



THE STATE  
of **ALASKA**  
GOVERNOR BILL WALKER

**Department of  
Fish and Game**

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES  
Westward Region Office




351 Research Court  
Kodiak, Alaska 99615-6327  
Main: 907.486.1825  
Fax: 907.486.1841

TO: Nick Sagalkin  
Regional Supervisor  
Division of Commercial Fisheries, Region IV

DATE: October 27, 2015

THRU:  Jeff Wadle  
Regional Finfish Management Biologist  
Division of Commercial Fisheries, Region IV

SUBJECT: Alaska Peninsula  
and Aleutian Islands  
Salmon Season Summary

FROM: Bob Murphy,  Matthew Keyse,  Lisa Fox, Reid Johnson,  Charles Russell  
Division of Commercial Fisheries  
Region IV – Kodiak

- |                                 |                                 |                     |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------|
| cc: Cotten                      | Kelley                          | Sagalkin            |
| Bowers                          | Linderman                       | Foster              |
| Salomone                        | Brazil                          | Russell             |
| Tracy                           | Dorner                          | Wattum              |
| Bergstrom                       | Polum                           | Elison              |
| Volk                            | Fair                            | Fall                |
| Menard                          | Wilburn                         | Sands               |
| Jackson                         | Finkle                          | Spalinger,G         |
| Lechner                         | Schaberg                        | Greer               |
| Aleutians East Borough          | Anderson                        | City of Cold Bay    |
| Chignik AC                      | Sand Point AC                   | Nelson Lagoon AC    |
| AK Pen Fishermen's Coop         | False Pass AC                   | City of Unalaska    |
| King Cove AC                    | City of Sand Point              | Dutch Harbor AC     |
| City of King Cove               | City of Port Heiden             | Kodiak AC           |
| City of Nelson Lagoon           | City of False Pass              | Adak Fisheries      |
| Concerned Area M Fishermen      | Peninsula Marketing Assoc.      | Peter Pan Seafood's |
| USFWS – King Salmon             | Bristol Bay Driftnetters Assoc. | Trident Seafood's   |
| United Chignik Salmon Fishermen |                                 |                     |

The following is an overview of the 2015 Alaska Peninsula, Aleutian Islands, and Atka-Amlia Islands areas (Figure 1) commercial salmon fishing season. Total harvest presented from the 2015 commercial salmon fishing season should closely approximate final harvest numbers for all species. The 2015 commercial salmon harvest in the Alaska Peninsula, Aleutian Islands, and Atka-Amlia Islands Management areas totaled 53,876 Chinook, 5,935,675 sockeye, 322,791 coho, 16,695,994 pink, and 867,279 chum salmon (Table 1). Subsistence salmon harvest will be reported in the 2015 annual

management report (AMR). Data detailed in this report are considered preliminary. Preliminary exvessel value of salmon harvested in Area M totaled \$33,257,880 (Table 2). Exvessel value information was generated from fish tickets and does not include postseason adjustments paid to fishermen.

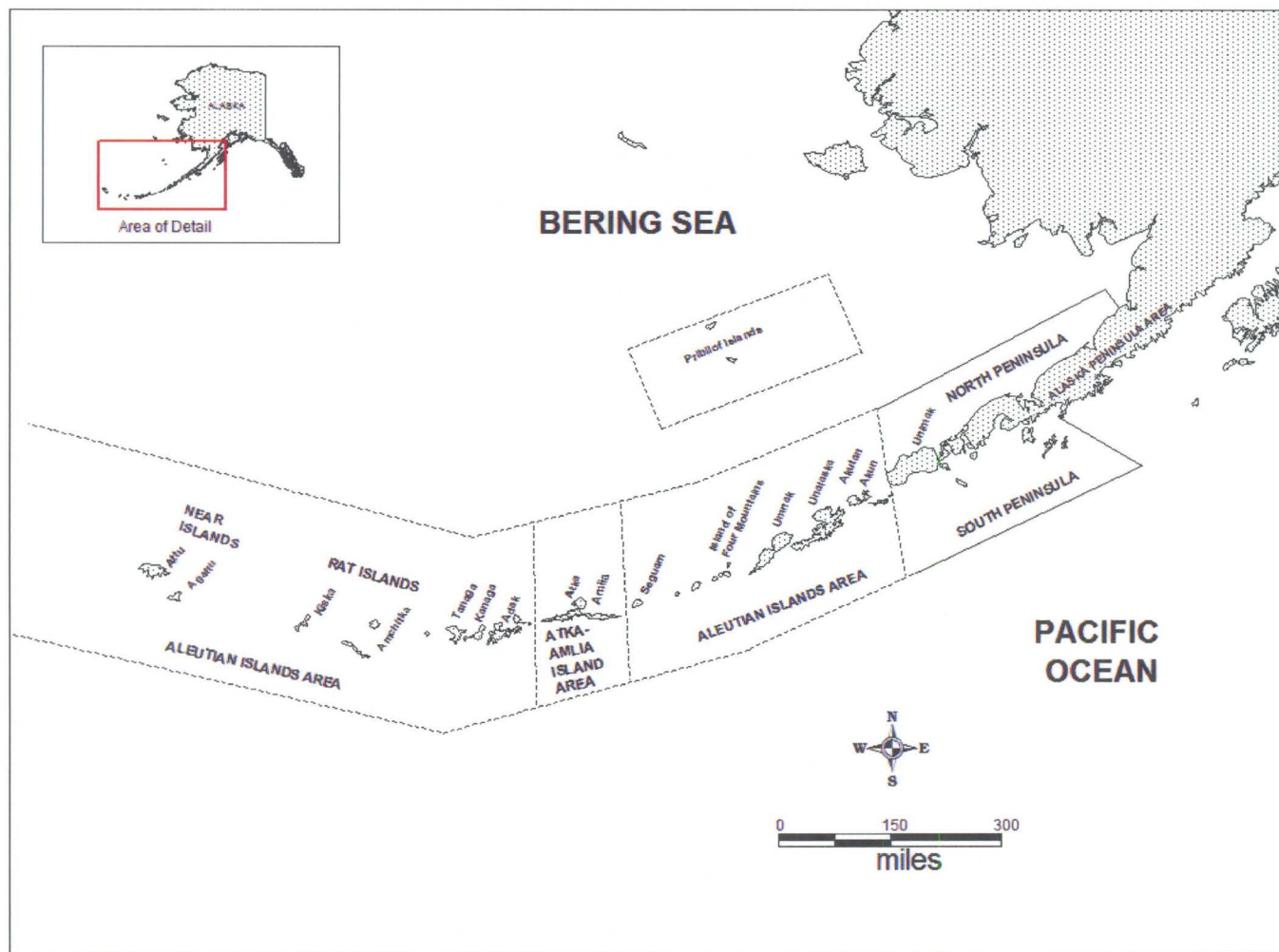


Figure 1.—Map of the Aleutian Islands, Atka-Amlia Islands, and Alaska Peninsula Management areas.

Table 1.—Alaska Peninsula, Aleutian Islands, and Atka-Amlia Islands commercial salmon harvest, 2015.

Location	Number of Fish					Total
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	
South Peninsula	51,077	3,207,360	265,652	16,683,602	675,603	20,883,294
North Peninsula	2,799	2,728,315	57,139	12,392	191,676	2,992,321
Aleutian Islands	0	0	0	0	0	0
Atka-Amlia Islands	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>53,876</b>	<b>5,935,675</b>	<b>322,791</b>	<b>16,695,994</b>	<b>867,279</b>	<b>23,875,615</b>

Table 2.—Preliminary commercial ex-vessel values by fishery and species, 2015.

Location	Value					Total
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	
S. Unimak-Shumagin June Fishery	\$204,004	\$3,552,094	\$35,941	\$259,179	\$220,701	\$4,271,919
Southeastern District Mainland Fishery	\$1,806	\$2,195,672	\$46,886	\$872,397	\$89,634	\$3,206,395
South Peninsula Post- Post-June Fishery	\$31,393	\$6,395,667	\$484,012	\$8,366,038	\$772,003	\$16,049,112
Total	\$237,203	\$12,143,433	\$566,839	\$9,497,614	\$1,082,338	\$23,527,427
Northwestern District	\$278	\$111,358	\$1,446	\$3,122	\$257,238	\$373,442
Northern District	\$48,297	\$9,087,537	\$159,911	\$3,507	\$57,760	\$9,357,011
Total	\$48,575	\$9,198,895	\$161,357	\$6,629	\$314,998	\$9,730,453
Aleutian Islands Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Atka-Amlia Islands Total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$285,778	\$21,342,328	\$728,196	\$9,504,243	\$1,397,336	\$33,257,880

### South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June Fisheries

The South Unimak and Shumagin Islands fishing season began on June 7 for set gillnet gear and on June 10 for seine and drift gillnet gear. There were four 88-hour and one 64-hour fishing periods for set gillnet gear and four 88-hour fishing periods for seine and drift gillnet gear. The commercial salmon harvest for the June fishery consisted of 44,389 Chinook, 1,115,504 sockeye, 20,193 coho, 573,104 pink, and 178,715 chum salmon (Table 3).

Table 3.—Total June salmon harvests in numbers of fish for the South Unimak and Shumagin Islands fisheries, excluding home pack, 2015.

	Number of salmon					Total
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	
South Unimak	6,643	618,485	740	67,604	42,306	735,778
Shumagin Islands	37,746	497,019	19,453	505,500	136,409	1,196,127
Total	44,389	1,115,504	20,193	573,104	178,715	1,931,905



### Southeastern District Mainland

From June 1 to July 25, the Southeastern District Mainland (SEDM; excluding the Northwest Stepovak Section (NWSS) beginning July 1) is managed based on the strength of the Chignik sockeye salmon run. Due to the later run timing of sockeye salmon returns to Chignik River in 2015, the Chignik Management Area (CMA) remained closed to commercial salmon fishing until June 24. During years in which it appears that the sockeye salmon harvest will be greater than 600,000 fish in the CMA, but the first run fails to develop, commercial salmon fishing will be curtailed in the East Stepovak, Stepovak Flats, Southwest Stepovak, Balboa Bay and Beaver Bay sections of SEDM until the department projects that 600,000 fish will be harvested in the CMA. The harvest exceeded 600,000 sockeye salmon on July 15, and one 48-hour commercial fishing period was permitted on July 16. A total of 187 Chinook, 123,091 sockeye, 6,507 coho, 59,989 pink, and 7,796 chum salmon were harvested during the allocation period from June 1 through July 25 (Table 4).

Beginning July 1, NWSS of SEDM is managed on the strength of the Orzinski Lake sockeye salmon run. Due to the later run timing of sockeye salmon returning to Orzinski Lake, the first commercial fishing period in the NWSS began on July 10. There were a total of three 96-hour fishing periods in the NWSS prior to July 26. The cumulative sockeye salmon escapement in Orzinski Lake of 26,600 fish was above the upper-end of the sustainable escapement goal (SEG) of 15,000–20,000 sockeye salmon. Due to the high escapement levels, Orzinski Bay was open continuously from July 10 through the end of the season. Closed water markers were reduced to the stream mouth on July 28. The total harvest in the NWSS from July 1 through July 25 was 44 Chinook, 110,527 sockeye, 1,306 coho, 18,223 pink, and 4,448 chum salmon (Table 4).

From July 26 through August 31, SEDM is managed based on the abundance of local salmon stocks. Due to strong returns of pink and chum salmon into SEDM streams, weekly fishing periods were established throughout the month of August and September that were interspersed by 36-hour closures. The total harvest in SEDM for the 2015 season was 261 Chinook, 624,096 sockeye, 22,646 coho, 1,595,876 pink, and 56,299 chum salmon (Table 4).

Table 4.–Preliminary Southeastern District Mainland salmon harvest, excluding home pack, 2015.

Location	Number of Salmon				
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum
June 1–June 30	0	0	0	0	0
July 1–July 25 SEDM <sup>a</sup>	187	123,091	6,507	59,989	7,796
July 1–July 25 NWSS <sup>b</sup>	44	110,527	1,306	18,223	4,448
August (July 26–August 31)	30	376,983	11,921	1,516,941	43,819
September	0	13,495	2,912	723	236
<b>Total</b>	<b>261</b>	<b>624,096</b>	<b>22,646</b>	<b>1,595,876</b>	<b>56,299</b>

<sup>a</sup> Southeastern District Mainland (excluding Northwest Stepovak Section).

<sup>b</sup> Northwest Stepovak Section

### South Peninsula Post-June Fishery

Prior to the South Peninsula Post-June fishery, the department conducts a test fishery to determine immature salmon abundance in the Shumagin Islands. Test fishing occurred on July 2, 8, and 9. The first test fishery, which occurred on July 2, resulted in 985 Chinook, 54 sockeye, 19 coho, and 194 chum immature salmon per set, for an average greater than 100 immature salmon per set. As a result, the seine fleet was closed to commercial salmon fishing in the Shumagin Islands of the Southeastern District during the first 33-hour fishing period that occurred on July 6. The second test fishery resulted in 322 Chinook, 87 sockeye, 29 coho, and 254 chum immature salmon per set, for an average of less than 100 immature salmon per set. The final test fishery resulted in approximately 191 Chinook, 95 sockeye, 9 coho, and 168 chum immature salmon per set respectively, for an average of less than 100 immature salmon per set. A reduction in the amount of immature salmon harvested during the test fishery on July 8 and July 9, permitted the seine fleet to harvest salmon in the Shumagin Islands section during the second commercial fishing period that occurred on July 10.

From July 6 through July 31, there was a 33-hour fishing period, followed by a 63-hour closure, followed by six 36-hour fishing periods, separated by 60-hour closures. During August, the Post-June fishery is managed based on the abundance of local stocks. In September and October, management focuses on coho salmon returns, though the status of late pink and chum salmon returns may also be taken into consideration.

The total commercial harvest for the South Peninsula Post-June fishery (including the SEDM from July 26–October 31) was 6,457 Chinook, 1,858,238 sockeye, 237,646 coho, 16,032,286 pink, and 484,644 chum salmon (Table 5).

Table 5.–Post-June South Peninsula commercial salmon harvest, excluding home pack, 2015.

Location	Number of Salmon				
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum
South Peninsula Post-June harvest	6,427	1,467,760	222,813	14,514,622	440,589
Post-June SEDM harvest (July 26– October 31)	30	390,478	14,833	1,517,664	44,055
Total Post-June harvest	6,457	1,858,238	237,646	16,032,286	484,644

### South Peninsula Escapement

The South Peninsula indexed sockeye salmon escapement of 88,010 fish (Table 6) was above the management objective range of 48,200–86,400 fish. Mortensen Lagoon and Thin Point did not meet their respective SEGs from aerial surveys due to poor surveying conditions. However, reports from sport and subsistence groups suggest that sockeye salmon returns were considerably stronger than what could be estimated from aerial surveys. Pink salmon total escapement of 7,820,800 fish (Table 6) was above the SEG range of 1,637,800–3,275,700 fish. Chum salmon indexed total escapement of 906,420 fish (Table 6) was above the cumulative district escapement goal range of 330,400–660,800 fish. A total of 2,320 coho salmon (Table 6) were documented in South Peninsula streams. Some of the major coho salmon systems are typically not surveyed or surveyed during off-peak times. A lack of escapement information for coho salmon is due to the departure of management staff from the South Peninsula



region prior to peak coho salmon runs and poor weather conditions during the peak coho salmon runs preventing aerial surveys from being conducted.

Table 6.—South Peninsula indexed salmon escapement by species and year, 2007–2015.

Year	Number of Salmon				
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum
2007	0	69,013	110,800	2,680,213	726,661
2008	0	95,859	19,600	3,338,370	591,950
2009	0	128,117	108,855	3,067,000	512,230
2010	0	38,039	260	742,912	291,912
2011	0	59,794	3,100	2,494,950	497,725
2012	0	55,900	7,910	478,910	205,242
2013	0	31,386	0	2,320,790	502,600
2014	0	38,120	9,050	1,340,380	313,545
2015	0	88,010	2,320	7,820,800	906,420
2010–2014 Average	0	44,648	4,064	1,475,588	362,205

### Aleutian Islands Fishery and Escapement

The Aleutian Islands Area may open to commercial salmon fishing by emergency order if adequate escapement is observed and there is interest from the fishing industry. During an aerial survey in July of the Aleutian Islands, an inadequate amount of pink salmon (approximately 37,000 fish) were observed in streams. The low abundance of pink salmon in the Unalaska Area did not allow for a commercial salmon fishery to occur in 2015. McLees Lake had a sockeye salmon escapement of 12,424 fish and met the SEG of 10,000-60,000 sockeye salmon.

### North Alaska Peninsula

#### Commercial Harvest

In 2015, 164 Area M permit holders participated in commercial salmon fisheries along the North Alaska Peninsula (Figure 2). There was no effort by Area T permit holders. The number of Area M permit holders participating in 2015 was far below the historic numbers observed during the 1990s.

The North Alaska Peninsula fishery is predominantly a sockeye salmon fishery, although depending on market conditions, directed Chinook, coho, and chum salmon fisheries occur in some locations. During even-numbered years, depending on market conditions, pink salmon runs are frequently targeted in the Northwestern District.

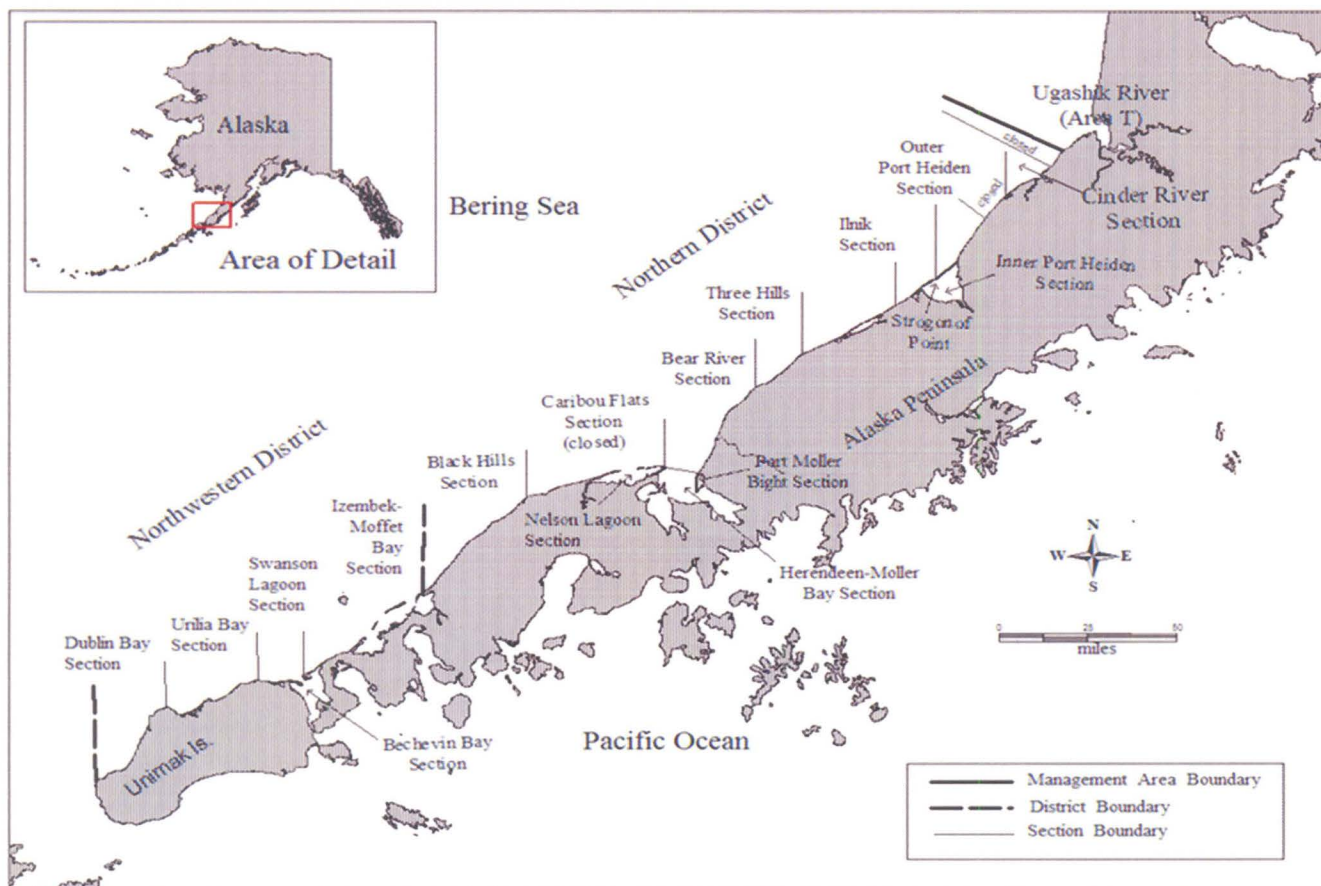


Figure 2.– Alaska Peninsula with North Alaska Peninsula commercial salmon fishing districts depicted.

In 2015 the harvest of Chinook, sockeye and chum salmon on the North Peninsula exceeded projected harvest levels, while the harvest of pink and coho salmon were below projected harvest levels. The North Alaska Peninsula harvest of sockeye, pink, and chum salmon were above the previous 10-year (2005–2014) averages for each species, while the harvest of Chinook and coho salmon were below the 10-year averages (Table 7).

Table 7.—The total 2015 North Alaska Peninsula commercial salmon harvest, excluding home pack and department test fishery, and 2015 projected harvest and 2005–2014 average harvest.

	Number of Salmon				
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum
2015 Season Total	2,799	2,728,315	57,139	12,392	191,676
Projected Harvest	1,400	2,000,000	100,000	20,000	175,000
2005–2014 Average <sup>a</sup>	3,710	1,993,097	67,995	3,707	153,267

<sup>a</sup> Pink salmon averages are for odd-numbered years only, 2005–2014.

### In-Season Management

#### Northwestern District

In the 2015 Northwestern District commercial salmon fishery a total of 50 Chinook, 31,705 sockeye, 599 coho, 6,087 pink, and 155,102 chum salmon were harvested (Table 8). A total of 8 permit holders participated in the fishery, consisting of 5 purse seiners and 3 drift gillnetters.

Table 8.—Northwestern District commercial salmon harvest, excluding home pack and department test fishery, by section, all gear combined, 2015.

Location	Number of Salmon				
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum
Dublin Bay Section	0	0	0	0	0
Urilia Bay Section	0	0	0	0	0
Swanson Lagoon Section	0	0	0	0	0
Bechevin Bay Section	0	0	0	0	0
Izembek-Moffet Bay Section	50	31,705	599	6,087	155,102
2015 Northwestern District Total	50	31,705	599	6,087	155,102
2005–2014 NW District Average	10	56,959	1,263	60,795	107,092

In the Northwestern District, the chum salmon escapement of 89,800 fish (Table 9) was below the chum salmon SEG of 100,000–215,000 fish. This escapement estimate represents a minimum; the actual escapement likely being greater due to very poor survey conditions in one of the major chum salmon producing streams in the Northwestern District streams. The sockeye salmon escapement for 2015 in the Northwestern District was within the escapement goal range of 52,600 – 106,000 fish with a total escapement of 69,690 fish (Table 9).

Table 9.—Northwestern District salmon escapement by species and section, 2015.

Location	Number of Salmon				
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum
Urilia Bay Section	0	49,700	0	0	0
Swanson Lagoon Section	0	4,000	0	0	0
Bechevin Bay Section	0	0	0	136,300	29,000
Izembek-Moffet Bay Section	0	16,260	20	29,500	60,800
Northwestern District Total	0	69,960	20	165,800	89,800



### Black Hills Section

Due to the lack of extensive closures during 2015 in the Bear, Three Hills, and Ilnik sections in the Northern District, effort by the drift gillnet fleet in the Black Hills Section (Figure 3) was limited. A total of 34,342 sockeye salmon (Table 10) and 16,577 chum salmon were harvested in the Black Hills Section in 2015. Weekly fishing periods occurred throughout the season in the Black Hills Section. North Creek is the only river in the Black Hills Section with a sockeye salmon escapement goal. The 2015 North Creek salmon escapement of 18,000 sockeye salmon (determined by aerial surveys) exceeded the escapement goal of 4,400–8,800 fish.

Table 10.—North Alaska Peninsula sockeye salmon commercial harvest, excluding home pack and department test fishery, by statistical area or combination of statistical areas, 2015.

Area <sup>a</sup>	Sockeye Salmon Harvest	Percent of Total
311-20 Dublin Bay, 311-32 Urilia Bay 311-52	0	0.00
311-60 Bechevin Bay	0	0.00
312-20 Izembek Lagoon, and 312-40 Moffet Bay	21,678	0.80
311-58, 312-10 Outside Izembek-Moffet	10,027	0.37
<b>Northwestern District Total</b>	<b>31,705</b>	<b>1.16</b>
313-10 Black Hills Section	34,342	1.26
313-30 Nelson Lagoon Section	312,894	11.48
314-12 Port Moller Bight <sup>b</sup>	-	-
314-20 PM & Herendeen Bays <sup>b</sup>	-	-
315-11 Bear River	384,005	14.09
315-20 NE Bear River	111,404	4.09
<i>Bear River Total (314-12,315-11,315-20)</i>	<i>495,409</i>	<i>18.17</i>
316-10 Three Hills Section	519,880	19.07
316-20 Ilnik SW of Unangashak Bluffs	306,887	11.26
316-22 Ilnik Lagoon	0	0.00
316-25 Ilnik NE of Unangashak Bluffs	157,269	5.77
<i>Ilnik Section Total (316-20,316-22,316-25)</i>	<i>464,156</i>	<i>17.03</i>
317-20 Inner Port Heiden Section <sup>c</sup>	-	-
317-10 Outer Port Heiden Section	867,674	31.83
318-20 Cinder River Section	0	0.00
<i>Cinder River and Port Heiden Total (317-20,317-10,318-20)</i>	<i>867,674</i>	<i>31.83</i>
<b>Northern District Total<sup>d</sup></b>	<b>2,696,610</b>	<b>98.84</b>
<b>Total North Peninsula<sup>d</sup></b>	<b>2,728,315</b>	<b>100.00</b>

<sup>a</sup> Some statistical areas are combined because the low number of participants makes the information confidential.

<sup>b</sup> Confidentiality requirements prohibit reporting harvest.

<sup>c</sup> No effort occurred in 2015.

<sup>d</sup> Totals include numbers excluded for confidentiality purposes.

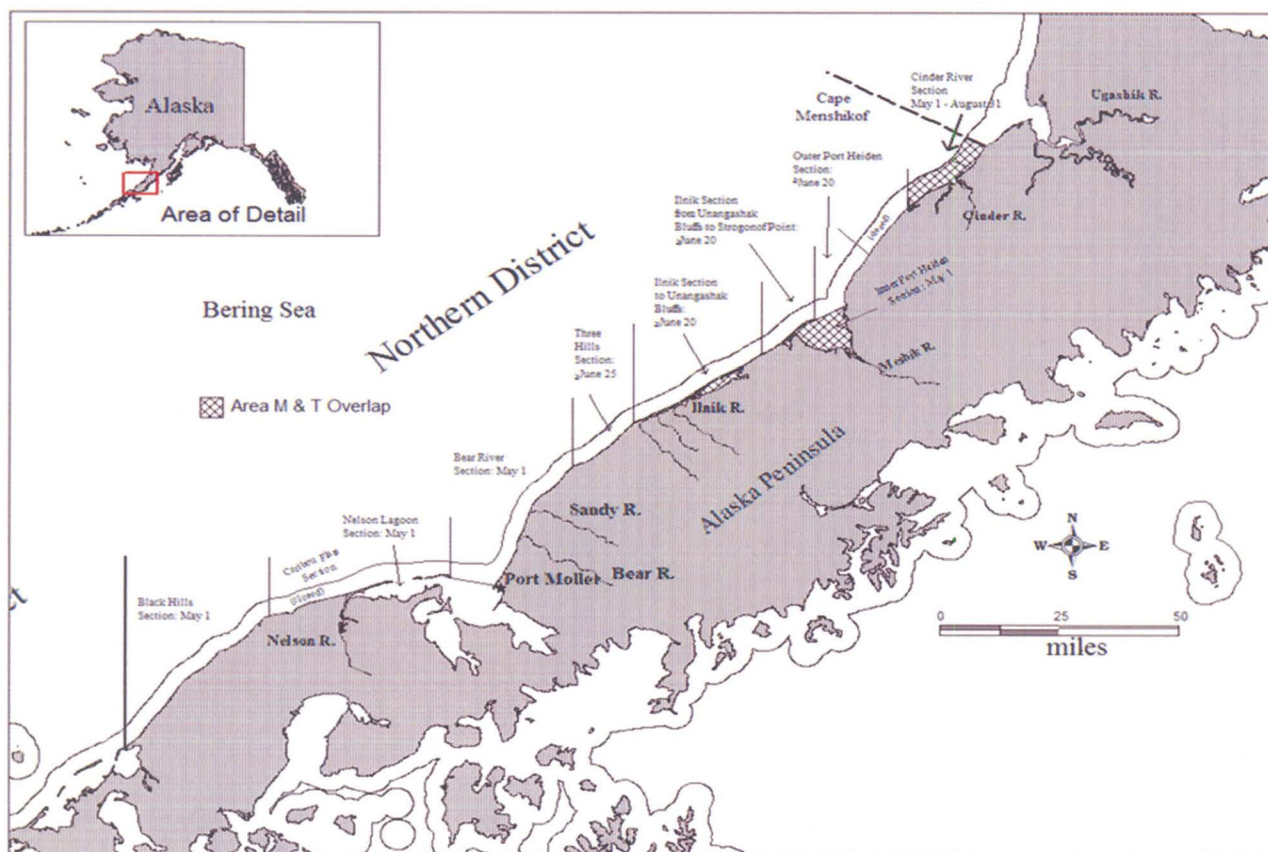


Figure 3.—Northern District commercial salmon fishing sections with earliest opening dates depicted.

### Nelson Lagoon Section

The Nelson (Sapsuk) River (Figure 3) total run of 569,894 sockeye salmon (includes harvest and escapement) exceeded the estimated forecast of 419,000 sockeye salmon. From the total run, 312,894 sockeye salmon were harvested in Nelson Lagoon (Table 10) and 257,000 fish escaped (Table 11) in the Nelson River. The 2015 sockeye salmon escapement into Nelson River exceeded the biological escapement goal (BEG) of 97,000–219,000 fish (Table 11).

The Nelson Lagoon Section was opened for all regularly scheduled fishing periods along with many extensions in fishing time in 2015. Beginning August 15, the Nelson Lagoon Section may be managed on local coho salmon runs. In 2015, 45,000 coho salmon were observed in Nelson River escapement exceeding the Nelson River SEG threshold of 18,000 fish.



Table 11.—North Alaska Peninsula sockeye salmon escapements and goals, 2015.

	Escapement <sup>a</sup>	Goal
Nelson (Sapsuk) River	257,000	97,000–219,000
Sandy River	116,000	34,000–74,000
Ilnik and Ocean Rivers	26,000	40,000–60,000
<i>Bear Lake early run</i>	304,356	176,000–293,000
<i>Bear Lake late run</i>	210,644	117,000–195,000
Bear Lake Total	515,000	293,000–488,000
Subtotal for systems with weirs	914,000	464,000–841,000
Subtotal for systems without weirs	463,460	53,400–106,800
North Peninsula Total	1,377,460	517,400–947,800

<sup>a</sup> Includes an estimate of sockeye salmon after removal of the weirs.

### **Bear River and Three Hills Sections**

By regulation, the Bear River Section (Figure 3) opens to commercial salmon fishing on May 1 while the Three Hills Section opens June 25. Both areas are managed based on the sockeye salmon run strength into Bear and Sandy rivers. In 2015, Bear and Sandy rivers experienced strong salmon runs and extensive closures that occurred in recent years were not necessary. A total of 495,409 sockeye salmon were harvested in the Bear River Section during 2015 and 519,880 sockeye salmon were harvested in the Three Hills Section (Table 10).

The Bear River early-run (through July 31) sockeye salmon escapement of 304,356 fish exceeded the escapement goal of 176,000–293,000 fish (Table 11). The Bear River late-run (after July 31) sockeye salmon escapement of 210,644 exceeded the late-run escapement goal of 117,000–195,000 fish. The Bear River season sockeye salmon escapement was 515,000 fish (Table 11), which exceeded the season escapement goal of 293,000–488,000 fish.

The 2015 Sandy River sockeye salmon escapement of 116,000 fish (Table 11) exceeded the season ending escapement goal range of 34,000–74,000 fish.

### **Ilnik Section**

In 2015 the Ilnik River sockeye salmon escapement through the weir was 26,000 fish (Table 11) and did not meet the Ilnik River escapement goal of 40,000–60,000 fish. By regulation, the Ilnik Section can open to commercial salmon fishing on June 20. Sockeye salmon escapement into Ilnik River exceeded interim escapement objectives early in the season and met the five-day escapement objectives beginning on June 20 through July 5. The Ilnik Section was open to commercial salmon fishing for 3 ½ days from June 24-27 and then remained closed to commercial salmon fishing until the Ilnik River sockeye salmon management was complete on July 20. No commercial fishing effort occurred in Ilnik Lagoon in 2015 despite weekly fishing periods.



In 2015, 464,156 sockeye salmon were harvested in the Ilnik Section (Table 10). Beginning August 15, the Ilnik Section is managed for coho salmon runs into Ilnik Lagoon. Effort occurred in the Ilnik Section after August 15 targeting sockeye and coho salmon during weekly fishing periods; however the effort was limited due to weather.

### **Inner and Outer Port Heiden Sections**

Aerial escapement surveys began on the Meshik River on June 18. Subsequent surveys occurred throughout the season and the final sockeye salmon escapement into the Meshik River system was 154,500 fish, exceeding the escapement goal of 25,000-100,000 sockeye salmon. This includes escapement into the Meshik River and tributaries, as well as Red Bluff and Yellow Bluff creeks.

Fishing time in the Outer Port Heiden Section (Figure 3) is based on Meshik River sockeye salmon abundance unless management actions are taken for the conservation of Ugashik River sockeye salmon in the Egegik District. By regulation, the Outer Port Heiden Section can open to commercial salmon fishing from June 20 to July 31. The weekly fishing periods in the Outer Port Heiden Section are scheduled from 6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday. The Outer Port Heiden Section opened on June 24 and had openings of 2½ days per week until the section closed on July 31. In 2015, a total of 867,674 sockeye salmon (Table 10) were harvested from the Outer Port Heiden Section.

### **Cinder River Section**

No commercial salmon fishing effort occurred in the Cinder River Section (Figure 3) in 2015 despite weekly fishing periods of 2½ days per week for the entire season. The total Cinder River (including Mud Creeks) sockeye salmon escapement estimate of 132,600 fish exceeded the escapement goal of 12,000–48,000 fish.

## **Northern District Escapement**

### **Chinook Salmon**

Nelson River is the only river in Area M with a Chinook salmon escapement goal. On July 7 an aerial survey was conducted and 450 Chinook salmon were observed in Nelson River. The 2015 Nelson River Chinook salmon escapement totaled 2,890 fish and met the escapement goal of 2,400–4,400 fish. The total Northern District Chinook salmon escapement of 11,545 fish was below the most recent ten-year average of 17,261 fish.

### **Chum Salmon**

The Northern District has a district wide chum salmon escapement goal of 119,600–239,200 fish. This goal was met with an escapement of 182,994 fish, close to the most recent ten-year average of 182,378 fish. The bulk of the chum salmon escapement occurred in the Herendeen-Moller Bay Section (92,850 fish) and the Meshik River in the Inner Port Heiden Section (32,100 fish).

**Coho Salmon**

Coho salmon surveys were done on all Northern District streams, however, the surveys were done in early September and the runs were not complete at that time so the escapement numbers are considered minimum estimates. Nelson and Ilnik rivers each have coho salmon threshold escapement goals in the Northern District. The Nelson River escapement of 45,000 coho salmon met the threshold goal of 18,000 fish. The coho salmon run continues through September and the last aerial survey was on September 8. The Ilnik River escapement of 14,000 coho salmon met the threshold of 9,000 fish. Like Nelson River, it is expected that more coho salmon entered the system after early September when the last aerial survey occurred. There was no directed coho salmon fishery in the Ilnik Section in 2015. The coho salmon escapement into the Cinder River was 28,000 fish, and 112,000 coho salmon escaped into the Meshik River system (Meshik R. and Landlocked Creek) as observed by aerial survey during early September.