



ALSEK RIVER SALMON UPDATE

Note: This update is intended as a message to fish harvesters. Information provided in this update is preliminary and subject to change. For more information contact the individuals listed at the end of this update.

Thursday Aug 31, 2023

Fisheries Management Summary

Canadian Fisheries:

In response to ongoing concerns over low returns of Chinook and early-migrating sockeye salmon, angling for salmon in the Alsek River watershed was prohibited until August 15, 2023. Public salmon angling is now open on the Alsek River; however, retention of Chinook salmon is prohibited for the duration of the 2023 season. Retention of sockeye salmon in the public angling fishery is currently prohibited subject to improved inseason run abundance estimates and the achievement of spawning escapement and subsistence fishery needs.

Information collected by current Alsek River salmon monitoring projects will be used to assess fishery management measures in effect and inform decisions beyond August 15, 2023.

For information on current fishery management measures, please subscribe to the Fishery Notification System where you will receive email notifications about the selected fishery or area of interest. Subscription to the Fishery Notification System can be completed by accessing: www-ops2.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fns-sap/index-eng.cfm?pg=pub_reg

U.S. Fisheries:

Regular updates on fisheries occurring in U.S. waters can be found on the following website:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareasoutheast.main>

Stock Assessment

Chinook

The Klukshu River video counter assessment program is the principal monitoring tool for Alsek River Chinook salmon. The pre-season forecast for Klukshu River origin Chinook salmon is 1,300 fish (Alsek River 5,300) which is above the recent 10 year average but below the long term average. The Klukshu River assessment program has been operational as of June 18, the first Chinook salmon was observed on June 19. The lower bound of the escapement goal range

(800 fish) was exceeded on August 3th, and the management objective (1,000 fish) was exceeded on August 15th.

The Blanchard River sonar project is operational as of June 18 and Chinook salmon counts will be available post season. Chinook salmon will be tagged in the lower Alsek River to support drainage wide post season estimates of abundance, migration, and spawning distributions for Alsek River Chinook salmon. The U.S. Dry Bay Fishery index and lower Alsek River stock assessment efforts indicate that Alsek River Chinook salmon abundance is average.

Assessment Program	Date (as of)	Count/Catch	Average (as of Date)
Klukshu River	Aug 28	1059	1,094
Blanchard River	Aug 28	Counts available post season	N/A
U.S. Dry Bay Fishery Index	July 16	169	~400 Chinook for the season

Sockeye

The Klukshu River video counter assessment program is the principal monitoring tool for Alsek River sockeye salmon. In addition, sockeye salmon passage into Nesketahin Lake is monitored using a video counter installed in Village Creek. The post-season estimate of total Alsek River sockeye salmon abundance is determined through a combination of genetic stock identification information and counts from upper Alsek River assessment programs, as well as, the use of mark-recapture techniques. The 2023 preseason forecast for Klukshu sockeye salmon is 27,000 fish (Alsek River 118,000) which is above average but it is anticipated that the early component of the Klukshu sockeye salmon run will be extremely poor.

The Klukshu River and Village Creek assessment programs have been operational as of June 18 and 20 respectively. The first sockeye salmon arrived in the Klukshu River on July 7th and Village Creek on July 9th. The U.S. Dry Bay Fishery index indicates Alsek River sockeye salmon abundance is average.

Assessment Program	Date (as of)	Count/Catch	Average (as of Date)
Klukshu River	Aug 28	2,324	5,619
Village Creek*	Aug 28	74	384
U.S. Dry Bay Fishery Index	July 16	2,601	5,778 Sockeye

*in-season corrections made to Village Creek 10 – year average.

Contacts

For questions about the information provided in this update or additional information please contact:

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