Overview of Sport Fisheries in the Lower Cook Inlet and North Gulf Coast Management Areas

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Division of Sport Fish
ADF&G Homer Office

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ANC/NGC/PWS Area Manager
Division of Sport Fish
ADF&G Anchorage Office

RC 3 & Tab 5
The Lower Cook Inlet & North Gulf Coast Sport Fish Management Areas

Presentation Overview
- Introduction
- Proposals
- Data
- Management Areas effort & harvest
- Details on specific fisheries
The Lower Cook Inlet & North Gulf Coast Sport Fish Management Areas
The Lower Cook Inlet & North Gulf Coast Sport Fish Management Areas
LCIMA & NGCMA Sport proposals

Lower Cook Inlet
Freshwater-
• Anchor River boundary
• Gear

Saltwater-
• King salmon
• Lingcod
• Snagging
• Area closure

North Gulf Coast
Freshwater-
• Youth fishery

Saltwater-
• Lingcod

LCIMA & NGCMA Sport Fisheries not included

• Halibut- IPHC & NPFMC
• Tanner crab- Statewide Tanner & King crab BOF meeting in March 2020
• Razor & Hardshell Clams- Miscellaneous Shellfish BOF meeting in 2021
Sport Fish Data & Monitoring

Sport Fishery Data
• Effort, catch & harvest data-SWHS, charter logbook
• Sport fisheries angler interview & harvest sampling

LCIMA Stock Assessment Data
• Salmon escapement monitoring
• Shellfish abundance surveys
LCIMA & NGCMA Sport Fish Effort

Lower Cook Inlet
- ~10% of the total sport fishing effort in AK occurs in LCIMA
- ~65% saltwater
- ~70% unguided anglers
- Downward trend

North Gulf Coast
- ~5% of the total sport fishing effort in AK occurs in LCIMA
- ~98% saltwater
- ~60% unguided anglers
- Stable trend

Total Sport Fish Effort by Management Area

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>North Gulf Coast</th>
<th>Lower Cook Inlet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1998</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2002</td>
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<td>2006</td>
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<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# LCIMA & NGCMA Sport Fishing Harvest Trends

## Lower Cook Inlet
- **Halibut** primary fish species
- Increased rockfish harvest
- Recent king & coho salmon harvest similar
- Recent SW king salmon harvest 23% of statewide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Averages</th>
<th>Pacific halibut</th>
<th>Lingcod</th>
<th>Rockfish</th>
<th>King salmon</th>
<th>Coho salmon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990–2008</td>
<td>194,763</td>
<td>2,751</td>
<td>7,376</td>
<td>18,409</td>
<td>31,146</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–2015</td>
<td>192,295</td>
<td>5,281</td>
<td>19,515</td>
<td>11,444</td>
<td>18,335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016–2018</td>
<td>163,399</td>
<td>3,090</td>
<td>35,103</td>
<td>19,872</td>
<td>18,540</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## North Gulf Coast
- **Coho salmon** primary fish species
- Increased rockfish harvest
- Recent coho salmon harvest below average
- Recent SW coho salmon harvest 13% of statewide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Averages</th>
<th>Pacific halibut</th>
<th>Lingcod</th>
<th>Rockfish</th>
<th>King salmon</th>
<th>Coho salmon</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990–2008</td>
<td>34,160</td>
<td>4,993</td>
<td>30,687</td>
<td>3,216</td>
<td>72,992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–2015</td>
<td>52,841</td>
<td>6,508</td>
<td>49,757</td>
<td>2,518</td>
<td>77,672</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016–2018</td>
<td>45,802</td>
<td>3,995</td>
<td>59,279</td>
<td>3,556</td>
<td>51,628</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LCIMA Freshwater Sport Fishing

- Primarily small, wadeable streams
- No stocked lakes
- 13% of effort for LCIMA
- Mostly non-guided, resident anglers
- >90% effort on Lower Kenai Peninsula Roadside streams
- Western Cook Inlet (Coho salmon)
- Kachemak Bay (pink salmon)
**Lower Kenai Peninsula Roadside Streams**

- King and coho salmon, Steelhead, Dolly Varden
- Regulation complexity
- Limited season
- Declining effort
- Coho & Chinook salmon primary harvest
- Steelhead catch stable
- Dolly Varden highest catch

**Days Fished**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Averages</th>
<th>Harvest</th>
<th>Catch</th>
<th>Harvest</th>
<th>Catch</th>
<th>Catch</th>
<th>Harvest</th>
<th>Catch</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990–2008</td>
<td>4,669</td>
<td>12,219</td>
<td>6,707</td>
<td>12,241</td>
<td>6,527</td>
<td>1,923</td>
<td>20,201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–2015</td>
<td>675</td>
<td>2,317</td>
<td>3,922</td>
<td>6,319</td>
<td>3,627</td>
<td>1,391</td>
<td>19,048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016–2018</td>
<td>1,338</td>
<td>3,933</td>
<td>2,137</td>
<td>3,561</td>
<td>3,792</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>15,078</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Harvest Catch**

- **King salmon**
  - Averages 1990–2008: 4,669
  - Averages 2009–2015: 675
  - Averages 2016–2018: 1,338
- **Coho salmon**
  - Averages 1990–2008: 12,219
  - Averages 2009–2015: 2,317
  - Averages 2016–2018: 3,933
- **Steelhead**
  - Averages 1990–2008: 6,707
  - Averages 2009–2015: 3,922
  - Averages 2016–2018: 2,137
- **Dolly Varden**
  - Averages 1990–2008: 6,527
  - Averages 2009–2015: 3,627
  - Averages 2016–2018: 3,792

**RC 3 & Tab 5**
Roadside Stream

King Salmon Fisheries

- Limited by season & area
- Differing regulations for each stream
- Ninilchik River also stocked
- Effort & harvest shifts between streams
- Pre-season and in-season management
Upper Cook Inlet Summer Fishery
• North of Bluff Pt.
• April-August
• Management plan- GHL 7,500
• Regulatory structure to limit harvest of Cook Inlet stocks
• Inseason management

Lower Cook Inlet Summer Fishery
• South of Bluff Pt.
• April-August
• No management plan or GHL
• Cook Inlet annual limit

Winter Fishery
• Entire Cook Inlet
• September-March
• Management plan- GHL 4,500
• No annual limit

LCIMA Saltwater King Salmon Sport Fisheries
King Salmon Summer Fisheries Harvest & Stock Composition

**UCI**
- Recent harvest below historical
- April-June: 70-90% outside CI stocks
- July-Aug: 82-97% outside CI stocks

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UCI Summer</th>
<th>LCI Summer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Averages</td>
<td>Charter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2002–2008</td>
<td>2,014</td>
<td>2,506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009–2015</td>
<td>1,366</td>
<td>1,164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016–2018</td>
<td>1,510</td>
<td>1,788</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**LCI**
- Recent harvest above historical
- 95-99% outside CI stocks

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**Upper Cook Inlet**
- Outside Cook Inlet: 2,902
- Cook Inlet: 128
- North Cook Inlet: 139
- Kenai River: 130
- Southern Kenai Peninsula: 397

**Lower Cook Inlet**
- Outside Cook Inlet: 8,121
- Cook Inlet: 337
- North Cook Inlet: 170
- Kenai River: 14
- Southern Kenai Peninsula: 154

RC 3 & Tab 5
King Salmon Winter Fishery Harvest & Stock Composition

- Expanded in 2016
- ~80% of the harvest is by non-guided anglers
- Harvest composed of 99.8% non-Cook Inlet stocks based on recent genetic study
- No effort data but has likely increased due to more favorable marine weather
- Harvest fluctuates with presence of stocks & increased effort

Cook Inlet Winter King Salmon Fishery Harvest Compared to the GHL

- Year 2002-2018
- Number of King Salmon
- Guideline Harvest Level

RC 3 & Tab 5
LCIMA Enhanced Saltwater Salmon Fisheries

King salmon - ADF&G
• NDFL- Homer Spit
• Seldovia
• Halibut Cove Lagoon - Discontinued

Coho salmon - ADF&G
• NDFL- Homer Spit

Sockeye salmon - CIAA
• China Poot
• Tutka

Homer Spit Harvest & Effort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Averages</th>
<th>King salmon</th>
<th>Coho salmon</th>
<th>Angler days</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990–2008</td>
<td>2,597</td>
<td>7,816</td>
<td>22,492</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009–2015</td>
<td>707</td>
<td>2,050</td>
<td>10,862</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016–2018</td>
<td>828</td>
<td>2,398</td>
<td>13,467</td>
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</table>
NGC Enhanced Saltwater Salmon Fisheries

**King salmon**
- ADF&G - Seward Lagoon (Smolt)

**Coho salmon**
- ADF&G & CIAA - Seward Lagoon (smolt)
- CIAA - Bear Lake (fry and smolt)

**Sockeye salmon**
- CIAA - Bear Lake (fry)
NGC Seward Lagoon Youth Fishery

- King and coho salmon youth fishery.
- Only open to anglers 15 years of age or younger. Remainder of the year closed to salmon fishing.
- Youth fishery includes Seward Lagoon and the entire Outfall stream.
- Snagging is not allowed, and only one hook may be used.
NGC Seward Lagoon Youth Fishery

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Lower Cook Inlet & North Gulf Coast

- Regulations
- Harvest levels
- Harvest break down:
  - Chartered anglers
    ~72% LCI
    ~74% NGC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>LCI Bag and Possession Dates</th>
<th>NGC Bag and Possession Dates</th>
<th>PWS Bag and Possession Dates</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993-2008</td>
<td>July 1 - Dec 31</td>
<td>Closed</td>
<td>1 &amp; 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009-2015</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016-2018</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Size restrictions: At least 35" long with head attached or 28" from tip of tail to front of dorsal fin

Lingcod Harvest

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Estimated Number of Fish</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1993</td>
<td>10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>9,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>8,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>1999</td>
<td>7,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>6,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>5,000</td>
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<td>2005</td>
<td>4,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>3,000</td>
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<td>2009</td>
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<td>2011</td>
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<td>2013</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average</th>
<th>LCI Charter</th>
<th>Non-guided</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996-2008</td>
<td>2,073</td>
<td>802</td>
<td>2,875</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009-2015</td>
<td>3,823</td>
<td>1,458</td>
<td>5,281</td>
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<tr>
<td>2016-2018</td>
<td>2,296</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>3,090</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Average</th>
<th>NGC Charter</th>
<th>Non-guided</th>
<th>Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1996-2008</td>
<td>2,936</td>
<td>2,009</td>
<td>4,946</td>
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<tr>
<td>2009-2015</td>
<td>4,734</td>
<td>1,773</td>
<td>6,508</td>
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<td>2016-2018</td>
<td>3,281</td>
<td>714</td>
<td>3,995</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Questions?

Additional information available:

