Fishery Management Report No. 25-29

Fishery Management Report for Sport Fisheries in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Management Area, 2024

by

John Chythlook

September 2025

Alaska Department of Fish and Game **Divisions of Sport Fish and Commercial Fisheries**

Symbols and Abbreviations

The following symbols and abbreviations, and others approved for the Système International d'Unités (SI), are used without definition in the following reports by the Divisions of Sport Fish and of Commercial Fisheries: Fishery Manuscripts, Fishery Data Series Reports, Fishery Management Reports, and Special Publications. All others, including deviations from definitions listed below, are noted in the text at first mention, as well as in the titles or footnotes of tables, and in figure or figure captions.

Weights and measures (metric)

centimeter	cm
deciliter	dL
gram	g
hectare	ha
kilogram	kg
kilometer	km
liter	L
meter	m
milliliter	mL
millimeter	mm

Weights and measures (English)

cubic feet per second	ft^3/s
foot	ft
gallon	gal
inch	in
mile	mi
nautical mile	nmi
ounce	oz
pound	lb
quart	qt
yard	yd

Time and temperature

day	d
degrees Celsius	°C
degrees Fahrenheit	°F
degrees kelvin	K
hour	h
minute	min
second	s

Physics and chemistry

all atomic symbols	
alternating current	AC
ampere	A
calorie	cal
direct current	DC
hertz	Hz
horsepower	hp
hydrogen ion activity (negative log of)	pH
parts per million	ppm
parts per thousand	ppt, ‰
volts	V
watts	W

General

Alaska Administrative Code	AAC
all commonly accepted abbreviations	e.g., Mr., Mrs., AM, PM, etc.
all commonly accepted professional titles	e.g., Dr., Ph.D., R.N., etc.
at	@
compass directions:	
east	E
north	N
south	S
west	W
copyright	©
corporate suffixes:	
Company	Co.
Corporation	Corp.
Incorporated	Inc.
Limited	Ltd.
District of Columbia	D.C.
et alii (and others)	et al.
et cetera (and so forth)	etc.
exempli gratia (for example)	e.g.
Federal Information Code	FIC
id est (that is)	i.e.
latitude or longitude	lat or long
monetary symbols (U.S.)	$, ¢
months (tables and figures): first three letters	Jan,...,Dec
registered trademark	®
trademark	™
United States (adjective)	U.S.
United States of America (noun)	USA
U.S.C.	United States Code
U.S. state	use two-letter abbreviations (e.g., AK, WA)

Mathematics, statistics

all standard mathematical signs, symbols and abbreviations	
alternate hypothesis	H_A
base of natural logarithm	e
catch per unit effort	CPUE
coefficient of variation	CV
common test statistics	(F, t, χ^2, etc.)
confidence interval	CI
correlation coefficient (multiple)	R
correlation coefficient (simple)	r
covariance	cov
degree (angular)	°
degrees of freedom	df
expected value	E
greater than	>
greater than or equal to	≥
harvest per unit effort	HPUE
less than	<
less than or equal to	≤
logarithm (natural)	ln
logarithm (base 10)	log
logarithm (specify base)	$\log_2$, etc.
minute (angular)	'
not significant	NS
null hypothesis	H_O
percent	%
probability	P
probability of a type I error (rejection of the null hypothesis when true)	α
probability of a type II error (acceptance of the null hypothesis when false)	β
second (angular)	"
standard deviation	SD
standard error	SE
variance	
population	Var
sample	var

FISHERY MANAGEMENT REPORT NO. 25-29

FISHERY MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR SPORT FISHERIES IN THE KUSKOKWIM-GOODNEWS MANAGEMENT AREA, 2024

by
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The Fishery Management Reports series was established in 1989 by the Division of Sport Fish for the publication of an overview of management activities and goals in a specific geographic area, and became a joint divisional series in 2004 with the Division of Commercial Fisheries. Fishery Management Reports are intended for fishery and other technical professionals, as well as lay persons. Fishery Management Reports are available through the Alaska State Library and on the Internet: http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/publications/. This publication has undergone regional peer review.

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ABSTRACT

Information specific to sport fisheries in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Management Area in 2024 and information for 2024 is presented. Estimates of fishing effort, total harvest, and catch are summarized through the 2024 season. This information is provided to the Alaska Board of Fisheries, as well as to the general public and interested parties. Major fisheries within the area that have associated proposals for the 2025 Arctic–Yukon–Kuskokwim Alaska Board of Fisheries meeting are detailed, including descriptions of the performance of these fisheries, regulatory actions by the Alaska Board of Fisheries, social and biological issues, and descriptions of ongoing research and management activities.

Keywords: Kuskokwim-Goodnews Management Area, Southwest Alaska, Bethel, Kuskokwim River, Aniak, McGrath, Kuskokwim Bay, Kanektok River, Goodnews River, Holitna River, sport fisheries, subsistence, Chinook salmon, coho salmon, pink salmon, sheefish, inconnu, rainbow trout

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document provides an array of information specific to the sport fishing opportunities and sport fisheries that exist within the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Management Area (KGMA). Information specific to the sport fisheries within the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Management Area during 2024 and data from 2025 are contained in this report. To assist Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) members in acquiring information in a timely manner, Appendix A2 has been constructed. This table guides the reader to specific information contained within the text, tables, and figures that may be useful in evaluating regulatory proposals.

INTRODUCTION

This report provides information for the KGMA and is one in a series of reports annually updating fisheries management information within Region III (Figure 1). The report is provided for the BOF, Fish and Game Advisory Committees (ACs), the general public, and other interested parties. It presents a description of area fisheries, a summary of the fisheries effort, harvest and catch, fisheries assessment information, and the management strategies developed from that information.

The mission of the Division of Sport Fish of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) is to protect and improve the state's fishery resources. This is achieved by managing the sustainable yield of wild stocks of sport fish, providing diverse sport fishing opportunities, and providing information to assist the BOF in optimizing social and economic benefits from sport fisheries. In order to implement these goals, the division has a fisheries management process in place.

A regional review is conducted annually, during which the status of important area fisheries is considered, and research needs are identified. Fisheries stock assessment and research projects are developed, scheduled, and implemented to meet information needs identified by fisheries managers. Projects are planned within a formal operational planning process. Biological information gathered from these research projects is combined with effort information and input from user groups to assess the need for and development of fisheries management plans and to propose regulatory strategies.

Division of Sport Fish management and research activities are funded by Fish and Game and Federal Aid in Fisheries Restoration funds. Fish and Game funds are derived from the sale of state sport fishing licenses. Federal Aid funds are derived from federal taxes on fishing tackle and equipment established by the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act (also referred to as the Dingell-Johnson Act or D-J Act). D-J funds are provided to the states at a match of up to 3-to-1 with the Fish and Game funds. Additional funding specified for providing, protecting, and

managing access to fish and game is provided through a tax on boat gas and equipment established by the Wallop-Breaux Act. Other peripheral funding sources may include contracts with various government agencies and the private sector, or in a few cases, State of Alaska general funds.

This area management report provides information regarding the KGMA and its fisheries for 2024, with information, if available, from the 2025 season. This report is organized into 2 primary sections: a management area overview, including a description of the management area and a summary of effort, harvest, and catch for the area based on data from the Alaska Sport Fishing Survey (commonly known as the Statewide Harvest Survey or SWHS); and a section on the significant area fisheries including specific harvest and catch by species and geographical region or drainage.

Sport fishing effort and harvest of sport fish species in Alaska have been estimated and reported annually since 1977 using a mail survey. The SWHS is designed to provide estimates of effort, harvest, and catch on a site-by-site basis. It is not designed to provide estimates of effort directed towards a single species. Species-specific catch-per-unit-effort (CPUE) information can seldom be derived from the survey data. A questionnaire is mailed to a stratified random sample of households containing at least one individual with a valid fishing license (resident or nonresident). Currently, information gathered from the survey includes participation (number of anglers and days fished), number of fish caught, and number harvested by species and site for guided and unguided fishing. These surveys estimate the number of angler-days of fishing effort expended by sport anglers fishing in Alaska waters as well as the sport harvest. Survey results for each year are not available until the following year; hence, the results for 2024 were not available until fall 2025. Additionally, creel surveys have been selectively used to verify the mail survey for fisheries of interest or for fisheries that require more detailed information or inseason management.

The utility of SWHS estimates depends on the number of responses received for a given site (Mills and Howe 1992). In general, estimates from smaller fisheries with low participation are less precise than those of larger fisheries with high participation for estimates from 1977 to 1990. Therefore, the following guidelines were implemented for evaluating survey data:

1. Estimates based on fewer than 12 responses should not be used other than to document that sport fishing occurred.
2. Estimates based on 12 to 29 responses can be useful in indicating relative orders of magnitude and for assessing long-term trends.
3. Estimates based on 30 or more responses are generally representative of levels of fishing effort, catch, and harvest.

More recently, SWHS estimates were compared to onsite creel surveys for estimates from 1996 to 2006, and using the coefficient of variation (CV) of harvest estimates was recommended to determine the precision of estimates (Clark 2009). Coefficients of variation of harvest estimates from the SWHS should be 0.30 or less before using the estimates for evaluating long-term trends, and coefficients of variation of 0.20 or less before use in stock assessments.

SECTION I: MANAGEMENT AREA OVERVIEW

MANAGEMENT AREA DESCRIPTION

The KGMA includes all waters of the Kuskokwim River drainage and all drainages in Kuskokwim Bay (Figure 2). Additionally, the KGMA includes all drainages that flow into the Bering Sea north

of Cape Newenham and south of the westernmost point of the Naskonat Peninsula (approximately Hooper Bay) to the north. Nunivak Island, St. Matthew Island, and adjacent islands are also included within the area.

For sport fish management purposes, the KGMA is partitioned into 2 subareas: the Kuskokwim River and Kuskokwim Bay (Figure 2).

The KGMA includes substantial parts of 2 National Wildlife Refuges: the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Refuge and the Togiak Refuge. Nearly half of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Refuge is within the KGMA, as are several thousand acres of the Togiak Refuge in the headwaters of Kuskokwim Bay streams.

FISHERY RESOURCES

Sport fisheries began to develop in the KGMA during the early 1980s (Lafferty 2001; Chythlook 2006, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015a–b, 2017, 2022). It was during this time that sport fisheries in this area were first recorded in the SWHS. Largely, sport fisheries of the KGMA are small and isolated, so relatively little effort is expended, which is reflected in low estimates of catch and harvest (Tables 1–4). The KGMA supports the third-highest amount of angling effort in the Arctic–Yukon–Kuskokwim (AYK) region.[1] The Upper Copper/Upper Susitna and Tanana Management Areas support more fishing effort, and many fisheries are largely road accessible. The amount of fishing effort in the area is directly related to the remoteness of the area and the difficulty and expense involved accessing these fisheries.

Angling effort in the Kuskokwim River drainage and Kuskokwim Bay reached a high of 27,913 angler-days in 1998 and fluctuated between 16,000 and 27,000 in recent years, not including the 2020 COVID-19 year, suggesting a fairly stable amount of fishing effort in this area. This was not sustained through the early parts of the COVID-19 epidemic. Effort was about 18,000 angler-days in 2024 (Tables 3 and 4). This static effort may be related to sustained high fuel and transportation costs to and within the region. There are 3 sport fisheries that dominate the area: the Kanektok, Goodnews, and Aniak Rivers (Tables 3 and 4, Figure 2). These 3 drainages support fisheries for all 5 species of Pacific salmon *Oncorhynchus* spp., as well as rainbow trout *O. mykiss*, in a remote Alaska setting. Other rivers in the Kuskokwim River area that receive small to moderate fishing pressure are the Kisaralik, Kwethluk, and Holitna Rivers (Table 4, Figure 2). Most other rivers in the area do not receive enough fishing effort to be reported consistently in the SWHS. In the upper portion of the Kuskokwim River, the Holitna River drainage is spoken of as a "breadbasket" for its production of salmon, but it does not see much effort expended in angler-days despite its large size. The majority of the Kuskokwim River upstream of the Holitna River drainage sees very little effort (Smith et al. 2022).

Subsistence fisheries for salmon have a long history on the Kuskokwim River, with harvests documented throughout the river dating as far back as 1922 (Burkey et al. 2000). The subsistence fishery for Chinook salmon *O. tshawytscha* is the most important, having reached harvests of over 80,000 fish for the entire Kuskokwim River drainage (Simon et al. 2007; Hamazaki 2011; Carroll and Hamazaki 2012; Hamazaki and Liller 2015; Smith 2019; Smith et al. 2022). Recent poor returns of Chinook salmon have resulted in restrictions and subsequently reduced harvests in the subsistence fishery to as little as an estimated 11,000 in 2014. Subsistence harvest of Chinook

[1] Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Intranet]. 1996– . Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish. (cited December 10, 2024). Available from: http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey/.

salmon in 2024 was estimated to be 32,493 fish and has hovered at or near 30,000 fish according to the recent 5- and 10-year averages (Table 5; Bembenic and Navarro *In prep*).

Commercial fisheries in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews drainages are relatively small and center on the Lower Kuskokwim River (District 1) and in Kuskokwim Bay at the Kanektok and Goodnews Rivers (Districts 4 and 5, respectively). They have been important to the local economies, but the fisheries directed toward chum salmon *O. keta* have been irregular in prosecution since the late 1990s due to factors including poor markets, limited processing capacity, and gear restrictions related to the conservation of Chinook salmon. There have not been commercial salmon fisheries other than some very small operations in the region from 2016 to 2025. There was a limited commercial fishery prosecuted in 2020 and 2021 in Kuskokwim Bay (Districts 4 and 5), but the harvest was small due to a small processor/buyer and travel restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic (N. Smith, Commercial Fisheries Biologist, ADF&G, Anchorage, personal communication).

Sport fisheries in the KGMA are small compared to other sport fisheries in the state with better access. The majority of effort occurs in the Kuskokwim Bay drainages, focusing mainly on the Kanektok River. Fishing effort on the Kanektok River averages about 7,000 angler-days annually based on the recent 10-year average (Table 3). Rainbow trout are the species most desired by anglers on the Kanektok River. Fishing for other resident species, such as Arctic grayling *Thymallus arcticus* and Dolly Varden *Salvelinus malma*, occurs there. Fishing for salmon, especially Chinook and coho salmon *O. kisutch*, is also common. Important rainbow trout sport fisheries also occur in the Lower Kuskokwim River tributaries: the Kisaralik, Kasigluk, Kwethluk, and Aniak Rivers. Fishing for the 5 Pacific salmon species occurs throughout much of the Kuskokwim River and Kuskokwim Bay drainages. The rivers that drain into the Central and Upper Kuskokwim Rivers, such as the Holitna River, attract a moderate number of sport anglers annually (Table 4).

ESTABLISHED MANAGEMENT PLANS AND POLICIES

Regulations governing fisheries in the KGMA are found in 5 AAC 71.010 through 5 AAC 71.995, 5 AAC 75.001 through 5 AAC 75.995 (sport fishing), 5 AAC 77.001 through 5 AAC 77.035, 5 AAC 77.200 through 5 AAC 77.240 (personal use), 5 AAC 01.250 through 5 AAC 01.295 (subsistence fishing), and 5 AAC 07.001 through 5 AAC 07.650 (commercial fishing and management plans).

Fisheries-specific management objectives for the management area have been identified in management plans for Arctic grayling, rainbow trout, and lake trout *S. namaycush*. In addition, a series of general Division of Sport Fish criteria have been prepared to guide the establishment of fishery objectives. These include the following:

1. **Management and protection of existing fish resources**. Divisional activities should strive to manage and protect Alaska's wild fish stock resources for future generations.
2. **Public use and benefits of existing fish resources**. Alaska's fishery resources should be made available for public use and benefit on a sustained yield basis.
3. **Rehabilitation of depressed stocks and damaged habitat**. Divisional activities should strive to restore and maintain fish stocks and habitat damaged by human activities.

4. **Enhancement of natural production or creation of new opportunities**. The division should pursue the creation of new sport fishing opportunities through the rehabilitation of natural stocks or the creation of new fisheries where these opportunities do not negatively affect other fisheries.

Currently, there are 3 management plans specific to sport fisheries in the KGMA: the *Southwest Alaska Rainbow Trout Plan*,[2] now an informal plan that directs regulations and management in the Kuskokwim and Bristol Bay regions, the *Wild Arctic Grayling Management Plan* (5 AAC 71.055), and the *Wild Lake Trout Management Plan* (5 AAC 71.040). The objectives are to distribute the opportunity to harvest a small proportion of the sustainable surplus over the fishing season without unnecessary disruptions to the sport fishery.

In the past, management plans were designed to provide managers guidance over inseason management, frequently addressing salmon management. Salmon management in the KGMA is governed by subsistence regulations and several management plans directed at controlling commercial fisheries harvests. Consequently, managers from the Division of Commercial Fisheries take the lead role in the management of salmon in this area of the state. Most subsistence and commercial fishing regulations are interconnected to provide an opportunity to harvest salmon surpluses in the Kuskokwim River drainage.

Salmon Management Plans

Subsistence fishing seasons and periods are the guiding regulations in the harvest of salmon in the Kuskokwim River (5 AAC 01.260). There are 2 salmon management plans that guide subsistence, commercial, and sport fishing management in the KGMA, including streams in Kuskokwim Bay:

1. *Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan* (5 AAC 07.365)
2. *District 4 (Quinhagak) Salmon Management Plan* (5 AAC 07.367)

The *Policy for the Management of Sustainable Salmon Fisheries* (5 AAC 39.222) provides guidance for the salmon management plans of the Kuskokwim River and Kuskokwim Bay. In 2001, comprehensive rebuilding measures were instituted for Chinook and chum salmon in the *Kuskokwim River Salmon Rebuilding Management Plan* (5 AAC 07.365) by placing windows of salmon passage in migratory routes in freshwater and marine environments. Many of the existing and a few new restrictions in the Aniak River sport fishery were included within the *Kuskokwim River Salmon Rebuilding Management Plan*, including the continuation of the Chinook salmon season from May 1 to July 25, with a bag limit of 2 Chinook salmon 20 inches or greater, and an annual limit of 2 Chinook salmon 20 inches or greater. On the Aniak River, a combined bag and possession limit of 3 other salmon species (pink *O. gorbuscha*, sockeye *O. nerka*, and coho salmon) per day remains in effect. The inclusion of chum salmon in the aggregate bag limit was reinstated in the Aniak River by BOF action in 2007. A correction of the *Kuskokwim River Salmon Rebuilding Management Plan* at the 2010 AYK BOF meeting reflected the continuation of the same action. In 2013, changes in the *Kuskokwim River Salmon Rebuilding Management Plan* resulted in the inclusion of a drainagewide escapement goal range for Chinook salmon in the Kuskokwim River, as well as reduced goals for many of the rivers that have salmon escapement

[2] ADF&G (Alaska Department of Fish and Game). Unpublished. Southwest Alaska rainbow trout management plan. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish, Fairbanks. [Plan drafted in 1990; contact: J. Chythlook, ADF&G, Division of Sport Fish, Fairbanks.]

goal projects. In 2016, the subsistence salmon fishery season was shortened by BOF action (in consultation with a Kuskokwim-based subcommittee) to open only after June 12.

Resident Species Management Plans

In the 1990s, sport fishing bag limits for resident fish species were liberal and were used as a surrogate for subsistence regulations in the Kuskokwim River drainage. Management of resident fish species in the KGMA is under subsistence and sport fishing regulations because currently, there are no commercial fisheries for nonsalmon species. Subsistence regulations of the Kuskokwim Area are an exception to resident species management throughout the State of Alaska. This area, the Yukon Management Area, the Northern Norton Sound Area, and Kotzebue Sound Area are some of the few areas of the state where an Alaskan resident can harvest resident fish (except rainbow trout) during the open water season with hook and line under subsistence regulations.

The *Policy for the Management of Sustainable Wild Trout Fisheries* (5 AAC 75.222; 5 AAC 75.210) directs ADF&G to manage wild trout (except lake trout) populations in Alaska for long-term sustained yield through a conservative harvest regime. The policy establishes a conservation plan for wild trout populations and defines the management approaches under which ADF&G shall manage wild trout populations in the KGMA. The policy establishes that wild trout stocks and habitats should be maintained at levels that assure optimum sustained yield.

The *Wild Arctic Grayling Management Plan* (5 AAC 71.055) directs ADF&G to manage wild Arctic grayling populations in the KGMA for long-term sustained yield through a conservative harvest regime. The plan establishes and defines 3 management approaches under which ADF&G shall manage wild Arctic grayling populations in the KGMA: (1) the regional management approach, (2) the conservative management approach, and (3) the special management approach. The plan also outlines guidelines and considerations for ADF&G, the public, and/or BOF when changing or addressing the management approach for a water body or fish stock.

The *Wild Lake Trout Management Plan* (5 AAC 69.140; 5 AAC 70.040) directs ADF&G to manage wild lake trout populations in the KGMA by employing a conservative harvest regime and by maintaining harvest below the maximum sustained yield level. ADF&G may take 1 or more management actions if there is a conservation or biological concern for the sustainability of the fishery or a stock harvested in that fishery. These actions include reduction of bag and possession limit(s), reduction of fishing time, allowing no retention, and modification of methods and means of harvest. The plan also specifies allowable measures to reduce harvest if the harvest level exceeds sustainable yield for a 2-year period. Finally, the plan establishes a process for designating special management waters and means for limiting harvest in these areas to meet the management objectives.

Sport Fishing Effort, Harvest, and Catch

Effort, harvest, and catch statistics for KGMA sport fisheries have been estimated from responses to the SWHS since 1977, and reported under the headings of the *Kuskokwim River/Kuskokwim Bay drainages* (Area V; http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey/). Estimates of angling effort in the KGMA ranged from 18,000 to 19,000 angler-days during the last 5-year (2019–2023) and 10-year (2014–2023) periods (Table 4).

The majority of the sport fishing effort occurs in 3 areas: Kuskokwim Bay tributaries, including the Kanektok and Goodnews Rivers, the Aniak River, and the Lower Kuskokwim River tributaries

near Bethel (Kwethluk and Kisaralik Rivers; Tables 3 and 4). Some sport fishing effort takes place in the Holitna River, but despite the large size of this drainage and many angling opportunities, effort remains exceptionally low.

Fishing effort in the KGMA has remained stable overall in recent years, although slightly decreased, probably due to a lack of opportunity to catch Chinook salmon in the sport fishery from conservation concerns, and a large dip in effort in 2020 resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic and associated travel restrictions to rural villages (Tables 3 and 4).

Coho salmon is the primary sport fish species harvested in the KGMA (Table 1). Dolly Varden and Arctic char *S. alpinus* surpass coho salmon in numbers of fish caught in the KGMA (Table 2), but the vast majority of Dolly Varden and Arctic char are released.

SECTION II: FISHERIES

This section provides a summary of significant sport fisheries by species in the KGMA in 2024. Discussion of each fishery will address (1) historical perspective, (2) recent fishery performance (stock status), (3) fishery objectives and management, (4) current issues, (5) recent actions by the BOF, and (6) ongoing and recommended management and research activities. Recent fishery performance will focus on data from 2024, with preliminary information from 2025 where available.

SALMON FISHERIES

Chinook Salmon

Background and Historical Perspective

Chinook salmon are present in most streams throughout the KGMA but are predominantly caught and harvested in tributaries of Kuskokwim Bay and tributaries of the Lower Kuskokwim River. Sport fisheries for Chinook salmon in the Kuskokwim River drainages have been closed by emergency order (EO) in recent years (Appendix A1). When open, the largest sport fisheries for Chinook salmon are in the Kanektok and Goodnews Rivers. The sport fisheries in the Kuskokwim Bay (Kanektok, Goodnews, and Arolik Rivers) support between 11,000 and 12,000 angler-days of effort, respectively, for all fish species, according to the 5- and 10-year averages (Table 3). The Aniak River has averaged about 2000 angler-days in recent years (Table 4). Very few Chinook salmon are caught and harvested in the sport fisheries in the Upper Kuskokwim River tributaries, including the Holitna River, due to the low overall fishing pressure in the upper river.

Sport harvest and catch of Chinook salmon are estimated through the SWHS and are summarized in previous fishery management reports (Lafferty 2001, 2003; Lafferty and Bingham 2002; Chythlook 2006, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015a–b, 2017, 2018a–b, 2021, 2022). Additional KGMA commercial and subsistence harvest information can be found in Lipka et al. (2016). Division of Sport Fish has monitored both the Kanektok River and Aniak River Chinook salmon sport fisheries with inseason harvest surveys and stock assessment projects in the past (Minard 1987; Minard and Brookover 1988; Dunaway and Bingham 1992; Dunaway and Fleischman 1995; Dunaway 1997; Lafferty and Bingham 2002). The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Togiak National Wildlife Refuge staff has collected age and size data from Chinook salmon spawning in the Kanektok River (Lisac and MacDonald 1995; MacDonald 1996; M. Lisac, Fisheries Biologist, FWS, Dillingham, personal communication).

Sport harvests of Chinook salmon have historically been minor in comparison to the commercial and subsistence harvests of the area (Tables 5–7). However, there continues to be interest among anglers in participating in the Chinook salmon fisheries of the Kuskokwim-Goodnews area. In the Kuskokwim Bay sport fisheries, the 10-year average is about 12,000 angler-days annually (Table 3), which is about 70% of the KGMA total annual effort on average (Table 4).

Interpretation of catch and harvest averages are generally inconclusive due to poor response rates in the SWHS (Tables 1 and 2). Catch and harvest numbers in the Kuskokwim River and Kuskokwim Bay tributaries have been nearly nonexistent in the last few years due to restrictions, up to and including complete closures of the fisheries in 2014 and 2015, and closure in the Kuskokwim River drainages (excluding the Kuskokwim Bay freshwater drainages) during 2016–2025 (Appendix A1). Catches in the Kuskokwim Bay area peaked at about 17,500 Chinook salmon in 2019, and from 2008 through 2019, catches ranged from 1,200 to 17,500 Chinook salmon (Table 10), with the lowest year of 1,200 occurring during 2014 when the fishery was heavily restricted and closed majority of the season. The year 2020 stands as an anomaly due to the travel restrictions during the COVID-19 pandemic. Higher catches in the Kuskokwim Bay streams reflect those streams that have not been restricted, whereas the Kuskokwim River drainage streams have been closed, thus driving anglers to areas where they can legally catch Chinook salmon. Most anglers participate in the KGMA Chinook salmon fisheries via float trips in tributary streams, which are a significant distance from estuarine waters and have significant river segments under unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure requirements to protect rainbow trout. Accepting that delayed hooking mortality is minor at 10% or less (Bendock and Alexandersdottir 1992), overall fishing mortality (harvest + delayed mortality) may account for a minimal number of fish removed from the populations in the sport fishery. The estimated harvest of Chinook salmon in the Kuskokwim River drainage sport fisheries has been 0 for the last 10 years (Table 8), due to restrictions placed on the fishery, and also thought to be related to the care taken by angler releases of accidentally sport-caught Chinook salmon by adhering to the unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure requirements in the Kuskokwim River drainages.

Recent Fishery Performance

In 2024, the Chinook salmon run was expected to be below average, and several of the escapement goals would not be met. Preseason actions included sport fishing closure for Chinook salmon in the Kuskokwim River drainage, excluding the Kuskokwim Bay drainages. This EO (3-KS-V-02-24) was issued on March 19 (Appendix A1), prior to the Chinook salmon season, in cooperation with conservation measures taken by the Division of Commercial Fisheries and FWS.

During 2016–2025, in expectation of low Chinook salmon numbers, commercial fishing would have been curtailed through the Chinook salmon season, had there been a buyer/processor available. The sport fishery for Chinook salmon remained closed the entire season (Appendix A1).

Chinook salmon sport fisheries were characterized as below average from 2010 through 2012 and have been virtually nonexistent in the Kuskokwim River section of the KGMA area during 2013–2025 due to restrictions and low escapements. Chinook salmon fishing has been allowed at background daily bag and possession limits in the Kuskokwim Bay drainages during 2016–2025 (3 per day, 3 in possession only 2 of which may be 28 inches or longer, and 10 per day for fish less than 20 inches, 10 in possession, with the season running from May 1–July 25).

In 2024, the estimate of Chinook salmon past the Kuskokwim River sonar was 78,458 fish. The estimate of Chinook salmon escapement (after subsistence harvest) through the run reconstruction

model produced an estimate of 130,837 Chinook salmon (D. Runfola, Commercial Fisheries Biologist, ADF&G, Fairbanks, 2023, personal communication).

Regardless of the model used, even with a subsistence harvest of approximately 34,000 fish, the drainagewide goal for Chinook salmon (65,000–120,000) was achieved (D. Runfola, Commercial Fisheries Biologist, ADF&G, Fairbanks, 2023, personal communication).

In 2025, the combination of Federal Special Actions and state EOs resulted in the subsistence fishery for Chinook salmon in the Kuskokwim River being restricted for extended periods of time. There was no commercial fishery for any salmon species due to a lack of market interest. The sport fishery for Chinook salmon remained closed all season in the Kuskokwim River. The Kuskokwim River drainagewide Chinook salmon sustainable escapement goal (SEG; 65,000–120,000) was achieved for 2025 with a preliminary run estimate at around 120,000 fish, although the final escapement will be finalized after the subsistence harvest is currently being estimated from household surveys (S. Decker, Commercial Fisheries Biologist, ADF&G, Fairbanks, 2025, personal communication).

Kuskokwim Bay Tributaries

In 2024, there was no commercial salmon fishing in Kuskokwim Bay due to a lack of market interest. The sport fishery remained open with background bag and possession limits for Chinook salmon. Aerial survey indices indicated that Chinook salmon escapement was achieved at both the Kanektok and Goodnews River drainages. (D. Runfola, Commercial Fisheries Biologist, ADF&G, Fairbanks, 2024, personal communication).

In 2025, there was no commercial fishery in Kuskokwim Bay, and the aerial survey indicated that Chinook salmon escapement was achieved at the Kanektok River at 4,689 fish (SEG = 3,900–12,000). The Goodnews River drainages were not flown due to weather and scheduling difficulties (S. Decker, Commercial Fisheries Biologist, ADF&G, Fairbanks, 2025, personal communication). The sport fishery remained open to 3 Chinook salmon 20 inches or longer, only 2 of which may be 28 inches or longer.

Fishery Objectives and Management

ADF&G has assessed Chinook salmon escapements and harvests through several programs in the Kuskokwim River area. Monitoring of the commercial harvest is conducted through fish harvest tickets, and surveys are utilized to estimate harvests from the subsistence and sport fisheries. Salmon escapements in the Kuskokwim River drainage are monitored through hydroacoustic sonar, aerial surveys, test fishing, and weir projects that provide data to create a run-reconstruction model. The primary Chinook salmon weir escapement projects in the Kuskokwim River drainage are located on the Tuluksak, Kwethluk, Kogrukluk, and George Rivers, the Pitka Fork of the Salmon River, and the Salmon River (a fork of the Aniak River).

Most Kuskokwim River tributary Chinook salmon escapement goals are based on aerial survey information. Often, these aerial surveys are sporadic because of aircraft availability or weather conditions, and this method of evaluating escapement has been unsatisfactory in understanding Kuskokwim River drainage Chinook salmon production. Therefore, ADF&G has invested in weir operations in locations where feasible. Generally, the location of these weirs is not based on the proportion of the total run using a tributary but on the suitability of the site for weir operation and maintenance. Many of the larger tributaries and the larger stocks of Chinook salmon, such as the Aniak and Holitna Rivers (Schaberg et al. 2012), are not completely assessed but are assessed with

opportunistic aerial surveys of Chinook salmon and weir counts on the Kogrukluk and Salmon Rivers, which serve as indices for these drainages. Test fishing in the Lower Kuskokwim River near Bethel provides relative abundance and run timing at Bethel but is not an accurate measure of escapement.

Current Issues and Fishery Outlook

Kuskokwim River and Tributaries

Some of the lowest recorded aerial surveys of Chinook salmon in the Kuskokwim River drainage have occurred during the past 10 years (Table 9). This has resulted in closures of sport fisheries, restriction to subsistence fisheries, and delay of chum salmon-directed commercial fisheries to avoid incidental catch of Chinook salmon. The 2023, 2024, and 2025 (preliminary) Chinook salmon runs were stronger than in recent years, and in 2023 and 2024, the escapement exceeded the upper end of the SEG. Restrictions to the subsistence fishery may occur in 2026, and restriction of the sport fishery is also expected. The commercial fishery was not prosecuted from 2016 to 2025 due to a lack of market and is unlikely to be prosecuted in 2026 for the same reasons.

Recent Board of Fisheries Actions

At the January 2016 BOF meeting, a BOF-generated proposal was adopted to restrict the subsistence Chinook salmon fishery until after June 12. The lone Kuskokwim Area sport fish proposal was from the village of Quinhagak to restrict certain sport fish gear types. That proposal did not pass. During the 2019 BOF meeting, there were 4 proposals from the public to limit the sport fishery in the Kuskokwim River and Lower Kuskokwim tributaries, none of which passed. At the January 2023 BOF meeting, there were 2 proposals related to the KGMA area. One of these would close the Buckstock River (an Aniak River tributary) to all fishing between June 14 and September 1, but it was not adopted. The second proposal would directly influence the Chinook salmon sport fishery by closing the chum salmon sport fishery on the Kanektok River from June 1 to July 15. This passed with an amendment to end the closure on June 30. A third proposal related to commercial fishing by closing the Kuskokwim Area District 4 (Goodnews) on Sundays and allowing only 1 gillnet to be operated per vessel in the subsistence and commercial fisheries between June 1 and July 15 passed in a special session.

Current or Recommended Research and Management Activities

The mainstem Kuskokwim River sonar project has operated since 2018 and has proven to compare well with the more established method (postseason run reconstruction analysis) of estimating escapement on the Kuskokwim River. The project uses the existing weirs to reevaluate salmon runs. Weirs have been used to enumerate Chinook salmon escapements on the Kwethluk, Tuluksak, George, Kogrukluk, Tatlawiksuk, and Takotna Rivers (Whitmore et al. 2008; Brazil et al. 2011). Aerial surveys conducted by the Division of Commercial Fisheries remain an important component of Chinook salmon assessment in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews area (Table 9).

In the Kuskokwim Bay, the Kanektok and Goodnews River weirs have been discontinued due to lack of funding; the Kanektok as of 2016, and the Goodnews River after 2019. Escapement estimates have then been made solely from aerial surveys when the weather cooperates.

Coho Salmon

Background and Historic Perspective

Coho salmon are present in most area streams and are caught and harvested in tributaries of Kuskokwim Bay and the Kuskokwim River. Historically, there has been a large commercial harvest of coho salmon in the Kuskokwim River and Kuskokwim Bay; however, there has been no commercial fishery in the Kuskokwim River since 2016 due to a lack of a commercial buyer (Tables 11–13). There was a very limited commercial fishery in the Kanektok and Goodnews Rivers in 2020 and 2021 (Tables 11–13). The recent commercial harvest from all locations up to 2015 has averaged approximately 91,000 coho salmon in the Kuskokwim River for the 5-year average and 108,000 for the 10-year average (Table 11; N. Smith, Commercial Fisheries Biologist, ADF&G, Anchorage, 2019, personal communication). The Kuskokwim River itself is characterized by broad channels and turbid water, thereby limiting sport fishing largely to clearwater tributaries of the Kuskokwim River and Kuskokwim Bay. The largest coho salmon sport fisheries are located in the Kanektok and Goodnews Rivers (Table 14).

Commercial and subsistence harvests are managed by the Division of Commercial Fisheries located in Bethel (Burkey et al. 1997–2001; Ward et al. 2003; Whitmore et al. 2005; Bavilla et al. 2010; Brazil et al. 2011; Smith et al. 2022). The Kanektok River has the most complete information on commercial, subsistence, and sport harvest of coho salmon in the area (Table 12). Division of Sport Fish monitors both the Kanektok and Aniak Rivers through conversations with locals and guides. Inseason harvest surveys and stock assessment projects have occurred in the past (Minard 1987; Minard and Brookover 1988; Dunaway and Bingham 1992; Dunaway and Fleischman 1995; Dunaway 1997; Lafferty and Bingham 2002). Data collected from 2006 to 2016 by the Division of Sport Fish Guide Logbook program, provides additional information to the catch and harvest estimates from the SWHS for the Kanektok River (Sigurdsson and Powers 2009–2014; Powers and Sigurdsson 2016; Smith et al. 2022).

Prior to 1987, bag limits for coho salmon were very liberal, allowing 15 fish per day and 30 fish in possession. These limits were adopted to accommodate subsistence fishers who were using rod and reel for subsistence purposes but were required to purchase a sport fishing license. In 1987, the BOF recognized the significance of the harvest potential of the Kanektok River sport fishery and reduced the daily bag and possession limit to 5 fish. These limits have remained the standard for most of the area, except for regulations in the Aniak River, where there is a daily aggregate limit of 3 salmon of any species, with additional special regulations for Chinook salmon. Repeatedly, harvest surveys conducted on the Kanektok River indicated that sport anglers rarely (7–15%) took a full bag limit of coho salmon, and most of the anglers (61–66%) elected to take no fish, even though 95% of them had caught and released a fish (Dunaway and Bingham 1992; Dunaway and Fleischman 1995; Powers and Sigurdsson 2016; Smith et al. 2022).

Recent Fishery Performance

Sport harvests of coho salmon are very small in comparison to the historic commercial harvests and recent subsistence harvests in the area (Tables 11–13). However, anglers' desire to participate in coho salmon fisheries is high. In the KGMA, for the recent 5-year average (2019–2023), approximately 3,200 coho salmon were harvested annually, while approximately 29,400 coho salmon were caught (Tables 1 and 2). Delayed mortality from catch-and-release fishing has been a concern in some coho salmon fisheries within the state. Stuby (2002) indicates mortality from coho salmon fisheries in estuarine waters may be different than mortality from entirely freshwater

locations. Most of the anglers participating in the KGMA fisheries use float trips in tributary headwaters, and furthermore, these headwaters have special management regulations to protect rainbow trout, with only unbaited, single-hook, artificial lures permitted for all species. Accepting that delayed hooking mortality is ≤15% (Stuby 2002), the overall mortality of coho salmon caused by the area sport fisheries is considered sustainable given current escapement and harvest levels.

In 2024, sport fish catches of coho salmon were average throughout Kuskokwim Bay and below average for the Kuskokwim River drainage. (Tables 11–14). Sport harvest for the entire KGMA at the end of the 2024 season was below average, due to high water in the Kuskokwim River drainages during the coho run in August and September (Table 1).

In 2024, high-water conditions made assessment of coho salmon escapement difficult throughout the Kuskokwim River drainage and Kuskokwim Bay, and consequently, no reliable escapement counts are available. The Kuskokwim River mainstem sonar operations ended early and thus did not end up with an accurate estimate. The Kuskokwim mainstem sonar operated later in the season to Augst 24, 2025, and the preliminary estimate was near 400,000 fish.

Fishery Objectives and Management

ADF&G has focused on assessing salmon escapements and harvests through several programs in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews area. Harvest monitoring is conducted through commercial fish tickets and surveys designed to estimate harvests from subsistence and sport fisheries. Salmon escapement is monitored through sonar, aerial surveys, test fishing, and weirs in the Kuskokwim River drainage. The cumulative CPUE at the Bethel Test Fishery and sonar passage estimates for coho salmon were incomplete in 2023 and 2024 because the coho salmon run was still progressing after the projects ceased operations on August 24 and August 26, respectively. Escapements at weir projects provided a more complete picture of coho salmon run strength than the Bethel Test Fishery or Kuskokwim River mainstem sonar. 2024 was the third year that the Kuskokwim River sonar operated into late August. Prior year operations ended in late July. Historically, the primary coho salmon escapement projects in the Kuskokwim River drainage were aerial surveys and Kogrukluk River weir counts. In 2010, an escapement goal for coho salmon was established for the Kwethluk River with a lower-bound SEG of ≥19,000 fish. However, due to persistent high-water events and periods of inoperable projects encompassing the entire coho salmon run, escapement counts have remained incomplete. The Bethel Test Fishery in the lower mainstem Kuskokwim River only provides relative abundance and run timing at Bethel.

Current Issues and Fishery Outlook

High-water conditions throughout the area usually hamper assessment efforts for coho during most years. Coho salmon passage at the Kwethluk River weir was not estimated in 2025. Counts at the Kogrukluk River weir are nearly always incomplete due to high water or an abbreviated season.

Recent Board of Fisheries Actions

During the 2019 BOF meeting, there were 4 proposals from the public to limit sport fisheries on the Kuskokwim River and Lower Kuskokwim tributaries, none of which were adopted. At the January 2023 BOF meeting, there were 2 proposals related to the KGMA area. One of these would close the Buckstock River (an Aniak River tributary) to all sport fishing between June 14 and September 1; another was to close rod-and-reel subsistence fishing during the same period. These proposals were not adopted.

Current or Recommended Research and Management Activities

The mainstem Kuskokwim River sonar project has operated since 2018. For the past 6 years, this project has complemented/compared well with the existing established method of estimating escapement with the postseason run reconstruction analysis on the Kuskokwim River. The analysis uses the existing weirs to reevaluate salmon runs. Weirs have been used to enumerate salmon escapements on the Kwethluk, Tuluksak, George, Kogrukluk, Tatlawiksuk, and Takotna Rivers (Whitmore et al. 2008; Brazil et al. 2011). Aerial surveys conducted by the Division of Commercial Fisheries remain an important component of salmon assessment in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews area. (Smith et al. 2022).

In the Kuskokwim Bay, the Kanektok and Goodnews River weirs have been discontinued due to lack of funding; the Kanektok as of 2016, and the Goodnews after 2019. Escapement estimates have then been made solely from aerial surveys if the weather cooperates. Funding has been applied for to operate the Goodnews River weir starting in 2026, but this may be optimistic.

Chum Salmon

Background and Historic Perspective

In the KGMA, chum salmon are primarily harvested from subsistence and commercial fisheries. There has been a long history of subsistence use of chum salmon in the Kuskokwim River communities. Chum salmon were documented as being used for subsistence as early as 1922 (Burkey et al. 2000). In the past, the subsistence fishery has had few restrictions, and most of the harvest has been taken using gillnets, either drift or set. Recent gillnet restrictions aimed at the conservation of Chinook salmon have influenced the harvest of Chinook salmon and have reduced the chum salmon harvest in the subsistence fishery.

Directed commercial fishing for chum salmon in the Kuskokwim River began in 1971. This fishery continued and expanded, with a record harvest of 1.4 million in 1988 (Burkey et al. 2000). Commercial harvests declined to less than 100,000 in the late 1990s and more recently have ranged broadly from 0 to 118,000 fish, with no commercial fishery prosecuted since 2015 (Table 15). Commercial harvests of Kuskokwim River chum salmon have generally declined from harvests that occurred in the 1980s, first due in part to low returns in the late 1990s, then largely due to low market demand during the mid-2000s, and most recently due to gear restrictions and delayed openings in an effort to conserve Chinook salmon. The harvest of chum salmon has been very low in recent years because there was no directed commercial fishery from 2016 onward. There was a limited commercial fishery that was prosecuted in 2020 in Kuskokwim Bay, but the harvest was low due to limited processor capacity and social distancing extremes during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Recent Fishery Performance

In 2024, the Division of Commercial Fisheries characterized chum salmon abundance as low based on the previous year's Bethel Test Fishery catches and subsistence harvest reports, and subsequently and temporarily restricted the subsistence fishery for chum salmon in the Kuskokwim River upriver of the Aniak River and including the Lower Aniak River from June 5 through June 12. The Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge requested and was granted a temporary Federal Special Action that allowed for 90 days of management of Chinook, chum, and coho salmon runs. Between June 1 and August 17, fishing for Chinook, chum, and coho salmon was restricted to federally qualified users. The sport fishery for chum salmon remained open. On

average, sport harvests of chum salmon represent about 5% of total KGMA salmon sport harvests (Tables 1 and 15). During the recent 10-year average, approximately 270 chum salmon were harvested, and 14,000 chum salmon were caught annually from 2013 to 2022 (Tables 1 and 2).

In 2024, efforts by both state and federal entities reduced the amount of subsistence salmon fishing time to conserve both Chinook and chum salmon. Chum salmon returns were characterized as late and poor, similar to 2023, but notably improved over escapements observed during 2020–2022. The cumulative chum salmon passage estimate at the sonar was 253,825 fish. Chum salmon escapement at all weir projects was poor but improved over recent escapements from 2020 to 2022 (D. Runfola, Commercial Fisheries Biologist, ADF&G, Fairbanks, 2024, personal communication).

Fishery Objectives and Management

ADF&G has focused on assessing salmon escapements and harvests through several programs in the KGMA. Harvest monitoring is conducted through commercial fish tickets and surveys designed to estimate harvests from the subsistence and sport fisheries. Salmon escapement is monitored through sonar, aerial surveys, test fishing, and weirs in the Kuskokwim River drainage.

Current Issues and Fishery Outlook

Chum salmon production has not provided surpluses for commercial fisheries in the past 4 years, even if there had been a market. The 2025 Kuskokwim River chum salmon run was late and eventually characterized as below average for escapement. The cumulative chum salmon passage estimate at the Kuskokwim River mainstem sonar was 158,101 fish. The Kogrukluk River weir count was more than 40% incomplete, so did not estimate what was needed to meet the established SEG of 15,000–49,000 (S. Decker, Commercial Fisheries Biologist, ADF&G, Fairbanks, 2025, personal communication).

Commercial fishing for salmon in the KGMA has been nonexistent since 2015 due to multiple factors. If future salmon escapements allow for a harvestable surplus, commercial fishing harvest may remain low due to the lack of a large-scale commercial buyer.

Sockeye Salmon

Background and Historic Perspective

Sockeye salmon are present in the Kuskokwim River drainage, although more abundant in Kuskokwim Bay tributaries. The sockeye salmon stocks of the Kanektok and Goodnews Rivers are the largest in the KGMA. Sockeye salmon stocks of the Kuskokwim River are relatively small and sporadically located throughout the drainage, with the largest occurring in the Holitna River drainage and at Telaquana Lake in the Stony River drainage (Templin et al. 2011). Most anglers venturing to western Alaska are interested in Chinook salmon and rainbow trout opportunities; however, sockeye and coho salmon opportunities have become increasingly popular for recreational anglers. Anglers seeking sockeye salmon fishing opportunities in the Kanektok and Goodnews Rivers focus their efforts during the month of July prior to the Chinook salmon spawning season closure on July 25. Sport harvest, catch, and effort are estimated through the SWHS, whereas commercial and subsistence harvests are managed by the Division of Commercial Fisheries located in Bethel and are reported in Fishery Management Reports (Smith 2019).

Sport harvests of sockeye salmon represent approximately 22% of the total KGMA salmon sport harvests, and less than 1% of the total harvests of sockeye salmon compared to the historic and

current harvests in the commercial and subsistence fisheries (Tables 1 and 18). There were no commercial harvests during 2016–2025 due to lack of a large-scale commercial buyer.

Recent Fishery Performance

In 2024, the sport fish catch of sockeye in the KGMA area was about 8,000 fish, near the 5- and 10-year averages of 7,253 and 7,971 fish, respectively (Table 2). Recreational sockeye salmon catches in the Kanektok and Goodnews Rivers have averaged about 5,700 to 6,700 fish/year according to the 5- and 10-year averages (Table 19). Harvest of sockeye salmon in Kuskokwim Bay rivers is uncommon, with most anglers practicing nonretention. In general, less than 10% of sockeye salmon caught in the sport fishery is harvested in the Goodnews and Kanektok Rivers (Table 19). A small sport fishery for sockeye salmon exists on Lower Kuskokwim River tributaries such as the Aniak, Kisaralik, and Kwethluk Rivers. The 2024 estimate of sport fish catch of sockeye salmon in Lower Kuskokwim River tributaries was small, at near 650 fish, and harvest estimated at 0 fish (Table 20). Since 2003, catches within the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Management Area have ranged between 1,400 fish in 2020 and 16,000 fish in 2006 (Table 2).

Fishery Objectives and Management

Sockeye salmon management of Kuskokwim Bay is outlined under the *District 4 Salmon Management Plan* (5 AAC 07.367); sockeye salmon management in Goodnews Bay, District 5 follows a similar regulation pattern, although there is no formal management plan in regulation (Ward et al. 2003; Whitmore et al. 2005). Escapement-based management has been challenging in Kuskokwim Bay. In the past, escapements have been evaluated by aerial surveys; however, multiple salmon species and frequently poor survey conditions have made documenting salmon escapements difficult. Developing a reliable method of assessing salmon escapements has been a challenge in the Kanektok River. Counting towers and sonar projects have been attempted but water conditions, staff availability, and budgetary constraints have limited the success of these projects. The mainstem Kuskokwim River sonar project has operated since 2018. Weirs have been used to enumerate Chinook salmon escapements on the Kwethluk, Tuluksak, George, Kogrukluk, Tatlawiksuk, and Takotna Rivers (Whitmore et al. 2008; Brazil et al. 2011).

In the Kuskokwim Bay, the Kanektok and Goodnews River weirs have been discontinued due to lack of funding; the Kanektok as of 2016, and the Goodnews after 2019. Escapement estimates have then been made solely from aerial survey counts when weather cooperates.

Aerial surveys have historically been used to count sockeye salmon escapements in the Kanektok and Goodnews Rivers, but surveys have not been successful every year, making escapement-based management difficult. Aerial surveys are used to estimate sockeye salmon escapements in tributaries of the Goodnews River drainage. Commercial fisheries management has followed a simple fishing schedule based on fishery performance in relation to the historic mean harvest and CPUE of the commercial fishery, and this method has worked to provide sustained yields when there is a commercial salmon market available.

Current Issues and Fishery Outlook

During 2016–2025, the lack of a large-scale commercial buyer resulted in very few or no harvests in the commercial fishery and subsequently larger escapements than anticipated in Kuskokwim Bay. In 2024, aerial surveys were conducted at the Kanektok River but not the Goodnews River. The estimate for the Kanektok River was 179,140 fish, far exceeding the SEG of 15,300–41,000

(S. Decker, Fisheries biologist, ADF&G Commercial Fisheries Division, Fairbanks, personal communication).

In the Kuskokwim River in 2025, sockeye salmon escapement was characterized as above average. The cumulative sockeye salmon passage estimate at the sonar was 695,724 fish. This is below the average of 739,679 fish from the sonar's inception in 2018 (S. Decker, fisheries biologist, ADF&G Commercial Fisheries Division, Fairbanks, personal communication).

Current or Recommended Research and Management Activities

Current sockeye salmon research has focused on enumeration through the mainstem sonar project and aerial surveys. In the past, Division of Commercial Fisheries has undertaken sockeye salmon radiotelemetry projects and sampling for genetics (Templin et al. 2011). Approximately half of the sockeye salmon in the Kuskokwim River spawn in the Holitna River drainage, and other spawning occurs in the Aniak River, and distantly, in other smaller drainages. Other current projects include a recently completed mark–recapture study, a genetic mark–recapture study, and a weir at Telaquana Lake operated with volunteers and in cooperation with the National Park Service (Elison et al. 2012).

RESIDENT SPECIES FISHERIES

Rainbow Trout

Background and Historic Perspective

Combining salmon and rainbow trout fishing is probably one of the major attractions for anglers traveling to the KGMA Area. Rainbow trout stocks are extremely important to the people of the state and to recreational and tourism-based services that contribute to the state's economy.

Rainbow trout of the KGMA are found only in the Lower Kuskokwim River drainages from the Aniak River downstream, and in the Kuskokwim Bay drainages. These stocks of rainbow trout are at the northern edge of their geographic distribution, probably due to thermal barriers for successful spawning and rearing. Many of these rainbow trout stocks are small, grow slowly, mature at older ages, and are found in low densities. As with any population on the edge of its distribution, these stocks are more sensitive to changes in climate and food availability. The *Policy for the Management of Sustainable Wild Trout Fisheries* (5 AAC 75.222, 5 AAC 75.210) recognizes these factors and provides a policy for conservative management and maintenance of rainbow trout stocks in the Lower Kuskokwim River and Kuskokwim Bay.

Historically, subsistence harvest surveys have focused on salmon, but in 2000, the Division of Subsistence began to estimate resident fish harvests, including rainbow trout, on a community basis. The value of these data to management is limited because estimates are based on communities of harvest rather than drainage. The Division of Commercial Fisheries manages all subsistence fisheries in the region.

Recent Fishery Performance

Total areawide rainbow trout sport harvests have remained low in recent years, and the recent 5-year average is about 105 rainbow trout (Table 21) in the Kuskokwim River drainages, and about 220 in the Kuskokwim Bay drainages (Table 22).

In 2024, catches were above the 5-and 10-year averages in both the Kuskokwim Bay and Kuskokwim River drainages. The 2024 catch for the Lower Kuskokwim River drainages was

about 13,149 rainbow trout (Table 21), while the Kuskokwim Bay catch was estimated at about 11,700 (Table 22). Nearly all sport-caught rainbow trout in the entire Kuskokwim-Goodnews area were released (Tables 21 and 22).

Fishery Objectives and Management

During the mid-1980s, bag limits were adopted in the KGMA to reduce harvests. Bag limits at that time were very liberal, providing opportunities for local people to meet their subsistence needs. In conjunction with the adoption of the Southwest Alaska Rainbow Trout Management Plan, the Aniak River drainage (Figure 2) was designated a special management area above its confluence with the Doestock River and was restricted to unbaited, single-hook, artificial-lures, and no retention allowed.

In 1997, the upper sections of the Kisaralik and Kwethluk Rivers and the entire length of the Kasigluk River were recognized as special rainbow trout waters under the guidelines of the Southwest Alaska Rainbow Trout Management Plan. This resulted in regulations allowing only unbaited, single-hook artificial lures. Portions of this plan were subsequently adopted into the statewide wild trout management plan (5 AAC 75.220).

Current Issues and Fishery Outlook

The rainbow trout stocks of the KGMA provide high catch rates in all size classes, a good indicator of healthy fish populations. Local anglers and the sport fishing guide industry continue to provide positive comments on rainbow trout stocks. Some guides and individuals have raised concerns about rainbow trout stocks on the Aniak and Kanektok Rivers, generally involving a lower number of large rainbow trout and fewer rainbow trout in general. Similar concerns have been expressed about the quantity and quality of the rainbow trout on the Goodnews River. The outlook for rainbow trout fisheries in the KGMA is generally good. Rainbow trout greater than 25 inches are occasionally caught. In the short term, impacts from rod-and-reel subsistence fishing appear to be minor (although there are no harvest reporting requirements in the subsistence fishery, and actual harvests are unknown).

In March 2003, the BOF adopted the *Statewide Management Standards for Wild Trout* (5 AAC 75.220), which consolidated regulations for rainbow trout stocks not under special management. Within the KGMA, the Kasigluk, Arolik, Kisaralik, and Kwethluk Rivers are not under special management regulations in the Southwest Alaska Rainbow Trout Management Plan and fall under the statewide background bag and possession limit of 2 fish, of which only 1 fish can be 20 inches or longer, and an annual limit of 2 fish that are 20 inches or longer. There are currently no major biological concerns for rainbow trout fisheries in the Kuskokwim River drainage and Kuskokwim Bay, and the fishery appears sustainable.

Recent Board of Fisheries Actions

During the 2019 BOF meeting, there were 4 proposals from the public to limit sport fisheries on the Kuskokwim River and Lower Kuskokwim tributaries, none of which were adopted. At the January 2023 BOF meeting, there were 2 sport fish proposals related to the KGMA area. One of these would close the Buckstock River (an Aniak River tributary) to all fishing between June 14 and September 1, but this was not adopted. The other proposal was to close the chum salmon sport fishery on the Kanektok River from June 1 to July 15, which would influence the rainbow trout fishery by decreasing guided activity. This passed with an amendment to end the closure on June 30.

Current or Recommended Research and Management Activities

Several onsite creel surveys in the Kanektok and Aniak Rivers have been conducted to verify catch, harvest, and angler effort (Alt 1986; Minard 1987, 1990; Minard and Brookover 1988; Dunaway and Bingham 1992; Dunaway and Fleischman 1995; Adams 1996; Dunaway 1997; Lafferty and Bingham 2002). These surveys were directed at both salmon and resident species fisheries, including rainbow trout fisheries.

Results of a stock assessment of the Kisaralik River rainbow trout population in 1997 by FWS estimated the rainbow trout abundance to be about 9,300 rainbow trout greater than 350 mm (11.8 in) in a 70-kilometer index area (Harper et al. 2005). Rainbow trout density estimates range from 200 rainbow trout/km in the Kisaralik River to 650 rainbow trout/km in the Kanektok River. Although the assumption of a closed population may have been violated because of potential emigration and immigration of tagged and untagged fish during the experiment, these density estimates are a rough approximation and provide evidence that the fisheries are sustainable. Area rainbow trout stocks continue to be conservatively managed.

A radiotelemetry project designed to describe the seasonal movements of rainbow trout began in the Aniak River drainage in the fall of 2008 (Schwanke and Thalhauser 2011). One of the major conclusions of this project was that rainbow trout that are caught in the winter subsistence fishery through the ice near the village of Aniak are probably a separate population of fish from those caught by sport and subsistence users upriver during the open-water season.

Similar work on the Kanektok River was conducted in 2011. Results determined that rainbow trout in the Upper Kanektok River moved downriver into the mainstem during the winter and spread upriver into tributaries during the spring/summer to spawn and feed (Schwanke et al. 2014).

A stock assessment of the rainbow trout population in the Kisaralik River was conducted in 2011. This cooperative project, which included the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge, Kenai Fisheries Resource Office, and ADF&G Division of Sport Fish, was designed as a mark–recapture study on the Kisaralik River drainage to determine abundance. This project updated the 1997 Kisaralik River study done by the FWS to assess changes in the 10+ years since that study was completed. The estimate generated by this study suggests a slightly lower population than the 1997 study, with about 5,000 rainbow trout larger than 350 mm compared to about 7,000 in 2011 (Schwanke 2015).

A project to estimate the abundance of rainbow trout in the Lower Kisaralik River that wasn't conducted in 2011 has been proposed and may be scheduled in the coming years.

Additional discussions of a radiotelemetry and/or mark–recapture project on the Goodnews River is in progress. If funded, either project would be in partnership with the FWS Togiak National Wildlife Refuge and the Kenai Field Office.

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TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1.–Kuskokwim-Goodnews Management Area (including Kuskokwim Bay drainages) sport fishing harvest by species, 2004–2024.

Year	Chinook salmon	Coho salmon	Sockeye salmon	Pink salmon	Chum salmon	Rainbow trout	Lake trout	Dolly Varden/ Arctic char	Arctic grayling	Northern pike	Whitefish	Burbot	Sheefish
2004	1,197	7,096	512	416	117	457	497	2,539	1,953	1,543	975	111	182
2005	1,092	5,591	792	66	608	141	233	2,135	1,287	3,749	209	75	1,079
2006	1,277	3,793	864	187	158	107	83	1,937	637	406	58	0	173
2007	2,543	3,802	876	0	439	232	42	1,492	827	346	342	0	435
2008	1,037	6,344	1,109	32	262	219	22	2,038	713	165	96	0	191
2009	1,399	4,724	394	337	351	197	29	2,176	1,307	981	664	0	161
2010	906	3,527	459	80	235	106	11	1,565	530	909	54	92	67
2011	1,733	3,713	662	0	354	13	24	1,231	713	247	70	0	114
2012	632	4,972	639	136	406	137	39	2,301	1,096	837	1,216	1,857	60
2013	132	5,946	471	39	351	377	14	2,032	1,002	321	1,482	597	74
2014	0	4,280	755	91	191	69	18	2,309	409	1,445	424	259	93
2015	0	4,877	171	0	185	20	50	1,247	475	332	0	0	107
2016	103	5,889	1,210	419	596	179	0	1,038	197	732	0	0	8
2017	167	4,497	1,467	34	230	18	52	858	242	17	0	0	8
2018	124	2,692	1,149	102	338	20	19	911	59	176	0	0	65
2019	587	3,373	842	0	418	295	30	1,556	832	1,464	7	0	68
2020	0	1,355	200	40	17	0	21	527	174	136	19	0	117
2021	597	4,418	1,900	72	264	525	30	1,087	1,031	489	112	0	126
2022	46	4,328	602	209	119	24	0	675	64	198	0	106	117
2023	104	2,692	1,149	102	338	20	19	911	59	176	0	0	0
2024	299	1,444	218	0	66	0	0	567	109	186	0	0	8
Average 2014–2023	173	3,840	945	107	270	117	24	1,112	354	517	56	37	71
Average 2019–2023	267	3,233	939	85	231	173	20	951	432	493	28	21	86

Source: Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996–. Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 1, 2025). Available from: http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey/.

Table 2.–Kuskokwim-Goodnews Management Area (including Kuskokwim Bay drainages) sport fishing catch by species, 2004–2024.

Year	Chinook salmon	Coho salmon	Sockeye salmon	Pink salmon	Chum salmon	Rainbow trout	Lake trout	Dolly Varden/ Arctic char	Arctic grayling	Northern pike	Whitefish	Burbot	Sheefish
2004	10,719	63,233	3,422	18,212	13,161	22,979	6,941	76,194	31,680	10,613	1,331	111	938
2005	13,143	40,420	7,854	2,454	15,457	17,128	1,951	49,353	11,599	10,425	334	75	3,933
2006	13,414	30,962	16,599	10,778	35,174	36,755	515	61,570	16,493	4,917	894	0	524
2007	21,013	28,406	6,544	1,128	19,563	29,150	655	42,337	20,907	4,606	769	0	452
2008	10,313	45,382	9,824	19,854	19,292	54,877	807	83,835	35,486	2,779	380	0	1,046
2009	6,879	23,143	3,595	1,650	14,398	49,534	654	57,625	35,693	4,354	957	0	768
2010	6,812	25,413	7,646	10,320	16,327	35,470	1,215	55,241	27,870	4,359	688	216	280
2011	13,448	36,033	8,301	1,105	17,247	37,049	485	64,818	29,418	4,129	555	6	1,593
2012	6,885	36,540	4,802	10,950	17,247	26,511	971	79,406	30,625	2,292	1,270	2,076	388
2013	5,357	43,413	5,734	1,299	17,001	40,530	450	90,132	42,005	2,954	1,560	607	358
2014	1,600	29,712	7,768	8,604	13,477	36,466	280	83,114	15,971	1,445	485	291	111
2015	4,335	58,373	7,441	2,747	17,796	35,390	250	66,036	21,952	2,529	537	0	226
2016	5,121	50,573	6,790	12,391	10,714	38,878	174	62,076	11,501	2,662	522	0	469
2017	5,074	60,953	10,306	4,443	11,511	44,408	168	77,075	15,029	953	219	0	154
2018	9,442	44,230	11,138	13,105	19,268	26,525	119	71,757	17,227	2,783	173	0	361
2019	19,373	50,156	10,031	3,392	18,572	59,282	152	67,921	33,286	5,757	161	8	440
2020	300	4,589	1,379	447	945	5,503	211	3,563	4,146	2,349	22	0	0
2021	7,802	22,692	8,148	5,616	6,638	33,146	862	24,614	22,611	1,406	444	0	488
2022	4,056	25,272	5,570	11,307	21,841	22,421	139	31,126	7,101	1,526	88	210	550
2023	9,442	44,230	11,138	13,105	19,268	26,525	119	71,757	17,227	2,783	173	0	361
2024	5,785	38,987	7,992	16,364	23,981	20,242	365	36,887	10,620	2,752	643	0	559
Average 2014–2023	6,655	39,078	7,971	7,516	14,003	32,854	247	55,904	16,605	2,419	282	57	316
Average 2019–2023	8,195	29,388	7,253	6,773	13,453	29,375	297	39,796	16,874	2,764	178	44	368

Source: Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996– . Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 1, 2025). Available from: http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey/.

Table 3.–Sport fishing effort (angler-days) in the Kuskokwim Bay drainages, 2004–2024.

	Kuskokwim Bay			
Year	Kanektok	Goodnews	Other	Total
2004	6,364	2,499	410	10,729
2005	5,789	2,612	32	8,854
2006	7,861	2,833	342	11,682
2007	5,071	3,375	960	9,406
2008	8,024	3,738	969	12,731
2009	3,267	2,212	1,031	6,510
2010	5,307	2,258	1,122	8,867
2011	7,235	3,064	1,431	11,730
2012	7,790	5,658	1,165	14,613
2013	8,792	4,517	0	13,309
2014	6,456	5,651	711	12,818
2015	9,346	4,961	216	14,523
2016	8,707	4,263	1,505	14,475
2017	8,314	1,750	1,205	11,269
2018	7,846	3,917	1,419	13,182
2019	9,033	8,705	2,053	19,791
2020	61	314	22	77
2021	5,071	3,514	1,497	10,082
2022	7,327	3,170	3,604	14,011
2023	7,846	3,917	1,472	13,235
2024	7,341	3,495	858	12,114
Average 2014–2023	6,992	4,016	1,370	12,346
Average 2019–2023	5,850	3,924	1,730	11,439

Source: Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996– . Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 1, 2025). Available from: http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey/.

Table 4.–Sport fishing effort (angler-days) in select Kuskokwim River tributaries, 2004–2024.

Year	Kuskokwim River tributaries					KGMA Area total
	Aniak	Kisaralik	Kwethluk	Other	Holitna	
2004	4,186	2,071	2,021	340	993	25,406
2005	2,497	714	2,022	525	1,452	19,447
2006	3,096	ND	1,922	1,867	9,034	22,389
2007	3,363	ND	1,067	4,414	9,217	21,206
2008	4,559	2,576	1,092	1,958	10,185	25,862
2009	2,611	2,235	1,387	1,203	7,346	17,791
2010	2,909	2,056	1,453	975	575	19,455
2011	1,715	2,417	369	92	2,673	22,141
2012	2,315	1,420	1,152	1,539	386	23,477
2013	2,189	1,871	1,117	1,341	166	21,642
2014	882	3,187	645	3,049	202	20,010
2015	1,528	662	609	1,275	964	20,917
2016	1,380	1,709	1,803	1,765	227	21,387
2017	652	978	1,468	797	43	20,715
2018	3,403	501	152	5,276	512	18,308
2019	3,155	1,832	829	593	1,086	27,286
2020	591	1,242	766	2,604	814	6,033
2021	2,426	1,932	1,827	2,583	374	19,853
2022	2,149	1,027	430	366	1,055	19,870
2023	3,403	501	152	401	512	15,822
2024	1,477	1,386	834	4,333	518	18,065
Average 2014–2023	1,957	1,357	868	1,898	579	19,020
Average 2019–2023	2,345	1,307	801	1,363	768	17,773

Source: Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996– . Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 1, 2025). Available from: http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey/.

Note: Cells without a number indicate years without enough Statewide Harvest Survey respondents, so estimates for that year may be in the "Other" category.

Table 5.–Harvest of Chinook salmon in the commercial, subsistence, test, and sport fisheries of the Kuskokwim River, 2004–2024.

	Harvest				
Year	Commercial[a]	Subsistence[b]	Test fishery	Sport[c]	Total
2004	2,305	97,110	691	857	100,963
2005	4,784	85,097	608	572	91,061
2006	2,777	90,094	352	444	93,677
2007	179	96,139	503	1,683	98,504
2008	8,865	98,099	420	739	108,123
2009	6,664	78,225	470	917	86,276
2010	2,731	66,053	292	354	69,430
2011	748	62,368	337	757	64,210
2012	14	22,527	321	0	22,862
2013	1	47,113	201	0	47,315
2014	0	11,234	638	0	11,872
2015	2	16,124	472	0	16,598
2016	0	30,677	683	0	31,360
2017	0	16,380	374	0	16,754
2018	0	22,264	451	0	22,715
2019	0	37,940	559	0	38,049
2020	0	35,847	345	0	38,608
2021	0	28,365	390	21	28,776
2022	0	34,134	378	0	34,512
2023	0	36,516	286	0	36,802
2024	0	32,493	207	0	32,700
Average 2014–2023	0	26,948	449	2	29,388
Average 2019–2023	0	34,560	392	4	35,349

Source: Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996– . Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 1, 2025). Available from: http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey

[a] Districts 1 and 2.

[b] Estimated subsistence harvest expanded from villages surveyed. Methodology changed starting in 2008.

[c] Statewide Harvest Survey (2004–2024).

Table 6.–Harvest of Chinook salmon in the commercial, subsistence, and sport fisheries in the Goodnews River, 2004–2024.

	Harvest			
Year	Commercial[a]	Subsistence[b]	Sport	Total
2004	2,565	863	100	3,528
2005	2,035	869	0	2,904
2006	2,892	713	79	3,684
2007	3,126	647	177	3,950
2008	1,281	1,012	78	2,371
2009	1,509	585	31	2,125
2010	1,752	480	0	2,232
2011	2,092	784	51	2,977
2012	1,531	389	41	1,961
2013	495	413	102	1,010
2014	205	431	0	636
2015	705	220	0	925
2016	0	654	68	722
2017	0	457	57	514
2018	0	555	20	575
2019	0	864	192	1,056
2020	442	766	109	1,317
2021	114	388	196	698
2022	0	963	306	963
2023	0	786	0	786
2024	0	678	299	977
Average 2014–2023	147	608	95	819
Average 2019–2023	111	753	161	964

Source: Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996– . Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 1, 2025). Available from: http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey/

[a] Goodnews District commercial harvest (N. Smith, Commercial Fisheries biologist, ADF&G, Anchorage, personal communication).

[b] Subsistence harvest by the community of Goodnews (D. Runfola, Commercial Fisheries biologist, ADF&G, Fairbanks, personal communication).

Table 7.–Harvest of Chinook salmon in the commercial, subsistence, and sport fisheries in the Kanektok River, 2004–2024.

	Harvest			
Year	Commercial[a]	Subsistence[b]	Sport	Total
2004	25,465	4,563	228	30,526
2005	24,195	3,505	520	28,220
2006	19,184	5,163	754	25,101
2007	19,573	4,686	633	24,892
2008	13,812	3,923	220	17,735
2009	13,920	2,976	400	17,296
2010	14,230	2,692	552	17,474
2011	15,387	2,177	891	18,455
2012	6,675	2,396	591	9,662
2013	2,054	3,143	30	5,227
2014	2,265	3,723	0	5,988
2015	7,547	3.082	0	10,629
2016	0	4,822	17	4,839
2017	0	5,217	110	5,327
2018	0	3,592	64	3,656
2019	0	5,690	348	6,038
2020	4,345	4,757	0	9,102
2021	2,468	2,656	304	5,428
2022	0	4,004	23	4,027
2023	0	2,407	0	2,407
2024	0	2,470	0	2,470
Average 2014–2023	1,663	3,995	87	5,744
Average 2019–2023	1,363	3,903	135	5,400

Source: Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996– . Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 1, 2025). Available from: http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey.

[a] Kanektok District commercial harvest (N. Smith, Commercial Fisheries biologist, ADF&G, Anchorage, personal communication).

[b] Subsistence harvest by the community of Quinhagak (D. Runfola, Commercial Fisheries biologist, ADF&G, Fairbanks, personal communication).

Table 8.–Sport fishing harvest and catch of Chinook salmon in the Aniak, Kisaralik, and Kwethluk Rivers, and other Kuskokwim rivers, 2004–2024.

	Aniak River		Kisaralik River		Kwethluk River		Holitna River		Kuskokwim River total	
Year	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch
2004	335	1,103	58	1,774	150	778	136	619	857	5,427
2005	189	594	40	907	65	385	**180**	**470**	572	2,652
2006	29	1,201	**86**	**359**	183	493	**16**	**173**	444	3,480
2007	162	5,380	**446**	**1,096**	93	733	86	171	1,683	11,224
2008	26	3,614	148	1,583	149	845	122	992	739	7,382
2009	10	796	51	287	42	499	0	676	917	3,586
2010	0	1,902	0	717	136	584	39	130	354	3,564
2011	51	1,069	17	**864**	**0**	**0**	318	1,641	579	4,249
2012	0	135	0	97	**0**	**86**	**0**	**0**	0	415
2013	0	328	0	0	**0**	**211**	**0**	**0**	0	662
2014	**0**	**241**	0	111	**0**	**18**	**0**	**0**	0	370
2015	0	66	0	**20**	**0**	**0**	0	129	0	300
2016	**0**	**35**	0	141	0	477	**0**	**0**	0	1,174
2017	**0**	**0**	0	**18**	0	147	**0**	**0**	0	165
2018	**0**	**61**	0	**439**	**0**	**20**	**0**	**20**	0	459
2019	0	671	0	**151**	**0**	**339**	**0**	**0**	0	1,244
2020	**0**	**0**	**0**	**60**	**0**	**33**	**0**	**0**	0	216
2021	**0**	**91**	**0**	**1,037**	**0**	**934**	**0**	**22**	0	2,128
2022	0	91	0	**237**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**431**
2023	**0**	**314**	**0**	**113**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**427**
2024	**0**	**151**	**0**	**96**	**0**	**120**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**367**
Average 2014–2023	0	157	0	233	0	197	0	17	0	691
Average 2019–2023	0	233	0	320	0	261	0	4	0	889

Source: Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996– . Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 1, 2025). Available from: http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey.

Note: Numbers in bold indicate Statewide Harvest Survey results that include fewer than 12 respondents and should not be used except to indicate presence or absence of fishing in those locations.

Table 9.–Peak aerial survey index counts of Chinook salmon in tributaries of the Lower Kuskokwim River, 2004–2024.

Year	Eek River	Kwethluk River	Kisaralik River	Tuluksak River	Aniak River	Kipchuk River[a]	Salmon River[a]
2004	4,653	6,801	6,913	1,196	5,569	1,868	2,177
2005	–	5,002	4,081	672	–	1,944	4,097
2006	–	–	4,734	–	5,639	1,618	–
2007	–	–	692	173	3,984	2,147	1,458
2008	–	487	1,074	–	3,222	1,061	589
2009[b]	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2010	–	–	235	–	–	–	–
2011	249	–	534	–	–	116	79
2012	–	–	610	–	–	193	49
2013	240	–	597	83	754	261	154
2014	206	–	622	–	3,201	1,220	497
2015	–	–	709	–	–	917	810
2016	–	–	622	–	718	898	–
2017	–	–	–	–	1,781	889	423
2018	–	–	584	–	1,534	1,123	441
2019	–	–	–	–	3,160	1,344	950
2020	–	721	350	–	1,264	723	269
2021[b]	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2022[b]	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2023	–	–	—	–	628	–	–
2024	–	400		135	450	330	65

Note: Estimates are from peak aerial surveys conducted between July 20 and July 31 under fair, good, or excellent conditions. En dashes indicate surveys were not flown due to poor conditions.

[a] Tributaries of Aniak River.

[b] Lower Kuskokwim drainages not surveyed due to poor weather conditions.

Table 10.–Sport fishing harvest and catch of Chinook salmon in the Kanektok and Goodnews Rivers, and Arolik River/other Kuskokwim Bay rivers, 2004–2024.

	Kanektok River		Goodnews River		Arolik/other rivers		Kuskokwim Bay total	
Year	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch
2004	228	2,758	100	1,754	**12**	**1,074**	340	5,586
2005	520	10,116	0	375	**0**	**0**	520	10,491
2006	754	7,292	79	2,243	**0**	**399**	833	9,934
2007	633	6,331	177	1,461	**50**	**1,997**	860	9,789
2008	78	2,490	78	367	**0**	**69**	298	2,931
2009	400	2,522	31	561	51	210	482	3,293
2010	552	2,619	0	547	0	82	552	3,248
2011	891	6,911	51	1,000	34	1,288	976	9,199
2012	591	4,322	41	1,674	0	444	632	6,440
2013	30	3,215	102	1,480	**0**	**0**	132	4,695
2014	0	633	0	597	**0**	**0**	0	1,230
2015	0	3,236	0	193	**0**	**665**	0	4,094
2016	17	3,002	68	698	**18**	**247**	103	3,947
2017	110	3,078	37	1,750	**0**	**81**	147	4,909
2018	64	5,537	20	2,206	**40**	**1,119**	124	8,862
2019	348	13,694	192	3,043	47	761	587	17,498
2020	**0**	**0**	**0**	**84**	**0**	**0**	0	84
2021	304	3,121	196	968	**97**	**1,794**	597	5,833
2022	23	2,163	0	306	**23**	**136**	46	2,605
2023	0	2,126	0	1,214	**0**	**114**	0	3,454
2024	0	3,388	299	1,688	**0**	**36**	299	5,112
Average 2014–2023	87	3,659	51	1,106	23	492	160	5,252
Average 2019–2023	135	4,221	78	1,123	33	561	246	5,895

Source: Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996– . Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 1, 2025). Available from: http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey.

Note: Numbers in bold indicate Statewide Harvest Survey results that include fewer than 12 respondents and should not be used except to indicate presence or absence of fishing in those locations.

Table 11.–Harvest of coho salmon in the commercial, subsistence, and sport fisheries in the Kuskokwim River, 2004–2024.

	Harvest			
Year	Commercial	Subsistence[a]	Sport[b]	Total
2004	435,407	48,898	4,996	489,301
2005	142,319	33,351	3,539	176,261
2006	185,598	41,272	1,474	228,344
2007	141,049	35,212	2,504	176,261
2008	142,862	46,461	3,893	193,216
2009	104,546	29,559	3,526	137,631
2010	58,031	32,094	1,549	91,854
2011	74,108	32,172	1,693	107,973
2012	86,389	28,294	1,752	116,435
2013	114,069	26,409	1,239	141,717
2014	117,557	49,736	1,326	168,619
2015	65,034	33,939	1,412	100,385
2016	0	36,787	1,686	38,473
2017	0	37,788	976	38,764
2018	0	19,981	416	20,397
2019	0	31,167	1,154	32,321
2020	0	31,958	1,246	33,204
2021	0	22,555	1,674	24,229
2022	0	15,401	457	15,858
2023	0	25,054	373	25,427
2024	0	19,659	69	19,728
Average 2014–2023	18,259	30,437	1,072	49,768
Average 2019–2023	0	25,227	981	26,208

[a] Estimated subsistence harvest expanded from villages surveyed.

[b] Statewide Harvest Survey (2004–2024).

Table 12.–Harvest of coho salmon in the commercial, subsistence, and sport fisheries in the Kanektok River, 2004–2024.

	Harvest			
Year	Commercial	Subsistence[a]	Sport[b]	Total
2004	82,398	1,435	1,362	85,195
2005	51,708	1,558	1,006	54,344
2006	26,831	1,315	1,742	29,888
2007	34,710	1,550	1,087	36,260
2008	94,257	2,217	1,541	44,597
2009	48,115	1,703	876	50,773
2010	13,690	1,547	1,280	16,517
2011	30,457	1,369	981	32,799
2012	31,214	1,380	2,533	35,127
2013	58,079	1,631	2,509	62,219
2014	52,317	1,956	2,240	56,513
2015	76,621	2,238	1,356	79,879
2016	0	2,014	3,234	5,248
2017	0	1,734	1,842	3,576
2018	0	1,486	1,355	2,841
2019	0	1,791	1,284	3,075
2020	29,374	1,395	**0**	30,769
2021	13,012	1,103	562	14,677
2022	0	1,508	1,321	2,829
2023	0	2,207	821	3,028
2024	0	1,092	155	1,247
Average 2014–2023	17,132	1,743	1,402	18,517
Average 2019–2023	8,477	1,601	798	10,786

Note: Number in bold indicates Statewide Harvest Survey results that include fewer than 12 respondents and should not be used except to indicate presence or absence of fishing in those locations.

[a] Estimated subsistence harvest expanded from villages surveyed.

[b] Statewide Harvest Survey (2004–2024).

Table 13.–Harvest of coho salmon in the commercial, subsistence, and sport fisheries in the Goodnews River, 2004–2024.

	Harvest			
Year	Commercial[a]	Subsistence[b]	Sport	Total
2004	23,690	1,808	622	26,120
2005	11,735	857	1,046	13,638
2006	12,436	721	553	13,157
2007	13,689	599	211	14,499
2008	22,547	1,075	220	23,842
2009	8,406	349	284	9,039
2010	4,900	516	597	6,013
2011	15,358	416	733	16,507
2012	25,515	506	624	26,645
2013	21,581	382	2,152	24,115
2014	52,158	295	998	53,451
2015	7,030	611	1,916	9,557
2016	0	558	900	1,458
2017	0	396	1,656	2,052
2018	0	201	789	990
2019	0	328	833	1,161
2020	10,928	155	109	11,192
2021	1,192	222	1,636	2,251
2022	0	162	2,337	2,499
2023	0	641	1,081	1,722
2024	0	349	846	1,195
Average 2014–2023	7,131	357	1,226	8,633
Average 2019–2023	2,424	302	1,199	3,765

Source: Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996– . Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 1, 2025). Available from: http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey/.

[a] Goodnews Bay (District 5) commercial harvest.

[b] Subsistence harvests by the communities of Goodnews Bay and Platinum.

Table 14.–Sport fishing harvest and catch of coho salmon in Kuskokwim Bay drainages, 2004–2024.

	Kanektok River		Goodnews River		Arolik/other rivers		Kuskokwim Bay total	
Year	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch
2004	1,362	23,845	622	10,985	**65**	**3,656**	2,049	38,486
2005	1006	13,279	1,046	11,541	**0**	**2,397**	2,052	27,217
2006	1,742	12,282	553	7,091	**0**	**243**	2,295	19,640
2007	1,087	12,768	211	3,528	**0**	**625**	1,298	16,921
2008	1,541	18,086	220	5,425	552	949	2,313	24,460
2009	876	6,896	284	2,805	38	2,252	1,198	11,953
2010	1,280	7,192	597	10,164	101	1,090	1,978	18,446
2011	981	11,506	733	11,253	306	1,299	2,020	24,058
2012	2,533	16,998	624	9,234	63	2,918	3,220	29,150
2013	2,509	17,062	2,152	16,597	**46**	**1,559**	4,661	33,569
2014	1,956	10,022	998	10,340	**10**	**510**	2,964	20,872
2015	1,356	26,235	1,916	20,662	**193**	**4,839**	3,645	51,736
2016	3,234	30,689	900	9,738	**69**	**1,435**	4,203	41,862
2017	1,842	33,921	1,656	20,761	**23**	**1,501**	3,521	56,183
2018	1,355	13,393	789	28,672	**132**	**377**	2,276	42,442
2019	1,284	26,626	833	8,226	102	4,135	2,219	38,987
2020	**0**	**23**	**109**	**304**	**0**	0	109	327
2021	562	5,163	1,636	6,173	**0**	**406**	2,198	11,742
2022	1,321	12,408	2,337	7,648	**223**	**226**	2,198	20,824
2023	821	17,369	1,081	11,129	**16**	**675**	1,097	29,173
2024	155	26,188	846	10,188	**0**	**456**	1,001	36,832
Average 2014–2023	1,373	17,585	1,226	12,365	77	1,410	2,425	31,361
Average 2019–2023	798	12,318	1,199	6,696	68	1,088	1,564	20,103

Source: Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996– . Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 1, 2025). Available from: http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey.

Note: Numbers in bold indicate Statewide Harvest Survey results that include fewer than 12 respondents and should not be used except to indicate presence or absence of fishing in those locations.

Table 15.–Harvest of chum salmon in the commercial, subsistence, test, and sport fisheries in the Kuskokwim River, 2004–2024.

	Harvest				
	Commercial	Subsistence[a]	Test Fishery	Sport	Total
2004	20,429	64,899	1,810	84	86,943
2005	69,139	58,020	4,459	500	132,118
2006	44,070	89,500	3,547	13	137,130
2007	10,763	73,561	3,237	403	87,964
2008	30,798	68,678	2,954	121	102,269
2009	78,205	43,621	2,204	285	124,315
2010	93,148	46,143	2,872	85	142,248
2011	118,316	49,717	2,289	83	170,405
2012	65,171	79,513	2,730	106	147,520
2013	114,069	53,627	2,615	31	170,342
2014	19,048	68,398	3,394	36	90,876
2015	16,051	42,612	1,487	102	60,252
2016	0	44,858	683	103	45,644
2017	0	52,589	3,471	29	56,089
2018	0	45,918	3,621	0	49,539
2019	0	34,571	1,230	0	35,798
2020	0	26,920	345	0	27,265
2021	0	9,621	390	0	10,011
2022	0	574	378	25	977
2023	0	24,582	2,040	0	26,622
2024	0	22,722	1,899	0	23,621
Average 2014–2023	3,510	35,064	1,704	30	40,307
Average 2019–2023	0	19,265	877	5	20,135

[a] Estimated subsistence harvest expanded from villages surveyed.

Table 16.–Sport fishing harvest and catch of chum salmon in the Kanektok and Goodnews Rivers, and Arolik/other Kuskokwim Bay Rivers, 2004–2024.

	Kanektok River		Goodnews River		Arolik/other rivers		Kuskokwim Bay total	
Year	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch
2004	33	4,715	0	1,757	**0**	**2,309**	33	8,781
2005	108	9,241	0	1,481	**0**	**0**	108	10,722
2006	145	21,528	0	5,566	**0**	**0**	145	27,094
2007	15	7,971	0	3,026	**0**	**1,362**	15	12,359
2008	48	9,232	26	922	**67**	**1,113**	141	11,267
2009	44	3,802	22	3,193	**0**	**542**	66	7,537
2010	150	10,298	0	1,334	0	430	150	12,062
2011	271	9,541	0	2,762	0	859	271	13,162
2012	127	11,397	51	2,730	7	686	300	15,467
2013	320	10,330	0	2,067	**0**	**0**	320	12,397
2014	110	7,935	45	2,892	**0**	**112**	155	13,085
2015	83	14,771	0	1,570	**0**	**0**	83	16,341
2016	466	6,943	27	2,138	**0**	**162**	493	9,243
2017	201	7,186	0	2,264	**0**	**176**	201	9,526
2018	226	14,790	0	3,033	**0**	**246**	226	18,069
2019	400	14,285	18	1,432	0	311	418	16,028
2020	0	0	0	11	**0**	**0**	0	11
2021	230	5549	16	4422	**0**	**0**	246	5,971
2022	70	16,244	0	3,621	**0**	**401**	70	20,377
2023	0	3,126	0	1,451	**0**	**763**	0	5,340
2024	66	20,045	0	1,528	**0**	**56**	66	21,629
Average 2014–2023	179	9,083	11	1,883	0	217	189	11,173
Average 2019–2023	140	7,841	7	1,387	0	295	147	9,545

Source: Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996– . Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 1, 2025). Available from: http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey.

Note: Numbers in bold indicate Statewide Harvest Survey results that include fewer than 12 respondents and should not be used except to indicate presence or absence of fishing in those locations.

Table 17.–Sport fishing harvest and catch of chum salmon in the Aniak, Kisaralik, Kwethluk, and Holitna Rivers, 2004–2024.

	Aniak River		Kisaralik River		Kwethluk River		Holitna River		Kuskokwim River total	
Year	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch
2004	0	1,602	0	606	70	308	136	426	84	4,380
2005	0	788	0	247	0	414	**180**	**1,638**	500	4,633
2006	0	2,135	**0**	**80**	0	918	**0**	**802**	13	8,188
2007	0	3,191	**0**	**140**	0	21	0	0	40	7,204
2008	45	2,427	31	2,446	0	961	45	408	121	7,312
2009	156	1,487	22	778	0	1,218	0	538	285	6,861
2010	0	1,360	24	2,069	61	524	0	37	85	4,265
2011	15	1,178	**0**	**681**	0	804	0	928	**83**	**4,085**
2012	0	5,268	0	584	18	**144**	**0**	123	**93**	**6,361**
2013	31	3,220	0	762	0	**268**	**0**	17	31	4,382
2014	**18**	**1,060**	0	1,105	0	**181**	**0**	0	36	2,382
2015	0	307	**0**	**98**	0	**224**	**0**	311	102	1,179
2016	**58**	**558**	0	240	0	**314**	**17**	86	103	1,476
2017	**0**	**116**	**0**	**161**	0	709	0	0	29	1,512
2018	**112**	**857**	**0**	**0**	0	**0**	0	51	112	1,199
2019	0	820	**0**	**514**	0	**188**	0	895	0	2,544
2020	**0**	**97**	**0**	**168**	**17**	**228**	**0**	**432**	17	934
2021	**0**	**53**	**0**	161	0	148	0	0	264	380
2022	0	90	**0**	**515**	**0**	**239**	**0**	**0**	25	869
2023	**0**	**802**	**0**	**58**	**0**	**250**	**0**	**125**	0	1,054
2024	**0**	**133**	**0**	**884**	**0**	**497**	**0**	**338**	0	2,183
Average 2014–2023	19	476	0	302	2	223	2	190	69	1,353
Average 2019–2023	0	372	0	283	3	161	0	290	61	1,156

Source: Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996– . Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited November 20, 2023). Available from: http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey.

Note: Numbers in bold indicate Statewide Harvest Survey results that include fewer than 12 respondents and should not be used except to indicate presence or absence of fishing in those locations.

Table 18.–Harvest of sockeye salmon in the commercial, subsistence, test, and sport fisheries in the Kuskokwim River, 2004–2024.

	Harvest				
Year	Commercial	Subsistence[a]	Test fishery	Sport[b]	Total
2004	8,532	40,405	742	512	50,191
2005	27,645	41,517	1,062	792	71,016
2006	12,618	43,143	519	187	56,467
2007	703	47,272	488	382	48,845
2008	15,601	58,732	584	273	75,190
2009	25,673	34,943	515	631	61,762
2010	22,428	38,130	495	419	61,472
2011	13,497	43,251	380	98	57,226
2012	2,857	47,231	861	196	51,145
2013	768	39,382	462	85	40,697
2014	2,714	48,372	867	270	52,223
2014	2,714	48,372	867	270	52,223
2015	130	36,781	1,045	14	37,970
2016	0	51,580	2,444	175	53,770
2017	0	48,462	1,354	40	49,856
2018	0	35,448	1,007	17	36,472
2019	0	48,745	1,230	329	50,304
2020	0	43,499	461	192	44,152
2021	0	44,264	730	443	45,347
2022	0	47,432	653	492	48,577
2023	0	61,519	828	219	62,566
2024	0	43,563	n/a	32	43,595
Average 2014–2023	284	46,610	937	219	45,042
Average 2019–2023	0	49,092	780	335	50,189

Source: Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996– . Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited November 20, 2024). Available from: http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey.

[a] Estimated subsistence harvest expanded from villages surveyed.

[b] Statewide Harvest Survey (2002–2023).

Table 19.–Sport fishing harvest and catch of sockeye salmon in the Kanektok and Goodnews Rivers, and Arolik River/other Kuskokwim Bay rivers, 2004–2024.

	Kanektok River		Goodnews River		Arolik/other rivers		Kuskokwim Bay Total	
Year	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch
2004	112	1,330	0	891	**0**	**226**	112	2,552
2005	156	5,692	0	683	**0**	**0**	156	6,418
2006	523	11,450	98	2,798	**12**	**276**	633	14,524
2007	385	3,481	84	903	**0**	**0**	469	4,384
2008	654	6,776	104	1,186	**78**	**485**	836	6,331
2009	75	768	111	1,205	46	623	232	2,596
2010	404	4,872	15	1,134	0	438	419	6,555
2011	429	5,193	135	1,126	0	250	564	6,667
2012	146	2,262	286	1,752	11	100	443	4,343
2013	159	2,616	227	1,835	**0**	**0**	386	4,451
2014	220	3,795	265	2,206	**0**	**198**	485	6,001
2015	107	4,451	32	2,029	**16**	**331**	14	6,811
2016	451	2,776	584	2,754	**0**	**384**	1,035	5,914
2017	1,027	5,842	400	3,100	**0**	**335**	1,427	9,277
2018	1,077	8,360	0	1,539	**55**	**799**	1,132	10,699
2019	373	6,139	125	1,240	15	4,135	513	11,514
2020	**8**	**41**	**0**	**180**	**0**	**0**	8	221
2021	528	1,917	827	2,344	**0**	**587**	1,355	5,107
2022	456	3,272	0	671	**121**	**1,185**	577	5,128
2023	57	5,414	63	784	**0**	**157**	120	6,355
2024	103	4,857	83	2,493	**0**	**0**	186	7,350
Average 2014–2023	430	4,201	230	1,685	21	811	667	6,703
Average 2019–2023	284	3,9357	203	1,044	27	1,213	515	5,665

Source: Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996– . Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 1, 2025). Available from: http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey.

Note: Numbers in bold indicate Statewide Harvest Survey results that include fewer than 12 respondents and should not be used except to indicate presence or absence of fishing in those locations.

Table 20.–Sport fishing harvest and catch of sockeye salmon in the Aniak, Kisaralik, Kwethluk, and Holitna Rivers, 2004–2024.

	Aniak River		Kisaralik River		Kwethluk River		Holitna River		Kuskokwim River total	
Year	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch
2004	119	185	22	45	65	218	124	259	400	870
2005	0	606	22	22	0	112	**345**	**467**	636	1436
2006	16	1,042	**67**	**160**	0	0	**136**	**431**	231	2075
2007	0	118	**0**	**179**	0	25	0	81	407	2160
2008	102	450	171	410	0	188	0	42	273	3,493
2009	0	203	10	82	12	130	20	91	162	999
2010	0	577	0	312	0	0	0	71	40	1,091
2011	0	171	**14**	**759**	**0**	**0**	26	319	98	1,634
2012	11	219	0	0	**121**	**154**	**22**	**22**	196	459
2013	0	616	64	290	**21**	**150**	**0**	**0**	85	1,283
2014	**234**	**427**	18	1,004	**0**	**18**	**0**	**0**	270	1,569
2015	0	303	**0**	**71**	**0**	**175**	0	67	14	630
2016	**43**	**112**	30	60	15	383	**0**	**0**	175	876
2017	**0**	**80**	**0**	**264**	0	619	**0**	**0**	0	129
2018	**0**	**136**	**0**	**287**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**17**	17	440
2019	152	**635**	**59**	**1,403**	**0**	**166**	**0**	**0**	329	2,156
2020	**76**	**616**	**8**	**183**	**41**	**273**	**0**	**0**	192	1,158
2021	**0**	**546**	**0**	**700**	**0**	**874**	**0**	**8**	443	3,003
2022	**0**	**65**	**25**	**227**	**0**	**126**	**0**	**311**	25	442
2023	**0**	**293**	**94**	**532**	**0**	**0**	**125**	470	219	1,386
2024	**0**	**87**	**32**	**156**	**0**	**308**	**0**	0	0	642
Average 2014–2023	51	321	23	473	6	263	14	90	168	1,269
Average 2019–2023	46	431	37	609	8	288	25	63	242	1,629

Source: Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996– . Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 1, 2025). Available from: http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey.

Note: Numbers in bold indicate Statewide Harvest Survey results that include fewer than 12 respondents and should not be used except to indicate presence or absence of fishing in those locations.

Table 21.–Sport fishing harvest and catch of rainbow trout in the Aniak, Kisaralik, and Kwethluk Rivers, 2004–2024.

	Aniak River		Kisaralik River		Kwethluk River		Kuskokwim River total	
Year	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch
2004	0	1,908	99	3,134	117	1,027	309	6,731
2005	0	1,077	78	3,378	ND	ND	141	5,542
2006	0	4,772	**0**	**4,339**	0	5,990	40	16,104
2007	0	7,243	**21**	**1,457**	31	3,277	76	12,523
2008	0	13,081	136	9,237	26	6,688	162	32,657
2009	0	10,767	0	10,006	26	6,615	59	28,943
2010	0	5,452	0	9,490	55	4,037	55	29,897
2011	0	8,519	**0**	**4,162**	**0**	**362**	0	16,170
2012	0	2,775	34	2,777	**103**	**2,329**	137	8,045
2013	0	5,056	0	8,503	**0**	**6,953**	187	20,843
2014	**0**	**3,436**	50	4,773	**19**	**1,077**	69	9,286
2015	0	3,497	0	1,102	**0**	**1,004**	0	5,617
2016	**0**	**1,412**	0	1,739	60	4,393	131	8,731
2017	**0**	**3,436**	0	**4,624**	0	4,034	0	12,109
2018	**0**	**2,342**	0	**411**	**0**	**601**	10	3,354
2019	0	8,188	**0**	**3,980**	**0**	**5,955**	0	18,284
2020	**0**	**1,387**	**0**	**924**	**0**	**2,547**	0	4,973
2021	**0**	**6,134**	**0**	**1,371**	**0**	**3,743**	525	23,210
2022	**0**	**6,625**	**0**	**1,269**	**0**	**970**	0	8,864
2023	**0**	**1,478**	**0**	**706**	**0**	**532**	0	3,109
2024	**0**	**11,349**	**0**	**467**	**0**	**729**	74	9,754
Average 2014–2023	0	4,532	5	2,486	27	2,486	74	9,754
Average 2019–2023	0	6,240	0	2,749	0	2,749	105	11,688

Source: Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996– . Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 1, 2025). Available from: http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey.

Note: Numbers in bold indicate Statewide Harvest Survey results that include fewer than 12 respondents and should not be used except to indicate presence or absence of fishing in those locations. ND = no data.

Table 22.–Sport fishing harvest and catch of rainbow trout in the Kanektok and Goodnews Rivers, and Arolik River/other Kuskokwim Bay rivers, 2004–2024.

	Kanektok River		Goodnews River		Arolik/other rivers		Kuskokwim Bay total	
Year	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch
2004	68	8,525	68	2,540	**12**	**2,503**	148	16,248
2005	0	7,070	0	2,125	**0**	**1,645**	0	11,586
2006	0	11,793	67	3,446	**0**	**5,244**	67	20,651
2007	11	11,538	105	2,451	**40**	**2,638**	156	16,627
2008	0	16,375	21	2,203	**10**	**1,696**	57	22,220
2009	0	12,670	108	1,556	30	6,209	138	20,591
2010	17	10,263	34	1,370	0	3,543	51	15,573
2011	13	17,642	0	3,036	0	2,888	13	20,879
2012	0	12,219	0	2,494	0	3,753	0	18,466
2013	149	15,632	41	2,592	**0**	**325**	190	19,687
2014	0	19,024	0	6,710	**0**	**1,446**	0	27,180
2015	0	23,141	0	1,514	**0**	**5,118**	20	29,773
2016	32	18,554	0	3,625	**16**	**7,968**	48	30,147
2017	0	23,822	0	4,539	**18**	**3,958**	18	32,319
2018	0	13,047	0	4,179	**10**	**5,925**	10	23,151
2019	34	29,367	38	3,058	223	8,573	295	40,998
2020	**0**	**85**	**0**	**445**	**0**	**0**	0	530
2021	0	14,638	0	1,473	**303**	**8,251**	303	24,632
2022	0	8,691	0	786	**0**	**4,080**	24	13,557
2023	0	7,590	0	1,756	**257**	**1,324**	257	10,670
2024	0	4,806	0	543	**0**	**1,713**	0	7,062
Average 2014–2023	7	15,684	4	2,798	105	4,619	120	23,101
Average 2019–2023	7	11,851	10	1,483	201	4,354	220	17,688

Source: Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996– . Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 1, 2025). Available from: http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey.

Note: Numbers in bold indicate Statewide Harvest Survey results that include fewer than 12 respondents and should not be used except to indicate presence or absence of fishing in those locations.

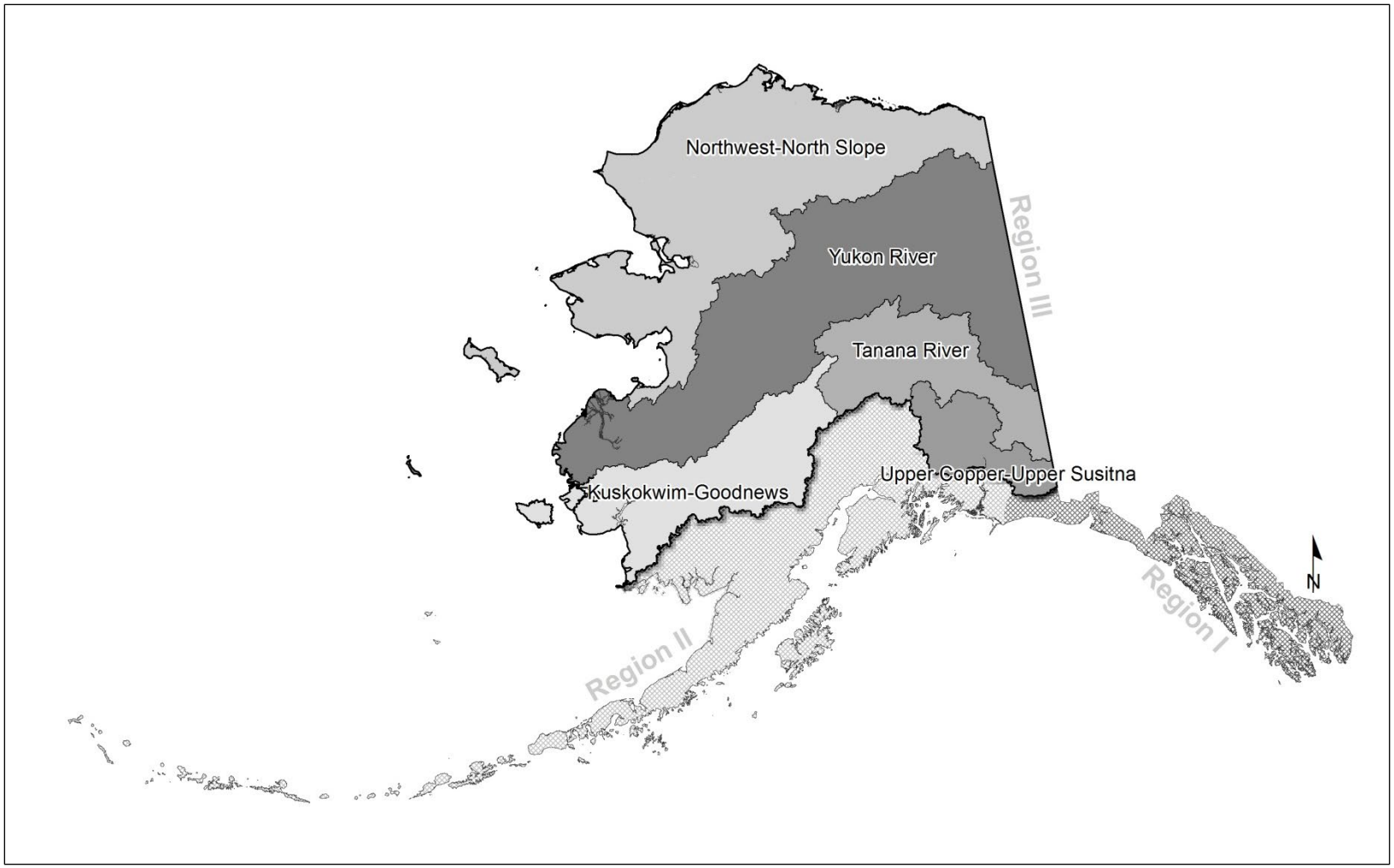

Figure 1.–Map of the sport fish regions in Alaska, and the 5 Region III management areas.

Kuskokwim-Goodnews Drainages

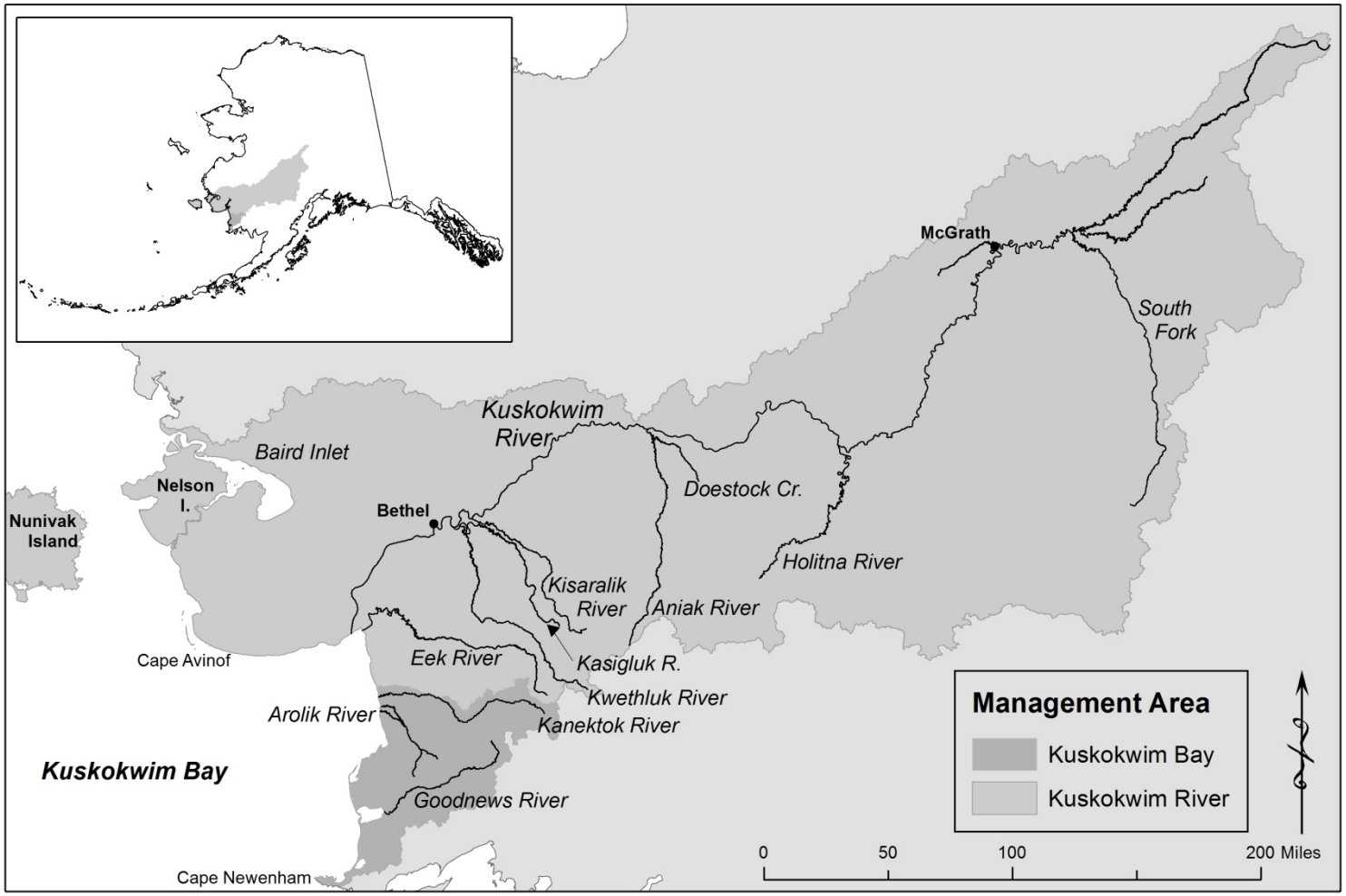

Figure 2.–Kuskokwim-Goodnews Management Area.

APPENDICES

Appendix A1.–Emergency orders (EO) issued for Kuskokwim-Goodnews Management Area sport fisheries, 2015–2025.

Year	EO Number	Explanation
2015	3-KS-01-15	This emergency order closes all waters of the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area to sport fishing for Chinook salmon, effective 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, April 1. In addition, anglers may use only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area. All Chinook salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. These restrictions will remain in effect through 11:59 p.m. Saturday, July 25, 2015.
2015	3-CS-01-15	This emergency order closes the Kuskokwim River drainage to sport fishing for chum salmon, effective 12:01 a.m. Monday, July 6, 2015. All chum salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. In addition, only unbaited, single-hook, artificial lures may be used in the entire Kuskokwim River drainage. These restrictions will remain in effect through 11:59 p.m. Monday, August 31, 2015.
2016	3-KS-01-16	This emergency order closes the Kuskokwim River drainage (excluding Kuskokwim Bay) to sport fishing for Chinook salmon, effective 12:01 a.m. Sunday, May 1, 2016. In addition, anglers may use only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area. All Chinook salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. These restrictions will remain in effect through 11:59 p.m. Monday, July 25, 2016.
2016	3-KS-02-16	This emergency order reduces the sport fishing bag and possession limit for Chinook salmon to one fish in all tributaries of Kuskokwim Bay effective 12:01 a.m. Sunday, May 1, 2016.
2017	3-KS-V-02-17	This emergency order closes the Kuskokwim River drainage (excluding Kuskokwim Bay) to sport fishing for Chinook salmon, effective 12:01 a.m. Monday, May 1, 2017. In addition, anglers may use only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area. All Chinook salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. These restrictions will remain in effect through 11:59 p.m. Tuesday, July 25, 2017.

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2018	3-KS-V-01-18	This emergency order closes the Kuskokwim River drainage (excluding Kuskokwim Bay) to sport fishing for Chinook salmon, effective 12:01 a.m. Tuesday, May 1, 2018. In addition, anglers may use only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area. All Chinook salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. These restrictions will remain in effect through 11:59 p.m. Wednesday, July 25, 2018.
2019	3-KS-V-01-19	The Division of Sport Fish is closing the entire Kuskokwim River drainage (including all tributaries) to sport fishing for Chinook salmon, effective 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, May 1, 2019. This does not include Kuskokwim Bay drainages. All Chinook salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. In addition, anglers may use only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure in the Kuskokwim River drainage. These restrictions will remain in effect through 11:59 p.m. Thursday, July 25, 2019.
2020	3-KS-V-02-20	The Division of Sport Fish is extending the closure to sport fishing for Chinook salmon for the entire Kuskokwim River drainage (including all tributaries) through 11:59 p.m. Saturday, July 25, 2020. This does not include Kuskokwim Bay drainages. All Chinook salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. In addition, anglers may use only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure in the Kuskokwim River drainage. These restrictions will remain in effect unless superseded by new information inseason.
2021	3-KSV-01-21	The Alaska Department of Fish and Game is closing the entire Kuskokwim River drainage (including all tributaries) to sport fishing for Chinook salmon, effective 12:01 a.m. Saturday, May 1, 2021. This does not include the Kuskokwim Bay drainages. All Chinook salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. In addition, anglers may use only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure in the Kuskokwim River drainage. These restrictions will remain in effect through at least 11:59 p.m. Friday, June 11, 2021.

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2021	3-KS-V-03-21	The Alaska Department of Fish and Game – Division of Sport Fish is extending the closure to sport fishing for Chinook salmon for the entire Kuskokwim River drainage (including all tributaries) through 11:59 p.m. Sunday, July 25, 2021. This does not include Kuskokwim Bay drainages. All Chinook salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. In addition, anglers may use only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure in the Kuskokwim River drainage.
2021	3-CS-V-3-21	The Alaska Department of Fish and Game is closing the entire Kuskokwim River drainage to sport fishing for chum salmon, effective 12:01 a.m. Thursday, July 1, 2021. This closure prohibits all sport fishing for chum salmon, including catch-and-release fishing. All chum salmon caught incidentally while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. In addition, only unbaited, single-hook, artificial lures may be used in the entire Kuskokwim River drainage.
2022	3-KS-V-02-22	The Alaska Department of Fish and Game is closing the entire Kuskokwim River drainage (including all tributaries) to sport fishing for king salmon, effective 12:01 a.m. Sunday, May 1, 2022, through June 11, 2022. This does not include the Kuskokwim Bay drainages. All king salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. In addition, anglers may use only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure in the Kuskokwim River drainage.
2022	3-KS-V-09-22	The Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) is extending the closure to sport fishing for king salmon in the entire Kuskokwim River drainage (including all tributaries) through 11:59 p.m. Monday, July 25, 2022. This does not include Kuskokwim Bay drainages. All king salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. In addition, anglers may use only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure in the Kuskokwim River drainage.
2022	3-CS-V-17-22	The Alaska Department of Fish and Game is closing the entire Kuskokwim River drainage to sport fishing for chum salmon, effective 12:01 a.m. Friday, July 1, 2022. This closure prohibits all sport fishing for chum salmon, including catch-and-release fishing. All chum salmon caught incidentally while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. In addition, only unbaited, single-hook, artificial lures may be used in the entire Kuskokwim River drainage.

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2022	3-SS-V-24-22	The Alaska Department of Fish and Game is closing the entire Kuskokwim River drainage to sport fishing for coho salmon, effective 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, August 17, 2022. This closure prohibits all sport fishing for coho salmon, including catch-and-release fishing. All coho salmon caught incidentally while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. In addition, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure may be used when sport fishing for any species in the entire Kuskokwim River drainage.
2023	3-KS-V-01-23	To help protect Chinook salmon during periods of low abundance and provide future sport fishing opportunities, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game is closing the entire Kuskokwim River drainage (including all tributaries) to sport fishing for Chinook salmon, effective 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, April 5 through Sunday, December 31, 2023. This closure prohibits all sport fishing for Chinook salmon, including catch-and-release fishing. This does not include the Kuskokwim Bay drainages of the Arolik, Goodnews and Kanektok Rivers. In addition, when fishing for other species anglers may use only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure in the Kuskokwim River drainage. All Chinook salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately.
2023	3-CS-V-02-23	To protect chum salmon in periods of low abundance and provide future sport fishing opportunities, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game is closing the entire Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area to sport fishing for chum salmon, effective 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, April 5, 2023. This area includes the Kuskokwim River and the Kuskokwim Bay drainages such as the Kanektok, Goodnews, and Arolik Rivers. This closure prohibits all sport fishing for chum salmon, including catch-and-release fishing. All chum salmon caught incidentally while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. A previous management action for Chinook salmon allows only unbaited, single-hook, artificial lures to be used in the entire Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area.

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2024	3-KS-V-02-24	The Alaska Department of Fish and Game is closing the entire Kuskokwim River drainage (including all tributaries) to sport fishing for king salmon, effective 12:01 a.m. Thursday, March 21 through Thursday, July 25, 2024. This closure prohibits all sport fishing for king salmon, including catch-and-release fishing. This does not include the Kuskokwim Bay drainages of the Arolik, Goodnews and Kanektok Rivers. All king salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately.
2025	3-KS-V-03-25	The Alaska Department of Fish and Game is closing the entire Kuskokwim River drainage (including all tributaries) to sport fishing for king salmon, effective 12:01 a.m. Monday, March 31 through Thursday, August 31, 2025. This closure prohibits all sport fishing for king salmon, including catch-and-release fishing. This does not include the Kuskokwim Bay drainages of the Arolik, Goodnews and Kanektok Rivers. All king salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately.

Appendix A2.–References to information specific to 2023 Alaska Board of Fisheries proposals.

Proposal	Proposal subject	Table	Figure	Appendix
13	Remove special bag limits for sheefish (inconnu) in the Goodnews, Kanektok, and Arolik Rivers.	1, 2	2	none
14	Align the Chinook salmon season between the upper and lower sections of the Kuskokwim River.	1, 2, 5, 8	2	A1