

2023 Summary

ANCHORAGE, NORTH GULF COAST, PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND SPORT FISH MANAGEMENT AREAS



Ship Creek

King salmon fishing in Ship Creek was good this season. A total of 1,128 king salmon were collected in the William Jack Hernandez Sport Fish Hatchery raceway. The hatchery was able to meet the broodstock goal of 608 king salmon. An estimated 1,326 king salmon were counted in Ship Creek for viewing and natural reproduction below the hatchery.

Management Actions

- No management actions were implemented during the 2023 sport fishery season.

Prince William Sound

King salmon fishing was fair in Whittier and good in Cordova. Both locations are terminal harvest areas. Throughout the summer more reports of king salmon getting caught towards Main Bay in the south and Glacier Island towards the north were reported. No formal surveys are conducted for king salmon in Prince William Sound.

Management Actions

- No management actions were implemented during the 2023 sport fishery season.

North Gulf Coast/Resurrection Bay

King salmon fishing was fair in Resurrection Bay. Angler reports indicated that the king salmon fishing in the Bay was slow, and fish seemed to be returning later and in lower numbers.

Management Actions

- On July 1, 2023, the youth fishery for king salmon in the Seward Lagoon and Outfall stream was extended through July 16, 2023.





Resurrection Bay

Anglers reported good sockeye salmon fishing in Resurrection Bay. On June 23, 2023, 7,284 sockeye salmon passed through the Bear Creek weir, with good numbers of sockeye salmon still entering the river at that time. Bear Lake sockeye salmon have a sustainable escapement goal (SEG) of 700 - 8,300 fish and is managed to escape 12,200 sockeye salmon, which meets both the SEG and the Trail Lakes Hatchery broodstock requirements. The final escapement (excluding broodstock) was approximately 10,004 sockeye salmon.

Management Actions

- On June 26, 2023, in marine waters of Resurrection Bay north of a line from Caines Head to the north point of Thumb Cove and the freshwaters open to sockeye salmon fishing, the bag and possession limits for sockeye salmon were increased to twelve fish.

Prince William Sound

Sockeye salmon fishing in the Coghill River was reported as fair to good this season. The final weir count on July 26, 2023 was 64,212 sockeye salmon through the Coghill River weir. The sockeye salmon SEG for the Coghill River is 20,000 - 60,000 fish.

Management Actions

- No management actions were implemented during the 2023 sport fishery season.



Ship Creek

Coho salmon fishing in Ship Creek this season was reported as good. The William Jack Hernandez Sport Fish Hatchery collected 2,088 coho salmon for broodstock. Division of Sport Fish staff have not conducted a final coho survey in Ship Creek due to high water, but plan to as soon as conditions allow.

Management Actions

- On August 15, 2023, the coho salmon bag and possession limits were increased to six fish in Ship Creek from its mouth upstream to a cable 100 feet downstream of the Chugach Power Plant dam.



Resurrection Bay

Coho salmon fishing in Resurrection Bay was fair to good this season. While coho salmon returning to the Seward Lagoon were late this season, fishing picked up in mid-September and was reported as fair to good for shore anglers. Fishing at the mouth of Resurrection River was reportedly poor to fair this season for coho salmon. As of October 3, 2023, 959 coho salmon have entered the Bear Creek weir which should provide adequate escapement for broodstock goals. Escapement surveys will not be conducted for coho salmon due to budget cuts.

Management Actions

- On September 6, 2023, the youth fishery for coho salmon in the Seward Lagoon and Outfall stream was extended through October 1, 2023.

Prince William Sound

Coho salmon fishing has been fair to good near Whittier and in Passage Canal, as well as in Valdez near Allison point and in the Valdez Narrows. Coho salmon fishing at Fleming Spit was the best that has been observed in many years. It has not been determined yet if broodstock goals have been met by the Valdez Fisheries Development Association (VFDA) and Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation hatcheries (PWSAC). Currently the VFDA in Valdez has collected enough coho salmon and it is anticipated that they will be able to meet their egg take goal. Egg takes for these locations occur as late as November. Both Whittier and Cordova are stocked by PWSAC and are terminal harvest areas. In Valdez, coho salmon are stocked by VFDA. No formal surveys are conducted for coho salmon in Prince William Sound, except for on the Copper River Delta.

Management Actions

- No management actions have been implemented during the 2023 sport fishery season.

Copper River Delta

Coho salmon fishing on the Copper River Delta has been good. Water conditions were high much of the early season with some normal periods of low fishable water and many high-water events. Based on aerial surveys, as of late September, the Copper River Delta coho salmon return is anticipated to meet the SEG of 32,000 - 67,000 fish. The coho salmon return is still being assessed.

Management Actions

- No management actions were implemented during the 2023 sport fishery season.



Prince William Sound

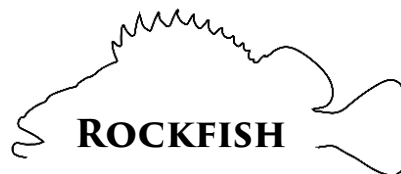
The total allowable harvest (TAH) of 157,819 pounds was established from the results of the fall 2022 Prince William Sound shrimp survey. The 2023 guideline harvest level (GHL) for the noncommercial (sport and subsistence) shrimp fishery harvest was established to be 94,700



pounds. This was very similar to the TAH and GHF established for the 2022 season. Approximately 4,375 noncommercial permits were issued in 2023. Effort and harvest are assessed post-season after harvest reports are received. Anecdotal reports from permit holders indicate that shrimping was fair to good this season.

Management Actions

- A preseason emergency order effective April 15, 2023, reduced the number of allowable noncommercial shrimp pots per person and per vessel to two pots in areas near the ports of Valdez and Whittier, and three pots in outer areas of Prince William Sound.



Prince William Sound

The harvest of rockfish has increased, and sustainable levels of rockfish harvest are currently unknown. Preliminary stock assessment work was reviewed in spring 2023 and changes in the biological data along with the increased harvest are indicators of a possible change in the population structure of rockfish in this area. In addition, harvest rates of yelloweye rockfish specifically appear to be unsustainable into the future and a seasonal restriction was put in place to reduce harvest and protect these fish during the period of time that females are gravid and release larvae. The 2023 harvest information will not be finalized until the fall of 2024.

Management Actions

- Effective May 1 – June 30, 2023, no retention of yelloweye rockfish was allowed in the Prince William Sound Management Area.
- Effective May 1 – December 31, the bag and possession limit for all rockfish was reduced to 3 per day and 6 in possession.

North Gulf Coast/Resurrection Bay

The harvest of rockfish has increased, and sustainable levels of rockfish harvest are currently unknown. Preliminary stock assessment work was reviewed in spring 2023 and changes in the biological data along with the increased harvest are indicators of a possible change in the population structure of rockfish in this area. The 2023 harvest information will not be finalized until the fall of 2024.

Management Actions

- Effective May 15 – December 31, 2023, the bag and possession limit for rockfish was reduced to 3 per day and 6 in possession.



Table 1 – Select Southcentral Region Salmon Escapement Goals and Escapements for king salmon, 2014 to 2023 (preliminary).

System	2023 Goal Range		Type	Initial Year											Preliminary	
	Lower	Upper			2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023		
KING SALMON																
Bristol Bay																
Nushagak River	55,000	120,000	SEG	2013	70,482	98,019	125,368	56,961	97,239	47,882	43,032	55,222	44,434	31,499		
Alagnak River	2,700		LB SEG	2007	NC	917	1,283	435	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC		
Kodiak/Alaska Peninsula																
Karluk River	3,000	6,000	BEG	2011	1,182	2,777	3,434	2,600	3,155	3,898	3,344	2,796	2,629	378		
Ayakulik River	4,800	8,400	BEG	2017	789	2,392	4,594	3,712	2,149	1,948	2,402	2,961	2,845	590		
Chignik River	1,300	2,700	BEG	2002	2,895	2,041	1,843	1,137	825	1,517	1,278	1,072	661	267		
Nelson River	2,400	5,000	BEG	2019	3,801	2,440	4,618	1,502	5,022	11,653	2,298	4,539	3,785	4,078		
Upper Cook Inlet																
Alexander Creek	1,900	3,700	SEG	2020	911	1,117	754	170	296	1,297	596	288	NC	NC		
Campbell Creek	380		LB SEG	2011	274	654	544	475	287	393	154	339	423	171		
Chuitna River	1,000	1,500	SEG	2002	1,398	1,965	1,372	235	939	2,115	869	806	NC	372		
Chulitna River	1,200	2,900	SEG	2020	1,011	3,137	1,151	NC	1125	2,765	845	1,535	NC	494		
Clear (Chunilna) Creek	eliminated (see Talkeetna Stock)			2020	1,390	1,205	NS	780	940	1,511						
Crooked Creek	700	1,400	SEG	2002	1,411	1,456	1,747	911	714	1,444	830	594	735	500		
Deshka River	eliminated (see Deshka Stock)			2020	16,335	24,316	22,874	11,383	8,544	9,711						
Deshka Stock	9,000	18,000	BEG	2020							10,638	18,674	5,440	3,741		
Eastside Susitna Stock	13,000	25,000	SEG	2020							14,995	15,208	7,654	Pending		
Goose Creek	eliminated (see Eastside Susitna Stock)			2020	232	NC	NC	148	90	NC						
Kenai River - Early Run (all fish)	eliminated ^a			2017	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	1,975		
Kenai River - Late Run (all fish)	eliminated ^a			2017	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	14,502 ^c		
Lake Creek	eliminated (see Yetna Stock)			2020	3,506	4,686	3,588	1,601	1,767	2,692						
Lewis River	eliminated			2020	61	5 ^b	0	0 ^b	0	0 ^b						
Little Susitna River (Aerial) ^c	700	1,500	SEG	2020	1,759	1,507	1,622	1,192	530	NC	NC	889	NC	NC		
Little Susitna River (weir)	2,100	4,300	SEG	2017				2,531	549 ^a	3,666	2,445 ^a	3,121	2,288	799 ^a		
Little Willow Creek	eliminated (see Eastside Susitna Stock)			2020	684	788	675	840	280	631						
Montana Creek	eliminated (see Eastside Susitna Stock)			2020	953	1,416	692	603	473	789						
Peters Creek	eliminated (see Yetna Stock)			2020	1,443	1,514	1,122	307	1,674	1,209						
Prairie Creek	eliminated (see Talkeetna Stock)			2020	2,812	3,290	1,853	1,930	1,194	2,371						
Sheep Creek	eliminated (see Eastside Susitna Stock)			2020	262	NC	NC	NC	334	NC						
Talachulitna River	eliminated (see Yetna Stock)			2020	2,256	2,582	4,295	1,087	1,483	3,225						
Talkeetna Stock	9,000	17,500	SEG	2020							7,283	9,107	4,288	Pending		
Theodore River	500	1,000	SEG	2020	312	426	68	21	18	201	111	38	NC	NC		
Willow Creek	eliminated (see Eastside Susitna Stock)			2020	1,335	2,046	1,814	1,329	411	897						
Yetna Stock	16,000	22,000	OEG	2020							14,850	18,890	16,583	Pending		
Lower Cook Inlet																
Anchor River	3,800	7,600	SEG	2017	2,497	10,241	7,146	5,796	3,162	5,691	3,558	4,300	3,147	23,338		
Deep Creek	350		LB SEG	2017	601	535	NS	753	182	751	327	NC	NC	NC		
Ninilchik River	750	1,300	SEG	2017	891	874	572	855	979	1,185	833	772	687	330		

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

^a Kenai River king salmon all fish SEG's were eliminated and large fish goals were instituted

^b Lewis River mouth naturally obstructed.

^c Little Susitna River king salmon aerial survey goal is only used to assess escapement if weir count is not available.

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

^e Sonar assessment extended seven days, count August 20 was 13,257 large king salmon

Table 2 – Select Southcentral Region Salmon Escapement Goals and Escapements for sockeye and coho salmon, 2014 to 2023 (preliminary).

System	2023 Goal Range		Type	Initial Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Preliminary	
	Lower	Upper											2022	2023
COHO SALMON														
Kodiak/Alaska Peninsula														
Buskin River	4,700	9,600	BEG	2014	7,345	3,363	2,513	5,559	1,066	5,537	630 ^a	7,919	2,526	NC
Olds River	500		LB SEG	2019	1,320	1,357	1,634	10,54	1,000	NS	794	923	1,129	NA
American River	400		LB SEG	2011	1,595	530	500	410	300	NS	279	297	360	NA
Pasagshak River	1,200		LB SEG	2011	4,934	1,790	667	701	1,200	488	2,031	4,721	618	NA
Upper Cook Inlet														
Fish Creek (Knik)	1,200	6,000	SEG	2020	10,283	7,912	2,484 ^a	8,966	5,022	3,025	4,555 ^a	6,424 ^a	NC ^a	1,534
Jim Creek	250	700	SEG	2020	122	571	106	5,646	758	162	735	1,499	1,899	378
Little Susitna River	9,200	17,700	SEG	2020	24,211	12,756	10,049	17,781	7,583	4,229	9,779 ^o	10,229 ^{oo}	2,792 ^{oo}	2,949 ^{oo}
Deshka River	10,200	24,100	SEG	2017				36,869	12,962	10,445	5,368 ^a	3,431 ^a	3,137 ^a	1,817 ^a
SOCKEYE SALMON														
Bristol Bay														
Kvichak River ^c	2,000,000	10,000,000	SEG	2010	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	3,751,686
Alagnak River (Tower) ^a	210,000		LB SEG	2018	200,524	5,770,650	NA	2,041,825	1,581,426	820,458	2,386,518	3,236,904	1,668,222	1,099,050
Alagnak River (Aerial) ^c	125,000		LB SEG	2016			696,400	629,200						
Naknek River	800,000	2,000,000	SEG ^f	2015	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	1,156,206
Egegik River	800,000	2,000,000	SEG	2015	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	1,562,700
Ugashik River	500,000	1,400,000	SEG	2015	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	1,128,896
Wood River	700,000	1,800,000	SEG	2015	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	2,648,616
Igushik River	150,000	400,000	SEG	2015	340,590	651,172	469,230	578,700	1,581,426	256,074	323,814	878,952	378,768	542,496
Nushagak River	370,000	900,000	SEG	2015	618,477	796,684	680,513	2,852,308	1,164,701	709,349	1,228,059	4,697,299	3,455,272	1,914,555
Kodiak/Alaska Peninsula														
Buskin River	5,000	8,000	SEG	2011	13,976	8,719	11,584	7,214	4,281	12,297	7,739	2,230	8,117	1,755
Afognak River	20,000	50,000	BEG	2005	36,345	38,151	33,167	22,151	17,601	26,817	24,284	31,997	29,509	35,559
Saltery River	15,000	35,000	BEG	2011	29,047	42,468	57,867	39,315	22,845	22,183	24,987	64,602	25,615	47,936
Pasagshak River	3,000		LB SEG	2011	1,582	2,077	7,053	11,021	2,019	4,537	3,522	8,551	4,377	4,345
Karluk River Early Run	150,000	250,000	BEG	2014	252,097	260,097	164,760	242,599	205,054	186,510	157,441	128,373	175,336	182,172
Ayakulik River Early Run	140,000	280,000	SEG	2011	210,040	218,178	182,589	204,497	266,333	279,639	220,935	265,756	251,690	200,143
Fraser River	75,000	170,000	BEG	2008	200,296	219,093	122,585	129,227	201,161	169,627	137,570	186,632	118,509	100,477
Upper Cook Inlet														
Fish Creek (Knik)	15,000	45,000	SEG	2017	43,915	102,309	46,202	63,882	72,157	76,264	64,408	99,324 ^a	58,333 ^a	44,960
Kasilof River	140,000	370,000	OEG	2020	439,977	470,679	239,981	358,724	394,309	378,416	545,654	521,859	971,604	932,896
	140,000	320,000	BEG	2020										
Kenai River ^g	OEG eliminated			2017	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	2,046,439
	varies based on tier		Inriver					1,308,498	1,035,761	1,849,054	1,714,565	2,441,825	1,567,750	2,351,020
Russian River - Early Run	22,000	42,000	BEG	2011	44,920	50,226	38,739	37,123	44,110	125,942	27,103	46,976	61,098	66,818
Russian River - Late Run	44,000	85,000	SEG	2020	52,277	46,223	37,837	45,012	71,052	64,585 ^a	78,832	123,950	124,561	160,430
Chelatna Lake	20,000	45,000	SEG	2017	26,212	69,750	60,792	26,986	20,438	26,303 ^b	NC	NC	NC	NC
Judd Lake	15,000	40,000	SEG	2017	22,416	47,684	NA	35,731	30,844	44,145	31,220	49,250	38,442	NC
Larson Lake	15,000	35,000	SEG	2017	12,040	23,214	14,333	31,866	23,444	9,699	12,018	21,987	17,436	38,069
Lower Cook Inlet														
English Bay	6,000	13,500	SEG	2002	7,832	6,290	7,673	20,751	18,083	24,044	31,486	6,328	11,425	23,661
Delight Lake	5,100	10,600	SEG	2017	22,289	3,220	5,110	5,380	13,428	17,410	12,299	7,525	22,717	6,901
Desire Lake	4,800	11,900	SEG	2017	11,480	2,830	6,740	9,450	9,840	9,040	2,260	3,323	20,460	14,700
Bear Lake	700	8,300	SEG	2002	9,090	9,560	9,011	9,207	10,568	9,185	8,212	11,318	9,962	7,975

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

^a Incomplete count because weir was pulled before end of run due to flood/fire evacuation, etc

^b Preliminary escapement estimate uses weir count minus five year average harvest above the weir.

^c 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.

^d 2009 to 2015 Alagnak River sockeye salmon escapements for Alagnak River (Tower) escapement goal are expanded aerial surveys.

^e Alagnak River sockeye salmon aerial survey-based escapement goal will be used in years that the Alagnak River tower is not operated.

^f Naknek River has an OEG of 800,000-2,000,000 sockeye salmon when the Naknek River Special Harvest Area is open to fishing.

^g Kenai River sockeye salmon uses the best estimate of sport harvest upstream of sonar.

^h Weir not operational