



Fish News

July 17, 2012

Cold Bay Commercial Salmon Fishery Announcement #5



According to the Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G), commercial salmon fishing will be allowed for **24 hours** from **9:00 p.m. today (Tuesday, July 17th)** until **9:00 p.m. Wednesday, July 18th** in the following districts and sections:

Unimak District
Southwestern District

All closed waters in the above locations will be as described in the regulation book or as adjusted by emergency order.

Statistical charts and harvest strategies are available at the Sand Point, Cold Bay, and Port Moller Fish and Game offices. Commercial salmon fishing regulations, commercial harvest, escapement, and news releases can be found on the ADF&G website at:
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareaakpeninsula.salmon>.

Salmon fishery announcements will be broadcast on VHF channels 6 and 73 daily at 9:30 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. and may also be obtained from ADF&G in Cold Bay at 532-2419.

Bristol Bay Sockeye Fishermen Getting Paid \$1 Per Pound

It appears that the base price of sockeye caught in Bristol Bay this summer, one dollar a pound, is the same as what fishermen received last year.

Visit the link below to get the latest report from KDLG's Mike Mason.

[KDLG radio story](#)

Low Escapement Issues to Blame for Port Moller Commercial Salmon Fishery Closure

ADF&G Area Management Biologist Bob Murphy said the Port Moller commercial salmon fishery (Port Moller Bight, Bear River, Three Hills, Ilnik and Outer Port Heiden Sections) was closed down Monday morning (July 16th) until further notice because of low escapement.



ADF&G Area Management Biologist Bob Murphy said the Port Moller commercial salmon fishery was closed down in order to hit the early sockeye run escapement objective of 176,000 by July 31st at Bear River.

“Although we’re hitting interim escapement objectives at Bear River, we’re just barely hitting the minimums,” Murphy said. “We essentially closed the fishery down so we can hit our early sockeye run escapement objective of 176,000 by July 31st at Bear River”.

Murphy says the area is on target to hit that escapement objective. Right now, the total number of sockeye has reached 140,000 up river. Another 36,000 fish are needed up Bear River to reach that goal.

Compared to ADF&G’s 10 to 20-year average, the Port Moller area has dipped far below of what is expected.

“We are way below the harvest levels that we typically see,” said Murphy. “I would say we’re probably 70 percent below average.”

Murphy said he believes the area is experiencing a series of low production years.

“We also had a fairly significant flood event in 2007, and that’s still impacting some of our local stocks,” he added. “We believe that has had a negative impact on our runs here, and we’re still feeling that to this day. It’s pretty dismal when we’re on target to hit our escapement objective, and we don’t even have a fishery going.”

Murphy said the closure has forced the bulk of the area fishing fleet to either go home or head to the south side.

“They’re trying to make a living by fishing other areas in Area M,” he added.

Murphy says fishermen in Nelson Lagoon are also experiencing a weak run.

“They’ve been getting a little more fishing time there compared to fishermen in the Port Moller area,” he said. “They hit their lower season ending goal yesterday, so that’s good news. But the volume of fish is very low”.

Murphy said Nelson Lagoon’s escapement goal is to have 97,000 sockeye by July 25th.

“We hit that yesterday, and we’ll get a few more fish in there. But the weir counts out of Nelson Lagoon have been anywhere between a few hundred to a couple thousand per day. It’s been very sporadic, which is an indication that the run isn’t very strong.”

Murphy said at this point, he, other biologists and fishermen are looking forward to an improved run next month.

“We hope we have a strong Coho run on the north side come August,” he said. “That’s what we’re hoping.”

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