



Federal Subsistence Board Fact Sheet



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Bureau of Land Management
National Park Service
Bureau of Indian Affairs

Forest Service

Contact: Justin Koller
(907) 891-0355 or (800) 478-1456
or by email at: justin_koller@fws.gov

Fisheries Temporary Special Action Request FSA24-01: Yukon River Chinook, Summer and Fall Chum, and Coho Salmon Fisheries

Background: The Yukon River drainage is the largest in the state of Alaska and provides residents from over 60 communities with fishery resources for subsistence purposes. Over the last several years, moderate to strict restrictions on subsistence harvest have been put in place to conserve Chinook, summer and fall Chum, and Coho salmon. These restrictions have impacted subsistence uses throughout the Yukon River drainage.

Question 1: What is a temporary special action and how long will it last?

Answer: A temporary special action is a temporary change to regulations to modify harvest limits, seasons, or methods and means. Temporary special actions are made outside of the normal regulatory cycle in response to unusual situations, such as significant changes in fish or wildlife abundance. There must be public notice and a public hearing before the Federal Subsistence Board (Board) can act on a temporary special action request. The Board must also consult with the State of Alaska and the Regional Advisory Council Chairs of the affected regions prior to acting on a temporary special action request. A temporary special action typically extends longer than 60 days but may not extend past the end of a regulatory cycle. If permanent changes to Federal subsistence fisheries regulations are desired, a proposal must be submitted through the normal two-year regulatory process. The next fisheries regulatory cycle will begin in the spring of 2024.

Question 2: What is included in this request?

Answer: This special action request asks that the Federal Subsistence Board:

- Close Federal public waters of the Yukon River drainage to the harvest of Chinook, summer and fall Chum, and Coho salmon except by federally qualified subsistence users from June 1 through September 30, 2024
- Require Federal subsistence fishing schedules, openings, closures, and fishing methods to be determined by the Federal Fisheries Manager

Question 3: How can the public comment on this specific special action request?

Answer: A public hearing to receive public testimony by teleconference will be held on March 20 from 5:00 to 7:00 PM. People wishing to make a comment can do so by calling the teleconference phone line: 833 436-1163 and entering the conference ID: 673 193 792#.

The public is encouraged to comment on the temporary special action request and its potential impacts at the public hearing. The following questions are examples of topics that the public may want to address during testimonies:

- a) Should Federal public waters be closed to the harvest of Chinook, summer and fall Chum, and Coho salmon except by federally qualified users? [See Questions 4, 5, and 6 below]
- b) Are the start and end dates for the closure (June 1 through September 30, 2024) appropriate dates for this special action?
- c) Are there any other comments or issues that may help the Board make its decision on this special action request?

Public testimony on this special action request will be forwarded to the Federal Subsistence Board for consideration.

Question 4: What Federal public waters would be affected by this special action request?

Answer: The Yukon River drainage consists of all waters flowing into the Bering Sea from the northwestern most point of Point Romanof extending south and west along the coast of the Yukon delta to the westernmost point of the Naskonat Peninsula. Federal public waters in this special action request consist of all freshwaters of the Yukon River drainage that are within and adjacent to the exterior boundaries of the Arctic, Innoko, Kanuti, Koyukuk, Nowitna, Tetlin, Yukon Delta, and Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuges, Yukon-Charley Rivers National Preserve, the Steese National Conservation Area, the White Mountains National Recreation Area, and those segments of the National Wild and Scenic River system located outside the boundaries of Federal conservation units (portions of Beaver and Birch Creeks and the Delta and Fortymile Rivers). Additionally, freshwaters of the Yukon River drainage that are within and adjacent to the exterior boundaries of Gates of the Arctic National Park and Preserve are within Federal jurisdiction for purposes of Federal subsistence fisheries management (see **Figure 1**).

Question 5: Who are federally qualified subsistence users affected by this special action request?

Answer: For Yukon River salmon, federally qualified subsistence users are rural residents of the Yukon River drainage. There are over 60 rural communities in the Yukon River drainage, including the coastal communities Chevak, Hooper Bay, and Scammon Bay, and Stebbins (see **Table 1**). Residents of the Fairbanks North Star Borough, which is a nonrural area, are not federally qualified users.

Question 6: How will non-federally qualified users be affected?

Answer: If the temporary special action is approved, non-federally qualified users will not be allowed to take Chinook, summer and fall Chum, or Coho salmon in Federal public waters of the Yukon River drainage at any time from June 1 through September 30, 2024. In Federal regulations, taking or take means to fish, pursue, hunt, shoot, trap, net, capture, collect, kill, harm, or attempt to engage in any such conduct (see 50 CFR 100.25(a)). For Yukon River salmon, non-federally qualified users include residents of Fairbanks North Star Borough and those living outside of the Yukon River drainage.

Question 7: What is the remaining process for this special action request after the public hearing?

Answer: The Office of Subsistence Management is currently analyzing the potential effects of this request on federally-qualified subsistence users and on Chinook, summer and fall Chum, and Coho salmon populations. The Board will consider this temporary special action request on April 15, 2024. The Board will consider all information provided in the analysis including Regional Advisory Councils' recommendations, public testimony, and Tribal and Native corporation consultation when making its decision. The Board may approve, approve with modification, reject, or defer this special action request until the next regulatory cycle that begins in spring 2024.

Question 8: How can I get more information on this special action request?

Answer: Please contact Justin Koller, acting Fisheries Division Leader at the Office of Subsistence Management, at (907) 891-0355 or (800) 478-1456 with questions about this special action request or visit the Federal Subsistence Management Program website (www.doi.gov/subsistence/) for more information about subsistence on Federal public lands and waters.

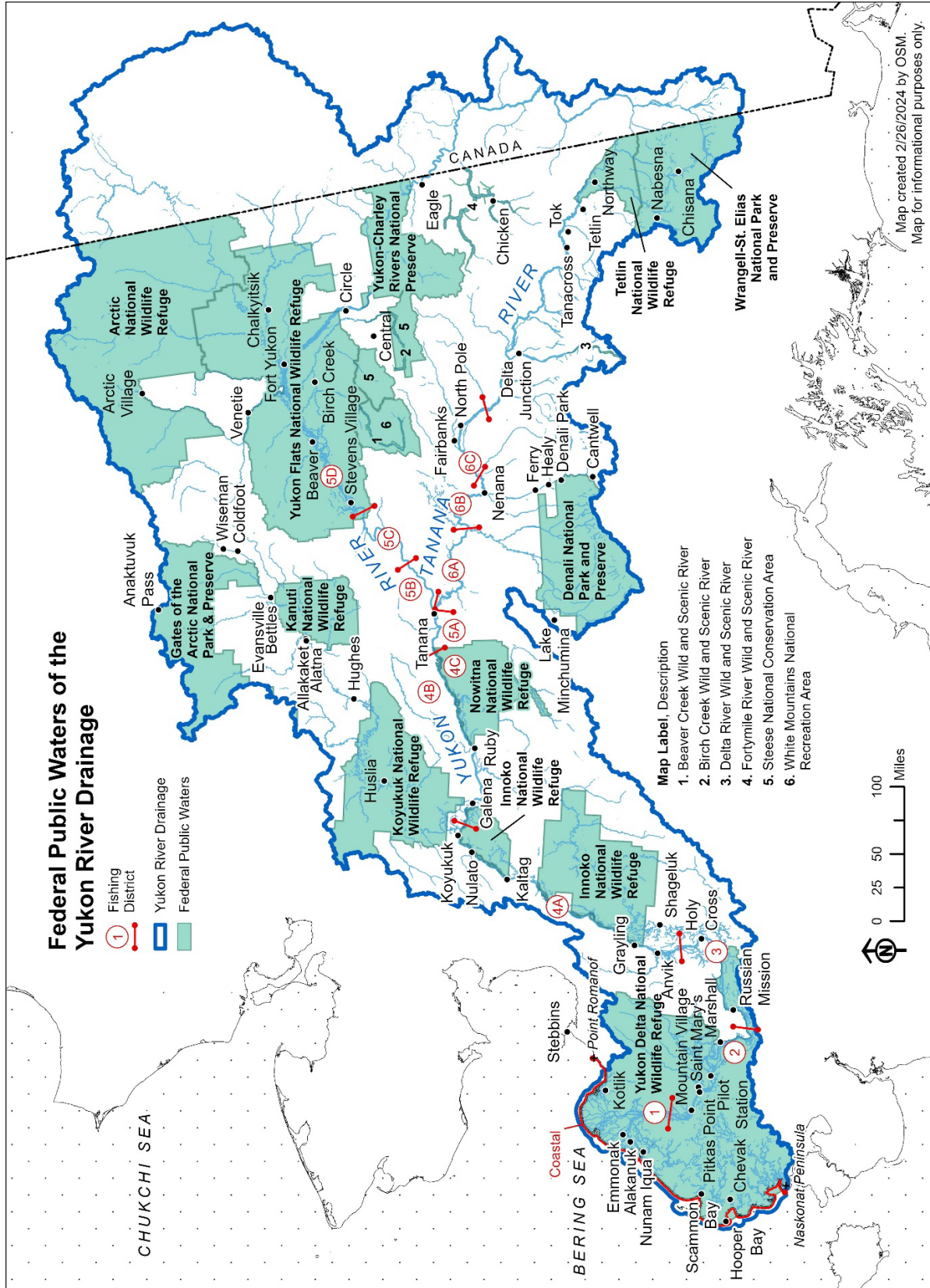


Figure 1. Federal public lands of the Yukon River drainage.

Table 1. Federally qualified subsistence users of salmon in the Yukon River drainage—All rural residents of the Yukon River drainage (except residents of the Fairbanks North Star Borough, which is a nonrural area) including residents of the following rural communities:

Outside the Yukon River drainage

Stebbins

Coastal District

Scammon Bay

Hooper Bay

Chevak

District 1

Alakanuk

Nunam Iqua

Emmonak

Kotlik

District 2

Mountain Village

Pitkas Point

Saint Marys

Pilot Station

Marshall

District 3

Russian Mission

Holy Cross

Shageluk

District 4

Anvik

Grayling

Kaltag

Nulato

Koyukuk

Huslia

Hughes

Allakaket

Alatna

Bettles

Evansville

Wiseman

Coldfoot

Galena

Ruby

District 5

Tanana

Rampart

District 5 (continued)

Stevens Village

Beaver

Fort Yukon

Chalkyitsik

Arctic Village

Venetie

Birch Creek

Circle

Chicken

Central

Eagle Village

Eagle

District 6

Livengood

Manley

Minto

Whitestone

Nenana

Four Mile Road

Healy

McKinley/Denali Park

Anderson

Ferry

Lake Minchumina

Cantwell

Delta Junction

Fort Greely/Deltana

Healy Lake

Big Delta

Dry Creek

Dot Lake

Dot Lake Village

Tanacross

Tetlin

Tok

Northway Junction/Village

Alcan border

Nabesna