

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE**



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**Kuskokwim River Salmon Fishery Announcement #1
Kuskokwim River Subsistence Fishery Outlook and Fishing Restrictions
Emergency Order #3-S-WR-01-18**

This is a joint announcement from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for fishermen in the Kuskokwim Area.

Kuskokwim River Chinook Salmon Forecast/Outlook

The 2018 Kuskokwim River Chinook Salmon forecast is for a total run of 140,000–193,000 fish. The drainage-wide Chinook salmon escapement goal is 65,000–120,000 fish. If the run comes back as projected, the drainagewide escapement goal is expected to be achieved and there may be enough available surplus to meet subsistence needs.

Based on the *Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan* (5 AAC 07.365(2)) and the 2018 Chinook salmon forecast, the departments preseason management strategy is to put in place the front end closure (**dates and times listed below**), then after which, at least one subsistence fishing period per week may be provided if the run is developing as expected. The department will be assessing the run inseason through the Bethel Test Fishery, Kuskokwim River Sonar, and the Aniak Test Fishery. The department will meet with Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group weekly to review inseason assessment information and determine subsistence fishing period dates and times after the front end closure.

Subsistence fishing with gillnets in the Kuskokwim River will be closed during the following times and areas, until further notice:

- Sections 1 & 2: Beginning 12:01 a.m. Friday, May 25, 2018, the Kuskokwim River Drainage from the Yukon Delta NWR boundary at the mouth of the Kuskokwim River to ADF&G markers approximately one-half mile upstream of the Tuluksak River mouth;
- Section 3: Beginning 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, May 30, 2018, from the ADF&G markers approximately one-half mile upstream of the Tuluksak River mouth to the Yukon Delta Refuge boundary near Aniak;
- Section 4: Beginning 12:01 a.m. Monday, June 4, 2018, from the Yukon Delta Refuge boundary near Aniak to the ADF&G regulatory markers near the Holitna River mouth; and
- Section 5: Beginning 12:01 a.m. Saturday, June 9, 2018, upstream of the ADF&G regulatory markers located near the Holitna River mouth to the headwaters of the Kuskokwim River.

The following subsistence fishing restrictions and tributary gillnet fishing closures go into effect beginning 12:01 a.m. Friday, May 25, 2017 until further notice:

- The Kwethluk River drainage including its confluence with Kuskokuak Slough and downstream to ADF&G regulatory markers located at the downstream mouth of the slough.
- The Kasigluk and Kisaralik river drainages including Old Kuskokuak Slough to ADF&G regulatory markers at the confluence of Old Kuskokuak Slough with Kuskokuak Slough.
- The Tuluksak River drainage including its confluence with the Kuskokwim River and downstream approximately 1-mile to ADF&G regulatory markers.
- The Aniak River drainage to ADF&G regulatory markers at its confluence with the Kuskokwim River.

Subsistence fishing with hook and line for Chinook salmon will close until further notice. Any Chinook salmon caught must be returned alive to the water.

Subsistence fishing with fish wheels will be allowed until further notice. Fish wheels are required to have a live box with no less than 45 cubic feet of water, must be checked at least every 6 hours. Fish wheels may be equipped with a chute and must be closely attended while in operation. All Chinook salmon must be returned alive to the water.

Subsistence fishing with dip nets and beach seines is currently allowed until further notice. Any Chinook salmon caught in a dip net or beach seine must be returned immediately to the water alive.

Further announcements will be made from the Bethel Fish and Game office, on the State of Alaska web site (<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>), and local radio stations. News releases will be faxed to area villages and local fish processing companies. For additional information or questions regarding Kuskokwim Area fisheries, contact the Alaska Department of Fish and Game office in the Bethel at 543-2433 or toll free at 1-855-933-2433.

For additional information concerning this news release:

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