



Advisory Announcement

For Immediate Release: Fri, October 14, 2022

Time: 2:00 PM

CONTACT: Glenn Hollowell

Finfish Management Biologist

(907) 235-8191

2022 Lower Cook Inlet Commercial Salmon Fishery Season Summary

The 2022 Lower Cook Inlet Area commercial salmon harvest was 750,948 fish. The harvest was composed of 275 Chinook, 292,845 sockeye, 1,000 coho, 403,035 pink, and 53,793 chum salmon (Table 1), of which 556,871 (74.2%) were commercial harvest and 194,087 (25.8%) were hatchery cost recovery. Total commercial common property harvest value was estimated to be \$2.4 million. The Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association (CIAA) cost recovery goal of \$4.6 million was not achieved with approximately \$1.3 million harvested. All data are considered preliminary.

Southern District

The 2022 preseason commercial harvest forecast for the Southern District was 76,800 sockeye and 398,000 pink salmon with an additional 114,800 hatchery-produced sockeye and 2.7 million hatchery pink salmon available in special harvest areas (SHAs). The purse seine harvest estimate for the 2022 season was 64 Chinook, 81,710 sockeye, 167 coho, 5,764 pink, and 308 chum salmon with 9 permit holders reporting deliveries. This compares to a previous 10-year average harvest of 94 Chinook, 46,783 sockeye, 1,394 coho, 147,359 pink, and 1,248 chum salmon. In addition, 26,121 sockeye and 63,571 pink salmon were harvested by CIAA from SHAs in this district for cost recovery.

The 2022 set gillnet harvest estimate was 182 Chinook, 26,667 sockeye, 643 coho, 8,661 pink, and 2,974 chum salmon with 15 permit holders reporting deliveries. The previous 10-year average harvest for this gear type was 373 Chinook, 24,348 sockeye, 2,658 coho, 21,049 pink, and 4,277 chum salmon.

There are eight sustainable escapement goals (SEGs) in the Southern District: six for pink salmon, one for chum salmon, and one for sockeye salmon. Escapement at the English Bay River weir was 11,452 sockeye salmon which is within the SEG range of 6,000–13,500 for this system. Pink salmon escapements were below the lower end of the SEG range for Humpy, China Poot, and Seldovia Creeks, and above the upper bound for Tutka Creek. Pink salmon escapement in both Barabara Creek as well as the Port Graham River were within SEG ranges. Chum salmon escapement in the Port Graham River was below the SEG range.

Outer District

The 2022 preseason commercial harvest forecast for the Outer District was 4,400 sockeye, 726,500 pink, and 23,900 chum salmon. The harvest, from nine permit holders that participated, was 12 Chinook, 16,442 sockeye, 40 coho, 324,836 pink, and 48,970 chum salmon. This harvest compares to previous 10-year averages of 22 Chinook, 4,268 sockeye, 390 coho, 1.2 million pink, and 55,604 chum salmon.

There are 15 SEGs in the Outer District: nine for pink salmon, four for chum and two for sockeye salmon. Pink salmon escapement were within their respective SEG ranges at Port Dick Creek, Desire Creek, and Rocky River. Pink salmon were above their SEG ranges at Windy Left, Windy Right, and Dogfish Lagoon Creeks. Pink Salmon were below the minimum SEG at Port Chatham, Island Creek, and South Nuka creeks. Chum salmon escapement was above the SEG range for the Rocky River, and within the SEG range for Port Dick Creek. Island and Dogfish creeks were below their assigned chum salmon SEGs. Sockeye salmon returns to both Delight and Desire Lakes were above their assigned SEG ranges.

Kamishak Bay District

The 2022 preseason commercial harvest forecast for the Kamishak Bay District was 71,600 sockeye, 900 coho, 23,200 pink, and 8,400 chum salmon. CIAA forecasted a run of 30,300 sockeye salmon to the Kirschner Lake remote release site. The Kamishak Bay District commercial harvest estimate is confidential because fewer than three permit holders reported deliveries from this area. The previous 10-year average is 43,049 sockeye, 1,321 coho, 46,880 pink, and 10,171 chum salmon harvested in the commercial fishery. In addition, 21,809 sockeye salmon were harvested by CIAA from the Kirschner Lake SHA for cost recovery purposes.

There are 13 SEGs in the Kamishak District: seven for chum salmon, three for sockeye, and three for pink salmon. Chum salmon escapement was within the SEG range in the Iniskin and Cottonwood Creeks, as well as in the Big Kamishak River. Chum Salmon escapement was above the SEG in the Little Kamishak River and was below in the McNeil, Bruin, and Ursus Cove rivers. Pink salmon were below SEG ranges in all three Kamishak Bay index systems, (Bruin River, Sunday, and Brown's Peak creeks). Sockeye salmon escapement to Chenik Lake was above the SEG, and Amakdedori Creek was within the SEG range, however escapement to Mikfik Lake for this species was below the minimum SEG.

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 harvest from the Eastern District in 2022. CIAA forecasted a total run of 78,100 sockeye salmon to Resurrection Bay facilities with 71,600 fish needed for broodstock and cost recovery purposes. Total cost recovery harvest from this district was 79,639 sockeye salmon. An additional 2,918 sockeye salmon were donated at the weir to members of the public. Portions of Resurrection Bay were open for commercial harvest from June 22 through July 15. Commercial harvest during this period is confidential due to fewer than three permit holders reporting harvests. The previous 10-year harvest average for sockeye salmon is 6,252 fish.

CIAA passed 12,760 sockeye salmon through the Bear Creek weir in 2022. However, only 2,798 sockeye salmon were subsequently removed from Bear Lake for broodstock, leaving a final escapement of 9,962 fish, which is above the SEG range of 700–8,300 for this stock. The only other index system in the Eastern District is Aialik Lake and is for sockeye salmon. Final escapement to this system was below its established SEG range.

Table 1. Lower Cook Inlet commercial salmon harvest based on preliminary fish ticket data, 2022.

District (or hatchery)	Permits	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
Southern District	9	64	81,710	167	5,764	308	88,013
Outer District	9	12	16,442	40	324,836	48,970	390,300
Eastern and Kamishak Bay districts	<3	<-----confidential----->					
Purse seine preliminary total	11	76	135,099	207	330,646	50,798	516,826
Southern District	15	182	26,667	643	8,661	2,974	39,127
Set gillnet preliminary total	15	182	26,667	643	8,661	2,974	39,127
Commercial common property preliminary total		258	161,766	850	339,307	53,772	555,953
Hatchery cost recovery preliminary harvests							
Tutka Lagoon SHA			26,121	1	63,571	9	89,702
Port Graham SHA							0
Hazel Lake SHA							0
Resurrection Bay SHA			79,639				79,639
Kirschner Lake SHA			21,809		19		21,828
Hatchery preliminary total			127,569	1	63,590	9	191,169
Homepack		17	592	149	138	12	908
Hatchery donated fish			2,918				2,918
LCI preliminary total harvest		275	292,845	1,000	403,035	53,793	750,948