**

A subsistence permit is also required to fish for all species in the portion of Subdistrict 5-D Upper from the upstream mouth of 22 Mile Slough to the U.S./Canada border. If you are outside the permit area, contact the Fairbanks office at 907-459-7274 for a subsistence harvest calendar.



**Subdistricts 6-A and 6-B** (including the Kantishna River drainage, Lake Minchumina, Manley, Old Minto area, Minto, and Nenana) **and the Upper Tanana Area** (including the Delta Junction area, Dot Lake, Tanacross, Tetlin, Tok, Northway, and Nabesna):

**The transition to fall season management is complete, and fishing for chum and Chinook salmon is closed.** 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. Manned fish wheels and dip nets may be used for

nonsalmon and coho salmon; however, chum and Chinook salmon must be released alive. While using manned fish wheels, chum and Chinook salmon may not enter a livebox.

Legal gear types to take nonsalmon include 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets 60 feet or shorter in length, handline, longline, fyke net, dip net, beach seine, and spear. Subsistence fishing for nonsalmon within Lake Minchumina and the Tolovana River drainage, including Minto Flats, is open 24 hours a day, seven days per week with 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets.

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

### Salmon Fishing

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

**The transition to fall season management is complete, and Personal Use salmon fishing remains 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):

**The transition to fall season management is complete, and Personal Use whitefish and sucker fishing with gillnets and fish wheels follows the Subdistrict 6-C Personal Use salmon fishing schedule and remains closed.** 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. As a reminder, only whitefish and suckers may be retained in this fishery.

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 or Delta Junction offices 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 advisory announcement. Fishermen must be Federally qualified subsistence users to harvest coho salmon in Federal public waters. 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.

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).

ADF&G subsistence fishing permits are available at [www.adfg.alaska.gov/store](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/store)

