



YUKON RIVER SALMON UPDATE

July 09, 2010

RUN SIZE ESTIMATES

Alaskan Portion Run Assessment: Chinook

Available in-season assessment information from U.S. programs on the lower river suggests that the 2010 Yukon River Chinook salmon run into Canada will be below average; this is consistent with the preseason outlook. Data from the Pilot Station sonar program, lower river test fisheries and Rampart Rapids fish wheel index program is summarized below. The Pilot Station sonar estimate to July 08 is 106,579, approximately 82% of the 2000-2009 average estimate to this date of approximately 129,300, or 86% of the 1995-2008 average of 124,400. Similarly, the lower Yukon Test Fishery index is 81% of average. It is projected that the total season sonar estimate at Pilot Station will be approximately 116,000 chinook salmon, therefore roughly 90% of the Chinook run has passed upstream of Pilot Station now. It is assumed that approximately 50% of the Chinook salmon at Pilot Station fish are of Canadian-origin (as supported by preliminary genetic analyses).

Chinook entry into the mouth of the river was delayed by ice conditions, adding to the level of uncertainty in early season projections. Run timing data so far suggests the run is about a week later than normal at the front end, but normal at the tail end. This appears to be holding true at Rampart Rapids where cumulative index values are running well below normal; the cumulative CPUE is 305 Chinook/day vs. an average of 1,248 Chinook/day.

Run Assessment Program	Date (as of)	2009	Comments
Pilot Station Sonar	July 08	106,579	average = 129,296 (2000-2009)
Lower Yukon Test Index*	July 08	17.33	average = 21.46 (1989-2008)
Rampart Rapids Fish Wheel Index*	July 08	305	average = 1248 (2000-2009)

**average number of fish caught per unit effort of fishing (CPUE) – gives relative abundance for comparison among years.*

Canadian Portion Run Assessment: Chinook

The 2010 assessment of Chinook salmon entering the Upper Yukon River drainage is being determined from a joint U.S./Canada sonar program located near Eagle Alaska. This will be the third year that this program has guided Canadian management actions.

The estimated passage at the Eagle sonar site to July 08 is 48 Chinook salmon with the first Chinook salmon being counted on July 03. Since we are just at the beginning of the

run, as expected, daily counts so far have been low ranging from 4-12 chinook/day over the past 4 days.

MANAGEMENT SUMMARY

U.S. Fisheries:

There have been no U.S. commercial fishing periods directed at Chinook salmon in the lower Yukon River. However, there have been openings for summer chum salmon with mesh sizes restricted to 6 inches or less; Chinook salmon are caught incidentally during these openings. In District Y-1 which is the area closest to the river mouth, there have been four, 6-hour openings over the period June 28- July 06; and in Y-2, which extends from below St. Mary's upstream to below Russian Mission, there have been one, 4-hour and two, 6-hour periods over the period from July 01-07. The openings were delayed until after the majority of the Chinook salmon had passed, i.e. after the $\frac{3}{4}$ point. The total combined area commercial catch to date is 109,453 summer chum and 7,473 Chinook salmon.

Subsistence fisheries are being restricted in some areas along the Yukon River to reduce Chinook harvest. Specific information on the US management of the subsistence fishery can be found at: www.cf.adfg.state.ak.us/region3/yukhome.php

Canadian Fisheries:

Management of Canadian fisheries will be based on projections of total run size and the number of salmon passing into the Canadian section of the upper Yukon River.

The preseason run outlook is for a below average to average run with a total run size of 77,800 to 113,100 and a border escapement of 50,600 to 61,300 chinook salmon.

It is too early to make projections based on the Eagle sonar counts. Based on inseason Pilot Station sonar data, anticipated catches in Alaska and assumptions regarding stock composition, the total Canadian run size is expected to be in the 77,000 to 84,000 range which is in the lower half of the pre-season forecast range. The U.S. border passage obligation for a run in this range is 50,000 to 52,000 Chinook salmon.

At this time, the lower Yukon run indicators in Alaska are below average and suggest that the 2010 Chinook salmon run size will be towards the lower end of the preseason outlook range. This would place the run in the YELLOW management zone.

Canadian Management actions for Chinook salmon Projections in the various zones are as follows:

The Red Zone is a Border Escapement Projection in the 1-30,000 range: this will result in closure of all fisheries except a test fishery;

The Yellow Zone is a Border Escapement Projection in the 30,000 to 51,000 range: this will require closures in the commercial, domestic and recreational fisheries and restrictions will be considered in the First Nations' fishery; and

The Green Zone is a Border Escapement Projection greater than 51,000: this will allow for a "normal" (unrestricted) First Nations fishery and commercial, domestic and recreational fisheries will be allowed but managed according to available abundance within the Green Zone.

Fishery	Status	Comments
Upper Yukon First Nations Fishery	OPEN	
Recreational Fishery	CLOSED	daily catch and possession limits for Chinook salmon in the Yukon drainage are reduced to zero midnight July 09, 2010.
Domestic Fishery	CLOSED	
Commercial Fishery	CLOSED	

For more information please contact:

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