

# 2022 Summary

## COOK INLET SPORT FISH MANAGEMENT AREAS Northern Cook Inlet, Northern Kenai Peninsula, and Lower Cook Inlet

### Northern Cook Inlet Management Area



#### Greater Susitna River/ Knik Arm Area

Below average escapements since 2012 have resulted in preseason and inseason restrictions and closures on the Deshka, Eastside, Talkeetna, and Yentna king salmon stocks. 2022 marks the third year of king salmon management under four stock-based goals set on the Susitna River drainage. The preseason forecast for Deshka River king salmon was for a total run 9,332 king salmon, with an 80% prediction interval of 5,637 – 15,450 fish. Given a forecast within but near the low end of the BEG a cautionary approach to management was again warranted and the Deshka king salmon fishery started the 2022 season as a catch-and-release fishery only. The Deshka weir is a tool for gauging run strength during the season and making regulatory adjustments accordingly. Catch-and-release fishing was also allowed by emergency order in Units 1-6 of the Susitna River drainage and sport fishing gear was restricted to one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure in all flowing waters of the Susitna drainage. Similar to 2020-2021, the Little Susitna River started the 2022 season as a catch-and-release fishery only as the sustainable escapement goal (SEG) on the Little Susitna was attained in 2020-2021 near the low end of the SEG range with a catch-and-release fishery in place. However, the past several years had demonstrated no apparent trend in abundance.

#### Westside Susitna Tributaries

The BEG for the Deshka River of 9,000 - 18,000 king salmon was not achieved in 2022. The sport fishery was closed effective June 20, at the midpoint of the run. The run was on time relative to historical run timing. The final weir count was 5,437 king salmon. Aerial escapement surveys were conducted in late July on two streams contributing to the Yentna king salmon stock, Lake Creek and Peters Creek. Poor weather conditions contributed to high water events through the end of July, resulting in poor counting conditions; the Talachulitna River and Alexander Creek were not surveyed. Assessment of the Yentna optimal escapement goal (OEG) is pending data analysis; however, counts on Lake Creek and Peters Creek were below average for those streams (Yentna SEG 13,000 - 22,000; Yentna OEG 16,000 - 22,000). The age composition of the Deshka Chinook run and forecast for the 2022 season in pending analysis of age data collected at the Deshka River weir.



### Management Actions

- A preseason emergency order effective May 1, 2022, restricted king salmon fishing in Units 1-6 of the Susitna River drainage to catch-and-release only.
- On July 20 Deshka River closed to sport fishing by Emergency Order
- On July 23, the remainder of Units 1-6 closed to sport fishing by Emergency Order.

### Eastside Susitna Tributaries

Management decisions effecting Eastside Susitna streams (Units 2, 3, 5, and 6) are based upon postseason aerial surveys over eight streams that are used to estimate run size and escapement of the Eastside (Unit 2 streams along the Parks Highway) king salmon stock and the Talkeetna River stock, which are two new stock goals in place since 2020. Some streams weren't surveyed due to poor weather conditions and high water. Counts were successfully conducted on Willow, Little Willow, North Fork Kashwitna, and Montana creeks that collectively contribute to the Eastside king stock and Clear and Prairie creeks that contribute to the Talkeetna stock. Assessment of the Eastside and Talkeetna stock goals is pending data analysis; however, counts on these systems were some of the lowest on record. The Chulitna River survey was not feasible due to poor water conditions.

### Management Actions

- A preseason emergency order effective May 1, 2022, restricted king salmon fishing in Units 1-6 of the Susitna River drainage to catch-and-release and fishing was restricted to only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure.
- On July 23, the remainder of Units 1-6 closed to sport fishing.

### Knik Arm

The SEG for the Little Susitna River is 2,100 - 4,300 king salmon as assessed by weir and 700 - 1,500 fish as assessed by post season aerial survey. This weir-based goal is the primary goal used for assessing escapement unless flooding or some other event results in an incomplete weir count. Use of video at this site has enabled fish to be counted even during periods of high spring runoff when water clarity is poor as was the case throughout the majority of the 2022 season. The SEG was achieved on July 4 post closure of the sport fishery on June 20 due to low weir counts. A final count of 2,288 fish was within the goal range and considered to be a complete count for 2022.

### Management Actions

- A preseason emergency order effective May 1, 2022, restricted king salmon fishing in the Little Susitna River drainage to catch-and-release only. In addition, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure was allowed in the waters normally open to king salmon fishing in the Little Susitna River drainage. Sport fishing for other species was allowed seven days per week from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.
- On July 20, the Little Su was closed to sport fishing by Emergency Order.

### West Cook Inlet

Sport fisheries on the Chuitna, Theodore, Lewis, and the Beluga rivers drainages are closed by regulation. SEGs on the Chuitna and Theodore rivers could not be assessed this year due to poor survey conditions.





### Susitna Tributaries

Weirs were operated to count sockeye salmon escapement into two lakes: Judd Lake (Talachulitna River) and Larson Lake (Larson Creek) on the Susitna River. The weir on Chelatna Lake (Lake Creek) was not operated this year due to budget reductions. On Larson Creek, the sport fishery is in relatively close proximity to the weir, allowing for timely inseason management of the fishery. The Larson Creek SEG of 15,000 - 35,000 sockeye salmon was achieved on August 3 with a final count of 17,436 fish. The SEG for Judd Lake was also attained with a count of 38,442 fish (SEG 15,000 – 40,000).

A Susitna River personal use dip net fishery was implemented by the Board of Fisheries in 2020 to take place on the lower Susitna River from a point located approximately one mile below the old Susitna Station, downstream to the Alexander Creek turnoff/tip of Bell Island. This fishery is remote and only accessible by boat or short field performance aircraft capable of landing on gravel bars. The fishery is part of the Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery management plan and occurs each Saturday and Wednesday between 6:00 a.m.-11:00 p.m. from July 10 through July 31. 2022 was the third year of this fishery. Fishing effort mostly mirrored last season with relatively low participation. Fishing success increased incrementally with each period through the end of July.

### Management Actions

- No management actions were implemented during the 2022 sport fishery season.

### Knik Arm

A weir is operated on Fish Creek to assess escapement and as a tool to manage the personal use dip net fishery. The SEG for the Fish Creek is 15,000 - 45,000 sockeye salmon. By management plan, a personal use dip net fishery may be opened by emergency order between July 15 and July 31, if the escapement can be projected to be above 35,000 fish. Due to budget cuts, the weir was staffed only for the purpose of managing the personal use fishery through the end of July. About 58,300 sockeye salmon were counted prior to the weir closing down. The dip net fishery was opened on July 21 for 11-days. Positive dipnetting reports combined with a strong run suggests harvest estimates will be above average.

### Management Actions

- On July 21, 2022, the Fish Creek Personal Use Dip Net Fishery was opened for all salmon species, except king salmon through July 31.
- On August 1, sport fishing was allowed 7 days a week and bag limits were increased to six per day and six in possession on Fish Creek targeting sockeye salmon.



### Susitna Tributaries

Due to budget reductions and impending flood waters, the Deshka weir was pulled August 8. Through this date 3,137 coho salmon were counted. The projected escapement was steadily building toward the low end of the SEG of 10,200-24,100 prior to the weir being pulled. Fishing success was consistent and mostly good during the season, indicating adequate escapement on the Deshka and other Susitna drainage tributaries.



### Management Actions

- No management actions were implemented during the 2022 sport fishery season.

#### Knik Arm

The Little Susitna weir was inundated by flood waters for the majority of the coho season. Projected escapement was within the SEG range going into a flood that overtopped the weir at the historical quarter point of the run, August 6, and then lasted for a month. Bait went into effect by regulation the same day the weir became flooded. Fishing harvest rate as estimated by angler reports (fee booth exit survey) was above average throughout most of the season, even during the flood. Even though the count was lost due to flooding, the SEG of 9,200-17,700 likely would have been attained. A weir count of 3,162 fish is considered an incomplete and minimal count.

The weir at Fish Creek was pulled at the end of July. The coho salmon run was not counted this season due to budget cuts. The SEG for Jim Creek of 250 - 700 coho salmon is assessed post season by a foot survey of McRoberts Creek, a small spawning tributary within the Jim Creek system. The survey counted 1,899 coho salmon. Fishing was reported to be good this season at Jim Creek and other Knik Arm streams.

### Management Actions

- No management actions were implemented during the 2022 sport fishing season.

#### West Cook Inlet

Coho salmon escapement is not monitored on West Cook Inlet (WCI) area streams and ADF&G must rely on trends in harvest and angler effort taken from the Statewide Harvest Survey and reports from anglers and guides when assessing these stocks. Sport fishing success as reportedly good this season in tributaries of WCI.

- No management actions were implemented during the 2022 sport fishing season.



# Northern Kenai Peninsula Management Area



## Kenai River - Early Run

The outlook for the early-run of Kenai River king salmon in 2022 was below average, with a large fish (>75 cm mid eye to tail fork length or approximately >34 inches in total length) forecast of ~4,200 fish. The 2022 forecasted total run was within the optimal escapement goal (OEG) of 3,900 – 6,600 large fish which allows the fishery to be opened under general regulation. The total estimated passage through June 30, 2022, at the river mile 14 sonar was 2,051 large king salmon. ADF&G applies harvest and catch-and-release mortality estimates of king salmon above the sonar to generate a preliminary spawning escapement estimate of 2,047 large early-run king salmon and a total inriver run estimate of 2,052 large fish. The return is below the 5-year average of 4,258 large fish. The mid-point of the run occurred on June 15 which is 4 days late when compared to the historical mid-point.

Preliminary age composition estimates from length groups show a noticeable low presence of 4-ocean fish but overall, there was a low abundance of all age classes.

Neither the OEG nor the sustainable escapement goal (SEG) were achieved. The SEG has been achieved or exceeded in four of the last six years. The OEG has been achieved or exceeded in three of the last six years.

## Management Actions

- On June 1, 2022, king salmon fishing was restricted to catch and release from the Kenai River mouth upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake until June 7.
- On June 8, 2022, king salmon fishing was closed from the Kenai River mouth upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake until June 30. The closure continued through July 31 in waters from an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake.
- Netting (preliminary)
  - Approximately 66% were large fish or  $\geq 75$  cm in total length.
  - Sex ratio of large fish  $\geq 75$  cm was 47% male and 53% female.
  - King salmon of all sizes sampled were predominately ocean-age 2 fish (41%) followed by ocean-age 3 fish (27%), ocean-age 4 (20%), and ocean-age 1 fish (11%).
- Harvest/Mortality (preliminary)
  - 5 large king salmon were harvested in the early-run sport fishery (includes catch-and-release mortality).



**Table 1. Summary of preliminary catch, harvest, and escapement, Kenai River early-run king salmon ( $\geq 750$  mm) fishery, 2022.**

Escapement Goal Range	3,900 – 6,600 large king salmon ( $\geq 75$ cm)
Total Catch <sup>a</sup>	66
Total Harvest <sup>a</sup>	Below sonar =1; Above sonar =4; Total =5
Sonar Estimate In-River	2,052
Preliminary Escapement	~ 2,047

<sup>a</sup>Lower River (below Soldotna Bridge).

### Kenai River - Late Run

The outlook for the late-run of Kenai River king salmon in 2022 was well below average, with a large king salmon (>75 cm mid eye to tail fork length) forecast of approximately 16,000 fish. Although the forecasted total run of large fish was within the large fish OEG of 15,000 – 30,000 fish, historical harvest data indicated the OEG would not be met without restricting fisheries. The total estimated passage through August 19, 2022, at the river mile 14 sonar was 13,425 large king salmon. ADF&G applies harvest and catch and release mortality estimates and spawning downstream of the sonar estimates to generate a preliminary spawning escapement estimate of 13,952 large king salmon and a total run estimate of 13,994 large fish. The mid-point of the run occurred on July 27 which is on the mean historical mid-point.

Preliminary age composition estimates indicate a greater proportion of ocean-age 3 fish and fewer ocean-age 4 than expected. The predominate age classes for all sizes of fish are the ocean-age 3 (43%), ocean-age 4 (34%), ocean-age 2 fish (18%), and ocean-age 1 (6%). The low abundance of both predominate large fish age classes (ocean-age 3 and 4) indicates poor production from 2016 and 2017 parent years and corresponds with the overall low abundance of the 2022 return.

The OEG was not achieved and the SEG was achieved in 2022. The SEG has been achieved in three of the last six years. The lower bound of the OEG has not been achieved since establishment in 2020.

### Management Actions

- On July 1, 2022, the retention of king salmon of all sizes was prohibited from the mouth of the Kenai River upstream to an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek. In addition, only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure was allowed. From an ADF&G regulatory marker located approximately 300 yards downstream from the mouth of Slikok Creek, upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake remained closed to king salmon fishing through July 31. In conjunction with the freshwater restrictions king salmon sport fishing was closed in the marine waters of Cook Inlet north of Bluff Point within 1-mile of shore and the annual limit was reduced from five to two king salmon.
- On July 17, 2022, king salmon fishing was closed from the Kenai River mouth upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake until July 31, 2022. The use of bait and multiple hooks were also prohibited while fishing for other species. Additionally, fishing for king salmon was closed in Cook Inlet marine waters north of Bluff Point.
- On August 1, 2022, bait and multiple hooks were prohibited from the mouth of the Kenai River upstream to the outlet of Skilak Lake until August 15 to reduce incidental catches of king salmon while fishing for other species.



- Netting (preliminary)
  - Approximately 68% of king salmon were  $\geq 75$  cm in total length.
  - Sex ratios for large fish  $> 75$  cm was 50% male and 50% female.
  - King salmon of all sizes sampled were predominately ocean-age 3 fish (43%) followed by ocean-age 4 fish (34%), ocean-age 2 fish (18%), and ocean-age 1 (6%).
- Harvest (preliminary)
  - 17 large king salmon were harvested in the sport fishery (includes catch-and-release mortality).
  - 32 Kenai stock large king salmon were harvested in the East Side Set Net commercial fishery

**Table 1. Summary of preliminary catch, harvest, and escapement, Kenai River late-run king salmon ( $\geq 75$  cm) fishery, 2021.**

Escapement Goal Range	15,000 – 30,000 large king salmon ( $\geq 75$ cm)
Total Catch <sup>a</sup>	234
Total Inriver Harvest <sup>a</sup>	Below sonar =7; Above sonar =10; Total =17
Sonar Estimate In-River	13,425
Preliminary Escapement <sup>b</sup>	Approximately 13,952

<sup>a</sup> Lower River (below Soldotna Bridge).

<sup>b</sup> Includes estimate of king salmon that spawn downstream of sonar.

### Kasilof River

This spring, approximately 97,562 king salmon smolt were successfully stocked into Crooked Creek to augment natural production and enhance recreational sport fishing opportunity in the Kasilof River. The wild component of the Crooked Creek early-run king salmon return is managed to achieve a SEG of 700 – 1,400 king salmon. The estimated escapement of wild (naturally-produced) king salmon was 735 fish. The egg take goal for future stocking of Crooked Creek was 33 pairs of naturally-produced king salmon of which 20 pairs were spawned in 2022.

#### Management Actions

- On May 1, 2022, the early-run king salmon bag and possession limits were restricted to two hatchery-produced fish, 20 inches or greater in length in the Kasilof River drainage. The retention of naturally-produced king salmon was prohibited. The use of bait and multiple hooks was prohibited downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge until May 16 when bait is allowed by regulation.
- On June 8, 2022, bait and multiple hooks were prohibited from the mouth of the Kasilof River upstream to the Sterling Highway Bridge.
- On July 15, 2022, the retention of king salmon was prohibited from the mouth of the Kasilof River upstream to Tustumena Lake. Bait and multiple hooks continued to be prohibited.
- On July 17, 2022, fishing for king salmon of any size downstream of the Sterling Highway Bridge closed through July 31, 2022. Bait and multiple hooks continued to be prohibited.





### Kenai River

The Upper Cook Inlet (UCI) sockeye salmon forecast projected a total run of 4.97 million fish: 2.9 million fish in the Kenai River, 941,000 fish in the Kasilof River, with the remaining fish being comprised of Susitna River, Fish Creek, and unmonitored systems. Based on the preseason forecast, the sockeye salmon run was managed on the middle tier for runs of 2.3 - 4.6 million Kenai River sockeye salmon, with an inriver goal of 1.1 – 1.4 million sockeye salmon. On July 25, 2022, ADF&G projected the total Kenai River sockeye salmon run to be 3.6 million fish and the department continued to manage for the middle tier with an inriver goal of 1.1 – 1.4 million sockeye salmon. The preliminary inriver sonar passage estimate was 1,567,750 sockeye salmon. Subtracting the recent 10-year average harvest upstream of the sonar (304,570 fish) produces a preliminary escapement estimate of 1,263,180 sockeye salmon. Final estimates will be available when the 2022 Statewide Harvest Survey is completed in the fall of 2023.

#### Management Actions

- On July 22, 2022, the sockeye salmon bag and possession limits were increased to six per day and twelve in possession.

### Russian River - Early Run

The escapement goal for Russian River early-run sockeye salmon is a biological escapement goal (BEG) of 22,000 – 42,000 fish. The weir count on July 14, 2022, was 61,098 sockeye salmon and exceeded the BEG.

#### Management Actions

- On June 22, 2022, the Russian River Sanctuary Area opened early for sport fishing.
- On June 25, 2022, the sockeye salmon bag and possession limits were increased to six per day and twelve in possession for the Russian River and a section of the mainstem Upper Kenai River downstream of the confluence with the Russian River.

### Russian River - Late Run

The escapement goal for Russian River late-run sockeye salmon is an SEG of 44,000 – 85,000 fish. The final Russian River weir count on September 08, 2022, was 124,561 sockeye salmon and exceeded the SEG.

#### Management Actions

- On August 2, 2022, the bag and possession limits for sockeye salmon were increased to six per day and twelve in possessions for the Russian River and a section of the mainstem Upper Kenai River downstream of the confluence with the Russian River.

### Kasilof River

The forecast for Kasilof River sockeye salmon was 941,000 fish. Kasilof River sockeye salmon are managed for a BEG of 140,000 – 320,000 salmon, and an OEG of 140,000 – 370,000 fish. The sockeye salmon sonar enumerated salmon passage through August 15, 2022, with a preliminary estimate of 971,604 fish.



### Management Actions

- On July 7, 2022, sockeye salmon limits were increased in all portions of the Kasilof River open to salmon fishing to six per day and 12 in possession.



### Kenai River

Kenai River coho salmon are not monitored for abundance in season and are managed through angler reporting, observations, and conservative general regulation. Angler reports indicate that coho salmon were showing up in the harvest during the last week of July and catches were reported as good through August and fair to good into September. September reports generally indicated a mix of angler success from day to day with an overall trend that was an average run and an improvement from 2020 and 2021.

### Management Actions

- On August 1, 2022, bait and multiple hooks were prohibited in the Kenai River from its mouth upstream to Skilak Lake to minimize incidental catch of late-run king salmon.



### Kasilof River and Kenai River

Harvest and participation information for the 2022 season are currently being compiled and will be available this coming winter. The Kasilof River set net fishery opened under restricted hours from June 15 through June 24, 2022. The Kasilof River dipnet fishery opened by regulation from June 25 through August 7, 2022. The area open to dipnetting was expanded for the Kasilof fishery on July 3. The Kenai River dipnet fishery opened by regulation on July 10 through July 31, with no retention of king salmon allowed by emergency order.

### Harvest Reports

- Beginning in 2022 harvest reporting was required to be done online by August 15. Reminder letters were mailed to permit holders who have not yet returned their harvest record. The historical mean for reporting of Upper Cook Inlet personal use permits is approximately 80% under the previous reporting system. Estimates of total harvest will be available in January 2023.

### Management Actions

- On June 15, 2022, the Kasilof River personal use set gillnet fishery was restricted by reducing the fishing time by 11-hours daily. Set netting was allowed from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily from June 15 through June 24, 2022.



- On July 7, 2022, the Kasilof River personal use dipnetting area was expanded. Dipnetting from the shore was allowed from ADF&G markers on Cook Inlet beaches upstream to the Sterling Highway Bridge and dipnetting from a boat was allowed from ADF&G markers located on Cook Inlet beaches upstream to ADF&G markers at approximately river mile 3 of the Kasilof River.
- On July 10, 2022, retention of king salmon in the Kenai River personal use dipnet fishery was prohibited.



# Lower Cook Inlet Management Area



## Anchor River

The 2022 pre-season inriver forecast of 2,974 king salmon was below the sustainable escapement goal (SEG) of 3,800-7,600 fish. Given the uncertainty with recent annual runs, pre-season restrictions were issued. King salmon escapement was monitored on the South and North forks of Anchor River beginning in early-May and continued throughout the run. The preliminary escapement estimate was 3,147 fish, which did not achieve the SEG. The cumulative run-timing mid-point (June 23) was 9 days late compared to the historical average mid-point of June 14. The sport fishery occurred for 12 days prior to closing by emergency order. Fishing was described as poor over the season.

## Management Actions

- A pre-season emergency order effective May 21, 2022, restricted sport fishing gear to one unbaited, single-hook artificial lures and king salmon fishing was limited to catch and release through June.
- On June 11, 2022, the Anchor River and Deep Creek were closed to all sport fishing through July 15.

## Ninilchik River

No pre-season forecast was estimated for the 2022 wild Ninilchik River king salmon run. Hatchery king salmon are stocked in the Ninilchik River to support the inriver sport fishery. The fishery occurred for the three 3-day weekends with pre-season restrictions that prohibited the retention of wild king salmon but liberalized the hatchery bag and possession limits from one to two fish 20" or longer. The use of multiple hooks and treble hooks were also prohibited with pre-season restrictions. In-season restrictions limited gear to one unbaited, single-hook artificial lures on the 3<sup>rd</sup> weekend. Fishing success was described as poor over the weekend fisheries, but anglers did harvest small numbers of hatchery king salmon. The fishery was closed for the continuous season that begins June 16 due to the low run size of wild king salmon. The SEG of 750-1,300 wild king salmon was not achieved in 2022 for the first time since 2009.

King salmon escapement was fully enumerated just above the fishery at approximately two miles upstream from the mouth. An instream video weir was operated from mid-May to early-August at this location, and the count was 1,011 wild king salmon and 2,347 hatchery king salmon. The mid-point of the wild and hatchery runs to the lower weir were June 30 and July 5, respectively.

The broodstock collection weir, located approximately five miles upstream from the mouth, was used to monitor escapement in regard to meeting the current SEG of 750 - 1,300 wild king salmon. The broodstock collection weir location also used instream video and was operated from mid-May through mid-August. After accounting for the removal of broodstock, the escapement was 687 wild king salmon, which did not meet the SEG. Based on weir counts at both locations, 73% of the wild king salmon and 79% of the hatchery king salmon counted through the lower weir also reached the broodstock collection weir.



### Management Actions

- A preseason emergency order effective May 28, 2022, changed the king salmon limits to restrict the harvest of wild fish and increase the bag and possession limits of hatchery king salmon, 20 inches or greater in length, from one to two fish. The use of multiple hooks and treble hooks were also prohibited.
- On June 11, gear was restricted to one unbaited, single-hook artificial lure through July 15.
- On June 16, the Ninilchik River closed to all sport fishing through July 15.

### Deep Creek

No preseason forecast was estimated for the 2022 Deep Creek king salmon run. The sport fishery began with preseason restrictions based on management actions for the Anchor River. Deep Creek has a SEG of 350 king salmon and is assessed post-season via a single aerial survey. No survey was conducted in 2022 due to a lack of funding. In 2022, the Deep Creek king salmon sport fishery occurred for six days before closing by emergency order. Fishing was described as poor due to high, turbid water conditions.

### Management Actions

- A preseason emergency order effective May 21, 2022, restricted sport fishing gear to one unbaited, single-hook artificial lure and king salmon fishing was limited to catch and release through June.
- On June 11, 2022, the Anchor River and Deep Creek closed to all sport fishing through July 15.

### Marine Fisheries

Sport fishing for king salmon in Cook Inlet was popular in the Winter (September 1-March 31) and the Summer (April 1-August 31) fisheries. The summer fishery north of Bluff Point began with preseason restrictions to protect king salmon returning to Cook Inlet drainages. The performance of these fisheries are only assessed post season with the Statewide Harvest Survey and charter logbook data, and harvest estimates will not be available until 2023. In the winter fishery, more favorable marine weather allowed anglers to fish more than usual from January through March, but success was slow. During the summer fisheries, limited fishing opportunities occurred in Upper Cook Inlet so most of the effort occurred south of the latitude of Bluff Point in Lower Cook Inlet.

### Management Actions

- A preseason emergency order effective May 1, 2022, in the Cook Inlet saltwaters north of the latitude of Bluff Point (59° 40.00' N. lat.), reduced the king salmon annual limit of fish 20 inches or greater in length from five to two fish and closed king salmon fishing within a mile of shore.
- On June 15, 2022, king salmon fishing was prohibited, including catch-and-release, in the Upper Cook Inlet saltwaters north of the latitude of Bluff Point (59° 40.00' N. lat.) through July 15.
- On July 17, 2022, king salmon fishing was prohibited, including catch-and-release, in the Upper Cook Inlet saltwaters north of the latitude of Bluff Point (59° 40.00' N. lat.) through July 31.





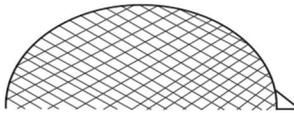
## Terminal Stocked Salmon Fisheries

### Nick Dudiak Fishing Lagoon

In 2022, the stocking goals were met for Nick Dudiak Fishing Lagoon (NDFL) on the Homer Spit with approximately 315,000 king salmon smolt and 120,000 coho salmon smolt. This year's king salmon stocking was the fifth consecutive year with a 30% increase over historical king salmon stockings. The Statewide Harvest Survey estimates harvest for these fisheries and will not be available until 2023. Overall, the king salmon fishery was likely below-average harvest for recent years and the coho salmon fishery was also likely below-average. There were several hundred king salmon harvested by anglers during the period open to snagging.

#### Management Actions

- On June 29, 2022, snagging was allowed in the NDFL through July 1 to harvest the remainder of the king salmon milling in the lagoon prior to coho salmon returning.
- No management actions were implemented during the 2022 coho salmon sport fishery season.



## Personal Use Dip Net Fisheries

### China Poot Creek

The China Poot Creek personal use dip net fishery does not require a permit for participation so there is no harvest and effort data available for 2022. The Commercial Fish Division conducts weekly foot surveys to count sockeye and pink salmon. There was a large build-up of over a thousand sockeye salmon in the creek when the fishery opened on July 1, 2022. Success through most of July was fair to good. The success in this fishery is most likely attributed to changes in commercial fishing and cost recoveries operations associated with the stocking. No emergency orders were issued to extend the season since very few sockeye salmon were still in the creek at the end of the season.

#### Management Actions

- No management actions were implemented during the 2022 season.



## Razor Clams

### East

All East Cook Inlet beaches remained closed to sport and personal use clamming in 2022 due to the continued below average abundances of adult-sized razor clams at Clam Gulch and Ninilchik. The affected area runs from the mouth of the Kenai River to the southernmost tip of the Homer Spit. Abundance surveys were conducted in April and May at both Clam Gulch and Ninilchik beaches. Adult-sized razor clams remained below average at both areas.



### Management Actions

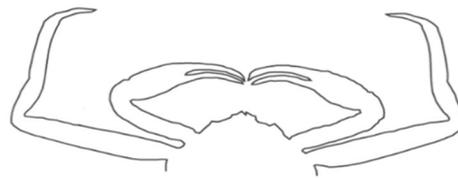
- A preseason emergency order effective January 1, 2022, closed all East Cook Inlet beaches to personal use and sport clamming for all clam species from the mouth of the Kenai River to the southernmost tip of the Homer Spit for 2022.

### West

The West Cook Inlet beaches remained open to commercial, sport, and personal use clamming in 2022. Harvest estimates for the sport fishery are not available yet, but clambers report good success at Polly Creek and Crescent River Bar areas with larger clams being found at Crescent River Bar.

### Management Actions

- No management actions were implemented during the 2022 sport and personal use fisheries season.



**Tanner Crab**

### Cook Inlet Tanner Crab

No trawl surveys were conducted in 2021 so the limited fishery was implemented for the 2021-2022 season. The sport and subsistence fisheries occurred from October 1, 2021, through February 28, 2022. The preliminary combined sport and subsistence Tanner crab harvest in the Cook Inlet & North Gulf Coast area was 6,622 male Tanner crabs. During the 2021-2022 season, 1,770 sport and subsistence permits were issued. Of these, 92% reported and will be eligible to receive a permit for the upcoming season. In total, 140 individuals did not report and are ineligible to receive a permit for the 2022-2023 season. Permits are only available through ADF&Gs online store.

### Management Actions

- No management actions were implemented for the 2021-2022 fishery season.



Table 1 – Select Southcentral Region Salmon Escapement Goals and Escapements for king salmon, 2013 to 2022 (preliminary).

System	2022 Goal Range		Type	Initial Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	Preliminary	
	Lower	Upper											2021	2022
<b>KING SALMON</b>														
<i>Bristol Bay</i>														
Nushagak River	55,000	120,000	SEG	2013	107,602	70,482	98,019	125,368	56,961	97,239	47,882	43,032	55,222	44,434
Alagnak River	2,700		LB SEG	2007	NC	NC	917	1,283	435	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
<i>Kodiak/Alaska Peninsula</i>														
Karluk River	3,000	6,000	BEG	2011	1,824	1,182	2,777	3,434	2,600	3,155	3,898	3,344	2,796	2,629
Ayakulik River	4,800	8,400	BEG	2017	2,304	789	2,392	4,594	3,712	2,149	1,948	2,402	2,961	2,845
Chignik River	1,300	2,700	BEG	2002	1,185	2,895	2,041	1,843	1,137	825	1,517	1,278	1,072	661
Nelson River	2,400	5,000	BEG	2019	1,421	3,801	2,440	4,618	1,502	5,022	11,653	2,298	4,539	3,785
<i>Upper Cook Inlet</i>														
Alexander Creek	1,900	3,700	SEG	2020	588	911	1,117	754	170	296	1,297	596	288	NC
Campbell Creek	380		LB SEG	2011	NS	274	654	544	475	287	393	154	339	423
Chuitna River	1,000	1,500	SEG	2002	1,690	1,398	1,965	1,372	235	939	2,115	869	806	NC
Chulitna River	1,200	2,900	SEG	2020	1,262	1,011	3,137	1,151	NC	1125	2,765	845	1,535	NC
Clear (Chunilna) Creek	eliminated (see Talkeetna Stock)			2020	1,471	1,390	1,205	NS	780	940	1,511			
Crooked Creek	700	1,400	SEG	2002	1,103	1,411	1,456	1,747	911	714	1,444	830	594	735
Deshka River	eliminated (see Deshka Stock)			2020	18,531	16,335	24,316	22,874	11,383	8,544	9,711			
Deshka Stock	9,000	18,000	BEG	2020								10,638	18,674	5,437
Eastside Susitna Stock	13,000	25,000	SEG	2020								14,995	15,208	Pending
Goose Creek	eliminated (see Eastside Susitna Stock)			2020	62	232	NC	NC	148	90	NC			
Kenai River - Early Run (all fish)	eliminated <sup>a</sup>			2017	2,148	5,311	6,190	9,177						
Kenai River - Early Run (large fish)	2,800	5,600	SEG	2017										
	3,900	6,600	OEG	2017					6,726	2,910	4,128	2,439	4,045	2,047
Kenai River - Late Run (all fish)	eliminated <sup>d</sup>			2017	19,342	17,451	22,642	18,790						
Kenai River - Late Run (large fish)	13,500	27,000	SEG	2017					20,615	17,289	11,638			
	15,000	30,000	OEG	2020								11,909	12,176	13,952
Lake Creek	eliminated (see Yetna Stock)			2020	3,655	3,506	4,686	3,588	1,601	1,767	2,692			
Lewis River	eliminated			2020	61	61	5 <sup>b</sup>	0	0 <sup>b</sup>	0	0 <sup>b</sup>			
Little Susitna River (Aerial) <sup>c</sup>	700	1,500	SEG	2020	1,651	1,759	1,507	1,622	1,192	530	NC	NC	889	NC
Little Susitna River (weir)	2,100	4,300	SEG	2017					2,531	549 <sup>c</sup>	3,666	2,445 <sup>d</sup>	3,121	2,288
Little Willow Creek	eliminated (see Eastside Susitna Stock)			2020	858	684	788	675	840	280	631			
Montana Creek	eliminated (see Eastside Susitna Stock)			2020	1,304	953	1,416	692	603	473	789			
Peters Creek	eliminated (see Yetna Stock)			2020	1,643	1,443	1,514	1,122	307	1,674	1,209			
Prairie Creek	eliminated (see Talkeetna Stock)			2020	3,304	2,812	3,290	1,853	1,930	1,194	2,371			
Sheep Creek	eliminated (see Eastside Susitna Stock)			2020	NC	262	NC	NC	NC	334	NC			
Talachulitna River	eliminated (see Yetna Stock)			2020	2,285	2,256	2,582	4,295	1,087	1,483	3,225			
Talkeetna Stock	9,000	17,500	SEG	2020								7,283	9,107	Pending
Theodore River	500	1,000	SEG	2020	476	312	426	68	21	18	201	111	38	NC
Willow Creek	eliminated (see Eastside Susitna Stock)			2020	1,752	1,335	2,046	1,814	1,329	411	897			
Yetna Stock	16,000	22,000	OEG	2020								14,709	18,890	Pending
<i>Lower Cook Inlet</i>														
Anchor River	3,800	7,600	SEG	2017	4,388	2,497	10,241	7,146	5,796	3,162	5,691	3,558	4,300	3,147
Deep Creek	350		LB SEG	2017	475	601	535	NS	753	182	751	327	NC	NC
Ninilchik River	750	1,300	SEG	2017	571	891	874	572	855	979	1,185	833	772	687

Note: NA = data not available; NC = no count; LB SEG = lower-bound SEG.

<sup>a</sup> Kenai River Chinook salmon all fish SEG's were eliminated and large fish goals were instituted

<sup>b</sup> Lewis River mouth naturally obstructed.

<sup>c</sup> Little Susitna River Chinook salmon aerial survey goal is only used to assess escapement if weir count is not available.

Table 2 – Select Southcentral Region Salmon Escapement Goals and Escapements for sockeye and coho salmon, 2013 to 2022 (preliminary).

System	2022 Goal Range		Type	Initial Year	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	Preliminary		
	Lower	Upper										2020	2021	2022
<b>COHO SALMON</b>														
<i>Kodiak/Alaska Peninsula</i>														
Buskin River	4,700	9,600	BEG	2014	4,401	7,345	3,363	2,513	5,559	1,066	5,537	630 <sup>d</sup>	7,919	2,526
Olds River	500		LB SEG	2019	2,145	1,320	1,357	1,634	10,54	1,000	NS	794	923	NA
American River	400		LB SEG	2011	841	1,595	530	500	410	300	NS	279	297	NA
Pasagshak River	1,200		LB SEG	2011	1,648	4,934	1,790	667	701	1,200	488	2,031	4,721	NA
<i>Upper Cook Inlet</i>														
Fish Creek (Knik)	1,200	6,000	SEG	2020	7,593 <sup>d</sup>	10,283	7,912	2,484	8,966	5,022	3,025	4,555 <sup>d</sup>	0 <sup>dk</sup>	0 <sup>d</sup>
Jim Creek	250	700	SEG	2020	663	122	571	106	5,646	758	162	735	1,499	1,899
Little Susitna River	9,200	17,700	SEG	2020	13,583	24,211	12,756	10,049	17,781	7,583	4,229	9,931 <sup>e</sup>	10,123 <sup>dc</sup>	3,162 <sup>d</sup>
Deshka River	10,200	24,100	SEG	2017					36,869	12,962	10,445	5,368 <sup>d</sup>	3,431 <sup>d</sup>	3,137 <sup>d</sup>
<b>SOCKEYE SALMON</b>														
<i>Bristol Bay</i>														
Kvichak River <sup>f</sup>	2,000,000	10,000,000	SEG	2010	2,088,576	4,458,540	7,341,612	4,462,728	3,163,404	4,398,708	2,371,242	4,030,968	4,703,520	4,224,882
Alagnak River (Tower) <sup>g</sup>	210,000		LB SEG	2018	1,095,950	200,524	5,770,650	NA	2,041,825	1,581,426	820,458	2,386,518	3,236,904	1,668,222
Alagnak River (Aerial) <sup>h</sup>	125,000		LB SEG	2016				696,400	629,200					
Naknek River	800,000	2,000,000	SEG <sup>i</sup>	2015	938,160	1,474,428	1,920,954	1,691,910	1,899,972	2,221,152	2,911,470	4,112,160	2,796,534	1,921,296
Egegik River	800,000	2,000,000	SEG	2015	1,113,630	1,382,466	2,160,792	1,837,260	2,600,982	1,608,354	2,340,210	2,389,728	1,832,196	1,786,152
Ugashik River	500,000	1,400,000	SEG	2015	898,110	640,158	1,564,638	1,635,270	1,186,446	1,167,792	1,547,748	1,745,940	2,859,930	1,436,784
Wood River	700,000	1,800,000	SEG	2015	1,183,348	2,764,614	1,941,474	1,309,707	4,274,224	7,507,254	2,073,276	2,243,886	4,410,156	3,747,612
Igushik River	150,000	400,000	SEG	2015	387,036	340,590	651,172	469,230	578,700	1,581,426	256,074	323,814	878,952	378,768
Nushagak River	370,000	900,000	SEG	2015	894,172	618,477	796,684	680,513	2,852,308	1,164,701	709,349	1,228,059	4,697,299	3,455,272
<i>Kodiak/Alaska Peninsula</i>														
Buskin River	5,000	8,000	SEG	2011	16,189	13,976	8,719	11,584	7,214	4,281	12,297	7,739	2,230	8,117
Afognak River	20,000	50,000	BEG	2005	42,153	36,345	38,151	33,167	22,151	17,601	26,817	24,284	31,997	29,509
Saltery River	15,000	35,000	BEG	2011	35,939	29,047	42,468	57,867	39,315	22,845	22,183	24,987	64,602	25,615
Pasagshak River	3,000		LB SEG	2011	9,750	1,582	2,077	7,053	11,021	2,019	4,537	3,522	8,551	4,377
Karluk River Early Run	150,000	250,000	BEG	2014	234,880	252,097	260,097	164,760	242,599	205,054	186,510	157,441	128,373	175,336
Ayakulik River Early Run	140,000	280,000	SEG	2011	214,969	210,040	218,178	182,589	204,497	266,333	279,639	220,935	265,756	251,690
Fraser River	75,000	170,000	BEG	2008	136,059	200,296	219,093	122,585	129,227	201,161	169,627	137,570	186,632	118,509
<i>Upper Cook Inlet</i>														
Fish Creek (Knik)	15,000	45,000	SEG	2017	18,912	43,915	102,309	46,202	61,469	71,556	76,031	64,234	70,000 <sup>k</sup>	58,333 <sup>d</sup>
Kasilof River	140,000	370,000	OEG	2020	490	439,977	470,679	239,981	358,724	394,309	378,416	545,654	521,859	971,604
	140,000	320,000	BEG	2020										
Kenai River <sup>l</sup>	OEG eliminated			2017	980,208	1,218,342	1,400,047	1,119,988						
	750,000	1,300,000	SEG	2017					1,071,064	886,761	1,457,031	1,505,940	2,148,955	1,263,170
	varies based on tier		Inriver						1,308,498	1,035,761	1,849,054	1,714,565	2,441,825	1,567,750
Russian River - Early Run	22,000	42,000	BEG	2011	35,776	44,920	50,226	38,739	37,123	44,110	125,942	27,103	46,976	61,098
Russian River - Late Run	44,000	85,000	SEG	2020	31,573	52,277	46,223	37,837	45,012	71,052	64,585 <sup>d</sup>	78,832	123,950	124,561
Chelatna Lake	20,000	45,000	SEG	2017	70,555	26,212	69,750	60,792	26,986	20,438	26,303 <sup>d</sup>	NC	NC	NC
Judd Lake	15,000	40,000	SEG	2017	14,088	22,416	47,684	NA	35,731	30,844	44,145	31,220	49,250	38,442
Larson Lake	15,000	35,000	SEG	2017	21,821	12,040	23,214	14,333	31,866	23,444	9,699	12,018	21,987	17,436
<i>Lower Cook Inlet</i>														
English Bay	6,000	13,500	SEG	2002	10,891	7,832	6,290	7,673	20,751	18,083	24,044	31,486	6,328	11,425
Delight Lake	5,100	10,600	SEG	2017	5,961	22,289	3,220	5,110	5,380	13,428	17,410	12,299	7,525	22,717
Desire Lake	4,800	11,900	SEG	2017	8,400	11,480	2,830	6,740	9,450	9,840	9,040	2,260	3,323	20,460
Bear Lake	700	8,300	SEG	2002	8,999	9,090	9,560	9,011	9,207	10,568	9,185	8,212	11,318	9,962

Note : NA = data not available; NC = no count; LB SEG = lower-bound SEG.

<sup>d</sup> Incomplete count because weir was pulled before end of run due to flood/fire evacuation, etc

<sup>e</sup> Preliminary escapement estimate uses weir count minus five year average harvest above the weir.

<sup>f</sup> Prior to 2010 Kvichak River had a pre-peak/peak-cycle escapement goal of 6-10 million sockeye and an off-peak escapement goal of 2-10 million fish.

<sup>g</sup> 2009 to 2015 Alagnak River sockeye salmon escapements for Alagnak River (Tower) escapement goal are expanded aerial surveys.

<sup>h</sup> Alagnak River sockeye salmon aerial survey-based escapement goal will be used in years that the Alagnak River tower is not operated.

<sup>i</sup> Naknek River has an OEG of 800,000-2,000,000 sockeye salmon when the Naknek River Special Harvest Area is open to fishing.

<sup>j</sup> Kenai River sockeye salmon uses the best estimate of sport harvest upstream of sonar.

<sup>k</sup> Incomplete count, video review still in progress

<sup>l</sup> Weir not operational