



YUKON RIVER SALMON UPDATE



Thursday, August 16, 2018

Note: This update is intended to inform fish harvesters. Information provided in this update is preliminary and subject to change. For more information please refer to the contacts identified at the end of this update.

Chinook Salmon Fishery Management

Management of Chinook salmon in Canada is guided by the 2018 Integrated Fisheries Management Plan for Yukon River Chinook and fall chum salmon (the IFMP). The IFMP was developed based on the management and allocation recommendations provided by the Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee and considered (among other things) that the pre-season forecast was for weak run (71,000 to 103,000).

The management plan also recognizes that Yukon River Chinook salmon productivity has been consistently low for the past 11 years, the minimum spawning escapement target was not achieved in 5 of the past 11 years. A conservative approach is required to provide for the long-term recovery and sustainability of the population.

Fishery management decisions are based on projections of run size of Chinook salmon returning to the upper Yukon River in Canada. The basis for fishery management actions considers the spawning escapement target as the primary objective, followed by the availability of harvest share allocation in accordance with the *Yukon River Salmon Agreement* and finally in order of Canadian Yukon River salmon fishery priority (1. First Nation, 2. Public Angling, 3. Domestic and Commercial). Specific allocations to fisheries are contingent on the overall abundance of salmon. It is important to note that some First Nation Governments have developed and implemented local management plans that define specific First Nation fishery management actions.



Chinook Salmon In-Season Assessment

Information from the Pilot Station sonar in the lower Yukon River in Alaska provides an early-season indication of run strength of Canadian-origin Chinook salmon. There is uncertainty associated with the Pilot Station estimate due to two principal challenges: 1) co-migration of Chinook salmon with several other fish species of similar size (species apportionment uncertainty), and 2) distinction of Canadian-origin Chinook salmon from U.S.-origin Chinook Salmon (stock distinction uncertainty based on genetic analysis).

In the upper Yukon River, the principle estimate of the number of Chinook salmon returning to Canada is obtained from the Eagle Sonar Assessment Program that is located immediately downstream of the international border at Eagle, Alaska. In addition, the number of Chinook salmon returning to the Porcupine River are estimated using the Porcupine Sonar Assessment Program located near Old Crow. There is a high degree of confidence in the estimated number of Chinook salmon migrating past the Eagle and Porcupine River Assessment Programs as Chinook salmon are the only upstream migrating species of salmon present at the sites in June and July and all Chinook salmon are Canadian origin. Canadian fishery management decisions are largely based on border passage estimates determined by the Eagle Sonar Program.

In-Season Chinook Salmon Abundance Estimate - Pilot Station Sonar (Mouth)

Date	% Passage complete	Cumulative Passage Estimate		Run Size Projection
Aug 15	100%	Total (U.S. & Canadian-origin)	Canadian-origin	Lower end of Pre-season range
		161,899	71,924*	

*based on preliminary in-season genetic analysis

In-Season Chinook Salmon Abundance Estimate - Eagle Sonar (Mainstem US/Canada Border)

Date	% Passage complete	Cumulative Passage Estimate	Run Size Projection
Aug 15	~98%	57,610	Near Average

In-Season Chinook Salmon Abundance Estimate - Porcupine Sonar (Porcupine River upstream of US/Canada Border near Old Crow)

Date	% Passage complete	Cumulative Passage Estimate	Run Size Projection
Aug 13	N/A	3,249	Below Average



In-Season Chinook Salmon Abundance Estimate – various projects

Project	Date	Cumulative Passage Estimate	Compared to Average (for this date)
Pelly Sonar	Aug 14	9,251	Above Average
Blind Creek	Aug 15	590	Near Average
Big Salmon Sonar	Aug 14	4,632	Near Average
Takhini Sonar	Aug 14	462	Too early
Whitehorse Fishway	Aug 16	246	Too early

Chinook Salmon Run Summary and Associated Management Actions

The 2018 pre-season forecast was for a run of 71,000 to 103,000 Canadian-origin Chinook salmon. Information from the Pilot Station Sonar indicates the run is near the lower end of the pre-season forecast range. Eagle sonar estimates indicate that the run is strong enough to support a conservative harvest by First Nations and meet escapement objectives.

Chinook Salmon Management Zone and Fishery Status

Date	Current Management Zone	Fishery			
		First Nation	Recreational	Commercial	Domestic
August 16	YELLOW	Harvest opportunities at discretion of First Nation Governments. Conservative harvest approach	No retention permitted	Closed	Closed

Notifications About Fishery Management Actions

Canadian First Nation Subsistence Fisheries – Fisheries and Oceans Canada communicates directly with Yukon River First Nation Governments by way of recommendations and issuance of an *Aboriginal Communal Salmon Fishing Licence* issued to interested First Nations.

Canadian Recreational, Domestic, and Commercial Fisheries – Information is available via the Fishery Notification System at: <http://notices.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fns-sap/index-eng.cfm>
Fishers are encouraged to subscribe to receive automatic notifications on fisheries of interest via email at: http://www-ops2.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fns-sap/index-eng.cfm?pg=pub_reg

U.S. Fisheries – Information on fisheries in U.S. portion of the Yukon River is available at: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareayukon.salmon>



Contacts

For further information:

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