



Advisory Announcement

For Immediate Release: July 29, 2026

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Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery Announcement #27

COPPER RIVER DISTRICT: The Copper River District will remain closed. The Copper River District will open to subsistence fishing at 7:00 am on Thursday, July 30 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. 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 7/27 is 568,413 fish whereas 597,585 fish would be expected by this date based on historical timing applied to the 2026 inriver goal. The 0600 count for 7/28 is 385 fish. For the week ending August 1, the actual Copper River Delta survey count was 37,569 sockeye salmon versus an anticipated range of 32,568- 76,979. The cumulative commercial harvest to date is 4,250 Chinook and 243,000 sockeye salmon.

BERING RIVER DISTRICT: Bering River District will remain closed. For the week ending August 1, the actual Bering River District survey count was 5,520 sockeye salmon versus an anticipated range of 8,409- 18,499.

ESHAMY DISTRICT: Wild sockeye, chum, and pink salmon run timing overlap is increasing. Fishing time and area is being adjusted to provide for district stream escapement and to allow for run entry to other districts. The Main Bay Subdistrict will open to commercial drift gillnet harvest for a **24-hour** period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 30. The Main Bay Subdistrict will open to commercial set gillnet harvest for a **24-hour** period starting at 8:00 am on Thursday, July 30. The AGZ will open to **SET 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 were 1,740 sockeye, 200 chum, and 2,200 pink salmon with 46 deliveries reported. Preliminary harvest estimates from the 12-hour period that started on Monday, July 27 were 1,630 sockeye, 790 chum, and 13,900 pink salmon with 44 deliveries reported.

SEINE FISHERIES: Prince William Sound purse seine fisheries will remain closed. The next commercial fishing opportunity will depend on aerial survey results, escapement and run strength. Although harvest levels and recent reports of increasing pink salmon abundance throughout PWS are encouraging, conservative management is warranted until these fish begin showing up in stream counts and hatchery SHAs.

VFDA brood stock numbers at the hatchery continue to improve, as fish move into the SHA. VFDA staff estimated 200,000 fish today, July 28, in the SHA with more coming across from the north shore. Brood stock is assessed daily, and cost recovery will resume if brood stock goals are met.

An aerial survey of the Southwestern and Montague Districts is scheduled for tomorrow, Wednesday, July 29. The next rotation of wild stock aerial surveys will begin later this week. While escapement trends are improving, they remain below what is anticipated for this date. The department does not anticipate these stocks will sustain a consistent schedule of openers at this time.

Pink salmon preliminary harvest estimate for the 12-hour period ending on July 27 are as follows:

- Eastern District was 119,000 pink and 6,240 chum salmon with 46 reported deliveries
- Southeastern District was 138,000 pink and 11,000 chum salmon with 45 reported deliveries
- Northwestern District was 63,500 pink and 1,400 chum salmon with 23 reported 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 Friday, July 31.

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.

