

# ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

## DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

### NEWS RELEASE



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#### **Lower Cook Inlet Salmon Fishery News Release #33**

The Outer, Eastern, Southern, and Kamishak Bay districts will close to purse seine harvest for the 2019 season at 10:00 PM on Sunday, September 22. The commercial set gillnet season in the Southern District will close at 6:00 AM on September 28. Fishing schedules for both gears will continue as stated in the previous announcement until those dates. There have been no commercial deliveries reported since August 31 for purse seine, and August 21 for set gillnet gear. Subsistence harvest in the Port Chatham and Windy Bay subdistricts closed on August 1. However, subsistence harvest remains open through September 30 in the Port Graham and Dogfish Bay subdistricts.

The preliminary estimate of the 2019 Lower Cook Inlet Area commercial salmon harvest, based on current preliminary fish ticket data, was 2.3 million salmon. The harvest was composed of 729 Chinook, 307,144 sockeye, 12,271 coho, 1,916,395 pink, and 55,085 chum salmon (Table 1). The harvest was comprised of 1,955,589 (85.7%) commercial common property fishery (CPF) harvested fish, and 336,035 (14.7%) hatchery cost recovery fish.

Salmon ear bones (otoliths) sampled from the commercial harvest this year will be examined for hatchery thermal marks. Last year sockeye salmon otoliths sampled from the set gillnet commercial fishery were 17.8% hatchery marked. Pink salmon otoliths sampled from this fishery were 50.3% hatchery marked. Sockeye salmon otoliths sampled last year from the purse seine fishery in the Southern District were 66.7% hatchery marked, and pink salmon otoliths sampled from this district and gear type were 78.6% hatchery marked<sup>a</sup>.

**SOUTHERN DISTRICT:** The 2019 preseason commercial common property harvest forecast for the Southern District, was 80,700 sockeye and 126,500 pink salmon with an additional 69,400 hatchery produced sockeye and 935,000 pink salmon available in special harvest areas (SHAs). The commercial salmon fishing season in the Southern District began on Monday, June 3. The preliminary purse seine harvest estimate for the 2019 season was 137 Chinook, 46,862 sockeye, 3,065 coho, 23,222 pink, and 404 chum salmon with 21 permit holders reporting deliveries. This compares to a previous 10-year average harvest of 86 Chinook, 35,943 sockeye, 1,081 coho, 161,082 pink, and 1,344 chum salmon. The preliminary set gillnet harvest estimate was 350 Chinook, 29,274 sockeye, 2,817 coho, 6,411 pink, and 3,908 chum salmon with 21 permits reporting deliveries. The previous 10-year average harvest for this gear type was 296 Chinook, 26,451 sockeye, 2,134 coho, 17,337 pink, and 4,044 chum salmon. In addition, 12,586 sockeye, and 179,659 pink salmon were harvested by Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association (CIAA) from SHAs in this district for cost recovery purposes. Preliminary passage estimate at the English Bay River weir was 24,044 sockeye salmon, which exceeded the SEG of 6,000–13,500 for this system. There are seven streams in the Southern District that have a total of 8 SEGs. Of those goals, six are for pink salmon, one is for chum and one is for sockeye salmon. Preliminary escapement estimates for pink salmon goals were within the SEG range for Humpy Creek, below for Seldovia and China Poot creeks, and above for Tutka and Barabara creeks. Chum salmon escapement in the Port Graham River was below the SEG range. Sockeye salmon escapement into the English Bay River exceeded the upper end of the SEG range for that species.

**OUTER DISTRICT:** The 2019 preseason commercial harvest forecast for the Outer District was 5,700 sockeye, 2.2 million pink, and 68,100 chum salmon. The commercial salmon fishing season began in this district on Monday, July 15. Overall preliminary harvest, from 21 permit holders that participated, was 184 Chinook, 14,147 sockeye, 2,869 coho, 1.6 million pink, and 19,037 chum salmon. This harvest compares to previous 10-year averages of 2 Chinook, 7,612 sockeye, 64 coho, 910,978 pink, and 58,842 chum salmon. There are 11 streams in the Outer District that have a total of 15 SEGs. Of those goals, nine are for pink salmon, four are for chum and two are for sockeye salmon. Preliminary estimates show that pink salmon escapement was above the minimum SEG at eight of these systems. Chum salmon escapement was above the minimum SEG at three systems. Escapement levels for salmon in the Outer District may have been underestimated due to poor weather conditions that prevented regular aerial and ground surveys of that area. Sockeye salmon escapement to Delight and Desire lakes were within respective SEG ranges.

<sup>a</sup> 2018 LCI Annual Management Report, appendices F25, F35, F29 and F39. ADF&G, Fishery Management Report, Anchorage, *in prep*.

**KAMISHAK BAY DISTRICT:** The 2019 preseason commercial harvest forecast for the Kamishak Bay District was 39,300 sockeye, 4,100 coho, 106,900 pink, and 9,800 chum salmon. CIAA forecasted a run of 39,000 sockeye salmon to the Kirschner Lake remote release site. Total preliminary estimated common property harvest was 57,968 sockeye, 3,349 coho, 58,728 pink, and 31,523 chum salmon as reported by 7 permit holders. This compares to a previous 10-year average of 42,594 sockeye, 1,041 coho, 47,425 pink, and 17,462 chum salmon harvested in the common property fishery. In addition, 18,698 sockeye salmon were harvested by CIAA from the Kirschner Lake SHA for cost recovery purposes. There are 12 systems in the Kamishak District that have a total of 13 SEGs. Of those goals, seven are for chum, three are for sockeye, and three are for pink salmon. Preliminary estimates show that chum salmon escapement was above the minimum SEG at five systems with pink salmon escapement above minimum SEGs in all index streams. Sockeye salmon escapement to Chenik Lake was within the SEG range, however preliminary escapement estimates to Mikfik Lake for this species is below the minimum SEG. Sockeye escapement to Amakdedori Creek was within the SEG range for that system.

**EASTERN DISTRICT:** Due to small runs in the last 10 years, no wild stock sockeye or pink salmon were forecast to be available for commercial common property harvest from the Eastern District in 2019. CIAA forecasted a total run of 305,600 sockeye salmon to Resurrection Bay facilities with all but 61,900 of these fish intended for broodstock or cost recovery purposes. Total cost recovery harvest from this district was 122,134 sockeye salmon with 863 donated at the weir to members of the public. Portions of Resurrection Bay were open for commercial common property harvest from June 24 through July 19. During this time 4 permit holders reported harvesting 4,307 sockeye salmon. Escapement of 12,760 sockeye salmon through the weir at Bear Creek was within the “desired inriver passage” goal of 5,620–13,220 sockeye salmon. This goal is the combination of the SEG (700–8,300) as well as the estimated 4,920 sockeye salmon required for broodstock for the CIAA Resurrection Bay sockeye salmon program at the Trail Lakes Hatchery. The only other index system in the Eastern District is Aialik Lake sockeye salmon where the final sockeye salmon escapement was within the SEG range.

**Table 1. Lower Cook Inlet commercial salmon harvest based on preliminary fish ticket data, 2019.**

District (or hatchery)	Permits	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
Southern District	21	137	46,862	3,065	23,222	404	73,690
Outer District	21	184	14,147	2,869	1,646,275	19,037	1,682,512
Eastern District	4		4,307	2	112	19	4,440
Kamishak Bay District	7		57,968	3,349	58,728	31,523	151,568
<b>Purse seine preliminary total</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>321</b>	<b>123,284</b>	<b>9,285</b>	<b>1,728,337</b>	<b>50,983</b>	<b>1,912,210</b>
Southern District	22	350	29,274	2,817	6,411	3,908	42,760
<b>Set gillnet preliminary total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>350</b>	<b>29,274</b>	<b>2,817</b>	<b>6,411</b>	<b>3,908</b>	<b>42,760</b>
Commercial homepacks		58	305	166	59	31	619
<b>Commercial common property preliminary total</b>		<b>729</b>	<b>152,863</b>	<b>12,268</b>	<b>1,734,807</b>	<b>54,922</b>	<b>1,955,589</b>
Hatchery cost recovery preliminary harvests							
Tutka Lagoon SHA			10,596	1	179,639	156	190,392
China Poot SHA			1,990	2	20	3	2,015
Resurrection Bay SHA			80,719				80,719
Bear Lake SHA			41,415				41,415
Kirschner Lake SHA			18,698		1,929	4	20,631
donated - Bear Lake SHA			863				863
<b>Hatchery preliminary total</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>154,281</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>181,588</b>	<b>163</b>	<b>336,035</b>
<b>LCI preliminary total harvest</b>		<b>729</b>	<b>307,144</b>	<b>12,271</b>	<b>1,916,395</b>	<b>55,085</b>	<b>2,291,624</b>

Announcement recordings are available on the 24-hour telephone recording in the Homer office at 907/235-7307. Additionally, announcements, inseason harvest data, and escapement data are available at the following web address:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyarealci.salmon>

Unless otherwise specified, all openings are clock openings based on Alaska Daylight Time, which is based on Coordinated Universal Time and may be obtained by calling 303-499-7111.