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Run Forecasts and Harvest Projections for 2026 Alaska Salmon Fisheries and Review of the 2025 Season

Edited by

Christy M. Gleason

and Andrew R. Munro

April 2026

Alaska Department of Fish and Game **Divisions of Sport Fish and Commercial Fisheries**

Symbols and Abbreviations

The following symbols and abbreviations, and others approved for the Système International d'Unités (SI), are used without definition in the following reports by the Divisions of Sport Fish and of Commercial Fisheries: Fishery Manuscripts, Fishery Data Series Reports, Fishery Management Reports, and Special Publications. All others, including deviations from definitions listed below, are noted in the text at first mention, as well as in the titles or footnotes of tables, and in figures or figure captions.

Weights and measures (metric)

centimeter	cm
deciliter	dL
gram	g
hectare	ha
kilogram	kg
kilometer	km
liter	L
meter	m
milliliter	mL
millimeter	mm

Weights and measures (English)

cubic feet per second	ft^3/s
foot	ft
gallon	gal
inch	in
mile	mi
nautical mile	nmi
ounce	oz
pound	lb
quart	qt
yard	yd

Time and temperature

day	d
degrees Celsius	°C
degrees Fahrenheit	°F
degrees kelvin	K
hour	h
minute	min
second	s

Physics and chemistry

all atomic symbols	
alternating current	AC
ampere	A
calorie	cal
direct current	DC
hertz	Hz
horsepower	hp
hydrogen ion activity (negative log of)	pH
parts per million	ppm
parts per thousand	ppt, ‰
volts	V
watts	W

General

Alaska Administrative Code	AAC
all commonly accepted abbreviations	e.g., Mr., Mrs., AM, PM, etc.
all commonly accepted professional titles	e.g., Dr., Ph.D., R.N., etc.
at	@
compass directions:	
east	E
north	N
south	S
west	W
copyright	©
corporate suffixes:	
Company	Co.
Corporation	Corp.
Incorporated	Inc.
Limited	Ltd.
District of Columbia	D.C.
et alii (and others)	et al.
et cetera (and so forth)	etc.
exempli gratia (for example)	e.g.
Federal Information Code	FIC
id est (that is)	i.e.
latitude or longitude	lat or long
monetary symbols (U.S.)	$, ¢
months (tables and figures): first three letters	Jan,...,Dec
registered trademark	®
trademark	™
United States (adjective)	U.S.
United States of America (noun)	USA
U.S.C.	United States Code
U.S. state	use two-letter abbreviations (e.g., AK, WA)

Mathematics, statistics

all standard mathematical signs, symbols and abbreviations	
alternate hypothesis	H_A
base of natural logarithm	e
catch per unit effort	CPUE
coefficient of variation	CV
common test statistics	(F, t, χ^2, etc.)
confidence interval	CI
correlation coefficient (multiple)	R
correlation coefficient (simple)	r
covariance	cov
degree (angular)	°
degrees of freedom	df
expected value	E
greater than	>
greater than or equal to	≥
harvest per unit effort	HPUE
less than	<
less than or equal to	≤
logarithm (natural)	ln
logarithm (base 10)	log
logarithm (specify base)	$\log_2$, etc.
minute (angular)	′
not significant	NS
null hypothesis	H_O
percent	%
probability	P
probability of a type I error (rejection of the null hypothesis when true)	α
probability of a type II error (acceptance of the null hypothesis when false)	β
second (angular)	″
standard deviation	SD
standard error	SE
variance	
population	Var
sample	var

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The Special Publication series was established by the Division of Sport Fish in 1991 for the publication of techniques and procedures manuals, informational pamphlets, special subject reports to decision-making bodies, symposia and workshop proceedings, application software documentation, in-house lectures, and became a joint divisional series in 2004 with the Division of Commercial Fisheries. Special Publications are intended for fishery and other technical professionals. Special Publications are available through the Alaska State Library, Alaska Resources Library and Information Services (ARLIS) and on the Internet: http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/publications/. This publication has undergone editorial and peer review.

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DEFINITION OF TERMS

Biological escapement goal	The number of salmon in a particular stock that the Alaska Department of Fish and Game has determined should be allowed to escape the fishery to spawn to achieve the maximum yield (human use). This determination is based on biological information about the fish stock in question. See 5 AAC 39.222(f)(3). (Also see *optimum escapement goal*.)
Commercial common property harvest	Harvests taken by traditional, competitive commercial fisheries (gillnet, purse seine, and troll), as opposed to commercial harvests resulting from hatchery cost recovery, fishing derbies, and sale of confiscated fish.
Commercial harvest	Harvests of fish that are used for commercial purposes. This includes fish caught by the commercial common property fishery and by hatchery operators for cost recovery; it excludes sport, subsistence, and personal use harvests.
Common property harvest	Harvests taken by the commercial common property fisheries, as well as the sport, subsistence, and personal use fisheries. This category excludes hatchery cost-recovery harvests.
Cost-recovery harvest	Harvests of salmon by hatchery operators in specially designated areas to fund the operation of hatcheries and other enhancement activities.
Enhanced salmon stock, runs	Hatcheries and other means of artificial propagation to create salmon runs or make existing salmon runs larger. Enhancement includes remote fish stocking, fertilization of lakes, and other techniques. See 5 AAC 39.222(f)(9).
Escapement, spawning population, or broodstock	The portion of a salmon run that is not harvested and survives to reach the spawning grounds or hatchery. See 5 AAC 39.222(f)(10)).
Harvest projections or harvest outlooks	Harvest outlooks are the best available estimates of upcoming harvest levels. Prepared by local biologists, outlooks are based on formal run forecasts when available. At other times outlooks are based on historical average catches, subjectively adjusted based on recent trends and local knowledge.
Optimal escapement goal	The number of salmon in a particular stock that should be allowed to spawn both to achieve sustainable runs based on biological needs of the stock and to meet social and allocative needs. See 5 AAC 39.222(f)(25).
Return	Return refers to an aggregation of salmon over several or more years that represent the surviving adult offspring from a single brood year. See 5 AAC 39.222(f)(30).
Run forecast	Forecasts of a run (harvest + escapement) are estimates of the fish that will return in a given year based on such information as parent-year escapements, subsequent fry abundance, and spring seawater temperatures. Run forecasts are generally thought to be more reliable than harvest outlooks, but run forecasts are provided only for selected areas.
Salmon run	Run refers to the total number of mature fish returning in a given year from ocean-rearing areas to spawn. See 5 AAC 39.222(f)(31).
Sustainable escapement goal	Sustainable escapement goal is defined as a level of escapement, indicated by an index or a range of escapement estimates, that is known to have provided for sustained yield over a 5- to 10-year period. A sustainable escapement goal is used in situations where a biological escapement goal cannot be estimated due to the absence of a stock-specific catch estimate. See 5 AAC 39.222(f)(36).

ABSTRACT

This report contains salmon run forecasts and harvest projections for 2026 as well as a detailed review of Alaska's 2025 commercial salmon season. The Alaska all-species salmon harvest for 2025 totaled approximately 197.4 million fish, about 17.3 million less fish than the preseason forecast of 214.6 million fish. This combined harvest was composed of approximately 201,000 Chinook (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*), 52.7 million sockeye (*O. nerka*), 2.7 million coho (*O. kisutch*), 120 million pink (*O. gorbuscha*), and 21.7 million chum salmon (*O. keta*). The Alaska Department of Fish and Game is expecting a decrease in commercial salmon harvests in 2026. The 2026 total commercial salmon harvest (all species) projection of 125.5 million fish is expected to include approximately 197,000 Chinook salmon, 49.7 million sockeye salmon, 2.4 million coho salmon, 56.0 million pink salmon, and 17.2 million chum salmon. Compared to 2025 commercial harvests, the projected 2026 commercial harvests are expected to be as follows: 64.1 million fewer pink salmon, 3.0 million fewer sockeye salmon, 256,000 fewer coho salmon, and 4.5 million fewer chum salmon.

Keywords: pink salmon, *Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*, sockeye salmon, *O. nerka*, chum salmon, *O. keta*, Chinook salmon, *O. tshawytscha*, coho salmon, *O. kisutch*, catch projection, run forecast, harvest projection, smolt outmigrations, sibling age classes, hatchery releases, fishing effort, salmon management

INTRODUCTION

This report contains salmon run forecasts and harvest projections for 2026 and a review of Alaska's 2025 commercial salmon season. Salmon escapement and harvest estimates reported in this document were summarized from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G, the department) escapement and fish ticket databases. Data provided in this report supersedes any data previously published. Detailed area-specific harvest and escapement summaries can be found in area management reports.

ADF&G is expecting a decrease in the overall commercial salmon harvest in 2026, mostly due to a decrease in pink salmon *Oncorhynchus gorbuscha* harvests compared to 2025. The 2026 total commercial salmon harvest (all species) projection of 125.5 million fish is expected to include approximately 197,000 Chinook salmon *O. tshawytscha*, 49.7 million sockeye salmon *O. nerka*, 2.4 million coho salmon *O. kisutch*, 56.0 million pink salmon, and 17.2 million chum salmon *O. keta*. Compared to 2025 commercial harvests, the projected 2026 commercial harvests are expected to be as follows: 64.1 million fewer pink salmon, 3.0 million fewer sockeye salmon, 256,000 fewer coho salmon, and 4.5 million fewer chum salmon.

There is a great deal of uncertainty in forecasting pink salmon returns due to their fixed 2-year life history and, therefore, limited information to serve as the basis for predictions (i.e., no siblings returning during prior years). As a result, pink salmon harvest forecasts are generally based on harvests from previous brood years. A notable exception is Southeast Alaska where a joint ADF&G and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) survey and juvenile pink salmon outmigration index is the basis for predicting harvests the following year. During recent decades, Alaska-wide pink salmon returns have tended to be larger during odd years than during adjacent even years, although there is much regional variation to this trend.

Table 1 shows specific harvest projection numbers by species and fishing area, and the "Preliminary Forecasts" section of this document provides forecast details for specific runs by area. When the appropriate data were available, harvest forecasts were arrived at through quantitative projections based on information of previous spawning levels, smolt outmigrations, returns of sibling age classes, and survival rates for hatchery releases. Other projections were based on averages of recent harvests. Fishing effort influences harvests, and effort is partly determined

by market conditions in addition to the size of salmon runs. Therefore, these projections may not be indicative of actual harvests.

Except for the Southeast Alaska Chinook salmon fisheries, the South Peninsula June fisheries, and salmon fisheries in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) of Cook Inlet, Alaska salmon management will be based on inseason estimates of salmon run strength. Alaska fishery managers have the primary goal of maintaining spawning population sizes, not of reaching preseason harvest projections.

Salmon productivity, survival, and resulting returns are probably influenced by many freshwater and marine drivers including spawning escapements, hatchery releases, temperature, and complex trophic interactions such as prey availability, predation, and competition. Although a review of this topic is well beyond the scope of this report, NOAA's Ecosystem Status Reports provide a summary of recent physical and ecological conditions encountered by a variety of species in the North Pacific, including salmon during their marine phase (Ortiz and Zador 2024; Siddon 2024; Ferriss 2026; available online[1]).

Table 1.–Projections of 2026 Alaska commercial salmon harvests, by fishing area and species, in thousands of fish.

	Species					
Region and area	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
Southeast Alaska						
Natural production	–	875[a]	956[a]	18,527	911	21,270
Hatchery production[b]	–	73	572	473	9,216	10,333
Southeast Region total	162[c]	948	1,528	19,000	10,128	31,765
Prince William Sound						
Natural production	3	852[d]	237[e]	3,942	413	5,447
Hatchery production[f]	–	398	85	14,652	4,200	19,334
Lower Cook Inlet						
Natural production	–	202	–	183	22	407
Hatchery production	–	267[g]	0	0	0	267
Upper Cook Inlet	–[h]	–[i]	94[a]	198[j]	91[a]	–[i]
Bristol Bay	6[a]	33,530	28[a]	256[j]	389[a]	34,210
Central Region total	9	40,848[i]	445	19,231	5,114	65,648[i]
Kodiak						
Natural production	7[a]	1,860[k]	132[a]	7,579	396[a]	9,973
Hatchery production[l]	–	195	32	4,681	98	5,006
Chignik	4[a]	1,085[m]	59[a]	415[j]	74[a]	1,638
South Peninsula	13[a]	2,753[a]	172[a]	5,039	1,197[a]	9,174
North Peninsula	1[a]	1,998[a]	19[a]	21[j]	64[a]	2,103
Westward Region total	26	7,890	414	17,735	1,829	27,895
Arctic–Yukon–Kuskokwim total	0	1	35	15	115	151
Statewide total	197	49,688[i]	2,422	55,981	17,186	125,459[i]

-continued-

[1] Ecosystem Status Reports for the Gulf of Alaska, Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands: NOAA Fisheries: https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/alaska/ecosystems/ecosystem-status-reports-gulf-alaska-bering-sea-and-aleutian-islands (accessed April 10, 2026).

Table 1.–Page 2 of 2.

Note: En dashes indicate no projection, and zeros indicate projection of <500 fish. Columns and rows may not total exactly due to rounding.

[a] Average harvest of the previous 5 years (2021–2025).

[b] Hatchery salmon projections made by Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association, Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association, Douglas Island Pink and Chum, Armstrong-Keta Inc., and Metlakatla Indian Community less broodstock (5-year average), and excess. Wild chum salmon catch estimated as 9% of total catch.

[c] The allowable catch of Chinook salmon in Southeast Alaska is determined by the Pacific Salmon Commission.

[d] Includes formal natural harvest estimates for Prince William Sound and Copper/Bering River Districts.

[e] Average harvest of the previous 10 years (2016–2025).

[f] Hatchery salmon projections made by Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation and Valdez Fisheries Development Association. Gulkana Hatchery projection made by ADF&G, less broodstock (5-year average).

[g] Hatchery salmon projections made by Cook Inlet Aquaculture Corporation minus broodstock (5-year average).

[h] Upper Cook Inlet Chinook salmon harvest forecast is not available for 2026.

[i] An Upper Cook Inlet sockeye salmon commercial harvest forecast is not available for 2026. Central Region and Statewide totals includes 5.60 million fish available for harvest to all user groups.

[j] Average harvest of the previous 5 even years (2016–2024).

[k] Total Kodiak harvest of natural run sockeye salmon includes projected harvests from formally forecasted systems, projected Chignik harvest at Cape Igvak, and projected harvest from additional minor systems.

[l] Hatchery projections made by Kodiak Regional Aquaculture Association. Sockeye salmon hatchery projections include enhanced Spiridon Lake sockeye salmon run harvest forecast and other Kodiak Regional Aquaculture Association projections.

[m] The Chignik sockeye salmon forecast is projected harvest of sockeye within Chignik Management Area.

The Alaska all-species salmon harvest for 2025 totaled approximately 197.4 million fish, about 17.3 million less fish than the preseason forecast of 214.6 million fish. This combined harvest was composed of approximately 201,000 Chinook, 52.7 million sockeye, 2.7 million coho, 120 million pink, and 21.7 million chum salmon. Table 2 shows 2025 harvest numbers by salmon species and fishing area in units of thousands of fish harvested, and Table 3 provides this information in units of thousands of whole pounds harvested. Tables 4–7 provide detailed information on the 2025 harvest by area and species.

Table 2.–2025 Alaska commercial salmon harvests, by fishing area and species, in thousands of fish.

	Species					
Fishing area	Chinook[a]	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
Southeast Region total	166	770	1,496	21,444	13,933	37,810
Prince William Sound	6	1,242	385	45,090	4,883	51,606
Lower Cook Inlet[b,c]	0	443	2	535	25	1,005
Upper Cook Inlet[c]	0	3,837	116	41	116	4,110
Bristol Bay	5	41,270	27	0	586	41,888
Central Region total	12	46,792	531	45,666	5,609	98,609
Kodiak Area[b]	1	1,437	316	34,171	740	36,666
Chignik	3	823	51	1,975	87	2,939
South Peninsula and Aleutians	18	1,727	205	16,595	1,189	19,734
North Peninsula	1	1,185	49	193	120	1,546
Westward Region total	23	5,172	620	52,934	2,136	60,885
Arctic–Yukon–Kuskokwim Region total[c]	0	1	32	0	40	73
Total Alaska	201	52,734	2,678	120,044	21,719	197,376

Note: Zeros indicate harvest activity but <500 fish. Columns may not total exactly due to rounding. Confidential data omitted.

[a] Chinook salmon adults and jacks are totaled. Catch accounting period for the 2025 Chinook salmon troll season spans from October 1, 2024, to September 30, 2025.

[b] Does not include broodstock.

[c] Total includes commercially harvested fish retained for personal use.

Table 3.–2025 Alaska commercial salmon harvests, by fishing area and species, in thousands of whole pounds (lb).

	Species					
Fishing area	Chinook[a]	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
Southeast Region total	1,930	4,115	9,449	68,445	99,242	183,180
Prince William Sound	88	6,537	2,925	144,297	28,465	182,312
Lower Cook Inlet[b,c]	2	2,210	13	1,682	159	4,066
Upper Cook Inlet[c]	1	21,027	627	139	758	22,553
Bristol Bay	50	208,400	152	1	3,382	211,985
Central Region total	142	238,173	3,718	146,118	32,765	420,916
Kodiak[b]	7	6,862	2,234	109,114	4,821	123,038
Chignik	21	4,722	343	6,270	544	11,899
South Peninsula and Aleutians	128	9,061	1,247	49,879	6,505	66,819
North Peninsula	8	6,111	291	558	755	7,722
Westward Region total	163	26,756	4,115	165,820	12,624	209,478
Arctic–Yukon–Kuskokwim region total[c]	0	4	217	0	307	528
Total Alaska	2,234	269,048	17,498	380,383	144,938	814,102

Note: Zeros indicate harvest activity but <500 fish. Columns may not total exactly due to rounding. Confidential data omitted.

[a] Chinook salmon adults and jacks are totaled. Catch accounting period for the 2025 Chinook salmon troll season spans from October 1, 2024, to September 30, 2025.

[b] Does not include broodstock.

[c] Total includes commercially harvested fish retained for personal use.

Inseason harvest information, postseason statistics, and other information about salmon in Alaska can be found online at http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishingCommercial.main.

ADF&G's 4 major commercial fishery management regions (Southeast, Central, Arctic–Yukon–Kuskokwim, and Westward) are shown in Figure 1. These regions supersede any references to ADF&G's former statistical regions.

Figure 1.–The 4 ADF&G fishery management regions (Southeast, Central, Arctic–Yukon–Kuskokwim, and Westward) of the Division of Commercial Fisheries.

REVIEW OF THE 2025 ALASKA COMMERCIAL SALMON FISHERIES

SOUTHEAST REGION

SOUTHEAST ALASKA AND YAKUTAT AREAS

The combined 2025 Southeast Alaska and Yakutat (SEAK) area cumulative commercial salmon harvest, including hatchery cost recovery, was 37.8 million fish (Table 4). Of this total, commercial common property harvest contributed approximately 30.5 million fish (81% of the total harvest). The overall salmon harvest was lower than the 2024 harvest by 0.4 million fish, and a little more than half of the 2023 harvest. The total commercial harvest proportions by species were: <1% Chinook, 2% sockeye, 4% coho, 57% pink, and 37% chum salmon. The all-species total harvest was 99% of the recent 10-year average (2015–2024) of 39.8 million fish and 92% of the long-term average (1962–2024) of 41.2 million fish.

Chinook Salmon

Harvest Summary: The 2025 Chinook salmon harvest of 166,000 fish was below both recent 10-year (231,000 fish) and long-term (289,000 fish) averages. Preliminary harvest estimates of coastwide Chinook salmon accountable under the Pacific Salmon Treaty included 94,000 fish by troll gear, 4,300 fish by purse seine gear, 2,800 fish by drift gillnet gear, 250 fish from set gillnet, and 1,400 from Annette Islands Reservation. In 2025, a total of 14,200 Alaska hatchery-origin Chinook salmon were commercially harvested in SEAK common property fisheries, and almost 30,000 hatchery-origin Chinook salmon were harvested in private hatchery cost-recovery fisheries.

Sockeye Salmon

Harvest Summary: The 2025 commercial harvest of sockeye salmon of 770,000 fish was below both the recent 10-year and long-term averages. The SEAK purse seine fishery harvest of 454,000 fish accounted for approximately 59% of the regional total sockeye salmon harvest. The drift gillnet fishery harvest of 224,000 fish accounted for 29% of the regional total sockeye salmon harvest. The set gillnet fishery harvest of 67,000 fish accounted for 9% of the regional total sockeye salmon harvest.

Coho Salmon

Harvest Summary: The 2025 coho salmon harvest of 1.5 million fish was below the recent 10-year and long-term averages. The coho salmon harvest in the troll fishery was 962,000 fish and accounted for 64% of the regional coho salmon harvest. The total drift gillnet harvest of 98,000 fish accounted for approximately 29% of the regional coho salmon harvest, and the set gillnet harvest of 87,000 fish accounted for 6% of the regional coho salmon harvest. The total purse seine harvest of 197,000 fish accounted for 13% of the regional coho salmon harvest.

Pink Salmon

Harvest Summary: The 2025 commercial pink salmon harvest was 21.4 million fish and was below the preseason forecast of 29 million fish. Approximately 57% of the total regional salmon harvest was composed of pink salmon. Most of the commercially harvested pink salmon in the SEAK area were harvested in the purse seine fishery (20.1 million fish, 91%). The 2025 harvest was the poorest odd-year harvest since 2019.

Chum Salmon

Harvest Summary: The 2025 SEAK chum salmon harvest was 13.9 million fish, 30% greater than the recent 10-year average of 10.7 million fish. Most commercial chum salmon fishing opportunities in the SEAK area are attributable to hatchery production. During the 2025 commercial fishing season, 4.4 million chum salmon were harvested in the purse seine fishery (31% of the regional total), 2.9 million fish were harvested in the drift gillnet fishery (21%), and 5.6 million chum salmon were harvested through hatchery cost-recovery efforts.

Summary by Troy Thynes, Southeast Region Salmon/Herring Fisheries Management Coordinator, ADF&G, Petersburg.

Table 4.–2025 Southeast Region commercial salmon harvests, by fishing area and species in thousands of fish.

	Species					
Fishery	Chinook[a]	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
Purse seine						
Southern purse seine traditional	3	209	110	9,492	1,452	11,266
Northern purse seine traditional	1	235	82	10,478	1,105	11,901
Hatchery terminal	13	10	5	126	1,828	1,982
Total purse seine	17	453	197	20,095	4,386	25,149
Drift gillnet						
Tree Point	1	12	10	102	318	444
Prince of Wales	1	24	17	79	155	274
Stikine	1	9	9	14	93	126
Taku-Snettisham	2	107	26	62	980	1,178
Lynn Canal	1	61	23	31	624	740
Drift gillnet hatchery terminal	13	10	12	69	756	861
Total drift gillnet	19	224	98	358	2,925	3,624
Set gillnet (Yakutat)	1	67	87	16	0	171
Troll						
Hand troll						
Traditional	3	0	19	1	0	23
Hatchery terminal	1	0	0	0	0	1
Spring areas	0	0	0	0	0	1
Total hand troll	4	0	20	1	1	25
Power troll						
Traditional	77	2	940	60	317	1,395
Hatchery terminal	3	0	2	2	142	149
Spring areas	13	0	0	0	2	16
Total power troll	93	2	942	62	462	1,560
Total troll	97	2	962	63	463	1,585
Annette Island Reservation	3	5	2	373	543	926
Hatchery cost recovery	30	16	146	486	5,575	6,252
Miscellaneous[b]	0	2	4	53	42	102
Southeast Region total	166	770	1,496	21,444	13,933	37,810

Note: Zeros indicate harvest activity but <500 fish. Columns may not total exactly due to rounding.

[a] Chinook salmon adults and jacks are totaled. Catch accounting period for the 2025 Chinook salmon troll season spans from October 1, 2024, to September 30, 2025.

[b] Includes fish that were confiscated, harvested in sport fishery derbies and later sold, and harvested in test fisheries.

CENTRAL REGION

PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND AREA

The 2025 cumulative Prince William Sound (PWS) area commercial common property fishery (CCPF) and hatchery cost-recovery salmon harvest was 51.6 million fish (Table 5). The overall harvest consisted of approximately 6,000 Chinook, 1.2 million sockeye, 385,000 coho, 45.0 million pink, and 4.9 million chum salmon. The CCPF accounted for 80% (39.8 million fish) of the total harvest; the remaining 20% (9.8 million fish) were attributed to hatchery cost-recovery fisheries and broodstock collection.

Chinook Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: The 2025 Chinook salmon total run forecast was 36,000 fish. Preliminary Chinook salmon abundance estimates indicated spawning escapement was near the lower bound of the sustainable escapement goal (SEG) range of 21,000 fish.

Harvest Summary: The CCPF harvest of 5,800 Chinook salmon in the Copper River District was approximately 25% below the 10-year (2015–2024) average harvest of 12,100 fish.

Sockeye Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: The 2025 Copper River sockeye salmon total run forecast was 2.64 million fish. Gulkana Hatchery represented 80,000 sockeye salmon in this total run forecast. The preseason commercial harvest forecast for the Copper River District sockeye salmon was 1.9 million fish.

The 2025 Miles Lake sonar passage was 895,308 salmon, which was above the inriver run goal of 633,400 fish. Considering preliminary projections of inriver harvest, the Upper Copper River sockeye salmon SEG range of 360,000–750,000 fish was likely achieved. Sockeye salmon escapement to the Copper River Delta was approximately 87,197 fish, which was within the SEG range of 55,000–130,000 fish.

The 2025 forecast of the sockeye salmon run to Coghill Lake was 331,000 fish, with 301,000 fish available for CCPF harvest. Approximately 82,019 sockeye salmon passed through the Coghill River weir, which was above the SEG range of 20,000–75,000 fish.

Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation (PWSAC) forecasted a run of approximately 1.0 million Main Bay Hatchery enhanced sockeye salmon in 2025.

Harvest Summary: The 2025 Copper River District CCPF sockeye salmon harvest of 840,000 fish was approximately 3% greater than the recent 10-year average harvest of 818,000 fish. Wild sockeye salmon accounted for 87% (792,000 fish) of the CCPF harvest in the Copper River District. Gulkana Hatchery commercial harvest was the 4th highest in the last 10 years, contributing 98,000 sockeye salmon, or 12% of the total commercial harvest. Main Bay Hatchery contributed 13,000 sockeye salmon, or 2% of the Copper River sockeye salmon harvest.

The Coghill District sockeye salmon CCPF harvest of 118,000 fish was 45% below the recent 10-year average of 172,000 fish. Wild sockeye salmon accounted for 89% (105,000 fish) of the CCPF harvest in the Coghill District.

The CCPF harvest of sockeye salmon in the Eshamy District gillnet fishery (drift gillnet and setnet) was 150,000 fish. The proportion of wild sockeye salmon harvested in the Eshamy District CCPF

was 10%. PWSAC harvested approximately 257,000 sockeye salmon for cost recovery and broodstock, almost 1.6 times the 10-year average of 163,000. The Main Bay Hatchery total sockeye salmon run of 256,000 fish was 73% below the recent 10-year average of 957,000 fish.

The Unakwik District CCPF gillnet harvest (drift and seine) of sockeye salmon was approximately 3,800 fish, well below the 10-year average harvest of 7,600 sockeye salmon.

Coho Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: The Copper River District's 2025 preseason CCPF harvest forecast was 182,000 coho salmon. The Copper River Delta sum of peak escapement counts of approximately 47,925 fish was within the SEG range of 32,000–50,000 fish. The Bering River District coho salmon spawning escapement estimate of 19,100 fish was within the SEG range of 13,000–25,000 fish.

PWSAC forecasted a 2025 run of 6,000 coho salmon to Wally Noerenberg Hatchery.

The Valdez Fisheries Development Association (VFDA) enhanced coho salmon forecast was 57,000 fish, which yields a projected CCPF harvest of 17,000 fish.

Harvest Summary: The season total CCPF drift gillnet coho salmon harvest in the Copper River District of 162,000 fish was 10% below the 10-year average of approximately 180,000 fish. Similarly, the Bering River District CCPF drift gillnet harvest of approximately 33,000 coho salmon was 37% below the 10-year average harvest of 52,000 fish.

The Coghill District coho salmon CCPF harvest (purse seine and drift gillnet) was 21,000 fish. This harvest was 3.5 times the forecast and marked the 3rd time in the last 10 years that more than 15,000 coho salmon were harvested. Coho salmon CCPF harvest in the Eastern District was approximately 133,000 fish, almost 8 times the VFDA preseason forecasted harvest of 17,000 fish.

Enhanced coho salmon from VFDA are managed primarily through a recreational fishery, but the commercial fleet inadvertently harvests them throughout PWS. The CCPF harvest of VFDA coho salmon is unknown due to the absence of regular otolith sampling. However, it is assumed that VFDA coho salmon makes up a significant proportion of the coho salmon harvest in the Eastern District purse seine fishery.

Pink Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: The 2025 pink salmon forecast was for a total run of 66.7 million fish, apportioned among 3 returns: 30% VFDA, 42% PWSAC, and 28% wild. After accounting for wild escapement, cost recovery, and broodstock, the projected CCPF harvest was 56.1 million pink salmon.

The total observed run in 2025 was 46.4 million pink salmon, 30% below forecast. The run composition was 56% VFDA, 27% PSWAC, and 17% wild. Composition estimates are based on otolith contributions. Pink salmon escapement goals were met in all districts but Eshamy, Southwestern, and Montague.

Combined with an aerial escapement index of 1.5 million fish, the estimated wild pink salmon return in 2025 was approximately 8.0 million, below the 5-year, odd-year (2015–2023) average return of 22.0 million wild fish. The 12.3 million PSWAC pink salmon run was 56% below the forecast and 50% below the odd-year average of 24.8 million fish. In total, 52% (approximately

6.4 million fish) of the PWSAC run was collected for cost recovery and broodstock; PWSAC was just short of its cost-recovery revenue goal for 2025 but met all egg-take goals. The total run of 26.1 million VFDA pink salmon was 30% above forecast and 27% above the 5-year, odd-year average of 20.5 million fish. In total, 7% (1.8 million fish) of the VFDA run was collected for cost recovery and broodstock; VFDA achieved both revenue and egg-take goals for 2025.

Harvest Summary: The 2025 PWS pink salmon harvest (including all CCPF harvest, hatchery cost recovery, broodstock, and raceway sales) was just under 45.0 million fish, 33% below the 5-year, odd-year average of 67.3 million fish. Approximately 37.5 million fish were harvested in the purse seine CCPF compared to the 5-year, odd-year average CCPF purse seine harvest of 57.3 million fish. The number of permits fished in the PWS purse seine fishery decreased from 177 permits in 2024 to 174 permits in 2025. There were 33 dual permit operations in PWS for the 2025 season.

Pink salmon CCPF drift gillnet pink salmon harvest in the Coghill District was 102,000 fish. The proportion of wild pink salmon in the Coghill District CCPF harvest was 49%.

In the Eshamy District, approximately 53,000 pink salmon were harvested in the CCPF gillnet (drift gillnet and setnet) fishery. The proportion of wild pink salmon in the Eshamy District CCPF harvest was 97%.

Chum Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: The 2025 chum salmon total run forecast was 3.1 million fish, with a commercial harvest forecast of 1.9 million fish. Most of the total run forecast, 2.4 million fish (80%), was attributed to PWSAC hatchery production. The forecast for the 2025 hatchery chum salmon run to Wally Noerenberg Hatchery (WNH) was 1.45 million fish. PWSAC projected approximately 948,000 fish for cost recovery and broodstock, leaving 502,000 for commercial harvest. Approximately 210,000 fish were forecasted to return to the Armin F. Koernig hatchery (AFK), and 780,000 fish were forecasted to return to the Port Chalmers Subdistrict. Based on the department's wild stock chum salmon forecast of 613,000 fish, there was a total commercial harvest forecast of 443,000 wild chum salmon. Managing for each district's escapement goal, the department's objective was to secure a combined escapement total of 170,000 wild chum salmon.

Chum salmon escapement was met in 3 of the 5 districts surveyed for wild chum salmon escapement.

Harvest Summary: The 2025 CCPF harvest of chum salmon was approximately 3.4 million fish, 10% above the preseason harvest forecast and 31% above the 10-year (2015–2024) average harvest of 2.6 million fish. PWSAC harvested approximately 1.4 million chum salmon for cost recovery and broodstock in the Coghill District. The drift gillnet harvest of chum in the Coghill District totaled 670,000, 33% above the forecast and 44% below the 10-year average of 1.2 million fish, with wild chum accounting for 1% of this commercial catch.

Based on contribution estimates, the CCPF harvest of enhanced chum salmon at the Port Chalmers remote release site was 1.9 million fish, which is 2.4 times the preseason forecast of 780,000 fish. In the Southwestern District, the CCPF harvest of enhanced chum salmon at AFK was 505,000 fish, 2.4 times the preseason forecast of 210,000 fish.

Summary by Heather Scannell, Jeremy Botz, and Todd Johnson, Area Management Biologists, ADF&G, Cordova.

LOWER COOK INLET AREA

The 2025 Lower Cook Inlet (LCI) area commercial salmon harvest was 1.0 million fish. The harvest consisted of approximately 204 Chinook, 443,000 sockeye, 2,100 coho, 535,000 pink, and 25,000 chum salmon (Table 5). Approximately 890,200 fish (89%) were harvested in the commercial fishery, and 115,000 fish (11%) were harvested through hatchery cost recovery.

Chinook Salmon

Harvest Summary: The 2025 LCI harvest of 204 Chinook salmon was below the 10-year average LCI harvest of 517 fish. The set gillnet Chinook salmon harvest for the Southern District was 122 fish, less than the 10-year average harvest of 357 fish. An additional 45 Chinook salmon were harvested by purse seine gear in the Southern and Outer Districts.

Sockeye Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association (CIAA) forecasted a run of 27,700 sockeye salmon to the Kirschner Lake remote release site. CIAA also forecasted a total run of 83,600 sockeye salmon to Resurrection Bay facilities, with all but 7,200 of these fish anticipated to be used for broodstock or cost-recovery purposes. An additional 113,600 fish were forecast to return to Kachemak Bay release sites, with 102,700 of these fish anticipated to be used for cost recovery or brood harvest.

Sockeye salmon escapement in the Kamishak District was within the SEG ranges for Chenik Lake, Mikfik Lake, and the Amakdedori River.

Sockeye salmon escapements were below the SEG range for Delight Lake and within the SEG range for Desire Lake in the Outer District.

The estimated escapement of sockeye salmon through the Bear Creek weir of 12,000 fish was within the desired inriver passage goal range of 5,520–13,520 fish. This goal combines the SEG range (600–8,600 fish) and the estimated 4,920 fish required for broodstock for the CIAA Resurrection Bay sockeye salmon program at the Trail Lakes Hatchery. CIAA harvested fewer broodstock than anticipated (1,578 fish), allowing approximately 10,422 sockeye salmon to remain in the lake and spawn naturally. This estimate is above the SEG range of 600–8,600 fish for this system. The only other index stock in the Eastern District is Aialik Lake, where the final escapement of approximately 5,700 fish was above the SEG range of 3,200–5,400 fish.

Harvest Summary: The 2025 CCPF purse seine harvest for the Southern District was 256,810 sockeye salmon, which was higher than the previous 10-year average harvest of 65,360 fish. The set gillnet harvest for the Southern District was 34,000 fish, which was above the previous 10-year average harvest of 23,129 fish.

The Kamishak Bay District CCPF sockeye salmon harvest was 54,939 fish. This was above the previous 10-year harvest average of 41,825 fish.

The Outer District harvest was 6,444 sockeye salmon, which was below the previous 10-year average harvest of 11,727 fish.

Due to small runs in recent decades, no wild sockeye salmon were forecast to be available for commercial harvest from the Eastern District. Portions of Resurrection Bay were open for commercial harvest from June 24 through July 12. In addition, the Aialik Subdistrict was open for

commercial fishing periods in July and August. There was no commercial common property harvest reported from the Eastern District in 2025.

Coho Salmon

Harvest Summary: The 2025 purse seine harvest for the Southern District was 270 coho salmon, which is below the 10-year average harvest of 1,224 fish. The set gillnet harvest for the Southern District was 669 fish, which is less than the previous 10-year average harvest of 2,382 fish.

The Kamishak Bay District CCPF coho salmon harvest was 91 fish. The previous 10-year average harvest was 1,321 fish.

The Outer District harvest was less than 730 coho salmon, which was greater than the previous 10-year average harvest of 382 fish.

Pink Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: Aggregated pink salmon SEGs were achieved for the Outer and Kamishak Bay districts.

Harvest Summary: The 2025 purse seine harvest for the Southern District was 1,333 pink salmon, less than the previous 10-year average harvest of 176,023 fish. The set gillnet harvest for the Southern District was 1,607 fish, less than the previous 10-year average harvest of 21,077 fish.

The Kamishak Bay District CCPF pink salmon harvest was 49,733 fish. The previous 10-year average for pink salmon harvest from this district is 47,553 fish.

The Outer District pink salmon harvest was 458,376 fish, which was lower than the previous 10-year average harvest of 1.1 million fish.

Chum Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: The aggregated chum salmon SEG was achieved for the Southern, Outer, and Kamishak Bay districts.

Harvest Summary: The 2025 purse seine harvest for the Southern District was 283 chum salmon, which was lower than the previous 10-year average harvest of 947 fish. The set gillnet harvest for the Southern District was 3,877 chum salmon, which was less than the previous 10-year average harvest of 4,049 fish.

The Kamishak Bay District CCPF chum salmon harvest was 3,274 fish. The previous 10-year average annual chum salmon harvest from this district is 9,717 fish.

The Outer District harvest was 17,605 chum salmon, which was lower than the previous 10-year average harvest of 48,102 fish.

Summary by Glenn Hollowell, Area Management Biologist, ADF&G, Homer.

UPPER COOK INLET AREA

The 2025 Upper Cook Inlet (UCI) Area commercial salmon fishery harvest of 4.1 million salmon was 51% more than the recent 10-year average harvest of 2.0 million fish. The harvest was composed of approximately 136 Chinook, 3.84 million sockeye, 116,000 coho, 41,000 pink, and 116,000 chum salmon (Table 5). The 2025 season was the 2nd season when the National Marine Fisheries Service directly managed the exclusive economic zone (EEZ) of Upper Cook Inlet. Harvest is reported separately for salmon caught in the Central District's EEZ and remaining State of Alaska waters (SOA) for the drift gillnet fishery.

Chinook Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: In UCI, most Chinook salmon are harvested in 2 commercial fisheries. These include the set gillnet fisheries in the Northern District and the Upper Subdistrict of the Central District. For the 2025 season, Chinook salmon runs were expected to be below average across Southcentral Alaska. As expected, the run was below average and even lower than the preseason forecasts. This led to preseason conservation measures in UCI fisheries to reduce the harvest of Chinook salmon.

The preseason run forecast for Deshka River Chinook salmon of approximately 5,200 fish was below the biological escapement goal (BEG) range of 9,000–18,000 fish. The department issued preseason restrictions, closing sport fishing for Chinook salmon in the Susitna River drainage (2-KS-2-06-25). In accordance with the *Northern District King Salmon Management Plan*, the directed commercial Chinook salmon fishery in the Northern District was also closed preseason (EO 2-F-H-1-25) after the Deshka River Chinook salmon sport fishery was closed. The final escapement estimate of Chinook salmon in the Deshka River was approximately 1,690 fish, which did not fall within the BEG range of 9,000–18,000 fish. The Little Susitna River weir was moved to a new location upstream during the early season when Chinook salmon are typically assessed. No weir count is available for Chinook salmon, and the run was assessed via aerial survey for the 2025 season. Results of the aerial escapement goals for the various other Susitna drainage Chinook salmon systems are still preliminary and are pending data analysis to determine whether goals have been achieved.

Kasilof River and Kenai River late-run Chinook salmon are the primary Chinook salmon stocks harvested in the eastside set gillnet (ESSN) fishery; however, the ESSN fishery was initially closed to commercial salmon fishing in 2025 (EO 2-F-H-2-25). At the February 2024 Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) meeting, the *Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Stock of Concern Management Plan* was created. Kenai River late-run Chinook salmon were managed to meet the recovery goal (RG) range of 14,250–30,000 large Chinook salmon ($\geq$75 cm mid eye to tail fork length) established in the *Kenai River Late-Run King Salmon Stock of Concern Management Plan*.

The total estimated passage at the river mile 14 sonar through August 21 was 15,641 large Chinook salmon, and the preliminary escapement was 15,015 large fish. The department applies harvest, catch-and-release mortality estimates, and spawning downstream of the sonar estimates to generate a preliminary spawning escapement estimate. The midpoint of the run occurred on July 27, which is the mean historical midpoint. The RG range of 14,250–30,000 large fish was achieved, and the SEG range of 13,500–27,000 large fish was achieved. Although the SEG has been achieved in 5 of the last 9 years, the lower bound of the optimal escapement goal (OEG) was achieved in 2025 for the first time since it was established in 2020. The 2025 preseason forecast was for a total run of approximately 8,742 large Kenai River late-run Chinook salmon.

For the 3 southern Kenai Peninsula Chinook salmon systems, the SEG was achieved in both the Anchor and Ninilchik Rivers. The Deep Creek Chinook salmon run was not assessed due to a lack of funding. The Anchor River preliminary escapement estimate was approximately 4,040 fish (SEG range: 3,200–6,400 fish). The Ninilchik River wild run count was 1,045 fish (SEG range: 900–1,600 fish). The recreational fisheries at Deep Creek and Anchor River were closed during the preseason and remained closed for the season. The Ninilchik River Chinook salmon sport fishery was opened for hatchery fish only and the use of bait was prohibited, but was closed by emergency order effective June 18.

Harvest Summary: The 2025 UCI commercial harvest of Chinook salmon was 136 fish, which was 97% less than the previous 10-year average of 4,520 fish. The drift gillnet fishery harvested just over 104 Chinook salmon of all sizes and all stocks. The estimated harvest of Chinook salmon in the set gillnet fishery of the Western, Kustatan, and Kalgin Island Subdistricts, and the commercial dip net fishery in the Upper Subdistrict was 32 fish.

The directed Chinook salmon set gillnet fishery in the Northern District was closed preseason (EO 2-F-H-1-25). However, 2 Chinook salmon were harvested in the Northern District during other fisheries in July.

Sockeye Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: The 2025 UCI preseason total run forecast of 6.9 million sockeye salmon included a harvest estimate (sport, personal use, and commercial) of 4.9 million fish. The 2025 preliminary total run estimate (harvest and escapement) of 12.1 million sockeye salmon was 5.1 million fish greater, or 74% more than the preseason forecast. Sockeye salmon run abundance to the Kenai River was more than forecasted by approximately 3.8 million fish; the run abundance to the Kasilof River exceeded the preseason forecast by 665,000 fish. The number of sockeye salmon returning to Fish Creek was approximately 41,000 fish more than forecasted (an escapement count of just over 42,000 fish was within the 15,000–45,000 fish SEG range). The Susitna River sockeye salmon run estimate of 597,000 fish exceeded the preseason forecast of 404,000 fish by 193,000 fish. For all other systems combined (minor systems), inseason abundance was 358,000 fish more than forecasted. The final passage estimated at the river mile 19 sonar of approximately 4.2 million sockeye salmon exceeded the Kenai River sockeye salmon upper tier inriver goal range (1,200,000–1,600,000 fish). The peak day of sockeye salmon passage in the Kenai River occurred on July 27 with a count of over 247,250 fish. Over the past 20 years, the average date on which 50% of the sonar passage occurred in the Kenai River was July 28. In 2025, the midpoint of total sockeye salmon passage occurred on July 28, which is the previous 20-year average. Approximately 30% of the sockeye salmon run arrived in the Kenai River during the month of August.

The Kasilof River sockeye salmon sonar count of approximately 1.1 million fish exceeded the Kasilof River BEG range of 140,000–320,000 fish and the OEG range of 140,000–370,000 fish. The passage midpoint for Kasilof River sockeye salmon occurred on July 17, which matched the average midpoint of July 17. Peak daily Kasilof River sockeye salmon passage of just over 44,000 fish occurred on July 16.

Harvest Summary: The UCI commercial combined-gear harvest of approximately 3.8 million sockeye salmon was 61% more than the 10-year average annual harvest of 1.6 million fish.

From June 19 through September 5, the drift gillnet fleet fished a total of 42 days broken up as follows: 3 days in the Expanded Kasilof Section only; 6 days in the Expanded Kasilof and Anchor Point Sections; 1 days in the Expanded Kasilof and Expanded Kenai Sections only; 15 days in the Expanded Kenai, Expanded Kasilof, and Anchor Point Sections only; 5 days in Drift Gillnet Area 1, with some or all the expanded sections open; and 7 days districtwide, excluding the Chinitna Bay Subdistrict. Beginning August 14, all Monday/Thursday regulatory drift gillnet fishing periods were restricted to Drift Gillnet Areas 3 and 4. The total UCI drift gillnet harvest in SOA waters was approximately 3.8 million sockeye salmon. The total UCI drift gillnet harvest in EEZ waters was approximately 383,349 sockeye salmon. In 2025, 410 drift gillnet permits made deliveries in SOA fisheries for a season average harvest of approximately 7,655 sockeye salmon per permit. The peak day of harvest for the drift gillnet fleet occurred on Thursday, July 17, with 357,755 sockeye salmon harvested.

Approximately 29,650 sockeye salmon were harvested by set gillnetters in the Western Subdistrict. This was 20% less than the 10-year average annual harvest of approximately 36,000 fish during the previous 10 years.

Approximately 18,000 sockeye salmon were harvested in the Kustatan Subdistrict during 2025. The 2025 sockeye salmon harvest for the Kustatan Subdistrict was much larger than the recent 10-year average harvest of over 7,252 fish.

In 2025, approximately 47,800 sockeye salmon were harvested from the Kalgin Island Subdistrict. The average annual sockeye salmon harvest in the Kalgin Island Subdistrict during the previous 10 years was approximately 48,000 fish.

In 2025, approximately 41,300 sockeye salmon were harvested in the Northern District. This harvest was 27% less than the 10-year average annual harvest of almost 56,000 sockeye salmon. As in past years, restrictions on the Northern District limited the number of nets allowed from July 21 until August 4, and the end of the season on August 14 was opened with a 4-hour reduction. The season was closed early by emergency order for coho conservation.

Coho Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: In UCI, there are 4 coho salmon systems with escapement goals. Weirs are used to assess escapement on Fish Creek, Little Susitna River, and Deshka River; McRoberts Creek is assessed using foot surveys.

The Little Susitna weir was moved from its original location at river mile 32.5 to river mile 39.5 and began operating on July 23. Low water conditions slowed the coho salmon passage through August. High water prevented counting from August 30 until September due to safety concerns, the last day of counts was on September 9. The weir count of 4,506 fish did not achieve the SEG of 9,200–17,700 fish.

The Deshka River weir began operation on June 13, the first coho salmon was counted on July 26. Low water conditions slowed the coho salmon passage into August. Flooding prevented counting fish at the Deshka River weir beginning August 29, ending the weir project. Visual assessments by department staff did not identify many fish in stream before or after the flood occurred. The count of 3,869 coho salmon is considered a minimum count and incomplete.

The weir at Fish Creek was pulled on September 7, with 3,386 coho salmon passed, which achieved the SEG of 1,200-4,400 fish. The SEG range for Jim Creek of 250–700 coho salmon is

assessed postseason by a foot survey of McRoberts Creek, a small spawning tributary within the Jim Creek system. The survey resulted in almost 450 coho salmon, which is within the SEG range.

Harvest Summary: The 2025 commercial harvest estimate of approximately 116,000 coho salmon was 35% less than the previous 10-year average of 156,000 fish. The drift gillnet harvest in SOA waters was 70,325 fish, and in EEZ waters was 15,026 fish. The Northern District set gillnet fishery harvested 18,960 coho salmon, which was 55% less than the recent 10-year average of 41,800 fish.

Pink Salmon

Harvest Summary: Pink salmon runs in UCI are even-year dominant, with odd-year average harvests typically less than one-sixth of even-year harvests. The 2025 UCI commercial pink salmon harvest was estimated to be 40,500 fish, 57% lower than the average annual harvest of 92,600 fish from the 10-year, even-year (2005–2023) average harvest.

Chum Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: An aerial survey of Chinitna River and Clearwater Creek was conducted on August 11. This survey produced an estimate of approximately 6,431 chum salmon, which was within the SEG range (3,500–8,000 fish). With the escapement goal being met, Chinitna Bay was opened to drift gillnet fishing on Tuesdays and Fridays from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM until UCI was closed to all fishing on September 22. Regularly scheduled Monday and Thursday drift gillnet fishing periods for Drift Gillnet Areas 3 and 4 began August 14.

Harvest Summary: The 2025 harvest of 116,000 chum salmon was 10% lower than the 10-year average annual harvest of 128,000 fish.

Summary by Colton Lipka and Lucas Stumpf, Area Management Biologists, ADF&G, Soldotna.

BRISTOL BAY AREA

The 2025 commercial salmon harvest in the Bristol Bay Area totaled 41.9 million salmon (Table 5). Sockeye salmon accounted for most of this harvest at 41.3 million fish. Harvest for the other species were approximately 5,000 Chinook, 586,000 chum, 250 pink, and 27,000 coho salmon.

Chinook Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: Bristol Bay Chinook salmon harvest and abundance remained low in 2025. The Nushagak River Chinook salmon inriver run index at Portage Creek sonar was 34,322 fish, below the sustainable escapement goal (SEG) range of 55,000–120,000 fish and the inriver goal of 95,000 fish.

Harvest Summary: Bristol Bay Chinook salmon harvest and abundance continued to be low in 2025. Chinook salmon harvested in Bristol Bay were incidentally caught during directed sockeye salmon fishing periods. Overall, the 2025 Chinook salmon harvests were below average in all districts of Bristol Bay, with a total of approximately 5,000 Chinook salmon harvested baywide (Table 5). Nushagak Chinook salmon is the main source of Chinook harvest in Bristol Bay and is a stock of concern. The Nushagak District was managed according to the Nushagak Chinook salmon action plan, with sockeye salmon optimum escapement goal (OEG) triggers that delay fishing to allow for increased Chinook salmon escapement. The Nushagak District Chinook harvest was approximately 3,000 fish, well below average.

Sockeye Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: The 2025 Bristol Bay sockeye salmon run of 56.7 million fish was 14% above the preseason inshore forecast of 49.8 million fish. Nushagak and Wood Rivers sockeye salmon have OEG ranges that were adopted in 2023 by the Alaska Board of Fisheries as part of the *Nushagak District King Salmon Stock of Concern Management Plan*. Sockeye salmon escapement goals were exceeded on the Nushagak, Igushik, and Togiak Rivers. The Kvichak, Naknek, Alagnak, Egegik, Ugashik, and Wood Rivers were within their escapement goal ranges. Overall, run timing was 1 day early compared to the 20-year average.

In 2025, the age composition of sockeye salmon in Bristol Bay was roughly on forecast, with 38% 2-ocean fish (forecast of 37%) and 61% 3-ocean fish (forecast of 63%) returning. The 1.2 age class contributed 27% and age-1.3 fish contributed 58%. Although the average weight of 5.1 pounds is slightly higher than the recent 5-year average of 4.9 pounds due to the large number of 3-ocean fish, weight-at-age was below average for most age classes

Harvest Summary: The 2025 harvest of 41.3 million sockeye salmon was 23% higher than the recent 20-year average of 33.6 million fish between all districts.

Coho Salmon

Harvest Summary: The commercial harvest of coho salmon was approximately 27,000 fish. The Nushagak District is typically the largest producer of coho salmon and had a harvest of approximately 11,000 fish, although the Egegik District accounted for the most coho harvest in 2025 with 12,000 fish (Table 5). Harvests of coho salmon can be variable from year to year depending on processor availability, market conditions, and overall fishing effort. There was no

real interest in a coho salmon fishery in the Nushagak District this season, and harvest was incidental to the sockeye salmon fishery. Coho escapement is not monitored in Bristol Bay.

Pink Salmon

Harvest Summary: Pink salmon in Bristol Bay are predominantly an even-year species. Pink salmon harvest was incidental to the sockeye salmon fishery and totaled 250 fish (Table 5). Pink salmon escapement is not monitored in Bristol Bay.

Chum Salmon

Escapement Summary: The Nushagak River sonar project is the only chum salmon escapement assessment project in Bristol Bay. The escapement of 369,000 fish was well above the lower-bound SEG of 200,000 fish.

Harvest Summary: In 2025, the baywide commercial harvest of 586,000 chum salmon was well below the recent 20-year average of 1.0 million fish.

Summary by Tim Sands, Travis Elison, and Stacy Vega, Area Management Biologists, ADF&G, Dillingham, and Anchorage.

Table 5.–2025 Central Region commercial salmon harvests, by area and species, in thousands of fish.

Fishing area	Species					Total
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	
Drift gillnet						
Bering River District	0	9	33	0	2	44
Coghill District	0	117	17	102	670	907
Copper River District	6	840	162	8	26	1,042
Eshamy District	0	63	1	30	41	136
Montague District	0	7	0	52	1,931	1,990
Unakwik District	0	3	0	0	0	4
Purse seine						
Coghill District	0	1	4	174	29	208
Eastern District	0	20	133	28,574	139	28,867
Montague District	0	2	6	999	2	1,008
Northern District	0	3	10	2,311	8	2,332
Northwestern District	0	4	2	325	6	336
Southeastern District	0	1	1	467	39	508
Southwestern District	0	23	10	3,713	506	4,252
Unakwik District	0	0	0	0	0	0
Set gillnet						
Eshamy District	0	87	0	23	44	154
Hatchery[a]	0	60	6	8,312	1,439	9,817
Prince William Sound total[b,c]	6	1,242	385	45,090	4,883	51,606
Southern District purse seine	0	257	0	1	0	259
Southern District set gillnet	0	34	1	2	4	40
Southern District total	0	291	1	3	4	299
Kamishak District purse seine	0	55	0	50	3	108
Outer District purse seine	0	6	1	458	18	483
Hatchery[d]	0	91	0	24	0	115
Lower Cook Inlet total[e]	0	443	2	535	25	1,005
Central District drift gillnet - EEZ	0	383	15	6	27	431
Central District drift gillnet - SOA	0	3,139	70	31	82	3,322
Central District set gillnet	0	139	12	1	3	155
Central District dip net	0	134	0	0	0	134
Central District total	0	3,796	97	38	112	4,042
Northern District	0	41	19	3	4	67
Upper Cook Inlet total[c,e]	0	3,837	116	41	116	4,110
Naknek-Kvichak District	1	11,487	1	0	118	11,607
Nushagak District	3	16,650	11	0	311	16,974
Egegik District	0	7,627	12	0	43	7,682
Ugashik District	0	4,982	1	0	46	5,030
Togiak District	1	524	3	0	68	595
Bristol Bay total[c]	5	41,270	27	0	586	41,888
Central Region total	12	46,792	531	45,666	5,609	98,609

Notes: Zeros indicate harvest activity but <500 fish. Columns may not total exactly due to rounding. EEZ is Economic Exclusive Zone. SOA is State of Alaska.

[a] Total includes hatchery sales for operating expenses and broodstock harvests.

[b] Chinook salmon adults and jacks are totaled.

[c] Total includes harvest that was discarded, confiscated, seized, or donated.

[d] Total includes cost recovery and hatchery-donated fish but not broodstock.

[e] Total includes commercially harvested fish retained for personal use.

ARCTIC–YUKON–KUSKOKWIM REGION

The Arctic–Yukon–Kuskokwim (AYK) Region 2025 harvests totaled approximately 73,000 fish (Table 6). The cumulative all-gear commercial harvest included approximately 650 sockeye, 32,000 coho, 40,000 chum, and 46 pink salmon, all harvested in the Norton Sound and Kotzebue areas.

KUSKOKWIM AREA

The 2025 Kuskokwim River Chinook salmon forecast was for a range of 136,000–217,000 fish. The drainagewide Chinook salmon SEG range was 65,000–120,000 fish. If the run came in as projected, the drainagewide and tributary escapement goals were expected to be achieved with a limited subsistence harvest. The 2025 season was managed in accordance with the *Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan* (5 AAC 07.365) with input from the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (Working Group). Since 1988, the Working Group has been an integral part of salmon management. The Working Group consists of rural fishers from all parts of the river who represent different stakeholder groups (elders, subsistence fishers, commercial fishers, and sport fishers) who meet weekly to discuss inseason data and fisher reports and advise the managers on decision making. It was the intent of the department to manage all Kuskokwim River salmon stocks in a conservative manner, consistent with the *Policy for the Management of Sustainable Salmon Fisheries* under 5 AAC 39.222, to meet escapement goals and the subsistence priority. Management strategies that were intended to achieve escapement goals included early season subsistence fishing closures, tributary closures, time and area restrictions, gillnet mesh size and length restrictions, and live-release requirements.

The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) determined that adopting a Federal Special Action (FSA) was warranted due to the expectation that subsistence needs would likely not be met for Chinook, chum, and coho salmon runs and therefore warranted fishing restrictions. Starting June 1, an FSA closed the Kuskokwim River subsistence gillnet fishery to non-federally qualified users within the boundary of the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge (YDNWR).

Upstream of the YDNWR boundary at Aniak to the Kuskokwim River headwaters, subsistence fishing in Sections 4 (from the refuge boundary at Aniak to the Holitna River mouth) and 5 (Holitna River mouth to headwaters) was not subject to the FSA. Beginning June 9, subsistence fishing in Sections 4 and 5 was closed to gillnets (drift and set) with additional restrictions that required live release of Chinook salmon captured in selective gears. On June 9, the number of Chinook salmon past the sonar was above the recent average, and FWS offered 2 fishing opportunities in the lower river with a reported harvest of 1,936 Chinook salmon, 243 chum salmon, and 302 sockeye salmon. The upper Kuskokwim River has a lower population and catches less than 20% of the total salmon harvest. Genetics research and traditional knowledge indicate that early run Chinook salmon are heading to the upper river, providing for both escapement and upper river harvest opportunity. After consulting with the Working Group, the department opened subsistence fishing in Sections 4 and 5 beginning June 12 until further notice with 6-inch or less mesh gillnets (set or drift), and 25 fathoms in length. Due to recent years with lower-than-average assessments, the Aniak River remained closed to Chinook salmon harvest.

On August 7, the FWS rescinded the FSA and the associated fishing closures that had been in place in the Kuskokwim River within the YDNWR boundaries. Based on inseason run assessment data, fisher reports, traditional knowledge, and in agreement with the Working Group, the

department determined that ending restrictions to fishing with gillnets was warranted. On August 7, the department resumed management of Sections 1–3 and subsequently opened subsistence fishing with gillnets until further notice from the mouth of the Kuskokwim River upstream to its headwaters. The Bethel Test Fishery (BTF) cumulative catch per unit effort (CPUE) on August 10 for coho salmon was almost 2,000 fish, and the total coho salmon passage past the sonar was 198,000 fish. These BTF and sonar data indicated that the coho salmon escapement goals at the Kwethluk River and Kogrukluk River weirs would likely be met. On average, approximately 58% of the coho salmon run has passed Bethel by August 10. By August 10, an average of 100% of the Chinook salmon run, 100% of the sockeye salmon run, and 99% of the chum salmon run have also passed Bethel.

Chinook Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: The preliminary Kuskokwim River total run estimate was 151,592 Chinook salmon (95% CI = 133,921–169,264 fish), and an estimated 105,983 Chinook salmon (95% CI = 88,499–123,468 fish) escaped Kuskokwim River fisheries, which achieved the drainagewide SEG range of 65,000–120,000 fish. Chinook salmon passage was monitored in season using a sonar near Bethel. In 2025, approximately 120,000 Chinook salmon were estimated to have passed the sonar, which was similar to the 2018–2024 average of approximately 125,000 fish.

Chinook salmon escapement was estimated at 4 weirs in 2025. Escapement at the George River weir was approximately 2,000 Chinook salmon, which fell within the SEG range of 1,800–3,300 fish. Escapement at the Kogrukluk River weir was approximately 9,800 Chinook salmon, which exceeded the SEG range of 4,800–8,800 fish. Approximately 1,400 Chinook salmon were counted at the Salmon (Aniak) River weir, which was below the most recent 10-year average (2015–2024) of approximately 1,800 fish. Approximately 200 Chinook salmon were counted at the Takotna River weir, which was below the most recent 10-year average (2015–2024) of approximately 330 fish. Seven aerial surveys were carried out for Chinook salmon in 2025. The Chinook salmon aerial survey estimate at the Salmon (Pitka Fork) River was 1,165 fish, which was within the SEG range of 470–1,600 fish.

One escapement goal for Chinook salmon was assessed within the Kuskokwim Bay drainages in 2025. The Chinook salmon aerial survey SEG range of 3,900–12,000 fish at the Kanektok River (District 4) was achieved with an estimated 6,676 fish. The Chinook salmon aerial survey SEG range of 640–3,300 fish at the North Fork Goodnews River was not assessed this season due to poor weather during peak spawning time.

Harvest Summary: Postseason subsistence harvest surveys have been completed for 2025; however, estimates are not currently available. Final subsistence harvest estimates are anticipated to be available in spring 2025. There was no commercial fishery for Chinook salmon in 2025.

Sockeye Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: Sockeye salmon passage was monitored during season using a sonar near Bethel. In 2025, approximately 924,000 sockeye salmon were estimated to have passed the sonar, which was above the 2018–2024 average of approximately 733,000 fish. Sockeye salmon escapement was estimated at 3 weirs in 2025. Escapement at the Kogrukluk River weir was approximately 22,300 sockeye salmon, which exceeded the SEG range of 4,400–17,000 fish. Approximately 117,700 sockeye salmon were counted at the Telaquana River weir, which was

below the most recent 10-year average (2015–2024) of approximately 156,800 fish. Sockeye salmon escapement at the Salmon (Aniak) River weir was 430 fish, which was below the most recent 10-year average (2015–2024) of approximately 1,400 fish. Sockeye salmon aerial surveys within Kuskokwim Bay were not assessed due to poor weather conditions during the peak spawning time.

Harvest Summary: Postseason subsistence harvest surveys have been completed for 2025; however, estimates are not currently available. Final subsistence harvest estimates are anticipated to be available in spring 2025. There was no commercial fishery for sockeye salmon in 2025.

Coho Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: Coho salmon passage was monitored during season using the sonar near Bethel. In 2025, approximately 396,000 coho salmon were estimated to have passed the sonar, which was above the 2020–2023 average of approximately 236,000 fish. Kuskokwim River coho salmon escapement was not assessed in 2025 because of extended periods of missed passage due to high water.

Harvest Summary: Postseason subsistence harvest surveys have been completed for 2025; however, estimates are not currently available. Final subsistence harvest estimates are anticipated to be available in spring 2025. There was no registered large scale commercial salmon processor in the Kuskokwim Area in 2025. Commercial opportunity was provided during August 8–30, for those permit holders that had registered with the department as a catcher/seller and had independently identified a market prior to fishing. Commercial harvest totals for 2025 are confidential due to the number of participants.

Chum Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: Chum salmon passage was monitored during season using a sonar near Bethel. In 2025, approximately 160,000 chum salmon were estimated to have passed the sonar, which was below the 2018–2024 average of approximately 236,000 fish. The sonar currently provides an index of chum salmon abundance and is considered an underestimate of true passage. Chum salmon escapement was estimated at 4 weirs in 2025. Escapement at the Kogrukluk River weir was approximately 29,300 chum salmon, which fell within the SEG range of 15,000–49,000 fish. Approximately 2,400 chum salmon were counted at the Salmon (Aniak) River weir, which was below the most recent 10-year average (2015–2024) of approximately 5,400 fish. Approximately 4,900 chum salmon were counted at the George River weir, which was below the most recent 10-year average (2015–2024) of approximately 22,300 fish. Approximately 2,000 chum salmon were counted at the Takotna River weir, which was below the most recent 10-year average (2015–2024) of approximately 5,200 fish.

Harvest Summary: Postseason subsistence harvest surveys have been completed for 2025; however, estimates are not currently available. Final subsistence harvest estimates are anticipated to be available in spring 2025. There was no commercial fishery for chum salmon in 2025.

Summary by Sam Decker, Kuskokwim Area Management Biologist, and Sean Larson, Kuskokwim Area Research Biologist, ADF&G, Anchorage.

YUKON AREA

No commercial fishing occurred in the Yukon Management Area during the summer or fall seasons in 2025 (Table 6).

The Yukon River summer season spans from early May through July 15 in District 1. On July 16, management in District 1 transitions to the fall season and becomes focused on fall chum and coho salmon entering the mouth of the Yukon River. However, summer season management continues beyond this date in upper river districts as Chinook and summer chum salmon migration progresses upstream. The subsequent transition of upriver districts to the fall season is based on the migration timing of fall chum salmon.

Summer Season

Chum Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: Approximately 347,146 summer chum salmon were estimated to have passed Pilot Station sonar (90% CI = 326,019–368,273 fish), which was below the Yukon River drainage SEG range of 500,000–1,200,000 fish. The estimated run size was below the preseason forecast of 550,000–1,800,000 fish.

Three pulses of summer chum salmon passed the sonar project; the largest group consisted of approximately 163,000 fish between June 28 and July 4. The first quarter point, midpoint, and third quarter point of the summer chum salmon run at the Pilot Station sonar was June 28, July 1, and July 6, respectively. This indicated that the summer chum salmon run was probably 2 days later than average based on the midpoint at the sonar project.

The Pilot Station sonar estimated a total of 347,146 summer chum salmon as of July 18 (with a 90% CI of 326,019 to 368,273 fish). Preliminary summer chum salmon passage estimates are below the 5-year average of 582,875 fish (2020–2024), and well below the 10-year and 20-year averages. The 2025 summer chum passage estimate from Pilot Station sonar is considered conservative due to genetic analysis of salmon continuing to migrate past the sonar site after the administrative date of July 18. In 2025, 62% of the chum salmon arriving between July 19 and July 30 at Pilot Station sonar were genetically determined to be summer chum salmon. The next group of chum salmon from July 31 to August 15 was 14%, and the final group passing the sonar between August 16 and August 26 was 5% summer chum salmon. Overall, an estimated 67,426 summer chum salmon came in during the fall season (after July 18).

Three escapement goals exist for summer chum salmon: a drainagewide goal of 500,000–1,200,000 fish, 350,000–700,000 fish for the Anvik River, and 40,000 or greater at the weir on the East Fork of the Andreafsky River. Based on passage estimates from Pilot Station sonar, aerial surveys, and anticipated low subsistence harvests, the drainagewide run size was below the goal range. Anvik sonar (ADF&G) operated from June 16 to July 26 and counted 49,575 summer chum salmon with a 90% CI of 48,542 to 50,608 fish. Passage was well below the historic cumulative median of 337,819 fish and below the escapement goal range. The goal on the Andreafsky River could not be assessed because the weir project did not operate.

Harvest Summary: No commercial fishing occurred in the Yukon Management Area in 2025. Subsistence fishing for summer chum salmon was closed all season; however, a small number were harvested through test fisheries or retained as incidental harvest using nonsalmon gear.

Chinook Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: The cumulative passage estimate at the Pilot Station sonar was 60,442 Chinook salmon (with a 90% CI of 51,728 to 69,156 fish). This passage was the 4th lowest recorded at the project (2000, 2022, and 2023 were lower) and about 38% of the average annual passage of 157,615 fish). Most Chinook salmon entered the river in 3 pulses, and the midpoint of the run appears to have been 5 days later than average.

Most assessment projects operated in 2025; however, the weir operated by FWS on the Andreafsky River was discontinued after multiple years of high-water impeding counts. The Gisasa and Henshaw River weirs (operated by Tanana Chiefs Conference) did not operate due to a lack of funding. High-water conditions in 2025 temporarily affected the ability of some projects to detect salmon passage for 1 to 3 days. However, evidence of poor escapement was also obtained through local reports, aerial surveys, and confirmed by carcass surveys by boat. No escapement goals were met this year for Chinook or summer chum salmon and counts were below average.

The Chena and Salcha River escapement projects are operated by the ADF&G Division of Sport Fish. The Chena River escapement project operated from June 30 to August 11. Based on the average run timing taken from historical data, summer chum salmon were still migrating past the site at the conclusion of the project. River conditions did not allow visual counts from July 11 to July 13 and July 30 to August 9, and passage estimates were extrapolated for that period. The season total estimate was 1,247 (SE = 174) Chinook salmon and 1,851 (SE = 749) summer chum salmon.

The Salcha River escapement project operated solely as a counting tower from July 3 to August 15. The season estimates were 1,832 (SE = 126) Chinook salmon and 5,013 (SE = 570) chum salmon. High-water conditions made tower counts unattainable for 3 days of the season. No counts were possible on July 31 and August 1 and multiple other days had incomplete counts. Based on historic average run timing, the project stopped counting summer chum salmon before most fish would have arrived (Figure 8). Summer chum salmon passage estimates from the Chena and Salcha River projects should be considered incomplete and partial because the projects do not stay in operation for the duration of the run.

Based on genetic mixed stock analysis and passage, Canadian-origin fish represented a weighted average of 44% of all Chinook salmon sampled at Pilot Station, with an estimated season total of 26,506 fish. The preliminary cumulative passage estimate at the Eagle sonar was almost 23,863 Chinook salmon, which is approximately 49% lower than the historical average and the third lowest season total estimate (90% CI = 23,563–24,163 fish). This estimate did not meet the U.S./Canada border passage objective of 71,000 fish. Fishing for Chinook salmon remained closed all season throughout the Yukon Area; however, a small number of Chinook salmon were harvested through test fisheries or retained as incidental harvest using nonsalmon gear.

Harvest Summary: No commercial salmon fishing periods occurred in 2025 due to low abundance of Chinook and summer chum salmon and the resulting subsistence fishery restrictions.

Fall Season

Fall Chum Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: In 2025, the preliminary estimate of the drainagewide total run size was 184,000 fall chum salmon. The drainagewide escapement (after preliminary harvest

estimates from U.S. and Canada were removed) was estimated to be 180,000 fall chum salmon, which was below the SEG range of 300,000–600,000 fish. The 2025 run was the 5th lowest fall chum salmon run on record, with 6 consecutive low years from 2020 to 2025.

Three fall chum salmon escapement goals were assessed in the Yukon Area during the 2025 fall season. Approximately 66,000 fall chum salmon were estimated to have passed through the Teedriinjik sonar project (estimate includes expansion beyond project termination), which is well below the SEG range of 85,000–234,000 fish. The Delta River, a tributary of the Tanana River drainage, was monitored using replicate ground (foot) surveys. The surveys resulted in an escapement estimate of just below 7,000 fall chum salmon, which is below the SEG range of 7,000–20,000 fish. The Sheenjek River sonar project, which was reestablished in 2022, resulted in an estimated passage of approximately 19,000 fall chum salmon (estimate includes expansion beyond project termination). The Sheenjek River was previously monitored from 1974 to 2012, with an average passage of 100,000 fall chum salmon.

Several escapement monitoring projects were also operated in Canada. On the Porcupine River, approximately 11,900 fall chum salmon passed the sonar. Although there is no established escapement goal for this location, this abundance estimate indicated that treaty obligations for the upper Porcupine River would not be met. In the Fishing Branch River, a weir/sonar project produced an escapement estimate of 7,900 fall chum salmon. This level of escapement in the Fishing Branch River was well below the lower end of the interim management escapement goal (IMEG) range of 22,000–49,000 fish.

The largest component of Canada-origin fall chum salmon pass into Canada via the mainstem Yukon River. The fall chum salmon passage estimate at the mainstem Yukon River sonar project near Eagle was 18,404 fish (SE = 164 fish) for the dates September 1 through October 6. Due to continued passage after the termination of the project, the fall chum salmon estimate was subsequently adjusted to approximately 19,600 fish. The preliminary escapement for the mainstem Yukon River in Canada is derived by subtracting the U.S. and Canadian harvests upstream of the sonar project from the expanded sonar estimate; however, no harvest was reported in 2025. The preliminary mainstem Yukon River escapement estimate (19,600 fall chum salmon) was the 2nd lowest on record since 1980 and was below the IMEG range (70,000–104,000 fish). As expected, based on the extremely low total drainagewide run size, neither of the Yukon River treaty obligations with Canada were achieved in 2025.

Stock composition estimates, provided by FWS Conservation Genetics Laboratory, were determined using tissue samples collected from chum salmon captured in the mainstem Yukon River sonar test net fishery near Pilot Station. Chum salmon genetic samples processed and analyzed resulted in 4 strata between July 19 and September 7 (fall season) and included approximately 20% summer stocks. Within the fall components, the 3 main stock groupings were 41% Border U.S. (Teedriinjik/Sheenjek/Draanjik), 12% Canadian, and 47% Tanana. In 2025, the upper Border U.S. was near the average of 36%, the Tanana River stocks were well above the average of 34%, and the Canadian component was lower than the 2004–2024 average of 30%. Analysis often reviews the mainstem Yukon to Canada separately because of sample size issues for the genetic Porcupine component. In 2025, the mainstem Yukon Canada component of fall chum salmon was the 3rd lowest on record at 10% compared to the 2004–2024 average of 26%.

Harvest Summary: No commercial fishing occurred in the Yukon Management Area during the summer or fall seasons. Subsistence fishing for fall chum salmon remained closed in the Yukon

Area. However, fall chum salmon were caught primarily in test fisheries with some incidental harvest in nonsalmon gear. The preliminary 2025 harvest estimate from these sources was approximately 4,500 fall chum salmon.

Coho Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: There are few coho salmon spawning escapement assessment projects in the Yukon River drainage because of funding limitations and late timing relative to the onset of winter. The sonar in the mainstem Yukon River near Pilot Station was operated through September 7. The project estimated passage through Pilot Station was about 106,000 coho salmon (90% CI = 96,000–116,000 fish); however, this project does not count the entire run. A coho salmon run size index is used that includes estimated passage after the sonar concludes for the season. In 2025, the run size index was estimated to be 112,000 coho salmon, which was below the (1995–2024) historical average of 211,000 fish. A boat survey conducted on the Delta Clearwater River in late October resulted in an escapement estimate of 9,760 coho salmon, which was below the 1972–2024 average of 14,000 fish. Escapement count estimates for coho salmon were conducted by aerial survey in the Nenana River drainage, and all spawning areas monitored were below the 1974–2024 average.

Harvest Summary: No commercial fishing occurred in the Yukon Management Area during the summer or fall seasons. Subsistence fishing for coho salmon in the Yukon Area opened August 21 due to better than expected returns. Coho salmon were caught primarily in test fisheries or in nonsalmon gear. The preliminary 2025 harvest estimate from these sources was approximately 1,190 coho salmon.

Summary by Deena Jallen, Area Management Biologist, and Matt Olson, Area Management Biologist, ADF&G, Fairbanks.

NORTON SOUND AREA

Weak runs of salmon, especially in southern Norton Sound, resulted in low volumes of commercial salmon harvest this season. Escapement goals were achieved for none of the 5 monitored chum salmon stocks, 2 of 3 coho salmon stocks, 1 of 3 pink salmon stocks, and both sockeye salmon stocks. Escapement goals were not achieved for Chinook salmon. Total commercial salmon harvests were approximately 650 sockeye, 31,500 coho, 46 pink, and 6,000 chum salmon (Table 6).

Chinook Salmon

Harvest Summary: Commercial fishing targeting Chinook salmon was prohibited in the Norton Sound Area during the 2025 season.

Sockeye Salmon

Harvest Summary: Sockeye salmon harvest accounts for a small portion of the overall harvest in Norton Sound and is incidental harvest when targeting other species. The 2025 commercial harvest of 650 fish was below the recent 5-year (2020–2024) average harvest of approximately 1,000 sockeye salmon.

Coho Salmon

Harvest Summary: The 2025 coho salmon harvest of 31,500 fish was nearly 3 times the recent 5-year average (12,000 fish).

Pink Salmon

Harvest Summary: The 2025 pink salmon run was weak, unlike the record runs experienced in Norton Sound in recent years. There were no directed pink commercial openings in Norton Sound in 2025, and 46 pink salmon were sold. Pink salmon harvest in Norton Sound is highly dependent on market availability, and directed pink salmon fisheries have been sporadic.

Chum Salmon

Harvest Summary: The 2025 chum salmon harvest of approximately 6,000 fish was below the recent 5-year average (18,000 fish).

Summary by Luke Henslee, Assistant Area Management Biologist, ADF&G, Nome.

KOTZEBUE SOUND AREA

There were 33 permit holders who commercially harvested fish in the Kotzebue Sound Area in 2025. The highest fishing effort this season occurred on August 4 when 22 permit holders made landings. Total commercial salmon harvests were approximately 35,000 chum salmon (Table 6).

Chum Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: No aerial surveys were conducted in 2025, and the Kobuk River test fish project was discontinued in the 2024 season due to budget cuts.

Harvest Summary: The Kotzebue Sound chum salmon harvest of 35,000 fish was one of the poorest on record when a buyer was available in the Kotzebue District.

Summary by Luke Henslee, Assistant Area Management Biologist, ADF&G, Nome.

Table 6.–2025 Arctic–Yukon–Kuskokwim Region (AYK) commercial salmon harvests, by fishing area and species, in thousands of fish.

	Species					
Fishing area	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
Kuskokwim River	–	–	–	–	–	–
Kuskokwim Bay	–	–	–	–	–	–
Kuskokwim Area total	–	–	–	–	–	–
Lower Yukon River	–	–	–	–	–	–
Upper Yukon River	–	–	–	–	–	–
Yukon River total	–	–	–	–	–	–
Norton Sound	0	1	32	0	6	38
Kotzebue Sound[a]	0	0	0	0	35	35
AYK Region total[a]	0	1	32	0	40	73

Note: En dashes indicate no harvest or confidential data, and zeros indicate harvest activity but <500 fish. Columns may not total exactly due to rounding. Confidential data omitted.

[a] Total includes commercial harvest that was discarded, confiscated, seized, donated, or retained for personal use.

WESTWARD REGION

KODIAK AREA

The 2025 commercial harvest in the Kodiak Management Area (KMA) was approximately 1,315 Chinook salmon, 1.4 million sockeye salmon, 316,000 coho salmon, 34.2 million pink salmon, and 740,000 chum salmon (Table 7). The total KMA salmon harvest of 36.7 million fish was above the 2025 forecast and the previous 10-year average of approximately 23.0 million fish.

Commercial fishing effort was below average compared to recent years. Of the 578 eligible commercial salmon permits, 249 permits were used, including 142 purse seine and 105 set gillnet permits.

Chinook Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: The total Chinook salmon escapement (550 fish) was the second lowest on record, and below the previous 10-year average of 4,957 fish. Escapement goals for Chinook salmon have been developed for the Karluk and Ayakulik Rivers, and escapements are estimated using fish counting weirs.

The Chinook salmon escapement of 93 fish through the Karluk River weir was the second lowest on record and below the BEG range of 3,000 to 6,000 fish. Chinook salmon escapement of 444 fish through the Ayakulik River weir was also near a record low and below the BEG range of 4,800 to 8,400 fish.

Harvest Summary: There are no directed Chinook salmon commercial fisheries in the KMA, but incidental commercial harvest occurs during targeted sockeye and pink salmon fisheries. The Karluk and Ayakulik Rivers both support small populations of Chinook salmon. By regulation, nonretention of Chinook salmon over 28 inches was implemented for the purse seine fleet areawide for the entire season. The 2025 commercial harvest of Chinook salmon in the KMA totaled 1,315 fish, which was below the previous 10-year average (8,247 fish) and the 2024 forecast (7,558 fish). The 2025 Chinook salmon harvest in the KMA was the lowest in the past 43 years (excluding the 1989 *Exxon Valdez* oil spill year).

Sockeye Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: Sockeye salmon runs in many systems in the KMA were average in 2025. All sockeye salmon systems in the Kodiak Area met their established escapement goals, except for the Karluk early run. The KMA estimated sockeye salmon escapement of 1.1 million fish was below the previous 10-year average of 1.5 million fish.

Harvest Summary: The 2025 commercial harvest of sockeye salmon totaled 1.4 million fish. The harvest was below the recent 10-year average (2.3 million fish) and the preseason forecast.

Early season management for much of the westside of Kodiak Island is driven by Karluk River early-run sockeye salmon. The 2025 Karluk River early run was very weak. Due to Chinook salmon conservation measures, no commercial salmon fishing was allowed in June along the westside of Kodiak Island until the management focus turned to pink salmon (July 6). A total of 74,769 sockeye salmon were harvested in early season westside areas based on Karluk River early-run sockeye salmon and the beginning of the pink salmon fishery (June 1–July 15). Westside sockeye salmon numbers include an estimated contribution of 17,882 sockeye salmon from the

enhanced Spiridon Lake sockeye salmon run harvested outside of the Spiridon Bay Special Harvest Area.

Late-season management for much of the west side of Kodiak is driven by the Kodiak Island pink and chum salmon fishery and the Karluk River late-run sockeye salmon run. Most of the wild pink salmon runs to the west side of Kodiak Island were well above average, and 105-hour weekly fishing periods were allowed in July. The Karluk River late-run sockeye salmon run was also below average. However, due to a very strong pink salmon run, extended fishing time was allowed until late August. A total of 378,037 sockeye salmon were commercially harvested in late-season westside areas managed based on Karluk River late-run sockeye and westside Kodiak pink and chum salmon abundance. Westside sockeye salmon numbers include an estimated contribution of 16,819 sockeye salmon from the enhanced Spiridon Lake sockeye salmon run harvested outside of the Spiridon Bay Special Harvest Area.

The Ayakulik River early-run sockeye salmon run was average; however, due to the department's Chinook salmon restrictions, the Ayakulik early run exceeded its BEG and very few fishing days were allowed in the Outer Ayakulik and Halibut Bay Sections of the Southwest Kodiak District during early-run sockeye salmon management. A total of 182,620 sockeye salmon were harvested in areas managed based on abundance of Ayakulik River early-run sockeye salmon. However, the department exceeded the Ayakulik BEG by nearly 76,000 fish.

The department conducted a test fishery in the Ayakulik area, harvesting 58,165 sockeye salmon before the Ayakulik BEG was exceeded. To prioritize conservation, a custom-built live box was used to successfully revive and release all 6 captured Chinook salmon; 2 of which were later observed by ADF&G staff passing upstream of the weir.

The Ayakulik River late-run sockeye salmon run was weak. A total of 72,836 sockeye salmon were harvested in areas managed based on Ayakulik River late-run sockeye salmon. A total of 255,456 sockeye salmon (not including ADF&G test fish harvest) were harvested from westside sections managed based on the abundance of Ayakulik River sockeye salmon.

Upper Station early-run sockeye salmon escapement was average, and the traditional fishing areas of the Alitak District (i.e., purse seine and set gillnet sections) were open for several fishing periods in June. However, the Frazer Lake sockeye salmon escapement was weak, and a significant closure in late June and most of July was needed to achieve the escapement goal. The Alitak District early-run sockeye salmon harvest was approximately 19,646 fish.

Commercial set gillnet effort in the Alitak District was low, allowing for liberal fishing time. Upper Station late-run sockeye salmon escapement was slightly below average and within the BEG range. The Alitak District late-run sockeye salmon harvest was 166,604 fish. The total harvest of the Alitak District sockeye salmon was 186,250 fish.

Coho Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: Although substantial coho salmon runs occur in the KMA, the department no longer has funds to monitor most stocks. The KMA has coho salmon escapement goals in the Northeast Kodiak and Eastside Kodiak Districts for the following systems: American (400 fish), Olds (500 fish), Buskin (4,700 to 9,600 fish), and Pasagshak Rivers (1,200 fish). Coho salmon runs in many systems in the KMA were average to above average in 2025. The Olds, Buskin, and Pasagshak Rivers achieved their escapement goals. The American River did not achieve its escapement goal in 2025.

Harvest Summary: The commercial coho salmon harvest of 315,681 fish was well above the forecast and above the previous 10-year average (296,695 fish). The majority of the coho salmon were harvested near the Kitoi Bay Hatchery in August and September.

Pink Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: The KMA pink salmon estimated escapement of 6.5 million fish was above the 10-years average of 5.5 million fish. However, due to budget reductions in aerial surveys and increasing costs, this figure should be considered a conservative estimate. Pink salmon escapement goals have been established as aggregate goals for the entire Kodiak Archipelago and the Mainland District. The 2025 escapement for the Kodiak Archipelago (5,676,124 fish) was above the escapement goal range of 2.0 to 5.0 million fish. The Mainland District pink salmon escapement of only 918,700 fish was above average and within the established escapement goal range (250,000 to 1,000,000 fish).

Harvest Summary: The 2025 KMA pink salmon harvest (including cost recovery) of 34,171,292 fish was the second largest on record and above the forecast and the previous 10-year average harvest of 19,709,645 fish. Pink salmon harvested in the areas managed on KMA wild stocks totaled 24,907,602 fish, which was well above forecast. Most of the wild area pink salmon harvested were from the Northwest Kodiak and Eastside Kodiak Districts.

The Kitoi Bay Hatchery pink salmon run was also above average with 9,263,690 pink salmon harvested in sections near the hatchery and only slightly below the 2025 forecast (10,800,000 fish). Kitoi-bound pink salmon are probably harvested along the west and east sides of Kodiak and Afognak Islands. Likewise, additional wild stock salmon are probably harvested in areas associated with Kitoi Bay Hatchery. The department does not have a stock separation program for pink salmon and is unable to differentiate the KMA wild and hatchery stocks. Cost-recovery fish harvested by Kodiak Regional Aquaculture Association accounted for 17% of the harvest, or 1,653,604 fish. An additional 434,406 pink salmon carcasses were also sold but not included in the totals.

Chum Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: The overall KMA chum salmon escapement of 428,718 fish was above the previous 10-year average (364,727 fish). A peak indexed escapement goal based on 17 streams on Kodiak Island has been established; the 2025 peak indexed escapement of 103,500 fish was above the goal of 101,000 fish.

Harvest Summary: Most of the KMA wild chum salmon harvest occurs during the directed pink and chum salmon fisheries in July. The majority of KMA chum salmon runs were average to below average, except several runs in the Northwest Kodiak District were particularly strong. The 2025 KMA chum salmon harvest of 740,485 fish was above the 2025 forecast (615,000 fish). Additionally, the Kitoi Bay Hatchery chum salmon harvest of 270,380 chum salmon was above the forecast (243,000 fish).

Summary by Todd Anderson, Assistant Area Management Biologist, ADF&G, Kodiak.

CHIGNIK AREA

Commercial salmon fishing effort in the Chignik Management Area (CMA) was average, with 37 permits participating. From 2018 to 2021, the early run of sockeye salmon into the Chignik River watershed failed to develop, and both the early and late runs failed to develop in 2018 and 2020. Despite the stronger run in 2023, the recent weak CMA sockeye salmon runs are the major contributing factor to low participation. Prior to 2018, between 50 and 70 permits participated in CMA commercial fisheries on any given year.

The 2025 commercial harvest in the CMA was approximately 2,919 Chinook, 823,419 sockeye 50,940 coho, 1,975,146 pink, and 86,649 chum salmon (Table 7).

On June 20, commercial salmon fishing was allowed in the Eastern, Central, Chignik Bay, Western, and Perryville Districts for 48 hours to assess the development of incoming sockeye salmon. Two more 48-hour periods occurred in June. Through July, commercial salmon fishing in the Chignik Bay District was restricted to 2 days per calendar week to protect the Chignik River Chinook salmon run. The Eastern, Central, Western, and Perryville Districts were open for the majority of July. During the month of August, the Chignik Bay and Central Districts were kept open, barring mandatory weekend regulatory closures. The Eastern, Western, and Perryville Districts were open for the remainder of the season due to high chum and pink salmon escapement. Harvest effort ceased after August 30 when processors concluded fish purchasing operations.

Chinook Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: The Chignik River is the only major Chinook salmon producing stream within the CMA and one of the largest Chinook salmon streams on the South Alaska Peninsula. The BEG range for Chinook salmon into the Chignik River watershed is 1,300–2,700 fish. The Chinook salmon run has failed to consistently develop since 2017 and was declared a stock of concern in 2023. The Chignik River Chinook salmon escapement (above the weir) of 1,391 fish in 2025 did meet the escapement goal for the first time since 2019. State subsistence and sport fishery harvest of Chinook salmon will not be known until permits and questionnaires are returned and tabulated.

Harvest Summary: A total of approximately 2,919 Chinook salmon were harvested during the 2025 season, which was below recent 5- and 10-year averages. Most of the harvest occurred in the Western District, with Chinook salmon harvest being incidental to fisheries targeting other species. Chinook salmon escapements into the Chignik River system have been near recent averages and within the BEG. Throughout the entire commercial salmon fishing season, Chinook salmon 28 inches or greater could not be retained in the commercial salmon fishery in the entire CMA. Commercial salmon openings in the Chignik Bay District were also limited to 48-hours a week to protect Chinook salmon. A harvest cap of 1,000 Chinook salmon caught within a 48-hour window was also instated, which, if triggered, would result in a 7-day closure of the districts primarily responsible. This harvest cap was never triggered in the 2025 season.

Sockeye Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: The Chignik River watershed supports 2 genetically distinct sockeye salmon runs that traditionally provide most directed harvest opportunities within the CMA: an early run and a late run. The early run starts in May, continues through June, and decreases in July, whereas the late run of sockeye salmon starts in June, continues through July, and decreases throughout August and into September. The early-run escapement was

approximately 399,000 fish and was within the early-run OEG range of 300,000–400,000 fish. The late-run estimated escapement of 659,000 fish was above the late-run OEG range of 240,000–360,000 fish.

Harvest Summary: Harvest opportunity targeting sockeye salmon in the CMA is based upon the escapement of both early- and late-run sockeye salmon in the Chignik River watershed. Due to the significant overlap of early and late runs of sockeye salmon, management must allow opportunity to harvest surplus fish without jeopardizing either run.

The 2025 Chignik River early run of sockeye salmon did not develop until mid-June, and no directed sockeye salmon commercial fishing periods were scheduled until June 20. The 2025 CMA sockeye salmon harvest of approximately 823,000 fish was near the recent 10- and 20-year average sockeye salmon harvests. Most sockeye salmon harvest came from the Chignik Bay District. Sockeye salmon harvest in the CMA occurred primarily in July.

Coho Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: Coho salmon start to enter CMA drainages in mid-August and generally continue through November. In 2025, the weir ceased operations after August 28, at which point approximately 6,031 coho salmon had passed the weir. Late season coho salmon stream surveys were not conducted in the CMA in 2025 due to staff departure from Chignik.

Due to late season run timing and limited directed effort, escapement goals for coho salmon have not been established in the CMA.

Harvest Summary: A total of approximately 51,000 coho salmon were harvested during the 2025 commercial salmon fishing season. Coho salmon harvest was incidental to efforts targeting sockeye and pink salmon. The most recent 10-year average harvest of coho salmon in the CMA is approximately 90,000 fish.

Pink Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: The CMA has an odd-year areawide aggregate pink salmon SEG range of 260,000–450,000 fish. The aggregate pink salmon escapement is the sum of pink salmon escapement into 8 different area index streams. In 2025, the aggregate pink salmon escapement was 609,000 fish, which was above the SEG range. Escapements into most other CMA streams were monitored via aerial surveys to assess areawide run timing and distribution.

Pink salmon were observed migrating past the Chignik River weir starting in mid-July. Pink salmon continued to migrate past the weir until August 28 when the weir was removed. The pink salmon escapement should be considered a minimum because runs continue through August and into September. A total of over 271,139 pink salmon were observed migrating past the Chignik River weir in 2025, the most ever recorded.

Chum Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: Chum salmon escaping into CMA streams were estimated via aerial surveys, except for the Chignik River, which was enumerated using the Chignik River weir. The chum salmon SEG range of 45,000–110,000 fish is based on escapement of 6 total index streams within 4 of the 5 districts. The 2025 estimated total peak chum salmon escapement for the 6 index streams was 102,000 fish, which was within the established SEG.

At the Chignik River weir, a total of 54 chum salmon were observed passing in 2025.

Harvest Summary: Approximately 87,000 chum salmon were harvested in the CMA, below the recent 10-year average of 127,000 fish. The majority of the chum salmon harvest occurred in the Western District.

Summary by Carl Burnside, Area Management Biologist, ADF&G, Kodiak.

ALASKA PENINSULA, ALEUTIAN ISLANDS, AND ATKA-AMLIA ISLANDS AREAS

The 2025 commercial salmon harvest in the Alaska Peninsula, Aleutian Islands, and Atka-Amlia Islands Management areas (Area M) totaled approximately 19,000 Chinook, 2.9 million sockeye, 253,000 coho, 16.8 million pink, and 1.3 million chum salmon (Table 7).

Chinook Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: Nelson River is the only river in Area M with a Chinook salmon escapement goal. At the Nelson River weir, a total of approximately 4,551 Chinook salmon escaped, meeting the BEG range of 2,400–5,000 fish. The total Northern District Chinook salmon escapement of over 7,857 fish was below the most recent 10-year average of approximately 11,868 fish.

Harvest Summary: On the North Alaska Peninsula, approximately 539 Chinook salmon were harvested, which was below the 10-year average harvest of over 1,932 fish. The total commercial harvest for the South Peninsula fishery (including the Southeastern District Mainland [SEDM] from July 26 to October 31) was approximately 18,000 Chinook salmon.

Sockeye Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: The Orzinski Lake sockeye salmon escapement of approximately 16,395 fish was within the SEG range of 14,000–28,000 fish.

The South Peninsula sockeye salmon escapement of almost 36,000 fish was below the management objective range of 48,200–86,400 fish. Escapement into Mortensen Lagoon was approximately 1,100 fish and just under the SEG range of 1,400–5,700 fish. Escapement into Thin Point Lagoon (just over 10,000 fish) was within the SEG range of 9,000–19,000 fish.

The 2025 sockeye salmon escapement in the Northwestern District was within the escapement objective range of 52,600–106,000 fish, with a total escapement of almost 67,280 fish.

In the Northern District, the 2025 North Creek escapement estimate of over 7,200 sockeye salmon was below the SEG range of 7,500–10,000 fish. Surveys for much of the season could not be conducted due to poor weather and stream conditions.

The Nelson Lagoon Section was open for all regularly scheduled weekly fishing periods and was open continuously starting on June 16. The Nelson (Sapsuk) River total run of approximately 819,504 sockeye salmon (including harvest and escapement) was above the estimated forecast of 177,000 fish. From the total run, just over 230,000 fish were harvested in Nelson Lagoon, and almost 552,000 fish escaped in the Nelson River. The 2025 escapement exceeded the BEG range of 97,000–219,000 fish.

The Bear River early-run (through July 31) sockeye salmon escapement of 212,355 fish was within the SEG range of 176,000–293,000 fish. The Bear River late-run (after July 31) sockeye salmon escapement of approximately 126,401 fish was above the SEG range of 117,000–195,000 fish.

The Bear River season sockeye salmon escapement was just over 338,000 fish, within the combined early- and late-run sockeye salmon SEG range of 293,000–488,000 fish.

The Sandy River weir was not operated in 2025 due to budgetary constraints. An aerial indexed total escapement goal of 20,000 to 30,000 was developed in the 1970s, based on visual estimates of spawning grounds. Sockeye estimates were derived from an aerial survey in 2025, and approximately 15,000 sockeye were observed, slightly below the established aerial-indexed escapement goal.

The Ilnik River system sockeye salmon escapement through the weir was approximately 40,810 fish and was within the Ilnik River SEG range of 40,000–60,000 fish.

The McLees Lake sockeye salmon escapement project was not operated in 2025 due to funding.

Aerial escapement surveys of the Meshik River began on June 20. Subsequent surveys occurred throughout the season, and the final sockeye salmon escapement into the Meshik River system was just over 45,900 fish, below the SEG range of 48,000–86,000 fish. This estimate includes escapement into the Meshik River and tributaries, as well as Red Bluff and Yellow Bluff Creeks.

The total Cinder River (including Mud Creek) sockeye salmon escapement estimate of almost 30,650 fish was below the SEG range of 36,000–94,000 fish.

Harvest Summary: The total commercial harvest for the South Peninsula fishery (including the SEDM from July 26–October 31) was approximately 1.7 million sockeye salmon.

On the North Peninsula, approximately 1.2 million sockeye salmon were harvested, which was below the 10-year average of 2.5 million fish.

Coho Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: No coho salmon surveys were flown on the South Peninsula streams in 2025. 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 2025 season, the final aerial surveys on the North Peninsula occurred on August 27. No coho surveys were conducted in September and October due to poor weather conditions and budgetary and logistical constraints. Escapement estimates that are tabulated from aerial surveys are considered minimum estimates. Nelson and Ilnik Rivers are the only systems on the North Alaska Peninsula that have a coho salmon lower-bound SEG. At Nelson River, no aerial survey was conducted during a time at which coho are typically observed, and it is unknown if the lower-bound of the escapement goal was achieved (19,000–29,000 fish). The Ilnik River was surveyed in late August, and 4,200 coho were observed during these surveys; it is unknown if the lower-bound escapement goal of 9,000 fish was achieved.

Harvest Summary: The total commercial harvest for the South Peninsula fishery (including the SEDM from July 26–October 31) was almost 205,000 coho salmon. A total of approximately 48,619 coho salmon were harvested in the North Peninsula.

Pink Salmon

*Run and Escapement Summ*ary: The South Peninsula pink salmon total indexed escapement of 4.5 million fish was above the SEG range of 1,750,000–4,000,000 fish.

There are no escapement goals for pink salmon on the North Peninsula. In some years, depending on market conditions, a directed pink salmon fishery may occur; however, this did not happen in 2024. A total of almost 29,000 pink salmon were observed in the Northern District in 2025, and over 268,000 pink salmon were observed in the Northwestern District.

Harvest Summary: The total commercial harvest for the South Peninsula fishery (including the July 26 to October 31 SEDM fishery) was 16.6 million fish. A total of 192,000 pink salmon were commercially harvested in the North Peninsula Area fisheries.

Chum Salmon

Run and Escapement Summary: The South Peninsula chum salmon indexed total escapement of over 514,000 fish was above the cumulative district SEG range of 218,300–410,600 fish.

In the Northwestern District, the chum salmon escapement of 144,000 fish was within the SEG range of 100,000–215,000 fish.

The Northern District escapement goal is determined by an aggregate of 18 index streams. In 2025, approximately 82,000 chum salmon were observed in the 18 index streams, within the escapement goal range of 49,000–132,000 fish. A total of almost 112,000 chum salmon escaped into Northern District streams in 2025.

Harvest Summary: The total commercial harvest for the South Peninsula fishery (including the SEDM from July 26 to October 31) was 1.2 million chum salmon. During the 2025 commercial chum salmon fishery, over 120,000 fish were harvested in the North Peninsula.

Summary by Matt Keyse, Geoff Spalinger, Annie Brewster, Charles Russell, and William Middleton Area Management Biologists, ADF&G, Kodiak.

Table 7.–2025 Westward Region commercial salmon harvests, by fishing area and species, in thousands of fish.

	Species					
Fishing area	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
Kodiak[a,b]	1	1,437	316	34,171	740	36,666
Chignik[b,c]	3	823	51	1,975	87	2,939
South Peninsula and Aleutians Islands[b,c]	18	1,727	205	16,595	1,189	19,734
North Peninsula	1	1,185	49	193	120	1,546
Alaska Peninsula total	19	2,911	253	16,788	1,309	21,280
Westward Region total	23	5,172	620	52,934	2,136	60,885

Note: Columns may not total exactly due to rounding.

[a] Total includes hatchery cost recovery and hatchery donated but not broodstock.

[b] Total includes commercial harvest that was discarded, confiscated, seized, or donated.

[c] Total includes test fish sales.

SALMON SPECIES CATCH AND PROJECTIONS

Figures 2–6 show actual catch and projected catch for Chinook, sockeye, coho, pink, and chum salmon.

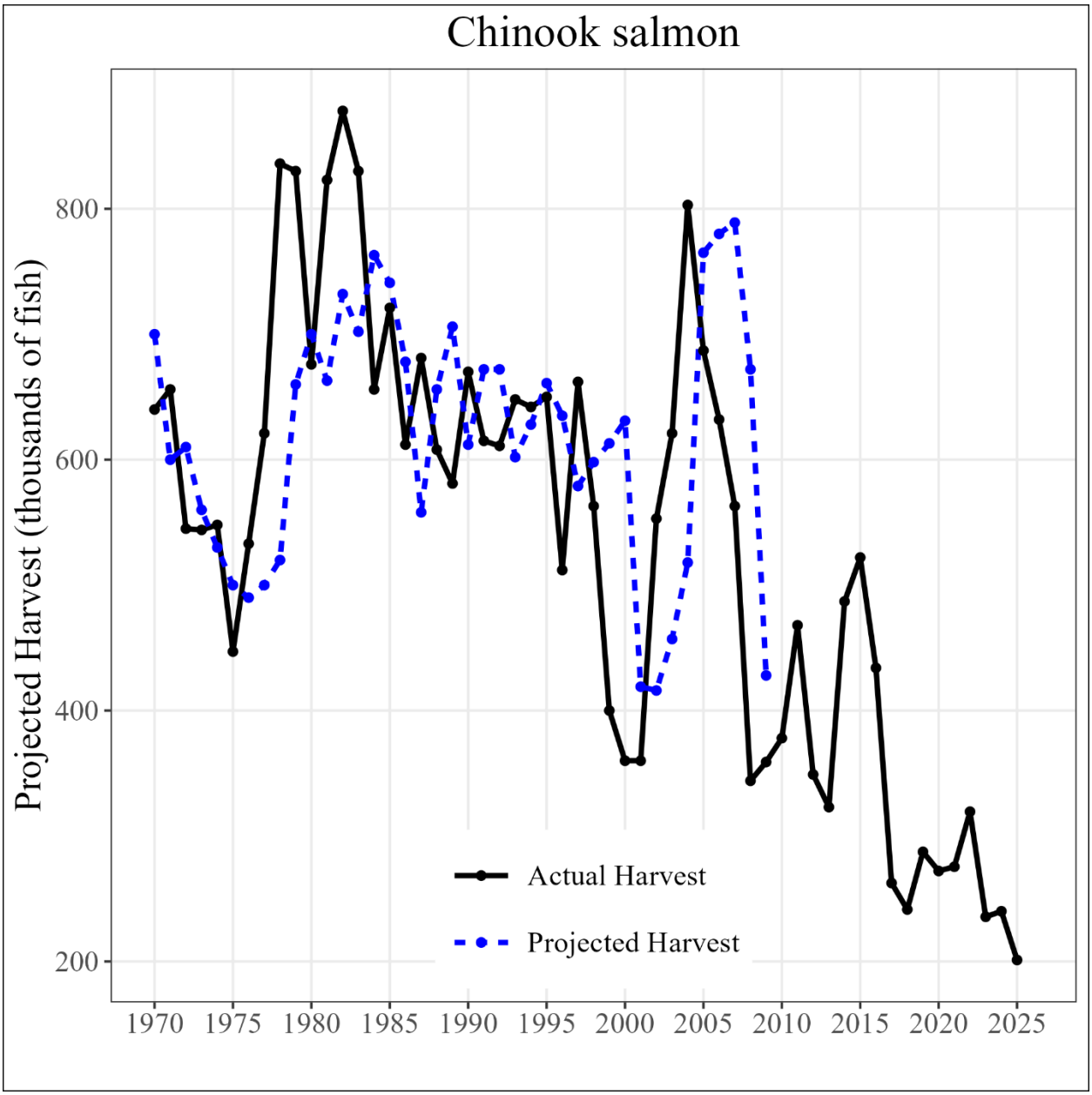

Figure 2.–Relationship between actual catch and projected catch in millions, for Alaska Chinook salmon fisheries from 1970 to 2025; 2010–2026 projections are not available.

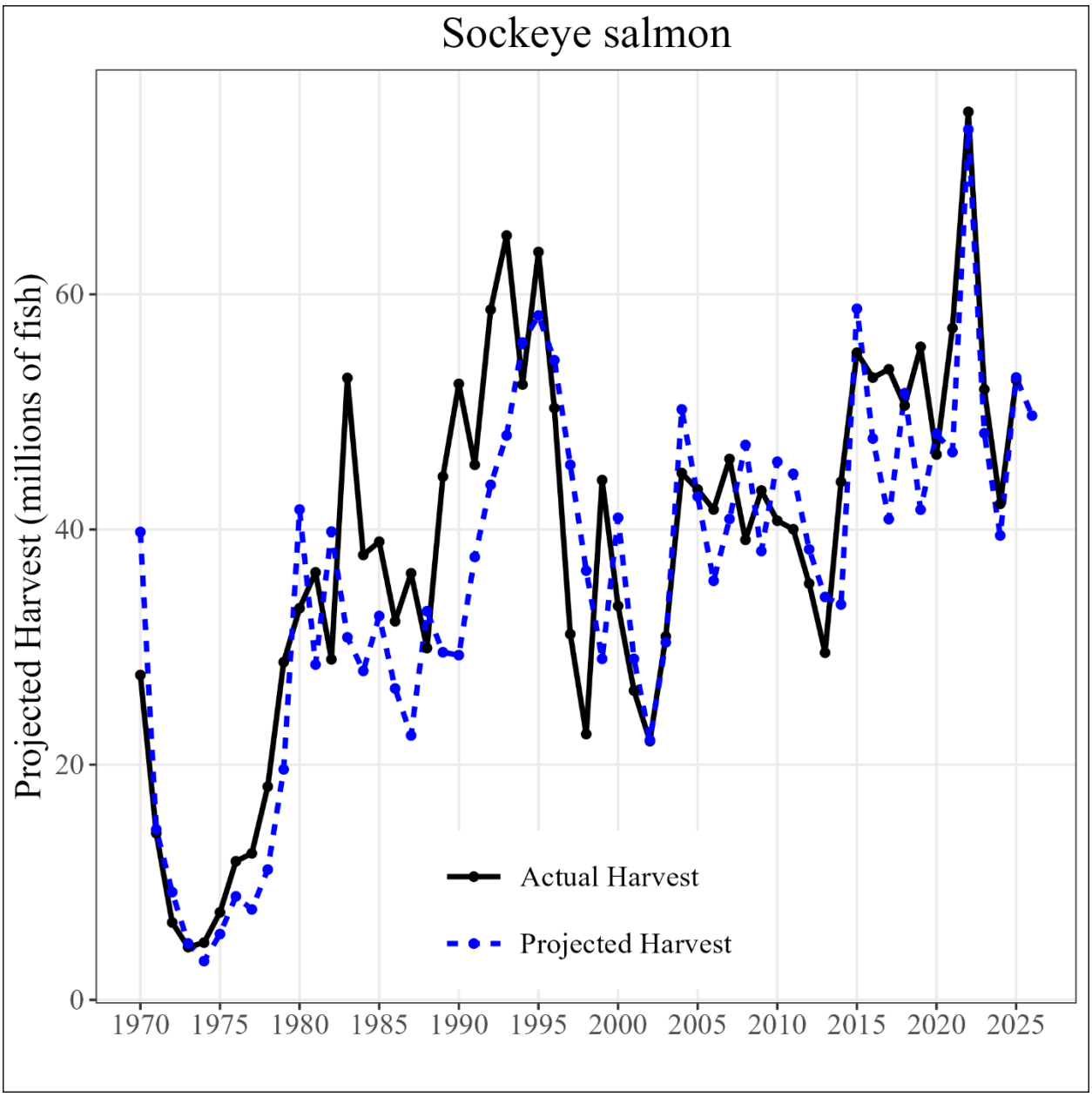

Figure 3.–Relationship between actual catch and projected catch in millions, for Alaska sockeye salmon fisheries from 1970 to 2025, with the 2026 projection.

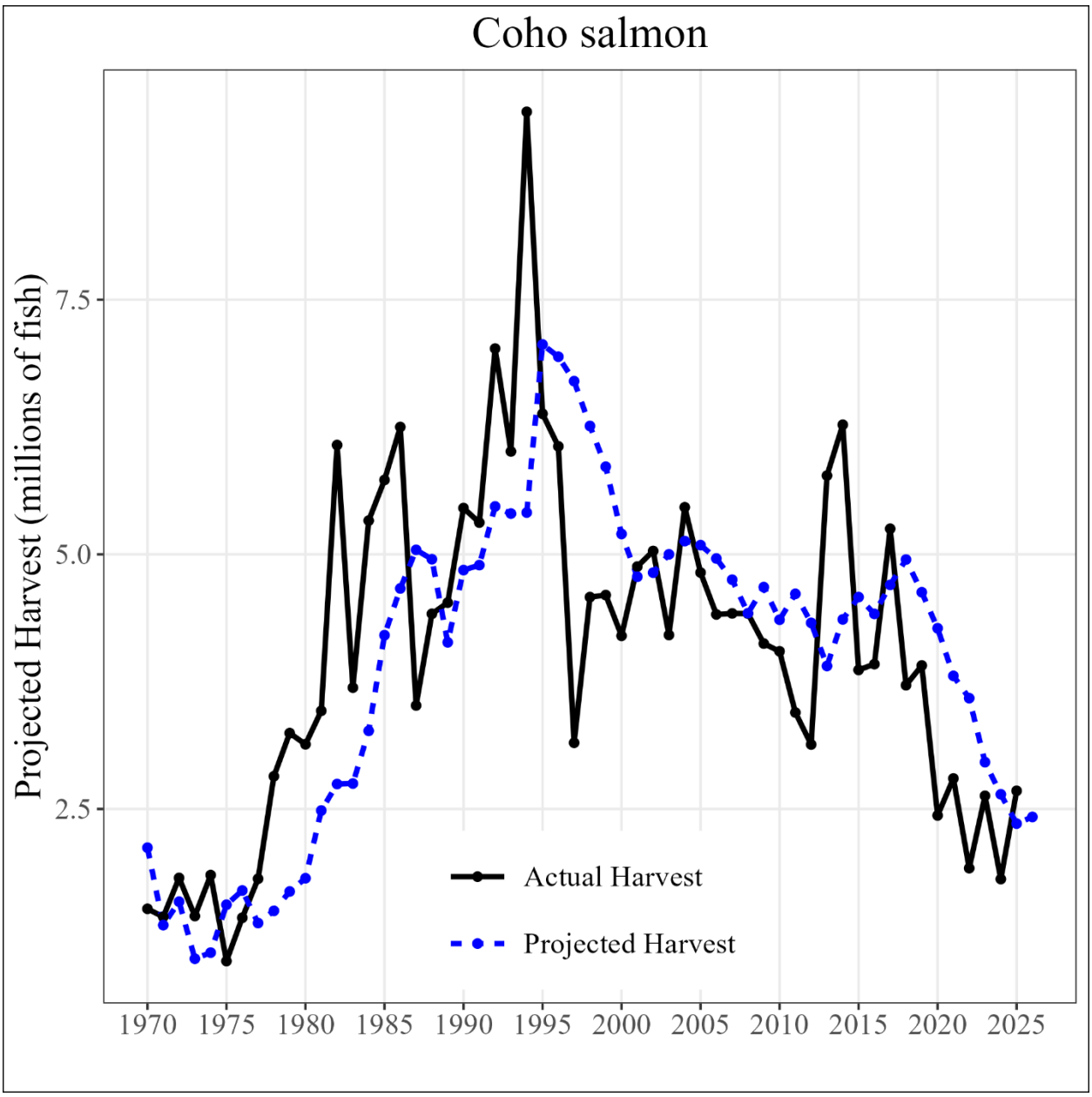

Figure 4.–Relationship between actual catch and projected catch in millions, for Alaska coho salmon fisheries from 1970 to 2025, with the 2026 projection.

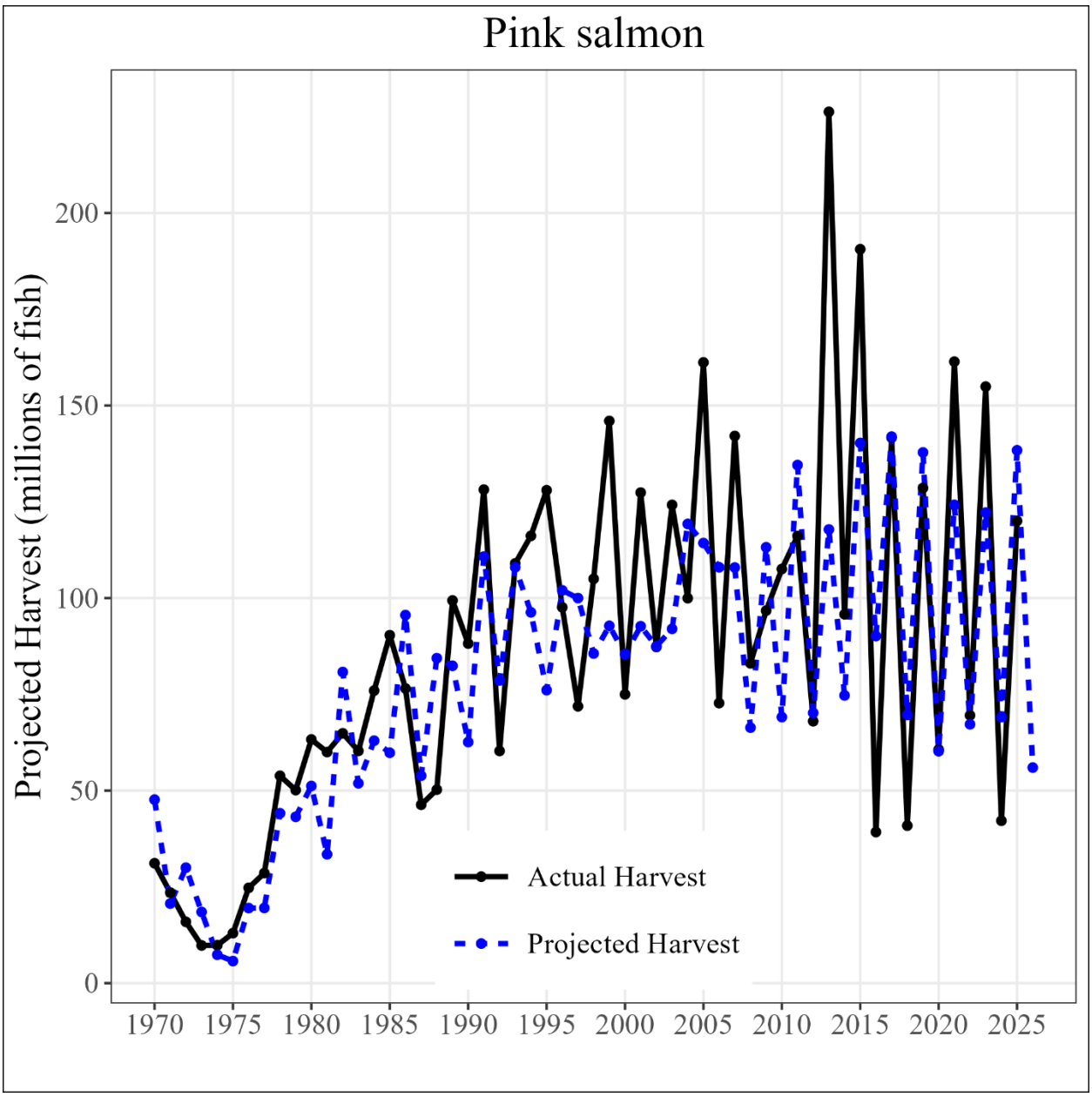

Figure 5.–Relationship between actual catch and projected catch in millions, for Alaska pink salmon fisheries from 1970 to 2025, with the 2026 projection.

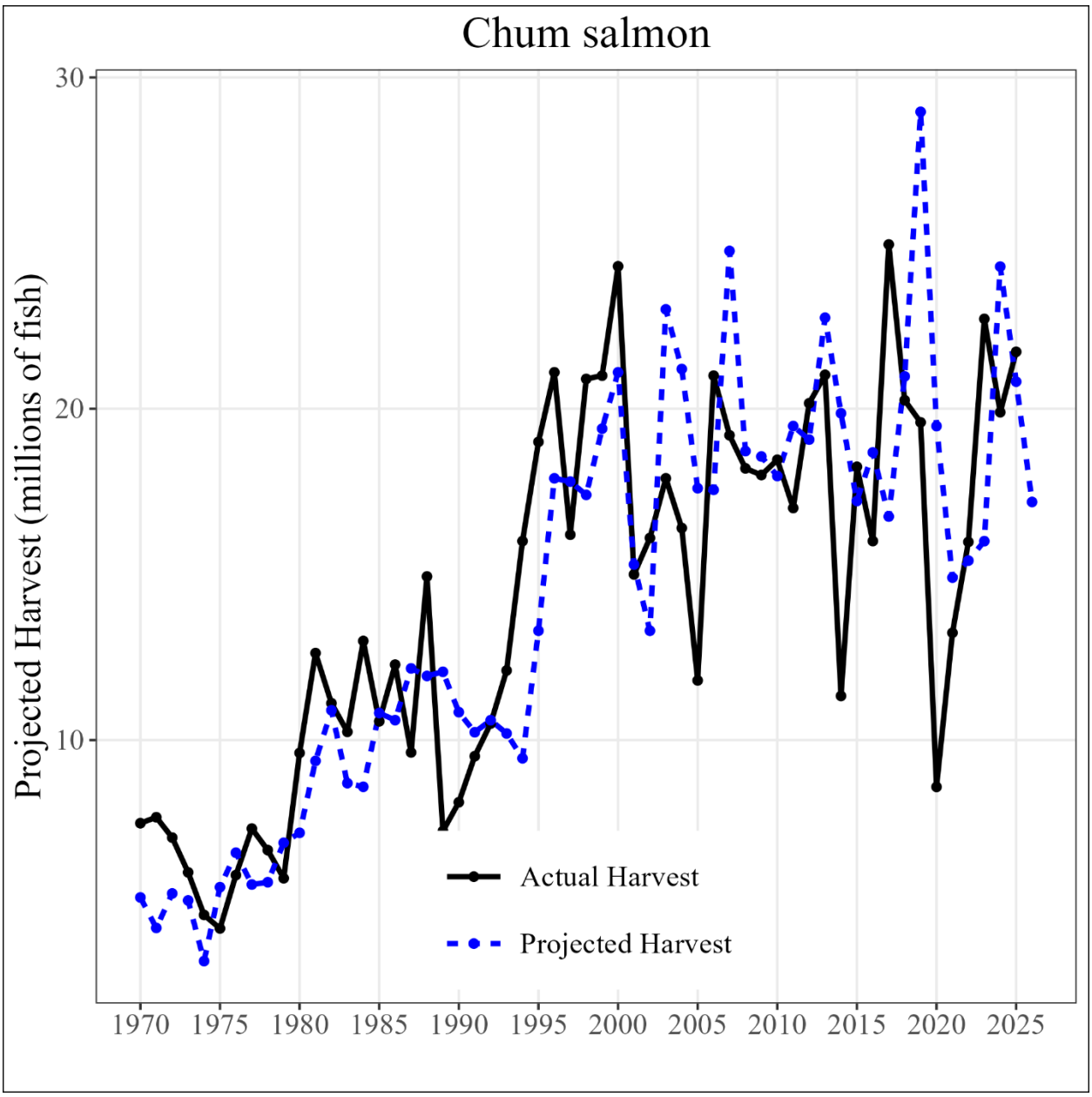

Figure 6.–Relationship between actual catch and projected catch in millions, for Alaska chum salmon fisheries from 1970 to 2025, with the 2026 projection.

PRELIMINARY FORECASTS OF 2026 SALMON RUNS TO SELECTED ALASKA FISHERIES

ADF&G prepares forecasts for salmon runs that affect major fisheries around the state. Salmon runs to be forecast are selected using several criteria, including economic importance, feasibility, compatibility with existing programs, and management needs (Table 8).

Table 8.–Forecast fisheries for the 2026 fishing year.

Fishing area	Targeted species
Southeast Region	Chinook salmon
	pink salmon
Central Region	
Copper River and Prince William Sound	wild Chinook, sockeye, pink, and chum salmon
Upper Cook Inlet	sockeye salmon
Lower Cook Inlet	pink salmon
Bristol Bay	sockeye salmon
Arctic–Yukon–Kuskokwim Region	
Yukon Management Area	fall chum salmon
Westward Region	
Kodiak Management Area	pink salmon
Ayakulik River	sockeye salmon
Karluk River	sockeye salmon
Alitak District (Frazer Lake and Upper Station)	sockeye salmon
Spiridon Lake	sockeye salmon
Chignik Management Area	sockeye salmon (early and late runs)
Alaska Peninsula/Aleutian Islands	sockeye salmon
Bear Lake	sockeye salmon (late run)
Nelson River	sockeye salmon
South Alaska Peninsula aggregate	pink salmon

A variety of information is used to forecast salmon runs and associated harvests. The escapement of parental stocks is an important first determinant of future run strength potential; however, other information that might be considered in forecasts includes outmigrating smolt numbers, returns from sibling age classes of the projected return, and environmental conditions. A range of run possibilities are predicted for each forecast fishery. In general, the actual run can be expected to fall within the range (between the lower and upper limits) less than half the time.

Harvest projections based on quantitative forecasts of salmon runs generally reflect potential harvests and are made for most of the major sockeye salmon fisheries and pink salmon fisheries in SEAK, PWS, Cook Inlet, Kodiak, and the Alaska Peninsula. Forecasts for large hatchery runs including sockeye, pink, and chum salmon runs to the SEAK, PWS, and Kodiak areas are provided by private nonprofit operators. For other fisheries, the harvest projections are made based on harvests levels from previous years and are reflective of fishing effort; thus, harvests are reflective of both market conditions and salmon run strength.

SOUTHEAST REGION

CHINOOK SALMON

Forecast Methods: Chinook salmon forecasts are typically produced for 5 stocks returning to SEAK rivers. The stocks of Chinook salmon originating in the Chilkat and Unuk Rivers have annual forecasts of total run, and terminal run forecasts are produced for stocks originating in the Situk, Taku, and Stikine Rivers. Methods described in Bernard and Jones (2014) are used to create forecasts of ocean-age-3 and ocean-age-4 fish. Ocean-age-5 fish are not forecast because these fish are rarely observed in escapements or harvests in SEAK. The age-specific forecasts use brood year data that are estimated for each stock annually. For example, the forecast of ocean-age-3 fish in year *t*, and from brood year (*t*-5), is based on the return of ocean-age-2 fish in year *t*-1; the forecast of ocean-age-4 fish in year *t*, from brood year (*t*-6), is based on the returns of ocean-age-2 fish in year *t*-2 and ocean-age-3 fish in year *t*-1. The brood year forecasting method incorporates more data for older age classes than a straight sibling regression and recognizes that previous returns from a given brood year have proven to be a good indicator of overall strength of an age class and early life-stage survival (Bernard and Jones 2014).

Run projections are created for the 2 principal brood years returning as ocean-age-3 and ocean-age-4 fish in the forecast year by applying previous abundance estimates at age to recently observed maturation rates. Once a brood year run projection is created, recent brood year return-at-age estimates are applied to the run projection to forecast the return of ocean-age-3 or ocean-age-4 fish. Using the previous 8 or 9 years of brood year information has proven to be the most accurate in forecasting, as described and investigated by the Chinook Technical Committee of the Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC 2016).

The uncertainty in return-at-age estimates is incorporated into the forecast by creating a normal distribution around the year (*t*-1), ocean-age-2 abundance estimates, and standard error, which is then sampled 10,000 times and after a sampled maturation rate is applied to the brood year run projection, a year (*t*) projection of ocean-age-3 fish is created. Similarly, a normal distribution using the year (*t*-2), ocean-age-2 abundance estimate, and year (*t*-1), ocean-age-3 abundance estimate, and standard errors, is created and sampled 10,000 times and after a sampled maturation rate is applied to the brood year run projection, a year (*t*) projection of ocean-age-4 fish is created. A 5-year hindcast is then analyzed to determine forecast errors using the geometric mean, mean percent error (MPE), or mean absolute percent error (MAPE). In some systems like the Taku River, the forecast error has been less than the hindcast error in recent years; therefore, no error reduction has been applied to the forecast.

Most Chinook salmon systems in SEAK have been experiencing maturation rate changes for recent brood years, and this current trend includes a reduction of ocean-age-4 fish in escapements and harvests. The loss of ocean-age-4 Chinook salmon has resulted in a slight increase of ocean-age-3 fish, and an even greater increase in the ocean-age-2 fish. Because hindcast error for a specific year is calculated as (forecast−actual)/actual, hindcast errors of ocean-age-4 fish are generally greater than errors in forecasts of ocean-age-3 fish; however, this is quite variable among Chinook salmon systems. Overall, the 2026 forecasts are for total or terminal runs near or above the midpoint of the escapement goal range for the Chilkat and Stikine stocks, at or above the upper bound of the escapement goal range for the Situk and Taku stocks, and below the lower bound of the escapement goal range for the Unuk River Chinook stock (Table 9).

Table 9.–The 2026 run forecasts and average runs from 2016 to 2025, including 2025 terminal/total runs and escapements for 3 Southeast Alaska Chinook stocks originating in the Situk, Chilkat, and Unuk Rivers, and 2 Transboundary Chinook stocks, including the Taku and Stikine Rivers.

Run type	Chinook stock	Situk Terminal	Chilkat total	Taku Terminal	Stikine Terminal	Unuk total
2026 Run forecast		900	2,650	33,200	16,700	1,800
Average run (2016–2025)		794	2,242	15,	11,747	2,299
2025 Total/terminal run		1,511	4,426	39,382	16,058	1,781
2025 Escapement		1,353	4,054	42,972	15,076	1,381
5-year hindcast error	3-ocean	48.4%	13.4%	N/A	–	25.1%
	4-ocean	19.8%	30.7%	N/A	–	−10.1%
Escapement goal range	Lower	450[a]	1,750	19,000	14,000	1,800
	Upper	1,050[a]	3,500	36,000	28,000	3,800

Note: En dashes indicate data not available; N/A = not applicable.

[a] ADF&G goal; Chinook Technical Committee of the Pacific Salmon Commission escapement goal range is 500 to 1,000 fish.

Forecast Discussion: Forecasting methods prior to 2018 used traditional sibling regressions, which failed to capture current trends in return-at-age and resulted in inaccurate forecasts. Inaccurate forecasts impaired management's ability to properly manage mixed stock and terminal area fisheries to pass adequate numbers of Chinook salmon to escapement. Overforecasting resulted in some very high harvest rates in poor run years and therefore several stocks failed to meet management objectives (Table 10, Figure 7). The methods outlined by Bernard and Jones (2014) have improved forecast accuracy and led to more conservative management in recent years.

Forecasts for SEAK Chinook salmon are produced by December 1 annually. The quality of data used in these forecasts is paramount in creating accurate and precise run projections. The department conducts full stock assessment projects on the Chilkat, Taku, Stikine, and Unuk Rivers, which includes marking emigrating Chinook salmon smolt with adipose fin clips and tagging with coded wire tags; estimating escapement either through mark–recapture experiments, index surveys, or both; and estimating stock-specific harvests in mixed stock fisheries using coded wire tag or genetic stock identification methodologies. The high-quality stock assessment data produced from SEAK stock assessment projects directly leads to more accurate forecasts.

Return year 2025 escapement and run estimates came in above forecast expectations for the Situk, Chilkat, Taku, and Stikine River stocks, and below forecast for the Unuk River stock, which was the only forecasted stock that did not achieve the lower bound of the BEG. Most systems experienced increased spawning abundance of age-1.3 fish from brood year 2020, which is proving to be a very strong age class throughout Southeast Alaska.

Despite run year 2025 showing a high abundance of ocean-age-3 fish from the 2020 brood year in most or all monitored systems for which age information is available, expectations for 2026 are tempered due to the recent low return-at-age rates for ocean-age-4 fish. Additionally, early signs from brood year 2021 are not as strong as brood year 2020; management is once again taking a cautious approach towards mixed stock commercial and sport fisheries that typically harvest wild Chinook stocks in SEAK.

Table 10.–Estimated harvests, escapements, total runs, and annual harvest percentages, 2015–2025, along with the 2026 forecasts for the Situk, Chilkat, Taku, Stikine, and Unuk stocks of Chinook salmon in Southeast Alaska.

Stock	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	10-year Average	Forecast 2026
						HARVEST							
Situk	21	64	25	2	–	–	70	12	–	–	18	19	
Chilkat	713	437	239	208	87	79	127	44	82	128	464	189	
Taku	5,297	3,758	2,706	1,777	627	1,143	838	1,599	1,273	1,363	1,686	1,677	
Stikine	7,039	6,244	2,421	260	1,656	995	1,181	1,982	1,524	2,823	1,076	2,016	
Unuk	3,632	1,471	544	856	955	597	577	731	1,125	494	413	776	
						ESCAPEMENT							
Situk	176	337	1,190	421	620	1,197	1,064	890	144	517	1,353	773	
Chilkat	2,452	1,380	1,173	873	2,028	3,180	2,038	1,582	2,234	2,070	4,054	2,061	
Taku	23,567	9,177	8,214	7,271	11,558	15,593	11,341	12,722	14,755	24,518	42,972	15,812	
Stikine	21,597	10,554	7,335	8,603	13,817	9,753	8,376	9,090	12,795	9,835	15,076	10,523	
Unuk	2,623	1,463	1,203	1,971	3,115	1,135	2,666	1,304	2,072	1,980	1,381	1,829	
						RUN							
Situk	197	401	1,215	423	620	1,197	1,134	902	144	517	1,371	792	900
Chilkat	3,165	1,817	1,412	1,081	2,115	3,259	2,165	1,626	2,316	2,198	4,518	2,251	2,650
Taku	28,864	12,935	10,920	9,048	12,185	16,736	12,179	14,321	16,028	25,881	44,658	17,489	33,200
Stikine	28,636	16,798	9,756	8,863	15,473	10,748	9,557	11,072	14,319	12,658	16,152	12,540	16,700
Unuk	6,255	2,934	1,747	2,827	4,070	1,732	3,244	2,035	3,197	2,474	1,794	2,605	1,800
						HARVEST RATE							
Situk	11%	16%	2%	0%	0%	0%	6%	1%	0%	0%	1%	3%	
Chilkat	23%	24%	17%	19%	4%	2%	6%	3%	4%	6%	10%	9%	
Taku	18%	29%	25%	20%	5%	7%	7%	11%	8%	5%	4%	12%	
Stikine	25%	37%	25%	3%	11%	9%	12%	18%	11%	22%	7%	15%	
Unuk	58%	50%	31%	30%	23%	34%	18%	36%	35%	20%	23%	30%	

Note: En dashes indicate no harvest

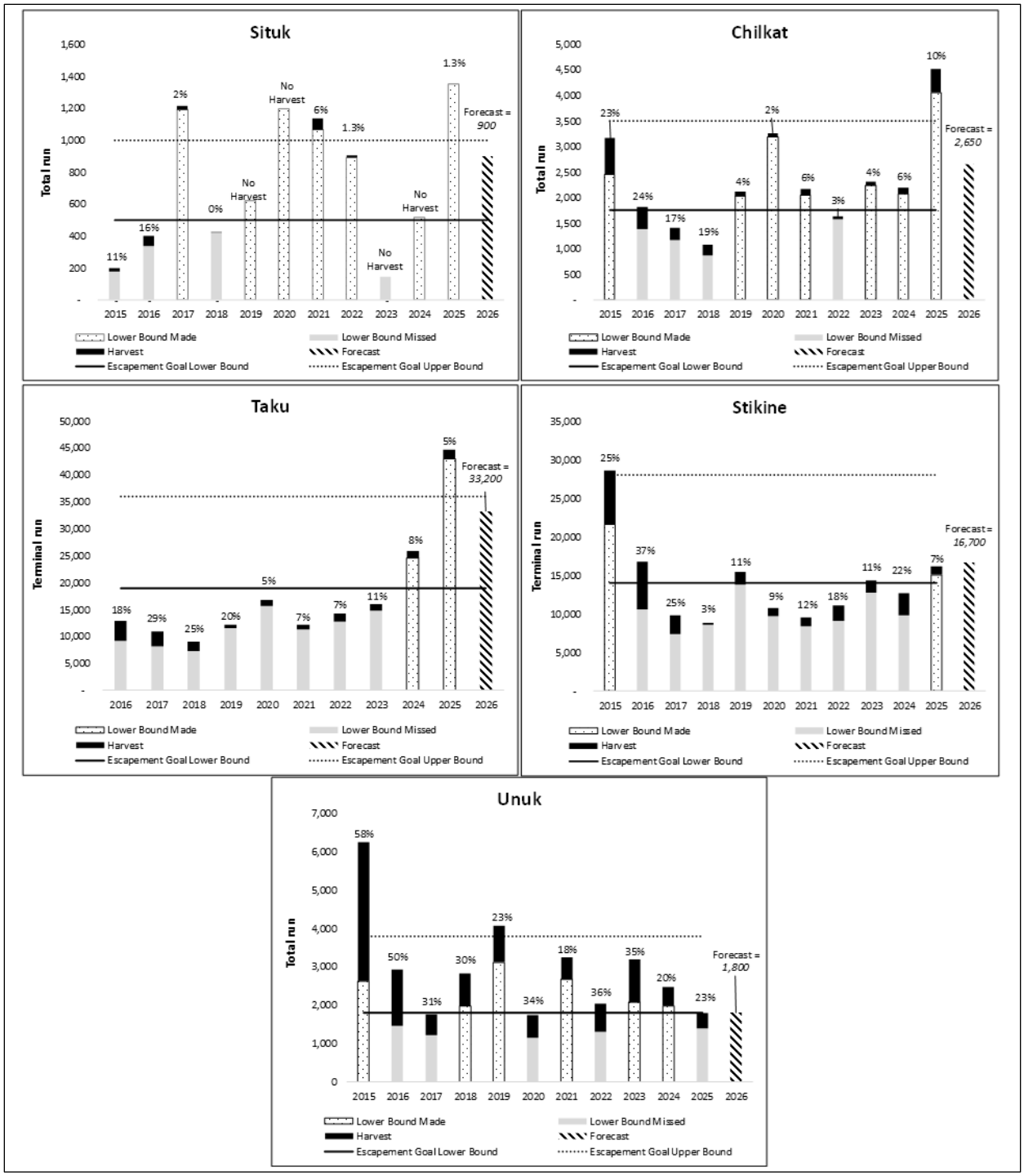

Figure 7.–Escapement estimates in relation to escapement goals, harvest estimates, and harvest percentages, as expressed as a calendar year harvest rate of the total run, for the Situk, Chilkat, Taku, Stikine, and Unuk stocks of Chinook salmon in Southeast Alaska, 2016–2025, including 2026 forecasts.

PINK SALMON

The 2026 Southeast Alaska pink salmon harvest is expected to be near *average*, with a harvest forecast of 19 million fish. Juvenile pink salmon abundance measured in northern inside waters during summer 2025 was near the middle of the long-term range, which suggests a moderate number of adults returning in 2026. Although salmon returns can vary due to changing ocean conditions, this forecast reflects the best available information from long-term National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Alaska Fisheries Science Center, Auke Bay Laboratories, and ADF&G monitoring programs. The commercial purse seine fishery will be managed in season based on aerial surveys and fishery performance indicators.

Forecast Methods: The NOAA Alaska Fisheries Science Center, Auke Bay Laboratories initiated the Southeast Alaska Coastal Monitoring (SECM) project in 1997 to better understand the effects of climate and nearshore ocean conditions on year-class strength of salmon and other ecologically related species (Orsi et al. 2000). Since 2018, the SECM project has been conducted cooperatively by NOAA and ADF&G using the ADF&G research vessel (R/V) *Medeia*, and the 2 agencies have combined efforts to produce a joint pink salmon harvest forecast using SECM data (Piston et al. 2019). The partnership between agencies facilitates the SECM survey and provides a wide variety of valuable information on the marine environment and juvenile salmon in northern Southeast Alaska (SEAK).

The 2026 SEAK pink salmon harvest forecast (Figures 8 and 9) was primarily based on juvenile pink salmon abundance indices collected by the SECM project in northern SEAK inside waters. These data were obtained from annual systematic surface trawl surveys conducted in June and July in upper Chatham and Icy Straits and have been shown to be highly correlated with the harvest of adult pink salmon in the following year (Wertheimer et al. 2011). The juvenile abundance index is calculated as the peak June or July mean vessel-calibrated catch per unit effort (CPUE) from duplicate standardized surface trawls at eight stations. The 2025 juvenile pink salmon abundance index of 1.29 is near the mean for the period the R/V *Medeia* has conducted the survey (2018–2024; mean: 1.38; range: 0.87–2.15) but below the mean for odd-year juvenile CPUE indices (1997–2023; mean: 1.80; range: 0.35–3.08).

The 2026 pink salmon forecast uses a method initially described by Wertheimer et al. (2006) and then later adapted by Orsi et al. (2016), Murphy et al. (2019), and Miller et al. (2022) and assumes a log-normal error structure and is based on multiple regression. The forecast models investigated included either raw or vessel-adjusted juvenile pink salmon CPUE, temperature data from SECM or satellite sea surface temperature data (Haung et al. 2017; Piston et al. 2021), a vessel factor, and an odd and even year factor. A total of 36 models were evaluated based on the one-step ahead mean absolute percent error for the last 5 years, whereas Akaike Information Criterion corrected for small sample sizes values were calculated to examine over-parameterization, and adjusted R-squared values, significant terms, and overall *p*-values of the models were used to determine model fit.

The recommended model included the vessel-adjusted juvenile pink salmon CPUE, an odd- and even-year factor, and mean satellite sea surface temperature (SST) data from northern SEAK for April, May, and June. Based on this model, the 2026 forecast point estimate of 19 million fish falls at the lower end of the *average* pink salmon harvest range (≥19 to 33 million), and the 80% prediction interval (13 to 30 million fish) spans the *weak* (≥11 to 19 million) and *average* pink salmon harvest ranges. The categorical ranges of pink salmon harvest in SEAK were formulated

from the 20th, 40th, 60th, and 80th percentiles of historical harvest over the 65-year period, 1960–2024 (Table 11).

Table 11.–Southeast Region pink salmon harvest categories.

Category	Range (millions)	Percentile
Poor	Less than 11	Less than 20th
Weak	11 to 19	20th to 40th
Average	19 to 33	40th to 60th
Strong	33 to 48	60th to 80th
Excellent	Greater than 48	Greater than 80th

Forecast Discussion: The 2026 harvest forecast of 19 million pink salmon is near the 2024 harvest (20 million), greater than the mean harvest of the last 10 even years (18 million; 2006 to 2024), but less than the mean even-year forecast from the same period (22 million). The 2025 juvenile pink salmon abundance index value (1.29) ranked 7th lowest among the 29 years for which SECM information has been collected, but is near the mean for the R/V *Medeia*, leading to a harvest forecast that falls near the boundary between the *average* and *weak* categories. Pink salmon harvests associated with juvenile indices below 1.30 have ranged from 8 to 21 million fish (mean = 15 million fish).

We continue to evaluate different treatments in our forecast model. Since 2004, 12 unique models have been used to produce the 23 harvest forecasts with changes occurring as additional information becomes available, and in response to poor predictive performance. For the 2025 harvest forecast, we implemented an odd and even year factor and model derived vessel-calibration coefficients to help address concerns that arose from underforecasting the prior 2 odd-year harvests (2021 and 2023). The 2025 forecast successfully predicted a harvest that was much lower than each of the previous odd-year harvests. The extensive time series of SECM data extending from 1997 to the present is now large enough to examine odd and even years separately, which may better represent the segregated brood lines (odd- and even-year) of pink salmon.

Although uncertainties are inherent in salmon forecasts, the NOAA/ADF&G joint pink salmon harvest forecast has maintained a strong track record (Figure 9), despite the unique challenges associated with pink salmon forecasting (Haeseker et al. 2005). As always, for the 2026 season, the department will manage the commercial purse seine fisheries in season with aerial escapement surveys and fishery performance indicators.

Forecast by Teresa Fish, Andy Piston, and Sara Miller, ADF&G; and Wesley Strasburger and Emily Fergusson, NOAA, Auke Bay Lab, Alaska Fisheries Science Center.

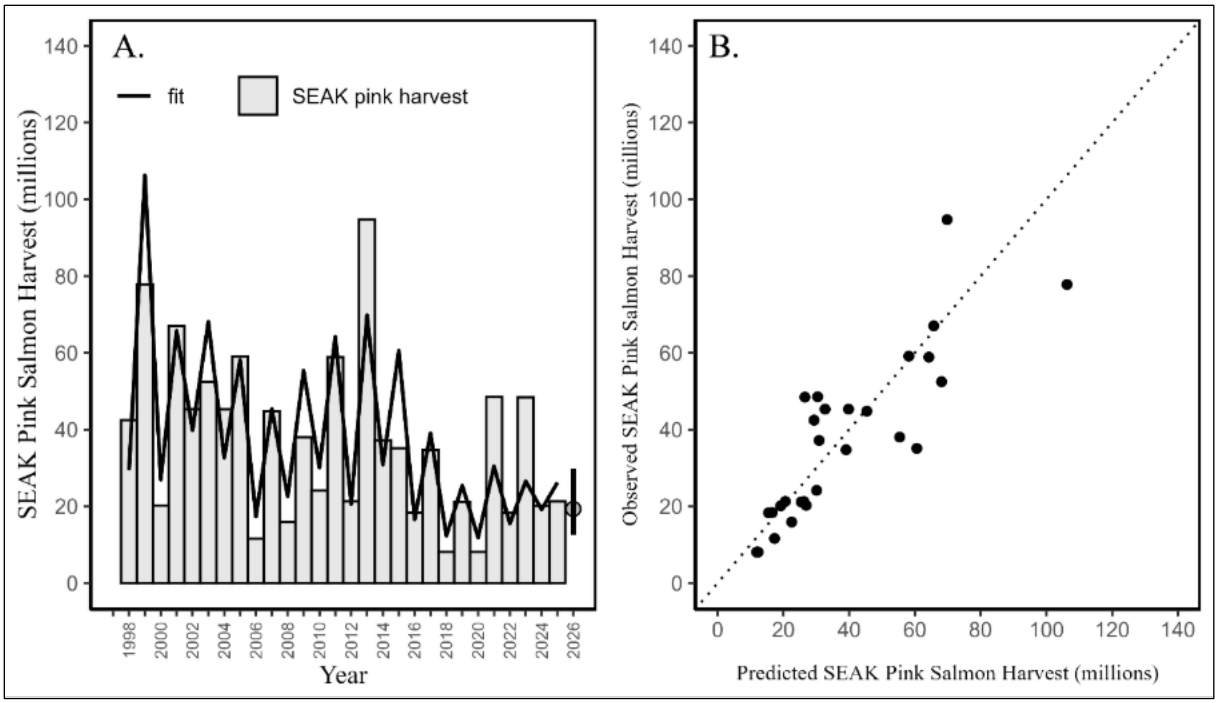

Figure 8.–Forecast model fit (hindcasts) to the total Southeast Alaska (SEAK) pink salmon harvest, 1998–2025, by the recommended 2026 forecast model. The recommended model is based on the vessel-adjusted juvenile pink salmon CPUE, an odd and even year factor, and the mean satellite sea surface temperature readings from northern SEAK from April, May, and June. In panel A, the 2026 forecast is shown as a grey circle with the 80% prediction interval as a black vertical line. The observed SEAK pink salmon harvest (in millions) is represented by the grey bars, and the model fit is shown by the black line. In panel B, the dotted line is a one-to-one line; circles above the line are years the model produced a point estimate lower than the actual harvest and circles below the line are years the model produced a point estimate higher than the actual harvest.

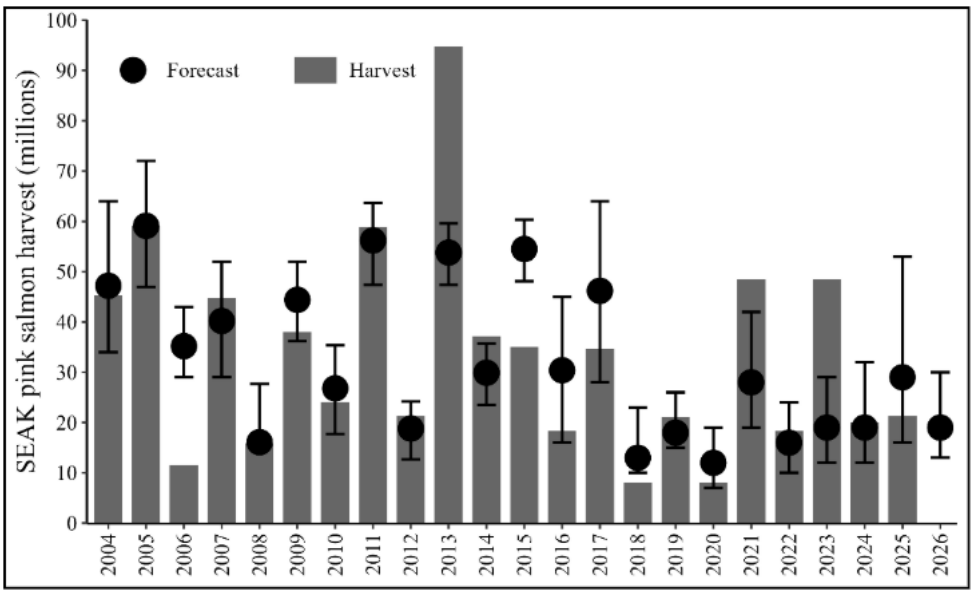

Figure 9.–Preseason forecasts (2004–2026) compared to the annual SEAK pink salmon harvest (2004–2025; grey bars). The error bars represent either 80% confidence or 80% prediction intervals of the forecasts, depending on the modeling method used.

CENTRAL REGION

COPPER RIVER AND PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND

Forecasts of total run were calculated for Copper River Chinook salmon, Copper River wild sockeye salmon, Gulkana Hatchery sockeye salmon, Coghill Lake sockeye salmon, and for wild Prince William Sound (PWS) pink and chum salmon (Table 12). Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation and Valdez Fisheries Development Association provide additional forecasts for hatchery-specific stocks. The categorical ranges of total run strength were formulated for each stock from the 20th, 40th, 60th, and 80th percentiles of the recent 10 years (2016–2025) for Chinook, chum, and sockeye salmon, and 10 even years (2006–2024) for pink salmon (Table 13). Salmon forecasts are inherently uncertain and are primarily used to gauge the general magnitude of expected runs and set early season harvest management strategies. In 2026, the department will manage PWS and Copper River area commercial salmon fisheries in season based on the strength of salmon abundance indices, including sonar counts, weir passage, aerial escapement surveys, and fishery performance data.

Table 12.–2026 Prince William Sound Area salmon run forecast summary (thousands of fish) and percentile category.

Area/run type	Salmon species	Forecast point estimate	Forecast range	% Above/below 10-year average	Total run 10-year average	Category
Copper River						
Wild	Chinook	33	22–47	27% Below	45	Weak
Wild	Sockeye	1,413	1,030–1,796	8% Below	1,528	Average
Gulkana Hatchery	Sockeye	42	31–53	58% Below	99	Weak
Total Run	Sockeye	1,455	1,060–1,849	11% Below	1,628	Average
Coghill Lake						
Wild	Sockeye	104	0–240	53% Below	223	Weak
Prince William Sound						
Wild	Pink	4,726	1,737–12,857	14% Above	4,150	Strong
Wild	Chum	586	258–914	14% Above	514	Strong

Table 13.–Copper River and Prince William Sound categorical ranges of total run.

Category	Percentile
Poor	Less than 20th
Weak	20th to 40th
Average	40th to 60th
Strong	60th to 80th
Excellent	Greater than 80th

Copper River Chinook Salmon

The 2026 Copper River Chinook salmon total run forecast point estimate is *weak* at 33,000 fish (80% prediction interval: 22,000–47,000 fish. This is 27% below the recent 10-year average (2016–2025) total run of 45,000 fish (Figure 10). Because the sustainable escapement goal (SEG) for Copper River Chinook salmon is 21,000 to 31,000 fish, this forecast supports conservative management.

Forecast Methods: For 2026, the Copper River Chinook salmon state-space model was chosen as the forecast method. This model simultaneously reconstructs runs and fits a spawner–recruit model to estimate total return, escapement, and recruitment of Copper River Chinook salmon from 1999 to 2025. Methods and details of this analysis are covered in separate reports (Savereide et al. 2018; Joy et al. 2021). The model uses harvest, age composition, and direct measures of inriver run abundance to estimate parameters that describe the spawner–recruit relationship for this stock. Uncertainty from the run reconstruction is passed through to the spawner–recruit analysis, and all relevant data are considered and weighted by their precision. The model accommodates missing data, measurement error in the data, and changes in age at maturity.

Several forecast methods were examined for the 2026 Copper River Chinook salmon total run forecast, including exponential smoothing; 2-, 3-, and 5-year running averages of total run; and projections from the Copper River Chinook salmon state-space model. The state-space model outperformed the exponential and average-based models by having a lower mean absolute percentage error (MAPE) and mean percentage error (MPE) when compared retrospectively (Table 14), and used more biological information to predict future runs. Total run size in prior years was calculated as the sum of commercial and subsistence harvests of Chinook salmon below Miles Lake and the mark–recapture point estimate of Chinook salmon inriver abundance. There are currently 26 years (1999–2025) of inriver mark–recapture abundance estimates and 47 years (1980–2025) of harvest, escapement, and age composition data available for this analysis. The final 2025 mark–recapture inriver abundance estimate was not yet available therefore a preliminary estimate was used. The 80% prediction intervals were calculated from the posterior distributions of the model parameters, including the predicted run size for 2026.

Table 14.–2026 Copper River Chinook salmon forecast model performance summary. The model selected as the run forecast, with the lowest mean absolute percentage error (MAPE), is bold.

Stock/model	Forecast point estimate	80% prediction interval	MAPE
State-space	**32,515**	**22,479–46,824**	**33%**
Exponential	37,335	20,766–53,903	39%
2-year	31,807	5,054–58,559	42%
3-year	41,716	16,191–67,240	41%
5-year	41,424	19,996–62,852	35%

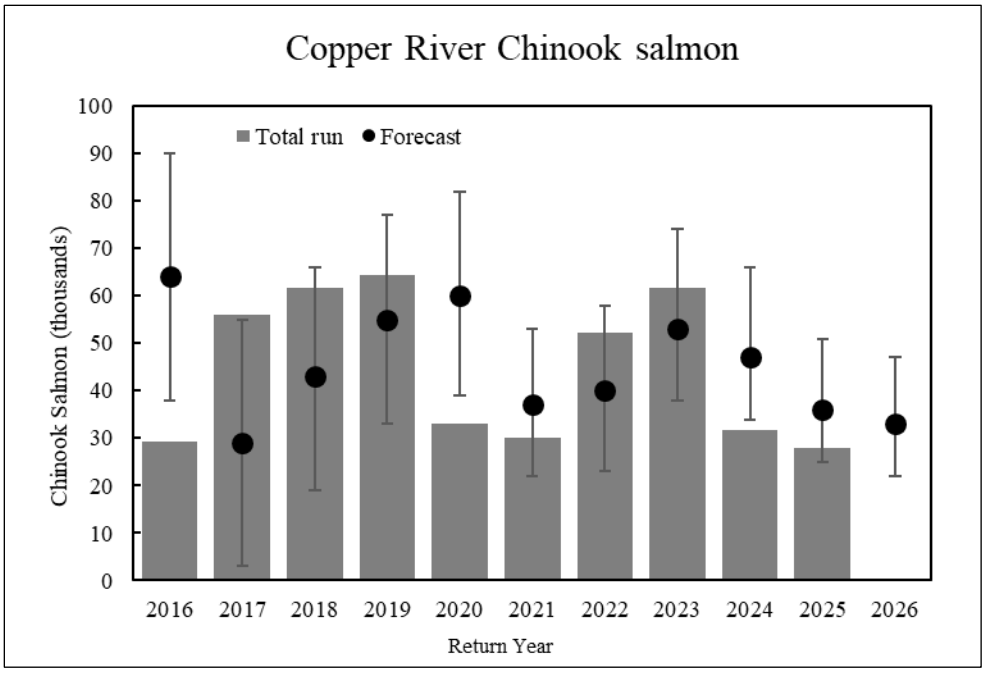

Figure 10.–Total run of Copper River Chinook salmon compared to preseason total run forecasts, 2016–2025, and the 2026 forecast. Error bars represent 80% prediction intervals of forecasts.

Copper River Sockeye Salmon

The 2026 wild Copper River sockeye salmon total run forecast point estimate is *average* at 1,413,000 fish (80% prediction interval: 1,030,000–1,796,000 fish). Gulkana Hatchery sockeye salmon total run forecast is *weak* at 42,000 fish (80% prediction interval: 31,000–53,000 fish), for an *average* total Copper River sockeye salmon run (wild + hatchery production) forecast of 1,455,000 fish (80% prediction interval: 1,060,000–1,849,000 fish). This is 11% below the recent 10-year average (2016–2025) total run of 1,628,000 fish (Figure 11). The total Copper River sockeye salmon harvest estimate (all fisheries) is predicted to be 954,000 (80% prediction interval: 603,000–1,306,000 fish), with a commercial harvest of 728,000 fish (80% prediction interval: 377,000–1,080,000 fish).

Forecast Methods: The 2026 forecast of wild sockeye salmon to the Copper River is the sum of individual forecasts for 6 age classes. Linear regression models with log-transformed data were used to forecast returns for age-1.2, -1.3, -2.2, and -2.3 sockeye salmon. Forecasts of these 4 age classes were developed from the relationship between returns of each age class and returns of the age class one year younger from the same brood year (sibling model; Table 15). The forecast return of age-1.1, and -0.3, sockeye salmon were calculated as the 5-year (2021–2025) mean return of these age classes. The 2026 run to Gulkana Hatchery was estimated based on the recent 3-year weighted average fry-to-adult survival estimate (1.11%).

The total harvest point estimate (all fisheries) was calculated by subtracting the Gulkana Hatchery broodstock, hatchery surplus, and wild stock escapement goal needs (upriver and Copper River Delta) from the total run forecast. The commercial harvest estimate was calculated by subtracting Copper River inriver goal categories (5 AAC 24.360(b)) and the lower bound of the Copper River

Delta spawning escapement goal from the total run forecast. An estimated exploitation rate of 70% was used to project the total harvest of Gulkana Hatchery stocks in 2026. There are currently 61 years (1965–2025) of harvest, escapement, and age composition data available for this analysis. The total run of 80% prediction intervals was calculated from the mean squared error of the retrospective forecast predictions.

Table 15.–2026 Prince William Sound wild sockeye salmon forecast model summary. Models selected for inclusion in the run forecast (lowest mean absolute percentage error [MAPE]) are bold.

Stock/age class	Brood year	Model	Forecast[a]	MAPE
Copper River wild sockeye				
0.3	2022	**5-year mean**	**59,963**	
1.1	2023	**5-year mean**	**3,433**	
1.2	2022	**log 1.2 R/S x BYE**	**255,218**	**42%**
		log 1.2 x log 1.1	68,719	44%
1.3	2021	1.3 x BYE	1,122,979	37%
		log 1.3R/S x BYE	1,050,588	38%
		log 1.3 x log 1.2	**948,858**	**30%**
		log 1.3 x log 0.3	1,003,074	36%
		1.3 x 1.2	991,439	34%
2.2	2021	log 2.2 x BYE	29,220	50%
		log 2.2 x log 1.2	**25,048**	**48%**
2.3	2020	**log 2.3 x log 2.2**	**120,235**	**42%**
		log 2.3 x log 1.3	119,188	47%
Total			1,412,753	
Coghill Lake sockeye				
1.1	2023	**10-year mean**	**7,418**	
1.2	2022	log 1.2 R/S x BYE	24,143	71%
		log 1.2 x log 1.1	**32,050**	**61%**
1.3	2021	log R/S 1.3 x BYE	107,295	61%
		log 1.3 x log 1.2	**33,693**	**48%**
2.2	2021	**10-year mean**	**12,475**	
2.3	2020	**10-year mean**	**18,851**	
Total			104,487	

Note: R/S = Return per spawner; BYE = Brood year escapement.

[a] Age class forecasts do not always sum to total run forecast due to rounding error.

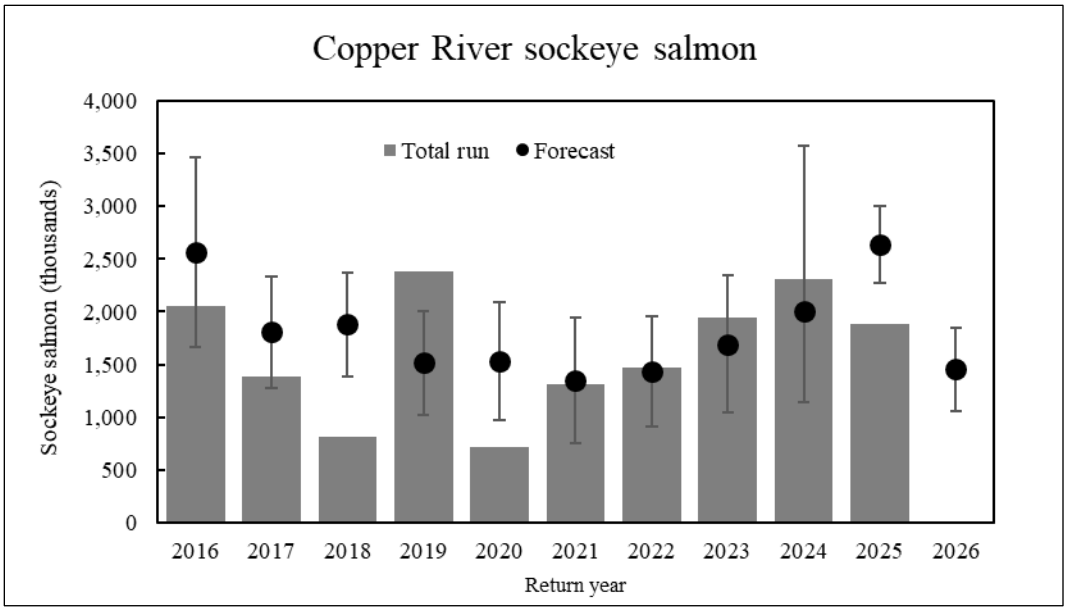

Figure 11.–Total run of Copper River sockeye salmon compared to preseason total run forecasts, 2016–2025, and the 2026 forecast. Error bars represent 80% prediction intervals of forecasts.

Coghill Lake Sockeye Salmon

The 2026 Coghill Lake sockeye salmon total run forecast point estimate is *weak* at 104,000 fish (80% prediction interval: 0–240,000 fish). This is 53% below the 10-year average (2016–2025) total run of 223,000 fish (Figure 12). Subtracting the escapement target of 30,000 fish from the total run forecast results in a harvest point estimate (all fisheries) of 74,000 fish (range: 0–210,000 fish).

Forecast Methods: The 2026 sockeye salmon run forecast to Coghill Lake is the total of estimates for 5 age classes. Linear regression models with log-transformed data were used to predict returns of age-1.3 and -1.2 sockeye salmon (Table 15). These linear regression models were parameterized using the historical relationship between returns of age-1.3 sockeye salmon and returns of age-1.2 fish one year previous and returns of age-1.2 sockeye salmon and returns of the age-1.1 fish one year previous (sibling models). For example, the model chosen to forecast the return of age-1.3 sockeye salmon in 2026 used the return of age-1.2 fish in 2025 as the input parameter. Forecast returns of age-1.1, -2.2, and -2.3 sockeye salmon were calculated as the 2016–2025 mean return of that age class.

Harvest, escapement, and age composition data have been available for Coghill Lake sockeye salmon runs since 1962; however, the inclusion of escapements prior to the installation of a full weir in 1974 reduces forecast reliability. Therefore, only data collected since 1974 were used. Total run by year was estimated as the total commercial harvest contribution combined with the Coghill River weir escapement count. The 80% prediction intervals for the Coghill Lake sockeye salmon total run were calculated using the squared deviations between the 2016–2025 forecasts and actual runs as the forecast variance.

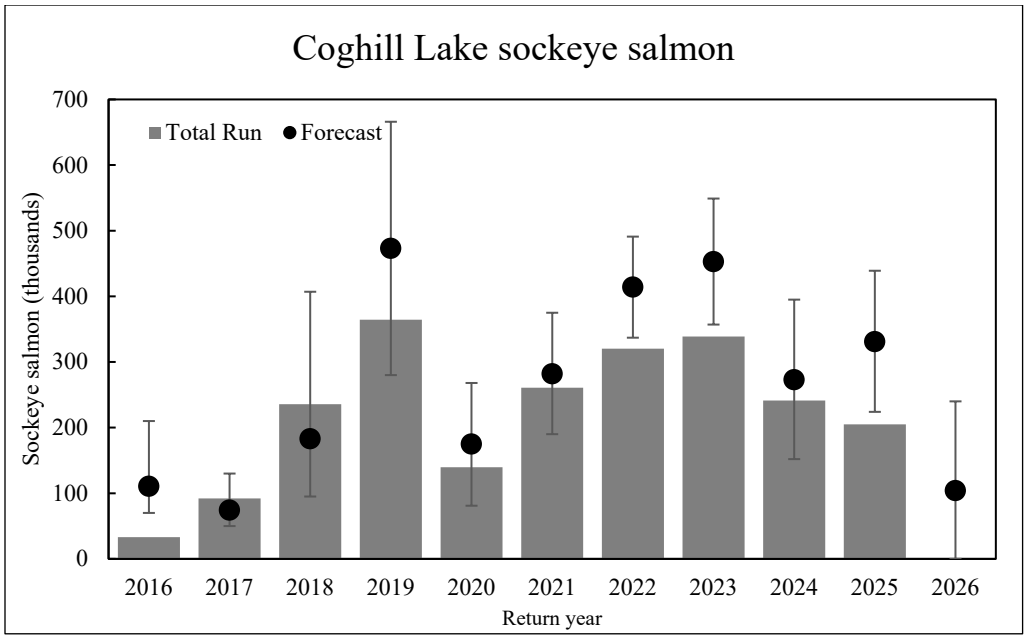

Figure 12.–Total run of Coghill Lake sockeye salmon compared to preseason total run forecasts, 2016–2025, and the 2026 forecast. Error bars represent 80% prediction intervals of forecasts.

PWS Even-Year Wild Pink Salmon

The 2026 PWS wild pink salmon total run forecast point estimate is *strong* at 4,726,000 fish (80% prediction interval: 1,737,000–12,857,000 fish). This is 14% above the recent 10-even-year average (2006–2024) PWS wild pink salmon total run of 4,150,000 fish (Figure 13). Subtracting the midpoint of the odd-year sustainable escapement goal, 784,000, from the total run forecast results in a harvest point estimate of 3,942,000 fish (range: 953,000–12,073,000).

Forecast Methods: Several models were examined for the 2026 PWS wild pink salmon total run forecast, including exponential smoothing and 2-, 3-, and 5-year running averages of past even-year total runs. The 5-year running average forecast was selected for 2026 because it outperformed other forecast models by having the lowest MAPE and median symmetrical accuracy (Table 16). The 80% prediction intervals were calculated from the mean squared error of the retrospective forecast predictions.

Total wild run of pink salmon by year was estimated as the total wild (non-hatchery) contribution to commercial harvests combined with stream escapement index. The stream escapement index is calculated as the area under the curve of weekly aerial escapement surveys, adjusted for estimates of stream life. Hatchery and wild stock contributions were determined from thermal marked otolith recoveries (1997–2025), coded wire tag recoveries (1985–1996), or average fry-to-adult survival estimates multiplied by fry release numbers and estimated exploitation rates (1977–1984).

Table 16.–2026 Prince William Sound (PWS) wild pink and chum salmon forecast model performance summary. Models selected as the run forecast (lowest MAAPE) are bold. Pink salmon MAAPEs are from log-transformed total run values.

Run		Prediction	MAAPE
PWS wild pink			
	Exponential	3,559,360	4.67%
	2-year	4,295,917	4.63%
	3-year	4,940,675	3.79%
	5-year	**4,725,661**	**3.70%**
PWS wild chum			
	Exponential	396,628	33%
	2-year	349,477	33%
	3-year	**586,027**	**32%**
	5-year	507,257	34%

Note: MAAPE= mean arctangent absolute percent error.

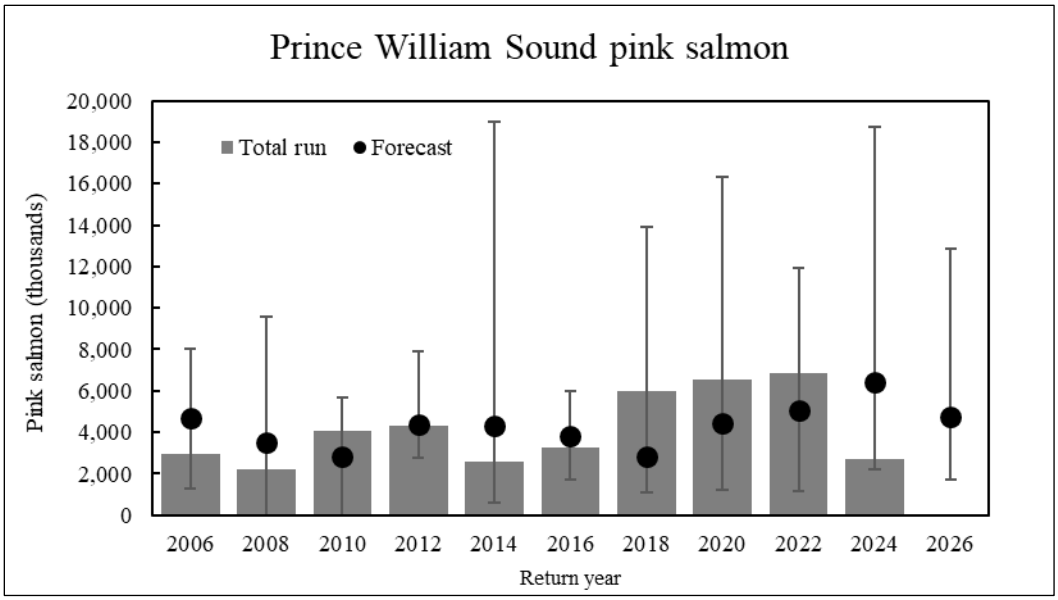

Figure 13.–Total run of Prince William Sound wild pink salmon compared to preseason total run forecasts, 2006–2024, and the 2026 forecast. Error bars represent 80% prediction intervals of forecasts.

PWS Wild Chum Salmon

The 2026 PWS wild chum salmon total run forecast point estimate is *strong* at 586,000 fish (80% prediction interval: 258,000–914,000 fish). This is 14% above the recent 10-year average (2016–2025) PWS wild chum salmon total run of 514,000 fish (Figure 14). Subtracting the 10-year average escapement of 173,000 from the total run forecast results in a harvest point estimate of 413,000 fish (range: 85,000–741,000 fish).

Forecast Methods: The 2026 PWS wild chum salmon total run forecast uses the 3-year running average method. Several models were examined for the 2026 PWS wild chum total run forecast, including exponential smoothing and 2-, 3-, and 5-year running averages of past total runs (Table 16). For 2026, the 3-year running average outperformed the other models by having the lowest mean arctangent absolute percent error (MAAPE), mean absolute squared error (MASE), and median symmetrical accuracy. The 80% prediction intervals were calculated from the mean squared error of the retrospective forecast predictions.

Total wild run of chum salmon by year was estimated as the total wild (non-hatchery) contribution to commercial harvests combined with the stream escapement index. The stream escapement index is calculated as the area under the curve of weekly aerial escapement surveys adjusted for estimates of stream life. Hatchery and wild stock contributions were estimated using pre-hatchery average natural runs (1998–2003) or thermally marked otolith estimates (2004–2025) for each district in PWS.

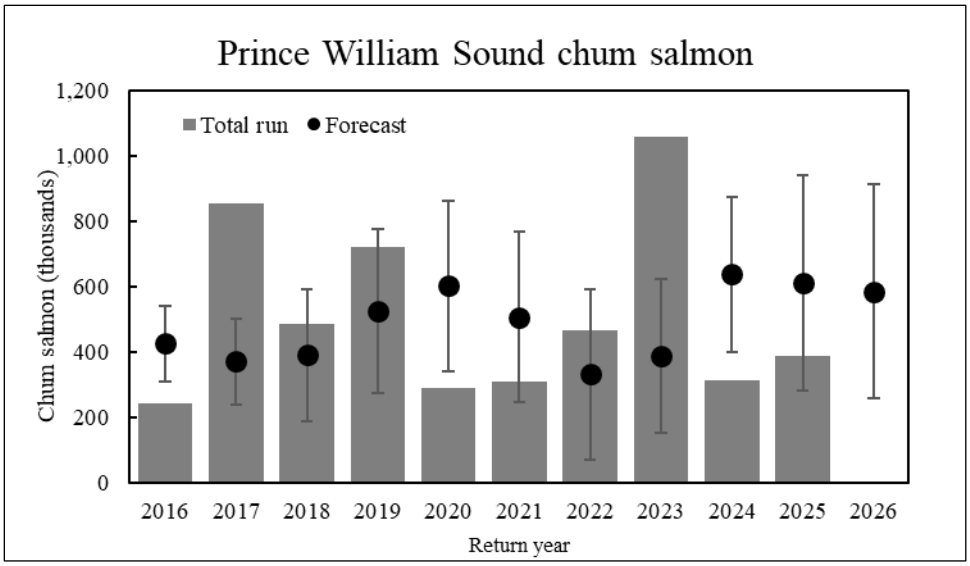

Figure 14.–Total run of Prince William Sound wild chum salmon compared to preseason total run forecasts, 2016–2025, and the 2026 forecast. Error bars represent 80% prediction intervals of forecasts.

Forecast by Jenni Morella, Area Finfish Research Biologist, ADF&G, Cordova.

UPPER COOK INLET

Sockeye Salmon

The Upper Cook Inlet sockeye salmon total run forecast of 7.60 million fish (Table 17, Figure 15) is predicted to be *excellent*. The categorical ranges of sockeye salmon total run strength were developed from the 20th, 40th, 60th, and 80th percentiles of historical runs (Table 18). Forecasts of salmon fisheries are inherently uncertain and are primarily used to gauge the general magnitude of expected runs and guide early season management strategies.

Table 17.–Forecast of the 2026 Upper Cook Inlet sockeye salmon run, escapement, and harvest in millions of fish. Forecast range is indicated in parentheses.

Production component	Forecast estimate
Total run	7.60 (5.07–10.13)
Escapement	2.00
Available harvest	5.60

Table 18.–Categorical ranges of Upper Cook Inlet sockeye salmon runs from 1986 to 2025, and the 2026 forecast in bold.

Category	Range (million)	Percentile
Poor	Less than 4.2	Less than 20th
Weak	4.2 to 5.2	20th to 40th
Average	5.2 to 5.9	40th to 60th
Strong	5.9 to 6.5	60th to 80th
Excellent	**Greater than 6.5**	**Greater than 80th**

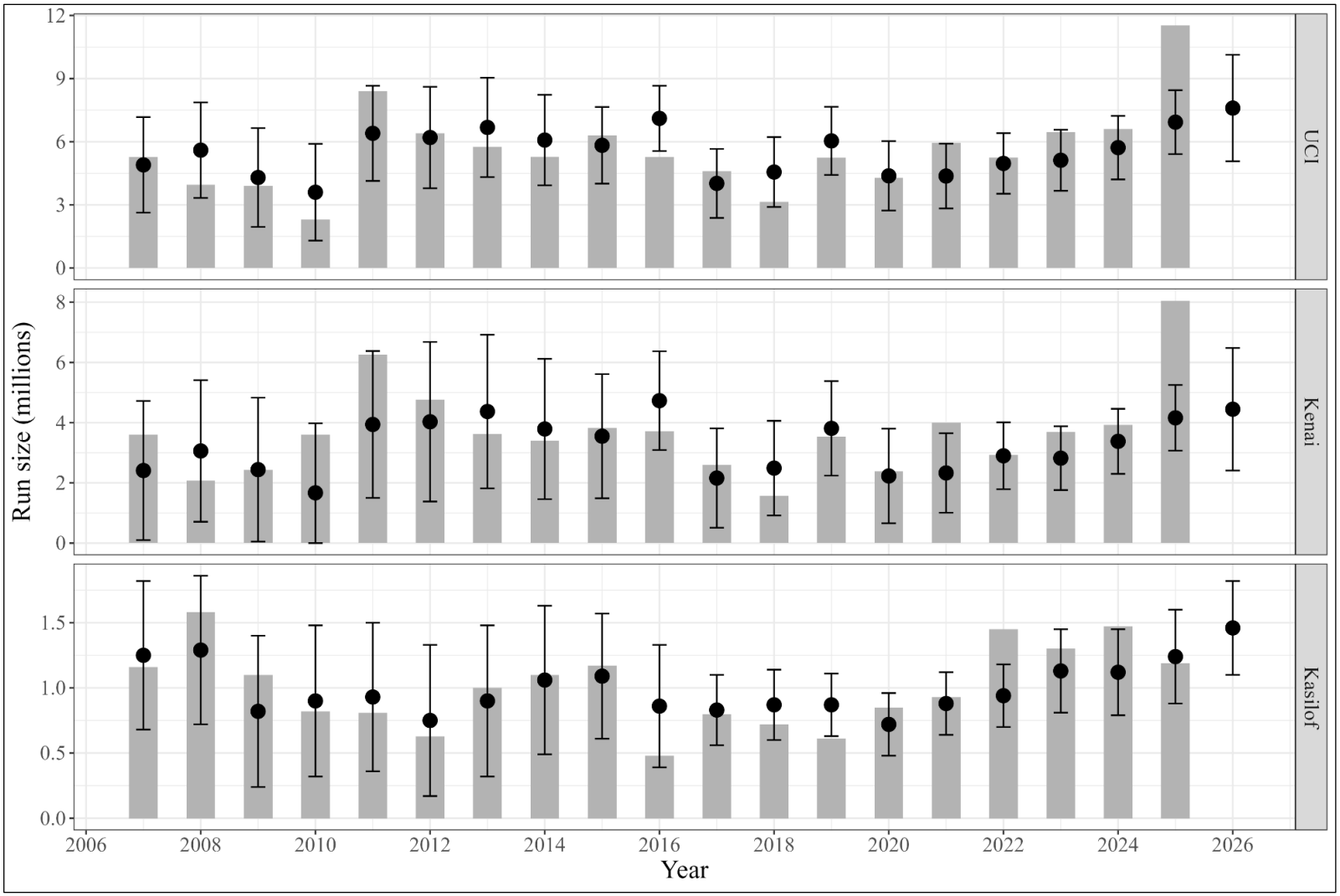

Figure 15.–Estimated total runs (gray bars) of Upper Cook Inlet (UCI; top panel), Kenai River (middle panel), and Kasilof River (bottom panel) sockeye salmon compared to total run forecasts (black points), 2007–2025 and 2026 forecast. Error bars represent 80% confidence intervals of forecasts.

Forecast Methods: The major sockeye salmon systems in Upper Cook Inlet (UCI) are the Kenai, Kasilof, and Susitna Rivers, and Fish Creek. Five model types were evaluated to forecast the total run of sockeye salmon to the Kenai and Kasilof Rivers in 2026: (1) brood year spawners, (2) emigrating smolt, (3) fall fry, (4) sibling returns, and (5) average returns (Table 19). Forecast model performance was assessed using the mean arctangent absolute percent error (MAAPE) between the forecasts and actual runs over the past 10 years (2016–2025; Table 20). The top 3 models with the lowest MAAPE and statistically significant parameters were selected for each age class, and a weighted hybrid model approach was applied (Table 19). Model weights were assigned based on the MAAPE of each selected model, with a lower MAAPE receiving a greater weight towards the forecast estimate. Weighted forecast estimates were summed across age classes for stock specific run estimates.

For Susitna River sockeye salmon, returns of age-0.3, -1.2, -1.3, -2.2, and -2.3 fish in 2026 were forecast using mean return per spawner by age class spanning brood years 2006–2021. Spawners for brood years 2019–2021 were estimated by subtracting the projected commercial harvest (average harvest rate of 42% from 2007 to 2015) from the forecast total run.

The 2026 forecast for Fish Creek sockeye salmon was estimated using the recent 5-year (2021–2025) average of total runs to the system. Total run estimates for Fish Creek sockeye salmon in 2022 is assumed to be biased low because weir operations were stopped early, and escapement estimates for these years were not expanded to account for unmonitored passage.

The sockeye salmon forecast for unmonitored systems in UCI was estimated as 17% of the aggregate forecast for the 4 monitored stocks. Unmonitored stocks include Crescent River, Big River, McArthur River, Chilligan River, Coal Creek, Cottonwood Creek, Wasilla Creek, Eagle River, Packers Creek, and many other smaller systems. The fraction of the total run destined for unmonitored systems was calculated using genetic estimates of the stock composition of offshore test fishery harvests.

The estimated available harvestable surplus of sockeye salmon was calculated by subtracting the aggregate escapement from the total run forecast for all stocks. Aggregate escapement was estimated as the sum of the midpoints of the escapement goal ranges for each monitored sockeye salmon producing system and the escapement into unmonitored systems.

Table 19.–Description of models used to forecast returns of sockeye salmon to the Kasilof and Kenai Rivers, 2026.

Model	Description
5-year moving average	Unweighted average of the previous 5-year's returns for the specified age class.
Exponential smoothing	An exponential function used to assign exponentially decreasing weights over time for the specified age class.
Ricker	Regression between the ratio of recruits of the specified age class and spawners from the same brood year and the number of spawners from the same brood year.
Ricker AR1	Autoregressive integrated moving average (ARIMA) analysis on the ratio of recruits of the specified age class and spawners from the same brood year with a covariate for the abundance of spawners from the same brood year.
Sibling	Regression between the returns of a specified age class and the most recent returns from the same brood year.
Sibling AR1	Autoregressive integrated moving average (ARIMA) analysis on the returns of the specified age class with a covariate for the abundance of spawners from the same brood year.

Note: Log transformation may be needed to meet the assumptions of a linear regression.

Table 20.–Kenai and Kasilof River sockeye salmon forecast estimates, 2026.

River	Age class	Model	MAAPE	Weight	Prediction	Weighted prediction	Subtotal	Total
Kenai	1.2	5-year moving average	44.14	0.37	675,853	249,771		
		Exponential smoothing	48.74	0.33	706,663	236,500		
		Log R vs S	55.15	0.30	390,169	115,398	601,670	
	1.3	Log Sibling	26.16	0.42	3,397,410	1,431,673		
		5-year moving average	37.68	0.29	3,149,529	921,529		
		Exponential smoothing	38.55	0.29	3,263,228	933,303	3,286,505	
	2.2	Log R vs S AR1	33.29	0.36	235,556	85,577		
		Log sibling	36.40	0.33	218,443	72,578		
		5-year moving average	39.72	0.30	199,016	60,591	218,745	
	2.3	Exponential smoothing	47.17	0.37	407,561	150,935		
		Log R vs S	52.96	0.33	243,957	80,469		
		5-year moving average	58.27	0.30	357,558	107,202	338,605	4,445,525
Kasilof	1.2	Exponential smoothing	37.11	0.38	928,759	350,396		
		5-year moving average	41.68	0.34	749,627	251,842		
		Log sibling	48.83	0.29	740,740	212,422	814,660	
	1.3	Log sibling	35.00	0.35	475,127	167,878		
		Ricker	37.80	0.33	384,043	125,635		
		Log R vs Log S	38.70	0.32	384,043	122,713	416,226	
	2.2	Log sibling	32.18	0.40	229,681	92,843		
		Exponential smoothing	43.27	0.30	190,678	57,325		
		5-year moving average	44.08	0.30	171,396	50,586	200,753	
	2.3	Exponential smoothing	57.81	0.35	11,840	4,102		
		Ricker AR1	59.79	0.33	52,904	17,722		
		5-year moving average	62.88	0.32	20,728	6,602	28,426	1,460,066

Note: MAAPE = mean arctangent absolute percent error.

Forecast Results and Discussion: In 2026, a run of approximately 7.60 million sockeye salmon are forecast to return to UCI with an estimate of 5.60 million available for harvest (Table 17). Based on the absolute percentage error (APE) for the recent 10-year (2016–2025) forecast UCI runs compared with the estimated runs, there is an 80% probability that the 2026 UCI forecast range falls between 5.07 million and 10.13 million fish (Table 17). This UCI forecast is excellent compared to historical total run estimates from 1986 to present (Table 18). Forecast error for UCI has ranged from 40% below forecast to 45% above forecast over the last 10 years with a MAPE of 22% (Figure 15).

The Kenai River sockeye salmon forecast is approximately 4.45 million fish (Table 20). The 2026 Kenai River forecast is 464,500 (12%) fish more than the historical (1986–2025) average run of 3.98 million and 833,000 (23%) fish more than the recent 10-year (2016–2025) average run of 3.61 million (Figure 15). Forecast error for the Kenai River has ranged from 48% below forecast to 59% above forecast over the last 10 years with a MAPE of 25% (Figure 15).

The Kasilof River sockeye salmon run forecast is approximately 1.46 million fish (Table 20). Over the last 10 years, the Kasilof River forecast has experienced a MAPE of 24%, with errors ranging from 35% under forecast to 79% over forecast. The 2026 forecast is 515,000 fish (54%) greater than the historical (1986–2025) average run of 954,000 fish and 439,000 fish (43%) greater than the recent 10-year (2016–2025) average run.

Approximately 489,400 and 100,000 sockeye salmon are forecast to return to the Susitna River and Fish Creek, respectively, in 2026. The 2026 Susitna River sockeye salmon forecast is approximately 93,000 fish (24%) above the historical (2006–2025) average run of 396,000 fish and approximately 126,000 fish (35%) greater than the recent 10-year (2016–2025) average run of 363,000 fish. The 2026 Fish Creek sockeye salmon forecast is approximately 10,000 (9%) fish fewer than the long-term average run size of 110,00 fish.

Forecast by Kyle Gatt, ADF&G Area Research Biologist, Soldotna, and Jack Erickson, ADF&G, Regional Research Coordinator, Anchorage.

LOWER COOK INLET

Pink Salmon

The Lower Cook Inlet (LCI) wild pink salmon commercial harvest in 2026 is predicted to be *weak*, with a point estimate of 183,000 fish and a range of 26,000–1,292,000 fish (80% CI). The categorical ranges of wild pink salmon harvest were formulated from the 20th, 40th, 60th, and 80th percentiles of historical harvests over the 66-year period from 1960 to 2025 (Table 21). Since adopting new forecast methods in 2018, the point forecasts have, on average, overforecast the harvest by 24%. However, forecasts have ranged from 88% below the observed harvest in 2020 to >6,000% above the observed harvest in 2024 (Figure 16), highlighting the uncertainties that surround all salmon forecasts (Adkison and Peterman 2000), and pink salmon in particular (Adkison 2002; Haeseker et al. 2005).

Table 21.–Categorical ranges of pink salmon commercial harvest (wild run), and the 2026 Lower Cook Inlet forecast in bold.

Category	Range (thousands)	Percentile
Poor	Less than 160	Less than 20th
Weak	**160 to 350**	**20th to 40th**
Average	350 to 590	40th to 60th
Strong	590 to 910	60th to 80th
Excellent	Greater than 910	Greater than 80th

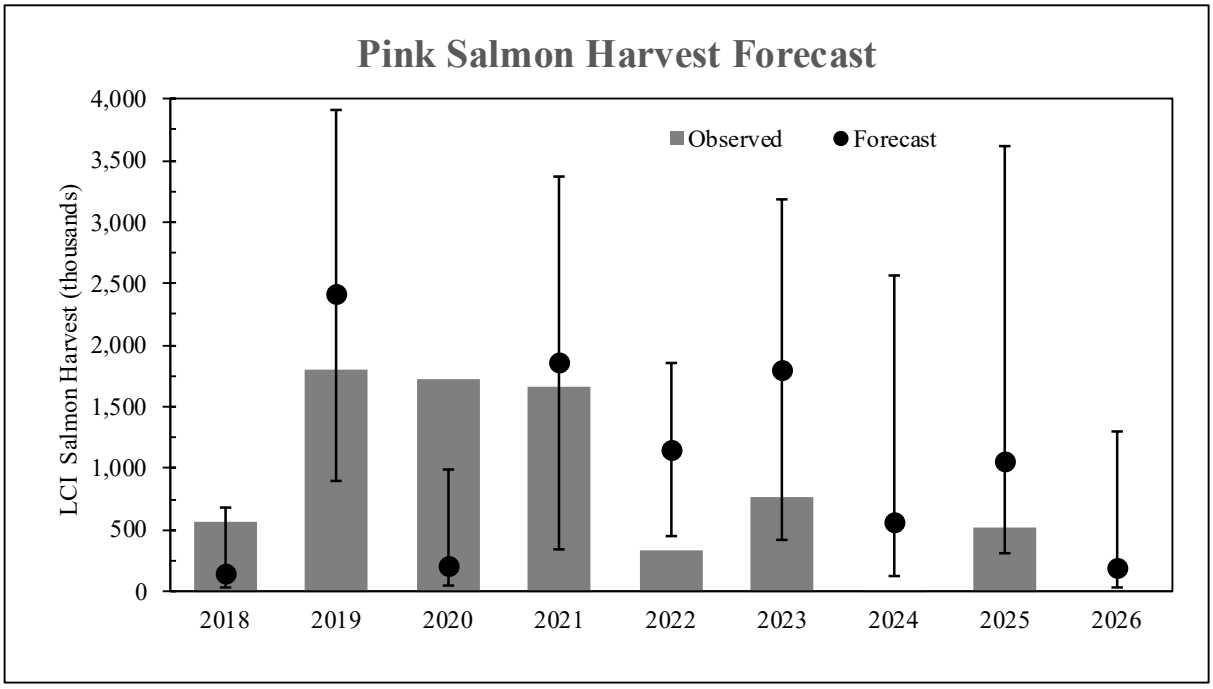

Figure 16.–Annual observed commercial harvest of wild pink salmon in Lower Cook Inlet (LCI) compared to preseason harvest forecasts, 2018–2026. Error bars represent 80% confidence intervals of forecasts.

Note: The 2024 harvest was 8,525 fish.

Forecast Methods: A naïve forecast based on historical odd- and even-year pink salmon harvests (1960–2025) was used to predict the 2026 wild pink salmon commercial harvest in LCI. Several trend forecast models were evaluated to determine which best fit the data, including exponential smoothing and 2-, 3-, and 5-year running averages of historical harvests. Exponential smoothing and running average models using log-transformed and non-logged data inputs produced point forecasts ranging from 54,000 to 1,034,000. The 5-year running average model using even-year log-transformed data inputs outperformed the other models this year based on comparison of several performance metrics (e.g., bias, MPE, mean square error [MSE], and MAPE). The 80% confidence intervals were calculated from the mean square error (MSE) of the retrospective forecast predictions.

Forecast Discussion: The 2026 harvest forecast of 183,000 pink salmon has a forecast range of 26,000–1,292,000 fish. If realized, a harvest of 183,000 pink salmon would be approximately 66%

lower than the recent 5-year average harvest of 543,000 fish for even-year runs between 2016 and 2024.

Prior to 2018, the odd-year LCI pink salmon forecast consisted of a wild stock total run forecast based on a logarithmic regression of total run and escapement from over 50 years of observations on 10 index streams, and a hatchery production forecast provided by Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association (CIAA). However, results from otolith sampling in LCI during 2014–2017 suggested high proportions of hatchery-marked fish in harvest (Otis and Hollowell 2023) and escapement (Otis et al. 2018) samples may confound the viability of spawner–recruit based run forecasts. Consequently, the decision was made to produce a harvest forecast in lieu of the total run forecast.

Because pink salmon exhibit a 2-year life cycle, comparisons of run size are typically stratified by odd and even years to account for dominance of one line over the other. In LCI overall, dominance of one line is typically short lived, lasting 2–7 generations before the opposing line becomes dominant. Odd/even year dominance is not synchronous across individual stocks and line dominance can persist up to 9 generations (18 years) in some stocks. Overall, odd- and even-year runs across all stocks and years are only moderately dissimilar (odd-year runs ~22% higher). However, areawide total runs exhibit 4–15 year periods during which production from one line is 19–57% higher than the other, on average. So, despite the relative parity between odd- and even-year pink salmon runs in LCI over broad time scales, we continue to stratify run size comparisons by odd and even years to account for these short-term dominance cycles. The odd-year brood line has been dominant in LCI since 2011 (7 generations).

In 2024, the parent year for the upcoming 2026 return, LCI experienced strong escapements to most pink salmon index streams. Only 2 of 22 index stocks (9%) that contribute to aggregate district SEGs achieved the low end of their respective management objective (MO). Most of the 20 poor performing stocks missed their MO by a wide margin, resulting in the 2024 LCI pink salmon escapement (65,000) being 66% below the lower bound of the aggregate SEG range (190,000–495,000). It is difficult to predict shifts in dominance between odd- and even-year lines of pink salmon before they occur. However, given the very poor parent year escapement, it appears highly unlikely that the 2026 run will break the 15-year trend of odd-year dominance. Consequently, the 2026 run of wild pink salmon is unlikely to produce a harvest greater than the point forecast of 183,000 fish.

To produce this wild stock commercial harvest forecast, we excluded hatchery cost-recovery harvests (HCR) from our analysis, but it should be noted that hatchery-origin pink and sockeye salmon (discussed in the next section) occur in Southern District harvests (Otis and Hollowell 2023), so a component of this wild stock harvest forecast derives from hatchery production. Additional commercial and HCR harvests of pink and sockeye salmon may be expected from hatchery runs in and around hatchery special harvest areas. LCI hatchery forecasts are available from Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association.[2]

Other Salmon Species

Forecast Methods: Naïve forecasts based on historical commercial harvests (1960–2025) were used to predict the 2026 harvest of other, less abundant salmon species in LCI. Several trend forecast models were evaluated to determine which best fit the data, including exponential smoothing and 2-, 3-, and 5-year running averages of past commercial harvests. Log-transformed

[2] Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association: http://www.ciaanet.org

and non-logged historical harvest datasets were evaluated with each model and the final forecast for each species was selected based on comparison of several performance metrics (e.g., bias, MSE, root mean square error [RMSE], MPE, MAPE, and mean absolute scaled error [MASE]).

Forecast Discussion: Prior to 2018, the recent 5-year average commercial harvest was used to forecast the LCI sockeye and chum salmon harvest for the coming year. Beginning in 2018, for consistency, we transitioned to the same trend forecast methods we used for LCI pink salmon. Context for the relative strength of the current harvest forecast and how it compares to the recent 10-year average harvest for each species is provided in Table 22. Context for the relative performance of sockeye and chum salmon forecasts since 2018 is provided in Figures 17 and 18, respectively.

Table 22.–Preliminary forecast of the 2026 Lower Cook Inlet (LCI) commercial harvest (wild run) of other, less abundant salmon species.

Salmon species	Model	Forecast (point)	Forecast(range)	% above/below 10-yr average	Forecast category
Sockeye	5-year running average	202,000	91,000–312,000	18% higher	Strong
Chum	5-year running average	21,600	4,400–106,200	60% lower	Weak

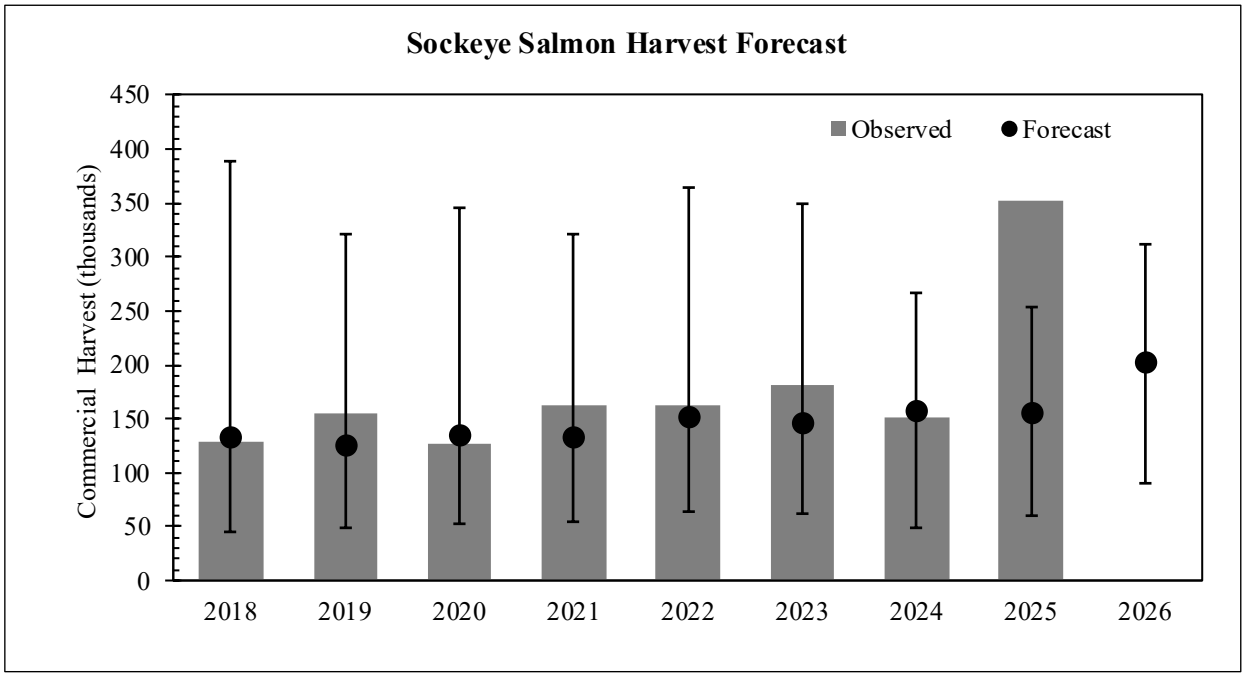

Figure 17.–Annual observed commercial harvest of sockeye salmon in Lower Cook Inlet compared to preseason harvest forecasts, 2018–2026. Error bars represent 80% confidence intervals of forecasts.

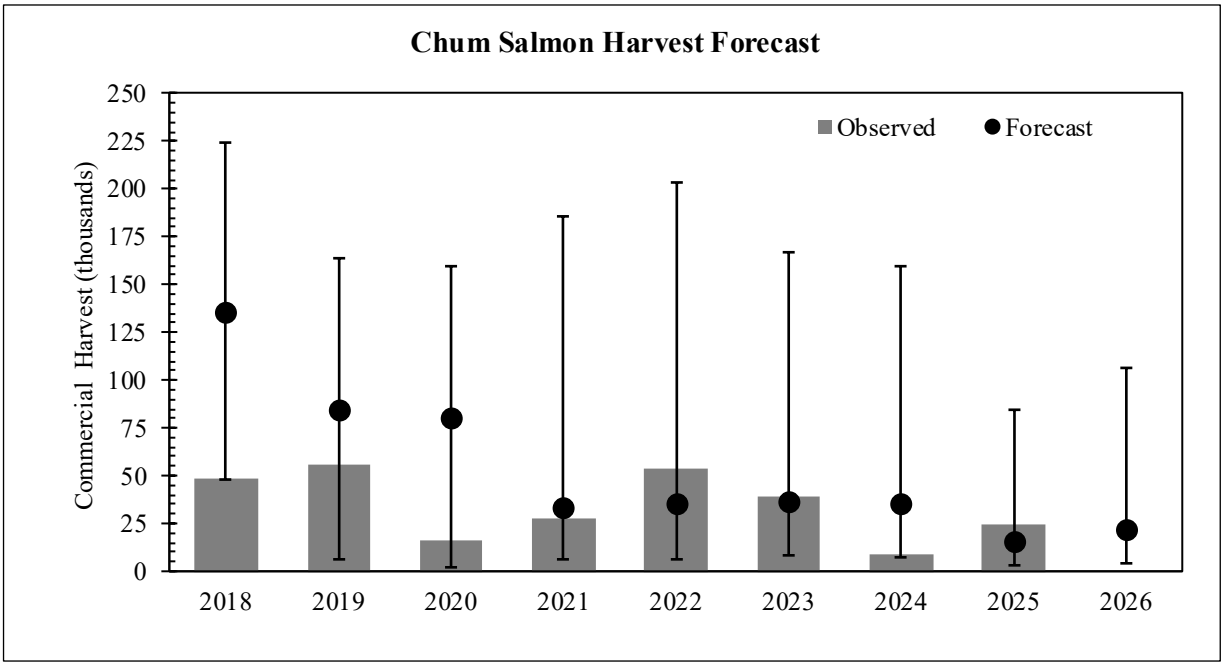

Figure 18.–Annual observed commercial harvest of chum salmon in Lower Cook Inlet compared to preseason harvest forecasts, 2018–2026. Error bars represent 80% confidence intervals of forecasts.

Forecast prepared by Edward O. Otis, Area Finfish Research Biologist, Homer; and Glenn J. Hollowell, Area Finfish Management Biologist, Homer.

BRISTOL BAY AREA

Sockeye Salmon

The sockeye salmon total run forecast for Bristol Bay in 2026 is predicted to be *strong* with a point estimate of 45.32 million fish and a range of 31.12 to 59.52 million fish (80% confidence interval; Table 23). Categorical ranges of sockeye salmon total run strength were formulated from percentiles of total runs from 1961 to 2025 (Table 24). Since 2006, our preseason forecasts have underforecast the actual run by 14% on average, ranging from 36% below in 2014 to 21% above in 2011 (Figure 19).

Table 23.–Preliminary forecast of the 2026 Bristol Bay area sockeye salmon run.

Total production:	Forecast (millions)	Forecast range (millions)
Total run	45.32	31.12–59.52
Escapement	11.79	–
Total harvestable surplus	33.53	–
Bristol Bay harvestable surplus	32.26	–
South Peninsula	1.27	–
Inshore run	44.05	–

Table 24.–Categorical ranges of Bristol Bay area sockeye salmon total run, and the 2026 forecast in bold.

Category	Range (millions)	Percentile
Poor	Less than 20	Less than 20th
Weak	20 to 29	20th to 40th
Average	29 to 43	40th to 60th
Strong	**43 to 55**	**60th to 80th**
Excellent	Greater than 55	Greater than 80th

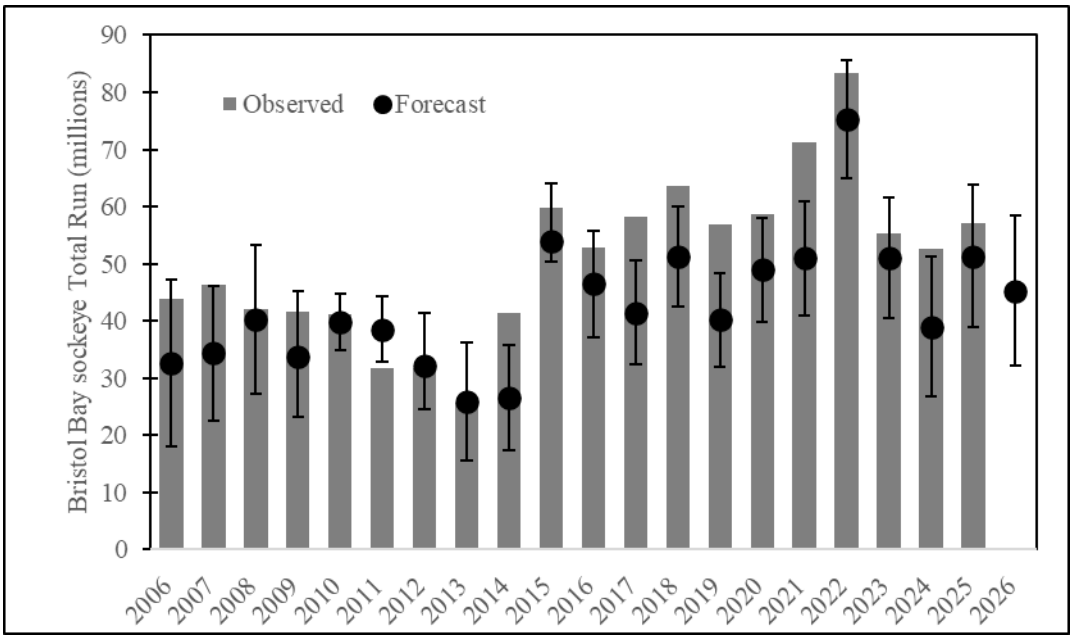

Figure 19.–Annual observed total run of sockeye salmon in Bristol Bay compared to preseason total run forecasts, 2006–2026. Error bars represent 80% confidence intervals of forecasts.

Forecast Methods: The 2026 Bristol Bay sockeye salmon forecast is the sum of individual predictions from 9 river systems (Kvichak, Alagnak, Naknek, Egegik, Ugashik, Wood, Igushik, Nushagak, and Togiak Rivers) and 4 age classes (ages 1.2, 1.3, 2.2, and 2.3). Adult escapement and return data from brood years 1972–2021 were used in the analyses for most rivers.

Forecasts for each age class returning to a river system were derived from models based on the relationship between adult returns of that age class and either total returns or sibling returns from the same brood years. The average return over the last 5 years was also considered as a forecast model, and in certain cases, competing models were averaged in a weighted hybrid model approach. In general, models with statistically significant parameters, the best past performance metrics, or both were chosen. Performance was evaluated using mean absolute deviation, mean absolute percent error, mean arctangent absolute percent error, and mean percent error between forecast and observed returns measured across the most recent 3- and 5-year time frames.

In the Nushagak District, escapement goals for the Wood and Nushagak Rivers will be modified in accordance with the *Nushagak District King Salmon Stock of Concern Management Plan*

(5AAC 06.391). Based on this regulation, the upper ends of the optimal escapement goal (OEG) ranges in 2026 will be 2.79 and 2.61 million sockeye salmon for the Wood and Nushagak Rivers, respectively, and escapements are projected as the 75th percentile of the OEGs. There is a possibility of changes to management plans at the upcoming BOF meeting that could modify or eliminate these OEGs or adjust management actions to address Nushagak River Chinook salmon. Where practical, ADF&G will manage escapements proportional to the run size (5 AAC 06.355(d)(1)). Forecasted escapements are the midpoints of the escapement goal ranges for Egegik and Ugashik Rivers as the total run is forecast to be average (Table 24). Escapements are projected as the 25th percentile of the escapement goal range when the forecast is in the lower range of historical run sizes, as seen in Naknek, Igushik, and Togiak Rivers. Kvichak River is forecasted at 2.02 million based on 50% exploitation rate. Since the Alagnak River is passively managed, the exploitation rate is assumed to be the same as that of the Kvichak River.

Over the past 5 years, an average of 2.8% of the Bristol Bay return is thought to have been harvested in the South Alaska Peninsula fisheries in June. Preseason harvestable surplus projections are provided to aid the industry in planning for the upcoming season.

Forecast Results: A total of 45.32 million sockeye salmon (with a range of 31.12–59.52 million) are expected to return to Bristol Bay in 2026 (Table 23). This is 26% smaller than the most recent 10-year average of 61.0 million fish and 21% greater than the long-term average of 37.40 million fish (1963–2025). All systems are expected to meet their spawning escapement goals in 2026. The forecast range represents the upper and lower values of the 80% prediction interval for the total run forecast. The confidence bounds were calculated from the difference between actual runs and run forecasts from 2006 through 2025.

A run of 45.32 million sockeye salmon would allow for a potential harvestable surplus of 33.53 million fish: 32.26 million fish in Bristol Bay and 1.27 million fish in the South Peninsula June fishery. A Bristol Bay inshore harvest of this size is 21% less than the most recent 10-year average harvest of 41.09 million (ranging from 31.69 to 60.52 million), and 38% greater than the long-term average harvest of 23.40 million fish (1963–2025).

Age-specific forecasts for the 2026 run consist of 16.00 million age-1.2 fish (35% of the total run), 5.38 million age-2.2 fish (12% of the total run), 19.98 million age-1.3 fish (44% of the total run), and 3.85 million age-2.3 fish (8% of the total run; Table 25).

Table 25.–Forecast of total run, escapement, and harvest of major age classes of sockeye salmon returning to Bristol Bay (BB) river systems in 2026.

	Millions of sockeye salmon								
	Forecasted production by age class					Forecasted		South	
District / river	1.2	2.2	1.3	2.3	Total	Escapement	Surplus	Peninsula[a]	BB Inshore
Naknek-Kvichak									
Kvichak	1.48	0.92	1.29	0.35	4.04	2.02	1.91	0.11	3.93
Alagnak	1.58	0.24	1.35	0.10	3.26	1.63	1.54	0.09	3.17
Naknek	1.11	0.45	2.09	0.35	4.00	1.10	2.79	0.11	3.89
Total	4.17	1.61	4.73	0.80	11.30	4.75	6.23	0.32	10.98
Egegik	2.70	2.84	1.07	2.58	9.19	1.40	7.53	0.26	8.93
Ugashik	2.43	0.49	2.19	0.25	5.36	0.95	4.26	0.15	5.21
Nushagak									
Wood	3.60	0.25	2.71	0.07	6.61	2.27	4.16	0.19	6.43
Igushik	0.41	0.02	0.48	0.01	0.91	0.21	0.68	0.03	0.89
Nushagak	2.56	0.17	8.42	0.14	11.39[b]	2.05	9.02	0.32	11.07
Total	6.56	0.43	11.60	0.22	18.92	4.53	13.86	0.53	18.39
Togiak	0.14	0.01	0.39	0.01	0.54[c]	0.16	0.37	0.02	0.53
Bristol Bay	16.00	5.38	19.98	3.85	45.32	11.79	32.26	1.27	44.05
	35%	12%	44%	8%	100%				

Note: This table is a summary. Slight differences may appear due to rounding.

[a] Projected harvest is based on the current 5-year running average exploitation rate of 2.8%.

[b] Nushagak River forecast total includes approximately 108,000 age-1.4 fish.

[c] Forecasts for Kulukak, Kanik, Osviak, and Matogak River systems are not included. These systems contribute approximately 50,000 sockeye salmon to Togiak District harvest each year.

Forecast Discussion: Forecasting future salmon returns is inherently difficult and uncertain. The department has used similar methods since 2001 to produce Bristol Bay sockeye salmon forecasts, which have performed well when applied to Bristol Bay as a whole. In the last 20 years, our forecasts have, on average, underforecast the run by 14%, ranging from 36% below the actual run in 2014 to 21% above the actual run in 2011. Forecasted harvestable surplus has had a mean absolute percentage error of 16% since 2006.

Forecasts at the individual river scale exhibit greater uncertainty than the total Bristol Bay forecast. Since 2006, return estimates have been biased low for the Alagnak (−16%), Togiak (−3%), Kvichak (−36%), Wood (−22%), Nushagak (−19%), Igushik (−7%), and Ugashik (−10%) Rivers, and biased high for Egegik (5%) and Naknek (1%). These offsetting errors contribute to higher accuracy in the baywide forecast compared to forecasts for individual rivers.

Forecast by Cole Weaver, Bristol Bay Research Biologist, ADF&G, Anchorage.

ARCTIC–YUKON–KUSKOKWIM REGION

ALL SALMON

The department prepares formal run forecasts annually for the following stocks in the Arctic–Yukon–Kuskokwim (AYK) Region: Kuskokwim River Chinook salmon, Yukon River Chinook salmon, Canadian-origin Yukon River Chinook salmon, Yukon River summer chum salmon, and Yukon River fall chum salmon. A summary of forecast methods and 2026 run size projections are provided.

The Kuskokwim River Chinook salmon run forecast is based on the estimated run size from the prior year (midpoint), and uncertainty is represented as the recent 7-year average percent error between forecasted and actual run estimates. The 2026 Kuskokwim River Chinook salmon forecast is for a range of 128,000–200,000 fish. The drainagewide Chinook salmon escapement goal is 65,000–120,000 fish.

Separate forecasts are prepared for Canadian-origin Yukon River Chinook salmon and total run. The Canadian-origin run forecast is produced by a U.S./Canada Joint Technical Committee and presented to the Yukon River Panel. The 2026 forecast is based on projections of brood year returns, sibling relationships, and juvenile abundance estimates from marine trawl surveys conducted in the northeastern Bering Sea. A Bayesian integrated forecast was produced, such that the model components that best fit the observed historical run sizes are given more weight. The final 2026 Canadian-origin Chinook salmon forecast is for a run size of 22,000–33,000, which is less than the minimum border passage objective of 71,000 as agreed to by ADF&G and Canada Department of Fisheries and Oceans. The Canadian-origin forecast is used to develop the drainagewide Chinook salmon outlook (all stocks), based on the assumption that the Canadian-origin run represents approximately 42% of the total run. The preliminary drainagewide forecast for Yukon River Chinook salmon is 52,000–79,000. Yukon River Chinook salmon is classified as a stock of management concern under the *Policy for the Management of Sustainable Salmon Fisheries*. Harvest of Yukon River Chinook salmon is not expected during the 2026 season in any fishery.

The 2026 Yukon River summer chum salmon run forecast is developed by projecting the age-5 return based on sibling relationships and expanding the age-5 return estimate to total run based on the recent 10-year average age at maturity. The drainagewide summer chum salmon forecast is for a below-average run size of 160,000–580,000 fish (80% confidence interval). The drainagewide BEG for this stock is 500,000–1,200,000 fish. If the 2026 summer chum salmon run returns less than 500,000, directed salmon fisheries will be closed, whereas subsistence harvest opportunities may be provided on surplus greater than 500,000. The 2026 forecast suggests that commercial fishery opportunity is unlikely as per the *Yukon River Summer Chum Salmon Management Plan*. Regardless of run size, fishing opportunities for summer chum salmon in 2026 will probably be limited by the low predicted Chinook salmon run size and will be restricted to selective gear types (dip nets, beach seines, human-operated fish wheels), with the release of Chinook salmon required.

The 2026 Yukon River fall chum salmon run forecast is based on drainagewide projections of brood year returns and age class proportions (age-3 through age-6) using a spawner–recruit analysis. The drainagewide fall chum salmon forecast point estimate is 311,000 fish, which is below the average run size of 950,000 fish. The forecast range is 209,000–413,000 fall chum salmon based on the upper and lower values of the 80% confidence bounds of the total run forecast.

Confidence bounds are calculated using the deviation of the run projection point estimates and the observed returns from 1987 to 2025. The drainagewide SEG is 300,000–600,000 fall chum salmon. The upper end of the forecast is slightly above the lower end of the minimum drainagewide escapement goal. However, the forecasted run based on spawner–recruit analysis overestimated fall chum salmon returns for the last 8 years, with the last 6 observed runs all ranking among the lowest on record. Yukon River fall chum salmon is classified as a stock of management concern under the *Policy for the Management of Sustainable Salmon Fisheries*. Surplus to support directed fishing opportunity in 2026 is not anticipated. However, if the run is larger than forecast, thus exceeding the lower end of the escapement goal, there is potential for some limited subsistence fisheries. Given the forecast run size and associated uncertainties, commercial fisheries would remain closed.

The department does not produce formal run forecasts for other salmon stocks returning to the Kuskokwim Area or Yukon Area, or any salmon stocks returning to the Norton Sound Area or Kotzebue Management Area. Consequently, commercial harvest outlooks for these stocks are typically based upon available parent-year spawning escapement indicators, age composition information, recent year trends, and the level of commercial harvest that can be expected given the fishery management plans in place and commercial processing capacity. Currently, southeastern Norton Sound Chinook salmon stocks are classified as *stocks of yield concern*. In general, low Chinook and chum salmon abundance is anticipated throughout the AYK Region in 2026, and the Yukon River coho salmon run is also expected to be poor. Low run sizes for multiple species throughout the AYK Region, combined with (currently) no commercial processor registered in the Kuskokwim Management Area is expected to result in well below average commercial harvest (Table 26).

Forecasts by Sean Larson, Kuskokwim Area Research Biologist, ADF&G, Anchorage/Bethel; Bonnie Borba, Yukon Area Research Biologist, ADF&G, Fairbanks; and Fred West, Yukon Area Research Biologist, ADF&G, Anchorage.

Table 26.–The 2026 Arctic–Yukon–Kuskokwim area all-salmon commercial harvest outlook by management area, in thousands of fish.

	Salmon species					
Management area	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Summer chum	Fall chum
Kuskokwim River	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kuskokwim Bay	0	0	0	0	0	0
Kuskokwim Area total[a]	0	0	0	0	0	0
Yukon	0	0	0	0	0	0
Norton Sound	0	0–2	20–50	5–25	5–25	0
Kotzebue Sound	0	0	0	0	0	50–150

[a] There is not currently a confirmed commercial buyer in the Kuskokwim area for 2026.

WESTWARD REGION

KODIAK MANAGEMENT AREA

Pink Salmon

The 2026 Kodiak Management Area (KMA) predicted pink salmon harvest is expected to be in the *weak* category with a point estimate of 12.3 million fish combining the wild stock and Kitoi Bay Hatchery harvest estimates (Tables 27 and 28). Harvest categories were delimited from the 20th, 40th, 60th, and 80th percentiles of historical commercial harvest in the KMA from 1988 to 2025.

Forecast Methods: The KMA wild stock pink salmon harvest forecast is derived from the total run forecast minus the estimated KMA escapement (5.0 million). The total run estimates were derived from a combination of weir counts, aerial survey index, and harvest estimates.

For the 2026 KMA wild stock pink salmon forecast, a generalized Ricker model (Quinn and Deriso 1999) was fit to the even-year KMA returns from 1988 to 2024, utilizing the westside (SW and NW Kodiak Districts) escapement spawner index. Four additional terms were included in this generalized Ricker model: (1) total KMA pink salmon indexed escapement, (2) western Gulf of Alaska May sea surface temperature (SST), (3) previous year (lag−1) Gulf of Alaska pink salmon landings, and (4) an environmental composite created from a series of forecast indices affecting pink salmon returns. The environmental variables used to create the composite included monthly mean air temperature, total precipitation, and peak precipitation total run correlation anomalies from August to June of the predominantly freshwater life history.

In constructing and evaluating the regression model, standard regression diagnostic procedures were used. The forecast range was estimated using the 80% confidence intervals of the absolute percent error of the composite model hindcast estimates.

Table 27.–The 2026 Kodiak Management Area (KMA) predicted pink salmon harvest categories, and the 2026 forecast in bold.

KMA harvest category	Range (millions)	Percentile
Poor	Less than 8.2	Less than 20th
Weak	**8.2 to 14.2**	**21st to 40th**
Average	14.2 to 21.5	41st to 60th
Strong	21.5 to 28.0	61st to 80th
Excellent	Greater than 28.0	81st to 100th

Table 28.–Preliminary forecast of the 2026 Kodiak Management Area (KMA) pink salmon run.

Total production	Forecast estimate (millions)	Forecast range (millions)
KMA wild stock total run	12.6	7.1–18.1
KMA escapement goal[a]	5.0	–
KMA wild stock harvest	7.6	2.1–13.1
Kitoi Bay Hatchery harvest[b]	4.7	3.4–6.0
Total KMA pink salmon harvest	12.3	5.5–19.0

Note: Column numbers may not total or correspond exactly with numbers in text due to rounding.

[a] The 2026 estimated escapement is within the range of the even-year aggregate escapement goals for the Kodiak Archipelago (3.0−7.0 million) and the Mainland District (0.25−1.0 million).

[b] This figure is the total expected return (5.1 million) minus the broodstock collection goal of 0.43 million fish; the Kitoi Bay Hatchery has yet to determine cost-recovery goals (if any) for 2026.

The 2026 Kitoi Bay Hatchery pink salmon forecast was prepared by evaluating pink salmon survivals from even brood years 1994 through 2022. These brood years are particularly important to the forecasting model because all pink salmon fry were released on the same day in order to saturate the release area with fry (predator satiation). This release strategy has proven to significantly improve fry-to-adult survival.

The pink salmon return to Kitoi Bay Hatchery is an odd-year dominant return that experiences exceptional marine survival every 4th year, dating back to the first releases in 1977 (with the exception of 1997). The midpoint estimate of 5.1 million reflects a marine survival of 2.74% for the 187 million fry released (0.73 g), near the traditional target size (0.8 g). The average survival was calculated using the last 10 even-year returns (parent class 2004 to 2022). The range was calculated as (+/−) 25% of the predicted marine survival.

Forecast Discussion: The 2026 KMA wild stock pink salmon total run (12.6 million) is predicted to be a *weak* return (Figure 20). With below-average escapement indicators, above-average environmental conditions and SST, but a fairly robust return in the Gulf of Alaska and the region (2025), this is indicative that a below-average pink salmon return in 2026 is likely to occur.

The 2026 Kitoi Bay Hatchery pink salmon production is expected to be 5.1 million fish (Figure 21). The brood stock collection goal is 425,000 fish, resulting in a total hatchery harvest projection of about 4.7 million fish. The Kitoi Bay Hatchery cost-recovery goal for 2026 has been set to 1.03 million fish.

Confidence in the 2026 forecast estimate is only fair considering the unpredictable nature of pink salmon returns. Despite the strength of the forecast model, we recognize that return corollaries are often fleeting due to the dynamic nature of the Gulf of Alaska. This forecast level should allow an initial weekly fishing period length of 57 hours (2.5 days) for most of the KMA during the initial general pink salmon fisheries (beginning July 6, 2026). By the third week of July, fishing time could be restricted, by section or district, to ensure escapement goals will be met.

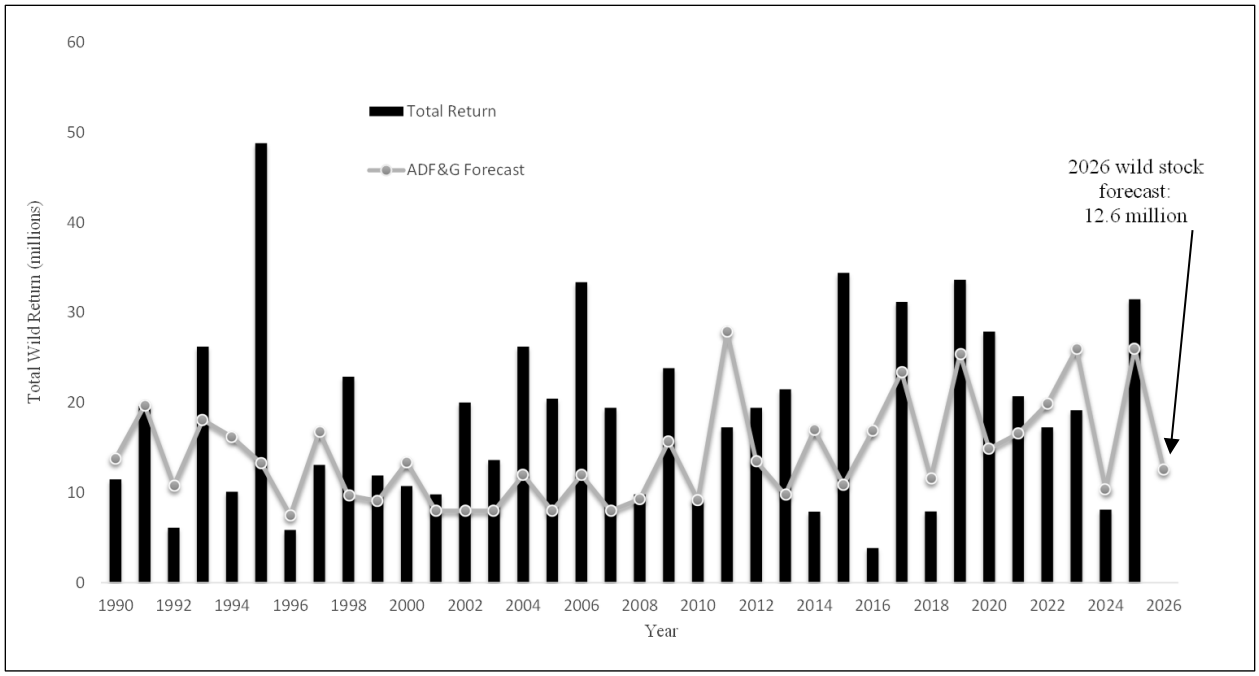

Figure 20.–Kodiak pink salmon wild stock total return compared to Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) forecasts, 1990 to 2025, and 2026 forecast.

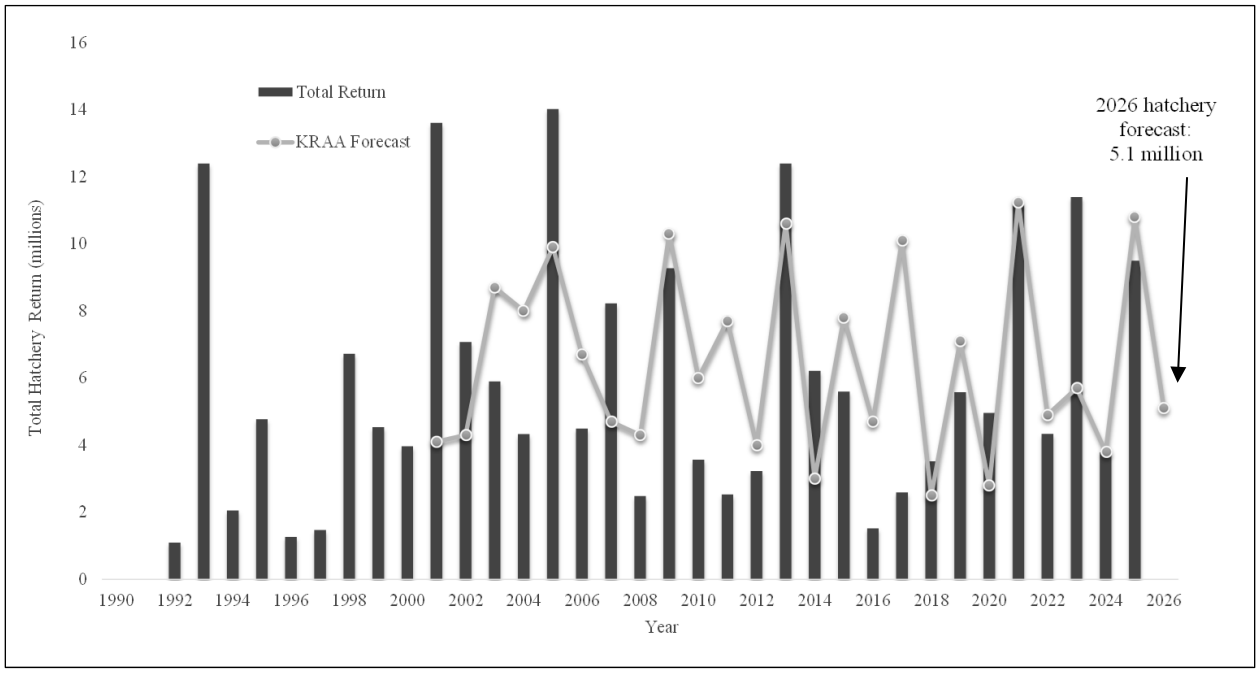

Figure 21.–Kitoi Bay Hatchery pink salmon total return compared to Kodiak Regional Aquaculture Association (KRAA) forecasts, 1990 to 2025, and 2026 forecast.

Forecast by M. Birch Foster, Finfish Research Biologist, Westward Region; and Jakob Cronk, Kitoi Bay Hatchery Manager, Kodiak Regional Aquaculture Association.

Ayakulik River

Sockeye Salmon

Forecast Methods: The 2026 Ayakulik River sockeye salmon forecast (Table 29) was prepared primarily by investigating simple linear regression models utilizing recent outmigration year age class relationships. In constructing and evaluating each of the regression models, standard regression diagnostic procedures were used. Prediction intervals (80%) for the regression estimates were calculated using the variances of the regression models. The age classes that could not be estimated with one of these models were estimated using pooled medians and the 10th and 90th percentiles of the data were used to calculate the prediction interval of the median estimates.

Table 29.–Preliminary forecast of the 2026 Ayakulik River sockeye salmon run.

Total production	Forecast estimate (thousands)	Forecast range (thousands)
Total run estimate	1,021	658–1,433
Escapement goal[a]	400	200–400
Harvest estimate	621	N/A

Note: N/A= not applicable.

[a] The escapement estimate is the sum of the upper-bound of escapement goals for the early (140,000–280,000 fish) and late run (60,000–120,000 fish).

The ocean-age-2 sockeye salmon were predicted from prior year ocean-age-1 returns (1992–present). Ocean-age-3 sockeye salmon were predicted from prior year ocean-age-2 returns (1992–present). Ocean-age-1 and all other age classes were predicted by the 20-year median return. Regression and median estimates were summed to estimate the total Ayakulik sockeye salmon run for 2026. The range was estimated as the sum of the individual 80% prediction intervals.

Forecast Discussion: The 2026 Ayakulik forecast of 1,021,000 sockeye salmon is about 283,000 more fish than the actual 2025 run estimate of approximately 737,000, and about 386,000 fish more than the most recent 10-year average of approximately 635,000 fish. The 2026 run is estimated to be composed of approximately 73% ocean-age-2 fish. The Ayakulik sockeye runs in 2021 and 2022 were the largest since 1998, and we are anticipating another strong run in 2026, but confidence is only fair. The projected harvest of 621,000 fish is based on the achievement of the upper-end of the combined escapement goal ranges (400,000 fish). Ayakulik is managed based on both early- and late-run (post July 15) components. Based on brood year escapement proportions from what will be the major contributing brood years (2020–2023), approximately 69% of the total run will occur in the early portion of the run.

Forecast by Michelle Wattum, Finfish Research Biologist, Westward Region.

Karluk River

Sockeye Salmon

Forecast Methods: The 2026 Karluk River sockeye salmon forecast (Table 30) was prepared primarily by investigating escapement, sibling age class relationships, moving average, and exponential smoothing methods.

Table 30.–Preliminary forecast of the 2026 Karluk River sockeye salmon run.

Total production		Forecast estimate (thousands)	Forecast range (thousands)
Early run	Total run estimate	115	0–323
	Escapement goal[a]	200	150–250
	Harvest estimate	0	N/A
Late run	Total run estimate	596	131–1,117
	Escapement goal[a]	325	200–450
	Harvest estimate	271	N/A
Total Karluk River	Total run estimate	712	131–1,441
System	Escapement goal[a]	525	350–700
	Harvest estimate	271	N/A

Note: Column numbers may not total or correspond exactly with numbers in text due to rounding. N/A= not applicable.

[a] The escapement estimates are based on the mid-points of the early-run and late-run escapement goals and summed for the total run, it is estimated that the escapement goal for the Karluk River early run will not be achieved because the 2026 forecast is below the lower-bound of the escapement goal.

Karluk River sockeye salmon production demonstrates strong positive autocorrelation (i.e., good years followed by good years and bad years followed by bad years). As a result, recent year trends have been a good prognosticator of the near future at Karluk River. Utilizing sibling age class relationships and regression models has been the preferred method since 1994. An exponential smoothing model was also fit to recent years early- and late-run total returns. Parameter estimates (early run $\alpha = 0.82$; and late run $\alpha = 0.42$) placed heavy weight on recent returns and outperformed 2-, 3-, and 5-year moving averages. However, the sibling age class forecasts for the early, late, and total runs outperformed the exponential smoothing model hindcast estimates (1994 to present) in terms of mean square error (MSE). Therefore, sibling age class methods were used for the 2026 forecast.

For the early run, ocean-age-2 sockeye salmon returns were predicted based on the abundance of the prior-year return of ocean-age-1, and ocean-age-3 sockeye salmon returns were predicted based on the abundance of the prior-year return of ocean-age-2 sockeye salmon (2005–present). The ocean-age-1 and -4 return predictions were calculated using their pooled median contribution since 2006.

For the late run, ocean-age-2 sockeye salmon returns were predicted based on the abundance of the prior-year return of ocean-age-1 sockeye salmon (2005–present). The ocean-age-1, -3, and -4 return predictions were calculated using their pooled median contribution since 2006.

Regression and median estimates were summed to estimate the total Karluk sockeye salmon run for 2026. The range was estimated as the overall 80% prediction intervals. The combined early- and late-run 80% prediction interval was calculated by summing the lower prediction bounds and upper prediction bounds of the 2 runs.

Forecast Discussion: The total 2026 sockeye salmon run to the Karluk River is predicted to be approximately 712,000 fish. The early run is expected to be approximately 115,000 fish, which is about 93,000 fish below the recent 10-year average (208,000 fish) and 35,000 fish above the 2025 run (80,000 fish). The late run is expected to be approximately 596,000 fish, which is 251,000 fish below the recent 10-year average (847,000 fish) and 218,000 fish more than the 2025 run (378,000

fish). The combined exponential smoothing estimate for the early run and late run is 817,000 fish for comparison.

The projected harvest estimate for the early run (0 fish) is based on the run projection being below the lower end of the early-run escapement goal range. The projected harvest estimate for the late run (271,000 fish) is based on achieving the midpoint of the late-run escapement goal. The Karluk sockeye salmon run is expected to be predominated by ocean-age-2 fish (68%). The overall confidence in the Karluk sockeye salmon forecast is fair.

Forecast by Michelle Wattum, Finfish Research Biologist, Westward Region.

Alitak District (Frazer Lake and Upper Station)

Sockeye Salmon

Forecast Methods: The 2026 sockeye salmon run to the Alitak District (Table 31) was forecast with linear regression models using ocean-age-class relationships by system from recent outmigration years and environmental indices. In constructing and evaluating each of the regression models, standard regression diagnostic procedures were used. Prediction intervals (80%) for the regression estimates were calculated using the variances of the regression models. The age classes that could not be estimated with one of these models were estimated using pooled medians, and the 10th and 90th percentiles of the data were used to calculate the prediction interval of the median estimate.

Table 31.–Preliminary forecast of the 2026 Alitak District sockeye salmon run.

Total production		Forecast estimate (thousands)	Forecast range (thousands)
Early Upper Station	Total run estimate	216	144–308
	Escapement goal[a]	93	43–93
	Harvest estimate[b]	123	–
Late Upper Station	Total run estimate	322	175–581
	Escapement goal	186	120–265
	Harvest estimate[b]	136	–
Frazer Lake	Total run estimate	203	34–412
	Escapement goal[c]	146	98–193
	Harvest estimate[b]	57	–
Total Alitak District	Total run estimate	741	353–1,301
	Escapement goal	425	261–551
	Harvest estimate[b]	316	–

Note: Column numbers may not total or correspond exactly with numbers in text due to rounding.

[a] The Alaska Board of Fisheries removed the Upper Station early-run optimal escapement goal (OEG) of 30,000 fish in 2017; the Upper Station early run is now managed for a biological escapement goal (BEG) of 43,000–93,000 fish. Because the upper bound of 93, 000 fish is anticipated to be achieved, the targeted escapement is 93,000 fish.

[b] The harvest of Upper Station-bound sockeye salmon is concurrent with the harvest of Frazer Lake-bound sockeye salmon and predominantly occurs within the Alitak District.

[c] The Frazer Lake escapement goal (75,000–170,000) is increased here by an additional 23,000 fish, which is the 20-year median of the number of fish that escape the Dog Salmon weir but do not ascend the fish pass to reach Frazer Lake. The value of 146,000 fish is S_{MSY} plus 23,000 fish.

Upper Station early-run ocean-age-2 returns were forecasted using prior year ocean-age-1 returns (outmigration years: 2003–2024) and August Bivariate El Niño-Southern Oscillation and September North Pacific Gyre Oscillation data during the year of outmigration. Upper Station early-run ocean-age-2 salmon were used to predict log-transformed ocean-age-3 fish data from

outmigration years 1992–2023. Upper Station late-run ocean-age-2 and log-transformed ocean-age-3 salmon returns were each predicted using their respective prior year ocean-age-1 and -2 returns (late-run outmigration years: 1998–2024 and 1998–2023, respectively). Upper Station early- and late-run ocean-age-1 and -4 returns were calculated using the pooled median contributions by stock and ocean age from the last 10 years. Frazer ocean-age-2 salmon were predicted using prior year ocean-age-1 returns (outmigration years: 2008–2024). Frazer ocean-age-3 salmon were predicted using prior year ocean-age-2 returns (outmigration years: 2006–2023). Frazer ocean-age-1, and -4 returns were calculated using the pooled median contributions from the last 15 years.

Regression and median estimates were summed to estimate the total Alitak District sockeye salmon run for 2026. The combined Alitak District prediction interval was calculated by summing the lower and upper prediction bounds of the 3 runs.

Forecast Discussion: The 2026 sockeye salmon run to the Alitak District is expected to be approximately 741,000 fish, approximately 59,000 more fish than the recent 10-year average run (682,000 fish) and 241,000 fish more than the 2025 run. The Upper Station early run is expected to be approximately 216,000 fish, which is greater than the recent 10-year average run (92,000 fish). The Upper Station late run is expected to be approximately 322,000 fish, which is less than the recent 10-year average run (330,000 fish). The Frazer Lake run is expected to be approximately 203,000 fish, which is less than the recent 10-year average (291,000 fish). The 2026 Alitak District sockeye salmon run should be composed of approximately 81% ocean-age-2 fish, 11% ocean-age-3 fish, and 8% ocean-age-1 fish. It is worth noting that returning Upper Station early-run age-2.2 fish, which are a large component of the 2-ocean age class, will be from the third largest escapement (108,000 fish) since 1977, and following the largest return of jacks (49,300 fish) on record; our confidence in the forecast is fair based on the strength of the regression models and the large prediction intervals.

The projected harvest estimate of 316,000 fish is based on achieving the upper bound of the escapement goal for the Upper Station early run, the S_{MSY} estimate for Upper Station late run, and S_{MSY} plus an additional 23,000 fish (20-year median of the number of fish that pass through the Dog Salmon weir but do not ascend the Frazer Lake fish pass) for the Frazer run. The Upper Station early run escapement of 93,000 fish is targeted because of the large Upper Station early run forecast of 216,000 fish and the relatively low forecast of 203,000 Frazer fish for 2026. The S_{MSY} is an estimate of the escapement that has the largest expectation of subsequent surplus production.

Forecast by Heather Finkle, Finfish Research Biologist, Westward Region.

Spiridon Lake

Sockeye Salmon

Forecast Methods: The 2026 Spiridon Lake sockeye salmon forecast (Table 32) was generated by estimating the return of net pen and lake stocked sockeye separately, then summing the forecasted returns to get the total run estimate. For each stocking method, the number of smolt released was multiplied by the mean smolt-to-adult survival rate by ocean age and the mean return proportion of each age class, based on completed brood years 2014–2018. The Spiridon Lake and Telrod Cove forecast ranges include the 95% confidence intervals created using Goodman's variance equation (1960).

Table 32.–Preliminary Forecast of the 2026 Spiridon Lake sockeye salmon run.

Total production	Forecast estimate (thousands)	Forecast range (thousands)
Total run estimate	143	24–279
Spiridon	63	0–145
Telrod Cove net pen	79	24–135
Escapement goal	N/A	N/A

Note: Column numbers may not total or correspond exactly with numbers in text due to rounding. N/A = not applicable

Forecast Discussion: Sockeye salmon are prevented from returning to Spiridon Lake due to barrier falls blocking upstream migrations in the outlet creek (Telrod Creek). Therefore, all returning adult sockeye salmon are available for harvest, primarily in the Central Section of the Northwest Kodiak District and in the Spiridon Bay Special Harvest Area in Telrod Cove. The point estimate forecast of 143,000 fish in 2026 is less than the 2025 forecast (169,000). If realized, this run will be below the recent 10-year average (2016 to 2025) run of 207,000 fish. The majority of the 2026 run will probably be composed of 2 major age classes; 67.3% age-1.2 fish, and 24.1% age-1.3 fish. All other age classes will make up 8.5% of the remaining run estimate. There is a substantial harvest of sockeye salmon bound for Telrod Cove that occurs during common property fishing within the Spiridon Bay Section (254-41). Production estimates incorporate the combined harvests of Spiridon Bay and Telrod Cove Sections to better approximate the run strength and total enhancement production.

The peak of the Spiridon Lake sockeye salmon run timing through the westside fishery is typically in early to mid-July.

The 2026 season will mark the 14th year of adult returns to Telrod Cove originating from net pen releases. Of the returning fish to Telrod Cove in 2026, age-1.1, -1.2, -1.3, and -1.4 sockeye salmon will be apportioned between lake and net pen production through evaluation of differential otolith marks created during hatchery incubation.

Forecast by Westley Landry-Murphy, Fisheries Biologist, Kodiak Regional Aquaculture Association.

CHIGNIK AREA

Sockeye Salmon

Forecast Methods: Simple linear regressions models using age class relationships were used to forecast the 2026 Chignik River sockeye salmon total run (Table 33).

Table 33.–Preliminary Forecast of the 2026 Chignik River sockeye salmon total run.

Total production		Forecast estimate (thousands)	Forecast range (thousands)
Early run	Total run estimate	816	342–1,776
	Optimal escapement goal[a]	350	300–400
	Harvest estimate[b]	466	–
Late run	Total run estimate	919	413–1,404
	Optimal escapement goal[a]	300	240–360
	Harvest estimate[b]	619	–
Total Chignik system	Total run estimate	1,735	755–3,180
	Biological escapement goal[c]	625	450–800
	Combined OEG	650	540–760
	Chignik Management Area[b]	1,029	–
	SEDM[d]	56	–
	Cape Igvak[d]	0	–

Note: Column numbers may not total or correspond exactly with numbers in text due to rounding.

[a] During the February 2023 Board of Fisheries, board instituted optimal escapement goals (OEGs) for the early run (300,000 to 400,000 sockeye salmon) and late run (240,000 to 360,000 sockeye salmon).

[b] Harvest represents the surplus achieved beyond the midpoint of the optimal escapement goal. An additional 109,000 fish transiting through the Chignik Management Area (CMA) are forecasted to be harvested beyond the 1,022,000 fish that are considered Chignik-bound fish in the CMA.

[c] The biological escapement goal is for the total run. Targeting the midpoints of the early- and late-run OEGs is estimated to reduce the harvest by 25,000 fish.

[d] Based on historical run size and timing, a harvestable surplus greater than 600,000 Chignik River sockeye salmon is forecast in 2026 in the CMA; however, not by July 5. Therefore, as outlined in regulation, commercial fisheries were forecasted in Southeastern District Mainland (SEDM) through July 25 but not in Cape Igvak during the regulatory timeframe through July 5.

Each regression model was assessed with standard regression diagnostic procedures. Data were log-transformed to address non-normality or unequal variance. Prediction intervals (80%) for the regression estimates were calculated using the variances of the regression models. Age class returns not estimated with statistical models utilized pooled medians with data from the last 15 years; median prediction intervals were calculated from the 10th and 90th percentiles of the data.

The 2026 total Chignik River sockeye salmon run was forecasted by modeling returns of stock components and summing those results by age. Early-run log-transformed ocean-age-2 returns predicted early-run log-transformed ocean-age-3 returns using data from the 2000 outmigration year to the present. Late-run ocean-age 3 returns were predicted from ocean-age-2 returns using data from brood year 2000 to the present.

The regression and median estimates were summed to estimate the total Chignik River sockeye salmon run for 2026. The total run 80% prediction interval was calculated by summing the lower and upper prediction bounds of the 2 runs.

Forecast Discussion: The 2026 Chignik River sockeye salmon total run is forecasted to be 1.74 million fish, which is 430,000 fish more than the 10-year average run of 1.31 million fish and almost 238,000 fish less than the 2025 total run of 1.97 million fish. The Chignik River sockeye salmon total run is predicted to be composed of approximately 79% ocean-age-3 and 20% ocean-age-2 fish, with the early and late runs making up 47% and 53% of the total run, respectively.

The projected 2026 harvest estimate of almost 1.09 million Chignik-bound fish is based on the achievement of the midpoints of the optimal escapement goal ranges. The harvest estimate of 1.03 million fish captured in the CMA does not include other stocks caught while transiting through the CMA, estimated at an additional 109,000 fish. Commercial fisheries and the Southeastern District Mainland of the Alaska Peninsula Management Area are forecast to harvest 56,000 sockeye salmon because a harvestable surplus of Chignik-bound sockeye salmon in the CMA is forecast to exceed 600,000. The Cape Igvak Section of the Kodiak Management Area is not anticipated to fish because 600,000 fish are not forecast to be harvested in the CMA prior to July 5.

The wide confidence intervals around the point estimate of the 2026 forecasts reflect the uncertainty inherent in the forecast models. Given the unreliability of sibling relationships used for forecasting the run and the variability in returns, the 2026 forecast may over- or underestimate returns if environmental variables, which are unknown at this time, remain spurious. Due to the range of variation in the relationships used in these forecasts and their historical accuracy, our confidence in the forecast is fair.

Forecast by Heather Finkle, Finfish Research Biologist, Westward Region.

ALASKA PENINSULA/ALEUTIAN ISLANDS AREA

Bear Lake (Late Run)

Sockeye Salmon

Forecast Methods: The 2026 forecast of the Bear Lake sockeye salmon late run (Table 34) was prepared using simple linear regressions of sibling age classes. Models were evaluated with standard regression diagnostics. Prediction intervals (80%) for the regression estimates were calculated using variances of the regression models. Age classes that could not be estimated with models were estimated using pooled medians and the 10th and 90th percentiles of the data to calculate the 80% prediction interval of the medians.

Table 34.–Preliminary forecast of the 2026 Bear Lake (late run) sockeye salmon run.

Total production	Forecast estimate (thousands)	Forecast range (thousands)
Total run estimate	216	81–512
Escapement goal[a]	156	117–195
Harvest estimate	60	N/A

Note: N/A= Not applicable

[a] The escapement estimate is the midpoint of the escapement goal range (117,000–195,000 fish) in 2026.

Ocean-age-2 sockeye salmon were predicted from prior year ocean-age-2 returns from outmigration years 2013 to present. Remaining age class components of the run were predicted by calculating median returns from the most recent 8 years.

Regression and median estimates were summed to estimate the total Bear Lake late-run sockeye salmon run for 2026. The forecast range was estimated using the sum of the 80% prediction intervals and 10th and 90th percentile intervals for each age class forecasted.

Forecast Discussion: The 2026 Bear Lake late-run forecast of 216,000 sockeye salmon is roughly 145,000 fish less than the 10-year average of approximately 361,000 fish and 80,000 fish more

than the 2025 run of 135,000 sockeye salmon. The 2026 late run is expected to be composed of 6% ocean-age-1, 44% ocean-age-2, and 51% ocean-age-3 fish. The projected harvest of 60,000 fish is based on achieving the midpoint (156,000 fish) of the late-run escapement goal range and adequate run strength. Bear River late-run sockeye salmon returns have shown a general decline in the total run since 1990, and the most recent 7 years have continued this trend. Additionally, in the most recent 6 years, age class composition of returns has shifted from primarily 2-ocean fish to 1-ocean fish, with an increase in both age-1.2 and age-1.3 fish, a decline in returns of age-2.3 fish, and suspected later river entry of late-run fish. The wide range around the point forecast results from changes in the age composition of the returns, as well as the lack of a strong predictive relationship among freshwater sibling age classes. Based on the uncertainty associated with the variable predictive capabilities of sibling age class, our confidence in this forecast is fair.

Forecast by Mary Beth Loewen, Finfish Research Biologist, Westward Region

Nelson River

Sockeye Salmon

Forecast Methods: The 2026 Nelson River sockeye salmon run (Table 35) was forecast using simple linear regression of sibling ocean-age class data from the past 10 years, excepting the most recent year of returns. Standard regression diagnostics were used to evaluate each model. Prediction intervals (80%) for regression estimates were calculated using the variances of the regression models. Age classes that could not be estimated with modeling were estimated using pooled medians, and the 10th and 90th percentiles of the data were used to calculate the prediction interval of median estimates.

Table 35.–Preliminary forecast of the 2026 Nelson River sockeye salmon run.

Total production	Forecast estimate (thousands)	Forecast range (thousands)
Total run estimate	375	190–623
Escapement goal[a]	158	97–219
Harvest estimate	217	N/A

Note: N/A= Not applicable

[a] The escapement estimate is the midpoint of the escapement goal range (97,000–219,000) in 2026.

The returns of ocean-age-2 and ocean-age-3 fish were predicted using the number of ocean-age-1 and ocean-age-2 fish returning in 2025, respectively. The ocean-age-1 and -4 returns were calculated from median estimates for each ocean age class using run data from the previous 10 years.

Regression and median estimates were summed to estimate the total Nelson River sockeye salmon run for 2026. The range was estimated as an overall 80% prediction interval, calculated from the sum of the 80% prediction intervals for each age class forecast.

Forecast Discussion: The 2026 Nelson River forecast of 375,000 sockeye salmon is about 88,000 fish less than the most recent 10-year average (2016–2025) of 463,000 fish and is approximately 407,000 fish less than the 2025 run of about 782,000 fish. The 2026 run should be composed mainly of ocean-age-2 (82%) and -3 (8%) fish. The projected harvest of 217,000 fish is based on achieving the midpoint (158,000 fish) of the escapement goal range.

The Nelson River sockeye salmon run has been notoriously unpredictable. Age class compositions predicted for 2026 are lower than average for ocean-age-2 (on average approximately 70% of the run) and higher than average for ocean-age-3 fish (on average approximately 20% of the run). Additionally, Nelson River sockeye salmon exhibit a strong cyclical pattern of high and low returns over a time range of about 5 years, and one more year of higher than average returns would fit this pattern. Therefore, confidence in this forecast is fair.

Forecast by Mary Beth Loewen, Finfish Research Biologist, Westward Region

South Alaska Peninsula Aggregate

Pink Salmon

The 2026 South Alaska Peninsula predicted post-June pink salmon harvest is expected to be in the *Average* category with a point estimate of 5.0 (1.7–8.3) million fish (Tables 36 and 37). Harvest categories were calculated from the 20th, 40th, 60th, and 80th percentiles of historical post-June commercial harvest on the South Alaska Peninsula from 1988 to 2025.

Table 36.–Preliminary forecast of the 2026 South Alaska Peninsula aggregate pink salmon run.

Total production	Forecast estimate (millions)	Forecast range (millions)
Total run estimate[a]	7.9	4.6–11.2
Escapement goal[b]	2.9	1.8–4.0
Post-June harvest estimate	5.0	1.7–8.3

[a] Post-June harvest and escapement.

[b] The escapement estimate is the midpoint of the aggregate goal range (1.75–4.0 million) in 2026.

Table 37.–The 2026 South Alaska Peninsula pink salmon harvest categories, calculated from the 20th, 40th, 60th, and 80th percentiles of historical post-June commercial harvest on the South Alaska Peninsula from 1988 to 2025.

South Peninsula harvest category	Range (millions)	Percentile
Poor	Less than 1.9	Less than 20th
Weak	1.9 to 4.2	20th to 40th
Average	4.2 to 7.2	40th to 60th
Strong	7.2 to 10.4	60th to 80th
Excellent	Greater than 10.4	80th to 100th

Forecast Methods: The South Alaska Peninsula pink salmon harvest forecast is derived from a total run forecast minus the estimated escapement (2.9 million). The total run estimates were derived from a combination of aerial survey index, and harvest estimates.

For the 2026 pink salmon forecast, a generalized Ricker model (Quinn and Deriso 1999) was fit to the even-year returns from 1988 to 2024 using aerial survey indexed escapement for the spawner index. Three additional terms were included in this generalized Ricker model: Eastern Aleutians April SST, and 2 environmental composites created from a series of forecast indices affecting pink salmon returns using climate data from Kodiak and Cold Bay. The environmental variables used to create the composite included monthly mean air temperature, total precipitation, and peak

precipitation total run correlation anomalies from August to June of predominantly freshwater life history.

In constructing and evaluating the regression model standard regression diagnostic procedures were used. The forecast range was estimated using the 80% confidence intervals of the absolute percent error of the composite model hindcast estimates.

Forecast Discussion: The June harvest of pink salmon has been omitted from the South Alaska Peninsula aggregate pink salmon forecast due to the variability of pink salmon harvest that occurs during the June fishery, and the origin of these fish is unknown. The 5-year even-year average harvest of pink salmon in June is approximately 1.2 million fish, with a range of 0.3–2.5 million fish.

The estimated 2026 South Alaska Peninsula pink salmon total harvest (5.0 million fish) is predicted to be *average*. Spawning escapement in 2024 was near average, but there were generally above-average freshwater spawning environmental conditions for adults and winter, and spring SST conditions for juvenile pink salmon also appear favorable. Since South Peninsula pink salmon forecasting began in 2011, even-year forecasts tend to be less accurate than those of the odd-year cycle. Accounting for uncertainty surrounding environmental conditions, confidence in the forecast is fair.

Forecast by M. Birch Foster, Finfish Research Biologist, Westward Region

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