



Advisory Announcement

For Immediate Release: July 11, 2026

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Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery Announcement #19

COPPER RIVER DISTRICT: The Copper River District will remain closed. **Permit holders are advised that unscheduled announcements providing additional fishing opportunity based on Miles Lake sonar passage trends may occur at any time inseason.**

The grass bank marker line is defined in 5 AAC 24.350(1)(A) with the exception of this year's extension of the closure line across Little Softuk (**see bold font below**). This closure line is defined with the following points:

<i>Point</i>	<i>Latitude</i>	<i>Longitude</i>
Point Whitshed South	60° 26.49' N.	145° 52.86' W.
Alaganik Slough North	60° 24.65' N.	145° 36.70' W.
Pete Dahl East	60° 20.44' N.	145° 29.14' W.
West Kokenhenik	60° 14.88' N.	145° 10.01' W.
East "East Side"	60° 14.83' N.	145° 03.36' W.
Coffee Creek East	60° 14.19' N.	144° 58.01' W.
Charlie Mohr North	60° 15.15' N.	144° 56.43' W.
Martin River North	60° 15.29' N.	144° 52.52' W.
Strawberry Reef	60° 13.93' N.	144° 50.66' W.
Little Softuk	60° 13.16' N.	144° 41.38' W.

Waters north of this line, within sloughs, and in Boswell Bay within the bay (5 AAC 24.350 (1)(A)) are closed to commercial and subsistence salmon fishing during all periods.

Sockeye salmon abundance trends at the sonar indicate a smaller than forecast run with passage projections through the end of sonar operation suggesting that the inriver goal is likely to be met. Forecast, harvest, sonar apportionment, and fish wheels indicators of Chinook salmon abundance all suggest a weak Copper River Chinook salmon run. Chinook salmon abundance in the commercial fishery peaks during the end of May through early June. Miles Lake Sonar project apportionment data (Figure 1) indicate that the cumulative count of large Chinook salmon is low for the date. The escapement goal was met in 4 out of the last 7 years. The current trend in large Chinook salmon passage indicate that count levels at the end of sonar operation are likely to be around the lower end of the escapement goal.

Cumulative sonar count through 7/10 is 512,442 fish whereas 500,936 fish would be expected by this date based on historical timing applied to the 2026 inriver goal. The 0600 count for 7/11 is 2,413 fish. For the week ending July 11, only a partial Copper River Delta survey was conducted due to weather conditions. Counts were within target ranges in systems surveyed. Preliminary harvest estimates from the 24-hour period that started on Thursday, July 9 were 72 Chinook and 13,100 sockeye salmon with 158 deliveries reported. This compares to a projected

harvest of 27,000 sockeye salmon for this period based on the preseason forecast. The cumulative commercial harvest to date is 4,250 Chinook and 242,000 sockeye salmon.

BERING RIVER DISTRICT: Bering River District will remain closed. Due to weather conditions, no survey was flown the week ending July 11.

COGHILL DISTRICT: The Coghill District will remain closed due to low WNH chum salmon escapement and low sockeye salmon escapement at Coghill River weir. Through Friday, July 10, the Coghill River weir had passed a total of 5,328 sockeye salmon versus an anticipated cumulative total of 13,000 fish. PWSAC requests that the Granite Bay and Esther Subdistricts remain closed for the entirety of this commercial fishing period. Cost recovery harvests will continue at WNH as run entry and hatchery escapement warrants. An estimated 112,000 fish of the 228,000 broodstock goal have been collected to date.

ESHAMY DISTRICT: Per 5 AAC 24.370 (f), the set gillnet fleet is limited to 36 hours per week starting July 10. The Eshamy District will open to commercial **drift gillnet** harvest for a **36-hour** period starting at 8:00 am on Monday, July 13. The Eshamy District, excluding waters of the MBH AGZ, will open to commercial **set gillnet** harvest for a **24-hour** period starting at 8:00 am on Monday, July 13. The MBH AGZ, excluding waters inside a line of buoys in front of the barrier seine, will open to **DRIFT GILLNET** permit holders only during this fishing period. Regulatory closed waters in the MBH SHA and AGZ, will not be in effect for this fishing period. Preliminary harvest estimates from the 36-hour period that started on Thursday, July 9 were 10,800 sockeye, 6,670 pink, and 3,000 chum salmon with 148 deliveries reported.

PWSAC recommends excluding waters inside a line of buoys in front of the barrier seine for this fishing period to facilitate additional brood collection. Fish are being collected behind the barrier seine for brood and 10,039 fish of the 12,000-sockeye salmon goal have been moved into the holding pond.

UNAKWIK DISTRICT: The Unakwik District will open to commercial drift gillnet and purse seine harvest for a 24-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Monday, July 13.

SEINE FISHERIES: An aerial survey of the Southeastern District was conducted on Friday, July 10. A partial survey of the Coghill, Northwestern, and Eshamy Districts is being flown today, Saturday, July 11. Remaining surveys will occur as weather permits. Chum and pink salmon escapement trends are tracking below anticipated levels for this date.

VFDA cost recovery is significantly behind historic harvest numbers for the date. As of July 10, VFDA has achieved less than one percent of its 2026 pink salmon revenue goal. Samples were collected from 292 pinks on July 9, showing an average weight of 3.9 pounds and 12% female from mostly Valdez Narrows test fishing. Samples collected from 300 pinks on July 10 showed an average weight of 3.7 pounds at 9% female from mostly Port Valdez sets. Cost recovery fishing is anticipated to continue to gauge run entry and monitor fishery performance.

MONTAGUE DISTRICT: The Port Chalmers Subdistrict, north of 60°12.56' N. lat. and east of a line from 60°12.56'N., 147°20.25'W. to 60°20.00'N., 147°14.30'W., will open to purse seine fishing for 48 hours starting at 8:00 am on Monday, July 13, for a 36-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 16, and a 36-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Saturday, July 18. Regulatory closed waters and anadromous stream closures within the Port Chalmers Subdistrict will not be in effect until further notice. The estimated harvest for the 48-hour period ending on July 8 was 7,700 chum salmon with 44 reported deliveries. A total of 840,000 chum salmon are forecast to return to Port Chalmers Subdistrict.

SOUTHWESTERN DISTRICT: The AFK Hatchery THA and SHA will open to purse seine fishing for 48 hours starting at 8:00 am on Monday, July 13, for a 36-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 16, and a 36-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Saturday, July 18. Anadromous stream closures within the AFK Hatchery THA and SHA will not be in effect until further notice. The estimated harvest for the 48-hour period ending on July 8 was 5,100 chum and 410 sockeye salmon with 29 reported deliveries. A total of 330,000 chum salmon are forecast to return to AFK Hatchery. Historical harvest timing for these chum salmon is from June 1 – July 27.

Copies of the regulation booklet, *2025-2028 Commercial Salmon Fishing Regulations for Prince William Sound*, are available in the Cordova and Anchorage ADFG office. [2025-2028 Prince William Sound Area Commercial Salmon Fishing Regulations](#)

ALL buyers purchasing fish in the PWS Management Area are required to complete a Processor Registration Form. Contact the Cordova office for any questions regarding registration.

The next scheduled salmon fisheries announcement is anticipated to be released by 2:00 pm on Wednesday, July 15.

Announcement recordings are available for gillnet fisheries at 907-424-7535 and seine fisheries at 907-424-7345.

Additionally, announcements, inseason harvest data, and escapement data are available at the following web address: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareapws.main> (Prince William Sound and Copper River homepage).

Unless otherwise specified, all openings are clock openings based on Alaska Daylight Time, which is based on Coordinated Universal Time and may be obtained by calling 303-499-7111.

The department encourages commercial permit holders to renew their licenses early and to check their CFEC vessel registration stickers to make sure they are current.

The department also encourages permit holders to report observed violations to Wildlife Safeguard at 800-478-3377. Reports are anonymous and cash rewards may be paid for successful prosecution of violations.

Figure 1.- Miles Lake Sonar large salmon apportionment, 2019-2026.

