

Submitted by Board Member Henaayee Irwin, prepared by the Alaska Department of Fish and Gameⁱ.

March 20, 2026

Substitute language for Yukon River King Salmon Stock of Concern Management Plan

5 AAC Chapter 01 is amended by adding a new section to read:

5 AAC 01.XXX Yukon River Fall Chum Salmon Stock of Concern Management Plan

(a) The purpose of this management plan is to provide the department with tools and guidelines for managing Yukon River salmon fisheries consistent with AS 16.05.258, 5 AAC 39.220, 5 AAC 39.222 and the Pacific Salmon Treaty. While Yukon River fall chum salmon are designated as a stock of management concern, this plan is intended to ensure run sizes at levels sufficient to meet established escapement goals, while also allowing for harvest opportunities in subsistence, sport, and commercial fisheries, consistent with AS 16.05.258.

(b) When Yukon fall chum salmon are designated as a stock of management concern, the department shall implement the Yukon River Drainage Fall Chum Salmon Management Plan (5 AAC 01.249) from July 13 through December 31.

(c) Commercial fisheries in the Yukon River drainage shall be prohibited from July 13 through December 31 when the projected run size is less than 550,000 fall chum salmon as specified in 5 AAC 01.249(5).

(d) Sport fishing for Yukon Chum will be restricted in the Yukon River drainage until subsistence opportunities are provided.

(e) Personal use fisheries will be managed in accordance with 5AAC 77.171-174 if subsistence opportunities are provided.

(f) The Department shall manage for subsistence fisheries opportunity as follows:

1) Should the department identify that a harvestable surplus is expected to exist in excess of 300,000 fall chum salmon, subsistence fishing opportunities shall be provided consistent with precautionary management principles of 5 AAC 39.222, to achieve the drainagewide or tributary-specific escapement goals.

(g) In addition to management measures specified in 5 AAC 01.249, and opportunity provided in 5 AAC 93.212; the subsistence fishery management measures could be relaxed in specific tributaries within Alaska if updated stock composition and run assessment data indicates areas where specific restrictions are no longer needed to ensure the established escapement goals will be met.

(h) A fish wheel may be used; a fish wheel operated under this subsection must be constructed in a manner that includes

(1) basket sides and bottoms consisting of soft mesh material similar to or made of seine web; and

(2) an adjustable or fixed slide or chute that

(A) consists of a smooth bottom and closed cell foam lined sides; and

(B) returns fall chum salmon immediately to the water;

(3) the permit holder shall be present at and attend the fish wheel at all times while the fish wheel is in operation.

(i) The provisions of this management plan will remain in effect as long as Yukon River fall chum salmon are designated as a stock of management concern. The department may recommend removal of this designation at the first Arctic/Yukon/Kuskokwim Board of Fisheries meeting when the following conditions exist:

1. the lower bound of the drainagewide sustainable escapement goal (SEG) of 300,000-600,000 fall chum salmon has been achieved or exceeded in each of the five consecutive years; and is projected to be met in future years;
2. if annual yields or harvestable surpluses are below the historical range, the department may recommend changing the stock of concern designation to a stock of yield concern.

ⁱ Preparation of draft substitute language at the request of a Board member does not imply ADF&G support. The Department will state its position on the language during deliberation.