

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



*Douglas S. Vincent-Lang,
Commissioner
Sam Rabung, Director*



Contact:
 Aaron Tiernan, Area Management Biologist
 Ben Gray, Asst. Area Management Biologist
 Phone: (907) 543-2433
 Toll Free: 855-933-2433
 Fax: (907) 543-2021

Kuskokwim Area Office
 P.O. Box 1467
 Bethel, AK 99559
 Date Issued: May 20, 2019
 Time: 12:00 p.m.

Kuskokwim River Salmon Fishery Announcement #2 **Kuskokwim River Subsistence Fishery Outlook** **Emergency Order #3-S-WR-01-19**

This is an announcement from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) for subsistence fishermen in the Kuskokwim River Drainage.

Chinook Salmon Forecast

The 2019 Kuskokwim River Chinook salmon forecast is for a range of 115,000–150,000 fish. The drainage-wide Chinook salmon escapement goal is 65,000–120,000. If the run comes back as projected, the drainagewide escapement goal is expected to be achieved and may be able to support a limited subsistence harvest. The 2019 season will be managed in accordance with the *Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan* (5 AAC 07.365). It is the department’s intent to take a cautionary approach during the early part of the season, with fishing periods based on inseason run assessment and input from the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group.

2019 Run and Harvest Outlook for Kuskokwim River Salmon

	Chinook	Chum	Sockeye	Coho
Projection:	Below Average	Average	Average	Average
Escapement:	Potential to meet goals	Expect to meet goals	Expect to meet goals	Expect to meet goals
Subsistence:	Limited harvest	Normal harvest	Normal harvest	Normal harvest
Commercial*:	None	None	None	None

**No commercial buyer registered at this time.*

During the 2019 preseason meeting held in Bethel on May 17, the Kuskokwim Salmon Management Working Group supported the following preseason management actions

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. Tuesday, May 28, 2019, 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. Saturday, June 1, 2019, 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. Thursday, June 6, 2019, 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. Tuesday, June 11, 2019, upstream of the ADF&G regulatory markers located near the Holitna River mouth to the headwaters of the Kuskokwim River.

The following tributary gillnet fishing closures go into effect beginning 12:01 a.m. Tuesday, May 28, 2019 until further notice:

- The Kwethluk River drainage to regulatory markers at its confluence with Kuskokuak 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.
- All Kuskokwim River tributaries not expressly mentioned above within the Yukon Delta NWR will close to subsistence fishing with gillnets from their confluence with the Kuskokwim River upstream 100 yards. Subsistence fishing with gillnets will remain open upstream of that 100 yard closure area.

The following subsistence fishing restrictions will also go into effect beginning 12:01 a.m. Tuesday, May 28, 2019 until further notice:

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 will be 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.

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