February 2, 2026

Alaska Board of Fisheries
Marit Carlson-Van Dort, Chair
Via email: dfg.bof.comments@alaska.gov

RE: **Oppose** Proposals 108 – 112, 116, 120, 126, 127, 129 – 133, 136, 140, 141, 143, 147, 148, and 152
RE: **Support** Proposals 135, 142, 144, 145

Chair Carlson-Van Dort and Board Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment in advance of the Alaska Board of Fisheries (Board) Alaska Peninsula/Aleutian Island/Chignik Finfish meeting scheduled for February 18 - 24. Trident Seafoods operates plants in Sand Point and Akutan that process salmon from the Area M fishery and historically operated with a larger footprint with plants in False Pass and a buying station in Chignik before a combination of factors, including decreased fishing opportunity in Area M, necessitated a reduced footprint.

Trident is opposed to proposals before the Board which seek to impose additional restrictions on the South Alaska Peninsula June commercial salmon fisheries. We are aligned with the Eastern Aleutians Fisheries Coalition opposition to proposals 108 – 112, 116, 120, 126, 127, 129 – 133, 136, 140, 141, 143, 147, 148, and 152. We support Proposals, 135, 142, 144, and 145. Trident also supports the comments made by the Pacific Seafood Processors Association.

Chum salmon interactions in the June fishery do not occur during set windows or calendar dates; rather, interactions vary year-to-year based on a variety of environmental and fishery conditions. Recent efforts by the Board, Area M fleet, and processors have shown that in-season management, with sufficient time and area to displace effort away from chum salmon, is the best means of achieving reductions in Western Alaska chum harvest in the Area M fishery. These efforts have resulted in 2025 Chum harvest reductions of 65% from 2024 and down 67% from the past five- and ten-year average harvests. Trident is committed to assisting the Area M fleet in continuing its in-season approach, as retaining this adaptive management framework is critical to further improvement.

It must be noted that Board action is swift and has significant impact on the communities, fishermen, businesses, and processors that operate within the region. Trident has been explicit during past deliberations (see attached letter from 2022) that reductions in fishing opportunity have a direct impact on our ability to sustain markets for fishermen and keep plants open. While the changes in our footprint are not entirely driven by Board action, fishing opportunity is one of the few factors that the Board has control over.

The Board has already driven significant reductions in time and area closures in the June fishery:

- Since the program was formalized in 2023, the seine fleet has collectively stood down an average of 291 hours of fishing time per year, across multiple closure types, areas, and periods, as part of the adaptive management framework.
- In 2025, as a result of the adaptive management program, the drift fleet collectively stood down 554 hours of fishing time across 28 vessels and 64 separate stand-down events, reflecting broad fleet participation over and above the regulatory requirements.
- Both the seine and drift fleets have voluntarily foregone the first fishing day of the June season every year since 2022, recognizing higher early-season risk and choosing to reduce impacts proactively.

- The seine fleet has also voluntarily conducted a pre-season test fishery prior to the start of June, often at its own expense, to assess chum presence before directed sockeye fishing begins.

Area M fishermen, processors, and the Aleutians East Borough have invested significant time and funding into developing an on-the-water program that has proven to reduce chum harvest while targeting sockeye salmon that is critically important to these communities and the State. Please continue to support the most effective system we have to balance these objectives.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Shannon Carroll
Alaska Public Affairs
Anchorage, AK

TRIDENT SEAFOODS CORPORATION

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March 11, 2022

Alaska Board of Fisheries
Marit Carlson-Van Dort, Chair
Via email dfg.bof.comments@alaska.gov

RE: Public comment on Proposal 282

Chair Carlson-Van Dort and Board Members:

On behalf of Trident Seafoods, I thank you for the opportunity to comment on **Proposal 282**, which requests further reductions to the fishing periods in the Shumagin Islands and Dolgoi Islands Area. **For the reasons detailed below, we ask the Board to delay taking any action until the in-cycle meeting in 2023.**

Proposal 282 will have a significant impact on Trident's ability to serve both Chignik and Area M fleets. Trident Seafoods is a family-owned company, with shoreside processing and fleet support facilities in twelve Alaska communities, including Sand Point, False Pass, and Chignik. Our Sand Point facility is uniquely impacted by any Board action pertaining to Area M and Chignik, as it serves as the primary processor for salmon harvested in Chignik, while also being dependent on our Area M fleet's ability to access the Area M salmon resource. Reductions in Area M harvest opportunity will negatively impact the viability of operations in Sand Point, which will, in turn, decrease our ability to serve the Chignik fleet. Both of these salmon fisheries are important to the ongoing processing activity in the region and the communities they support.

The complexity of Area M and L management necessitates the type of robust analysis that only an in-cycle meeting can provide. As noted by Alaska Fish and Game (ADFG) staff during the October work session, Area M management is incredibly complicated and acting out-of-cycle at the end of long back-to-back Board meetings is not good public process. It is important to note that the Board did not produce a decision record after its last meeting where it took significant action to restrict fishing opportunity in Area M, as it did when it made major changes to the Area M management structure in 2004. This Board has been almost entirely reshuffled since the 2018 meeting, and an understanding of past management decisions will be essential to understand the impact of Proposal 282. For this reason, it is better for the Board to take a focused approach during the 2023 in-cycle meeting, where new members can consider a full suite of information and proposals related to Areas M and L.

Potential future changes to Chignik escapement management support delayed action. In October, ADFG indicated that it was planning on making significant changes to how it manages Chignik escapement goals and that these changes will be before the Board during the in-cycle meeting in 2023. These changes will impact how the Board balances the impact of management changes to Area M and Chignik. It therefore seems premature to consider a proposal that will have significant impact on the stakeholders of Area M, before the Board evaluates how changes to escapement goals will impact allocations.

It is not clear that a conservation concern exists. Late-run and total escapements were achieved in 2021. 2021 total season sockeye escapement is near the five-year average and actually increased relative to the three-year average. Neither run is listed as a "stock of concern." ADFG forecasts that Chignik runs will meet escapement in 2022, as the preliminary forecast for Chignik is for an early run of 639,000 sockeye (escapement of 400,000 and harvest of 239,000).

In 2019, the Board increased closed areas for all gear types in the South Peninsula June fishery and closed the Dolgoi area to seining in June. These restrictions had significant negative impacts on harvesters, processors, and communities in Area M, *and have not even been given a full sockeye life cycle for the Board to evaluate their efficacy in increasing Chignik runs*. Looking at the fishery performance over the past four years, there does not appear to be a strong causal link to June harvest in the Shumagin/Dolgoi Island area and early-run Chignik sockeye; rather, the most direct connection to Chignik's runs appears to be associated with habitat degradation in Black Lake and the corresponding condition of out-migrating smolt, which was poor from 2007 – 2019. The Board should not support a proposal that results in further direct economic harm at this point, especially given the lack of corresponding benefit.

Even if a conservation concern existed, ADFG already has authority to restrict Area M harvests in order to minimize harvest of Chignik-bound sockeye. ADFG used this authority in 2018 and 2020 to close the Dolgoi Island Area and reduce fishing times in the Shumagin Islands. ADFG can continue to use this authority as needed until all potential issues regarding Chignik runs can be explored in the next meeting cycle. Please do not support Proposal 282 at this time.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Shannon Carroll
Director, Alaska Fisheries Development and Public Policy

Alaska Board of Fisheries
P.O. Box 115526
1255 W. 8th Street
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To the Members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries:

My name is Rob Tripp, and I am a longtime resident of Sand Point, Alaska. I have lived in Sand Point for nearly 30 years, where my wife and two sons were raised and continue to live year-round.

As a fisherman in Area M, I strongly oppose any further attempts to restrict, reduce, or close fishing areas or fishing time. Our fisheries have already suffered significant economic hardship from previous reductions in fishing time and statistical areas. Additional restrictions would further undermine our ability to support our families and remain in our communities.

As a year-round resident, the cost of living continues to rise across all aspects of daily life—groceries, fuel, moorage, maintenance, and parts. Many of us already struggle to make ends meet from year to year. Losing any additional fishing opportunity would make it increasingly difficult, if not impossible, to continue fishing and living in Sand Point.

Further restrictions would hit small, rural coastal communities like ours the hardest. Area M has already taken meaningful steps to reduce chum harvest through adaptive management, and the June Area M fishery is not the primary driver of Arctic–Yukon–Kuskokwim chum or Chinook declines. Salmon runs vary by river system, and continued reductions here will not solve broader environmental challenges.

Please consider the real and lasting impacts your decisions have on the families and communities who depend on these fisheries. Balanced, science-based management is critical to sustaining both fish populations and the people who rely on them.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Rob Tripp
Sand Point, Alaska
[redacted]

VIRGIL UMPHENOUR

PUBLIC COMMENT FOR BOARD OF FISHERIES ALASKA PENINSULA
ALEUTIAN ISLAND CHIGNIK AREA FINFISH MEETING FEB 18-24, 2026

The following publications will be referenced during oral testimony:

Alaska Department of Fish & Game 2025 Yukon River Preliminary Summer Season Summary

Alaska Department of Fish & Game 2025 Yukon Area Fall Season Summary

Fisheries and Oceans Canada 2025 Yukon River Chinook Salmon Postseason Review

Fisheries and Oceans Canada 2025 Yukon River Mainstem Chum Salmon Postseason Review

Fisheries and Oceans Canada 2025 Porcupine River (Fishing Branch) Chum Salmon Postseason Review

Division of Commercial Fisheries
Forrest Bowers, Director

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Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Doug Vincent-Lang, Commissioner

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Advisory Announcement

CONTACT:
Deena Jallen, Area Management Biologist
Mike Parker, Assistant Area Management Biologist
Fairbanks ADF&G Office: 907-459-7274
Toll free fishing schedule and counts: 866-479-7387

Released: **January 9, 2026**

2025 Yukon River Salmon Summer Fishery Announcement #22
2025 Yukon River Preliminary Summer Season Summary

Districts Affected: Yukon Area

The following is a summary of the 2025 Yukon River Chinook and summer chum salmon fisheries. For management purposes, the Yukon River is divided into multiple fishing districts and subdistricts (Figure 1). The "summer season" refers to the management of Chinook and summer chum salmon runs which enter the river from late May through mid-July in District 1. Management actions transition to "fall season" in District 1 on July 16 and progress upriver as fall chum and coho salmon migrate through each District. The data presented in this summary is considered preliminary and applies to "summer season" species only.

Preseason Forecast and Management Strategy

The 2025 preseason outlook for Chinook salmon was for a run size of 72,000 with a range of 58,000 to 88,000 fish. The preseason outlook for summer chum salmon predicted a run size of 1,100,000 fish with a range of 550,000 to 1,800,000. Run sizes for each species are below average and warranted a cautious management approach. The 2025 Canadian-origin Chinook salmon run size was forecast to be 24,000 to 37,000 fish, which was below the border passage objective of 71,000 fish established in the seven-year agreement[1].

Fishery management teams from ADF&G and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) formed strategies based on run outlooks and discussed management options at preseason meetings to seek public input. The Yukon River Panel and Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association (YRDFA) hosted preseason meetings in April. Projected run sizes, border passage objectives, management strategies, and research project plans were presented with time for discussion and questions. Fishermen from throughout the drainage discussed management options, concerns about environmental factors, bycatch, fish diseases, food security, and project operations.

The preseason salmon management plan, including harvest strategies, was published online May 23 as Advisory Announcement #1 and mailed to Yukon River households. Due to the projected salmon run sizes, the summer season began with Chinook and chum salmon fishing being closed. This included subsistence, commercial, sport and personal use. Closures began in the lower river districts on June 1 and continued upriver based on Chinook salmon travel time. Subsistence fishing for nonsalmon species remained open with 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets limited to 60 feet maximum length and required to be operated as set gillnets (Table 1).

[1] www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/home/news/hottopics/pdfs/yukon_river_chinook_salmon_7_year_management_2024_2030.pdf

Inseason Assessment Overview

Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF)/ADF&G and YDFDA

Ice-out occurred on May 17 on the Yukon River near Emmonak, which was the same as the recent 20-year average and slightly earlier than the long-term average (1982–2024) of May 20. The LYTF program consistently fishes the same sites to assess salmon run timing and strength as Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE). This provides an index of abundance and indicates the presence of large 'pulses' or groups of fish entering the river. Two test sites are used: Middle Mouth (upstream from the confluence of Middle Mouth and North Mouth) and Big Eddy (on South Mouth). To help protect Chinook salmon, LYTF discontinued fishing with large mesh (8.25 inch) drift gillnets since 2023. LYTF utilized 5.5-inch drift gillnets to target summer chum salmon. The test fishery itself was operated by Yukon Delta Fishery Development Association (YDFDA) and conducted by local crew members.

Crews began drifting snag nets to clear the fishing zones on May 24. Drifting with 5.5-inch gillnets began on June 2 for the Big Eddy and June 3 for the Middle Mouth site. The first summer chum salmon was caught at the Big Eddy site on the morning of June 2.

Water temperatures collected throughout the summer season were below average until mid-June and then slightly above average through mid-July (Figure 2).

Salmon caught in the test fishery were donated to District 1 communities with coordination from village Tribal Councils and the assistance of YDFDA. After biological samples were collected the salmon were placed in a tote and made available to the public. Incidentally caught Chinook salmon were released alive except for a total of 12 mortalities that were donated to elders within the communities of Emmonak and Alakanuk.

The combined cumulative CPUE from Big Eddy-Middle Mouth was 644.52, which was well below the historical median of 2,634.27. A total of 612 summer chum salmon were caught, of which 596 fish were retained for sampling. The number retained in 2025 was 56% less than the recent 5-year average of 1,357 summer chum salmon.

The summer chum salmon age composition, estimated from 419 samples collected from the drift gillnet test fishery was less than 1% age-3, 30.3% age-4, 64.9% age-5, and 4.1% age-6. The age composition for age-5 fish was above the recent 10-year average of 45.9%, and the percentage of age-4 fish was below the recent 10-year average of 51.8%. The average length of summer chum salmon by age was above the recent 10-year average. The average length of all summer chum salmon was 561 mm, which was slightly above the recent 10-year average of 556 mm. The proportion of females was 51% which was slightly less than the recent 10-year average of 56%.

Pilot Station Sonar (ADF&G)

Pilot Station Sonar is located at river mile 123 and provides passage estimates and run timing information for Chinook and summer chum salmon as well as nonsalmon species. The project's test fishery functions to apportion catch to daily sonar counts by species and sample salmon for age, sex, length (ASL), overall health, and genetics. The project utilizes a suite of mesh sizes (2.75, 4.0, 5.0, 5.25, 6.5, 7.5, and 8.5 inches) to capture a representative sample of sizes and age classes. A total of 374 Chinook salmon were caught and sampled in the test fishery. Out of the total catch, 104 Chinook salmon mortalities underwent additional sampling for fish health research and were then distributed locally. The remainder of the catch (270 fish) was released alive. A total of 904 summer chum salmon were caught and sampled, 641 were released alive and 263 were distributed locally.

The Pilot Station sonar project indicated that the first Chinook salmon passed the sonar site on June 4, which was about 6 days later than average for years 1995–2024. The midpoint of the run occurred on June 30 and was 5 days later than average. The cumulative passage estimate at the Pilot Station sonar was 60,442 Chinook

salmon (with a 90% confidence interval of 51,728 to 69,156 fish). This passage was the fourth lowest recorded at the project (2000, 2022 and 2023 were lower) and about 38% of the average annual passage of 157,615 fish (2005–2024; Figure 3).

The Chinook salmon age composition, estimated from 328 samples collected from the drift gillnet test fishery at the Pilot Station sonar project (all mesh sizes combined), was 18.0% age-4, 64.6% age-5, 15.5% age-6, and 1.8% age-7. The age composition for age-6 fish was well below the recent 10-year average of 37.7%, while the percentage of age-4 and age-5 fish were both above the 10-year averages of 11.1% and 48.1% respectively. The average length of all Chinook salmon sampled at Pilot Station sonar was 695 mm and below the historical average (739 mm). The proportion of females was 25.7%.

Genetic mixed stock analysis (MSA) at the Pilot Station sonar site of Canadian-origin Chinook salmon indicated that the early group and first pulse of Chinook salmon (June 4 to June 23) were 45% Canadian-origin. The second pulse of Chinook salmon at the sonar (June 24 to July 3) was made up of 49% Canadian-origin fish. Genetic MSA of the third pulse and remaining groups of Chinook salmon observed at the sonar (July 4 to August 8) indicated that 36% of the fish were Canadian-origin. Overall, Canadian-origin fish represented a weighted average of 44% of all Chinook salmon sampled at Pilot Station, with an estimated season total of 26,506 fish. In comparison to previous years, the percentage of Canadian-origin fish observed at Pilot Station was about average; however, the strength of the Canadian run of Chinook salmon was well below average. For more background information on genetic MSA for Yukon River Chinook salmon, please refer to the department's Gene Conservation Laboratory webpage[2].

Three pulses of summer chum salmon passed the sonar project; the largest group consisted of approximately 163,000 fish between June 28 and July 4. The first quarter point, midpoint, and third quarter point of the summer chum salmon run at the Pilot Station sonar were June 28, July 1, and July 6, respectively. This indicated that the summer chum salmon run was likely 2 days later than average based on the midpoint at the sonar project.

The Pilot Station sonar estimated a total of 347,146 summer chum salmon as of July 18 (with a 90% confidence interval of 326,019 to 368,273 fish). Preliminary summer chum salmon passage estimates are below the 5-year average of 582,875 fish (2020–2024), and well below the 10-year and 20-year averages (Figure 4).

The 2025 summer chum passage estimate from Pilot Station sonar is considered conservative due to genetic analysis of salmon continuing to migrate past the sonar site after the administrative date of July 18. In 2025, 62% of the chum salmon arriving between July 19 and July 30 at Pilot Station sonar were genetically determined to be summer chum salmon. The next group of chum salmon from July 31 to August 15 was 14%, and the final group passing the sonar between August 16 to August 26 was 5% summer chum salmon. Overall, an estimated 67,426 summer chum salmon came in during the fall season (after July 18).

Eagle Sonar (ADF&G and DFO)

The Eagle sonar project, located at river mile 1,210, began operations on June 30. The project had a passage estimate of 23,863 Chinook salmon, which is approximately 49% lower than the historical average and the third lowest season total estimate (2022 and 2023 were lower; Figure 5). Incidental harvest of salmon between the sonar project and the border has yet to be accounted for and the final border passage estimate will not be finalized until all harvest permits have been returned. The test fishery caught, sampled, and released 242 Chinook salmon alive.

The Chinook salmon age composition, from 208 samples that were aged from the test fishery at the Eagle sonar project, was 12% age-4, 55.3% age-5, 29.8% age-6, and 2.9% age-7, fish. The age composition was below average for age-6 fish, above average for age-4 fish and age-5 fish and similar to average for age-7

[2] www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishinggeneconservationlab.main

fish. The proportion of female fish was 33.1%, which was below the recent 10-year average of 42.6%. Average length of all Chinook salmon encountered at the Eagle sonar was 726 mm, which is the smallest on record. Length at age for all age classes was also below average. The average length for females (801 mm) was below the recent 10-year average.

Escapement Projects

Most assessment projects operated in 2025; however the weir operated by USFWS on the Andreafsky River was discontinued after multiple years of high-water impeding counts. The Gisasa and Henshaw River weirs (operated by TCC) did not operate due to lack of funding. High water conditions in 2025 temporarily affected the ability of some projects to detect salmon passage for one to three days. However, evidence of poor escapement was obtained through local reports, aerial surveys, and confirmed by carcass surveys by boat. No escapement goals were met this year for Chinook salmon (Table 3).

Three escapement goals exist for summer chum salmon: a drainage-wide goal of 500,000–1,200,000 fish, 350,000-700,000 fish for the Anvik River and 40,000 or greater at the weir on the East Fork of the Andreafsky River (Table 4). The drainagewide summer chum salmon goal is assessed postseason by incorporating estimates from Pilot Station sonar, reported harvest, and observed escapement into a run reconstruction model. Based on preliminary information, no goals were met for summer chum salmon in 2025 and the goal on the Andreafsky River could not be assessed because the weir project did not operate.

Anvik Sonar (ADF&G) operated from June 16 to July 26 and counted 49,575 summer chum salmon with a 90% confidence interval of 48,542 to 50,608 fish. Passage was well below the historic cumulative median of 337,819 fish and below the escapement goal range of 350,000–700,000 fish. The project deployed sonars from both banks on June 16, however the left bank sonar was pulled due to high water from June 28 through July 3 and was unable to count from either bank on July 17 due to high water conditions. Partial and missed counts were interpolated and final count was adjusted post season (Figure 6).

Escapement projects on the Chena and Salcha Rivers are operated by the Sport Fish Division of ADF&G. The Chena River escapement project operated from June 30 to August 11. Based on the average run timing taken from historical data, summer chum salmon were still migrating past the site at the conclusion of the project (Figure 7). River conditions did not allow visual counts from July 11 to July 13 and July 30 to August 9, and passage estimates were extrapolated for that period. The season total estimate was 1,247 (SE = 174) Chinook salmon and 1,851 (SE = 749) summer chum salmon. Carcass surveys were conducted in August, and a total of 51 Chinook and 31 chum salmon were collected for tissue samples and ASL data.

The Salcha River escapement project operated solely as a counting tower from July 3 to August 15. The season estimates are 1,832 (SE = 126) Chinook salmon and 5,013 (SE = 570) chum salmon. High water conditions made tower counts unattainable for three days of the season. No counts were possible on July 31 and August 1 and multiple other days had incomplete counts. Based on historic average run timing, the project stopped counting summer chum salmon before most fish would have arrived (Figure 8). Carcass surveys were conducted in August and 87 Chinook and 73 chum salmon were sampled for ASL and tissue samples. Summer chum salmon passage estimates from the Chena and Salcha river projects should be considered incomplete and partial because the projects do not stay in operation for the duration of the run.

Aerial surveys of primary and secondary index streams were conducted in 2025 and included: both forks of the Andreafsky River, Anvik River, Nulato River, as well as selected tributaries of the Koyukuk River. All counts were below average for Chinook and summer chum salmon.

Fish Health

Ongoing research and monitoring projects aim to better understand the factors affecting Chinook salmon migration and spawning success. Data suggests that natural mortality varies annually. Continued research is

warranted to identify the potential causes of natural mortality inriver and improve the methods for estimating all sources of annual mortality as fish migrate through the Yukon River mainstem in Alaska. A total of 104 Chinook salmon were sampled at Pilot Station sonar site for *Ichthyophonus* and other fish health conditions. Samples taken at the site will support ongoing efforts to develop inseason monitoring for *Ichthyophonus* prevalence and severity and other research projects investigating en route mortality and fish health.

Subsistence Fishery Overview

Subsistence fishery closures began on June 1 in the Coastal District and District 1 and progressed upriver based on run timing (Table 3). During the salmon fishing closures, fishermen were allowed to use nonsalmon gear, including hand line, longline, fyke net, dip net, and spear. Gillnets of 4-inch or smaller mesh were restricted to set nets 60 feet in length. Hook and line gear could be used for subsistence throughout the Yukon Area, except for the Tanana River drainage, the Dall River drainage, and some closed waters adjacent to the Dalton and Steese highways.

Nonsalmon subsistence fishing opportunities remained open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week throughout most of the entire summer season. Fishermen were asked to release all Chinook and chum salmon alive from selective and nonsalmon gear whenever possible, and to avoid fishing in areas where salmon could be caught. Pink and sockeye salmon could be retained all season. Despite full closures for Chinook and summer chum salmon, a small number are known to be harvested incidentally in 4-inch mesh subsistence gear. To reduce the amount of incidental harvest, all gillnet fishing was closed in each district for an 18-day period that roughly coincided with the first quarter point to the third quarter point of the Chinook salmon run (Table 1).

Post-season subsistence salmon harvest surveys are conducted via in-person household visits and phone calls during the months of September, October, and November. These surveys occur annually in selected communities with additional follow-up contacts by phone and mail. Individual households are asked about their use of salmon and nonsalmon species which provide harvest estimates that are finalized and reported on in January.

Subsistence harvests in recent years with full salmon fishery closures have been well below average. In addition to salmon incidentally harvested in nonsalmon gear, mortalities from test fishery projects are distributed in communities near assessment projects. In 2025, preliminary test fish totals include 115 Chinook, 859 summer chum, 1,107 fall chum, 260 coho, and 4 sockeye salmon that were primarily distributed from the Lower Yukon Test Fishery and Pilot Station Sonar projects to communities in Districts 1 and 2. Test fish mortalities are well below average due to low run sizes and efforts made at assessment projects to release as many fish alive as possible.

Yukon Area Educational and Ceremonial, Funerary or Memorial Permits

In recognition of the persistent decline of Canadian-origin Chinook salmon, Alaska and Canada entered into a 7-year agreement from 2024 through 2030 which focuses on efforts to conserve and rebuild Chinook salmon runs. A component of the agreement also recognizes the importance of Chinook salmon for ceremonial use and the transmission of cultural knowledge. In Alaska, new regulations were adopted allowing a small amount of harvest in times of salmon conservation, following a process to provide the preservation of culture in communities, balanced with the need to ensure salmon return to their spawning grounds.

Regulation **5 AAC 93.212. Yukon Management Area educational fishing permit for customary and traditional harvest of salmon** was finalized and became effective on June 16, 2025. Part of the new regulation formalizes the issuing of permits for funerary and memorial events, and other ceremonial purposes. Additionally, the new Yukon Area permits for educational harvests may be issued for the purpose of teaching and preserving long-established customary and traditional practices.

<u>Ceremonial, Funerary, and Memorial Permits</u>

People interested in obtaining a permit were encouraged to contact fishery managers before the desired fishing time to discuss harvest needs, plans, and to share other relevant information needed to issue the permit. A ceremonial, funerary or memorial permit included the name of the fishermen responsible for the fishing gear, name of the deceased person or people being honored, fishing dates and times, allowed gear, and a table for recording harvest. Typically, a funerary permit harvest limit was for 5 Chinook, 10 summer chum, 10 fall chum, or 10 coho salmon, depending on which species were present. The permit was required to be in the possession of the fishermen during fishing activities. All harvests were required to be reported to the fishery management staff when fishing was completed. Salmon harvested under a ceremonial, funerary, and memorial permit were intended to be shared at the event in honor of the deceased.

Educational Permits

For educational permits, an interested person, household, village or tribal council, community or similar organization was required to contact ADF&G at least 15 days in advance of a planned fishing activity. Information needed to issue an educational permit included requestors name, contact information, harvest location, fishermen names, and description of the planned educational activities. An educational fishery event needed to have instructors and students and a record of the number of attendees. Fish were required to be shared with the activity participants or community and were not to be kept for personal use. Harvest limits for educational permits are 10 Chinook, 50 summer chum, 25 fall chum, and/or 25 coho salmon. The combined annual harvest limit for educational permits is 300 Chinook salmon, 1,000 summer chum, 500 fall chum, and/or 500 coho salmon. After completion of the educational event, a report was made to the fishery managers by phone or email about completed educational activities, attendance, number of salmon harvested, and use of the salmon by the attendees or community members.

These permits were issued in coordination with Federal managers. Once issued, state and federal enforcement staff were notified so they would be aware of the planned fishing activities. Other fishing regulations such as allowable gear types and specifications, marking of gear, obstructions of stream channels, etc. must be followed while fishing during the dates and times specified on the permit. In permit required areas of District 4, 5, and 6, fishermen needed to have a subsistence fishing permit. In federal waters, fishing activity was limited to federally-qualified users. For nearly all permits, fishing with gillnets was limited to 6-inch or smaller mesh gear to target smaller Chinook and chum salmon and avoid the harvest of the larger female Chinook salmon.

2025 Permit Reports

The total reported harvest from ceremonial, funerary and memorial permits was 24 Chinook salmon, 47 summer chum, 3 fall chum, and 1 coho salmon. Also reported was the harvest of 12 sheefish, 41 whitefish, 2 pike, and 1 sucker. A total of 14 permits were issued throughout the summer and fall season.

A total of 5 educational permits were issued in 2025. Gear used to harvest fish was gillnets with 6-inch or less mesh and manned fish wheels. The total harvested from all permits was: 9 Chinook, 73 summer chum, 1 fall chum, and 1 coho salmon, and 88 sheefish and 10 whitefish. About 80–120 participants attended the educational events.

Commercial Fishery

No commercial salmon fishing periods occurred in 2025 due to low abundance of Chinook and summer chum salmon and the resulting subsistence fishery restrictions (Appendix A1).

Canadian Fisheries

The preseason outlook forecast a run size of approximately 18,000 Canadian-origin Chinook salmon. Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) implemented fishery management measures consistent with the

Agreement of April 1, 2024, between Canada and Alaska on Canadian-origin Chinook salmon and in accordance with international (i.e. Pacific Salmon Treaty; Yukon River Salmon Agreement) obligations.

Preseason information and in-season estimates from the Pilot Station sonar project suggested a run below the rebuilding target of 71,000 fish at the Canada/U.S. border. As per the agreement (Canadian-origin Chinook salmon), all fisheries in the Canadian portion of the Yukon River were closed in 2025. The closure included the Yukon First Nation subsistence fishery as the Chinook salmon run size into Canada was projected to be below the rebuilding target.

As the season progressed, estimates from the Eagle sonar project confirmed that passage was well below the rebuilding target. DFO shared the in-season information with Yukon First Nations who managed their fisheries accordingly. While not all information is currently available, due to low numbers of Chinook salmon and the conservation measures taken by First Nations, there was no directed Chinook salmon harvest in 2025 and any incidental harvest in First Nation freshwater subsistence fisheries will likely be minimal.

Federal Special Action

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) have coordinated on this season summary announcement. The Federal manager issued emergency and temporary special actions throughout the season, similar to ADF&G actions. When retention of coho salmon was allowed, this salmon fishing was limited to federally-qualified subsistence users only in federal public waters. For more information regarding Federal subsistence fishing regulations, contact the USFWS Yukon River Subsistence Fishery Manager Holly Carroll at 907-351-3029.

This is an announcement by the ADF&G and the USFWS. Federal Special Actions will be posted on www.doi.gov/subsistence/fisheries-special-actions.

ADF&G Advisory Announcements will be posted on www.cfnews.adfg.alaska.gov/ and shared on Facebook at www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG.

Table 1.– Subsistence salmon management actions, 2025.

District or Subdistrict	Closure date [a]	All gillnets closed [b]
Coastal District	June 1	June 16 to July 3
District 1	June 1	June 16 to July 3
District 2	June 3	June 18 to July 5
District 3	June 7	June 21 to July 8
Innoko River	June 9	June 23 to July 10
4-A Lower	June 11	June 23 to July 10
4-A Upper	June 14	June 27 to July 14
4-B and 4-C	June 16	June 29 to July 16
Koyukuk River	June 20	June 29 to July 16
5-A, 5-B, 5-C	June 20	July 3 to July 20
5-D Lower	June 27	July 9 to July 26
5-D Middle	June 30	July 13 to July 30
5-D Upper	July 2	July 17 to August 3
6-A	June 25	July 5 to July 22
6-B and Old Minto	June 27	July 7 to July 24
6-C (Personal Use)	June 29	n/a [c]
Upper Tanana	July 1	4-inch mesh remained open
Kantishna	June 25	July 5 to July 22
Lake Minchumina	June 25 [d]	n/a [d]
Tolovana River and Minto Flats	June 27 [d]	n/a [d]

Note: Nonsalmon gear types such as hook and line, dip net, beach seine, hand line, longline, fyke net, and spear remained open all season, however all Chinook and summer chum salmon were required to be released alive. Nonsalmon, pink and sockeye salmon could be retained all season.

[a] Also the start date when 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets were restricted to 60-feet or length and were required to be operated as a set net.

[b] Fishing with all gillnets was closed from approximately the first to third quarter points of the Chinook salmon run.

[c] Personal use fishing for salmon remained closed all season. Whitefish and suckers could be harvested with other gear types following individual permit stipulations.

[d] Fishing with 7.5 inch or less mesh closed for salmon but remained open with 6-inch or smaller mesh for nonsalmon (pike and whitefish) all season.

Table 2.–Escapement goals and passage estimates for Chinook salmon at selected Yukon River tributaries, 2025.

Project	Current Goal	Type of Goal	Historical Average [a]	Estimate
East Fork Andreafsky Weir	2,100–4,900	SEG	3,953	– [b]
Pilot Station Sonar	–	–	164,347	60,442
Chena River Tower	2,800–5,700	BEG	5,049	1,247 [c]
Salcha River Tower	3,300–6,500	BEG	7,297	1,832 [d]
Eagle Sonar	71,000 [d]	–	48,483	23,863 [e]

Note: En dash indicates no goal at the project. Projects on the East Fork Andreafsky, Gisasa, and Henshaw did not operate in 2025.

[a] Historical average includes all years the projects operated fully; years excluded have incomplete datasets due to weather and technical difficulties.

[b] Weir did not operate in 2025 and was discontinued by USFWS.

[c] The tower and sonar operated between June 30 and August 11 with no counts between July 11 and July 13 due to high water conditions.

[d] The tower operated between July 3 to August 15 with no counts between July 31 to August 1 and August 4 because of high water.

[e] The border passage objective of 71,000 fish was adopted as part of the Yukon River Panel 7-Year Agreement for Chinook salmon.

[f] The passage estimate at Eagle Sonar is not an escapement estimate. Some harvest (US and Canada) may occur between the project location and spawning habitats.

Table 3. –Escapement goals and passage estimates for summer chum salmon at selected Yukon River tributaries, 2025.

Project	Current Goal	Type of Goal	Historical Median [a]	Estimate
Drainage-wide [b]	500,000–1,200,000	BEG	1,591,505	347,146
East Fork Andreafsky Weir	>40,000	SEG	53,336	– [c]
Anvik Sonar	350,000 - 700,000	BEG	450,229	49,575 [d]
Chena River Tower	–	–	7,561	1,851 [e]
Salcha River Tower	–	–	21,351	5,013 [f]

Note: En dash indicates no escapement goal at the project. Escapement estimates are considered preliminary.

[a] Historical median includes all years the projects operated with the exclusion of years the projects operated poorly.

[b] Estimate of abundance at the Pilot Station sonar. Salmon fishing was closed above and below the sonar for the whole season, however small numbers of summer chum were harvested in nonsalmon gear and test fisheries.

[c] The weir did not operate in 2025 and was removed by USFWS.

[d] The sonar operated from June16 to July 26 with partial counts between June 28 and July 3 and no counts on July 17 because of high water. Partial and missed counts were interpolated postseason.

[e] The tower and sonar operated between June 30 and August 11 with no counts between July 11 and July 13 because of high water. Counts are incomplete and partial because the tower does not stay in operation for the duration of the run.

[f] The tower operated between July 3 to August 15 with no counts between July 31 to August 1 and August 4 because of high water. Summer chum salmon estimates are partial and incomplete.

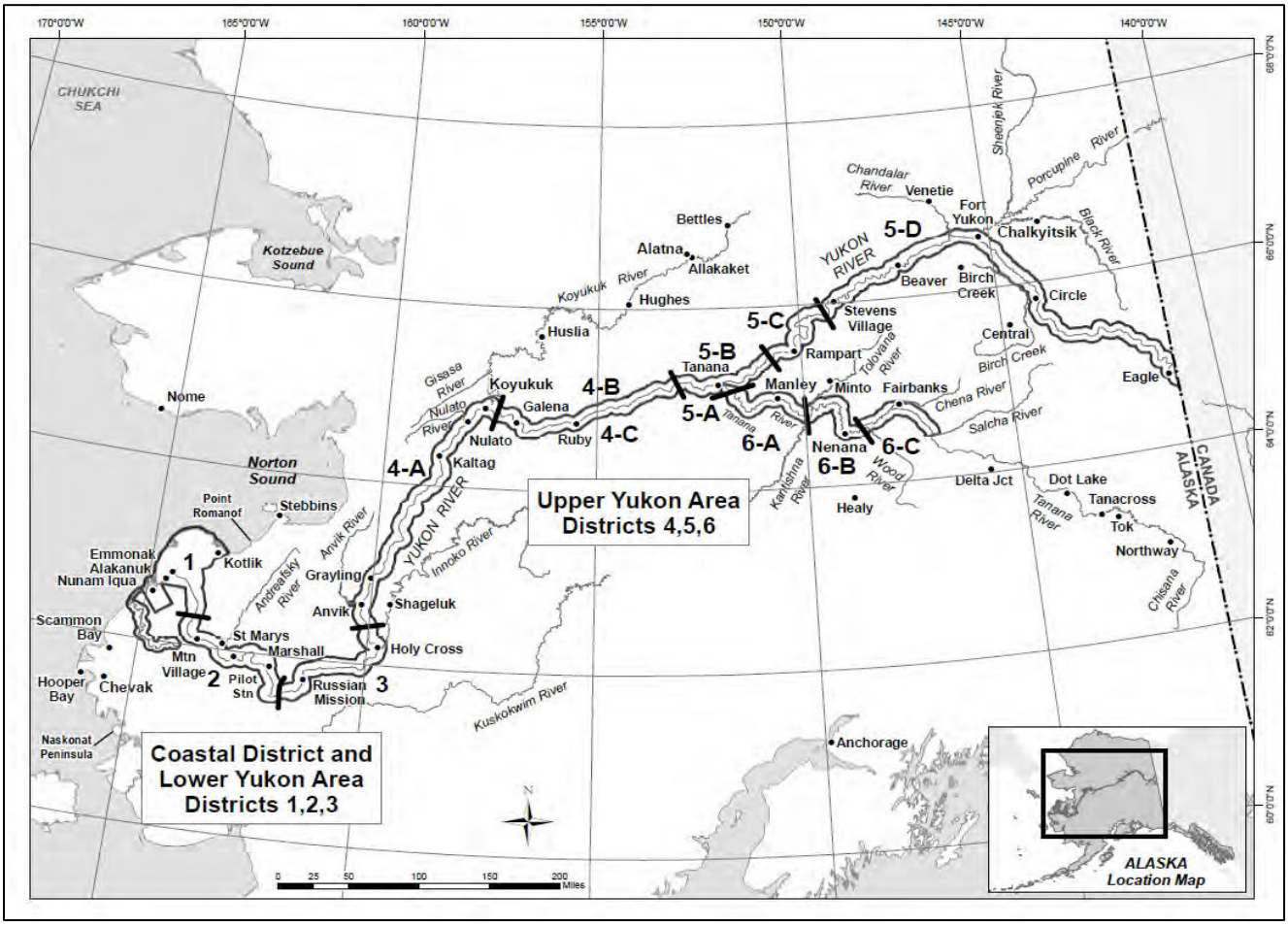

Figure 1.–Yukon Area communities and fishing districts.

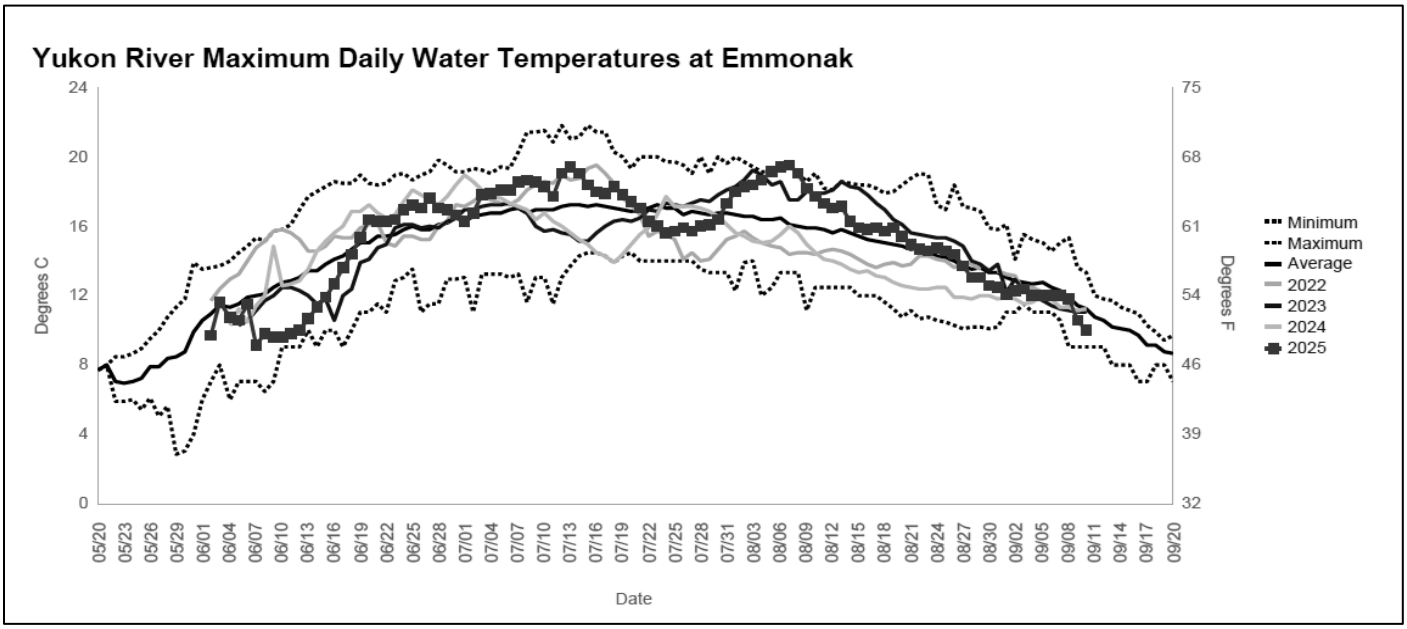

Figure 2.– Average daily water temperatures collected (from hand-held thermometers 1984–present and loggers 2004–2024) in the Yukon River near Emmonak, comparing 2025 and select years to historical minimum, maximum, and average temperatures.

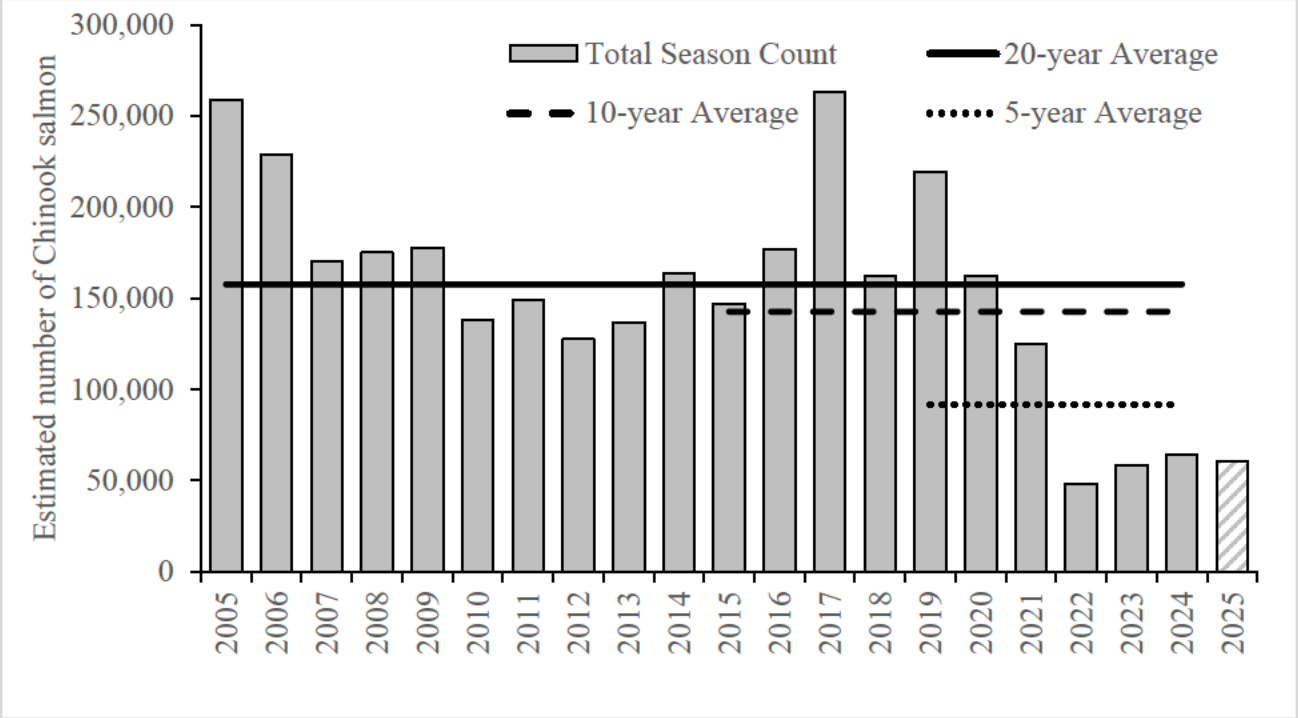

Figure 3. Estimated Chinook salmon passage at Pilot Station sonar.

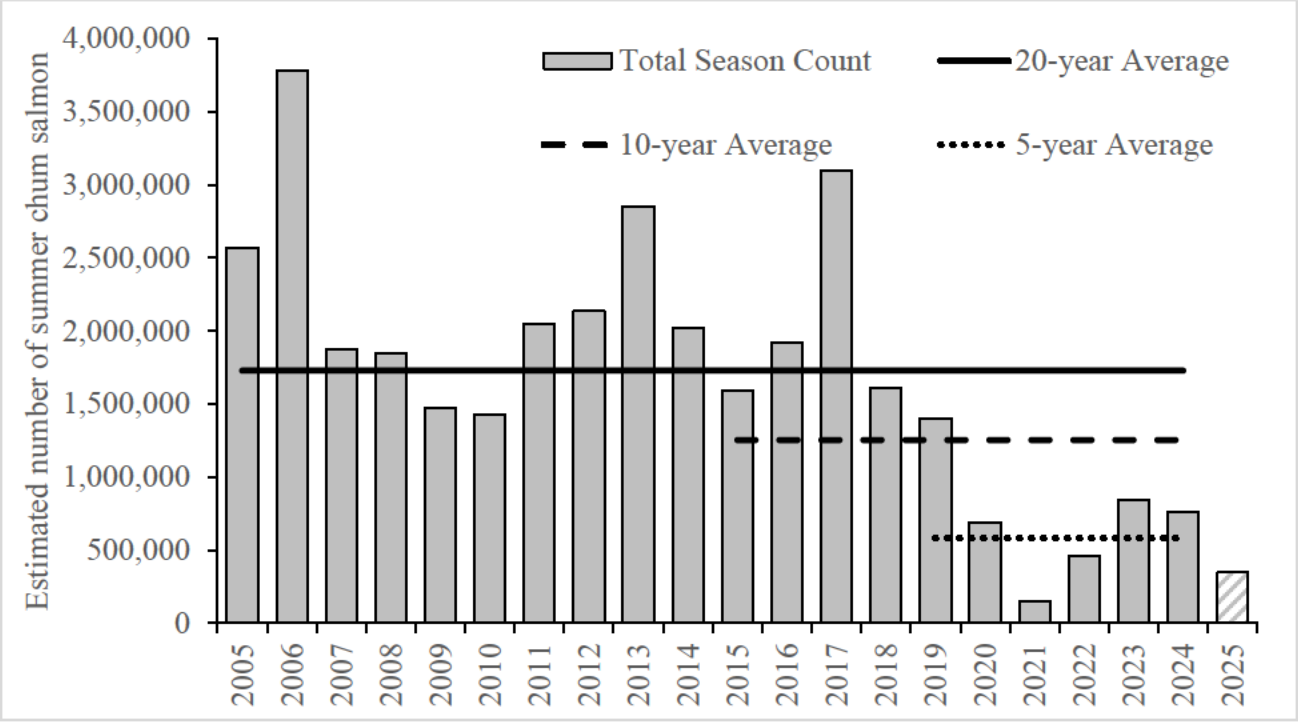

Figure 4. Estimated summer chum salmon passage at Pilot Station sonar.

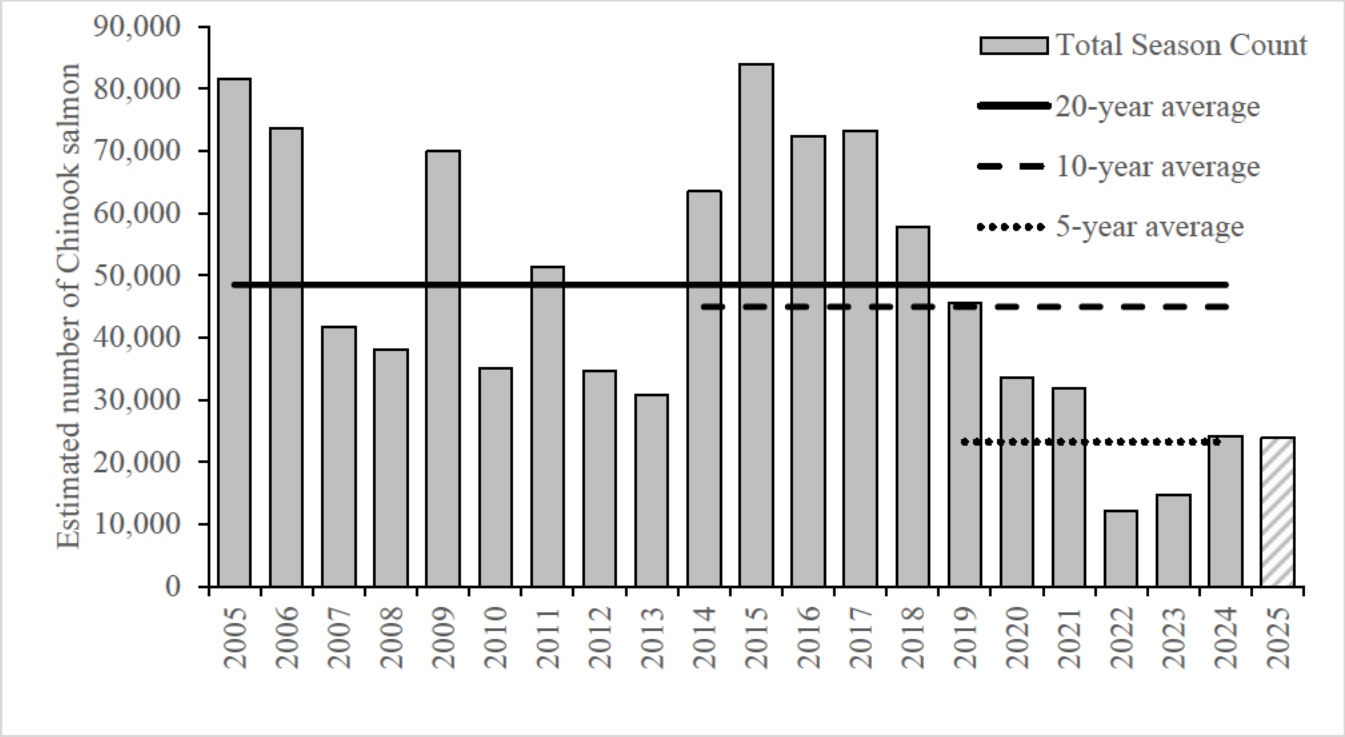

Figure 5. Estimated Chinook salmon passage at Eagle sonar.

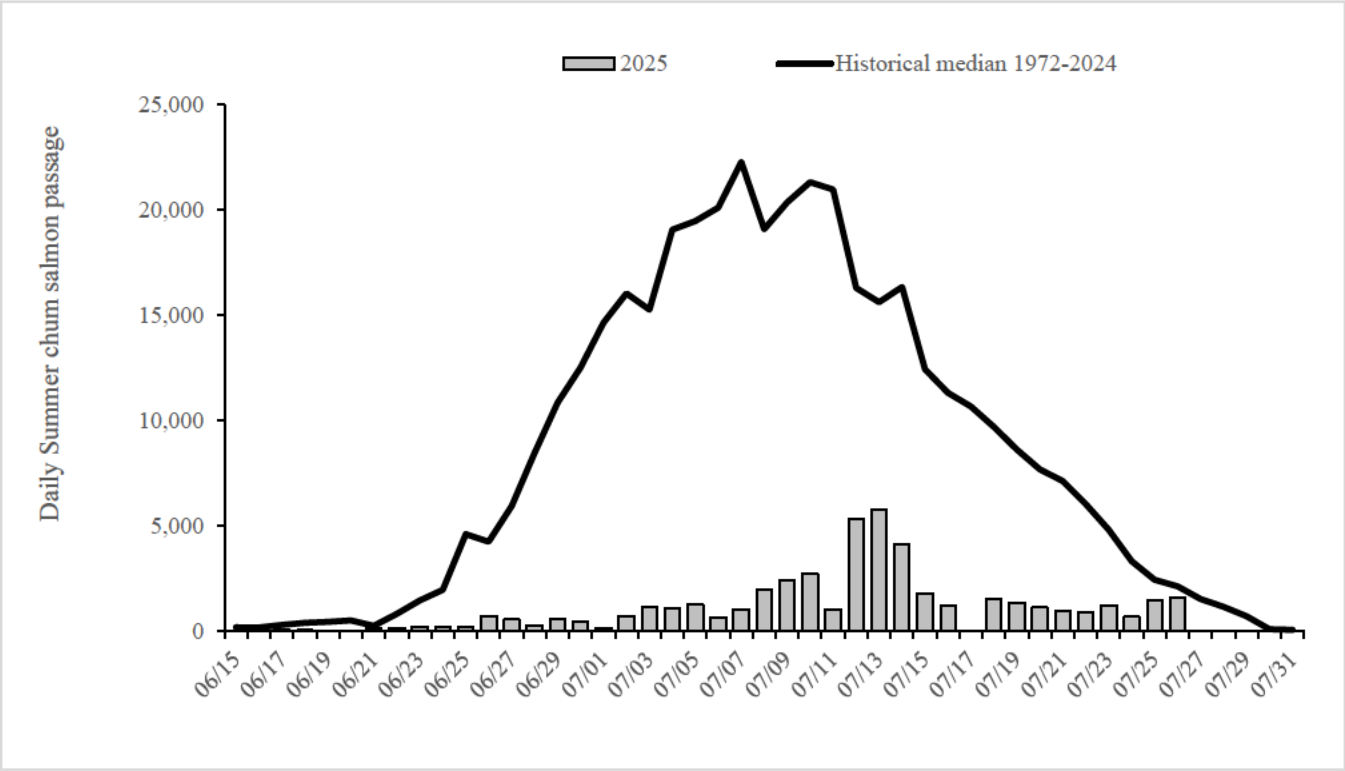

Figure 6.– Anvik River daily sonar passage counts attributed to summer chum salmon.
Note: Historical median does not include 2020. In 2025, the left bank sonar was pulled due to high water from June 28 through July 3, and was unable to count from either bank on July 17 due to high water conditions.

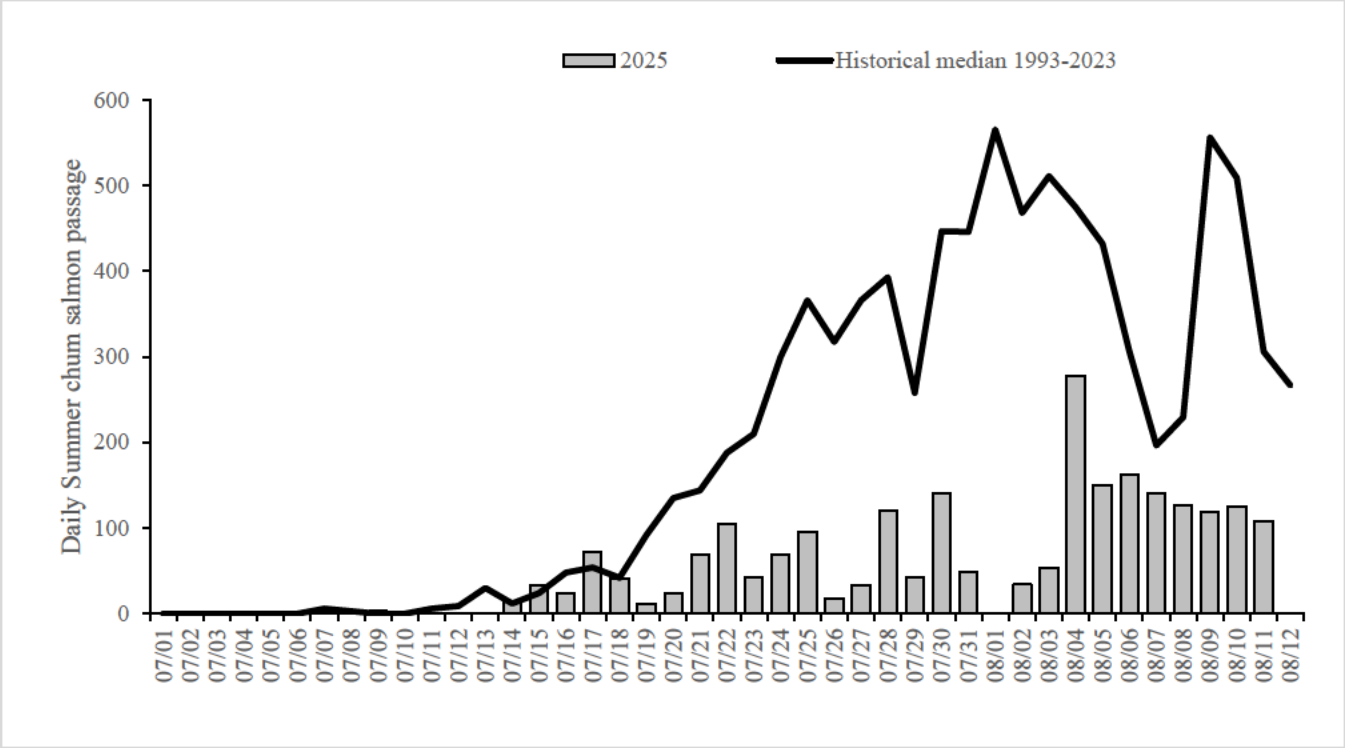

Figure 7.– Chena River daily sonar passage counts attributed to summer chum salmon.
Note: Historical median excludes years 1995-1996, 2000, 2002-2003, 2005, 2011, and 2020. River conditions did not allow visual counts from July 11 to July 13 and July 30 to August 9, and passage estimates were extrapolated.

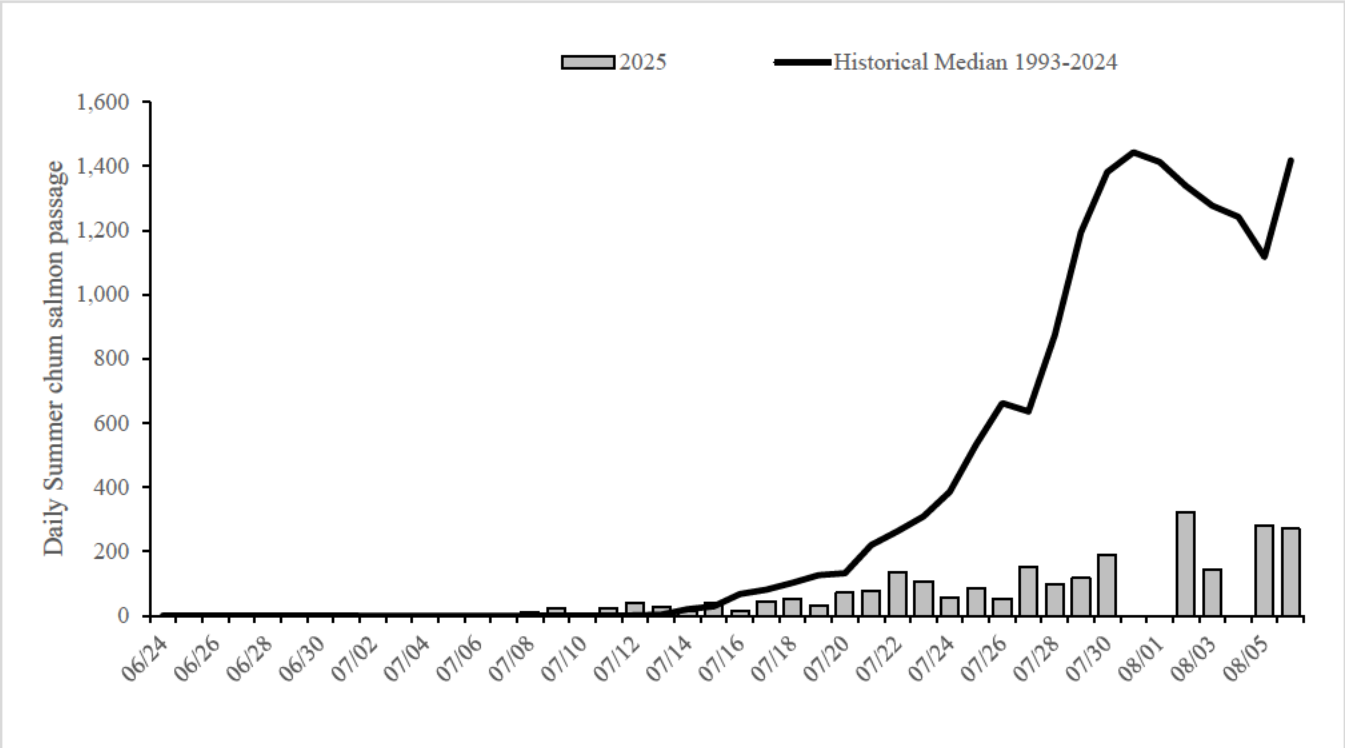

Figure 8.– Salcha River daily sonar passage counts attributed to summer chum salmon.
Note: Historical median excludes years 1996, 2003, 2008, 2011, 2014, and 2020. No counts were possible on July 31 and August 1 and multiple other days had incomplete counts due to high water.

Appendix A1.–Summer chum salmon commercial harvests by district for 2015–2025 and guideline harvest ranges.

	Guideline Harvest for Districts 1 and 2: 251,000–755,000			113,000–338,000	13,000–38,000	400,000–1,200,000
	District 1	District 2	Districts 1 and 2	Subdistrict 4-A	District 6	Total Districts 1–6
2015	172,639	181,447	354,086	–	4,770	358,856
2016	293,522	228,267	521789	–	4,020	525,809
2017	345,395	47,770	393165	159,051	4,300	556,516
2018	250,958	195,423	446,381	126,892	3,427	576,700
2019	183,658	41,835	225,493	–	1,596	227,089
2020	9,613	4,355	13,968	–	–	13,968
2021	–	–	–	–	–	–
2022	–	–	–	–	–	–
2023	–	–	–	–	–	–
2024	–	–	–	–	–	–
2025	–	–	–	–	–	–
2015–2020 Average						
	209,298	116,516	325,814	142,972	3,623	376,490

Note: Commercial harvest only includes summer chum salmon sold in the round. Averages do not include 2021–2025 when no commercial fisheries occurred.

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2025 Yukon Area Fall Season Summary

This announcement provides a preliminary summary of the 2025 Yukon Area (Figure 1) fall chum and coho salmon season.

2025 Fall Season Outlook

The fall chum salmon run size forecast, using brood year analysis was for 218,000 fish, with a range of 114,000 to 322,000 fish. A preseason run size projection was made in mid-July using the relationship between historical summer and fall chum salmon run size estimates. Using the inseason estimate of 348,000 summer chum salmon, the preseason projection for fall chum salmon was a run size of 196,000 fish. This projection is well below the 1974–2024 historical average run size of 944,000 fall chum salmon.

The coho salmon outlook for 2025 was for a below average run size, where average (1995–2024 excluding 1996 and 2009) was 211,000 fish. The outlook assumed an average survival of fish from the 2021 parent year, for which most escapements were below average. Additionally, the recent trend in overall run sizes has been below average.

Preseason Management Strategy

Management of the Yukon Area fall season salmon fisheries are in accordance with the *Yukon River Drainage Fall Chum Salmon Management Plan* (5 AAC 01.249). The plan requires that when a projected run size is less than 300,000 chum salmon, all subsistence, personal use, sport, and commercial directed chum salmon fisheries close. Directed chum salmon subsistence fisheries may open if the drainagewide or individual escapement goals are projected to be achieved. The plan also requires a run size of at least 550,000 chum salmon to allow commercial fishing on surplus fish above that level. There are three U.S. escapement goals for fall chum salmon; Yukon River drainagewide (300,000–600,000), Teedriinjik (85,000–234,000), and Delta River (7,000–20,000), and two Canadian treaty objectives; Yukon River Mainstem (70,000–104,000 plus harvest shares) at the Canadian Border near Eagle and Fishing Branch River (22,000–49,000) in the Canadian portion of the Porcupine River drainage.

Based on the preseason projection of 196,000 fall chum salmon and a below average run of coho salmon, preseason management strategies included the following:

- Subsistence fishing would remain closed until inseason fall chum salmon projections indicated escapement goals would be met.
- If escapement goals were projected to be met, harvestable surplus would be evaluated for potential subsistence fishing opportunity.
- Important fall chum spawning tributary drainages would remain closed through December to improve salmon escapement to the spawning grounds.
- Subsistence fishing with nonsalmon gear (including 4-inch and smaller mesh size set gillnets limited to 60 feet or shorter in length) and manned fish wheels would open from noon Thursdays to noon Sundays. Selective gear (dip nets, hook and line, beach seine, and fyke nets) for pink and sockeye salmon would be allowed. If a conservation concern existed for a salmon species, there would be a requirement to release the species from nonsalmon gear excluding gillnets.
- Subsistence fishing for nonsalmon with 6-inch or smaller mesh set gillnets (limited to 60 feet or shorter in length) only in designated areas off the mainstem Yukon River where salmon have not been documented migrating or spawning. The opportunity was designed to target the larger nonsalmon species late in the fall season when meat quality is best and to provide subsistence fishing opportunity in areas where protected salmon species are not likely to be encountered.
- Commercial salmon fishing would not be allowed unless the inseason drainagewide fall chum salmon run projection exceeded 550,000 fish, and a commercial surplus was identified, and reasonable subsistence fishing opportunity had been provided.

2025 Run Assessment

Assessment information collected from projects located in the lower river was used to inform initial management decisions. The Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF) which operated drift gillnet gear out of the community of Emmonak and provided run timing and relative abundance information. Also, a mainstem Yukon River sonar, located near the community of Pilot Station (Pilot Station Sonar), provided fish abundance estimates by species. Stock composition information for chum salmon was provided by genetic samples collected from the species apportionment drift fishery associated with the mainstem Yukon River sonar project. Upriver projects that monitored escapement consisted of a mainstem Yukon River sonar operated near the U.S./Canada border near Eagle (Eagle Sonar); Teedriinjik (Chandalar River) sonar; Sheenjek River sonar; an upper Porcupine River sonar; a weir/sonar project operated in the Fishing Branch River, a Porcupine River headwater tributary; foot surveys conducted in the Delta River and boat surveys in the Delta Clearwater River, both tributaries of the Tanana River. Age, sex, and length information was collected at LYTF, the mainstem Yukon River sonar near the U.S./Canada border, and from the Fishing Branch and Delta rivers.

The transition from summer to fall season management begins by regulation on July 16 in District 1. Chum salmon caught after that date in LYTF are considered fall chum salmon. Based on travel time, Pilot Station sonar began counting fall chum salmon on July 19. The transition of upriver districts and subdistricts to fall season management was based on the migration timing of fall chum salmon. Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association assisted LYTF operations throughout the season and conducted all drifts in late August through September 10. Preliminary cumulative fall chum salmon catch per unit effort (CPUE) at LYTF was 860.44, which was below the historical

median of 1,258.96. The mainstem Yukon River sonar near Pilot Station ceased operations on September 7.

After July 19, five groups of chum salmon were monitored entering the Yukon River (Figure 2). The early fish that entered in July were predominantly summer chum salmon, while fish entering in August and September were predominantly fall chum salmon. The cumulative chum salmon passage estimate during the fall season at Pilot Station sonar was 341,439 fish (with a 90% confidence interval of 319,317 to 363,561), which was well below the historical median of 653,000 fish. Once mixed stock genetic analysis was applied inseason, the estimated number of fall chum salmon was near 275,000 fish. After the largest pulse entered (August 10) and for the remainder of the season, the projected run size tracked slightly below the 300,000-threshold necessary to consider subsistence fishing opportunities (Figure 2).

Postseason, the preliminary drainagewide estimate of run size was 184,000 fall chum salmon (developed using observed escapements from assessment projects in a Bayesian framework and preliminary harvest estimates). This estimate of run size was the fifth lowest on record compared to a median (1974–2024) of 944,000 fall chum salmon.

Run timing for fall chum salmon in all the assessment projects was 2.3 days later than average. Water levels were above average during the fall salmon migration within the Alaska portion of the Yukon River drainage. Water temperatures were above average through late August dropping below average in September in the lower Yukon River and fish experienced near average water temperatures in the upper Yukon River during their migration.

Coho salmon entered earlier than the last few years but were still weaker than average (Figure 3). Inseason, the cumulative coho salmon passage at Pilot Station sonar was estimated to be 106,200 fish (with a 90% confidence interval of 96,314 to 116,086), well below the historical median of 141,000 fish (Figure 3). Preliminary cumulative coho salmon CPUE at LYTF was 248.51, which was below the historical median of 343.42. Run timing for coho salmon was 3 days earlier than average across all the assessment projects. The postseason run size index was estimated to be 112,000 coho salmon, which includes estimates of passage after the sonar concludes plus preliminary harvest. The median index of abundance is 200,000 coho salmon, making 2025 the fifth lowest on record (1995–2024, excluding 1996 and 2009).

Subsistence Fishery

The fall season began with a preseason projection of 196,000 fall chum salmon based on the summer and fall chum salmon run size relationship. In accordance with the *Yukon River Drainage Fall Chum Salmon Management Plan*, all subsistence, personal use, sport, and commercial fishing was closed. Subsistence fishing for nonsalmon, pink, and sockeye salmon was allowed using 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets and manned fish wheels from noon Thursdays to noon Sundays, and selective gear, including dip nets, beach seines, and hook and line, 24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Due to salmon conservation, 4-inch or smaller mesh size gillnets were limited to operation as a set net and restricted to 60 feet or shorter in length to reduce incidental harvest of fall chum. Chinook, chum, and coho salmon were required to be released alive from selective gears.

As the season progressed, the fall chum salmon run projection remained below the drainagewide escapement goal and subsistence fishing closures for chum salmon remained in place. Starting August 17, subsistence fishing opened for nonsalmon in designated areas off the mainstem Yukon

River with 6-inch or smaller mesh set gillnets. The coho salmon run came in better than expected and coho salmon retention was allowed starting on August 21.

Once the tail end of the salmon runs had passed, subsistence salmon fishing restrictions were relaxed starting October 9 in the Lower Yukon and progressed to upriver districts based on migration timing of fall chum salmon. However, to protect spawning salmon, important spawning tributaries for fall chum and coho salmon remained closed to subsistence salmon fishing through December. This included the Koyukuk, Teedriinjik, Porcupine, Nenana, and Kantishna river drainages.

The preliminary subsistence harvest estimate of fall chum salmon was 4,498 fish (25% from test fishery projects) and was well below the 2015–2024 average harvest of 40,889 fish (Table 1). The preliminary subsistence harvest estimate of coho salmon was 1,194 fish (22% from test fishery projects), which is below the 2015–2024 average of 5,496 fish (Table 2). Salmon caught in the test fisheries were donated to local communities and are reported in the total subsistence harvest estimate. This was the sixth consecutive year of subsistence salmon fishing closures in the fall season. The average subsistence harvest has declined dramatically due to closures to protect low returns of fall chum and coho salmon.

Commercial Fishery

In 2025, no commercial fisheries occurred for fall chum or coho salmon in the Yukon Area. This was the sixth year of consecutive commercial salmon fishery closures during the fall season. Prior to the recent poor years, the commercial harvest from 2012–2019 averaged 305,757 fall chum salmon and 110,620 coho salmon. Historical harvest, value, and numbers of permits in the fall chum and coho salmon fishery can be found in the 2021 Yukon Area Annual Management Report https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/FedAidPDFs/FMR22-29.pdf.

Salmon Escapement

Fall Chum Salmon Escapement

In 2025, the preliminary estimate of the drainagewide total run size is approximately 184,000 fall chum salmon. This was the fifth smallest run on record back to 1974 and higher than the return in 2024. With the removal of the estimated total harvests this season, the drainagewide escapement is estimated to be approximately 180,000 fall chum salmon, which is below the sustainable escapement goal (SEG) range of 300,000 to 600,000 fish.

All the escapements for fall chum salmon in the upper Yukon River (Teedriinjik, Fishing Branch, and mainstem Yukon) were below their respective escapement goals. In the Teedriinjik River, the estimated escapement of 65,817 fall chum salmon (including expansions to estimate the run after the sonar project ended) was only 77% of the lower bound of the sustainable escapement goal (SEG) range of 85,000 to 234,000 fish (Table 3). The Fishing Branch River weir estimate was approximately 7,858 fall chum salmon, which was 36% below the lower end of the Interim Management Escapement Goal (IMEG) range of 22,000–49,000 fish (Table 3). The fall chum salmon passage estimate at Eagle sonar was 18,404 fish (90% CI: 18,133–18,675) for the dates August 26 through October 6. The fall chum salmon estimate was subsequently adjusted to include 1,170 fish, which were estimated to pass after the project was concluded for winter. The preliminary escapement for the mainstem Yukon River in Canada is derived by subtracting the U.S. and Canadian fall chum salmon harvests upstream of Eagle sonar (no harvests reported in this area in 2025) from the expanded sonar estimate. The preliminary mainstem Yukon River

escapement estimate of 19,574 fall chum salmon was only 28% of the lower end of the IMEG range of 70,000 to 104,000 fish (Table 3) and is the second lowest on record. The average escapement to the mainstem Yukon River from 1980–2019 (prior to the recent declines) was 117,000 fall chum salmon. The estimated escapement in the Delta River, a tributary of the Tanana River, was 6,972 fall chum salmon and just below the SEG range of 7,000 to 20,000 fish (Table 3).

Upper Yukon River systems without escapement goals were also well below historical averages. The Sheenjek River had an estimated run size of 19,083 fall chum salmon (based on sonar); the highest observed since 2022 when the project resumed operations. However, escapements in the last four years are all well below the historical average of 93,000 (1974–2012; Table 3). Assessment in the upper Porcupine River using sonars located downstream of Old Crow in Canada, estimated 11,918 fall chum salmon which was well below the historical average of 25,000 (2011–2024, excluding 2018 and 2020).

Fall Chum Salmon Age, Sex, Length and Stock Composition

Stock composition estimates for chum salmon were provided by USFWS Conservation Genetics Laboratory using tissue samples (fin clips) collected from salmon captured in the Pilot Station sonar test net fishery. Chum salmon genetic samples processed from four strata between July 19 and September 7 (fall season) indicated that the stocks represented were approximately 20% summer, 33% Border U.S. (Teedriinjik/Sheenjek/Draanjik), 10% Canadian, and 37% Tanana.

In 2025, the weighted proportion of age-3 (5%) and age-4 (78%) fall chum salmon were above average whereas age-5 (17%) and age-6 (none) were below average based on samples collected at LYTF using 6-inch mesh drift gillnets. Females comprised 59% of the samples which was near the 2001 to 2024 average. Fall chum salmon length samples in 2025 averaged 576 mm, well below the 2001–2024 average of 583 mm.

Coho Salmon Escapement

There are few coho salmon assessment projects in the Yukon River drainage because of funding limitations and late timing relative to onset of winter. Pilot Station sonar estimated a passage of 106,200 coho salmon (90% CI: 96,314–116,086) which is below the (2015–2024) historical average of 104,000 fish. A boat survey was conducted on the Delta Clearwater River, on October 17, providing an escapement estimate of 9,760 coho salmon (Table 4), which was above the 2015–2024 average of 4,900 fish. Escapement estimates for coho salmon were also conducted by aerial surveys in late October and early November on the Nenana, Toklat, and upper Tanana river drainages; all these spawning area counts were below their respective 2015–2024 averages (Table 4).

Coho Salmon Age, Sex and Length Composition

In 2025, the proportion of age-3 (40%) coho salmon was above average, age-4 fish (59%) and age-5 (1.6%) were both below average, based on samples collected at LYTF using 6-inch mesh drift gillnets. The proportion of age-3 coho salmon was notably higher than average and may indicate increased survival compared to observations the past few years. Females comprised 48% of the samples which is near the historical average (2001 to 2024). Coho salmon length samples in 2025 averaged 562 mm which was near the 2001–2024 average and larger than 2024. Sex and length information were also taken from coho salmon (n=1,206) from the Pilot Station sonar test fishery.

Coho salmon at the sonar project averaged 559 mm in length, which was above the 1995–2024 average of 553 mm and was much larger than 2024 as well.

Federal Special Action

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) have coordinated on this season summary announcement. The Federal manager issued Federal emergency special actions to restrict the subsistence fishing opportunities for coho salmon to federally-qualified subsistence users within federal public waters. For information regarding Federal subsistence fishing regulations contact the USFWS Yukon River Subsistence Fishery Manager Holly Carroll at 907-351-3029.

Perspectives on Low Salmon Returns

As the salmon decline continues, the offspring from the beginning of the salmon decline in 2020 are returning to the Yukon River this past year. In 2025, the dominant age classes of fall chum salmon were age-4 (returning from 2021) and age-5 (returning from 2020). In 2021, the drainagewide escapement goal was not met despite fishery closures, and the total run size was lowest on record at 93,000 fall chum salmon. In 2020, estimated run size of 183,000 fall chum salmon was also well below the drainagewide escapement goal. Beginning in 2016, production has been below 1 offspring for each adult fall chum salmon that successfully spawned, with the lowest return per spawner of 0.08 occurring from the 2017 brood year. Production has been gradually increasing (2017–2020), with indications that the 2021 parent year is estimated to have exceeded 2 return per spawner, which is higher than the historical (1974–2019) average of 1.62 return per spawner. This indicates an increase in survival, although overall fish numbers were still low in 2025. Looking forward to 2026, the fall chum salmon run will be composed of offspring from the primary parent year escapements of 93,000 fish in 2021 and 171,000 fish in 2022, which were previously two of the three lowest fall chum salmon run sizes on record.

It is unclear what is driving the low returns of fall chum salmon to the Yukon River drainage. Returns per spawner can be affected by many factors, including spawning success, rearing and overwintering environmental changes, outmigration timing, and their 2–4 years residency in the ocean. However, marine research surveys focused on the juvenile life stage or the first year at sea have helped us understand the early life history of Yukon River fall chum salmon. ADF&G and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) have completed these surveys annually from 2003 to 2025, except 2008 and 2020.

One of the products of these marine surveys is an index of juvenile fall chum salmon abundance using annual catch and effort data. The fall chum salmon that would have returned as adults in 2025 were juveniles in 2021 and 2022. The index of fall chum salmon abundance in 2021 was the highest observed in the time series, but the 2022 index was well below average. Juvenile chum salmon in both 2021 and 2022 had above-average energy density, a measure of how much fat is stored in their bodies in preparation for their first winter at sea. We expect that juveniles with higher energy density will have a higher chance of surviving their first winter in the ocean. While abundance and energy density appeared adequate for juveniles entering their first winter in the ocean in 2021, it is possible these fall chum salmon experienced higher mortality in the marine environment before returning as adults to the Yukon River in 2025. These 2021 juveniles would have returned as age-5 adults in 2025, and the age-5 component of fall chum as well-below the long-term average.

The juvenile fall chum salmon abundance index from the 2025 Northern Bering Sea survey was below average. Estimates of energy density for these juveniles are not yet available. However, the low abundance index suggests that fall chum salmon returns may not improve over the next few years. Juvenile chum salmon caught in the 2025 survey will return as adults primarily in the 2028 and 2029 runs. ADF&G staff are leading the development of juvenile chum salmon forecast models in hopes that future run sizes of Yukon River fall chum salmon can be predicted. The results of model progress will be shared in future public meetings.

ADF&G is committed to investigating the cause of the recent Pacific salmon declines, especially regarding returns to the Yukon Area. If you have further questions on upcoming marine salmon research efforts, contact Sabrina Garcia at sabrina.garcia@alaska.gov. Research updates are shared on https://www.facebook.com/ADFGUnderseaWorldOfSalmonAndSharks.

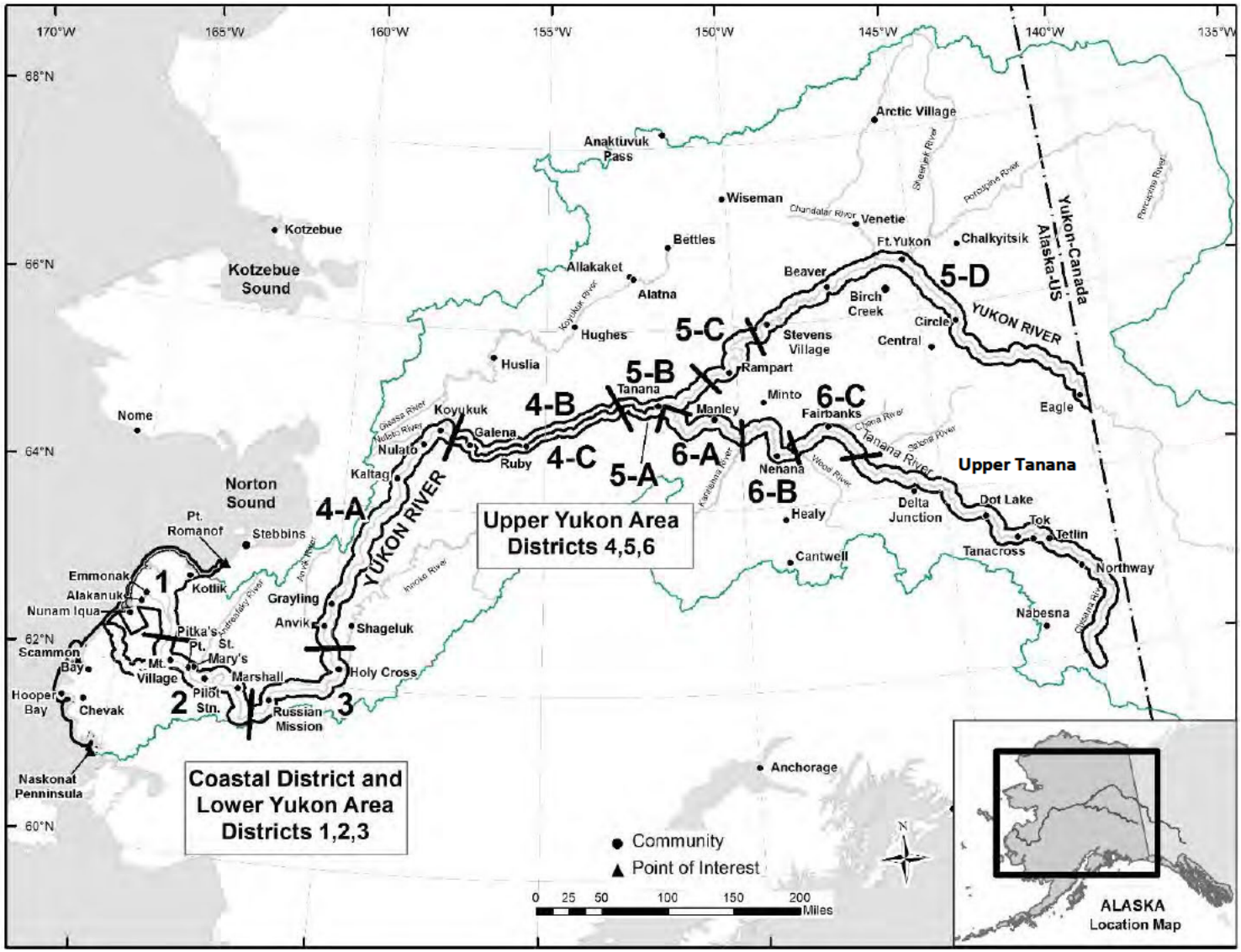


Figure 1.–Alaska portion of the Yukon River drainage showing communities and fishing districts.

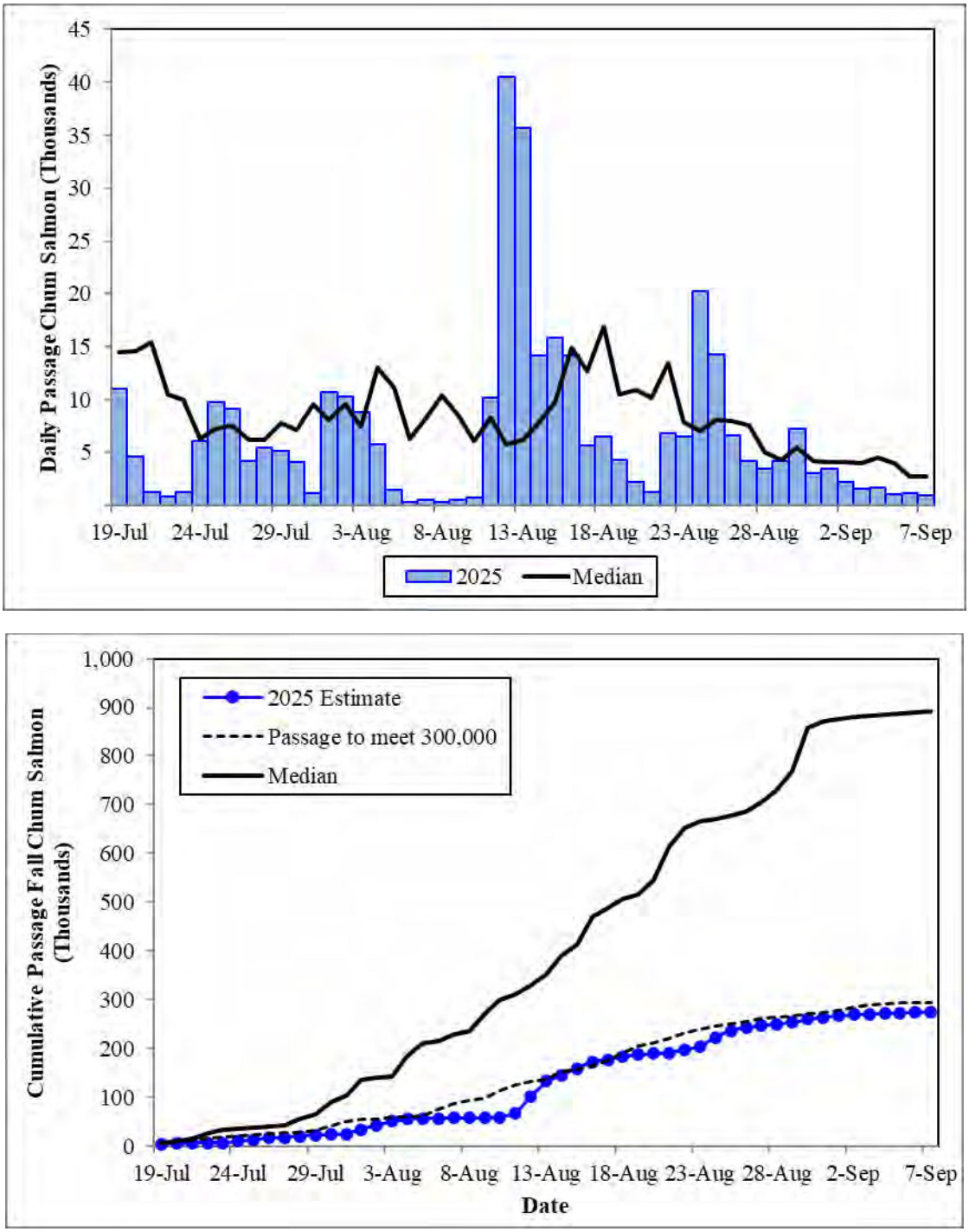


Figure 2.–Estimated daily passage of chum salmon (top) based on the Yukon River mainstem sonar (Pilot Station) and cumulative fall chum salmon based on genetics for 2025 (bottom), compared to historical (1995, 1997–2008, and 2010–2024) median run size. The dashed line is the passage required to meet the minimum management requirement of 300,000 fish to allow subsistence fishing.

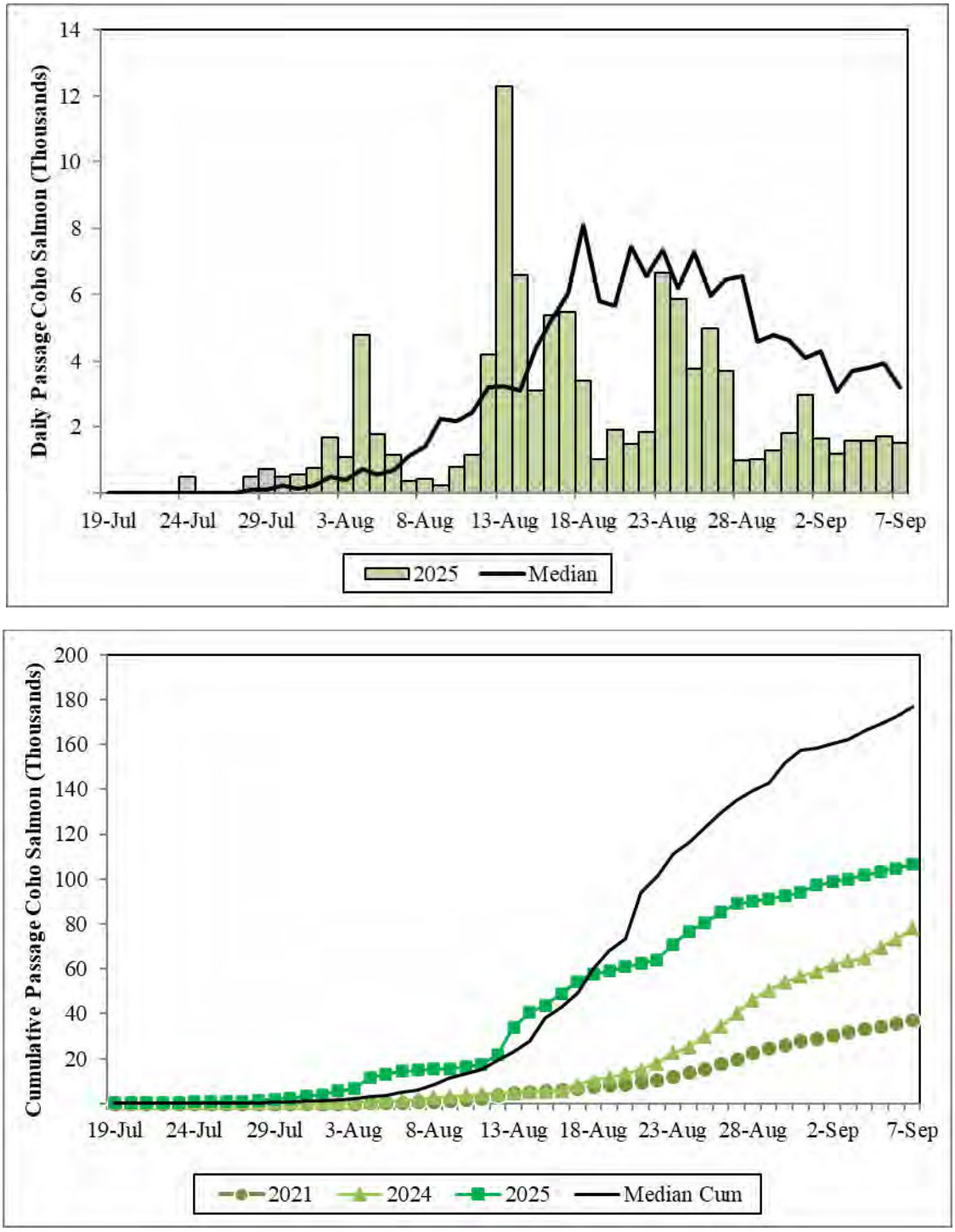
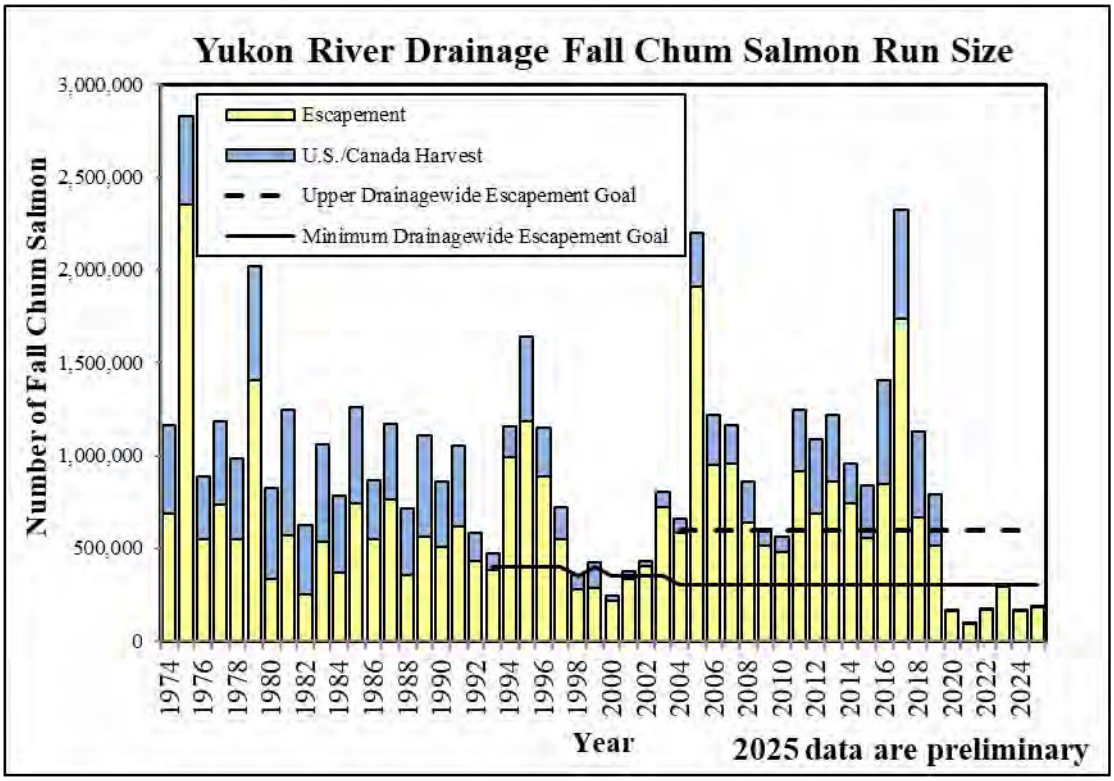


Figure 3.–Estimated daily passage of coho salmon (top) based on the Yukon River mainstem sonar (Pilot Station), 2025 compared to historical (1995, 1997–2008, and 2010–2024) median run size index. Cumulative passage of coho salmon (bottom) at the mainstem Yukon River sonar project (Pilot Station) in 2025 compared to historical median, 2021, and 2024.



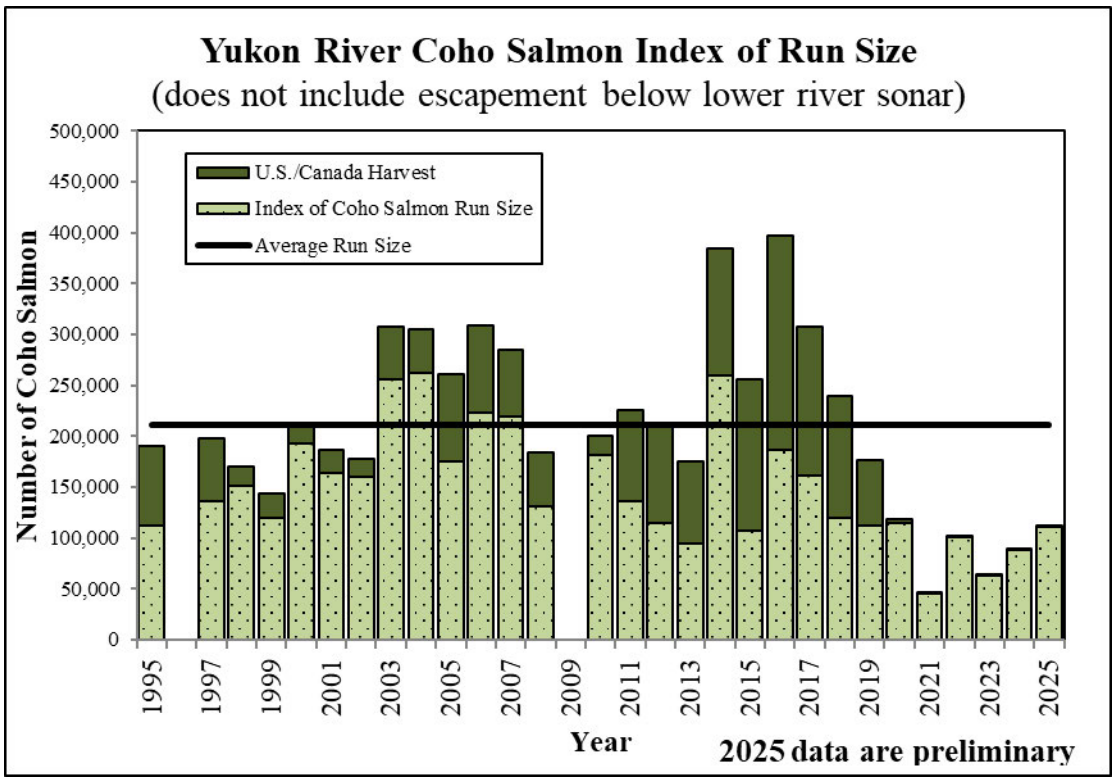


Figure 4.–Estimated drainagewide run size of fall chum salmon (top) and index of run size of coho salmon (bottom) in the Yukon River drainage.

Table 1.–Fall chum salmon subsistence harvest estimates, including donated test fishery harvests, by district, Yukon Area, 2005–2025.

	Lower Yukon					*Upper Yukon*				Yukon
Year	Coastal	District 1	District 2	District 3	*Subtotal*	District 4	District 5	District 6	*Subtotal*	total
2005	70	2,889	3,257	1,304	7,450	9,405	51,663	22,946	84,014	91,534
2006	187	3,902	4,015	480	8,397	6,335	52,158	16,925	75,418	84,002
2007	234	4,390	3,472	925	8,787	8,576	53,731	29,893	92,200	101,221
2008	386	2,823	3,522	1,821	8,166	7,412	57,258	16,135	80,805	89,357
2009	158	1,917	1,563	937	4,417	7,382	38,083	16,079	61,544	66,119
2010	186	3,202	1,419	1,325	5,946	6,788	44,334	11,391	62,513	68,645
2011	315	3,434	2,578	354	6,366	7,260	51,885	14,376	73,521	80,202
2012	11	7,622	3,332	637	11,591	18,055	54,350	15,302	87,707	99,309
2013	149	3,673	4,878	1,764	10,315	15,191	76,098	11,640	102,929	113,393
2014	252	4,072	5,817	2,457	12,346	15,936	51,197	12,798	79,931	92,529
2015	198	5,877	6,258	1,388	13,523	13,274	50,260	9,345	72,879	86,600
2016	762	4,572	4,539	997	10,108	10,034	58,831	4,882	73,747	84,617
2017	553	4,581	4,082	1,284	9,947	9,573	61,444	4,622	75,639	86,139
2018	522	3,665	2,985	699	7,349	5,944	45,988	9,404	61,336	69,207
2019	815	4,251	3,804	754	8,809	4,232	44,946	4,932	54,110	63,734
2020	652	1,594	937	26	2,557	365	1,952	202	2,519	5,728
2021	39	143	435	0	578	0	71	17	88	705
2022	236	1,208	512	25	1,745	86	708	19	813	2,794
2023	158	1,963	1,436	130	3,529	78	2,270	2	2,350	6,037
2024	175	994	926	131	2,051	6	1,025	70	1,101	3,327
2025 [a]	58	1,080	427	1	1,508	3	2,869	60	2,932	4,498
Average										
2015–2024	411	2,885	2,591	543	6,020	4,359	26,750	3,350	34,458	40,889
2020–2024	252	1,180	849	62	2,092	107	1,205	62	1,374	3,718

Source: Numbers of fish harvested are based on reports from OceanAK (accessed 1/8/2026), applicable annual footnotes are within the database.

[a] Values are preliminary until the project report is published.

Table 2.–Coho salmon subsistence harvest estimates, including donated test fishery harvests, by district, Yukon Area, 2005–2025.

	Lower Yukon					*Upper Yukon*				Yukon
Year	Coastal	District 1	District 2	District 3	*Subtotal*	District 4	District 5	District 6	*Subtotal*	total
2005	279	976	1,110	217	2,303	2,971	2,159	19,538	24,668	27,250
2006	335	1,177	2,459	83	3,719	1,302	3,779	10,571	15,652	19,706
2007	110	2,265	2,347	739	5,351	2,952	3,366	7,845	14,163	19,624
2008	116	1,211	1,997	410	3,618	1,490	3,203	8,428	13,121	16,855
2009	246	847	1,057	321	2,225	3,986	2,498	7,051	13,535	16,006
2010	124	1,122	557	353	2,032	1,730	3,604	5,555	10,889	13,045
2011	55	1,127	823	36	1,986	2,072	1,389	6,842	10,303	12,344
2012	93	3,350	1,346	556	5,252	3,556	3,092	9,540	16,188	21,533
2013	287	1,224	1,080	371	2,675	4,940	1,298	5,257	11,495	14,457
2014	204	1,782	1,769	340	3,891	3,062	2,030	7,911	13,003	17,098
2015	174	2,100	3,002	428	5,530	1,941	2,462	8,000	12,403	18,107
2016	355	1,231	1,131	140	2,502	826	861	4,271	5,958	8,815
2017	424	1,044	1,396	497	2,937	526	1,012	2,515	4,053	7,414
2018	865	967	591	154	1,712	1,580	1,449	2,661	5,690	8,267
2019	804	1,962	642	232	2,836	497	612	1,069	2,178	5,818
2020	339	552	494	20	1,066	138	196	591	925	2,330
2021	50	36	126	0	162	0	31	53	84	296
2022	291	301	272	30	603	108	27	59	194	1,088
2023	288	665	323	58	1,046	5	52	8	65	1,399
2024	183	323	289	158	770	406	43	24	473	1,426
2025 [a]	134	415	208	0	623	2	203	232	437	1,194
Average										
2015–2024	377	918	827	172	1,916	603	675	1,925	3,202	5,496
2020–2024	230	375	301	53	729	131	70	147	348	1,308

Source: Numbers of fish harvested are based on reports from OceanAK (accessed 1/8/2026), applicable annual footnotes are within the database.

[a] Values are preliminary until the project report is published.

Table 3.–Fall chum salmon passage or escapement estimates for selected spawning areas, Yukon River drainage, 2005–2025.

	Alaska						Canada		
		Tanana River drainage		Upper Yukon River drainage					
Year	Yukon River drainagewide escapement estimate[a]	Delta River[b]	Bluff Cabin Slough[c]	Teedriinjik (Chandalar) River[d]	Sheenjek River[e]	Yukon River mainstem (Eagle) passage estimate[f]	Mainstem escapement estimate[g]	Porcupine River sonar[h]	Fishing Branch River[i]
2005	1,910,000	28,132	11,964	526,838	485,890	–	437,498 [j]	–	119,058
2006	945,700	14,055	1,180	254,778	175,620	245,290	220,898 [j]	–	30,954
2007	956,900	18,610	666	243,805	69,183	265,008	236,987 [j]	–	32,150
2008	638,200	23,055	1,198	178,278	50,350	185,409	167,898	–	19,086
2009	511,300	13,492	2,900	–	54,125	101,734	93,626	–	25,828
2010	480,900	17,993	1,610	167,532	24,669 [k]	132,930	117,789	–	15,413
2011	915,350	23,639	2,655	298,223	97,976	224,355	205,566	14,640	13,085
2012	689,600	9,377 [l]	–	205,791	104,702	153,248	137,662	33,469	22,399
2013	859,550	31,955	5,554	252,710		216,791	200,262	35,615	–
2014	742,200	32,480 [l]	4,095	221,421		172,887	156,796	17,244	–
2015	554,100	33,401 [l]	6,020	171,742		125,095	108,658	21,397	8,351
2016	846,850	21,913 [l]	4,936	302,869		161,027	145,267	54,395	29,397
2017	1,737,500	45,238 [l]	–	515,216		419,099	401,585	67,818	48,524
2018	663,650	39,225	5,822	170,413		168,798	154,126	–	10,151
2019	514,600	51,748 [l]	4,664	116,141		113,256	99,866	27,447	18,171
2020	163,900	11,105	1,124	–		23,512	23,512	–	4,795
2021	92,450	1,613	1,085	21,162		23,170	23,170	3,486	2,413
2022	168,000	5,709	1,844	67,434	13,957	22,075	22,034	3,804	2,934
2023	292,600	13,366	–	141,120	15,958	22,179	22,090	15,649	11,528
2024	161,000	16,880	3,732	58,457	14,319	16,204	16,174	8,799	5,933
2025[m]	179,600	6,972	3,114	65,817	19,083	19,574	19,574	11,918	7,858
Average									
2015–2024	519,465	24,020	3,653	173,839	14,745	109,442	101,648	25,349	14,220
2020–2024	175,590	9,735	1,946	72,043	14,745	21,428	21,396	7,935	5,521
SEG Range	300,000	7,000 [n]	–	85,000 [n]	[o]		> 80,000 [p]		50,000
	600,000	20,000		234,000					120,000 [p]
Interim Management Escapement Goal							70,000–104,000 [q]		22,000–49,000 [r]

-continued-

Table 3.–Page 2 of 2.

Note: En dash indicates no data were collected or calculated. SEG indicates "sustainable escapement goal" with lower and upper ranges.

[a] Escapement estimates are derived from Bayesian State-Space model as posterior medians.

[b] Population estimate generated from replicate foot surveys and stream life data using AUC (area-under-curve method) unless otherwise indicated.

[c] Aerial survey count, unless otherwise indicated.

[d] Split beam sonar estimate (2005–2006). Dual frequency IDentification SONar (DIDSON) from 2007-present. Includes expansions to the end of the run (October 9, October 13 in 2018).

[e] DIDSON sonar (2005–2012 and 2022–present). Includes expansions to the end of the run (October 9). Two bank operations unless otherwise indicated.

[f] Sonar estimates include an expansion for fish that may have passed after operations ceased, through October 18, except 2018 was expanded through October 23 for an extremely late run.

[g] Estimated mainstem Yukon River Canadian escapement is derived from Eagle sonar expanded estimate minus harvest upstream of project from Eagle community and including Canadian harvests (2006–present), unless otherwise indicated.

[h] Porcupine River Sonar is located near Canadian border, downstream of community of Old Crow. Includes expansions to the end of the run.

[i] Weir located within the Canadian portion of the Porcupine River drainage. Includes expansions to the end of the run.

[j] Estimated mainstem Canadian escapement derived from mark-recapture project minus Canadian mainstem harvest.

[k] Right bank only operations.

[l] Peak counts from foot surveys unless otherwise noted.

[m] Data are preliminary.

[n] Escapement goal revised to a Sustainable Escapement Goal (SEG) in 2019 based on percentile method.

[o] Sheenjek escapement goal 50,000–104,000 was discontinued in 2016 (was right bank only dataset).

[p] Escapement goal as written in the Pacific Salmon Treaty.

[q] Interim Management Escapement Goal (IMEG) range of 70,000 to 104,000 was established for 2010 to present is based on Canadian stock Ricker model.

[r] IMEG established 2008 and is based on percentile method.

Table 4.–Coho salmon passage or escapement estimates for selected spawning areas, Yukon River drainage, 2005–2025.

Year	Yukon River index of drainagewide escapement[a]	Nenana River drainage				Upper Tanana River drainage					
		Lost Slough	Nenana Mainstem[b]	Wood Creek	Seventeen Mile Slough	Delta Clearwater River[c]		Clearwater Lake and Outlet		Richardson Clearwater River	
2005	175,268	430 (h)	325 (h)	1,030 (h)	3,890 (h)	34,293	(b)	2,100	(b)	2,024	(h)
2006	223,236	194 (h)	160 (h)	634 (h)	1,916 (h)	16,748	(b)	4,375	(b)	271	(h)
2007	218,871	63 (h)	520 (h)	605 (h)	1,733 (h)	14,650	(b)	2,075	(b)	553	(h)
2008	131,184	1,342 (h)	1,539 (h)	578 (h)	1,652 (h)	7,500	(b)	1,275	(b)	265	(h)
2009	[d]	410 (h)	–	470 (h)	680 (h)	16,850	(b)	5,450	(b)	155	(h)
2010	181,415	1,110 (h)	280 (h)	340 (h)	720 (h)	5,867	(b)	813	(b)	1,002	(h)
2011	135,914	369 (h)	–	–	912 (h)	6,180	(b)	2,092	(b)	575	(h)
2012	115,094	–	106 (h)	–	405 (h)	5,230	(b)	396	(h)	515	(h)
2013	94,385	721 (h)	–	55 (h)	425 (h)	6,222	(b)	2,221	(h)	647	(h)
2014	260,251	333 (h)	378 (h)	649 (h)	886 (h)	4,285	(b)	434	(h)	1,941	(h)
2015	106,988	242 (h)	1,789 (h)	1,419 (h)	3,890 (h)	19,533	(b)	1,621	(h)	3,742	(h)
2016	186,399	334 (h)	1,680 (h)	1,327 (h)	2,746 (h)	6,767	(b)	1,421	(h)	1,350	(h)
2017	161,213	1,278 (h)	862 (h)	2,025 (h)	1,942 (h)	9,627	(b)	–		–	
2018	119,646	1,822 (h)	241 (h)	361 (h)	347 (h)	2,884	(b)	2,465	(h)	976	(h)
2019	112,177	–	749 (h)	184 (h)	424 (h)	2,043	(b)	258	(h)	300	(h)
2020	115,396	28 (h)	206 (h)	231 (h)	507 (h)	2,557	(b)	210	(h)	475	(h)
2021	45,213	126 (h)	104 (h)	226 (h)	213 (h)	913	(b)	130	(h)	17	(h)
2022	100,486	–	–	–	–	1,750	(b)	101	(h)	57	(h)
2023	63,241	–	–	–	–	1,794	(b)	–		–	
2024	88,408	–	349 (h)	–	–	1,455	(b)	708	(h)	395	(h)
2025[e]	111,086	535 (h)	87 (h)	628 (h)	213 (h)	9,760	(b)			333	(b)
Average											
2015–2024	109,917	638	748	825	1,438	4,932		864		914	
2020–2024	82,549	77	220	229	360	1,694		287		236	

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Table 4.–Page 2 of 2.

Note: Only peak counts presented. Survey rating is fair to good, unless otherwise noted. Denotations of survey methods include (b)=boat and (h)=helicopter. En dash indicates no data available.

[a] Index of drainagewide escapement based on Pilot Station sonar, which is expanded by portion of the run missed using nearby test fisheries, plus harvest below sonar site, then subtracts total drainage harvest to estimate escapement. Does not include the escapements to the Andreafsky River (East Fork was monitored 1995–2005 and averaged 8,000 coho salmon).

[b] Index area includes mainstem Nenana River between confluences of Lost Slough and Teklanika River.

[c] Index area is lower 17.5 miles of system. A biological escapement goal of greater than 9,000 fish existed from 1993 to 2003, replaced with a sustainable escapement goal range of 5,200–17,000, then goal was discontinued in 2023.

[d] Could not be derived as extreme low water levels were experienced in 2009, affecting species apportionment at Pilot Station sonar, which is the basis of this index.

[e] Data are preliminary.

2025 Yukon River Chinook Salmon Postseason Review: Canadian Reporting

Presented to:

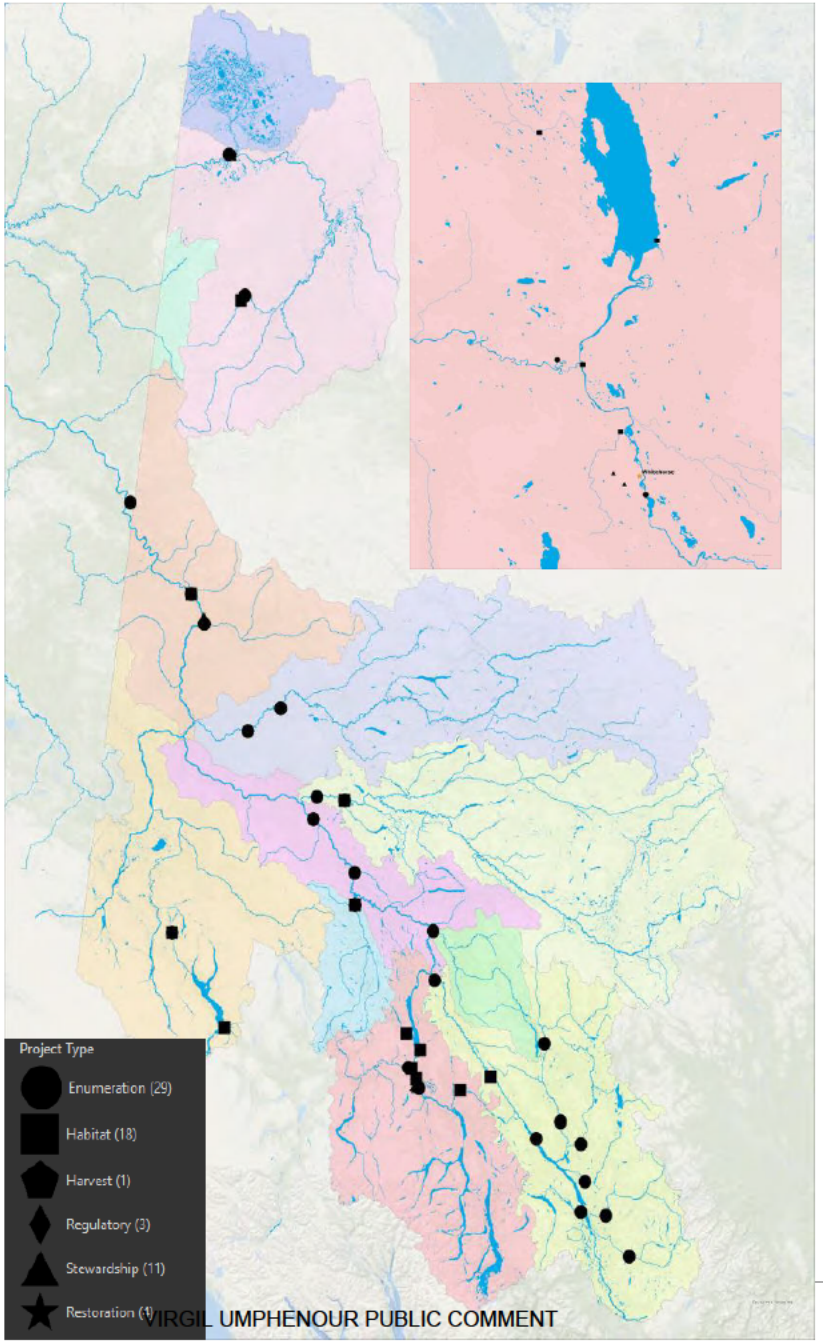
Yukon River Panel

Prepared by:

Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Yukon River Operations in partnership with Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Natural Resources Department

January 28, 2026

Canadian Salmon Projects 2025



Area-based or Territory-wide Projects
Canadian Yukon River Chinook Tracking
Stream Temperature monitoring
Beaver Dam Stewardship
Annual Salmon Ceremony and Gathering
Action While Planning Working Groups
Rainbow Trout removal
Salmon Resiliency Initiative
YFNSSA Run Forecast
Action While Planning Working Groups
Yukon River Chinook Rebuilding and Ecosystem Strategy
Annual Salmon Ceremony
Youth fish camp
TH Salmon Stewardship Plan
Salmon Day Celebration
Salmon Stewardship Centre

Preseason Forecast

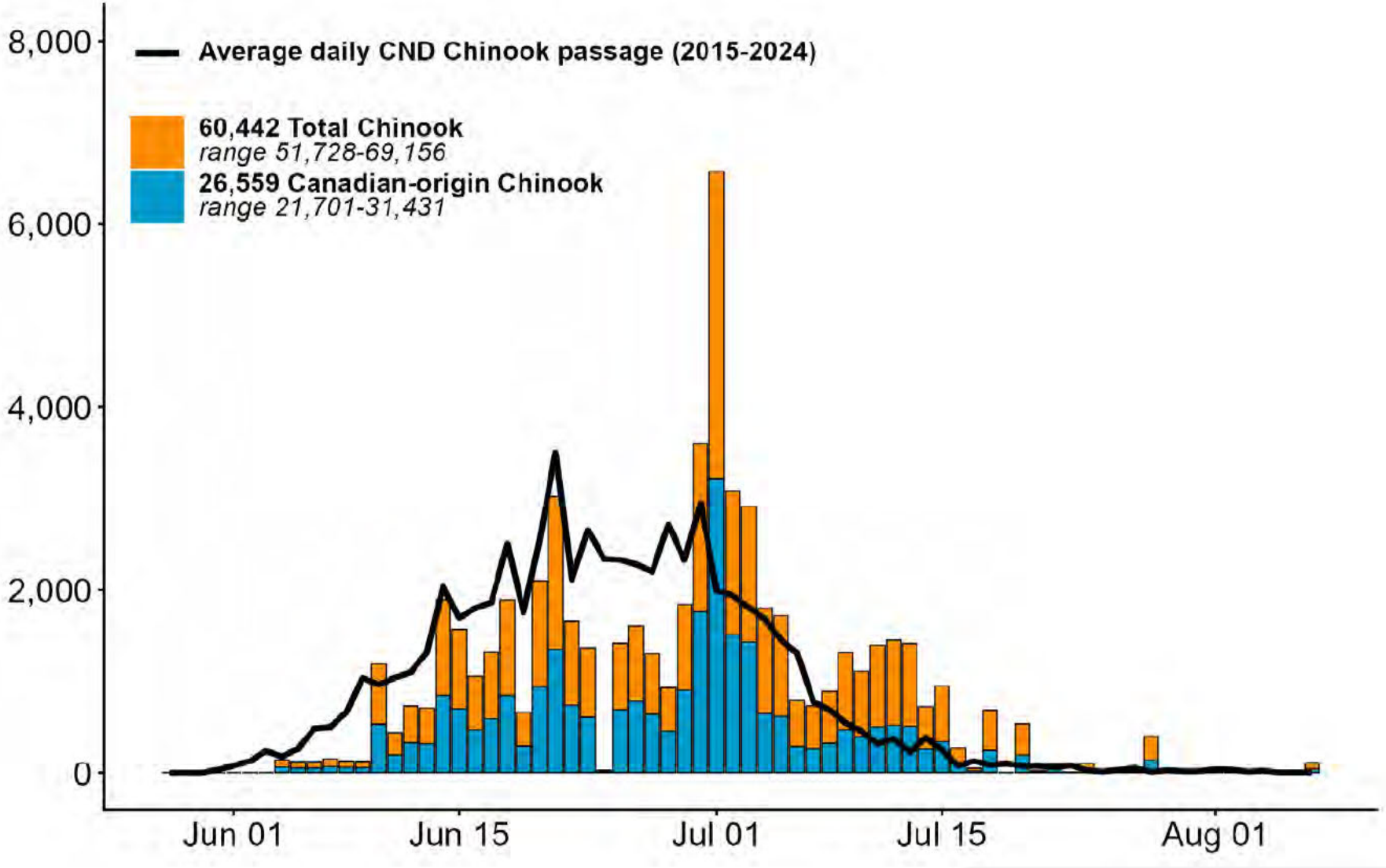
Canadian-Origin Yukon River Chinook Salmon

- **30,000 entering mouth of Yukon River**
  - **18,000 entering Canadian mainstem Yukon River**

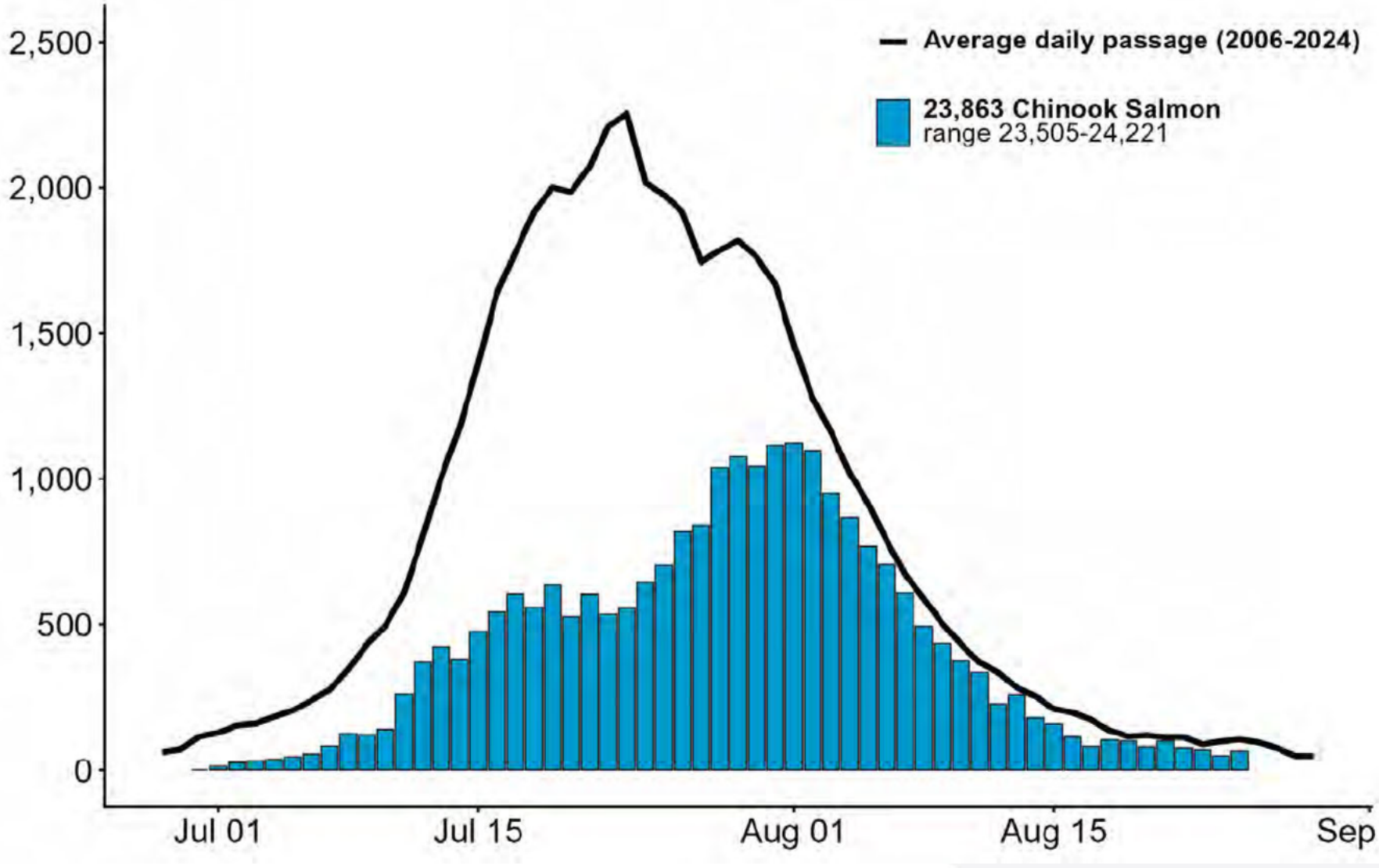
- Below recent and historical average run sizes
  - 55,000 (2015 – 2024)
  - 174,000 (1982 – 1997)

- Close to last year's forecast of 19,000 – 28,000

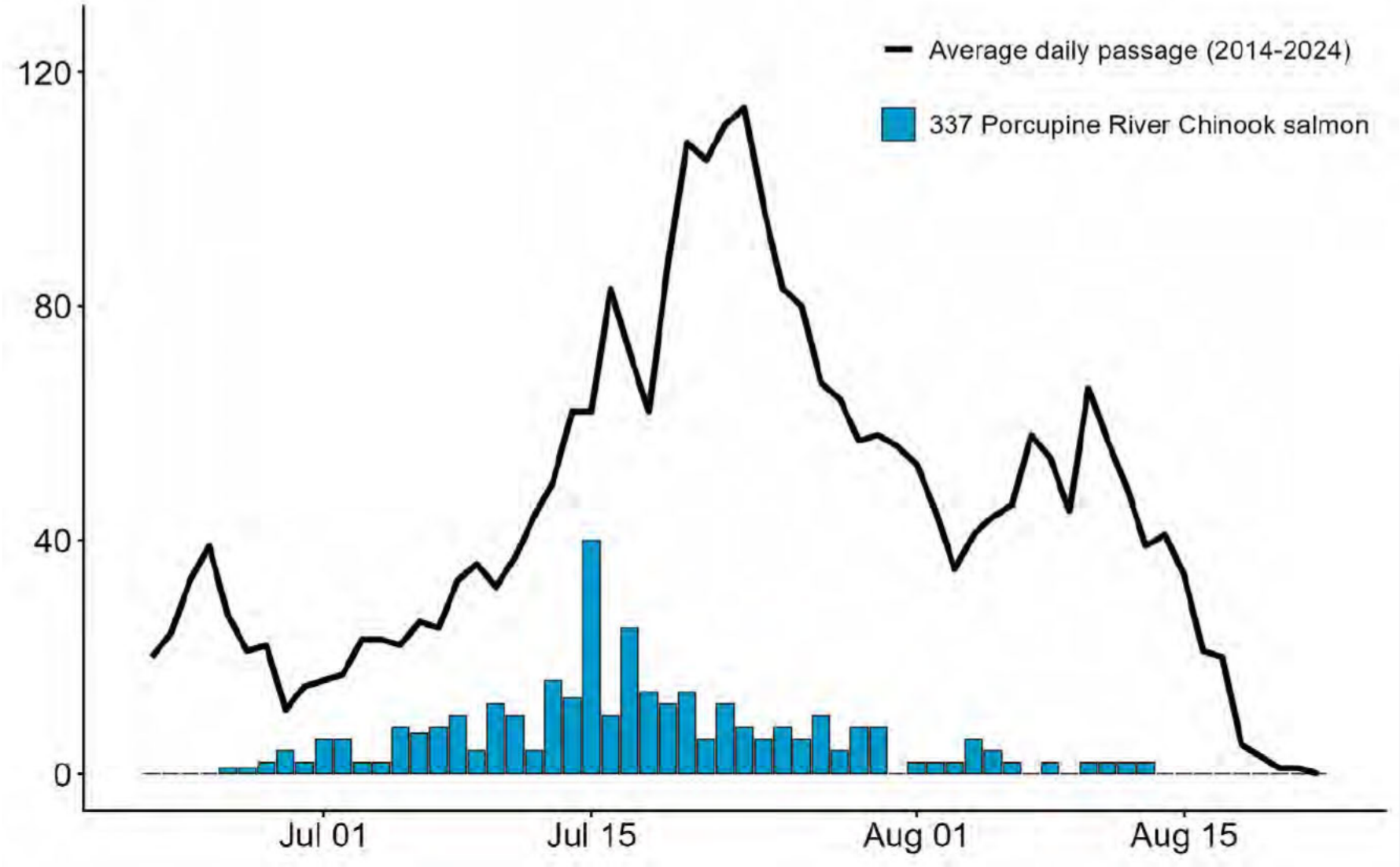
Pilot Station – 2025 Daily Passage Estimates



Eagle Sonar – 2025 Daily Passage Estimates



Porcupine Sonar - 2025 Daily Passage Estimates

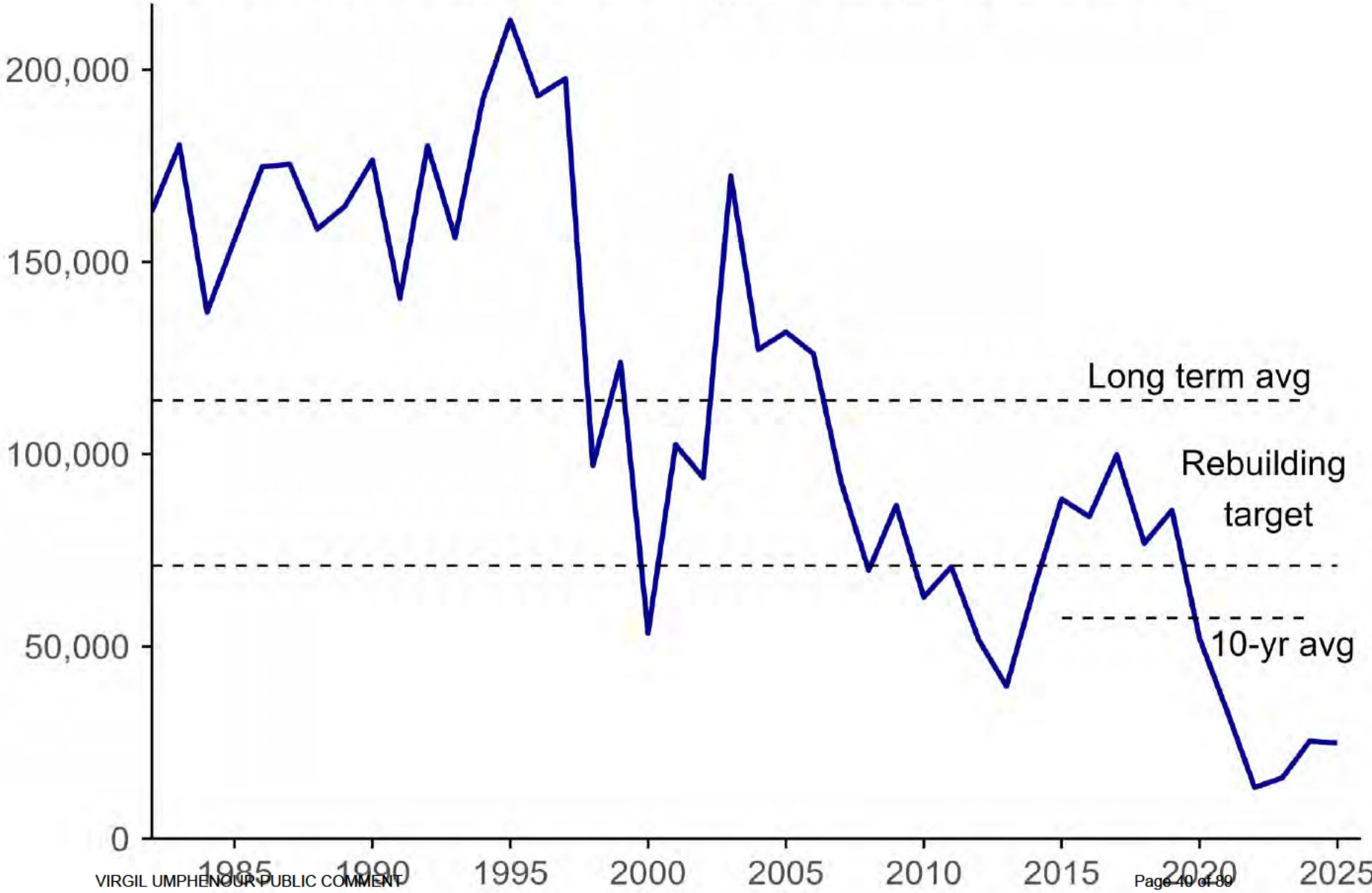


Chinook Assessment Summary 2025

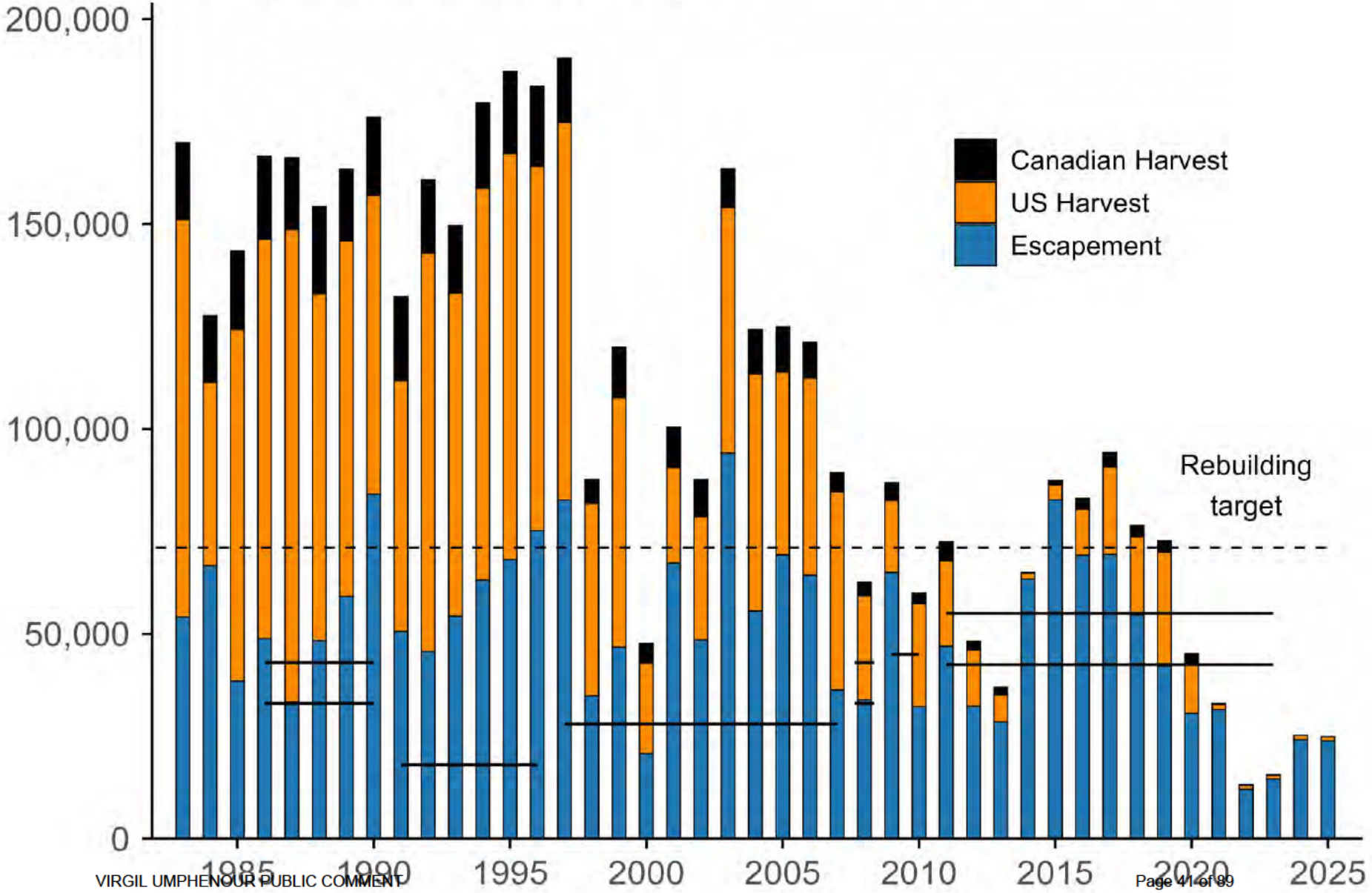
Project	2025 Passage	Relative to Average	Years of Operation
Pilot Station Sonar (CA-origin)	26,559	42% (10-yr)	31
Eagle Sonar	23,863	51% (10-yr)	21
Klondike Sonar	222	52% (5-yr)	9
Pelly Sonar	2,966	58% (8-yr)	9
Tatchun Creek Weir	257	NA	5
Big Salmon Sonar	3,143	71% (10-yr)	20
Takhini Sonar	554	60% (6-yr)	7
Whitehorse Fishway	804	126% (10-yr)	50
Nisutlin Sonar	621	NA	3
Porcupine Sonar	337	13% (10-yr)	11

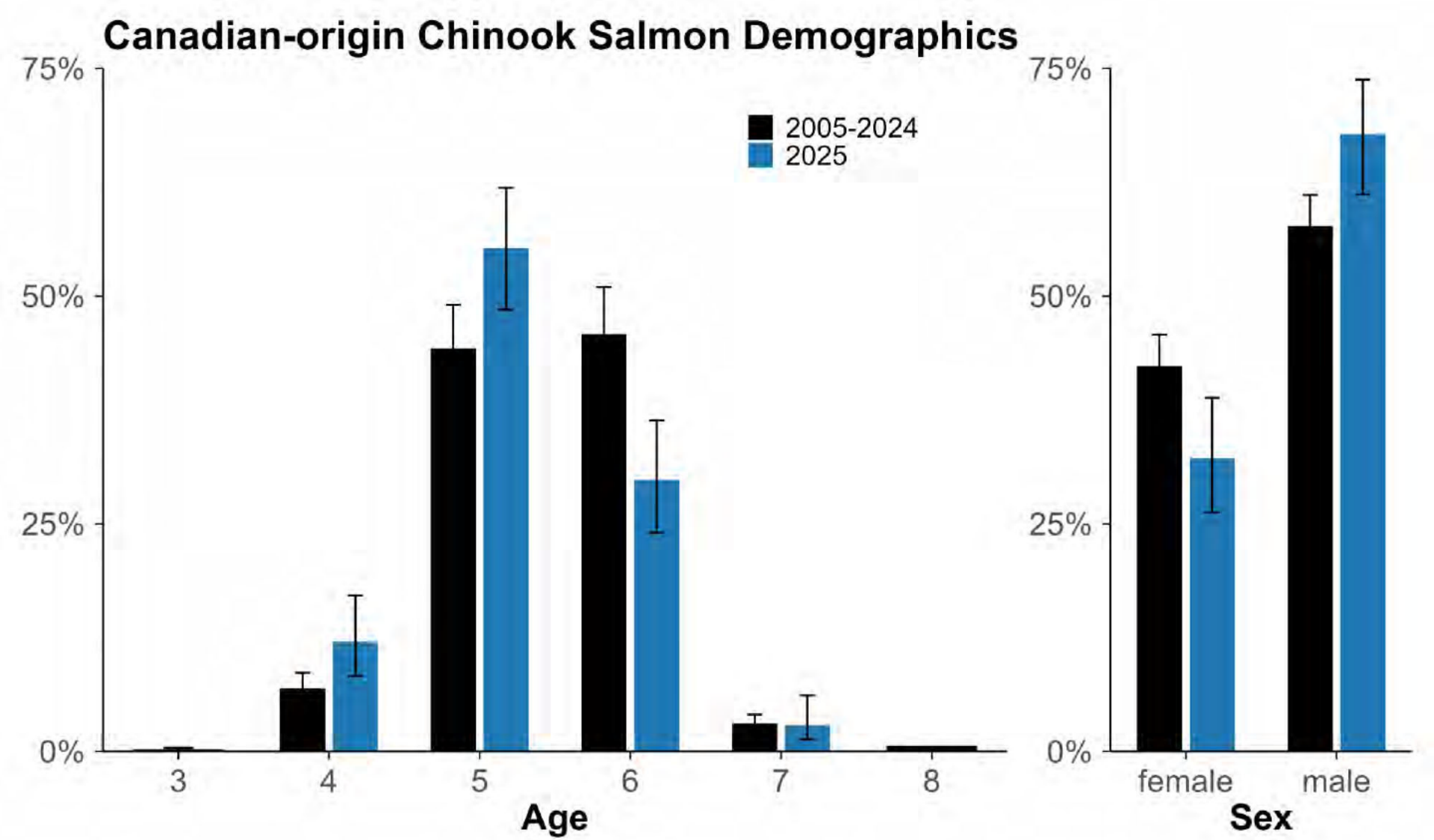
*preliminary

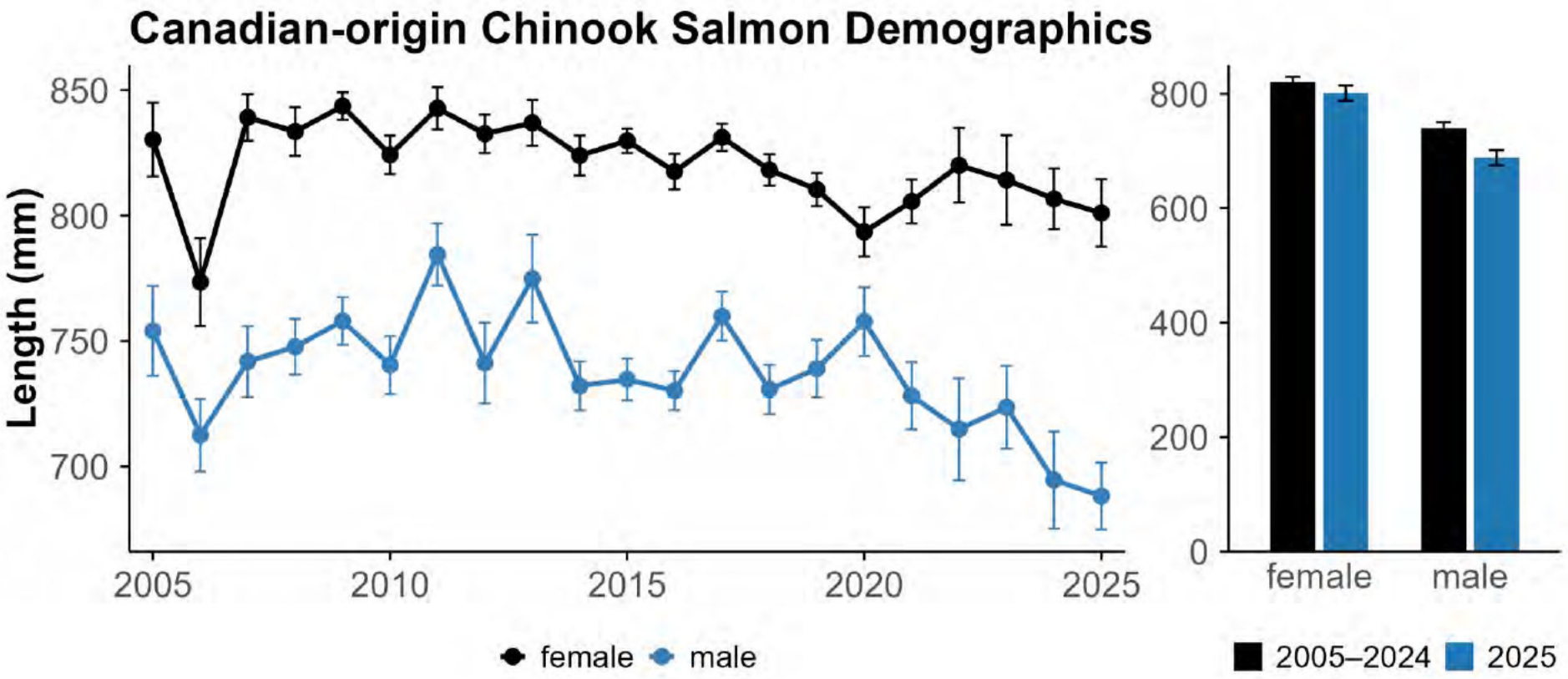
Estimated Total Run Size
Mainstem Canadian-Origin Chinook Salmon



Mainstem Canadian-Origin Chinook Salmon Escapement and Harvest




Canadian-origin Chinook Salmon Demographics
75%
50%
25%
0%
2005-2024
2025
3
4
5
6
7
8
Age
75%
50%
25%
0%
female
male
Sex


Canadian-origin Chinook Salmon Demographics
Length (mm)
850
800
750
700
2005
2010
2015
2020
2025
female
male
800
600
400
200
0
female
male
2005–2024
2025

2025 Yukon River Chinook Salmon Fisheries Pre-Season Management Summary

Pre-Season Management:

- Yukon River Panel accepted the pre-season management plans for both countries.
- Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee recommended no harvest of any Yukon River Chinook salmon.
- Minister of Fisheries accepted that recommendation.
- Public Angling, commercial and domestic fisheries closed for 7 years
- First Nation subsistence fisheries expected to be closed based on preseason forecast below the Rebuilding Target of 71,000

2025 Yukon River Chinook Salmon Fisheries Management Summary

In-season run information collected at Pilot Station and Eagle confirmed a run within the pre-season forecast range, however; the run size would not be sufficient to meet the rebuilding target.

Estimated Border Passage	Rebuilding Target	2025 Fishery Closures	
		First Nation Subsistance	Public Angling, Domestic and Commercial
23,863	71,000	Closed	Closed for 7 years

2025 Yukon River Chinook Salmon Communication Summary

- Canadian Pre-Season government to government meeting was held on May 27 with virtual in-season assessment and management update meetings held bi-weekly on Wednesdays from June 25 to September 17.
- Interagency meetings began June 7 and concluded October 29
- Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association meetings started June 10 and ran until August 12 – 10 in total for 2025.
- Implementing management aspects of the Canadian-origin Yukon River Chinook salmon agreement was again a high priority in 2025.

2025 Chinook Harvest Management

1. Authorization to Enforce Fishing Closures

Resolution GA2024-01 - Passed by consensus

5. Salmon Management Plan

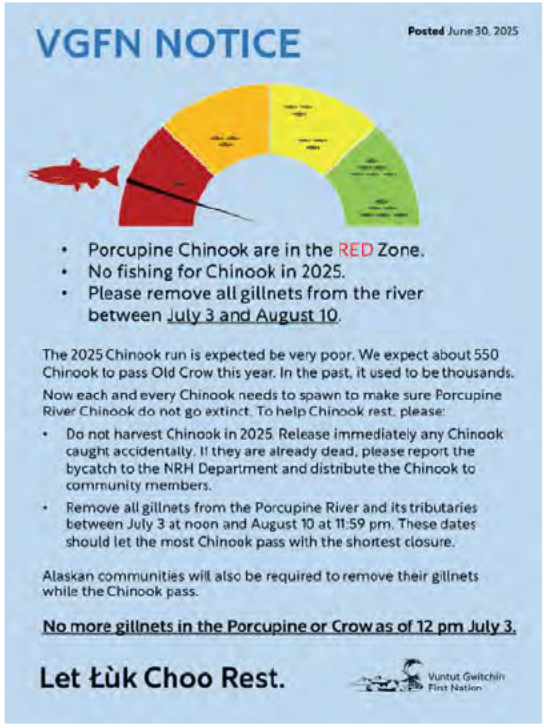
Resolution 2023-05 - Passed by consensus

32. Porcupine River Chinook Fishery

July 9, 2025 - Resolution CO2025-32

3. The following measures shall come into effect on July 10, 2025 at 12:01 am and remain in effect until August 10, 2025 at 11:59 PM.

4. The Porcupine River and its tributaries within VGFN Traditional Territory are closed to all gillnet fishing.



2025 VGFN Fisheries Assistance

Join Natural Resources staff outside the John Tizya Center from Wednesday to Friday this week (June 18–20).

We will begin in the morning at 11 AM and will continue into the afternoon until all the fish we have are done.

Please bring you
otherwise we wi

Posted June 18 2025

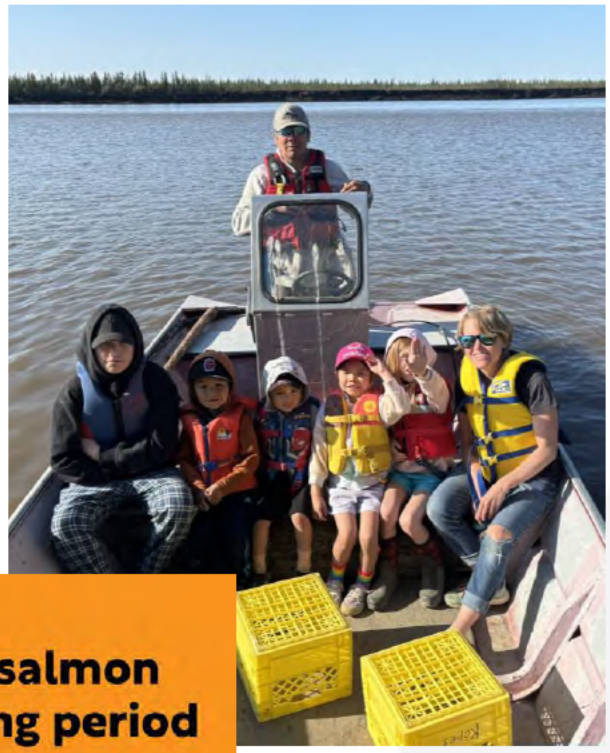
Fish Camp is back! Come and cut fish with Natural Resources staff outside the John Tizya Center. We'll be there **Wednesday to Friday this week** (August 13–15) and **Tuesday to Friday next week** (August 19–22).

We'll start in the morning around 10:30 am and go into the afternoon until all the fish we have are done.

Please bring your own knife if you have one, otherwise
ve some on hand.

here!

025



NOTICE

It's time to fish!

Gillnet fishing for non-salmon species is permitted from **August 11 to 26, 2025** in between the Chinook and chum runs.

In order to safeguard the salmon runs, it is very important to:

- Use a 4-inch mesh or smaller;
- Check net at least 2 TIMES A DAY to avoid killing salmon;
- Release live salmon if you find any in your net;
- If you do find dead salmon when you check net, report it to the Natural Resources and Heritage department.

The Teechik Land Guardians will be fishing for the community. We will schedule community fish cutting and a community dinner at a later date.

Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation

REMINDER

End of non-salmon gillnet fishing period

Today (August 26, 2025) is the last day permitted for gillnet fishing of non-salmon species.

All nets must be removed before tomorrow (August 27, 2025) to protect the upcoming chum salmon run.

The Teechik Land Guardians will be patrolling the river.

Mahsi'.

Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation

Environmental Conditions Spring (March – April)

Lifestage and Event:

- Egg incubation
- Egg hatch
- Fry emergence
- Overwintering age 1+ juveniles

Haggart Creek, Stewart River Watershed

Environmental Conditions Experienced During This Time

- Air temperatures above average across much of the Yukon
- Precipitation was variable, resulting in near average snowpack across most basins (above average in Central Yukon, Lower Yukon and Porcupine).
- Spring discharge was near average and no major flooding was observed.
- Ice-off timing was generally within the historical average range across most of the Yukon River basin with delayed ice-off in the Porcupine River.

Environmental Conditions Summer (May – July)

Lifestage and Event:

- Adult Migration
- Juvenile Rearing and Dispersal to Non-Natal Tributaries
- Smolt Outmigration

Landslide, Yukon River upstream of Lake Laberge

Environmental Conditions Experienced During This Time

- Air temperatures were below average in May and near average during June - July
- Precipitation was variable, with generally low to average rainfall and drier conditions in Southern and Central Yukon.
- Spring freshet occurred under moderate flow conditions with near average peak flows at the end of June for most basins.
- Below average flows in Nordenskiold and Takhini rivers drainages may have impacted juvenile dispersal and access to rearing habitats.
- Dry conditions contributed to increased wildfire activity.

Environmental Conditions Fall (Aug - Nov)

Lifestage and Event:

- Adult Migration
- Adult Spawning
- Juvenile Rearing Dispersal

Silver Creek, Kluane Lake

Environmental Conditions Experienced During This Time

- Air temperatures were above average across the Yukon resulting in a slow freeze up period.
- Precipitation was variable with dry conditions in South and Central Yukon.
- Flows were generally near average with below average flows in the Nordenskiold, Takhini, and Big Salmon drainages.
- No stream temperature stations exceeded a daily average of 18°C during the migration period.
- Only one station (Tatchun Creek) exceeded a daily mean temperature of 18°C during the spawning period (15 days between August 5 and Sept 5).

Environmental Conditions Winter

Lifestage and Event:

- Egg Incubation
- Juvenile Overwintering

Kluane Lake

Environmental Conditions Experienced During This Time

- Air temperatures were below average across much of the Yukon, several regions experienced temperatures 7 – 14℃ degrees below long term averages.
- Precipitation was variable with significant snowfall in Southern and Kluane regions including record or near record accumulations in some locations. The Mayo region has been much drier than normal with precipitation below average for this time of year.

Jozien Keijzer – iNaturalist.org

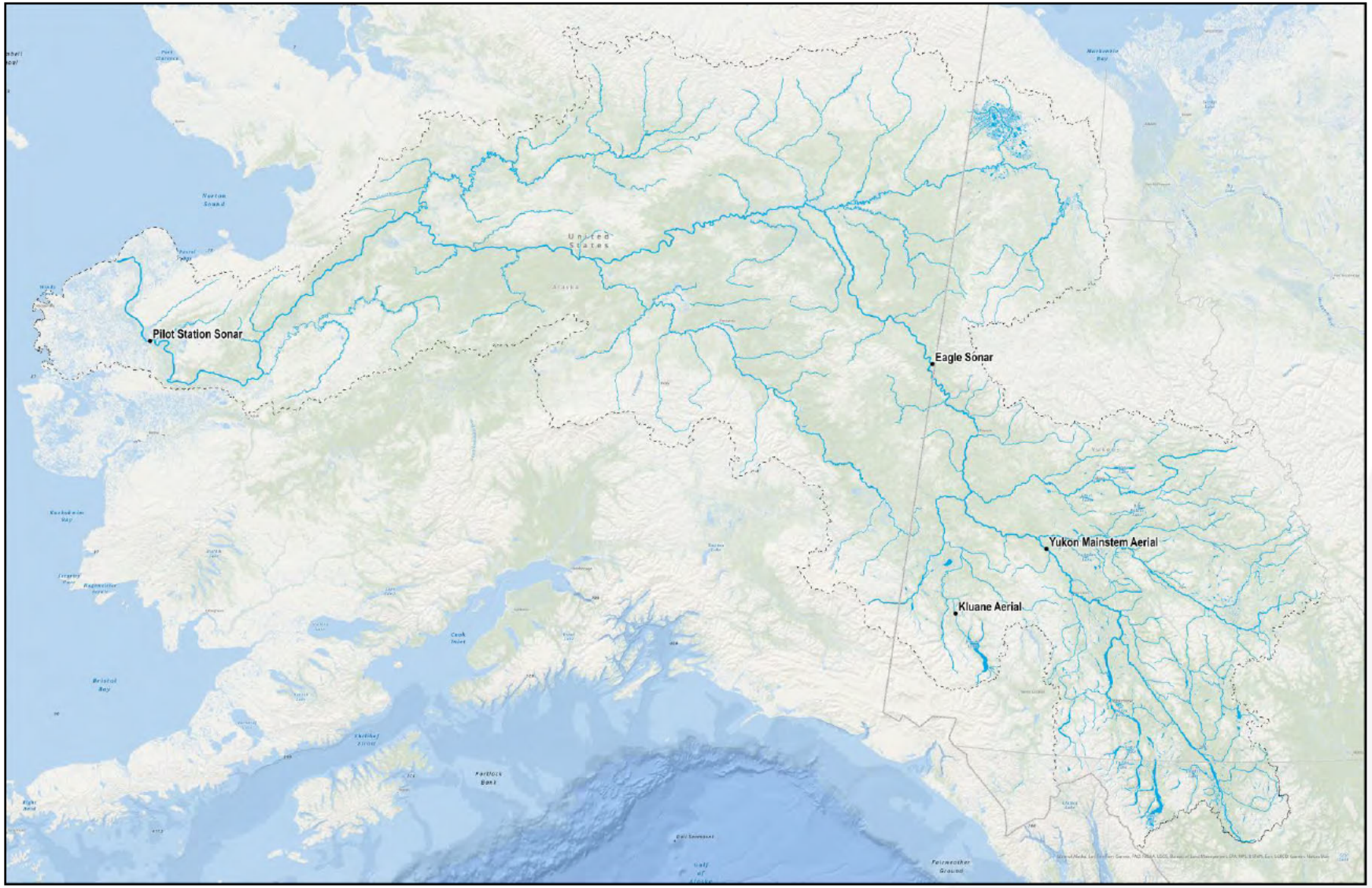
2025 Yukon River Mainstem Chum Salmon Postseason Review: Canadian Reporting

Presented to:
Yukon River Panel

Prepared by:
Yukon River Operations
Yukon and Transboundary Rivers Area
Fisheries and Oceans Canada

January 28, 2026

Yukon River Chum Salmon Assessment Sites



2025 Chum Salmon Preseason Forecasts

Drainagewide Fall Chum

- **218,000 Chum Salmon**

Canadian Yukon River Drainage

- **31,000 Chum Salmon**

Canadian Mainstem Yukon River

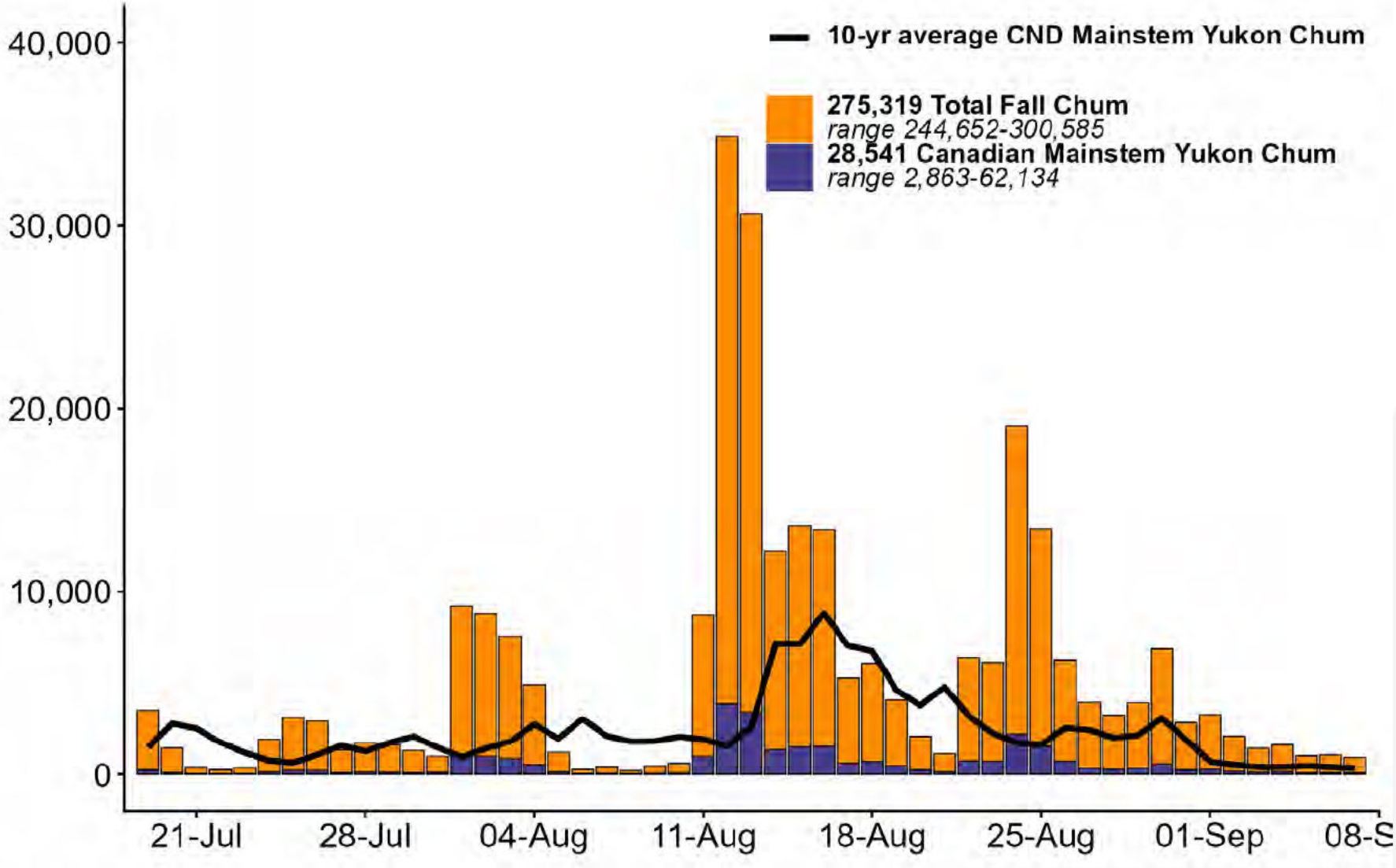
- **22,000 Chum Salmon**

2025 Chum Salmon Inseason Projection

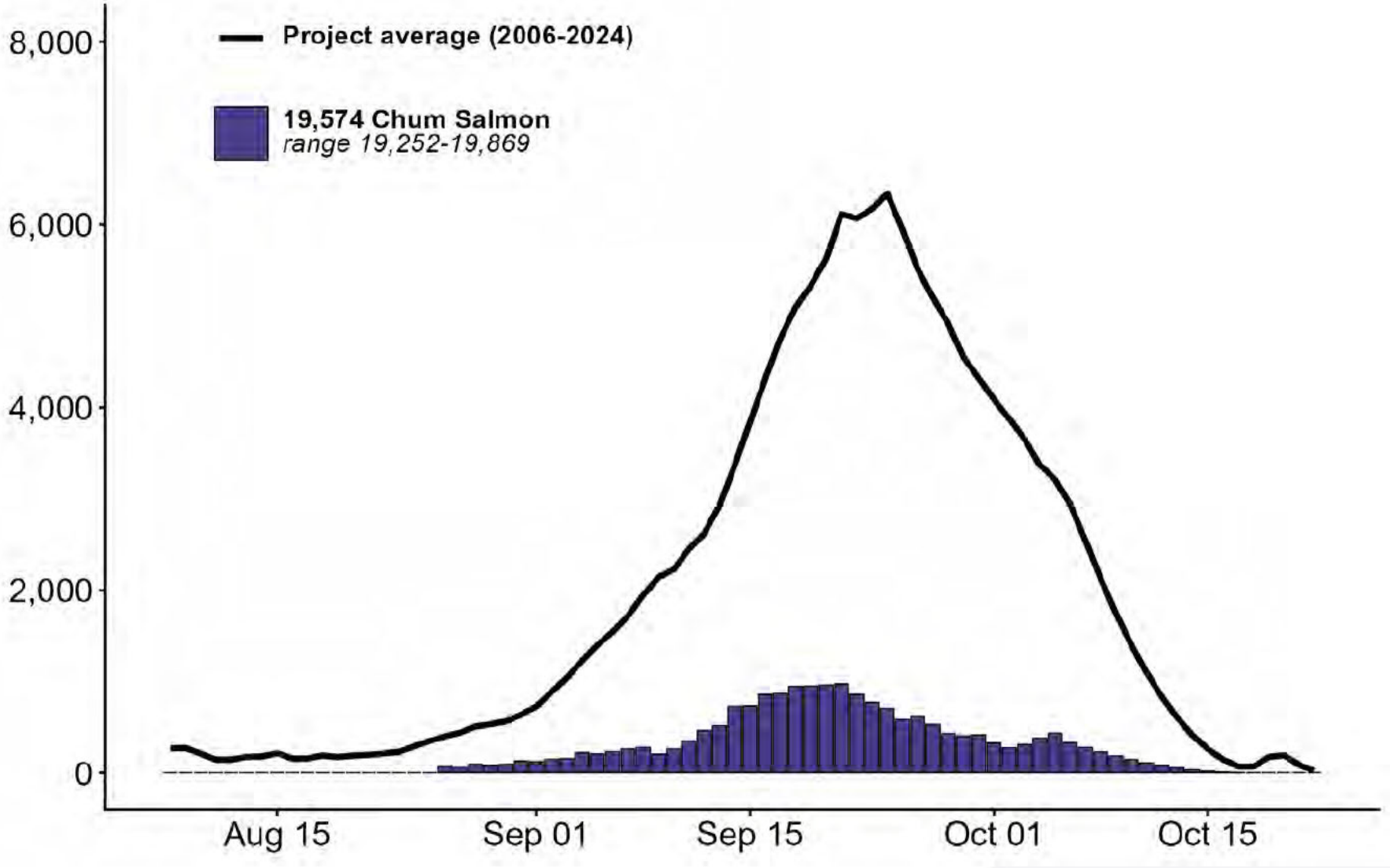
Summer to Fall Chum Salmon relationship, July 19, 2025

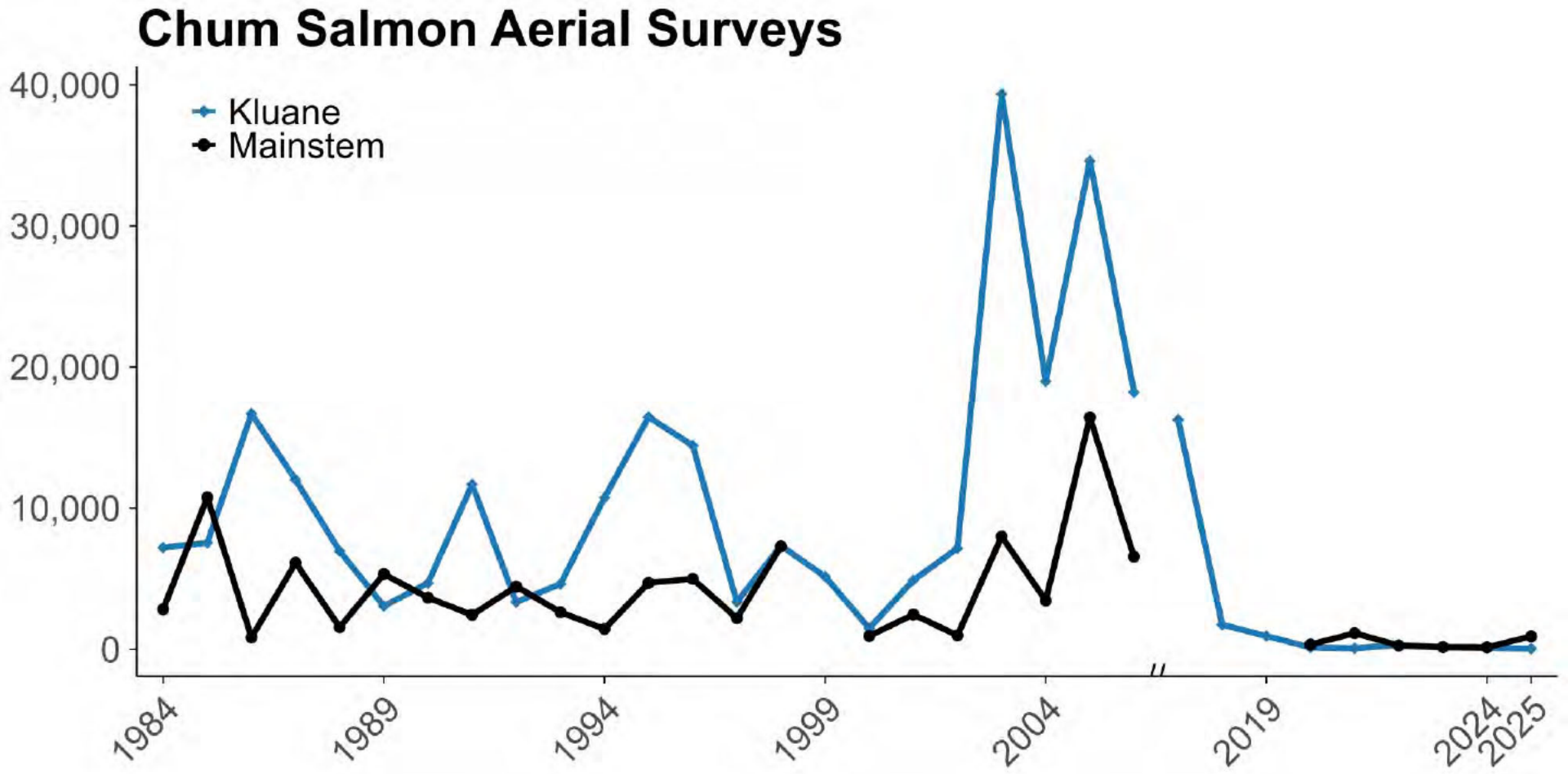
- **20,000**

Pilot Station - 2025 Daily Passage Estimates



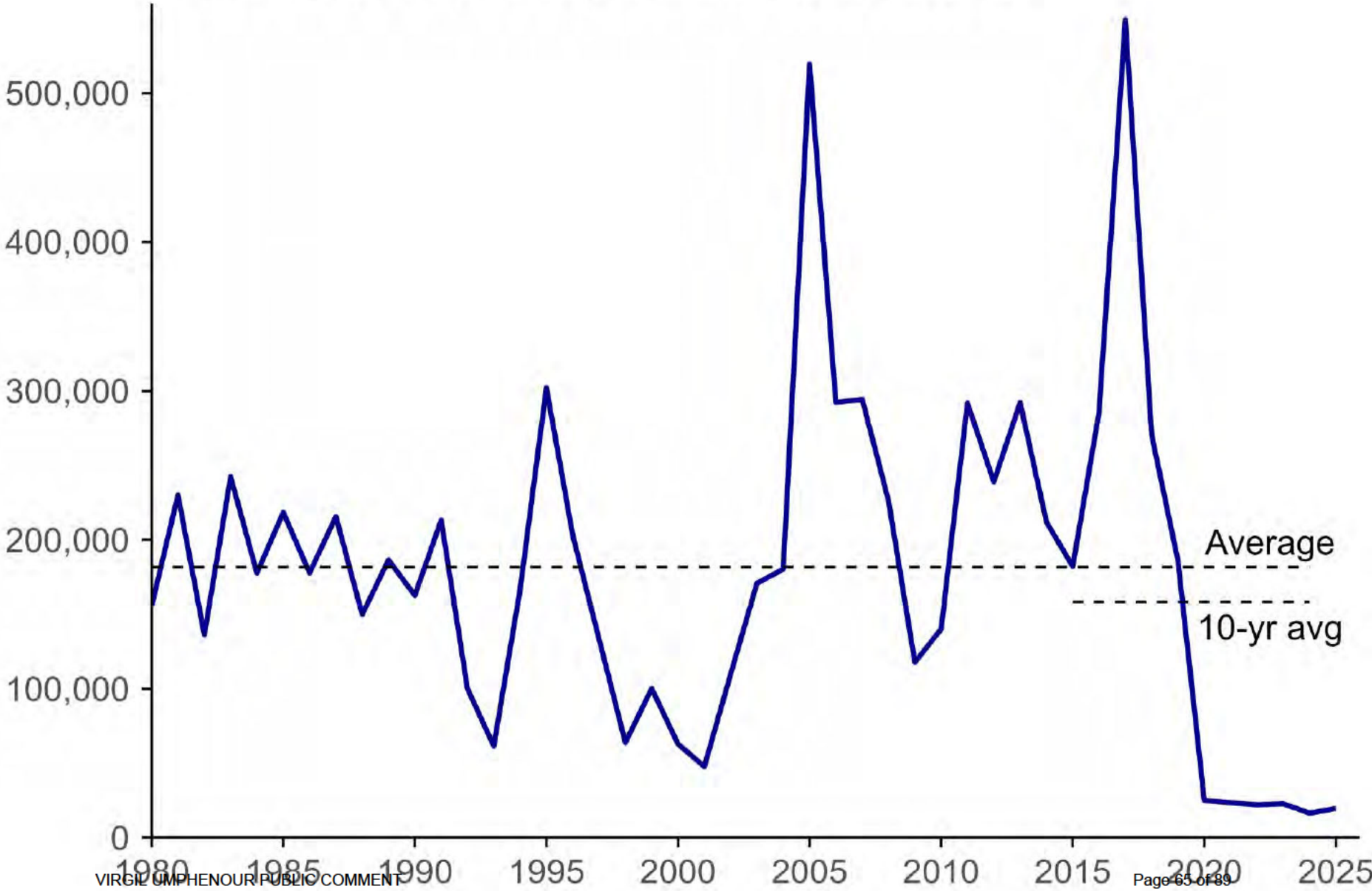
Eagle Sonar - 2025 Daily Passage Estimates



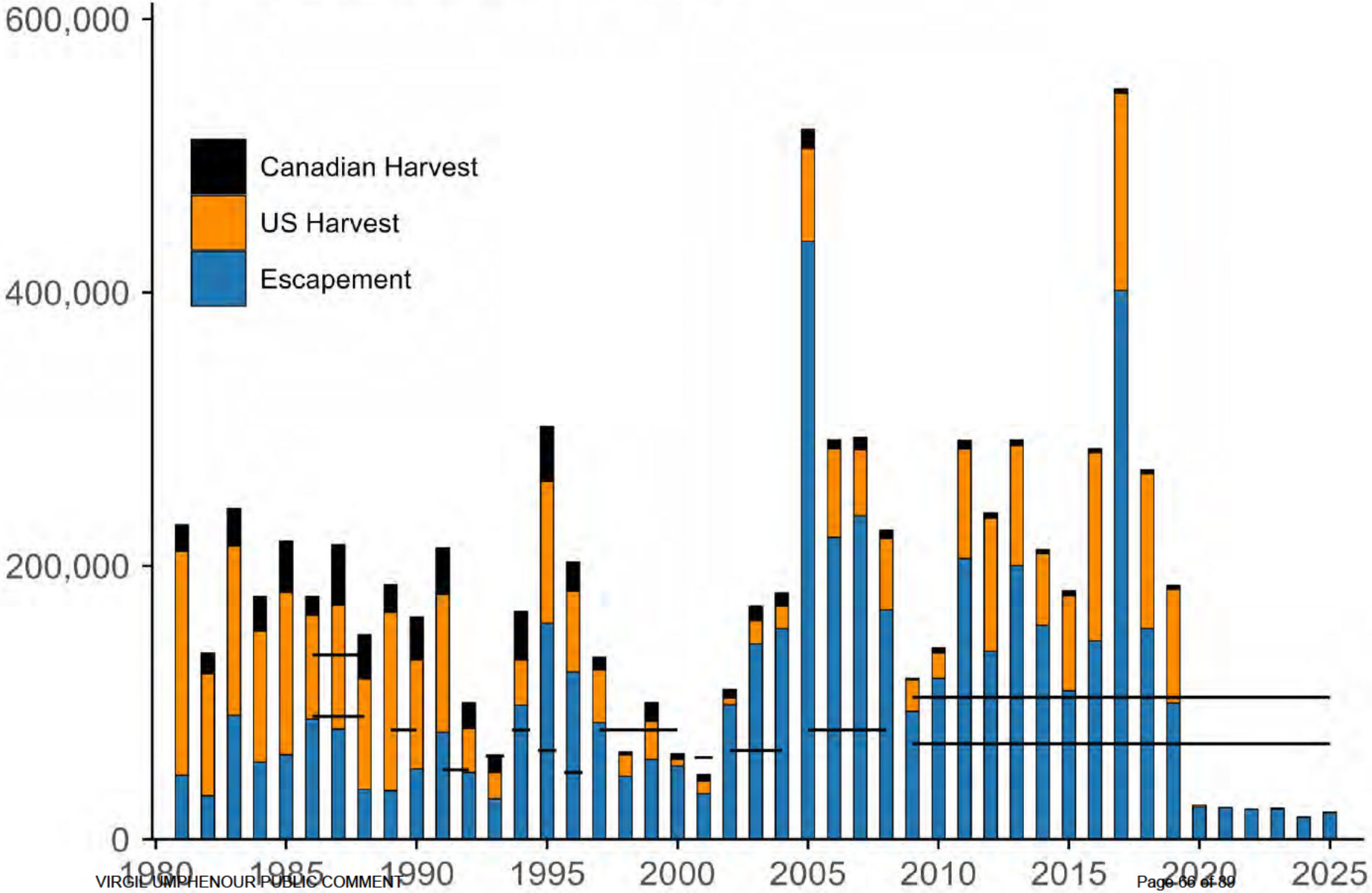

Chum Salmon Aerial Surveys
Kluane
Mainstem
40,000
30,000
20,000
10,000
0
1984
1989
1994
1999
2004
2019
2024
2025

Estimated Total Run Size
Mainstem Yukon River Chum Salmon

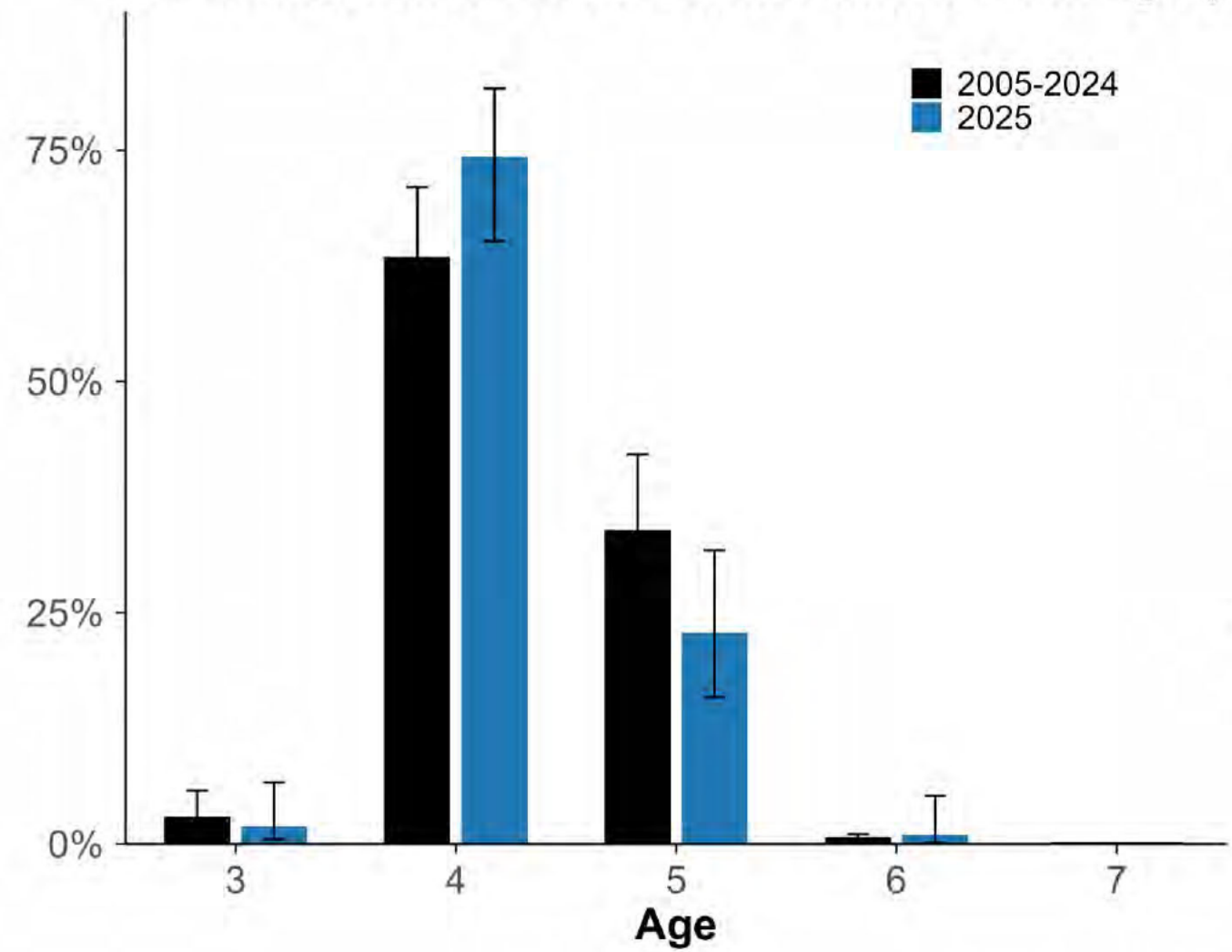
PC203

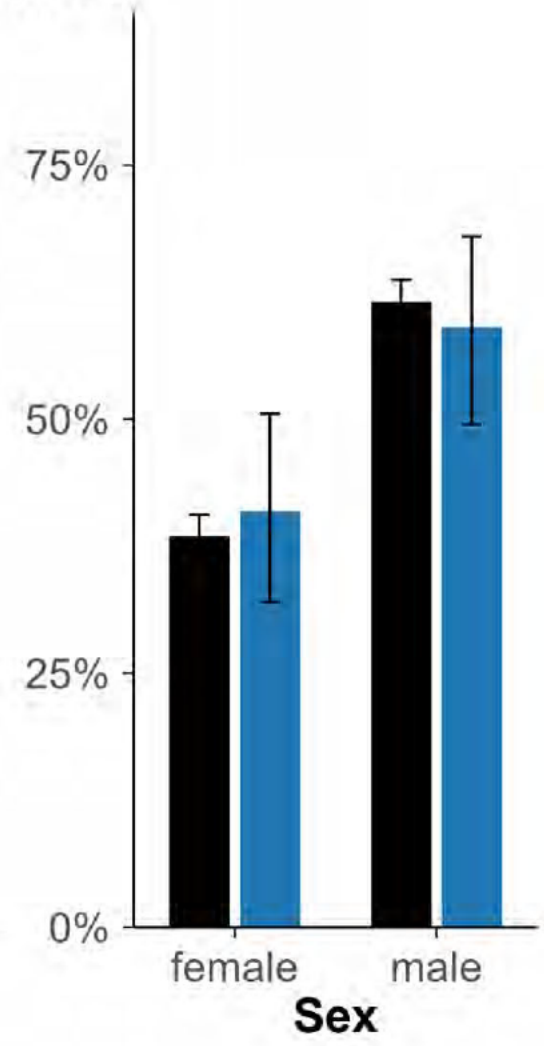


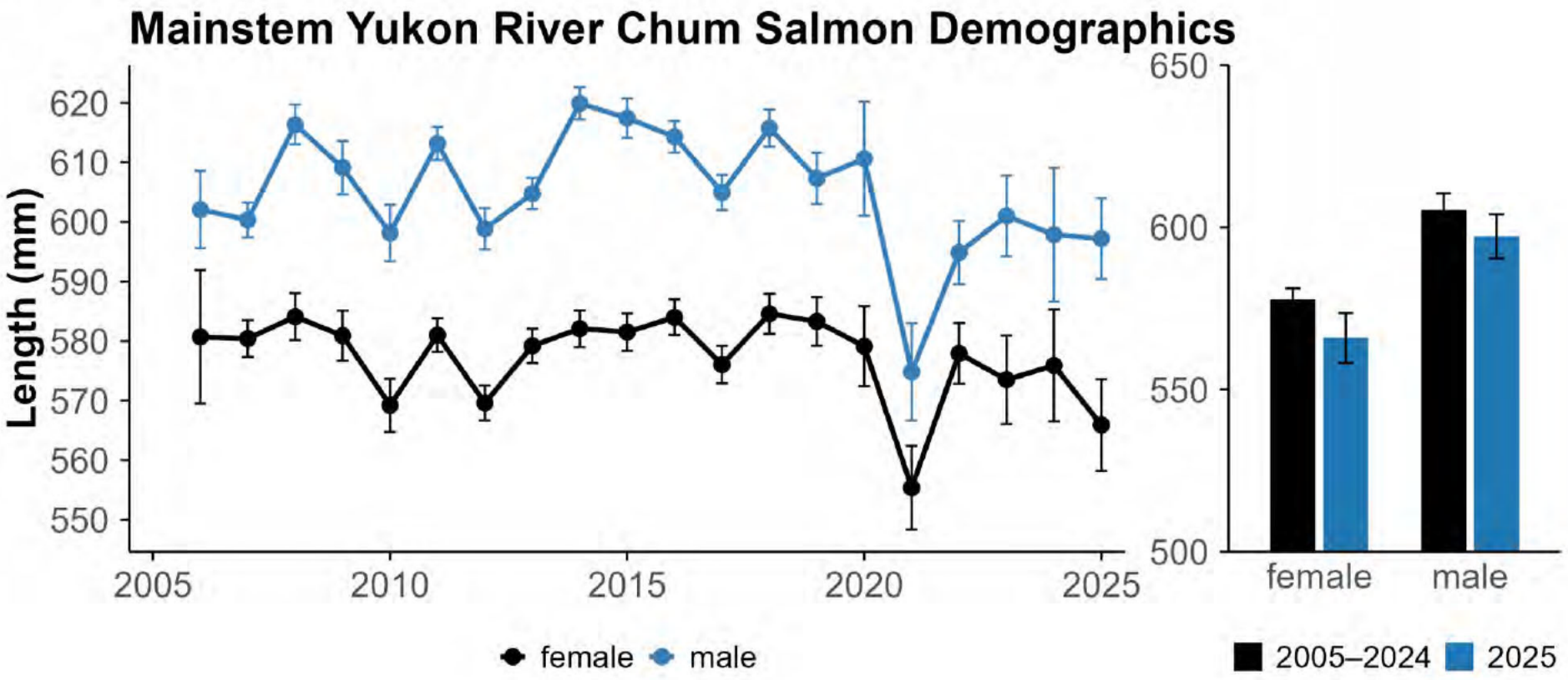
Mainstem Yukon River Chum Salmon Escapement and Harvest



Mainstem Yukon River Chum Salmon Demographics






Mainstem Yukon River Chum Salmon Demographics
Length (mm)
620
610
600
590
580
570
560
550
2005
2010
2015
2020
2025
female
male
650
600
550
500
female
male
2005–2024
2025

2025 Assessment Summary
Mainstem Yukon River Chum Salmon

Project	2025 Passage	Relative to Average	Years of Operation
Yukon River - Eagle sonar	19,574	18% (10-yr)	21
Yukon River (Minto) – aerial	667	176% (5-yr)	29
Kluane River – aerial	27	19% (6-yr)	43

2025 Fisheries Management Summary: Yukon River Chum Salmon

2025 Canadian Mainstem Yukon River Pre-Season Chum salmon Forecast: 22,000

Yukon River Spawning Objective: 70,000 to 104,000

- Yukon River Panel accepted the management plans for both countries for 2025.
- Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee recommended no harvest of any Yukon River Chum salmon in 2025.
- Minister of Fisheries accepted that recommendation which was implemented in 2025.

2025 Fisheries Management Summary: Yukon River Chum Salmon

2025 Canadian Mainstem Yukon River In-Season Chum salmon Forecast: 20,000

2025 Preliminary Eagle Sonar Passage Estimate: 19,574

- **First Nation Fishery:** The spawning goal for Yukon River chum salmon was not achieved in 2025 and as a result there were no harvest opportunities
- **Public Angling Fishery:** Closed
- **Commercial and Domestic Fisheries:** Closed

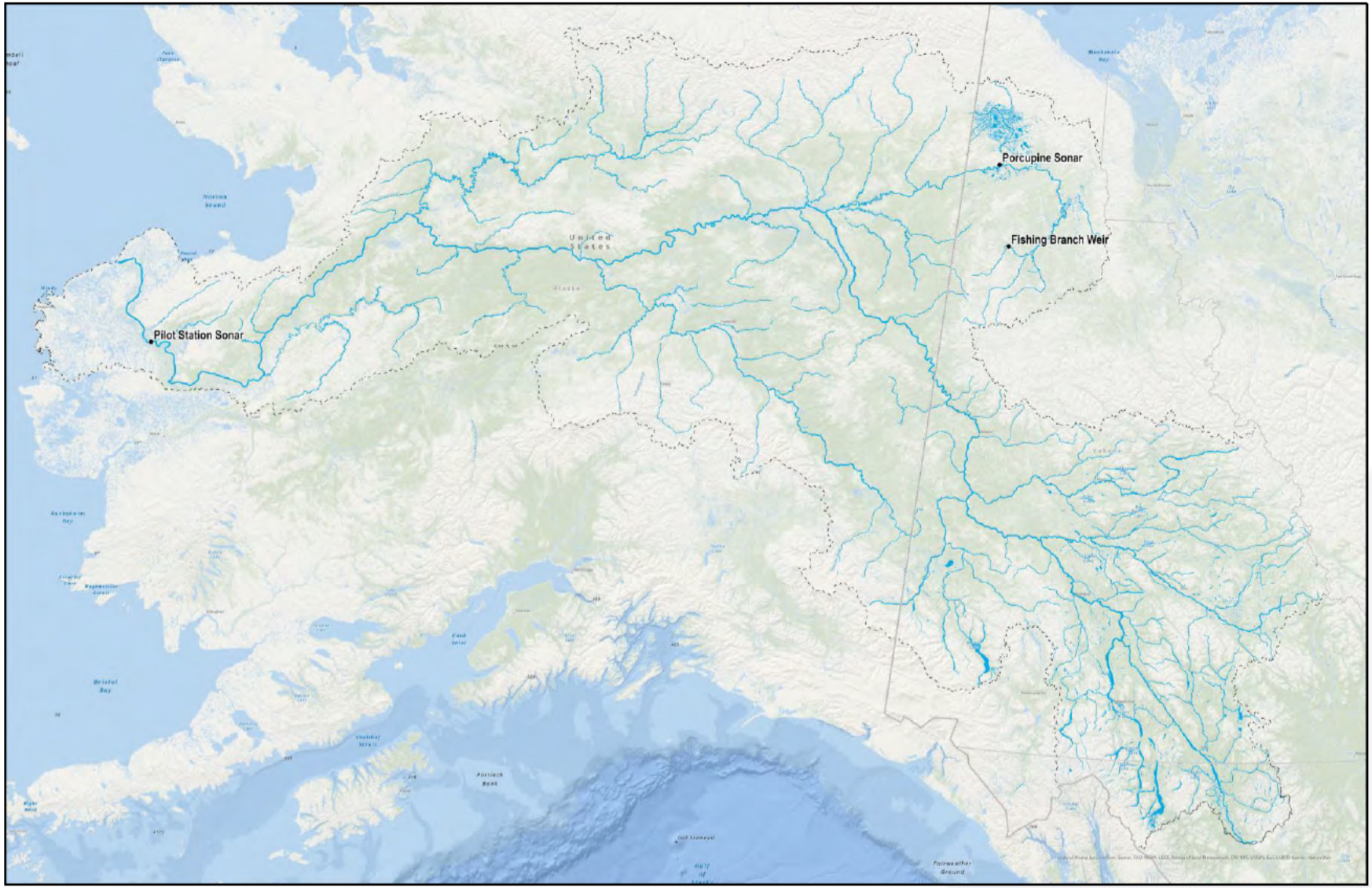
2025 Porcupine River (Fishing Branch) Chum Salmon Postseason Review: Canadian Reporting

Presented to:
Yukon River Panel

Prepared by:
Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Yukon River Operations in partnership with Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Natural Resources Department

January 28, 2026

Porcupine River Chum Salmon Assessment Sites



2025 Chum Salmon Preseason Forecasts

Drainagewide Fall Chum

- **218,000 Chum Salmon**

Canadian Yukon River Drainage

- **31,000 Chum Salmon**

Fishing Branch River

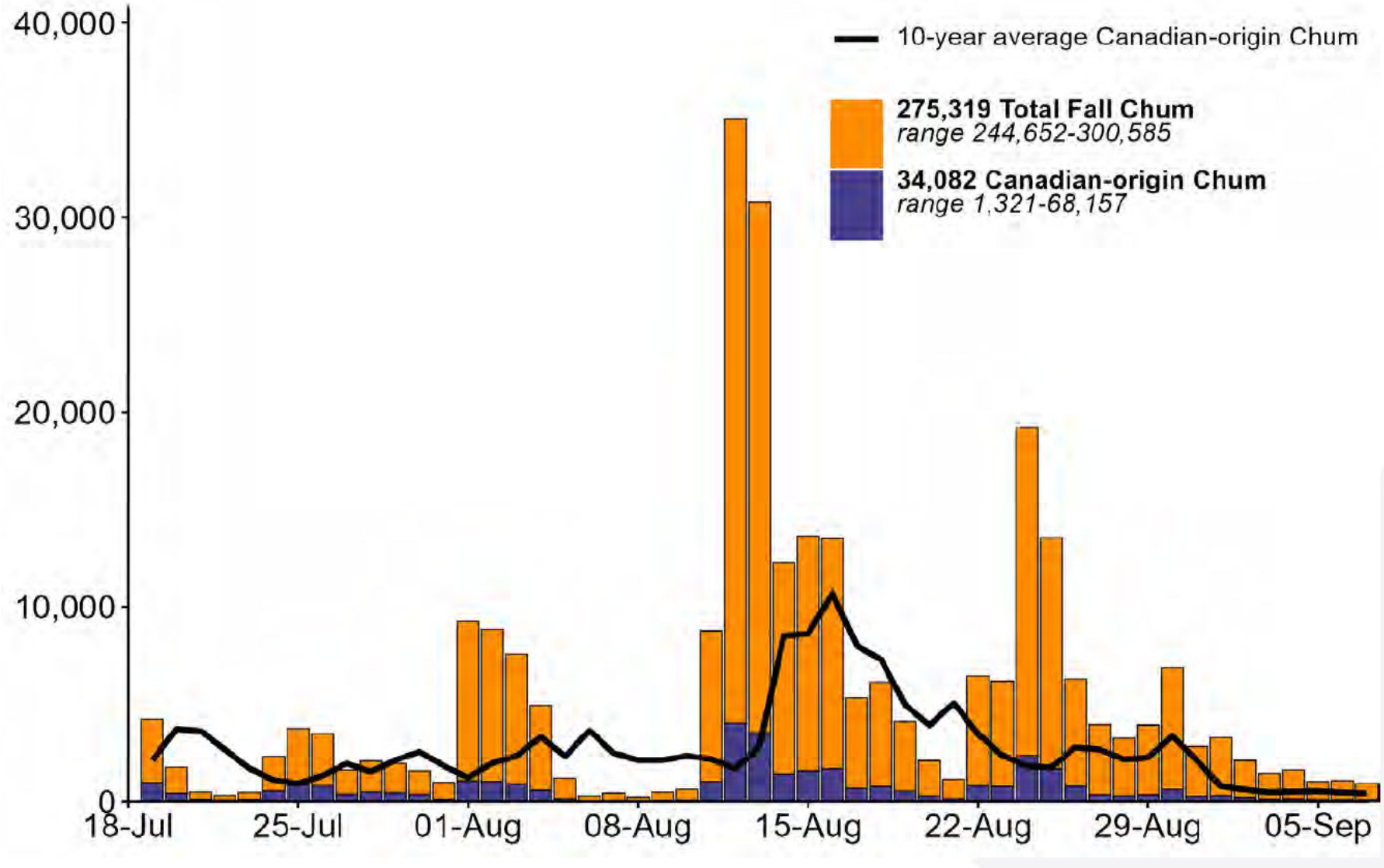
- **9,000 Chum Salmon**

2025 Chum Salmon Inseason Projection

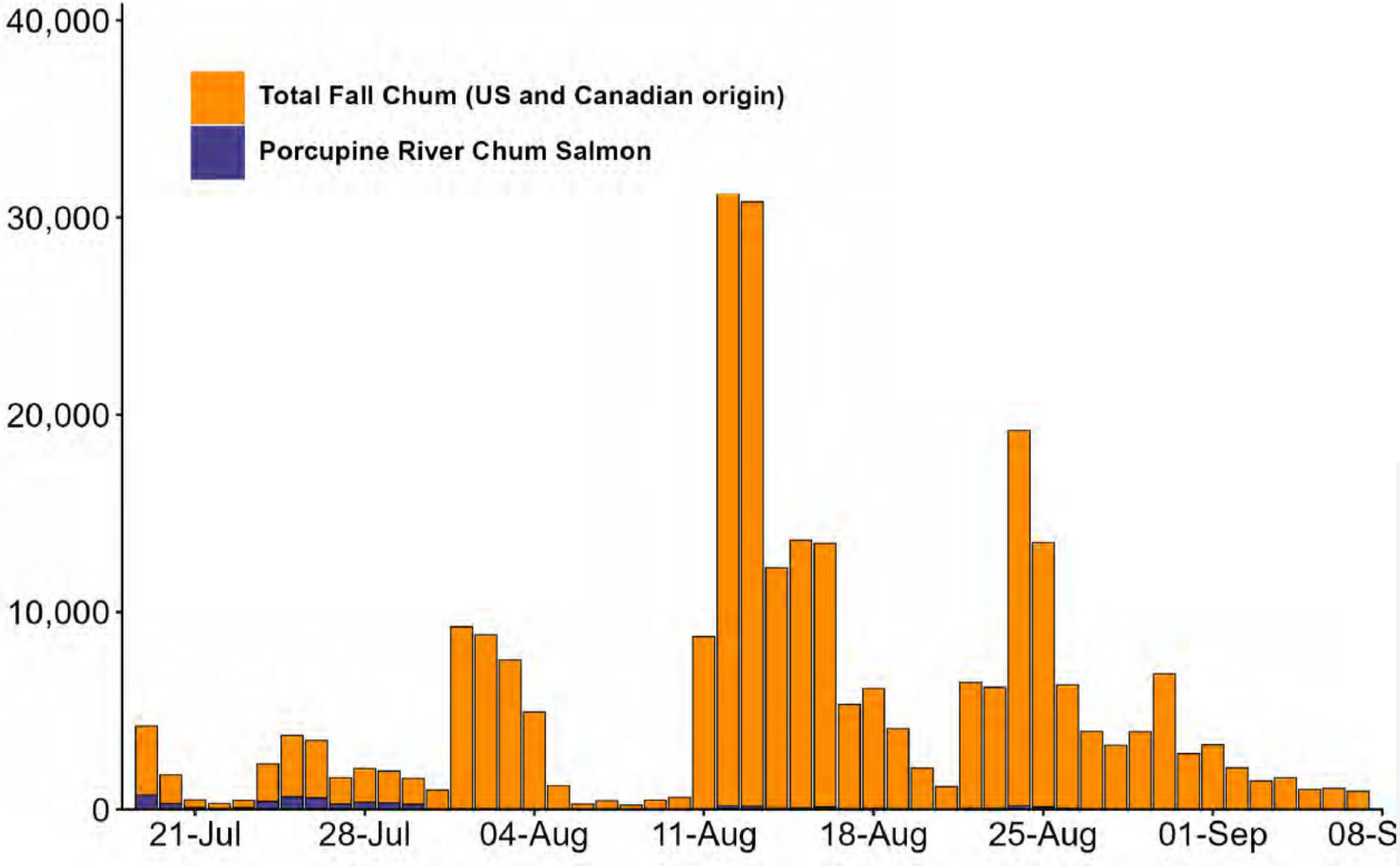
Summer to Fall Chum Salmon relationship, July 19, 2025

- **8,000**

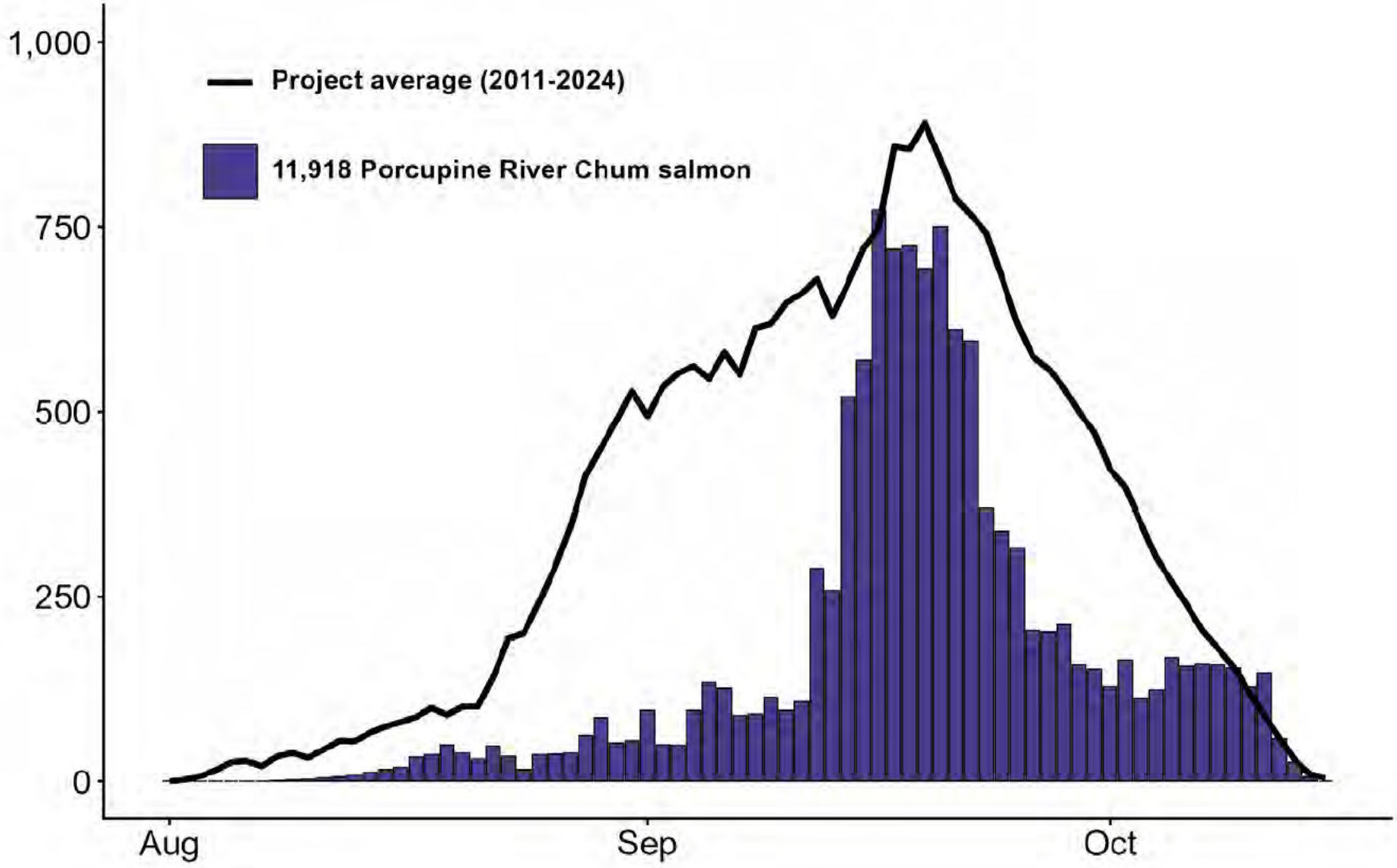
Pilot Station - 2025 Daily Passage Estimates



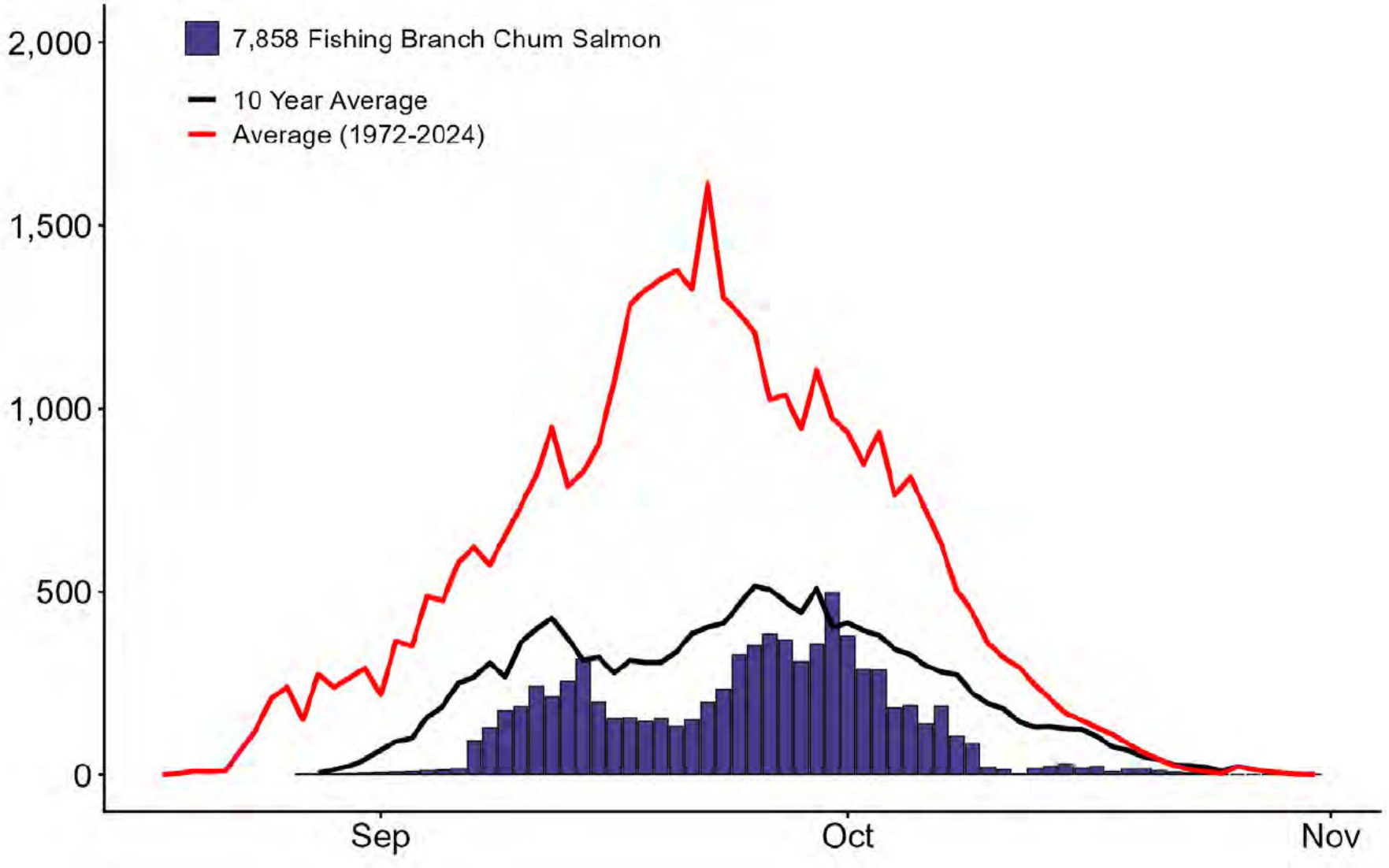
Pilot Station – Porcupine Chum Salmon 2025 Daily Passage Estimates



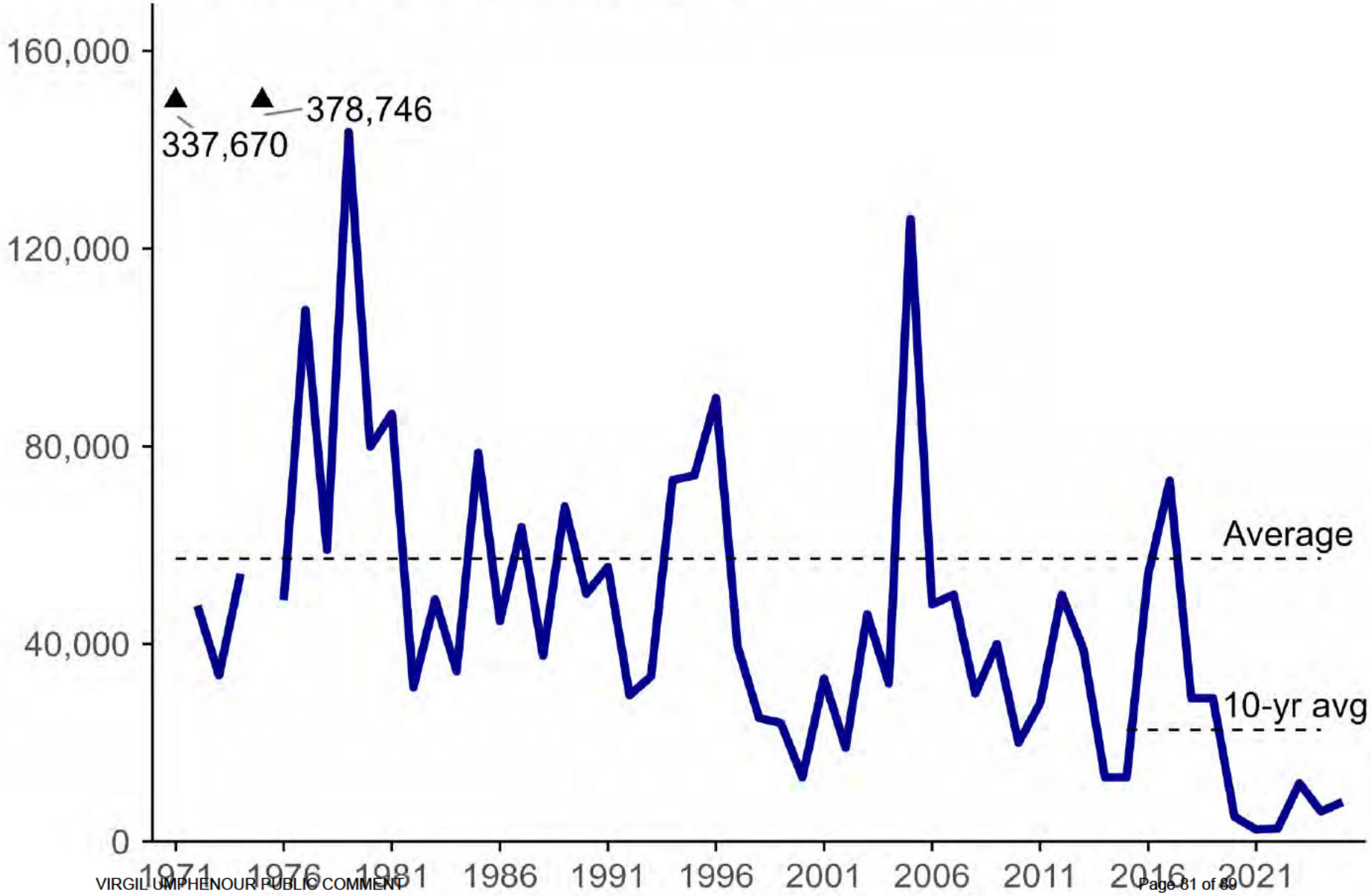
Porcupine River - 2025 Daily Passage Estimates



Fishing Branch River - 2025 Daily Passage

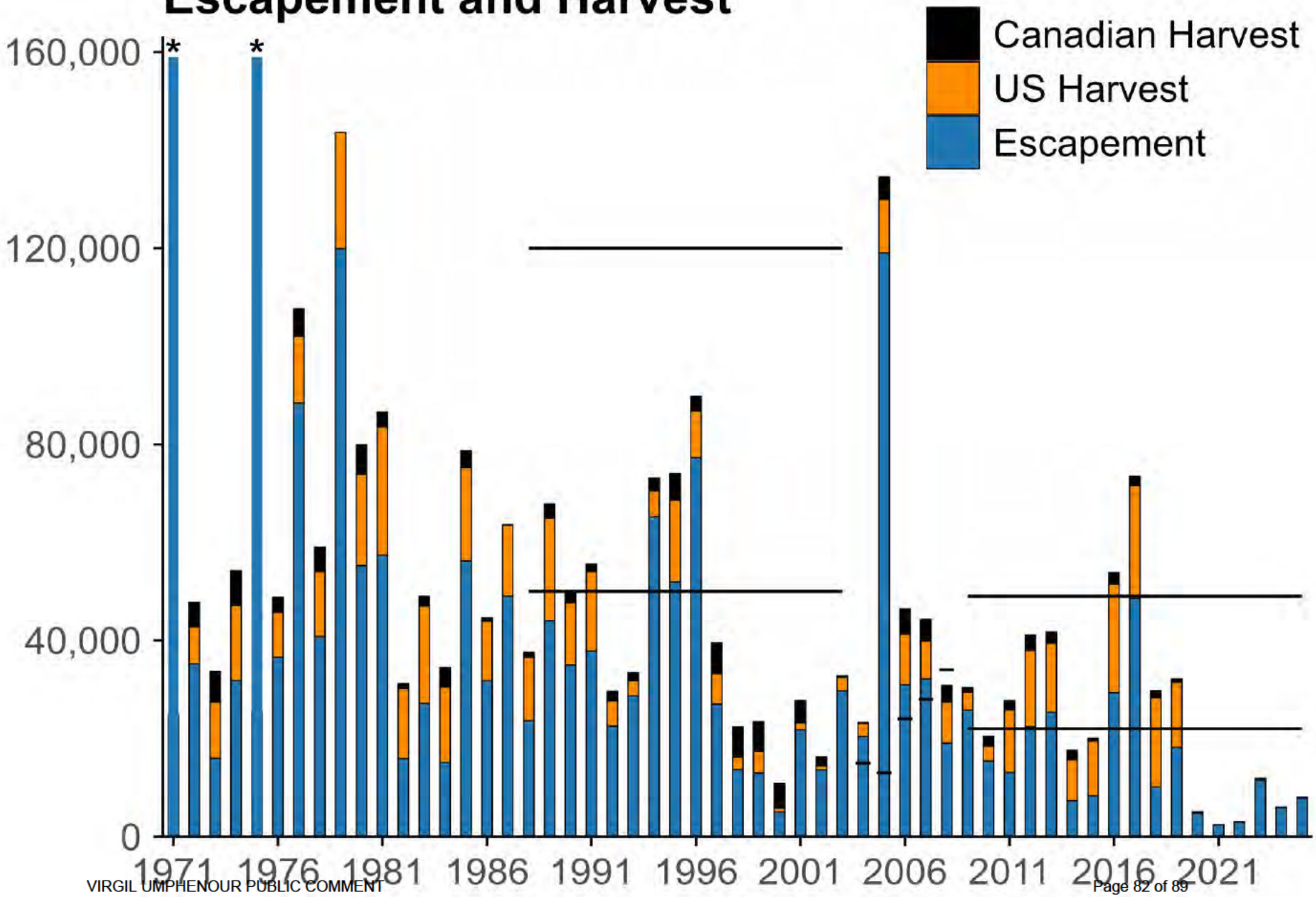


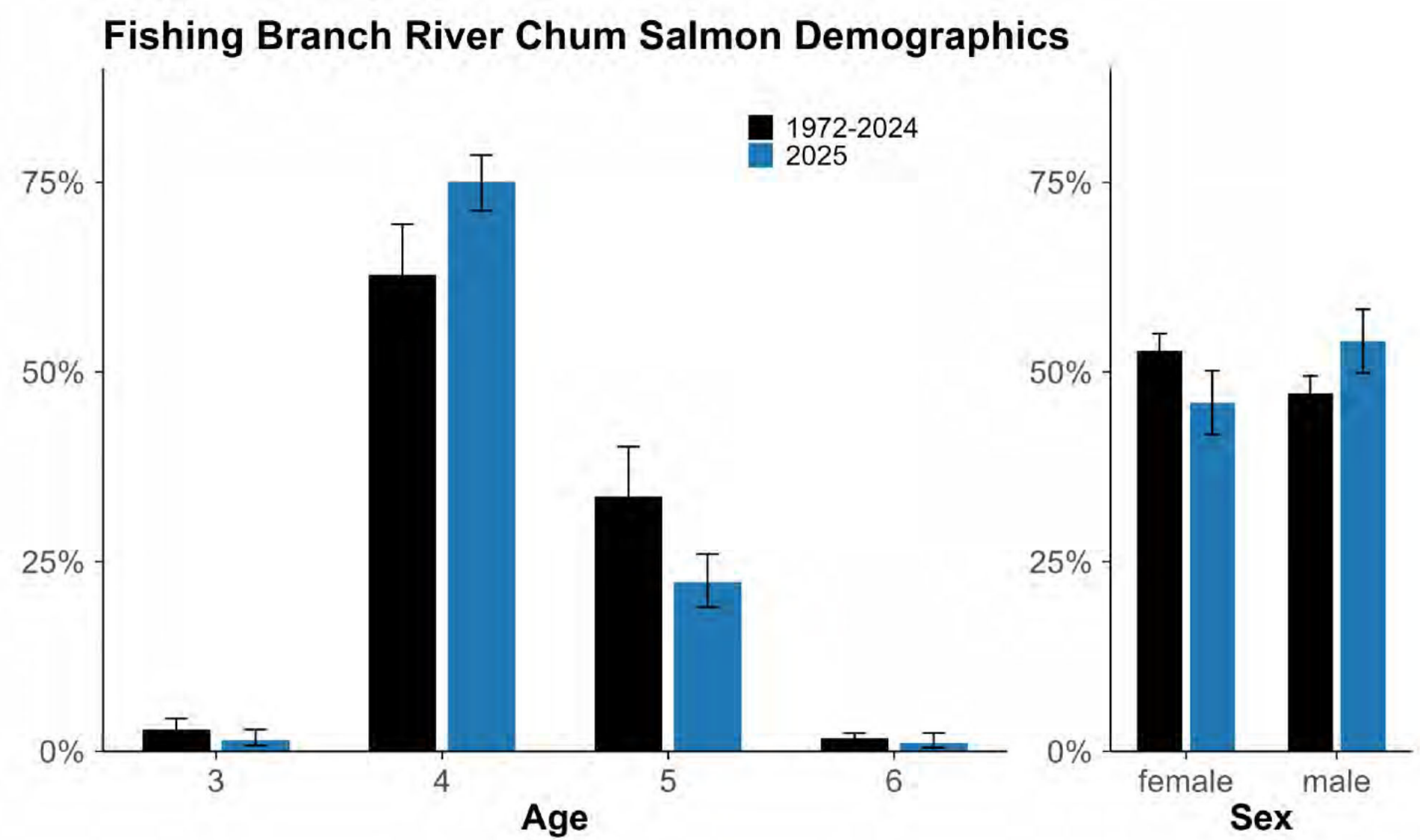
Fishing Branch River Chum Salmon
Estimated Total Run Size

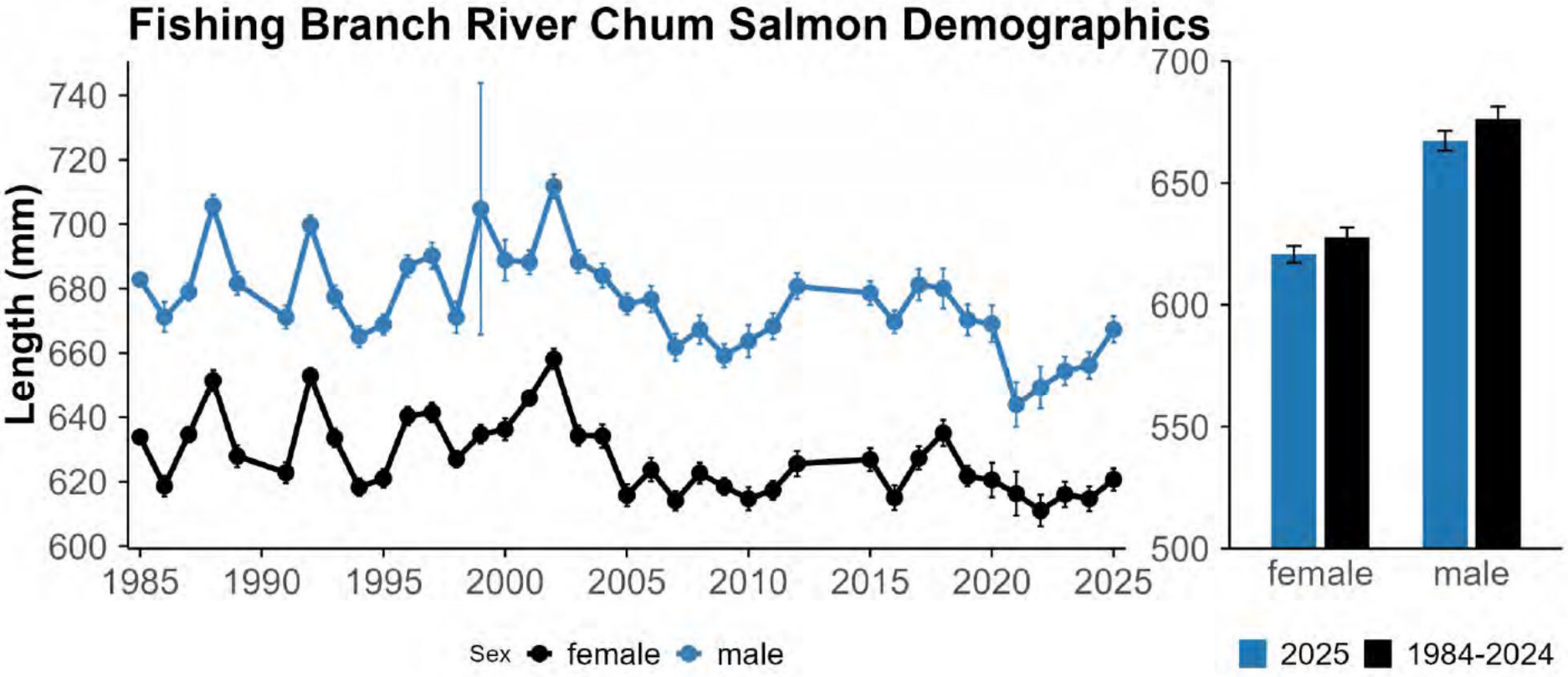


Fishing Branch River Chum Salmon Escapement and Harvest

PC203




Fishing Branch River Chum Salmon Demographics
1972-2024
2025
75%
50%
25%
0%
3
4
5
6
Age
75%
50%
25%
0%
female
male
Sex


Fishing Branch River Chum Salmon Demographics
Length (mm)
740
720
700
680
660
640
620
600
1985
1990
1995
2000
2005
2010
2015
2020
2025
Sex
female
male
700
650
600
550
500
female
male
2025
1984-2024

2025 Fisheries Management Summary: Fishing Branch River Chum Salmon

2025 Canadian Fishing Branch River Pre-Season Chum salmon Forecast: 9,000

Fishing Branch River Mainstem Spawning Objective: 22,000 to 49,000

- Yukon River Panel accepted the management plans for both countries for 2025.
- Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee recommended no harvest of any Porcupine River Chum salmon in 2025.
- Minister of Fisheries accepted that recommendation which was implemented in 2025.

2025 Fisheries Management Summary: Fishing Branch River Chum Salmon

2025 Canadian Fishing Branch River In-Season Chum salmon Forecast: 8,000

2025 Preliminary Fishing Branch Passage Estimate: 7,858

- **First Nation Fishery:** The spawning goal for Fishing Branch River Chum salmon was not achieved in 2025 and as a result there were no harvest opportunities
- **Public Angling Fishery:** Closed

Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Summary for 2026 Management Actions

37. Porcupine River Chum Fishery

July 23, 2025 - Resolution CO2025-37

3. The following measures shall come into effect on August 27, 2025 at 12:01 am and remain in effect until September 29, 2025 at 11:59 PM. Outside of these dates, four (4) inch gillnets or smaller can be used.

REMINDER

End of non-salmon gillnet fishing period

Today (August 26, 2025) is the last day permitted for gillnet fishing of non-salmon species.

All nets must be removed before tomorrow (August 27, 2025) to protect the upcoming chum salmon run.

The Teechik Land Guardians will be patrolling the river.

Mahsi'.

Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation

Fish Camp is back! Come and cut fish with Natural Resources staff outside the John Tizya Center. We'll be there **Wednesday to Friday this week** (August 13–15) and **Tuesday to Friday next week** (August 19–22).

We'll start in the morning around 10:30 am and go into the afternoon until all the fish we have are done.

Please bring your own knife if you have one, otherwise we will have some on hand.

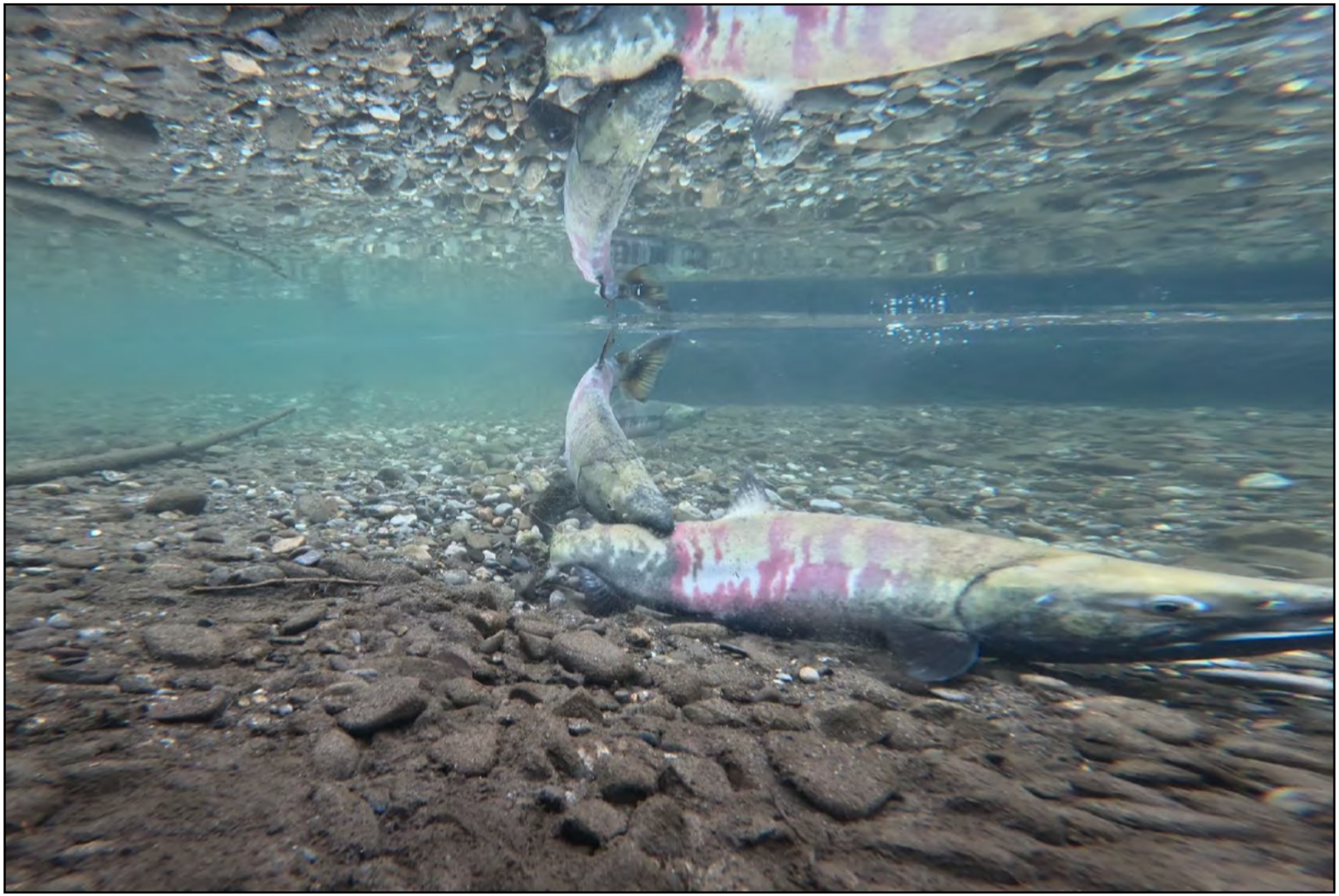
See you there!

Posted August 13, 2025

Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation

2025 Canadian-Origin Coho Salmon Porcupine River

- Coho salmon spawn in the Canadian Yukon River drainage, but little is known on their distribution or abundance, and no targeted assessment is completed.
- In 2025, we sampled three Coho salmon at Fishing Branch for the first time since 2019.
  - Sampled a dozen Coho salmon at the Porcupine sonar site as well.
- Limited fishing opportunities, dependent on environmental and ice conditions, as well as run timing
- For 2025, the ADF&G reported the Coho salmon run size to be approximately 108,000 fish compared to a historical average run index of 216,000 fish.



UNITED FISHERMEN OF ALASKA

Mailing Address: P.O. Box 20229, Juneau AK 99802-0229
Phone: (907) 586-2820
E-mail: ufa@ufa-fish.org **Website:** www.ufa-fish.org

December 26, 2025

Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Attn: Board of Fisheries- Board Support Section
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Re: South Alaska Peninsula / Aleutian Islands / Chignik Finfish Proposals — February 2026 Meeting

Dear Chair Carlson Van-Dort and Members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries,

United Fishermen of Alaska (UFA) submits this letter to state our positions on proposals affecting the South Alaska Peninsula (Area M) salmon fisheries at the February 2026 Finfish meeting.

UFA represents commercial fishing organizations statewide. Our members depend on management decisions that are grounded in data, preserve effective conservation tools, and allow fishing communities to remain viable. The positions outlined below reflect those priorities.

UFA **opposes** Proposals 127, 129–133, and 136. UFA **supports** Proposals 134 and 135.

The proposals we oppose would undermine the fleet's ability to continue adaptive management in Area M. That system—developed collaboratively by fishermen, processors, and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and endorsed by the Board—has already produced measurable results. Since implementation began in 2022 and was strengthened in 2023, June chum harvest has been reduced by roughly 50 percent compared to the prior decade, while maintaining in-season selectivity and reliable data collection.

Genetic stock identification and harvest analyses show that the June Area M fishery removes a small share of Arctic–Yukon–Kuskokwim and Coastal Western Alaska chum and Chinook salmon. Multiple studies, including WASSIP and more recent genetic work, estimate June CWAK chum harvest rates in the range of four to six percent. Most fish harvested originate from Asian and East of Kodiak stocks, not Western Alaska rivers, and the Western Alaska component is spread across many systems rather than concentrated in any one river.

The proposals UFA opposes would replace a working, flexible management framework with rigid caps, prescriptive closures, and regulatory changes that limit in-season decision-making and disrupt long-standing datasets. These changes would not address the climate-driven freshwater and marine conditions affecting Western Alaska salmon productivity. They would, however, weaken tools that have already reduced impacts and would impose disproportionate economic harm on Alaska Peninsula fishing communities.

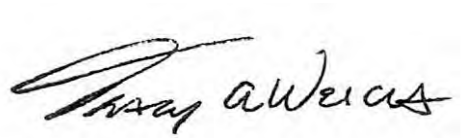
UFA **supports** Proposal 134 because it restores fishing time lost in 2023 and improves flexibility within the existing adaptive management plan. That flexibility is necessary to respond to real-time conditions and to continue reducing unintended impacts while keeping the fishery viable.

UFA also **supports** Proposal 135 because it allows the release of Chinook salmon, aligning Area M with practices already used in regions such as Southeast Alaska and Kodiak. Allowing release promotes conservation and reduces unnecessary mortality while improving consistency across management areas.

UFA urges the Board to maintain and strengthen the adaptive management approach that is already in place. We respectfully ask the Board to **oppose** Proposals 127, 129–133, and 136, and to **adopt** Proposals 134 and 135.

Thank you for your consideration.

Regards,



Matt Alward
President

Tracy Welch
Executive Director

PC205

Submitted by: Carter Uttecht
Community of Residence: King Cove

I respectfully submit this comment in opposition to Proposals 127, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, and 136, all of which would introduce regulatory language that limits or harms June commercial salmon fishing opportunity in Area M and the Eastern Aleutian region

Alaska Board of Fisheries
P.O. Box 115526
1255 W. 8th Street
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

To the Members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries:

My name is Darien Uttecht, and I am a community member from King Cove, Alaska. I am submitting this comment in opposition to further restrictions on the Area M commercial fishery.

Limiting Area M fishing opportunity would be detrimental to my household income and to the broader King Cove community. Our community is already struggling, and additional restrictions would compound existing economic hardship for families who rely on fishing to survive.

The June Area M fishery is not the primary driver of Arctic–Yukon–Kuskokwim chum or Chinook declines, and Area M has already reduced chum harvest through adaptive management. Further restrictions would disproportionately impact small, rural coastal communities while failing to address the real causes of declining salmon returns.

There are many unaccounted-for factors affecting salmon populations, including climate stressors and habitat impacts throughout river systems. These issues cannot be regulated away by further restricting Area M fishermen.

I urge the Board to consider these realities and avoid placing additional burdens on communities like King Cove that are already facing significant economic challenges.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Darien Uttecht
King Cove, Alaska
[redacted]

Alaska Board of Fisheries
P.O. Box 115526
1255 W. 8th Street
Juneau, AK 99811-5526
To the Members of the Board of Fisheries:

I am submitting this public comment regarding proposed changes affecting the Area M fishery.

All Aleutians are my lifelong family and community in Alaska. While I currently live in Anchorage, my ties to the region and its people are deep and enduring.

Reducing time, area, or opportunity significantly impacts the ability of our loved ones to live and raise children in their ancestral lands. When any of us are restricted from a way of life that is older than the Board itself, we suffer the consequences of strictures that were made as an afterthought. Furthermore, the burden any Unangax bear, we all feel. Even those lucky enough to sustain business or maintain a quality of living in places where untenable restrictions are applied will suffer seeing their kin reap costs they did not sow.

The negative impact of imposing these restrictions on our communities would mean more hunger, less security, more scarcity, and less meaningful work in the places that matter to the people who come from there. Imagine being raised in a place and building your future there only to have the actions and economic interests of those far away ruin your chances of giving your own children the same chances you had to build a life where your family comes from. That is what this negative impact will mean for generations to come.

The June Area M fishery is not a primary driver of Arctic–Yukon–Kuskokwim (AYK) chum and Chinook declines. Area M has already reduced chum harvest through adaptive management. This effort has been successful. Runs vary by river system; not all poor runs share a single cause. Climate and habitat stressors are major drivers of declines and cannot be regulated away. Further restrictions would hit small rural coastal communities hardest.

These restrictions are not conducive to conservation. They will only result in lessened collaboration between those who have lived on these lands and a decrease in meaningful conservation objectives that are already and have been delivered upon.

I am opposed to Proposals 127, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 136, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 116, 120, 126, 140, 141, 143, 148, 152.

Sincerely,
Aiden Vergen
Anchorage, AK
[redacted]

Submitted by: Jacole Vergen
Community of Residence: King Cove

To the Alaska Board of Fisheries,

I write to you today not only as a concerned Alaskan, but as a Unangan woman who was raised on the waters of my homeland — the waters you call “Area M,” but that I will not call by that name any longer. That term, sterile

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To: Alaska Board of Fisheries
Alaska Peninsula / Aleutian Island / Chignik Finfish meeting February 2026
On-time Public Comments

From: Gale K. Vick, Member, Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee
Personal comments

RE: The need to consider "home pack" enumeration and regulatory reform
Support For Proposal #107 *with amendments*

Date: February 3, 2026

At the January 2026 Board of Fisheries Bristol Bay meeting in Dillingham, Alaska, the Board of Fish unanimously adopted Proposal #44 as amended in RC 109, to "Limit the number of king salmon retained as home pack in the commercial fishery and in the subsistence fishery and report all king salmon harvest." [1]

This was another way to help the enumeration of king salmon in the Nushugak River which are now listed as a "stock of concern" under the Nushagak District King Salmon Stock of Concern Management Plan (5 AAC 06.391.

For the 2025 season, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) implemented unprecedented conservation measures for Area M (Alaska Peninsula) due to Gulf of Alaska Chinook salmon declines.[2] However, there was no recognition for the need to review the practice of "home pack" (personal use on the fish ticket.)

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[1] **BOF BRISTOL BAY ACTION 7-0 SUPPORT JANUARY 2026**
RC 109 . Proposal #44 Substitute Language / Board Member Carlson-Van Dort
5 AAC 06.391. Nushagak District King Salmon Stock of Concern Management Plan.
(g) All king salmon caught under a S03T or S04T CFEC permit must be retained. King salmon taken during commercial fishing must be sold, delivered, processed, or otherwise lawfully transferred to the commercial market and may not be retained for the purposes of 5 AAC 39.010, except that king salmon may be donated to a food bank, charitable organization, or tribal or village entity providing food distribution services in the Bristol Bay region.
(h) A fish ticket shall be submitted to the department for all king salmon caught, including for the purposes of donation, within seven days of landing the fish;
(i) For the purposes of this subsection
(1) "landing" means successfully removing the fish out of the water.
(2) "charitable organization" in this section has the meaning given in AS 17.20.347(1).
(3) "food bank" in this section has the meaning given in AS 17.20.347(4).
(4) "caught" means brought on board the vessel or shore.

[2] **Sand Point Commercial Salmon Fishery Update # 1**
https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/applications/dcfnewsrelease/1659401442.pdf
Because of concerns for Gulf of Alaska Chinook salmon (king salmon) across the Gulf of Alaska, the department is taking unprecedented steps to conserve king salmon by restricting numerous fisheries in 2025. In the South Alaska Peninsula Area, additional management actions are being implemented to protect these stocks beginning in July:
Beginning July 1, Chinook (king) salmon 28 inches or greater in length may not be retained by purse seine gear in

The Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee (FAC) is in full support of Proposal #107 as submitted by the Koyukuk River Advisory Committee, but I would like to offer an amendment that mirrors the action the Board of Fish took in Bristol Bay. (We did not have time to discuss this at the FAC meeting so I am submitting as a personal amendment.)

> "(g) All king salmon caught under a S03M or S01M CFEC permit must be retained. King salmon taken during commercial fishing must be sold, delivered, processed, or otherwise lawfully transferred to the commercial market and may not be retained for the purposes of 5 AAC 39.010, except that king salmon may be donated to a food bank, charitable organization, or tribal or village entity providing food distribution services in the AYK (Arctic Yukon Kuskokwim) region.
> (h) A fish ticket shall be submitted to the department for all king salmon caught, including for the purposes of donation, within seven days of landing the fish;
> (i) For the purposes of this subsection
> (1) "landing" means successfully removing the fish out of the water.
> (2) "charitable organization" in this section has the meaning given in AS 17.20.347(1).
> (3) "food bank" in this section has the meaning given in AS 17.20.347(4).
> (4) "caught" means brought on board the vessel or shore."

Thank you.

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the Unimak, Southwestern, South Central, and Southeastern Districts of Area M during a commercial salmon fishery and must be returned to the water unharmed. Additionally, the Department will monitor the harvest of Chinook salmon in the Shumagin Islands Section of the Southeastern District. If more than 1,000 Chinook salmon are harvested within the Shumagin Islands Section of the Southeastern District during a regulatory fishing period in July, then the next scheduled fishing period in **stat area 282-11** (Unga Cape-East Popof (Delarof Harbor), Popof Head, Red Bluff, Elephant Head (Dark Cliffs), Fox Hole, Pirate Cove, Dangerous Point, East Head, Andronica Island, and Salmon Ranch) **Will Not Open** to commercial salmon fishing for **purse seine gear only.**

Alaska Board of Fisheries
P.O. Box 115526
1255 W. 8th Street
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

To the Members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries:

My family is from King Cove, with deep roots in Belkofski, Sand Point, and Unga. These connections go back multiple generations, and my family history is closely tied to these communities in the Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian region.

If the Board reduces time, area, or opportunity in Area M fisheries, it would have serious and lasting impacts on me and my household. Fishing income is a critical part of the regional economy and directly supports my ability to live and work in King Cove. Any further reduction would significantly reduce my income and make it increasingly difficult to cover basic costs of living, including housing, food, fuel, and utilities, which are already much higher in remote communities.

Due to the limited winter economy and lack of employment opportunities in King Cove, I have already been forced to relocate during the winter months to support my household. Further reductions in Area M fisheries would make it financially impossible for me to return to my hometown on a permanent basis. This would mean losing not only my livelihood but also my connection to my home community, family, and cultural roots.

Reduced fishing opportunities would also affect food security, as fishing income helps offset the high cost of groceries and transportation. The loss of income would make it harder to afford childcare when available, maintain stable housing, and plan for long-term residency in the community. Ultimately, continued reductions would contribute to outmigration, weaken the local economy, and make it harder for families like mine to remain in King Cove.

Access to Area M fisheries is critical to the economic and social well-being of King Cove and other Aleutian communities. Fishing income supports not only individual households, but also local businesses, utilities, and essential services across the region. When Area M fishing opportunity is maintained, residents can remain year-round, supporting stable populations and thriving local economies. This directly benefits local schools by sustaining enrollment, ensuring adequate funding, resources, and teaching positions.

A clear example of the impact of restrictions and uncertainty in recent years is the closure of the Peter Pan cannery in King Cove. This closure directly affected local workers, and with the lack of tax income, it has forced many city employees to take pay cuts and has placed significant financial strain on households. Many Aleutian communities have already experienced population decline, with schools permanently closing and services disappearing. Reduced fishing opportunities and economic uncertainty accelerate this cycle, ultimately displacing

families, weakening local economies, and threatening the long-term survival of Aleutian communities.

The June Area M fishery is not a primary driver of Arctic–Yukon–Kuskokwim chum and Chinook declines. Area M has already reduced chum harvest through adaptive management, and this effort has been successful. Runs vary by river system; not all poor runs share a single cause. Climate and habitat stressors are major drivers of declines and can't be "regulated away." Removing management tools and flexibility makes it harder to manage mixed-stock fisheries well. Further restrictions would hit small rural coastal communities hardest.

Respectfully,

Dakota Walker
King Cove, Alaska
[redacted]

Alaska Board of Fisheries
P.O. Box 115526
1255 W. 8th Street
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

To the Members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries:

My name is Joe Ward, and I am submitting my comments in strong opposition to any proposals that would sharply reduce fishing time and opportunity in Area M.

As an Aleutian shareholder, fishing is the primary economic driver in our region. Our families, small businesses, and communities rely heavily on fisheries. The revenue produced from fishing in Area M not only supports the seasonal economy, but also sustains businesses and schools year-round.

While I do not currently live in the area, this is my ancestral homeland. Accessing, fishing, and harvesting in Area M is imperative because my family and local communities have relied on these waters for generations to put food on the table and support our communities. This is a vital part of our culture and heritage.

Any additional closures would cause irreparable harm to families and communities throughout the region. I respectfully ask the Board to pursue a balanced approach to management that sustains jobs, local economies, and cultural traditions across our region.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Joe Ward
Aleutian Islands
[redacted]

Alaska Board of Fisheries
P.O. Box 115526
1255 W. 8th Street
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

To the Members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries:

My name is Maeva Waterman, and I am most connected to the Aleutians East Borough, where I have been fishing for the past ten years. I am a former fisherman and crew member based in King Cove and currently serve as a Fleet Manager for Trident Seafoods. I previously served as a Fleet Manager for Silver Bay Seafoods in False Pass.

If the Board reduces fishing time in Area M, it would significantly impact my ability to earn income and effectively plan fishing operations in the region. Shortened seasons compress fishing activity into narrower timeframes, increasing operational risk in an already dangerous industry. Reduced flexibility limits the ability to fish safely, respond to weather and mechanical issues, and make sound operational decisions, placing additional strain on vessels, crews, and the overall fishing system.

A closure or further reduction would significantly harm communities across the Aleutians East Borough. Commercial fishing generates millions of dollars each year in fish tax revenue, which funds essential services and supports the Aleutians East Borough School District. Reducing fishing activity would shrink this tax base, limiting funding for schools, infrastructure, and local government, while also reducing jobs and economic stability in communities such as King Cove, Sand Point, and False Pass.

Restrictions and regulatory uncertainty have real consequences for people and communities. A clear example is the closure of the Peter Pan processing plant in King Cove. The loss of a processor gutted the community—jobs disappeared, businesses closed, and families were forced to leave. Regular coastal transportation and weekly deliveries were disrupted, store shelves went empty, and residents experienced weeks without fresh produce.

Coastal Aleutian communities depend on fishing not only for income, but for basic access to food, services, and transportation. Further reductions in fishing time increase the risk to remaining processors. The Aleutians East Borough cannot afford to lose another processor without threatening the economic foundation, cultural identity, and long-term viability of these communities.

Area M has already reduced chum harvest through adaptive management, and climate and habitat stressors cannot be regulated away.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Maeva Waterman
Aleutians East Borough
[redacted]

Alaska Board of Fisheries
P.O. Box 115526
1255 W. 8th Street
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

To the Members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries:

My name is Jimmy Weaver. I am a commercial fisherman and permit holder operating in Area M.

Reducing fishing opportunity directly reduces my income. Less fishing time means fewer fish landed and less fish tax collected by boroughs and communities that depend on that revenue. Fish tax is the primary revenue source for many communities on the Alaska Peninsula.

Area M has already reduced chum harvest through adaptive management, and those measures have been successful. Further restrictions would disproportionately impact fishermen and coastal communities without addressing broader factors affecting salmon runs.

I am opposed to Proposals 127, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 136, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 116, 120, 126, 140, 141, 143, 148, 152.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Jimmy Weaver
Homer, Alaska
[redacted]

Submitted by: Chris Wenzel
Community of Residence: currently in Washington state

SUPPORT PROPOSALS : 113,114,115,134,142,145

113 Will give ADFG a tool to manage Nelson river escapement to better utilize Alaska's resources to its potential.

114 Will make understanding current regulations easier for user groups within the fishery.

115 Will give ADFG another tool to manage the fishery to better utilize Alaska's resources to its potential.

134 Adaptive management during the Area M June fishery amongst the drift and seine fishermen has shown measurable reductions in the June Chum harvest. Adaptive management allows ADFG and fisherman to maintain data on the Area M June Chum harvests and gives them the ability respond to conditions in real-time further reducing Area M June Chum harvest. Adaptive management during the June fishery in Area M is working and delivering reduced June Chum harvests.

142 Will give ADFG another tool to manage the Area M fishery to better utilize Alaska's resources to its potential

145 Will give ADFG another tool to manage the Area M fishery to better utilize Alaska's resources to its potential

OPPOSED PROPOSALS 116, 127,128,129,130,131,132,133,136,147

116 Would negatively affect ADFG's ability to manage the fishery efficiently. Potentially causing Alaska's resources to be under utilized.

127,128,129,130,131,132,133, 136 Some Western Alaska rivers are thriving, even when others are not. Science shows that Area M is not the main cause of poor salmon returns elsewhere. If Area M were the problem, all rivers within the region would be struggling. Further restricting Area M won't fix a problem that isn't being caused here.

147 What does an assumption of Area M seine harvest have to do with gillnet specifications? What kind of science supports reducing gillnet depths from 90 to 70 meshes deep pertains to seine harvests. furthermore burdening gillnet fishermen financially to replace and build new nets based on an assumption of seine harvest seems un-logical

Submitted by: Chris Wenzel
Community of Residence: Currently Lake Tapps, Washington

SUPPORT PROPOSALS : 113,114,115,134,142,145

113 Will give ADFG a tool to manage Nelson river escapement to better utilize Alaska's resources to its potential.

114 Will make understanding current regulations easier for user groups within the fishery.

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furthermore burdening gillnet fishermen financially to replace and build new nets based on an assumption of seine harvest seems un-logical

Alaska Board of Fisheries
P.O. Box 115526
1255 W. 8th Street
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

To the Members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries:

I rely heavily on fishing for my income. If fishing time and opportunity are taken away, my income is directly reduced. For people who live in communities like Sand Point, King Cove, and False Pass, fishing is not just work — it is their way of life and how they survive.

Further restrictions would be detrimental to these communities. Fishing is what keeps them running. Without revenue from the fishing industry, schools, stores, and year-round jobs would be severely limited and could even close.

I know fishermen who are unsure whether they can continue operating their boats due to rising costs and uncertainty around closures and lost fishing opportunity. Some may be forced to relocate.

I am opposed to Proposals 127, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 136, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 116, 120, 126, 140, 141, 143, 148, and 152.

Respectfully,

Elliot West
Sand Point, Alaska
[redacted]

Western Interior Alaska and Eastern Interior Alaska
Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils
c/o Office of Subsistence Management
1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199
Phone: (907) 786-3888, Fax: (907) 786-3898
Toll-Free: 1-800-478-1456

In Reply Refer To
OSM.R26002

January 20 2026

Märit Carlson-Van Dort, Chair
Alaska Board of Fisheries
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Boards Support Section
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526

Dear Chair Carlson-Van Dort,

We write to you on behalf of the Western Interior Alaska and Eastern Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils (Councils) to provide comments on Alaska Board of Fisheries proposals being considered at the upcoming Alaska Peninsula/Aleutian Island/Chignik and Statewide Finfish Meetings.

The Councils represent subsistence harvesters of fish and wildlife resources on Federal public lands and waters in Interior Alaska. They were established by the authority in Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) and are chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act. Section 805 of ANILCA and the Councils' charters establishes the Councils' authority to initiate, review, and evaluate proposals for regulations, policies, management plans, and other matters related to subsistence uses of fish and wildlife within the region. The Councils also review resource management actions occurring outside their regions that may impact subsistence resources critical to communities served by the Councils. The Councils provide public forums for the expression of opinions and recommendations regarding any matter related to the subsistence uses of fish and wildlife within their regions.

The Councils held a joint public meeting October 17, 2025, in Fairbanks and voted to submit the following comments.

Alaska Peninsula/Aleutian Island/Chignik Meeting

The Councils **support proposals 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 136, 140, 141, and 148**. These proposals seek to implement Chinook and Chum salmon savings measures in commercial fisheries that intercept Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim bound salmon. Escapement goals for Chinook and fall Chum salmon are not being met on the Yukon River. Yukon River salmon stocks need to be protected across their entire range, not just in-river, or else we risk losing these stocks forever. Every

salmon counts in an effort to rebuild runs. Subsistence fishers have been long been bearing the burden of conservation, and the subsistence priority is not being upheld. These proposals will help distribute a small amount of that burden by reducing interception in commercial fisheries.

Statewide Meeting

The Councils **support proposals 163, 164, and 165**. Efforts to better regulate trawl fisheries are long overdue. These proposals will do that by helping to clarify definitions, setting standards for monitoring, reducing bottom contact and subsequent habitat destruction, and requiring the use salmon excluders as is done in other fisheries to reduce salmon bycatch.

The Councils **support proposals 170 and 172** that seek to reduce egg take and overall hatchery production. A growing body of scientific evidence shows that hatchery salmon compete with wild salmon for resources and impact the diet, growth, fecundity, productivity, and abundance of wild salmon and other species in the marine environment. The State of Alaska needs to reduce hatchery production so that our struggling wild salmon stocks have a better chance at health and survival. Not only does this need to be done domestically, but State and Federal governments must also collaborate with other nations to reduce international hatchery production throughout the north Pacific Ocean.

Thank you for considering our comments on the above proposals. If you have any questions or would like to follow up, please contact us through our respective Subsistence Council Coordinators:
Brooke McDavid (Eastern Interior), at (907) 891-9181 or brooke_mcdavid@ios.doi.gov or
Nissa Pilcher (Western Interior), at (907) 891-9054 or nissa_pilcher@ios.doi.gov.

Sincerely,

Jack Reakoff
Chair, Western Interior

Robert "Charlie" Wright, Sr.
Chair, Eastern Interior

cc: Federal Subsistence Board
Western Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
Eastern Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
Office of Subsistence Management
Interagency Staff Committee
Benjamin Mulligan, Deputy Commissioner, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Aaron Poetter, Federal Subsistence Liaison, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Administrative Record

Alaska Board of Fisheries
P.O. Box 115526
1255 W. 8th Street
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

To the Members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries:

I have been fishing out of King Cove since 2013. If the Board further reduces fishing time or area, it will significantly reduce my income. In fishing, a few good days can make or break a season, and losing those opportunities can be devastating for fishermen and the communities that rely on us.

Further restricting time and area has far-reaching consequences. These communities depend on fishing revenue, and reduced income means less fish tax to support schools, utilities, and local businesses.

The restrictions already in place have harmed fishermen. The June 2025 fishery was the worst I have ever experienced, and missing critical early fishing days can severely impact an entire season.

Area M has already reduced chum harvest through adaptive management, and this effort has been successful. The June Area M fishery is not a primary driver of AYK chum and Chinook declines.

I respectfully oppose Proposals 127, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 136, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 116, 120, 126, 140, 141, 143, 148, and 152.

Respectfully,

Keith Williams
King Cove, Alaska
[redacted]

Alaska Board of Fisheries
P.O. Box 115526
1255 W. 8th Street
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

To the Members of the Board of Fisheries:

I am submitting this public comment regarding the proposed changes affecting the Area M fishery.

I am from King Cove. My family has lived and fished here for generations. I returned to King Cove after college and intend to raise my children here, rooted in our culture.

Commercial fishing is our livelihood. We grew up fishing and have worked our way up to captain and boat owner. Fishing doesn't just support our family; we employ five to seven local crew members annually. We buy fuel and groceries locally, supporting our community. Our fish tax paid into the city and borough supports our children's school and employment for city and school officials.

We are slowly starting to see negative impacts of what slowing down our fishery looks like. We can talk about losing jobs and families having to move to find more reliable employment, but the main point is that this will kill our village. Our city and borough are predominantly funded through fish tax. Local boats employ local fishermen, their families live in these communities, and their children attend our local schools. In the long term, slowing the fishery will kill villages.

Crew members have left with their families to find more reliable employment in urban areas, and our village is struggling. We are now having to recruit from other villages for crew members, and our school district enrollment is steadily dropping. Our cities are struggling to find reasons to encourage young families to stay. It is very frustrating that fishing has become so political, but more infuriating is the fact that we have to fight to save our culture.

The June Area M fishery is not a primary driver of Arctic–Yukon–Kuskokwim (AYK) chum and Chinook declines. Area M has already reduced chum harvest through adaptive management, and this effort has been successful. Runs vary by river system; not all poor runs share a single cause. Climate and habitat stressors are major drivers of declines and can't be "regulated away." Removing management tools and flexibility makes it harder to manage mixed-stock fisheries well. Further restrictions would hit small rural coastal communities hardest.

If the Board of Fish wants to make regulations for Area M, help support your local native fisherman, and the Kjell of same permits for Area M and help us get it regulated to a more native based fishery regulated by our tribes.

I am opposed to Proposals 127, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 136, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 116, 120, 126, 140, 141, 143, 148, 152.

Sincerely,

Arlene Wilson
[redacted]
King Cove, AK

Alaska Board of Fisheries
P.O. Box 115526
1255 W. 8th Street
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

To the Members of the Board of Fisheries:

I am submitting this public comment regarding the proposed changes affecting the Area M fishery.

A lifetime of family history connects me to our community and Aleutians East. These proposals affect my income, cost of living, and the ability to stay in the community.

Cuts to our fisheries have already affected the schools, with businesses being cut and/or reduced hours. People have been cut from their jobs. I personally have been cut in hours.

The June Area M fishery is not a primary driver of Arctic–Yukon–Kuskokwim (AYK) chum and Chinook declines. Area M has already reduced chum harvest through adaptive management. This effort has been successful. Further restrictions would hit small rural coastal communities hardest. Runs vary by river system; not all poor runs share a single cause.

I am opposed to Proposals 127, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 136, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 116, 120, 126, 140, 141, 143, 148, 152.

Sincerely,

Courtney Wilson
[redacted]
King Cove, AK

PC220

Submitted by: Michael Wooding
Community of Residence: Sumner, Washington

Dear Madam Chair Carlson-Van Dort and board members:

Hello board members, I want to first thank you for your time and service for serving on the board. My name is Mike Wooding and our family has been drift fishing Area M for over 50 years. I want to emphasize how well the new adaptive management plan has worked on reducing chum catches in the Area M June fishery. I think all users have been working really hard to make this successful. Adfg has fully supported this program and approve its results. I would oppose any proposals that would further restrict fishing opportunities in the June fishery.

The drift fleet has seen three consecutive disaster seasons on the north peninsula and need status quo fishing opportunities in June. Thank you for your time

And service again!

Sincerely, Mike Wooding

PC221

Submitted by: Tim Wooding
Community of Residence: Lake Tapps, Wa

Dear Madam Chair Carlson-Van Dort and Board Members

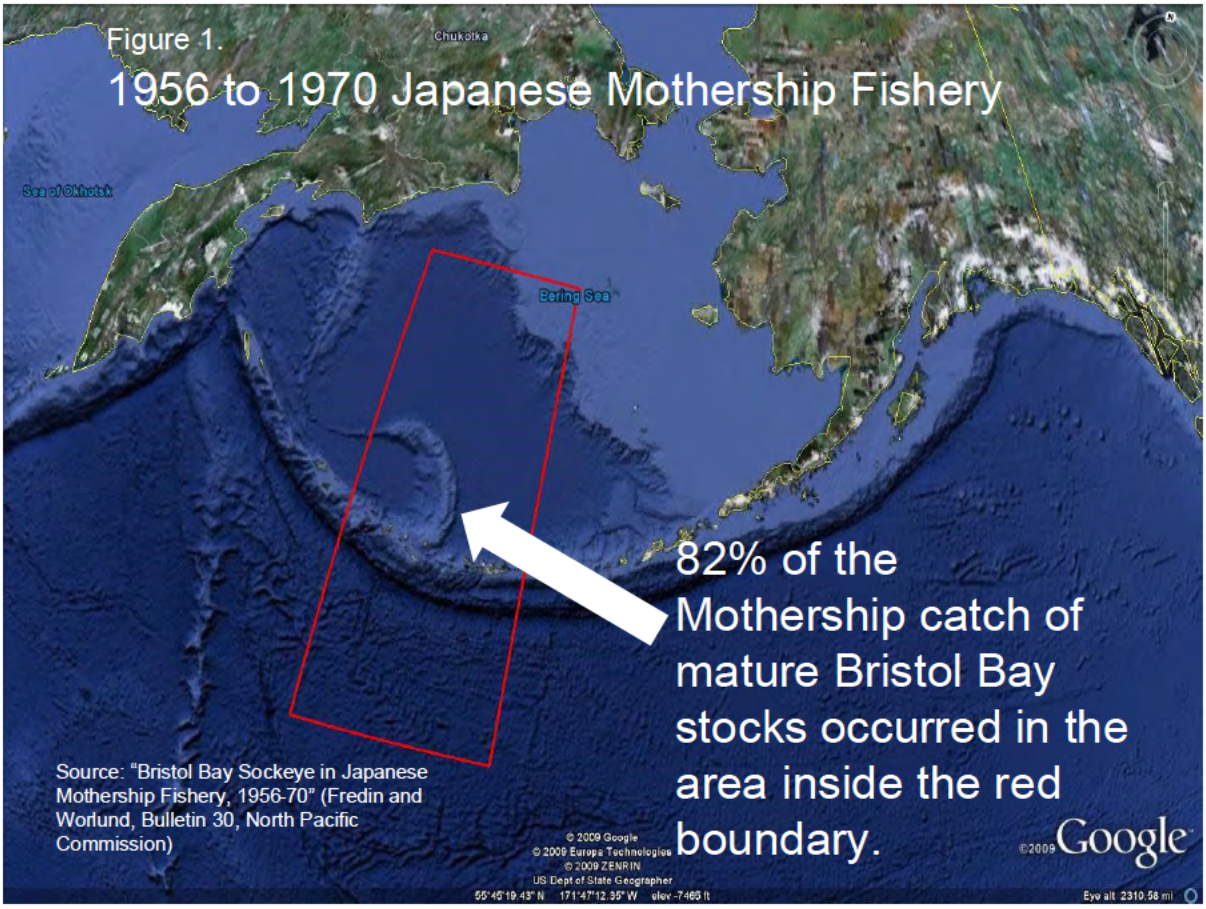
My name is Tim Wooding I'm an area m drift gillnet permit older for the past 41 years. I oppose all the proposals that will reduce fishing time in area m. In my 41 years owning my operation we've been cut back and sacrificed days and hours of potential harvest each year in order to try to satisfy areas throughout the state with little or no impact on there stocks. Are fishers in area m have made a conscious effort and are aware of the consequences if we target certain species in any kind of abundance. Thank You!

Dear Madam Chair Carlson-Van Dort and Board Members,

My name is Tom Wooding I've been an Area M permit holder since 1983. I've been attending BOF meetings since 1989. I support proposals 113, 114, 115, 119, 121, 122, 123, 124, 134, 135, 137, 138, 139, 142, 144, 145, 146, 150, 153, 154, 156, 157, 158, 159, 160, 188. I oppose proposals 107, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 116, 117, 118, 120, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 136, 140, 141, 143, 147, 148, 149, 151, 152.

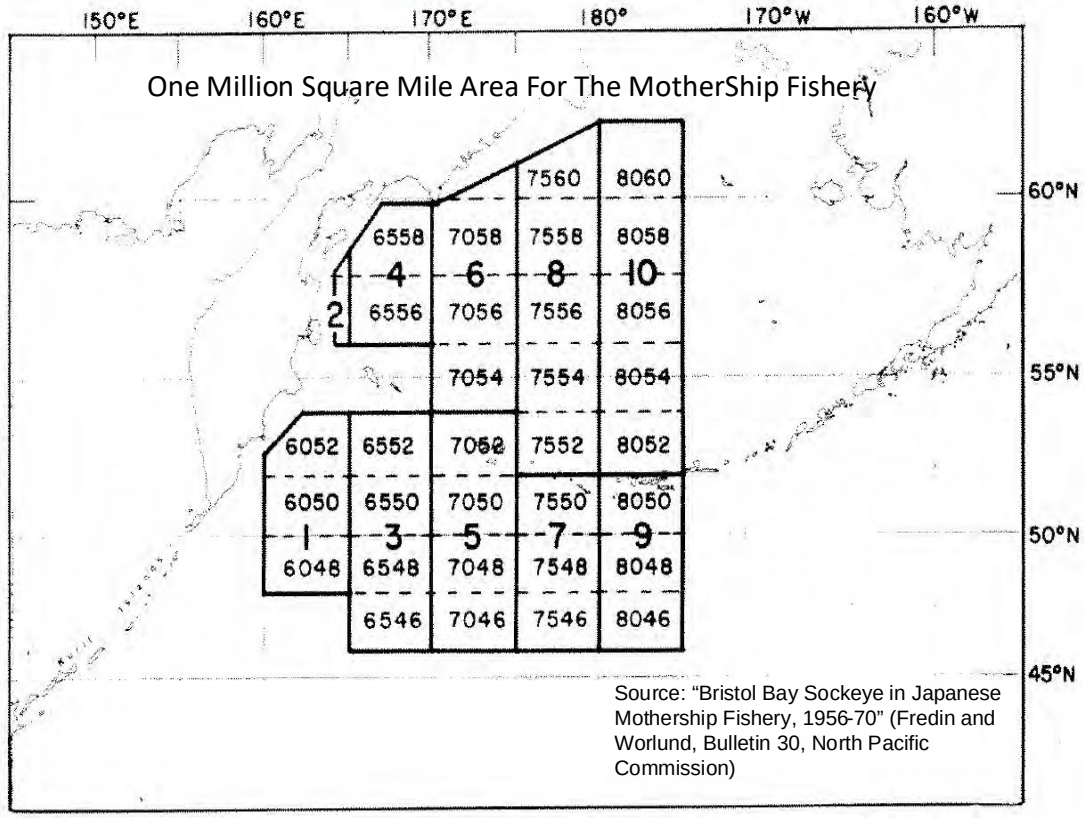
Over the years the misconceptions of the Area M fishery, especially the June South Unimak Shumagin Island fishery, has continued to grow. One of my first meetings I attended a gentlemen from Kuskokwim pointed to a chart on the wall and stated that you're whole fleet fishes in the small channel that separates Unimak Island and the Alaska Peninsula known as False Pass. I assured him that nobody fishes there and preceded to point out the actual fishing grounds are mostly out in the ocean. I was hopeful that with enough dialog we could eventually work out our differences after educating people about the fishery. Fast forward 35 years later and I see proposals citing "2000-meter nets that are 200 meters deep".

I would like to show that salmon transit a far larger area than the area of the SUSI fishery. To help show it I would like to enlighten people on a fishery that occurred before the Magnason-Stevens Act. The Japanese Mothership Fishery occurred between 1956 to 1970 in an area much further west than the SUSI fishery. (Figure 1)



While most of the harvest occurred in area specified in Figure 1, the fishery had a total area of one million square miles. (Figure 2.)

Figure 2.



One Million Square Mile Area For The MotherShip Fishery

Source: "Bristol Bay Sockeye in Japanese Mothership Fishery, 1956-70" (Fredin and Worlund, Bulletin 30, North Pacific Commission)

FIGURE 1. Fishing area of the Japanese mothership salmon fleet since 1959, designated subareas, and $2° \times 5°$ statistical areas.

Some key details about the fishery

- The Japanese mothership fishery included up to **380 vessels**, and each vessel could fish as much as ten miles of gillnet gear, totaling approximately **3,800 miles of net** in the water at one time. (Source Fredin and Worlund Bulletin 30)
- By comparison, the Area M June fishery can fish at most about 55 miles of gear, even if every active permit were fishing simultaneously.
- For additional perspective, if every salmon permit in the entire state of Alaska were fished at once, the combined gear length would total about 1,283 nautical miles.
- This demonstrates the enormous scale of the mothership fishery in both size and fishing power. As shown here, if those nets were placed end to end, they would extend from Hawaii to the Arctic Ocean. (Figure 3)
- The Area M June fishery, shown in yellow, occupies a very small coastal area when compared to even the eastern portion of the mothership fishery. (Figure 4)
- The mothership fishery harvested between **6 and 20 million sockeye salmon**, and **6 to 15 million chum salmon** annually. (Figure 5) (Source Fredin and Worlund Bulletin 30)

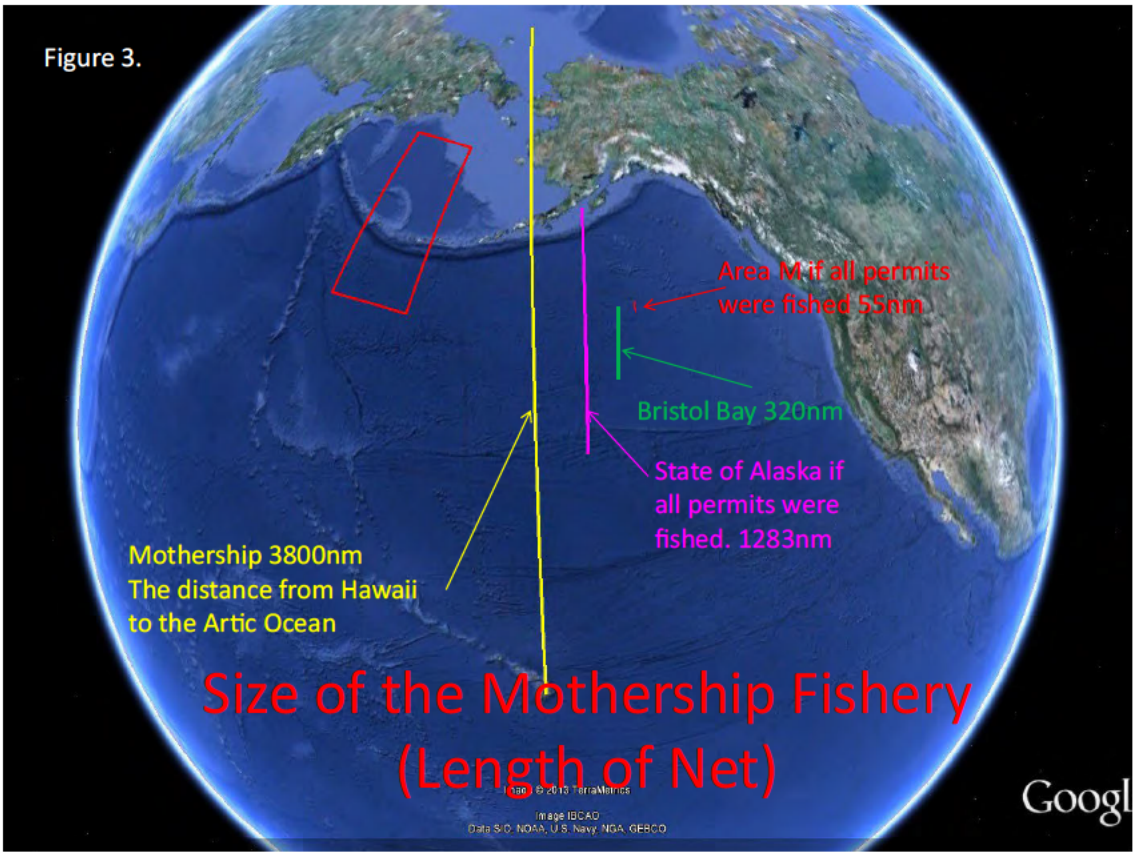


Figure 3.
Area M if all permits were fished 55nm
Bristol Bay 320nm
State of Alaska if all permits were fished. 1283nm
Mothership 3800nm
The distance from Hawaii to the Artic Ocean
Size of the Mothership Fishery (Length of Net)
Image IBCAO
Data SIO, NOAA, U.S. Navy, NGA, GEBCO
Googl

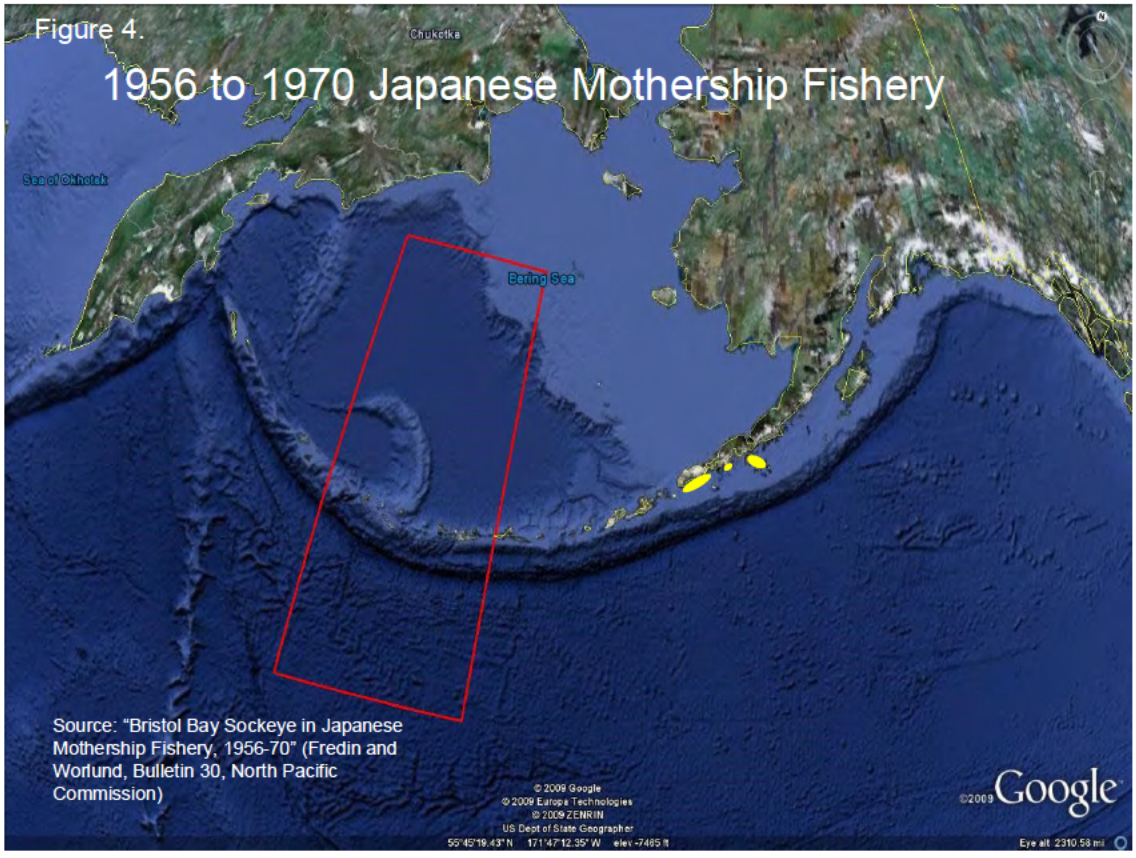


Figure 4.
1956 to 1970 Japanese Mothership Fishery
Chukotka
Sea of Okhotsk
Bering Sea
Source: "Bristol Bay Sockeye in Japanese Mothership Fishery, 1956-70" (Fredin and Worlund, Bulletin 30, North Pacific Commission)
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US Dept of State Geographer
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Figure 5.

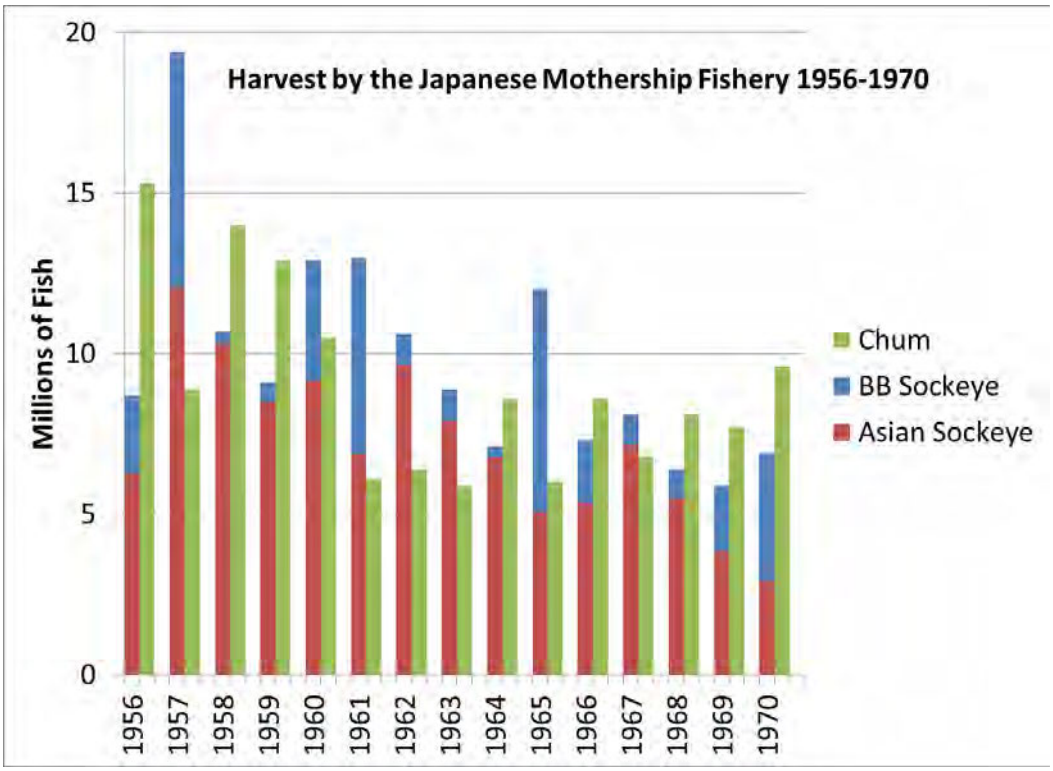
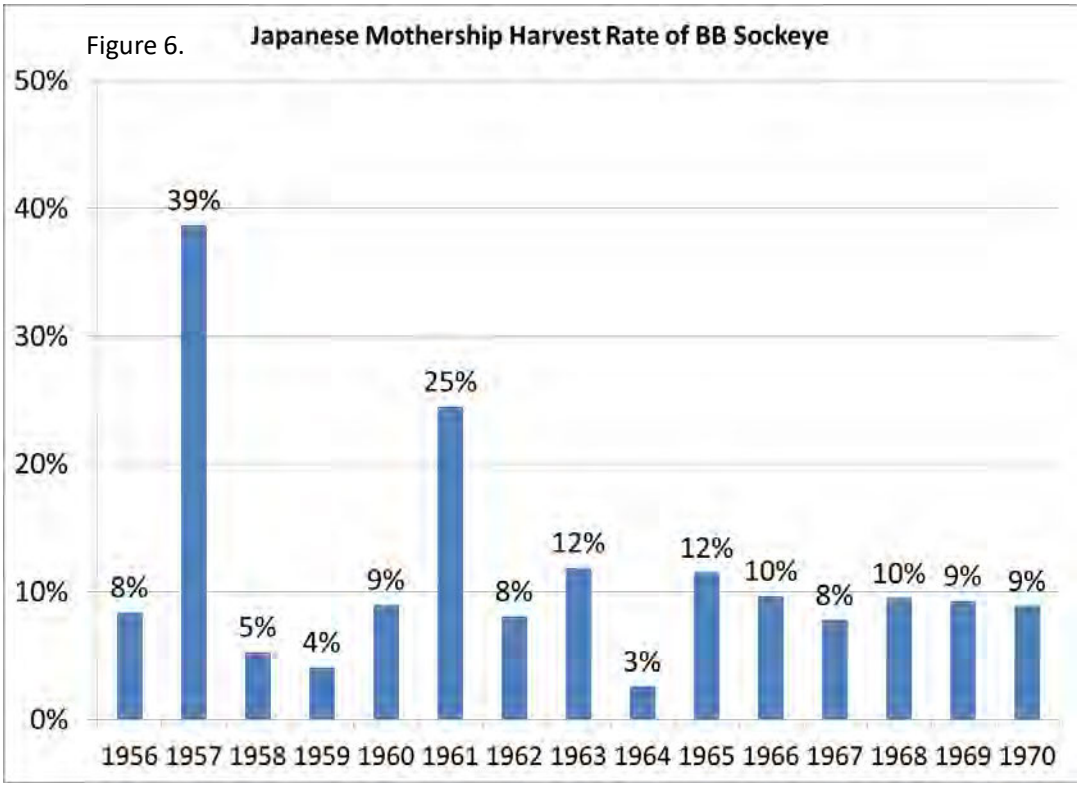


Figure 6.



Harvest rates on Bristol Bay sockeye stocks in the mothership fishery reached as high as **39%**, with an average of about **10%**. (Source Fredin and Worlund Bulletin 30). Area M harvest rates on Bristol Bay stocks during the WASSIP years were much lower, approximately **1% to 3.5%**. (WASSIP)

The only similarity between these fisheries is that both occur during similar run timing in June and harvest mixed salmon stocks during migration. Because of this timing, Bristol Bay sockeye stocks and Western Alaskan chum stocks must be present throughout the Aleutians and along Alaska's coast. Numerous genetic sampling efforts across decades support this reality.

Furthermore, compared to the historic Japanese mothership fishery, the June fishery has no ability or capacity to harvest more than a small fraction of the fish returning to Bristol Bay, Western Alaska, or anywhere else.

I believe much of the misconception comes from comparing this fishery to terminal or river fisheries, where harvest occurs in a narrow and visible area. In Area M, fishermen operate across a large marine district where we cannot even see the entirety of the fishing grounds, let alone the hundreds of miles of coastline and the 1,200-mile span of the Aleutian chain.

This reflects the common-sense reality that salmon migrate broadly across Alaska, the Bering Sea, and the North Pacific, and the South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June fishery represents only a small portion of that migration corridor.

In conclusion, I respectfully ask that the June fishery be recognized not as a massive intercept fishery, but as a small coastal community fishery that Alaska Peninsula fishermen and communities depend on for economic survival.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these facts and thank you for your service.

Sincerely,

Tom Wooding

PC223

Submitted by: Tucker Wooding
Community of Residence: Lake Tapps, WA

As a CAMF member, I support and oppose the proposals below.

PC224

Submitted by: Tyler Wooding
Community of Residence: Washington

Dear Members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries,

My name is Tyler Wooding. I am a drift gillnet fisherman in Area M. I have been fishing Area M since 2001.

I oppose proposal 116. This proposal is trying to decrease/restrict our fishing periods for no logical reason. Nelson River is exceeding there upper end escapement goals and at the same time wanting to limit our fishing time within the same area.

I oppose proposal 127 which would establish a 10 day closure between June 10 and June 23rd. That would be detrimental to our fishing fleet, both Seiners and the drift gillnet fleet participate in the Adaptive Management Plan. These efforts of standing down and moving areas when chums are present have helped cut chum harvest down. We need as many days as we can get, due to the short nature of each fishing period.

Alaska Board of Fisheries
P.O. Box 115526
1255 W. 8th Street
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

To the Members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries:

My name is Jamie Wurtz. I am a fisherman, permit holder, and small business owner operating in Area M, with strong ties to Sand Point and False Pass. I have been fishing and building relationships on the Alaska Peninsula since 2008.

The possible reduction in time and area for Area M fisheries would be a disastrous outcome. The Area M fishery is already very fickle, with many seasons offering only small windows where weather and ocean conditions allow us to harvest June sockeye salmon. July fishing opportunity is already limited and often unproductive across much of the area, making it necessary to be on the water as much as possible to maintain a viable season.

Finding and retaining crew is already difficult due to market swings and year-to-year changes in harvestable runs. Further reductions would make it even harder to keep crew and would put additional strain on fishing businesses that are already financially fragile.

A reduction in time or area would also have immediate effects on local communities. False Pass, King Cove, and Sand Point rely heavily on fishing opportunities and the jobs provided by fishing vessels and processing plants. When boats are not fishing, plants sit idle, employment is reduced, local services suffer, and the tax revenue that keeps these communities afloat declines.

Fish landing taxes are based on pounds delivered. Moorage supports harbor maintenance and employment. Local welders, fabricators, and service providers exist because of the boats and processors operating in town.

After low fish prices in 2023, many Area M boats struggled to crew up for uncertain seasons with reduced time. In 2024, reduced opportunity and additional shutdowns resulted in many vessels finishing the season without a profit. As a result, some fishermen retired, sold their boats, or left the industry entirely.

These impacts are lasting. Without a profitable fishery, coastal villages will suffer permanent damage that they may never recover from.

I am opposed to Proposals 127, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 136, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 116, 120, 126, 140, 141, 143, 148, 152.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Jamie Wurtz
Sand Point & False Pass, Alaska
[redacted]

Alaska Board of Fisheries
P.O. Box 115526
1255 W. 8th Street
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

To the Members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries:

My name is Allie Yatchmeneff, and I am a lifelong community member, subsistence user, and part of a fishing family from King Cove, Alaska, in the Aleutians East Borough. I am writing in opposition to any reduction in time, area, or opportunity for Area M fisheries.

I am opposed to Proposals 127, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 136, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 116, 120, 126, 140, 141, 143, 148, 152.

If the Board were to further reduce fishing opportunity in Area M, my household would be negatively impacted in very real and immediate ways. We are a two-income household with a family of six. I work limited hours, and my income alone does not cover our living expenses. Fishing income is essential to our family's ability to meet basic needs. Reducing fishing opportunity directly reduces our ability to catch fish and support our family.

AC is now the only grocery store in town since the closure of Gould's store. Prices are already extremely high and continue to rise with inflation. With less fishing income, more and more households—including my own—will struggle to afford food and basic necessities. This is not sustainable for families trying to remain in their home community.

The broader impacts on our community would be severe. We have already suffered greatly with the closure of our cannery and our local grocery store. When Peter Pan Seafoods closed, the impacts extended beyond fishing—our school was affected as well. Many cannery and fishing families had children enrolled in the district, and as families have been forced to leave, our schools have lost students and funding.

Households are increasingly discussing the possibility of having to move due to reduced fishing opportunity, loss of income, school cuts, and the rising cost of living. Further reductions would force families out of the communities where they were born and raised. Local businesses are already struggling, and with less income circulating locally, fewer families can afford basic things like food, coffee, or small local services. Jobs at AC would also be impacted if people can no longer afford to shop there.

Salmon runs vary by river system, and not all poor runs share a single cause. Climate and habitat stressors cannot be regulated away by placing additional burdens on small coastal communities. Further restrictions on Area M fisheries will not solve these larger challenges, but they will accelerate the decline of communities like King Cove.

Please consider the cumulative impacts these decisions have on families, schools, businesses, and the long-term survival of our community.Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Allie Yatchmeneff
King Cove, Alaska

Alaska Board of Fisheries
P.O. Box 115526
1255 W. 8th Street
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

To the Members of the Board of Fisheries:

I am submitting this public comment regarding the proposed changes affecting the Area M fishery. I have lived in False Pass my whole life. Some of my great-grandparents lived here and outside the pass for many years.

Your whole town is dependent on the income and catch of summer fishing. Because we are such a small town, with fewer than forty year-round residents, these proposals would affect us deeply not only during the summer months, but year-round. My household and most of my family depend on fishing to have stability and a source of income.

There would be a greater need for year-round jobs because we would not be able to make that money up during fishing season. Our local store would have less income due to fewer cannery workers and boats. Our school would also suffer because, if it were not for fishing jobs, there is a good chance people would leave.

We have given so much time, and we have already reduced our hours of fishing by a huge amount.

The June Area M fishery is not a primary driver of Arctic–Yukon–Kuskokwim (AYK) chum and Chinook declines. Runs vary by river system; not all poor runs share a single cause.

I am opposed to Proposals 127, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 136, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 116, 120, 126, 140, 141, 143, 148, 152.

Sincerely,

Hazel Yatchmeneff
[redacted]
False Pass, AK

Alaska Board of Fisheries
P.O. Box 115526
1255 W. 8th Street
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

To the Members of the Board of Fisheries:

I am submitting this public comment regarding the proposed changes affecting the Area M fishery. I have lived in King Cove and False Pass my whole life.

If these proposals pass there would be less opportunity to catch fish to make money to pay bills and survive, and to put food away for the winter. People would be forced to move because they would be unable to afford to live here. There would be fewer fishing opportunities for fishermen to make money and fewer chances to put away home packs for the winter.

The June Area M fishery is not a primary driver of Arctic–Yukon–Kuskokwim (AYK) chum and Chinook declines. Climate and habitat stressors are major drivers of declines and can't be "regulated away." Further restrictions would hit small rural coastal communities hardest.

Area M is not the cause of the chum decline; it's the draggers.

I am opposed to Proposals 127, 129, 130, 131, 132, 133, 136, 108, 109, 110, 111, 112, 116, 120, 126, 140, 141, 143, 148, 152.

Sincerely,

Marylee Yatchmeneff
[redacted]
King Cove, AK

Submitted by: Tasha Yatchmeneff
Community of Residence: Anchorage

I am writing to express my strong support for the continued sustainability and responsible, science-based management of Area M fisheries. This fishery is not simply an economic resource—it is the backbone of our communities, our families, and our way of life. For generations, my family and many others have depended on these waters, building lives rooted in stewardship, hard work, and deep respect for the land and sea. The continued health of Area M fisheries is directly tied to our ability to remain in our region, support our families, and pass on cultural knowledge and traditions to future generations.

Area M fisheries represent far more than commerce. They embody long-standing relationships between people and place, and they are essential to the cultural continuity and subsistence practices of Tribal communities who have relied on these resources since time immemorial. Protecting these fisheries means protecting communities, identities, and a shared responsibility to care for the land and waters that sustain us all. Decisions affecting Area M must therefore be guided by sound science, accurate data, and meaningful collaboration with those who live and work here.

When decisions are made without data-driven science, the consequences are not theoretical, they are deeply personal. Restricting access or imposing limitations without clear scientific justification risks destabilizing entire communities. Families may be forced to leave, cultural practices may be disrupted or lost, and already fragile local economies may suffer lasting harm. These impacts ripple outward, affecting schools, community gatherings, and the social fabric that holds rural communities together.

I urge decision-makers to prioritize science-based management and collaborative approaches that recognize both the ecological importance and the human realities of Area M fisheries. Sustainable management is not just about protecting fish stocks—it is about sustaining communities, honoring Tribal sovereignty and knowledge, and ensuring that future generations can continue to live, work, and thrive in this region.

Thank you for considering the voices of those who are directly connected to Area M fisheries and who bear the consequences of management decisions. Our shared future depends on thoughtful, informed actions taken today.

Tasha Yatchmeneff

YUKON RIVER
INTER-TRIBAL FISH COMMISSION

February 3, 2026

Märit Carlson-Van Dort, Chair
Alaska Board of Fisheries
c/o Alaska Department of Fish and Game
1255 W. 8th Street
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526

Re: 2026 Alaska Department of Fish and Game Alaska Peninsula / Aleutian Island / Chignik Finfish Proposals

Dear Chairperson Carlson-Van Dort and Members of the Board,

The Yukon River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (YRITFC) is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization charged with representing 44 member Tribal Governments and First Nations of the Yukon River watershed in fisheries management. Founded on Tribal unity, the YRITFC works across jurisdictional and geographic boundaries to maintain our traditional way of life, to protect the health and well-being of all those who rely upon the health of the fish, and ensure wild salmon for generations to come. The YRITFC weaves time-tested Indigenous knowledge and stewardship techniques with the best available Western science to promote a real gravel-to-gravel approach to rebuilding our stocks and in our pursuit of establishing co-management on the Yukon River.

We strongly support conservation measures and endorse proposals **136, 131, and 132**, with a preference for 136. We also support proposals **140, 141, and 143** for the protections and accountability they propose for the Post-June Fishery. Additionally, we support proposals **147, 148, 151, and 152**, as well as the gear restrictions they propose. Conversely, we oppose proposals **113, 114, 115, 119, 121, 122, 123, 124, 125, 134, 135, 137, 138, 139, 142, 144, 145, 146, and 149** that seek to liberalize fishing time, gear, and area.

We are gravely concerned that the current state of the stocks necessitates restrictions on the Area M fishery to allow for any possibility of rebuilding. It is a harsh reality that for the past five years, communities throughout the Yukon River watershed have been unable to harvest salmon for subsistence.

YUKON RIVER
INTER-TRIBAL FISH COMMISSION

Despite in-river management efforts, Yukon River salmon stocks have been in decline for decades. Communities throughout the watershed have long maintained that stock sustainability requires conservation measures extending beyond in-river restrictions.

The burden of conservation cannot be placed solely on in-river communities. We reiterate the long-standing calls from our communities for more conservative management practices and urge the State to actively defend subsistence protections outside the Yukon River as well.

The Yukon River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (YRITFC) submits this public comment to the Board of Fisheries concerning the Alaska Peninsula / Aleutian Island / Chignik Finfish proposals. Our position is unified, driven by the need for robust conservation measures for Yukon River salmon stocks.

Ana Basi'/Mahsi' Cho/Quyana,

Robert C Wright Sr

Robert Charles Wright Sr
YRITFC Chair

Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
c/o Office of Subsistence Management
1011 East Tudor Road, MS 121
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-6199
Phone: (907) 786-3888, Fax: (907) 786-3898
Toll-Free: 1-800-478-1456

In Reply Refer To
OSM.R26011

FEBRUARY 03 2026

Märit Carlson-Van Dort, Chair
Alaska Board of Fisheries
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Boards Support Section
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526

Dear Chair Carlson-Van Dort,

We write to you on behalf of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils (Council) to provide comments on Alaska Board of Fisheries proposals being considered at the upcoming Alaska Peninsula/Aleutian Island/Chignik finfish meeting.

The Council represents subsistence harvesters of fish and wildlife resources on Federal public lands and waters in Interior Alaska. It was established by the authority in Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) and is chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act. Section 805 of ANILCA and the Council's charter establishes the Council's authority to initiate, review, and evaluate proposals for regulations, policies, management plans, and other matters related to subsistence uses of fish and wildlife within the region. The Council also reviews resource management actions occurring outside their region that may impact subsistence resources critical to communities served by the Council.

The Councils held a public meeting January 20-22, 2026, in Bethel and voted to submit the following comments:

Proposal 136 - SUPPORT
The Council supports proposal 136 as their first priority among the proposals seeking to amend the South Alaska Peninsula Salmon June Management Plan. Large numbers of Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim (AYK) salmon are intercepted and harvested in the South Alaska Peninsula (Area M) commercial salmon fisheries. This is documented by genetic studies. This interception prevents AYK salmon from returning to their home rivers, such as the Yukon, where subsistence salmon fishing continues to be closed and where spawning escapement goals are not being met. The Council supports closing the June Area M fishery because commercial fisheries should be closed before subsistence fisheries. The subsistence priority is not being followed. Subsistence fishers in Western and Interior Alaska continue to bear the burden of conservation. Proposal 136 would offer the most protection for both Chum and Chinook salmon by allowing the greatest number of fish to pass

through Area M without interception. The Council requests that the Board adopt this proposal to help rebuild AYK salmon stocks and abide by the subsistence priority. Salmon should be managed on an ecosystem scale and the Board must recognize that what happens in Area M has significant impacts to AYK salmon and subsistence users.

Proposal 131 – SUPPORT

The Council supports proposal 131 as their second priority among the proposals seeking to amend the South Alaska Peninsula Salmon June Management Plan. The Council prefers Proposal 136 because it would offer more protection for AYK salmon stocks, but Proposal 131 offers the next highest level of protection by closing the Area M fisheries for 12 consecutive days during the time period when the peak of AYK salmon interception has historically occurred. Please reference the above comments on Proposal 136 for justification.

Thank you for considering our comments on the above proposals. If you have any questions or would like to follow up, please contact us through our Subsistence Council Coordinator Brooke McDavid at (907) 891-9181 or brooke_mcdavid@ios.doi.gov.

Sincerely,

Jaqueline Cleveland
Chair

cc: Federal Subsistence Board
Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
Office of Subsistence Management
Interagency Staff Committee
Benjamin Mulligan, Deputy Commissioner, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Aaron Poetter, Federal Subsistence Liaison, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Administrative Record