

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE**



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2017 Kuskokwim River Chinook Salmon Outlook

This is an announcement from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in Bethel for salmon fishermen in the Kuskokwim River Drainage.

Chinook Salmon Forecast

The 2017 Kuskokwim River Chinook salmon forecast is for a range of 132,000–222,000 fish. The drainage-wide Chinook salmon escapement goal is 65,000–120,000. The amount of Chinook salmon determined by the Board of Fish that is reasonably necessary for subsistence is a range of 67,200–109,800 fish. If the run comes back within the forecast range, the drainage-wide escapement goal is expected to be achieved and there may be enough Chinook to meet subsistence needs.

Kuskokwim River Management Strategy

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), who has delegated authority from the Federal Subsistence Board (FSB), in collaboration with the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (KRSMWG), an ADF&G advisory body, and the Kuskokwim River Intertribal Fisheries Commission (KRITFC), a body that represents the Kuskokwim River Tribes and shares a collaborative management relationship with the USFWS, a finalized set of conservation measures for the 2017 Chinook

salmon season will be developed. It is the intent of both agencies to provide more directed Chinook salmon subsistence harvest opportunity than in recent years.

Management actions that may be in place during the 2017 subsistence fishing season include, but are not limited to:

- Early season Chinook salmon subsistence fishery closure;
- Tributary closures;
- Gillnet mesh size and length restrictions;
- Live release of Chinook salmon from dip nets, fish wheels, seines etc.;
- Time and area restrictions and;
- Subsistence hook and line bag and possession limits.

As additional information useful for assessing run strength becomes available in-season, ADF&G and USFWS will work closely with the KRSMWG and KRITFC to determine if and when early season conservation measures could be relaxed or rescinded.

For additional information concerning this news release:

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