Norton Sound Chum and King Salmon Stock Status and Fishery Overview

A Report to the Alaska Board of Fisheries, January, 2019
Presented by Jim Menard and Justin Leon

RC 3: Written Reports, tabs 2 and 3
RC 3: Oral Reports, tab 15A
Outline

Northern Norton Sound Chum Salmon

- Stock Status Summaries
  - Subdistrict 1
  - Subdistricts 2 & 3

Southern Norton Sound King Salmon
Subdistricts 5 & 6

- Management Action Plan
- Stock Status Summary

Board of Fisheries Proposals
Norton Sound-Port Clarence Commercial Salmon Fishing Districts and Subdistricts
Port Clarence and Subdistrict 1 Escapement Projects
Subdistrict 1 Estimated Chum Salmon Escapement, and Commercial and Subsistence Harvest

Chum Salmon Total Run

- Escapement
- Subsistence
- Commercial

BEG Range 23,000–35,000
Subdistrict 1 (Nome) and Pilgrim River Subsistence Harvest

Number of Salmon

Chum Salmon | Pink Salmon | Coho Salmon | Sockeye Salmon

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Subdistrict 1 Chum Salmon Stock Status Summary

Improved runs have continued the last 5 years

- Escapements have exceeded all goals
- Available yield is at historical levels
- Subsistence harvest shifted to other species
Subdistricts 2 and 3 Escapement Projects
Subdistricts 2 and 3 Commercial and Subsistence Chum Salmon Harvest

Number of Chum Salmon

Subsistence
Commercial

Year


100,000 140,000 180,000 220,000 260,000 300,000 340,000 380,000 420,000 460,000 500,000 540,000 580,000 620,000 660,000 700,000 740,000 780,000 820,000 860,000 900,000 940,000 980,000 1020,000 1060,000 1100,000 1140,000
Subdistricts 2 and 3 Chum Salmon Stock Status Summary

• Escapement goals have been exceeded in recent years
• Commercial harvests have been the highest since 1988
• Recommend discontinue stock of yield concern status
Subdistricts 5 and 6 King Salmon Stock Status Summary

Management Action Plan

• No directed king salmon commercial fishing
• Continue combination of fishing time reductions and mesh size restrictions to minimize harvest of king salmon
• Use gear and time restrictions in pink and chum salmon commercial fishery to protect king salmon

Since 2013

• Escapement goals met in 3 of the previous 5 years
• Increased restrictions on fisheries
Subdistricts 5 and 6 Escapement Projects
Unalakleet River Weir King Salmon Escapement, 2010–2018

Black hashed bar indicates year in which escapement estimate is incomplete.
Unalakleet River King Salmon Total Run Size, 1996–2018

1996–1999 average run size 15,201 king salmon

2014–2018 average run size 5,154 king salmon

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Subdistricts 5 and 6 Commercial and Subsistence King Salmon Harvest, 1994-2018

1994-1999 average harvest
11,184 king salmon

2014-2018 average harvest
1,326 king salmon
Subdistricts 5 and 6 King Salmon
Stock Status Summary

- Escapement goals met in 3 of the previous 5 years
- Increased restrictions on fisheries
- No directed king salmon commercial fishing
- Combination of fishing time reductions and mesh size restrictions to minimize harvest of king salmon
- Recommend continue stock of yield concern status
Board of Fisheries Proposals

Norton Sound District, Subdistrict 1

Proposal 123 — Repeal Tier II chum salmon fishing regulations

Proposals 124-126 — Allow more commercial fishing time by expanding fishing season and fishing period length

Port Clarence District

Proposal 127 — Set subsistence sockeye catch limits and allow commercial fishing time based on previous two years’ of escapements
Acknowledgements

Norton Sound Economic Development Corporation
Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund
Sitnasuak Native Corporation
Unalakleet Native Corporation
White Mountain Native Corporation
Elim Native Corporation
Bering Straits Native Corporation
Native Village of Unalakleet
U.S. National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management and FWS-OSM
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