

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES



NEWS RELEASE

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Lower Cook Inlet Salmon Fishery News Release #38, (revised 9/25)

The Outer, Eastern, Southern, and Kamishak Bay districts will close to purse seine harvest for the 2018 season at 10:00 PM on Sunday, September 23. The commercial set gillnet season in the Southern District will close at 6:00 AM on September 30. Fishing schedules for both gears will continue as stated in the previous announcement until those dates. There have been no commercial deliveries reported since August 27 for purse seine, and August 22 for set gillnet. Subsistence harvest in the Port Chatham and Windy Bay subdistricts closed on August 1. However, subsistence harvest remains open through September 30 in the Port Graham and Dogfish Bay subdistricts.

The preliminary estimate of the 2018 Lower Cook Inlet Area commercial salmon harvest, based on current preliminary fish ticket data, was 2.0 million salmon. The harvest was composed of 381 Chinook, 370,460 sockeye, 14,110 coho, 1,564,079 pink, and 48,729 chum salmon (Table 1). The harvest was comprised of 758,117 (37.9%) commercial common property fishery (CPF) harvested fish, and 1,239,642 (62.1%) hatchery cost recovery fish.

Salmon ear bones (otoliths) sampled from the commercial harvest this year will be examined for hatchery thermal marks. Last year sockeye salmon otoliths sampled from the set gillnet commercial fishery were 11.9% hatchery marked. Pink salmon otoliths sampled from this fishery were 28.1% hatchery marked. Sockeye salmon otoliths sampled last year from the purse seine fishery in the Southern District were 50.3% hatchery marked, and pink salmon otoliths sampled from this district and gear type were 30.6% hatchery marked^a.

SOUTHERN DISTRICT: The 2018 preseason commercial common property harvest forecast for the Southern District, based on an average of the past 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 commercial salmon fishing season in the Southern District began on Friday, June 1. 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 SEG of 6,000–13,500 for this system. There are seven streams in the Southern District that have a total of 8 SEGs. Of those goals, six are for pink salmon, one is for chum and one is for sockeye salmon. Preliminary escapement estimates for both the chum and sockeye salmon goals were within SEG ranges for most of those systems. One stream, China Poot Creek, did not achieve its pink salmon SEG and two streams, Tutka Creek and Seldovia Creek, exceeded the upper end of their pink salmon SEG.

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 commercial salmon fishing season began in this district on Saturday, July 14. Overall preliminary harvest, from 11 permit holders that participated, was 762 sockeye, 32,314 pink, and 34,856 chum salmon. This harvest compares to previous 10-year averages of 7,641 sockeye, 954,505 pink, and 65,438 chum salmon. There are 11 streams in the Outer District that have a total of 15 SEGs. Of those goals, nine are for pink salmon, four are for chum and two are for sockeye salmon. Preliminary estimates show that pink salmon escapement was within the SEG at six of these systems. Chum salmon escapement was below the SEG at Island Creek and Port Dick Creek, and within the SEG range at Dogfish Bay and in the Rocky River. 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 that area. Sockeye salmon escapement to Delight and Desire lakes were both within SEG ranges.

^a 2017 LCI Annual Management Report, appendices F27, F30, F34 and F37. ADF&G, Fishery Management Report, Anchorage, *in prep*.

KAMISHAK BAY DISTRICT: The 2018 preseason commercial harvest forecast for the Kamishak Bay District based on an average of the past 5 year's 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. Total preliminary estimated common property harvest was 33,699 sockeye, 9,077 coho, 5,226 pink, and 8,298 chum salmon. This compares to a previous 10-year average of 56,416 sockeye, 136 coho, 49,542 pink, and 23,953 chum salmon harvested in the common property fishery. In addition, 11,536 sockeye salmon were harvested by CIAA from the Kirschner Lake SHA for cost recovery purposes. There are 12 systems in the Kamishak District that have a total of 13 SEGs. Of those goals, seven are for chum, three are for sockeye, and three are for pink salmon. Video data from the monitoring stations at Chenik Lake and Mikfik Lake has only been partially reviewed. This data indicates that sockeye escapement for both systems will likely be within respective escapement goals of 2,900–13,700 and 3,400–11,000 fish. Sockeye escapement to Amakdedori Creek was within the SEG for that system. Chum salmon escapement was below the SEG at five systems: Big Kamishak River, McNeil River, Ursus Cove, Cottonwood Creek, and Iniskin River. The chum salmon SEG was exceeded at the Bruin River and within the goal in the Little Kamishak River. Pink salmon escapement was within the SEG range at Sunday Creek, and in the Bruin River. The pink salmon escapement to the Bruin River was within the SEG and below 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.

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 common property 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 with 2,924 donated at the weir to members of the public. Portions of Resurrection Bay were open for commercial common property harvest from June 18 through July 13. During this time 5 permit holders reported harvesting 22,957 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.

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	762	5	32,314	34,856	67,939
Eastern District	5	0	22,957	0	12	67	23,036
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				2,924
Hatchery preliminary total		2	241,866	79	997,613	82	1,239,642
LCI preliminary total harvest		381	370,460	14,110	1,564,079	48,729	1,997,759

Announcement recordings are available on the 24-hour telephone recording in the Homer office at 907/235-7307.

Additionally, announcements, inseason harvest data, and escapement data are available at the following web address:

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

Unless otherwise specified, all openings are clock openings based on Alaska Daylight Time, which is based on Coordinated Universal Time and may be obtained by calling 303-499-7111.