



Advisory Announcement

For Immediate Release: July 24, 2026

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Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery Announcement #25

COPPER RIVER DISTRICT: The Copper River District will remain closed. The Copper River District will open to subsistence fishing at 7:00 am on Monday, July 27 for a 12-hour fishing period. Waters within the Chinook salmon expanded inside closure area will be OPEN during this subsistence fishing period.

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 indicates 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 7/23 is 564,140 fish whereas 582,581 fish would be expected by this date based on historical timing applied to the 2026 inriver goal. The 0600 count for 7/24 is 283 fish. A delta aerial survey will be flown as soon as weather and plane availability permit. The cumulative commercial harvest to date is 4,250 Chinook and 243,000 sockeye salmon.

BERING RIVER DISTRICT: Bering River District will remain closed. An aerial survey will be flown as soon as weather and plane availability permit.

GILLNET FISHERIES: The Coghill District has transitioned to pink salmon management and openings will be in the seine section of this announcement.

ESHAMY DISTRICT: Wild sockeye, chum, and pink salmon run timing overlap is increasing. Fishing time is being reduced to provide for district stream escapement and to allow for run entry to other districts. The Eshamy District north of Loomis Creek (60° 29.44'N., 147° 58.42'W.), will open to commercial drift gillnet harvest for a **12-hour** period starting at 8:00 am on Monday, July 27. The Eshamy District north of Loomis Creek (60° 29.44'N., 147° 58.42'W.), will open to commercial set gillnet harvest for a 12-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Monday, July 27. The AGZ 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 23 are not yet available.

SEINE FISHERIES: Following the July 27 48-hour commercial fishing period in the Port Chalmers Subdistrict, the Montague District will transition to pink salmon management. Current wild stock escapement trends in the Montague remain below expected levels for this date.

Aerial surveys of the Eastern and Northern Districts are being flown today, Friday, July 24. Aerial surveys are anticipated for the rest of PWS later this week. Wild pink and chum salmon escapement is trending well below anticipated counts for this date. Future wild stock fishing opportunities will be dependent on escapement and run strength.

VFDA continues to prioritize brood recruitment as it remains well below anticipated numbers. There is an estimated 100,000 pink salmon in the SHA, with an additional 125,000 pinks in the Mineral Creek area. Cost recovery will continue to be paused to recruit sufficient brood stock to the hatchery.

COGHILL DISTRICT: The Coghill District has transitioned to pink salmon management and there are currently no indications of a harvestable surplus of hatchery or wild pink salmon. Through Thursday, July 23, the Coghill River weir had passed a total of 6,877 sockeye salmon versus an anticipated cumulative total of 19,446 fish. Due to high water, fish are currently not being enumerated at the weir. PWSAC requests that the Granite Bay and Esther Subdistricts remain closed to continue chum salmon brood collection and maximize pink salmon run entry for cost recovery.

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 a 48-hour period starting at 8:00 am on Monday, July 27. **Port Chalmers Subdistrict will then close to commercial purse seine fishing as the department transitions to pink salmon management in the Montague District.** Regulatory closed waters and anadromous stream closures within the Port Chalmers Subdistrict will not be in effect. The estimated harvest for the 48-hour period ending on July 24 was 800 chum salmon and 2,500 pink salmon with 21 reported deliveries. The estimated harvest for the 36-hour opening ending on July 19 was 1,260 chum salmon and 3,700 pink salmon with 19 deliveries.

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 29.

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.

