

# ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

## DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

### NEWS RELEASE



*Cora Campbell, Commissioner*

*Jeff Regnart, Director*



Contact:  
Glenn Hollowell, Area Finfish Management Biologist  
Ted Otis, Area Finfish Research Biologist  
Ethan Ford, Fisheries Biologist  
Phone: (907) 235-8191

Homer Area Office  
3298 Douglas Place  
Homer, AK 99603  
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### **2014 LOWER COOK INLET SALMON FISHERY OUTLOOK**

#### **General Information**

This outlook is provided to assist the commercial salmon industry in planning for the 2014 season in the Lower Cook Inlet (LCI) Management Area. Preseason forecasts and previous 5 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 underwent Regional Planning Team (RPT) review on April 16, and are being submitted for 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 the LCI commercial salmon fisheries is based in the Homer area office. All emergency order (EO) 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 on Friday's 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 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, Friday, May 2.

CIAA anticipates a total of 114,900 hatchery produced sockeye, and 559,000 pink salmon to return to LCI release sites in 2014. All of these fish are anticipated to be required for either broodstock or cost recovery purposes.

The overall commercial common property harvest from Lower Cook Inlet is anticipated to be 305,000 salmon nearly all of which are anticipated to be of wild stock origin (Table 1).

### **Set Gillnet Fishery**

The **Southern District** is anticipated to open for the 2014 season on Monday, June 2 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 110 Chinook, 1,000 coho and 1,900 chum salmon. The 5-year commercial harvest average for the wild sockeye salmon harvested in the English Bay Section is 800 fish. Harvests for 2014 are anticipated to be similar to the historic average. The department's preliminary pink salmon forecast estimated a harvestable surplus of 79,000 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. CIAA anticipates a return of 15,600 sockeye salmon to Leisure and Hazel lakes combined 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. 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 13–19 (week 29). CIAA anticipates a return of 15,600 sockeye salmon to Leisure and Hazel lakes combined, as well as 22,100 sockeye salmon to Tutka Bay. All hatchery returns are anticipated to be needed 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 559,000 hatchery produced pink salmon are anticipated to return to release sites in the Southern District.

Hatchery sockeye salmon returns to the **Eastern District** are forecast by CIAA to be 66,000 fish, all of which will be required for cost recovery and broodstock purposes. Wild stock harvest opportunity in the Eastern District will be linked to aerial survey observations of wild sockeye and pink salmon escapements 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** may 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 may be open by this time 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 9,900 sockeye and 36,700 chum salmon. The department has forecast a harvestable surplus of 102,000 pink salmon from this district. Last year's harvest was 2.0 million pink and 49,000 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 Kirschner Subdistrict) are 49,300 sockeye and 23,200 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 2012, the department has forecast that there will not be a significant commercial harvest of pink salmon from this district. Returns of hatchery released sockeye salmon to the Kirschner Lake outfall remote release site are anticipated to be 8,200 fish. The Kirschner 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, 2014.

<b>SOCKEYE SALMON</b>		Total anticipated harvest =		<b>60,000</b>
<b>Natural stocks, (5-yr average commercial harvest)</b>				
Southern District, (English Bay Section only)				800
Eastern District, (Aialik Bay)				0
Outer District				9,900
Kamishak Bay District, (excluding Kirschner Lake Subdistrict)				49,300
			<b>Commercial</b>	<b>Common</b>
	<b>Hatchery</b>	<b>Broodstock</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Property</b>
<b>Sockeye salmon hatchery stocks</b>	<b>Return</b>	<b>Harvest</b>	<b>Recovery</b>	<b>Harvest</b>
Resurrection Bay	66,000	4,452	61,548	0
China Poot and Hazel lakes	15,600	0	15,600	0
Tutka Bay Lagoon	22,100	4,720	17,380	0
Kirschner Lake	8,200	0	8,200	0
Port Graham Bay	0	0	0	0
English Bay Lakes	3,000	394 – 5,026	0	0
<b>PINK SALMON, ADF&amp;G Preliminary Pink Salmon Forecast<sup>a</sup></b>		Total anticipated harvest =		<b>181,000</b>
Southern District (combined gear)				79,000
Eastern District				0
Outer District				102,000
Kamishak Bay District				0
			<b>Commercial</b>	<b>Common</b>
	<b>Hatchery</b>	<b>Broodstock</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Property</b>
<b>Pink salmon hatchery stocks<sup>b</sup></b>	<b>Return</b>	<b>Harvest</b>	<b>Recovery</b>	<b>Harvest</b>
Tutka Bay Lagoon	131,000	143,000 – 161,000	0	0
Port Graham Bay	428,000	13,000 – 108,000	320,000 – 415,000	0
<b>CHUM SALMON - 5-year average harvest</b>		Total anticipated harvest =		<b>62,136</b>
Southern District (purse seine)				226
Southern District (set gillnet)				1,900
Eastern District				110
Outer District				36,700
Kamishak Bay District				23,200
<b>COHO SALMON - 5-year average harvest</b>		Total anticipated harvest =		<b>1,840</b>
Southern District (purse seine)				700
Southern District (set gillnet)				1,000
Eastern District				0
Outer District				40
Kamishak Bay District				100
<b>CHINOOK SALMON – 5-year average harvest</b>		Total anticipated harvest =		<b>172</b>
Southern District (purse seine)				57
Southern District (set gillnet)				110
Eastern District				0
Outer District				4
Kamishak Bay District				2
<b>Total LCI anticipated commercial common property harvest- all salmon species =</b>			<b>305,148</b>	

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

<sup>b</sup> Provided by Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association, based on parent year releases and recent ocean survival.