



Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee
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Public Announcement - Yukon River Chinook Public Angling Fishery

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For Immediate Release

On June 7th, prior to the arrival of Chinook Salmon in the Yukon River, the Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee (YSSC) recommended to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada that there should be no allocation of Chinook Salmon to the public angling fishery at the start of the season. This recommendation was based largely on the high level of uncertainty associated with the range of pre-season projections which at the low end would mean a limited First Nation subsistence fishery.

The YSSC also recommended that should the in-season run information indicate that spawning escapement objectives would be met and First Nation subsistence fisheries not be limited, there should be a consideration for some public angling fishing openings and opportunities to retain Chinook salmon.

Based on the current in-season information with the Yukon River Chinook Salmon run returning to Canada on the low end of the pre-season projection and the likelihood that First Nation subsistence needs will not be met, **there will be no retention of Chinook Salmon for other fisheries on the Yukon River at this time.**

YSSC Chair Harvey Jessup states, "the YSSC and management partners have been watching the Chinook closely as they entered the river and travelled through the lower river in Alaska. We are now seeing the salmon enter Canada and while not a strong run, we are hopeful that we can meet spawning escapement objectives on our side of the border. It is looking like another season of sacrifice on behalf of Yukon First Nations, public anglers, commercial fishers and the public in general".

While at the low end of the pre-season projection, Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) and management partners in Alaska suggest that the internationally agreed upon spawning escapement goals are likely to be achieved.

Due to the long-term productivity issues and declining runs surrounding Yukon River Chinook there has not been a public angling fishery on the Yukon River in close to a decade. The YSSC will continue to work with all management partners to engage public anglers and the general public to ensure adequate input into Yukon River salmon management.

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For more information or to schedule an interview contact YSSC Chair, Harvey Jessup, at yssc.harvey@icloud.com or 867-336-3474.

Yukon River Chinook Salmon Management Background:

- The Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee (YSSC) is established and mandated under Yukon First Nation Final Agreements (YFNFA) to be the "the main instrument of salmon management in Yukon".
- Section 16.7.17.12 of the YFNFA instructs that, after consultation with affected Yukon First Nations and the public, the YSSC shall make recommendations to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) on allocation, in amount by area, of salmon to users. Users include First Nation subsistence, public anglers (recreational or sport-fishers), commercial and domestic fisheries.
- The Yukon River Panel was established pursuant to the *Yukon River Salmon Agreement* between Alaska and Canada. The Yukon River Panel sets the internationally agreed upon spawning escapement goal which is 42,000-55,000 Canadian-origin Chinook salmon.
- The Canadian 2018 Integrated Fishery Management Plan for Chinook salmon provides for a Canadian spawning escapement target at the mid range of 48,750.
- Early season fishery management strategy is based on the 2018 pre-season forecast. In-season management decisions are informed by Pilot Station (Alaska near the mouth of the river) and Eagle (Alaska near Canada/US border) estimates.
- Canadian fisheries include: First Nation subsistence, public angling, and commercial/domestic.
- Priority of allocation is based on spawning and conservation objectives, First Nation, public angling and domestic/commercial fisheries.
- Total Chinook salmon entrance into the river as of July 16 is ~ 158,500 with those destined for Canada (Canadian-origin Chinook) is estimated between 62,000 and 84,000 with the run 98% complete. Projected total at this time is a Canadian origin run size of 74,000.
- The Canadian origin pre-season forecast was for 71,000 to 103,000 Chinook salmon.