

Chinook Age Compositions:

Kuskokwim Chinook Salmon Ages (Average of 2006-2010 Compositions)

	3	4	5	6	7
Commercial Harvest	0.0%	41.7%	36.7%	20.5%	1.0%
Subsistence Harvest	0.1%	7.3%	39.7%	49.2%	3.7%
Escapement (from weirs)	0.3%	32.6%	33.6%	30.5%	3.0%
Total Run	0.2%	25.8%	35.2%	35.7%	3.0%

- The dominant age classes of Chinook salmon in the Kuskokwim River overall are 4- 5- and 6- year-old salmon.
- The dominant age class of the Chinook salmon commercial harvest on the Kuskokwim is 4-year-old salmon.
- The dominant age class of Chinook salmon from samples received from the subsistence harvest is 6-year-old.
- Quality of escapement concern: Larger/older/female Chinook are being exploited heavily, what actions can be implemented to reduce this harvest?
- Run timing of each individual age class overlaps greatly with other age classes, making it difficult to target a specific age class at different times of the run.
 - The commercial fishery uses 6" or less mesh and catches smaller age 4 Chinook predominantly.
 - The subsistence fishery uses predominantly 8" mesh and catches a higher proportion of larger age 6 Chinook.

Background Information on Salmon Bycatch in Groundfish Fisheries

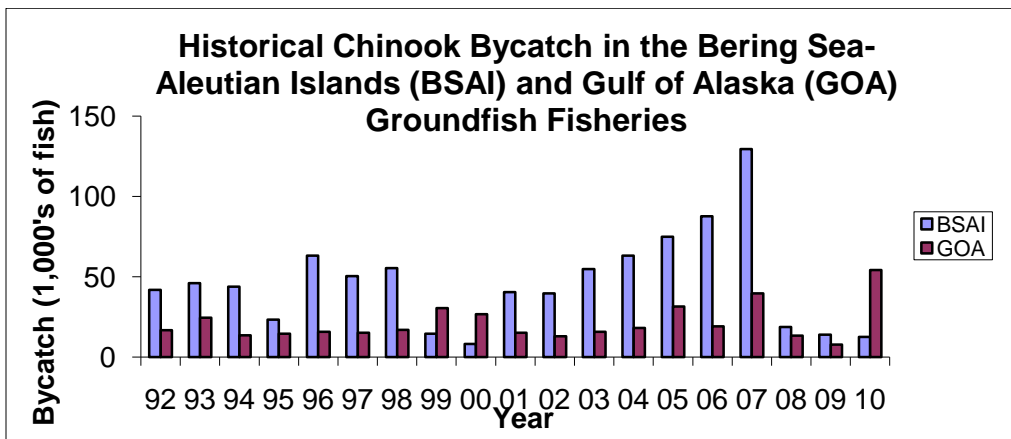
- The Groundfish fisheries (also called the “Pollock” or “trawl fisheries”) are managed by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council. The Commissioner of ADF&G holds one of 11 voting seats on the council and represents the state of Alaska along with 5 other members representing Alaska.
 - Steps have been made to place caps on Chinook bycatch in these fisheries (See attached document: *Understanding the NPFMC bycatch action 2009*)
- The Bering Sea-Aleutian Island (BSAI) groundfish fishery primarily catches walleye pollock.
- BSAI groundfish fishery bycatch includes salmon originating from rivers in Western Alaska, Southcentral and Southeast Alaska, Russia, British Columbia, Washington, and elsewhere.
- Millions of salmon are in the Bering Sea at any time, and Western Alaska stocks make up a relatively small amount of those fish.
- Based on migration patterns of Western Alaskan Chinook salmon, it is believed that these fish stay in the Bering Sea and few, if any, would be found in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) or Area M bycatch.
- Migration patterns of Western Alaskan Chum salmon are not as well understood as Chinook but it is believed that their migration patterns are different from Chinook salmon, and these fish could be vulnerable to GOA and Area M fisheries.
- While there have been estimates developed for the numbers of Western Alaskan salmon in the bycatch, these estimates are problematic and unreliable because prior to January 2011, bycatch sampling was inadequate. A new sampling plan should provide accurate and reliable estimates of Western Alaskan salmon captured in the bycatch.
- Not all fish captured in the bycatch would have survived to maturity and returned to their rivers of origin to spawn, because some would have died from natural mortality (from predators, disease, etc) during their remaining life at sea.
- Chinook salmon bycatch is primarily immature fish that are one or two years away from returning to their river of origin. For instance, bycatch in 2007 includes fish that would have returned to rivers (if they survived to maturity) in 2008 and 2009. Therefore, 2011 Chinook returns could have been impacted by the bycatch in 2009 and 2010, but the few Chinook that may have been caught in bycatch *prior* to 2009 would have limited, if any, impact on the current run.

Weekly Chinook Bycatch in Groundfish Fisheries, Bering Sea Aleutian Islands and Gulf of Alaska, 2011.

Week	Week_Date	BSAI	GOA
01-Jan-11	1-Jan	0	0
08-Jan-11	8-Jan	0	0
15-Jan-11	15-Jan	0	0
22-Jan-11	22-Jan	35	19
29-Jan-11	29-Jan	272	259
05-Feb-11	5-Feb	1,404	121
12-Feb-11	12-Feb	615	71
19-Feb-11	19-Feb	1,771	58
26-Feb-11	26-Feb	231	1,643
05-Mar-11	5-Mar	973	215
12-Mar-11	12-Mar	322	773
19-Mar-11	19-Mar	1,256	636
26-Mar-11	26-Mar	1,250	259
02-Apr-11	2-Apr	133	92
09-Apr-11	9-Apr	97	449
16-Apr-11	16-Apr	239	1,776
23-Apr-11	23-Apr	139	1,347
30-Apr-11	30-Apr	0	0
07-May-11	7-May	0	40
14-May-11	14-May	0	99
21-May-11	21-May	0	74
28-May-11	28-May	0	80
04-Jun-11	4-Jun	0	2
11-Jun-11	11-Jun	0	74

***total thru 11th June: 8,737 8,087**

*The data for 2011 is not complete as the season is currently underway



Interception of Kuskokwim Area fish in AREA M Fisheries:

- This commercial fishing area is managed by ADFG, Westward Region by staff based in Kodiak.
- Based on migration patterns of Western Alaskan Chinook salmon, it is believed that these fish stay in the Bering Sea and few, if any, would be found in the Gulf of Alaska (GOA) or Area M bycatch.
- Salmon intercepted in Area M are legally harvested under regulatory allocations, unlike salmon bycatch in the Groundfish fisheries that are prohibited species.
- The current reported AREA M total harvest of Chinook salmon as of June 28, 2011 is 4,814.