



Advisory Announcement

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2022 Yukon River Salmon Fall Fishery Announcement #9

Fall Update #4, 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 78,000 fall chum salmon are in the river as of August 14 (see figure below). The fall chum salmon run is near the historical midpoint. The projection based on inseason assessment projects indicates a run size well 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 and tributary escapement goals. Therefore, subsistence and personal use fishing for fall chum salmon remains closed.

Coho salmon have started to arrive slightly later than average in all the Lower Yukon River assessment projects. The beginning of the coho salmon run is being counted at the Yukon River mainstem sonar near Pilot Station. Passage is 13,000 fish as of August 14. The bulk of the run is expected to arrive mid to late August. 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).

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.

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 14, the fall chum salmon cumulative CPUE was 167.00, which is below the average of 880.76 for this date. The

cumulative CPUE for coho salmon was 0.80, which is well below the median of 116.61. The mid-point of the coho salmon run is typically around August 19 at this project.

Mountain Village Drift Test Fishing / Asacarsarmiut Tribal Council

Fall season operations began on July 18. As of August 13, the fall chum salmon cumulative CPUE was 205.38, which is below the average of 1,199.77 for this date. The cumulative CPUE for coho salmon was 11.79, which is well below the median of 169.73. The first quarter point of the coho salmon run is typically around August 17 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 14, the cumulative passage is approximately 196,000 chum salmon. This compares to a median cumulative passage of 368,000 chum salmon for this date. The three-quarter point for chum salmon passing after July 18 is typically on August 19 for this project. Genetic stock proportions were applied to the sonar passage counts and resulted in an estimate of 78,000 fall chum salmon that have come into the river since July 19. The three-quarter point of the MSA fall chum salmon run at the mainstem sonar operated near Pilot Station typically occurs on August 20. As of August 14, the cumulative passage of coho salmon is approximately 13,000 fish, which is below the median of 19,000 fish through this date.

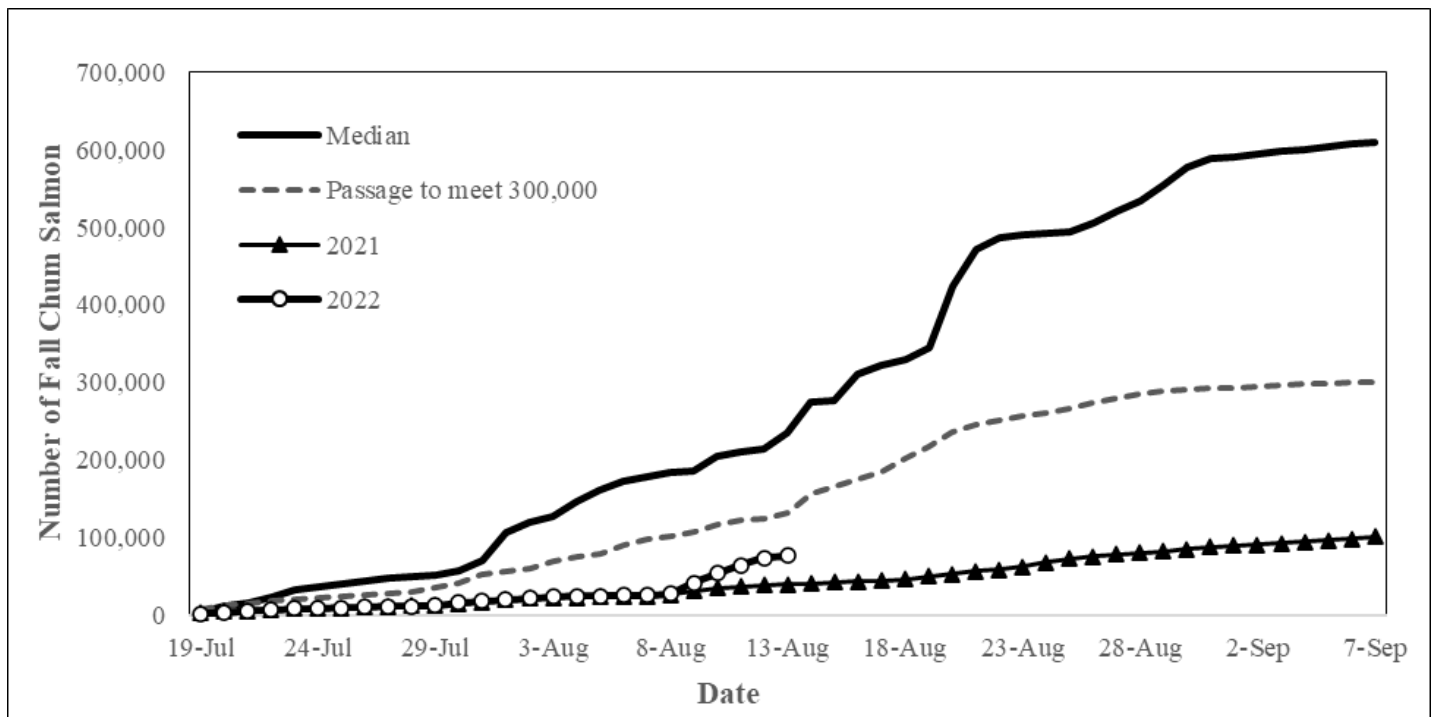


Figure 1. Cumulative passage of fall chum salmon at the mainstem Yukon River sonar project (Pilot Station) in 2022 compared to median and 2021. The dashed line is the passage required to meet the minimum management requirement of 300,000 fish to allow subsistence fishing.

Teedriinjik (Chandalar) Sonar / USFWS

Sonar operations began August 8, but high water and technical issues delayed daily counts. Sonar counts on both banks began August 14 with a daily passage of 246 chum salmon.

Sheenjek River Sonar / ADF&G

Operations began on the historical date of August 8 and as of August 13, the fall chum salmon cumulative passage was 185, which is below the average of 852 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 will transition from counting Chinook to fall chum salmon later in August.

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. The Coastal District through Subdistricts 5-A, 5-B, 5-C, and 5-D Lower have transitioned to fall season management. The remaining upriver subdistricts will transition to fall season management as the fall chum salmon migration reaches those areas. 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 is beginning to arrive in the Lower Yukon Area. Nonsalmon subsistence fishing gears remain open.

Summer Season Assessment

Subdistricts 5-D Middle, 5-D Upper, and District 6 on the Yukon and Tanana rivers continue to be managed for Chinook and summer chum salmon and are closed to salmon fishing. Assuming late run timing, the Chinook salmon run at Eagle is estimated to be close to 99% complete. The cumulative passage of Chinook salmon entering Canada is below average and the lowest on record. Current projections indicate that the lower end of the Canadian IMEG of 42,500 fish will not be met. Passage of Chinook salmon at all U.S. assessment projects are also below average and escapement goals are unlikely to be met.

Summer Assessment ProjectsSalcha Tower / ADF&G

Counts began on July 2. As of August 14, cumulative passage is 1,106 Chinook salmon, which is below the average of 8,157 fish for this date; and 1,457 summer chum salmon, which is below the median cumulative passage of 21,818 fish for this date. Counts are visual due to issues with the sonar unit.

Eagle Sonar / ADF&G

As of August 14, cumulative passage is 11,678 Chinook salmon, which is below the average cumulative passage of 53,328 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

The fifth stratum of chum salmon genetic samples from the mainstem sonar project test fishery (from July 29 through August 15) is headed to the laboratory and results should be available next week. The most recent group

of chum salmon that passed by the mainstem Yukon River sonar operated near Pilot Station should be dominated by fall chum salmon.

Age, Sex, and Length Composition

The age composition of 143 chum salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the LYTF project through August 12, consisted of 70% age-4 and 30% 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 14 was 54% which is near the historical average (1986–2021) of 56%. The average length of 567 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 for the same effective dates listed in this announcement. 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 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.

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).

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):

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 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 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):

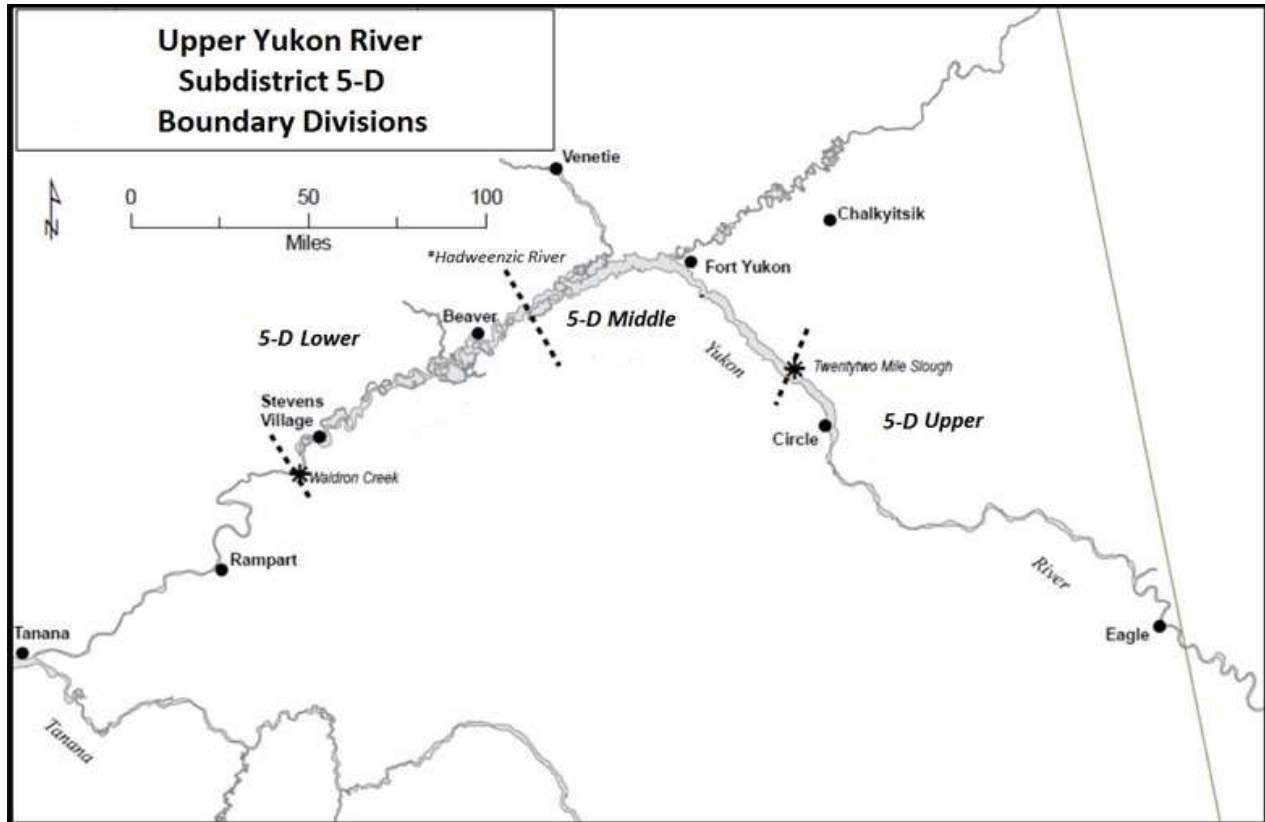
The transition to fall season management begins 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, August 17. Chum and Chinook salmon fishing will remain closed. Dip nets may be used for nonsalmon. However, chum and Chinook salmon must be released alive. **Once fall season management begins, manned fish wheels and dip nets may be 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.** 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):

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 begins 12:01 a.m. Tuesday, August 16. Chum and Chinook salmon fishing will remain closed. Dip nets may currently 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.**

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/.

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 begins 12:01 a.m. Tuesday, August 16. Personal Use salmon fishing will remain 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 begins 12:01 a.m. Tuesday, August 16. Personal Use whitefish and sucker fishing with gillnets and fish wheels follows the Subdistrict 6-C Personal Use salmon fishing schedule and will remain 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/.

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 and shared on Facebook at www.facebook.com/subsistencealaska.

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

ADF&G subsistence fishing permits are available at www.adfg.alaska.gov/store

