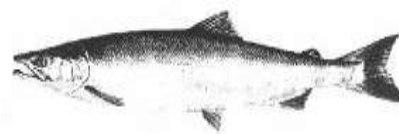


ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



NEWS RELEASE

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2019 Lower Cook Inlet Commercial Salmon Fishery Season Summary

The 2019 Lower Cook Inlet Area commercial salmon harvest was 2.4 million fish. The harvest was composed of 736 Chinook, 311,696 sockeye, 12,712 coho, 1,980,124 pink, and 55,508 chum salmon (Table 1), of which 2,022,354 (85.7%) were commercial harvest and 338,422 (14.3%) were hatchery cost recovery. The commercial harvest exvessel value of approximately \$3.6 million was above the previous 10-year average of \$2.4 million. The 2019 Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association (CIAA) hatchery cost recovery value was \$1.7 million and below the anticipated cost recovery goal of \$5.2 million dollars. Hatchery sockeye egg take was 7.0 million eggs and was below the anticipated egg take level of 11.7 million eggs. A total of 47.2 million pink salmon eggs were collected which was below the anticipated egg take of 209.0 million eggs. All data are preliminary.

Southern District

The 2019 preseason commercial harvest forecast for the Southern District, was 80,700 sockeye and 126,500 pink salmon with an additional 69,400 hatchery-produced sockeye and 935,000 hatchery pink salmon available in special harvest areas (SHAs). The purse seine harvest estimate for the 2019 season was 140 Chinook, 47,006 sockeye, 3,065 coho, 22,934 pink, and 298 chum salmon with 21 permit holders reporting deliveries. This compares to a previous 10-year average harvest of 86 Chinook, 35,943 sockeye, 1,081 coho, 161,082 pink, and 1,344 chum salmon. The preliminary set gillnet harvest estimate was 350 Chinook, 29,274 sockeye, 2,817 coho, 6,411 pink, and 3,908 chum salmon with 22 permits reporting deliveries. The previous 10-year average harvest for this gear type was 296 Chinook, 26,451 sockeye, 2,134 coho, 17,337 pink, and 4,044 chum salmon. In addition, 12,586 sockeye and 179,659 pink salmon were harvested by CIAA from SHAs in this district for cost recovery.

There are eight sustainable escapement goals (SEG) in the Southern District; six for pink salmon, one for chum and one for sockeye salmon. Escapement at the English Bay River weir was 24,044 sockeye salmon, which exceeded the SEG of 6,000–13,500 for this system (Table 2). Pink salmon goals were within the SEG range for Humpy Creek, below for Seldovia and China Poot creeks, and above for Tutka, Barabara, and Port Graham creeks. Chum salmon escapement in the Port Graham River was below the SEG range.

Kamishak Bay District

The 2019 preseason commercial harvest forecast for the Kamishak Bay District was 39,300 sockeye, 4,100 coho, 106,900 pink, and 9,800 chum salmon. CIAA forecasted a run of 39,000 sockeye salmon to the Kirschner Lake remote release site. The Kamishak Bay District commercial harvest was 59,069 sockeye, 3,349 coho, 59,008 pink, and 31,629 chum salmon as reported by 7 permit holders. This compares to a previous 10-year average of 42,594 sockeye, 1,041 coho, 47,425 pink, and 17,462

chum salmon harvested in the commercial fishery. In addition, 18,698 sockeye salmon were harvested by CIAA from the Kirschner Lake SHA for cost recovery purposes.

There are 13 SEGs in the Kamishak District; seven for chum salmon, three for sockeye, and three for pink salmon (Table 2). Chum salmon escapement was above the minimum SEG at five systems and below at two (McNeil River, Cottonwood Creek). Pink salmon escapement was above the minimum SEG in all three index streams. Sockeye salmon escapement to Chenik Lake was within the SEG range, however escapement to Mikfik Lake for this species was below the minimum SEG. Sockeye escapement to Amakdedori Creek was within the SEG range.

Outer District

The 2019 preseason commercial harvest forecast for the Outer District was 5,700 sockeye, 2.2 million pink, and 68,100 chum salmon. The harvest, from 21 permit holders that participated, was 184 Chinook, 15,482 sockeye, 2,889 coho, 1.7 million pink, and 19,460 chum salmon. This harvest compares to previous 10-year averages of 2 Chinook, 7,612 sockeye, 64 coho, 910,978 pink, and 58,842 chum salmon.

There are 15 SEGs in the Outer District; nine for pink salmon, four for chum and two for sockeye salmon (Table 2). Pink salmon escapement was above the minimum SEG at eight streams and below at one (South Nuka Island Creek). Chum salmon escapement was above the minimum SEG at all four systems. Sockeye salmon escapement to Delight and Desire lakes were within their respective SEG ranges.

Eastern District

Due to small runs in the last 10 years, no wild stock sockeye or pink salmon were forecast to be available for commercial harvest from the Eastern District in 2019. CIAA forecasted a total run of 305,600 sockeye salmon to Resurrection Bay facilities with all but 61,900 of these fish intended for broodstock or cost recovery purposes. Total cost recovery harvest from this district was 124,100 sockeye salmon. An additional 863 sockeye and 421 coho salmon were donated at the weir to members of the public. Portions of Resurrection Bay were open for commercial harvest from June 24 through July 19. During this time, 4 permit holders reported harvesting 4,307 sockeye salmon.

Escapement of 12,760 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 sockeye salmon escapement was within the SEG range.

Table 1.–Lower Cook Inlet commercial salmon harvest based on preliminary fish ticket data, 2019.

District (or hatchery)	Permits	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
Southern District	21	140	47,006	3,065	22,934	298	73,443
Outer District	21	184	15,482	2,889	1,710,012	19,460	1,748,027
Eastern District	4	0	4,307	2	112	19	4,440
Kamishak Bay District	7	0	59,069	3,349	59,008	31,629	153,055
Purse seine preliminary total	21	324	125,864	9,305	1,792,066	51,406	1,978,965
Southern District	22	350	29,274	2,817	6,411	3,908	42,760
Set gillnet preliminary total	22	350	29,274	2,817	6,411	3,908	42,760
Commercial homepacks		62	311	166	59	31	629
Commercial common property preliminary total		736	155,449	12,288	1,798,536	55,345	2,022,354
Hatchery cost recovery preliminary harvests							
Tutka Lagoon SHA			10,596	1	179,639	156	190,392
Port Graham SHA					0		0
China Poot SHA			1,990	2	20	3	2,015
Resurrection Bay SHA			82,685				82,685
Bear Lake SHA			41,415				41,415
Kirschner Lake SHA			18,698		1,929	4	20,631
donated - Bear Lake SHA			863	421			1,284
Hatchery preliminary total		0	156,247	424	181,588	163	338,422
LCI preliminary total harvest		736	311,696	12,712	1,980,124	55,508	2,360,776

Table 2.—2019 Escapements and sustainable escapement goal ranges in Lower Cook Inlet, Alaska.

Stock	2019 Escapement	Escapement goal range			Monitoring method			Comments
		Lower	Mid-Point	Upper	Aerial	Ground	Video Weir	
Chum salmon								
Port Graham River	1,074	1,200	1,950	2,700		X		
Dogfish Lagoon	3,640	3,500	6,050	8,600	X	X		used ground index
Rocky River	6,569	1,500	2,950	4,400	X			
Port Dick Creek	2,000	1,900	3,100	4,300	X	X		used ground index
Island Creek	5,482	5,100	8,500	11,900	X	X		used ground index
Big Kamishak River	51,030	6,800	11,200	15,600	X			
Little Kamishak River	22,611	8,000	12,400	16,800	X			
McNeil River	9,205	24,000	36,000	48,000	X			
Bruin River	25,283	5,200	7,600	10,000	X			
Ursus Cove	13,400	5,900	8,000	10,100	X			
Cottonwood Creek	3,908	5,200	8,700	12,200	X			
Iniskin Bay	15,294	5,900	9,750	13,600	X			
Pink salmon								
Humpy Creek	25,667	17,500	34,450	51,400		X		
China Poot Creek	1,575	2,500	4,400	6,300		X		
Tutka Creek	53,732	6,500	11,750	17,000		X		
Barabara Creek	9,462	2,000	3,800	5,600		X		
Seldovia Creek	18,337	21,800	29,600	37,400		X		
Port Graham River	29,588	7,700	13,700	19,700		X		
Dogfish Lagoon Cks.	22,043	800	3,950	7,100	X	X		used aerial index
Port Chatham	39,585	7,800	12,950	18,100	X	X		used ground index
Windy Creek Right	13,744	3,400	7,300	11,200	X			
Windy Creek Left	25,580	5,400	16,250	27,100	X			
Rocky River	75,412	11,700	33,250	54,800	X			
Port Dick Creek	93,157	17,900	33,850	49,800	X	X		used ground index
Island Creek	63,691	9,600	21,050	32,500	X	X		used ground index
S. Nuka Island Creek	2,453	2,800	7,000	11,200	X			
Desire Lake	12,070	1,500	9,750	18,000	X			
Bruin River	43,800	17,800	60,400	103,000	X			
Sunday Creek	21,801	4,400	14,650	24,900	X			
Brown's Peak Creek	43,420	2,600	10,050	17,500	X			
Sockeye salmon								
English Bay	24,044	6,000	9,750	13,500	X		X	used weir count
Delight Lake	17,410	7,500	12,575	17,650	X		X	used weir count
Desire Lake	9,040	4,800	8,350	11,900	X		-	
Bear Lake	9,185	700	4,500	8,300			X	
Aialik Lake	5,000	3,200	4,300	5,400	X			
Mikfik Lake	2,901	3,400	7,200	11,000			X	
Chenik Lake	12,079	2,900	8,300	13,700			X	
Amakdedori Creek	1,620	1,200	1,900	2,600	X			