

**ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES
NEWS RELEASE**



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2013 LOWER COOK INLET SALMON FISHERY OUTLOOK

General Information

This outlook is provided to assist the commercial salmon industry in planning for the 2013 season in the Lower Cook Inlet (LCI) Management Area. Preseason forecasts and previous five year commercial common property harvest averages are the basis for the information provided. Forecasts for LCI can be found on ADF&G's web site:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyarealci.salmon>

Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association (CIAA) manages the Trail Lakes Hatchery (TLH), and the Tutka Bay Lagoon Hatchery (TBLH). Hatchery forecasts can be found through the CIAA web site:

<http://www.ciaa.net.org>

Inseason modifications to harvest projections, season opening dates, and strategies for weekly fishing periods may occur as fisheries develop. Hatchery Annual Management Plans (AMP) are used to provide guidelines to the department when managing enhanced fisheries to achieve cost recovery and broodstock objectives. CIAA AMPs will undergo Regional Planning Team (RPT) review on April 18, and then be submitted for the commissioner's approval.

The forecasts for commercial common property fishery (CCPF) harvests by species are summarized in Table 1. The pink salmon forecast is derived from a spawner-recruit analysis, whereas run projections for other species and districts are based on average historical production. Projected returns of hatchery-origin salmon are provided by CIAA. These projections of hatchery and wild stock returns will provide the basis for early-season management in all districts with other management tools such as aerial survey estimates, weir counts, remote video monitoring and anticipated harvest being used as the season progresses.

Management of LCI commercial salmon fisheries are based in the Homer area office. All emergency order announcements of fishery openings and closures are broadcast on VHF channel 10. As was done last year, fishery announcements from the Homer ADF&G office will routinely occur at 2:00 PM or earlier if possible. Announcement recordings will be available for commercial fisheries at 907-235-7307. Emergency order announcement information is also transmitted by FAX and email to all registered processors, local radio stations, news media and

interested members of the public. Harvest information and fisheries announcements are located on the ADF&G web site: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyarealci.salmon>

In addition, interested individuals may sign up to receive email announcements: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>

The first announcement is anticipated to be released at 2:00 PM, Wednesday, May 1 and concerns CIAA cost recovery harvest.

The preliminary CIAA annual corporate budget for fiscal year 2013 incorporates an overall cost recovery goal of 2.4 million dollars. A total of 155,514 hatchery produced sockeye, and 339,033 pink salmon are anticipated to return to CIAA release sites in 2013. Based on current market conditions, CIAA anticipates the market value of the return (minus broodstock) to be 1.4 million dollars, and therefore CIAA anticipates a 1.0 million dollar revenue shortfall in 2013. CIAA anticipates harvesting close to 100% of the hatchery returns up to a value of 2.4 million dollars.

The overall commercial common property harvest from Lower Cook Inlet is anticipated to be 278,579 salmon nearly all of which are anticipated to be of wild stock origin. Total anticipated harvest by species is shown on Table 1.

Set Gillnet Fishery

The **Southern District** is anticipated to open for the 2013 season on Monday, June 3 at 6:00 AM for a 48-hour period. Following periods will likely be 48-hours in length beginning at 6:00 AM on Monday and Thursday as specified in regulation. The 5-year harvest averages for this area and gear are 89 Chinook, 400 coho and 1,600 chum salmon. The 5-year commercial harvest average for the wild sockeye salmon harvested in the English Bay Section is 1,100 fish. Harvests for 2013 are anticipated to be similar to the historic average. The department's preliminary pink salmon forecast estimated a harvestable surplus of 40,000 fish from the Southern District; which is to be shared by commercial set gillnet and purse seine permit holders. Sockeye salmon returns to subdistricts outside of the English Bay Section are comprised significantly of fish returning to hatchery release sites at Leisure Lake, Hazel Lake, and Tutka Bay Lagoon. Returns to Leisure and Hazel lakes from the 2010 release (2009 brood year) of 3.2 million sockeye salmon is anticipated to be 43,352 fish. Fishing time in the Port Graham Subdistrict will be closely linked to escapement levels to English Bay Lakes. Management priority will be to provide for the subsistence needs of those immediate communities at the level prescribed in the Customary and Traditional Use finding in 5 AAC 01.566(d) of 4,800–7,200 salmon. The Port Graham Subdistrict is anticipated to remain closed to commercial harvest until English Bay River escapement is tracking to meet the overall spawning escapement goal (6,000–13,500) and hatchery broodstock goals (1,586 fish). While 2,000 sockeye salmon are anticipated to return to the release site near the Port Graham Hatchery; 1,900 of these fish will likely be subsistence harvest with the remainder harvested by CIAA for broodstock. Further information regarding previous year's hatchery releases and commercial harvests may be found in Annual Management Reports for this area at:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyarealci.salmon#/management>

Purse Seine Fishery

Portions of the **Southern District** are anticipated to open to purse seine harvest in mid-June coinciding with enhanced returns to Leisure and Hazel lakes. Historically this return peaks from July 15–21 (week 29). CIAA anticipates a return of 43,352 sockeye salmon to Leisure and Hazel lakes combined, as well as 17,821 sockeye salmon to Tutka Bay. All hatchery returns to Tutka Bay are anticipated to be used by CIAA for cost recovery and broodstock purposes.

Commercial fishing time after mid-July will be correlated to pink salmon escapement at Humpy Creek, Seldovia Bay, Port Graham and other locations in this district. A total of 339,033 hatchery produced pink salmon are anticipated to return to release sites in Kachemak Bay. Of those, 130,000 will be required for broodstock purposes. Waters of the Halibut Cove SHA are anticipated to open to CCPF in early-July to ascertain arrival of Windy Bay stock pink salmon. The SHA will then close and a portion will reopen to cost recovery harvest. Following the completion of cost recovery this area may reopen to CCPF for final clean-up. The department's priority in managing this remote hatchery release is to minimize straying to nearby wild pink salmon streams while focusing on harvesting only enhanced returns for hatchery cost recovery. The Tutka Bay and China Poot SHAs will remain closed to CCPF in order to maximize cost recovery harvest at those locations.

Hatchery sockeye salmon returns to the **Eastern District** are forecast by CIAA to be 70,666 fish. This is fewer than last year's forecasted return of 216,000 Trail Lakes Hatchery produced fish, where the actual estimated total return was 96,000 sockeye salmon. The Resurrection Bay North subdistrict is anticipated to open on May 20 to cost recovery harvest. Historically common property fishing has occurred in early June after cost recovery is completed. Wild stock harvest from the Eastern District will be linked to aerial survey observations of wild sockeye and pink salmon escapement to Aialik Lake and other spawning systems in this district. In addition, surveys of chum salmon index systems in Resurrection Bay and Day Harbor will be flown, weather permitting.

Portions of the **Outer District** are anticipated to open to commercial harvest in mid-July focusing on sockeye returns to McCarty Fjord lakes. Escapement to these systems is monitored by aerial survey (Desire and Delusion lakes) as well as a weir at the outlet of Delight Lake. In addition, waters in the western portion of this district are also anticipated to open at this time and later focusing on pink and chum salmon returns to Port Dick, as well as Windy and Rocky bays. There are numerous other smaller systems in the Nuka Passage area that are also monitored for returning chum and pink salmon. In the far west end of this district, systems with the latest return timing: Dogfish Bay, Chugach Bay and Port Chatham will be evaluated for chum and pink salmon harvest potential from August to early September. The previous 5-year harvest average for this district is 10,200 sockeye and 47,100 chum salmon. The department has forecast a harvestable surplus of 63,000 pink salmon from this district. Last year's harvest was 69,359 pink and 51,313 chum salmon.

Portions of the **Kamishak Bay District** open by regulation to commercial harvest on June 1. Previous 5-year average harvests for this district (excluding the Kirchner Subdistrict) are 77,000 sockeye and 37,400 chum salmon with the majority of the sockeye salmon harvest attributed to Chenik Lake runs and the chum salmon harvest spread throughout the district. Due to poor pink salmon escapement in 2011, the department has forecast that there will not be a significant commercial harvest of pink salmon from this district. Returns of hatchery released sockeye to the Kirchner Lake outfall remote release site are anticipated to be 21,675 fish. The Kirchner Lake SHA will be closed to CCPF until the conclusion of hatchery cost recovery efforts. The department tracks salmon escapement in this district using remote video monitoring sites at Chenik and Mikfik lakes, as well as regular aerial survey observations of index streams.

Table 1.–Projected commercial common property harvests and hatchery returns for Lower Cook Inlet, 2013.

SOCKEYE SALMON		Total anticipated harvest =	88,300
Natural stocks, (5-year average commercial harvest)			
Southern District, (English Bay Section only)			1,100
Eastern District, (Aialik Bay)			0
Outer District			10,200
Kamishak Bay District, (excluding Kirchner Lake Subdistrict)			77,000
	Total Return	Hatchery Harvest^b	Commercial Harvest
Sockeye salmon hatchery stocks^a			
Resurrection Bay	70,666	70,666	0
China Poot and Hazel lakes	43,352	43,352	0
Tutka Bay Lagoon	17,821	17,821	0
Kirchner Lake	21,675	21,675	0
Port Graham Bay	2,000	100	0
PINK SALMON, ADF&G Preliminary Pink Salmon Forecast^c		Total anticipated harvest =	103,000
Southern District (combined gear)			40,000
Eastern District			0
Outer District			63,000
Kamishak Bay District			0
	Total Return	Hatchery Harvest^b	Commercial Harvest
Pink salmon hatchery stocks^a			
Tutka Bay Lagoon	244,653	244,653	0
Halibut Cove Bight	94,380	94,380	0
CHUM SALMON - 5-year average harvest		Total anticipated harvest =	86,330
Southern District (purse seine)			160
Southern District (set gillnet)			1,600
Eastern District			70
Outer District			47,100
Kamishak Bay District			37,400
COHO SALMON - 5-year average harvest		Total anticipated harvest =	830
Southern District (purse seine)			300
Southern District (set gillnet)			400
Eastern District			0
Outer District			30
Kamishak Bay District			100
CHINOOK SALMON – 5-year average harvest		Total anticipated harvest =	119
Southern District (purse seine)			23
Southern District (set gillnet)			89
Eastern District			0
Outer District			4
Kamishak Bay District			2
Total LCI anticipated commercial common property harvest- all salmon species =			278,579

^a Provided by Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association, based on parent year releases and recent ocean survival.

^b Includes hatchery cost recovery, broodstock and natural spawning escapement.

^c Available online at <http://www.adfg.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyarealci.salmon#/forecasts>.