



Advisory Announcement

For Immediate Release: July 31, 2026

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Prince William Sound Salmon Fishery Announcement #28

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, August 3 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 indicated a smaller than forecast run this season. 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 the lowest in the past 8 seasons. The escapement goal was met in 4 out of the last 7 years. This year's inseason Chinook salmon passage at the sonar ended near the lower end of the escapement goal.

Cumulative sonar count through 7/28 is 570,391 fish whereas 600,897 fish would be expected by this date based on historical timing applied to the 2026 inriver goal. Sonar operation ceased for the season after a full day of counting on 7/28. For the week ending August 1, the Copper River Delta survey count was 37,569 sockeye salmon and falls within the 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, which is below the anticipated range of 8,409–18,499.

ESHAMY DISTRICT: 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, August 3. 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, August 3. 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 24-hour period that started on Thursday, July 30 are not yet available.

SEINE FISHERIES: **Prince William Sound purse seine fisheries will remain closed.** The next commercial fishing opportunity will depend on aerial survey results and escapement. 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.

An aerial survey of the Eastern and Northern districts was flown, Thursday, July 30. There is a scheduled survey for Coghill, Northwestern and Eshamy Districts tomorrow. While escapement trends are improving, they remain below what is projected for this date.

VFDA broodstock numbers at the hatchery have improved to warrant a limited cost recovery effort to gauge run entry and build-up in the outer port. VFDA has achieved 13% of its pink salmon cost recovery goal.

PWSAC staff at AFK, CCH, and WNH are currently reporting small schools of pink salmon at three facilities. The estimated numbers have been increasing over the last three days. If sufficient fish are available to harvest, cost recovery efforts will begin Saturday, August 1.

The preliminary harvest estimate for the 48-hour period at Port Chalmers ending on July 29 was 23,000 pink and 621 chum salmon with 10 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 Wednesday, August 5.

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.

