

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



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**2010 BRISTOL BAY SALMON SEASON SUMMARY**

The following is an overview of the 2010 Bristol Bay commercial salmon season. Fishing has been completed in all districts and preliminary harvest totals should be representative for all species.

The 2010 inshore Bristol Bay sockeye salmon run of approximately 40.19 million fish and preliminary catch of 29 million sockeye rank 17<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup>, respectively, since statehood. This year's total inshore run was 6% above the 20-year average (1990–2009) of 37.97 million and was 1% higher than the preseason forecast of 39.77 million fish. Two of five districts attained harvests above preseason expectations; the Naknek–Kvichak District harvest of 10.66 million sockeye salmon was 28% above forecast and the Ugashik District harvest of 4.05 million sockeye salmon was 15% above forecast. The Nushagak District harvest at 8.3 million was the second largest in the history of the district. The total Nushagak run was 11.1 million sockeye salmon or about 5% above the preseason forecast. The Togiak and Egegik Districts were 21% and 45% below forecast, respectively. The commercial harvest of sockeye salmon was 5% below the 30.53 million preseason forecast. Total Bristol Bay escapement was 11.5 million sockeye salmon.

Approximately 31,400 Chinook salmon were harvested in Bristol Bay in 2010. This is 48% of the average harvest for the last 20 years. Chum salmon harvest of 1.09 million fish was 15% above the 20-year average of 946,000 fish. Coho salmon harvest of approximately 104,000 fish was 7% above the 20-year average of 93,000. Pink salmon harvest was approximately 1.34 million fish. There was significant market interest in pink salmon in the Nushagak District which resulted in a bay wide pink salmon harvest almost 800% higher than the even year average over the last 20 years.

**EXVESSEL VALUE**

The 2010 harvest of all salmon species in Bristol Bay was approximately 31 million fish. To derive a preliminary estimate of the exvessel value of the fishery, the figures listed in the following table were used. These figures represent an estimate since the contribution of future price adjustments, loyalty bonuses, and differential prices for refrigerated versus non-refrigerated

fish were not included. The calculated preliminary exvessel value of the 2010 Bristol Bay salmon fishery is approximately \$153.12 million, which is 35% above the 20-year average, and ranks 7<sup>th</sup> over that same period.

Species	Average price/Lb.	Average Weight	Number of Fish	Total Weight	Value
Sockeye	\$0.95	5.5	28,594,518	155,949,015	\$148,703,323
Chinook	\$0.98	14.7	31,402	460,774	\$449,264
Chum	\$0.27	6.4	1,091,269	6,989,494	\$1,887,574
Pink	\$0.37	3.2	1,339,596	4,320,060	\$1,578,230
Coho	\$0.53	8.9	104,373	930,613	\$496,649
Totals			31,161,158	168,649,956	\$153,115,042

### ALLOCATION

The 2010 season was the 13<sup>th</sup> year of managing drift and set gillnet sockeye salmon harvest allocation in four of the five districts in Bristol Bay. The Togiak District is excluded from the allocation plan. The following table lists the allocations adopted by the Alaska Board of Fisheries in November, 1997 and the resulting harvests by gear group, from June 1 to July 17, for the 2010 season.

District	Drift Net Percent of Harvest Allocated /Caught	Set Net Percent of Harvest Allocated /Caught	Set Net Percent of Harvest Allocated /Caught
			<i>Naknek:</i> 8% / 10%
<i>Naknek / Kvichak</i>	84% / 81%	16% / 19%	<i>Kvichak:</i> 8% / 9%
<i>Egegik</i>	86% / 84%	14% / 16%	Not applicable
<i>Ugashik</i>	90% / 90%	10% / 10%	Not applicable
	74% / 78 %	26% / 23%	<i>Nushagak:</i> 20% / 17%
<i>Nushagak</i>	WRSHA: 74% / 71%	WRSHA: 26% / 29%	<i>Igushik:</i> 6% / 6%

Strategies used to achieve allocation percentages between gear groups included varying the amount of fishing time and providing separate gear group openings.

### SPECIES PERFORMANCE

#### Sockeye Salmon

The 2010 inshore sockeye salmon run of 40.19 million fish was 1% higher than the preseason forecast of 39.77 million. Runs versus forecasts by district with deviations from forecast are listed below.

District	Forecast	Inshore Run	Deviation from Forecast
Naknek-Kvichak	13,000,000	17,518,183	35% more
Egegik	10,630,000	5,890,103	45% less
Ugashik	4,500,000	4,824,148	7% more
Nushagak	10,610,000	11,100,363	5% more
Togiak	1,030,000	858,289	17% less
Totals	39,770,000	40,190,936	1% more

2010 preliminary commercial sockeye harvests compared to the 20-year averages by district:

<b>District</b>	<b>1989–2008 Average Sockeye Harvest</b>	<b>2010 Sockeye Harvest</b>
Naknek-Kvichak	8,504,000	10,659,115
Egegik	8,703,000	4,963,049
Nushagak	5,232,000	8,309,283
Ugashik	2,694,000	3,993,080
Togiak	491,000	669,991
Totals	25,677,000	28,594,518

Sockeye salmon escapements by river system are listed in the following table. Escapements into the Igushik, Wood and Naknek Rivers were above established ranges. All other systems were within established ranges.

<b>River System</b>	<b>SEG Range</b>	<b>Escapement</b>
Kvichak River	2,000,000–10,000,000	4,207,410
Naknek River	800,000–1,400,000	1,463,928
Alagnak River <sup>a</sup>	320,000 minimum	1,187,730
Egegik River	800,000–1,400,000	926,904
Ugashik River	500,000–1,200,000	805,686
Nushagak River <sup>b</sup>	340,000–760,000	468,696
Wood River	700,000–1,500,000	1,804,344
Igushik River	150,000–300,000	518,040
Togiak River <sup>c</sup>	120,000–270,000	188,298

<sup>a</sup> Alagnak River lower bound SEG is 320,000 with no upper bound since the stock is not actively managed.

<sup>b</sup> Nushagak River optimal escapement goal (OEG) is 235,000–760,000.

<sup>c</sup> Togiak River has a biological escapement goal (BEG) of 120,000–270,000. All other escapement goals for sockeye salmon in Bristol Bay are Sustainable Escapement Goals (SEG).

A potential issue with processing capacity was the only major preseason concern entering the 2010 Bristol Bay salmon season. In a pattern similar to the last 4 years, the winter of 2009–2010 was colder than the historic average, suggesting that run timing might be delayed by a few days. Given the projected harvest of 30.53 million sockeye, the department planned to allow more fishing time early in the run. At the December 2009 Alaska Board of Fisheries meeting the board also changed regulations with the goal of encouraging early season fishing. The board adopted regulations allowing fishermen to fish eastside districts prior to June 25 without having to register their permit or vessel. Although this new regulation did seem to increase the number of participants fishing in eastside districts prior to June 25, the run timing in 2010 seemed a little later and the total harvest through June 25 was only 1.2 million sockeye salmon. With recent improvements in total processing capacity and staggered run timing of individual river systems, no catch limits were imposed in 2010. The total harvest was 6% below and total inshore run was 1% above forecast. Also of significance in 2010, the Naknek River Special Harvest Area (NRSHA) was not opened for the third season since 1995. The Wood River Special Harvest Area (WRSHA) was opened for the conservation of Nushagak sockeye salmon for 5 tides beginning on July 6. By July 8, the Nushagak sockeye salmon escapement was back to

appropriate levels and fishing was reopened in the Nushagak Section of the Nushagak District. The WRSHA stayed open under new regulations passed at the December 2009 Alaska Board of Fisheries meeting. This regulation allows fishing in the WRSHA if the escapement exceeds 1.1 million and is projected to exceed 1.4 million.

### Chinook Salmon

Chinook salmon harvests in Bristol Bay districts were below average in every district. There were three directed Chinook fishing periods in the Nushagak District with a total harvest of approximately 1,100 Chinook salmon. After the third directed Chinook salmon opening, escapement into the Nushagak River started to fall below expected daily levels and failed to reach several trigger points in the management plan. Over the course of the season, sport fishing was restricted to catch and release and the use of bait was prohibited. Ultimately, the sport fishery was closed completely and subsistence fishing was reduced to 3 days per week in the Nushagak drainage for the conservation of Chinook salmon. The total Chinook salmon escapement into the Nushagak River was 36,625. This is the first time since enumeration began, in 1980, that the minimum escapement goal of 40,000 was not achieved for Nushagak Chinook salmon. The total Nushagak District Chinook salmon harvest was 25,581.

2010 Chinook salmon preliminary harvest data by district.

<b>District</b>	<b>1989–2008 Average Chinook Harvest</b>	<b>2010 Chinook Harvest</b>
Naknek-Kvichak	3,099	369
Egegik	939	56
Ugashik	1,462	314
Nushagak	52,306	25,581
Togiak	9,302	5,082
<b>Totals</b>	<b>64,869</b>	<b>31,402</b>

### Chum Salmon

The 2010 total Bristol Bay chum salmon harvest was approximately 1.09 million fish. Naknek-Kvichak and Nushagak Districts produced harvests above their 20-year averages while Egegik, Ugashik and Togiak Districts produced less chum salmon than their 20-year averages. The Nushagak District was the largest producer of chum salmon, where over 509,000 fish were harvested.

### Pink Salmon

Pink salmon runs are strong during even years in Bristol Bay. For the first time since 1984, there was a significant directed pink salmon fishery in Bristol Bay and especially within the Nushagak District. The department worked with stakeholders over the winter to devise and implement a plan designed to provide harvest opportunity for pink salmon while protecting pink and coho salmon stocks. The plan allowed fishing 6 days a week for 15 hours a day. Three days were limited to pink gear only and 3 days were unlimited in mesh size to provide some opportunity to harvest coho salmon while mostly targeting pink salmon. The daily fishing time could be reduced if effort increased above expected levels. The fishery was very successful with over 1.2 million pink salmon harvested in the Nushagak District and 1.3 million harvested Bay wide.

### Coho Salmon

The bay-wide harvest of approximately 104,000 coho salmon was 7% above the recent 20-year average of 97,000. The majority of the coho harvest was in the Nushagak District, where most fish were caught from mid July to mid August. The primary fishery in the Nushagak District after the sockeye salmon season was for pink salmon with coho salmon harvested incidentally although there was some directed coho salmon harvest.

## Preliminary 2010 Bristol Bay salmon harvest and escapement by district and species.

<b>District</b>	<b>Sockeye</b>	<b>Chinook</b>	<b>Chum</b>	<b>Pink</b>	<b>Coho</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Naknek-Kvichak Catch	10,659,115	369	330,342	8,237	1,006	10,999,069
Escapement-						
Kvichak Tower	4,207,410	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	4,207,410
Naknek Tower	1,463,928	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	1,463,928
Alagnak Tower	1,187,730	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	1,187,730
<b>NK Subtotal</b>	<b>17,518,183</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>330,342</b>	<b>8,237</b>	<b>1,006</b>	<b>17,858,137</b>
Egegik Catch	4,963,049	56	58,979	1,655	9,984	5,033,723
Escapement-Egegik						
Tower	926,904	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	926,904
other <sup>a</sup>	150	188	5,560	N.A.	N.A.	5,898
<b>Egegik Subtotal</b>	<b>5,890,103</b>	<b>244</b>	<b>64,539</b>	<b>1,655</b>	<b>9,984</b>	<b>5,966,525</b>
Ugashik Catch	3,993,080	314	68,617	0	467	4,062,478
Escapement-Ugashik						
Tower	805,686	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	805,686
other <sup>b</sup>	25,200	295	2,222	N.A.	N.A.	27,717
<b>Ugashik Subtotal</b>	<b>4,823,966</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>70,839</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>467</b>	<b>4,895,881</b>
Nushagak Catch	8,309,283	25,581	509,628	1,289,970	69,186	10,203,648
Escapement- Wood						
Tower	1,804,344	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	1,804,344
Igushik	518,040	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	518,040
Nushagak	468,696	36,625	273,914	N.A.	N.A.	779,235
<b>Nushagak Subtotal</b>	<b>11,100,363</b>	<b>62,206</b>	<b>783,542</b>	<b>1,289,970</b>	<b>69,186</b>	<b>13,305,267</b>
Togiak Catch	669,991	5,082	123,703	39,734	23,730	862,240
Escapement - Togiak						
Tower	188,298	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	188,298
Togiak R. & Trib.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	0
Kulukak	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	N.A.	0
<b>Togiak Subtotal</b>	<b>858,289</b>	<b>5,082</b>	<b>123,703</b>	<b>39,734</b>	<b>23,730</b>	<b>1,050,538</b>
Bristol Bay Catch	28,594,518	31,402	1,091,269	1,339,596	104,373	31,161,158
Bristol Bay Escapement	11,596,386	39,304	431,696	N.A.	N.A.	12,067,386
<b>Bristol Bay Total Run</b>	<b>40,190,904</b>	<b>70,706</b>	<b>1,522,965</b>	<b>1,339,596</b>	<b>104,373</b>	<b>43,228,544</b>

*Note:* Escapement data for coho are incomplete (in most cases the data are escapement index counts). Total run data do not include sport or subsistence harvests.

<sup>a</sup> Includes aerial surveys of King Salmon River drainage and Shosky Creek.

<sup>b</sup> Includes aerial surveys of King and Dog Salmon Rivers.