

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



*Cora J. Campbell, Commissioner
Jeff Regnart, Director*



Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Travis Elison, Acting Area Management Biologist

Kuskokwim Area Office
P.O. Box 1467
Bethel, AK 99559
Phone: (907) 543-2433
Fax: (907) 543-2021
Toll free: (855) 933-2433

U.S. Department of Interior
Fish and Wildlife Service
Federal Subsistence Board
Geoffrey L. Haskett, Regional Director
Peter J. Probasco, Asst.
Regional Director Subsistence
Gene Peltola, Kuskokwim Area Inseason Manager
Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge
P.O. Box 346
Bethel, AK 99559
Phone: (907) 543-3151
Fax (907) 543-4413

Date Issued: June 14, 2012

**2012 Kuskokwim River Salmon Fishery News Release 5
Kuskokwim River Subsistence Salmon Fishing Restrictions
Emergency Order 4**

This is an announcement from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game at Bethel for subsistence salmon fishermen in the Kuskokwim River Drainage.

Effective 12:01 a.m., Sunday, June 17, 2012 until 11:59 p.m., Saturday, June 23, 2012 subsistence Chinook salmon fishing with hook and line gear is closed and subsistence fishing is restricted to the use of gillnets with 4-inch or less mesh not exceeding 60-feet in length in the Kuskokwim River Drainage from Tuluksak to Chuathbaluk (Rolling Closure Section 3). Additionally, a fish wheel used to take fish must be equipped with a livebox that contains no less than 45 cubic feet of water volume while in operation. The livebox must be checked at least once every six hours while in operation and all Chinook salmon must be returned to the water alive.

Tuluksak to Chuathbaluk (Rolling Closure Section 3) is defined as that portion of the Kuskokwim River and its tributaries upstream from a line between ADF&G regulatory markers located approximately half a mile upstream of the Tuluksak River mouth to a line between ADF&G regulatory markers located at the downstream edge of Chuathbaluk. This section does NOT include the slough (locally known as Utak Slough) on the northwest side of the Kuskokwim River adjacent to the Tuluksak River mouth. Excluded waters are non-salmon spawning tributaries: the Whitefish Lake drainage near Aniak, and those portions of Discovery, Birch, and Swift creeks more than 100 yards upstream from the mouth of these rivers. These waters are open with any mesh size gillnet and are not affected by these closures. See the

enclosed map for more detailed information on Tuluksak to Chuathbaluk (Rolling Closure Section 3).

The current Bethel Test Fishery (BTF) Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) indicates that there are not enough Chinook salmon to meet the 2012 Chinook salmon Management Objective (Management Objective) that was agreed upon by the Department, the Federal Inseason Manager, and was supported by the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (Working Group). During the Friday, June 8, Working Group meeting the Department and the Federal Inseason Manager presented a recommendation to initiate a 7-day rolling closure along the Kuskokwim River. The Working Group voted unanimously to support this recommendation.

If the BTF CPUE continues to indicate that the Management Objective will not be met, further management actions will be warranted. However, if the BTF CPUE indicates that the Management Objective is likely to be met, subsistence restrictions may be reduced.

The subsistence salmon fishing closures in the Lower Section of Subdistrict 1-B (Rolling Closure Section 1) as announced in News Release 3 and in the Upper Section of Subdistrict 1-B to Tuluksak (Rolling Closure Section 2) as announced in News Release 4 remain in effect. Subsistence fishing remains open 7 days per week above the regulatory markers located at Chuathbaluk.

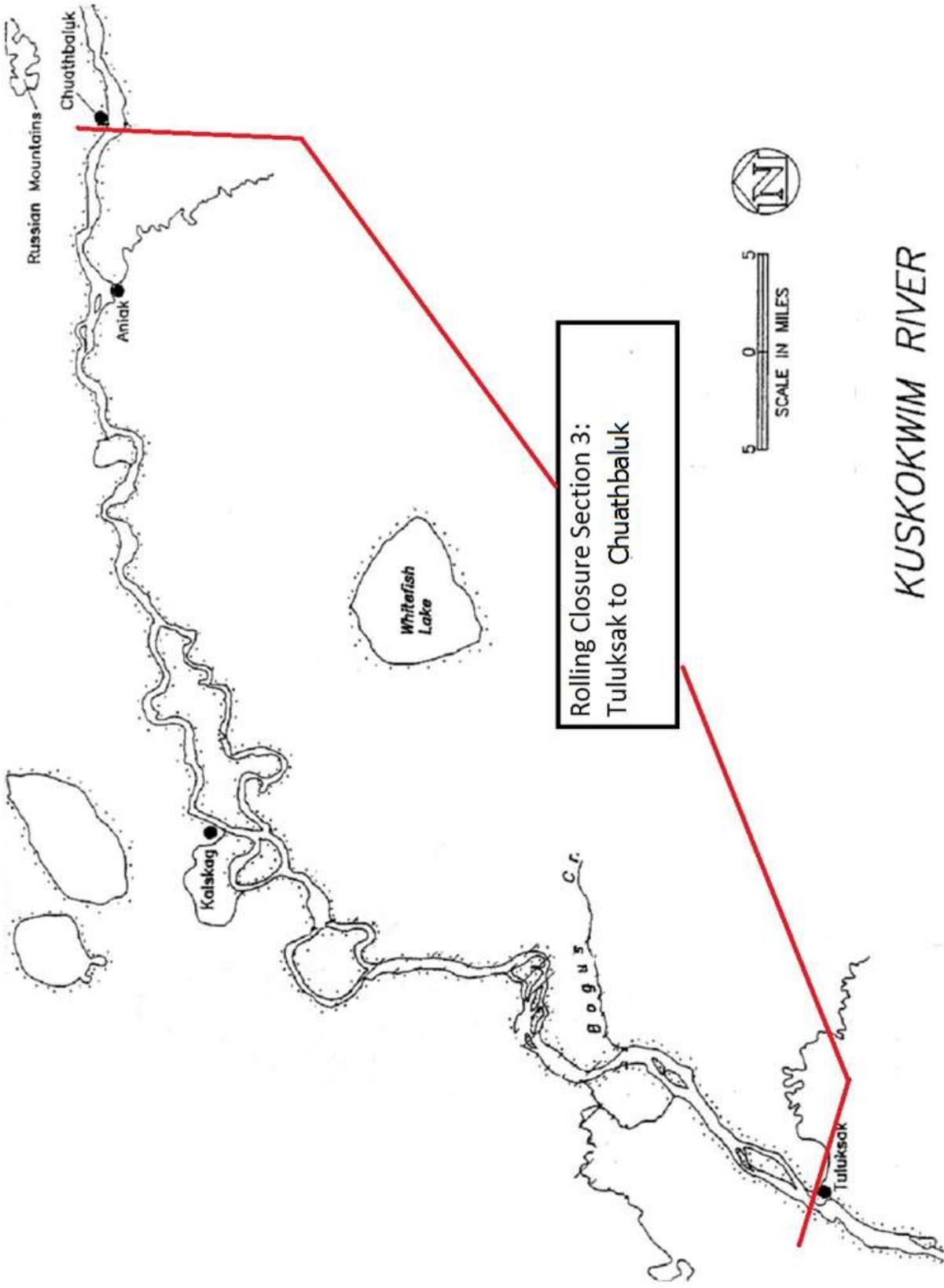
Stay tuned for further announcements regarding subsistence salmon fishing in the Kuskokwim River. Further announcements will be made from the Bethel Fish and Game office and through local radio stations. News releases will be faxed to area villages and local fish processing companies.

For additional information concerning this news release:

ADF&G: Travis Elison in Bethel 907-543-2709

USFWS: Gene Peltola in Bethel 907-543-3151

-end-



Rolling Closure Section 3:
Tuluksak to Chuathbaluk

KUSKOKWIM RIVER