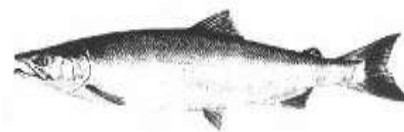


ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



NEWS RELEASE

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2018 Lower Cook Inlet Commercial Salmon Fishery Season Summary

The 2018 Lower Cook Inlet Area commercial salmon harvest, based on current preliminary fish ticket data, was 2.0 million fish. The harvest was composed of 381 Chinook, 370,460 sockeye, 14,544 coho, 1.6 million pink, and 48,729 chum salmon (Table 1), of which 758,117 (37.9%) were commercial common property harvest and 1.2 million (62.1%) were hatchery cost recovery. The preliminary common property harvest exvessel value of approximately \$2.6 million was above the previous 10-year average of \$2.5 million. The preliminary 2018 hatchery cost recovery value was \$4.6 million.

Southern District

The 2018 preseason commercial harvest forecast for the Southern District, based on an average of the previous 5 year's commercial harvest was 64,100 sockeye and 37,000 pink salmon, with an additional 61,600 hatchery produced sockeye and 46,700 pink salmon available in special harvest areas (SHAs). The preliminary purse seine harvest estimate for the 2018 season was 131 Chinook, 55,246 sockeye, 1,747 coho, 472,204 pink, and 1,166 chum salmon. This compares to a previous 10-year average harvest of 67 Chinook, 40,818 sockeye, 994 coho, 83,523 pink, and 994 chum salmon. The preliminary set gillnet harvest estimate was 185 Chinook, 15,157 sockeye, 3,067 coho, 56,638 pink, and 4,232 chum salmon. The previous 10-year average harvest for this gear type was 292 Chinook, 27,617 sockeye, 1,888 coho, 11,861 pink, and 3,760 chum salmon. In addition, 68,979 sockeye, and 997,518 pink salmon were harvested by Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association (CIAA) from SHAs in this district for cost recovery purposes. Preliminary passage estimate at the English Bay River weir was 18,083 sockeye salmon, which exceeded the sustainable escapement goal (SEG) of 6,000–13,500 for this system. Seven other stocks in the Southern District have SEGs, 1 chum and 6 pink salmon. Preliminary escapement indices indicate most of these stocks were within their respective SEG ranges. However, one stream, China Poot Creek, did not achieve its pink salmon SEG and two streams, Tutka Creek and Seldovia River, exceeded the upper end of their respective pink salmon SEG ranges, (Table 2).

Kamishak Bay District

The 2018 preseason commercial harvest forecast for the Kamishak Bay District, based on an average of the previous 5 years commercial harvest, was 38,500 sockeye, 200 coho, 7,200 pink, and 10,500 chum salmon. CIAA forecasted a run of 44,600 sockeye salmon to the Kirschner Lake remote release site. The Kamishak Bay District harvest was 33,699 sockeye, 9,077 coho, 5,226 pink, and 8,298 chum salmon. This compares to a previous 10-year average annual harvest of 56,416 sockeye, 136 coho, 49,542 pink, and 23,953 chum salmon from the commercial fishery. In addition, 11,536 sockeye salmon were harvested by CIAA from the Kirschner Lake SHA for cost

recovery purposes. There are 13 salmon SEGs in the Kamishak District, seven chum, three sockeye, and three pink salmon. Sockeye salmon escapement was within SEG ranges for all systems. Chum salmon escapement was below the SEG at Ursus Cove and Cottonwood Creek and within the SEG range at Big and Little Kamishak rivers, McNeil, and Iniskin rivers. The chum salmon SEG was exceeded at the Bruin River. Pink salmon escapement was within the SEG in the Bruin River. The pink salmon escapement was below the SEG range at Sunday Creek and Brown's Peak Creek. Escapement levels for salmon in the Kamishak District may have been underestimated due to poor weather conditions that prevented regular aerial surveys of that area.

Outer District

The 2018 preseason commercial harvest forecast for the Outer District was 5,100 sockeye, 95,800 pink, and 83,800 chum salmon. The Outer District harvest was 1,409 sockeye, 32,326 pink, and 34,857 chum salmon. This harvest compares to the previous 10-year average annual harvest of 7,641 sockeye, 954,505 pink, and 65,438 chum salmon. There are 15 salmon SEGs in the Outer District, nine pink salmon, four chum and two sockeye salmon. Preliminary estimates show that pink salmon escapement was below the SEG range for three stocks, within the range for three stocks, and above the range for three stocks. Chum salmon escapement was below the SEG at Island Creek and Port Dick Creek, within the SEG range at Dogfish Bay and above the SEG range in the Rocky River. Sockeye salmon escapement to Delight Lake was above the SEG range for that lake, and within the range for Desire Lake. Escapement levels for salmon in the Outer District may have been underestimated due to poor weather conditions that prevented regular aerial and ground surveys of this area.

Eastern District

Due to small runs in the previous 10 years, no sockeye or pink salmon wild stocks were forecast to be available for commercial harvest from the Eastern District in 2018. CIAA forecasted a total run of 199,727 sockeye salmon to Resurrection Bay facilities with all but 52,500 of these fish intended for broodstock or cost recovery purposes. Total cost recovery harvest from this district was 158,427 sockeye salmon. In addition, 2,924 sockeye and 434 coho salmon were donated at the weir to members of the public. Portions of Resurrection Bay were open for commercial harvest from June 18 through July 13. During this time, five permit holders reported harvesting 22,310 sockeye salmon. Escapement of 12,779 sockeye salmon through the weir at Bear Creek was within the "desired inriver passage" goal of 5,620–13,220 sockeye salmon. This goal is the combination of the SEG (700–8,300) as well as the estimated 4,920 sockeye salmon required for broodstock for the CIAA Resurrection Bay sockeye salmon program at the Trail Lakes Hatchery. The only other index system in the Eastern District is Aialik Lake sockeye salmon, where the final escapement was below the SEG range of 3,200–5,400.

Table 1. Lower Cook Inlet commercial salmon harvest based on preliminary fish ticket data, 2018.

District (or hatchery)	Permits	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
Southern District	20	131	55,246	1,747	472,204	1,166	530,494
Outer District	11	2	1,409	5	32,326	34,857	68,599
Eastern District	5	0	22,310	0	0	66	22,376
Kamishak Bay District	7	0	33,699	9,077	5,226	8,298	56,300
Purse seine preliminary total	20	133	112,664	10,829	509,756	44,387	677,769
Southern District	24	185	15,157	3,067	56,638	4,232	79,279
Set gillnet preliminary total	24	185	15,157	3,067	56,638	4,232	79,279
Commercial homepacks		61	773	135	72	28	1,069
Commercial common property preliminary total		379	128,594	14,031	566,466	48,647	758,117
Hatchery cost recovery preliminary harvests							
Tutka Lagoon SHA	24107	2	62,389	79	939,967	70	1,002,507
Port Graham SHA	24120				57,549	4	57,553
China Poot SHA	24192		6,590		2		6,592
Resurrection Bay SHA	231		129,444			2	129,446
Bear Lake SHA	231		28,983				28,983
Kirschner Lake SHA	249		11,536		95	6	11,637
donated - Bear Lake SHA			2,924	434			3,358
Hatchery preliminary total		2	241,866	513	997,613	82	1,240,076
LCI preliminary total harvest		381	370,460	14,544	1,564,079	48,729	1,998,193

Table 2.- 2018 Escapements and sustainable escapement goal (SEG) ranges Lower Cook Inlet, Alaska.

Stock	2018 Escapement	Escapement Goal			Monitoring Method			Comments
		Type (BEG, SEG)	Range		Aerial	Ground	Video Weir	
			Lower	Mid-Point	Upper			
Chum Salmon (12 with goals)								
Port Graham River	3,725	SEG	1,200	1,950	2,700		X	
Dogfish Lagoon	7,615	SEG	3,500	6,050	8,600	X	X	used ground index
Rocky River	5,620	SEG	1,500	2,950	4,400	X		
Port Dick Creek	724	SEG	1,900	3,100	4,300	X	X	used ground index
Island Creek	1,368	SEG	5,100	8,500	11,900	X	X	used ground index
Big Kamishak River	7,694	SEG	6,800	11,200	15,600	X		
Little Kamishak River	14,417	SEG	8,000	12,400	16,800	X		
McNeil River	37,331	SEG	24,000	36,000	48,000	X		
Bruin River	28,497	SEG	5,200	7,600	10,000	X		
Ursus Cove	3,718	SEG	5,900	8,000	10,100	X		
Cottonwood Creek	1,326	SEG	5,200	8,700	12,200	X		
Iniskin Bay	9,149	SEG	5,900	9,750	13,600	X		
Pink Salmon (18 with goals)								
Humpy Creek	54,816	SEG	17,500	34,450	51,400		X	
China Poot Creek	2,280	SEG	2,500	4,400	6,300		X	
Tutka Creek	60,691	SEG	6,500	11,750	17,000		X	
Barabara Creek	7,236	SEG	2,000	3,800	5,600		X	
Seldovia Creek	50,827	SEG	21,800	29,600	37,400		X	
Port Graham River	33,419	SEG	7,700	13,700	19,700		X	
Dogfish Lagoon Cks.	8,398	SEG	800	3,950	7,100	X	X	used aerial index
Port Chatham	18,122	SEG	7,800	12,950	18,100	X	X	used ground index
Windy Creek Right	8,925	SEG	3,400	7,300	11,200	X		
Windy Creek Left	14,043	SEG	5,400	16,250	27,100	X		
Rocky River	2,088	SEG	11,700	33,250	54,800	X		
Port Dick Creek	94,585	SEG	17,900	33,850	49,800	X	X	used ground index
Island Creek	5,558	SEG	9,600	21,050	32,500	X	X	used ground index
S. Nuka Island Creek	545	SEG	2,800	7,000	11,200	X		
Desire Lake	2,547	SEG	1,500	9,750	18,000	X		
Bruin River	94,715	SEG	17,800	60,400	103,000	X		
Sunday Creek	3,400	SEG	4,400	14,650	24,900	X		
Brown's Peak Creek	1,341	SEG	2,600	10,050	17,500	X		
Sockeye Salmon (8 with goals)								
English Bay	18,304	SEG	6,000	9,750	13,500	X		X used weir count
Delight Lake	13,428	SEG	5,100	7,850	10,600	X		X used weir count
Desire Lake	9,840	SEG	4,800	8,350	11,900	X		-
Bear Lake	10,568	SEG	700	4,500	8,300			X
Aialik Lake	2,620	SEG	3,200	4,300	5,400	X		
Mikfik Lake	4,966	SEG	3,400	7,200	11,000			X
Chenik Lake	6,651	SEG	2,900	8,300	13,700			X
Amakdedori Creek	1,916	SEG	1,200	1,900	2,600	X		