



Overview of Select Recreational Fisheries in the Northern Kenai Peninsula Management Area (NKPMA)



Colton Lipka

NKPMA Sport Fish Area Management Biologist

RC 04, Tab 10

Recreational Fisheries of the NKPMA

- Kenai River early and late run king salmon sport fisheries
- Russian River sockeye salmon sport fishery
- Kenai River late run sockeye salmon sport fishery
- Kenai and Kasilof rivers personal use fisheries
- Kenai River coho salmon sport fishery

In-season Kenai king salmon management:

- ✓ Sonar passage estimates of large king salmon ($\geq 75\text{cm}$)
- ✓ Creel survey harvest
- ✓ Escapement projected: (sonar - harvest = escapement)
- ✓ Direct estimates of large king salmon = less error and reduce uncertainty

Early-run King Salmon Management

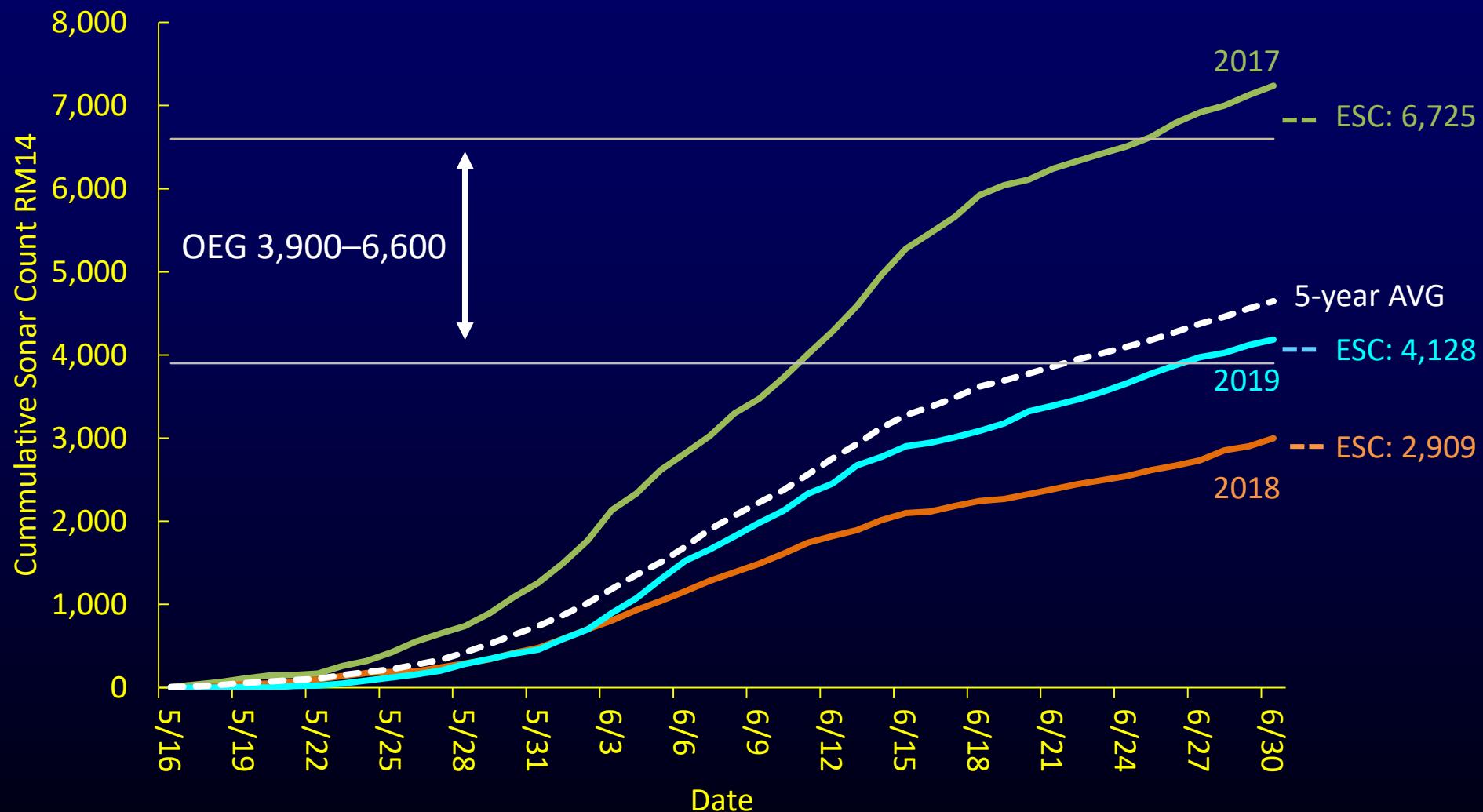
- ❖ 5 AAC 57.160. Kenai River and Kasilof River Early-run King Salmon Management Plan
 - Conserve unique large size of early-run fish
 - Regulations
 - OEG 3,900 – 6,600 large king salmon
 - SEG 2,800 – 5,600 large king salmon
 - No change recommended

2019 Assessment and Management

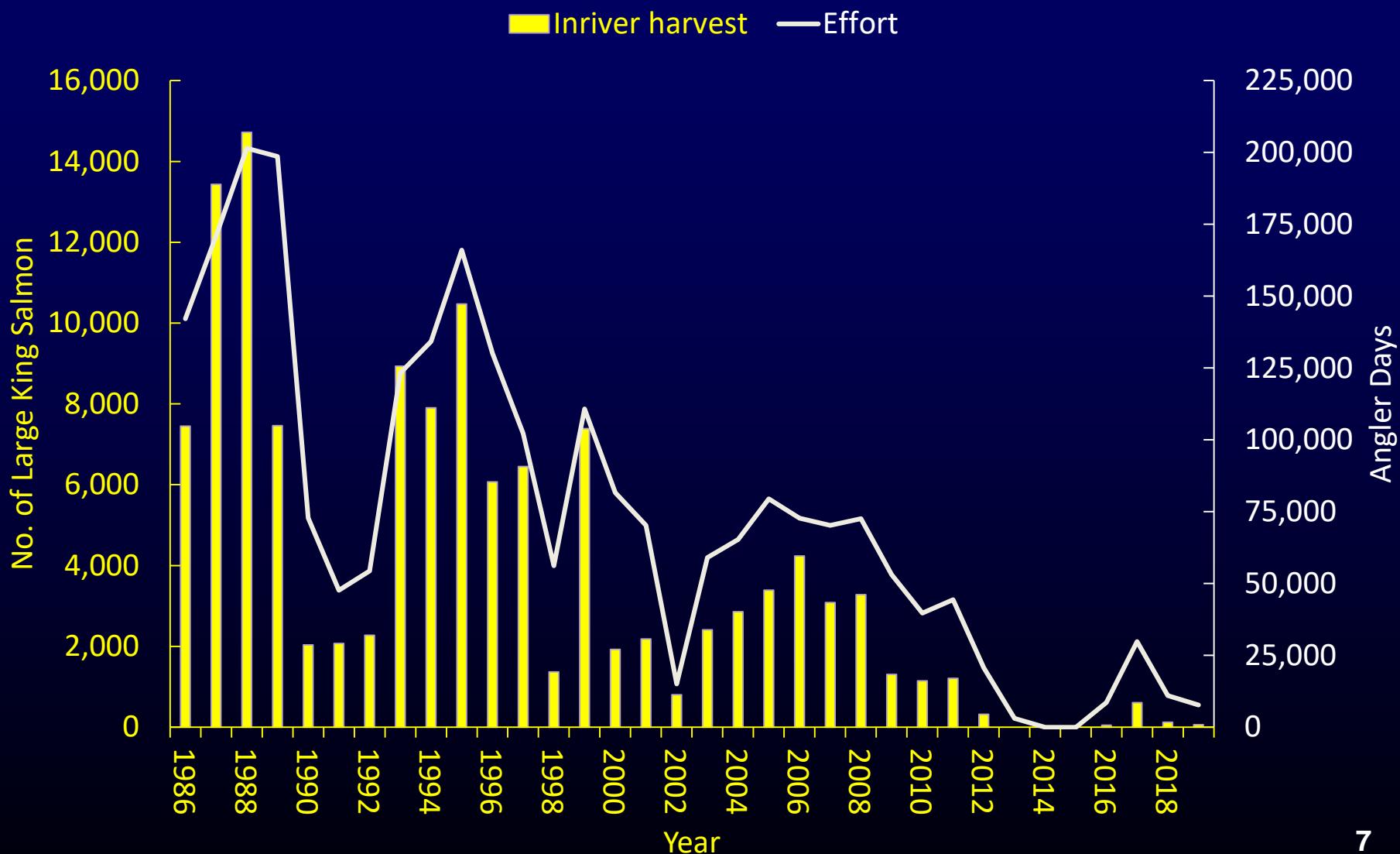
❖ 2019 Early-Run

- **2019 Forecast: 3,167 large king salmon**
 - SEG 2,800 – 5,600 → OEG 3,900 – 6,600
- **Preseason management action = catch and release**
- **Inseason projections = catch and release**
- **Final Escapement: 4,128 large king salmon**

Early-Run King Salmon (≥ 75 cm) Run to Sonar



Early-Run King Salmon (≥ 75 cm) Inriver Sport Harvest and Effort



2020 Preseason Management

❖ Early-Run

- 2020 Forecast: 4,800 large king salmon
- Below historical average of 9,300 large king salmon
- General Regulations



Late-Run King Salmon Management

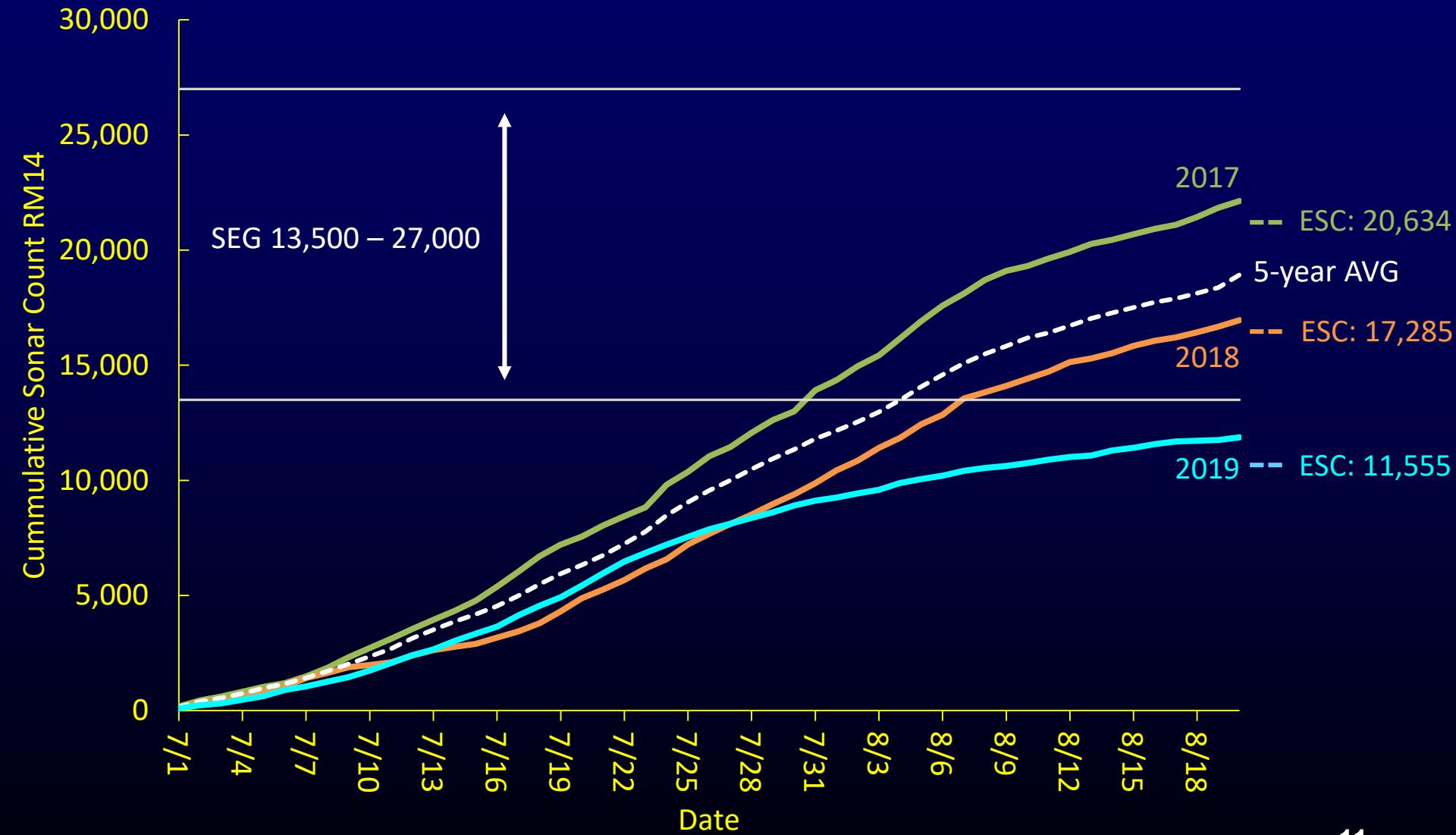
- ❖ 5 AAC 21.359. Kenai River Late-run King Salmon Management Plan
 - **Regulations**
 - **Primarily for inriver sport fishery**
 - **Inseason management guided by projections**
 - **Achieve SEG 13,500 – 27,000 large king salmon**
 - No change recommended
 - No OEG currently

2019 Assessment and Management

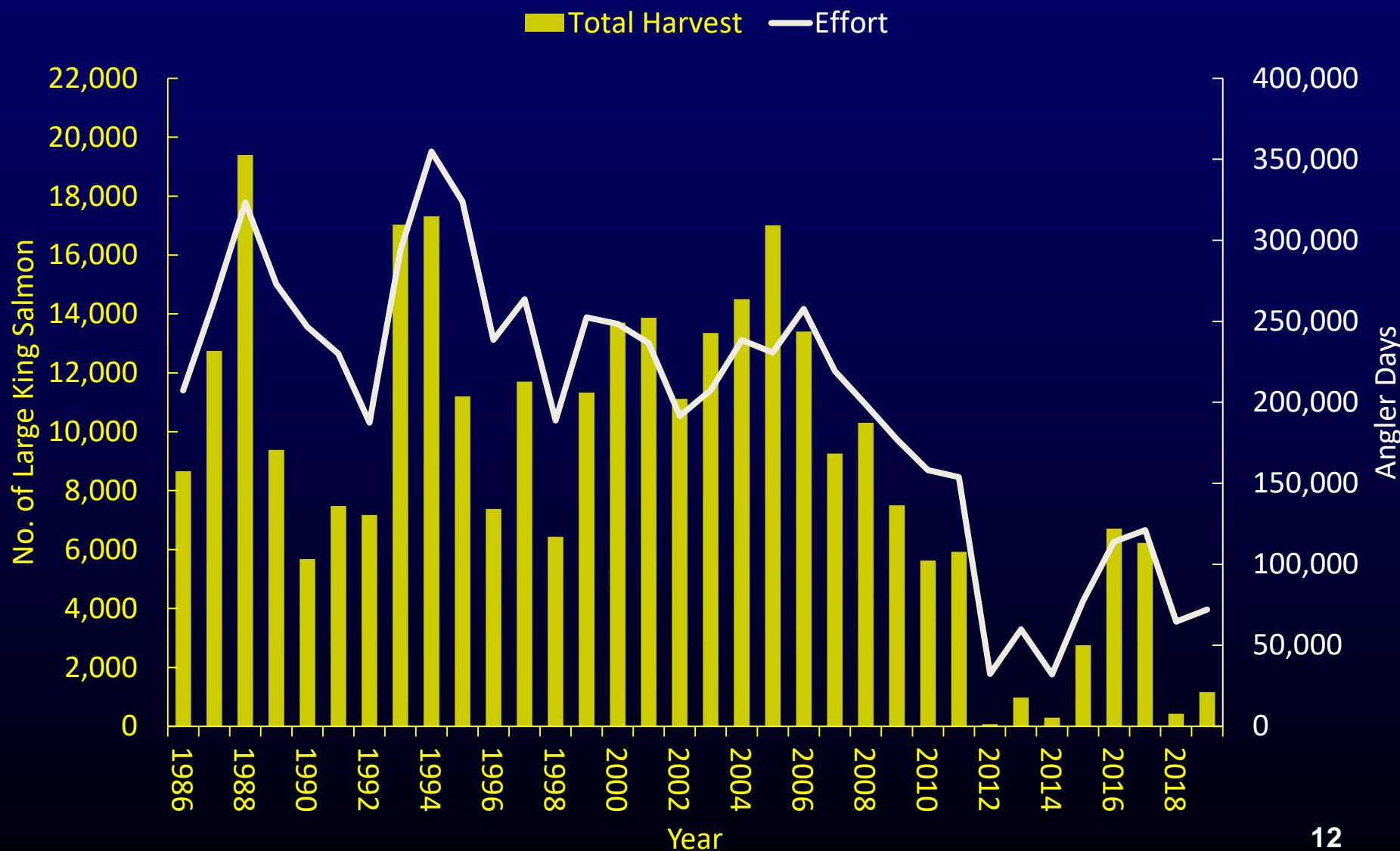
❖ 2019 Late-Run

- **2019 Forecast: 22,105 large king salmon**
- **SEG 13,500 – 27,000 large king salmon**
- **Preseason = No Bait**
- **Inseason projections -> 7/31 = No Bait**
- **August projections = No Bait (coho salmon) , close ESSN**
- **Final Escapement: 11,555 large king salmon**

Late-Run King Salmon (≥ 75 cm) Run to Sonar

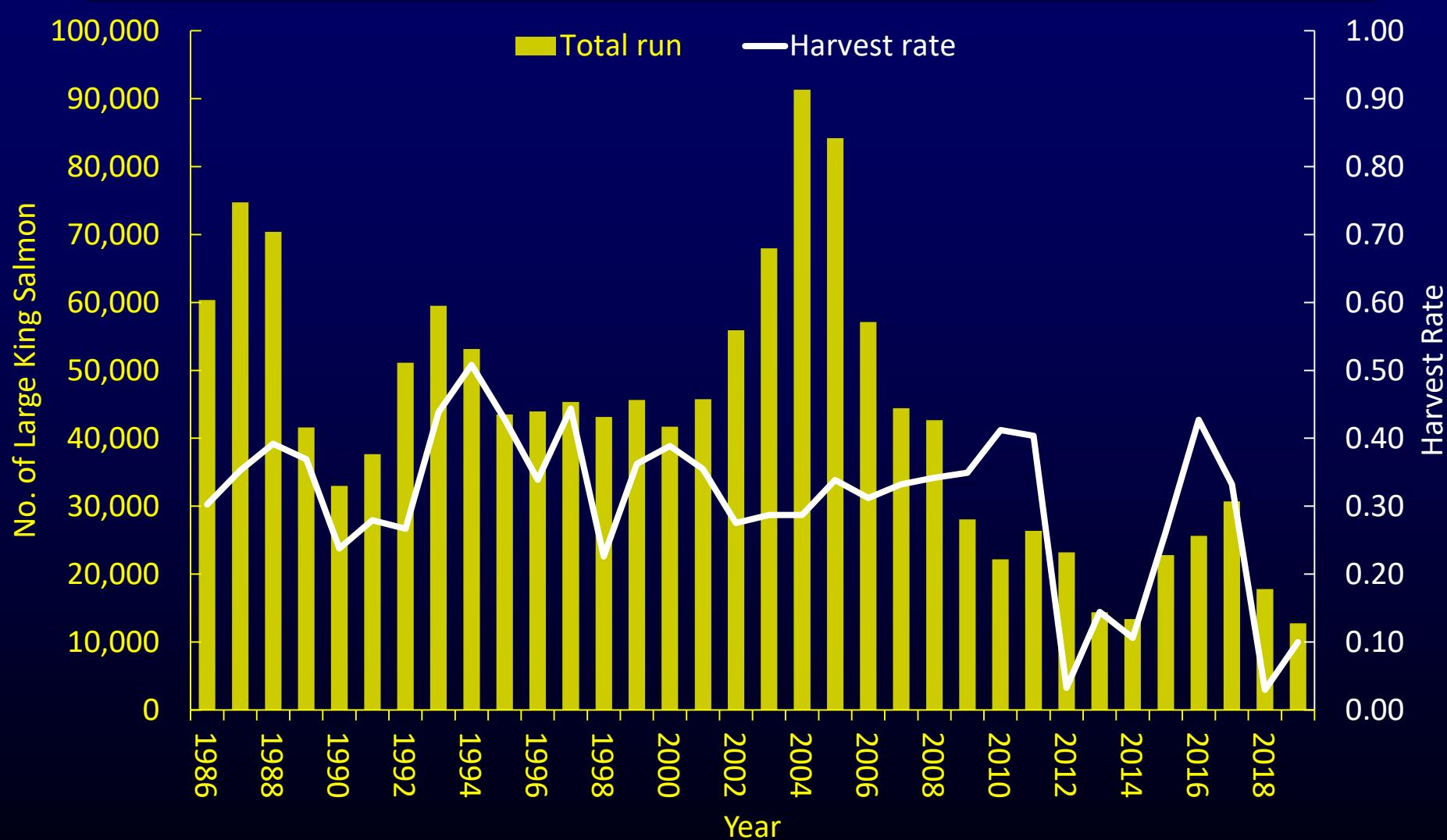


Late-Run King Salmon (≥ 75 cm) Inriver Sport Harvest and Effort



Late-Run King Salmon (≥ 75 cm)

Total Run and Harvest Rate



2020 Preseason Management

❖ Late-Run

- **2020 Forecast: 22,700 large king salmon**
- Below historical average run of 45,000 large king salmon
- Preliminary -> No Bait

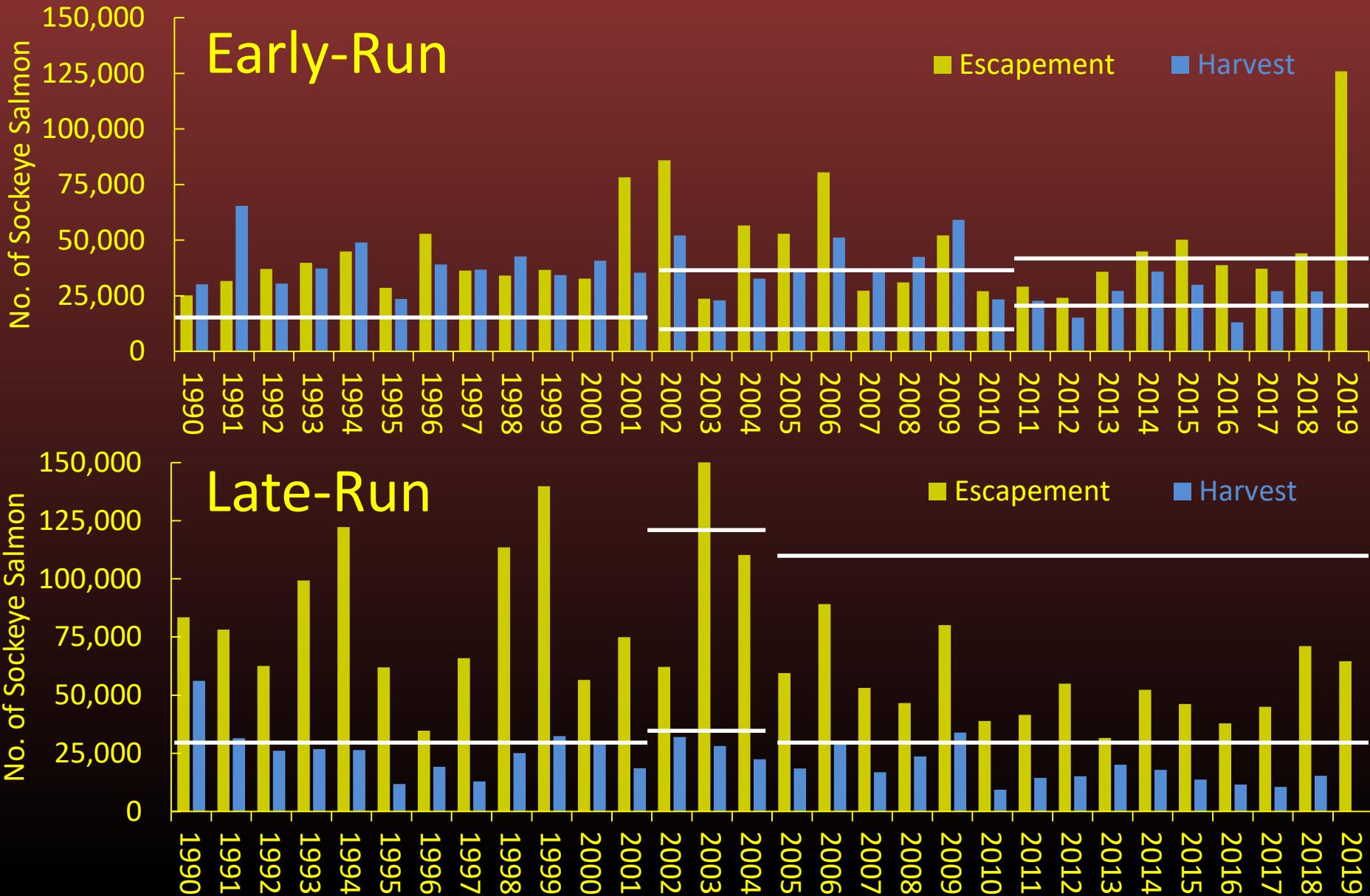




Russian River Early- and Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Sport Fishery

- ❖ **Alaska's second largest sport fishery for sockeye salmon**
 - June 11 through August 20
 - Early-run: June 11 – July 15, Late-run: July 16 – August 20
 - Bag / Possession limit: 3 per day / 6 possession
 - Restricted to achieve escapement goals
 - Liberalized when escapement goals are projected to be exceeded
 - Early-Run: BEG 22,000 – 42,000 sockeye salmon
 - Recommend no change
 - Late-Run: SEG 30,000 – 110,000 sockeye salmon
 - Recommend Change: 44,000 – 85,000 sockeye salmon

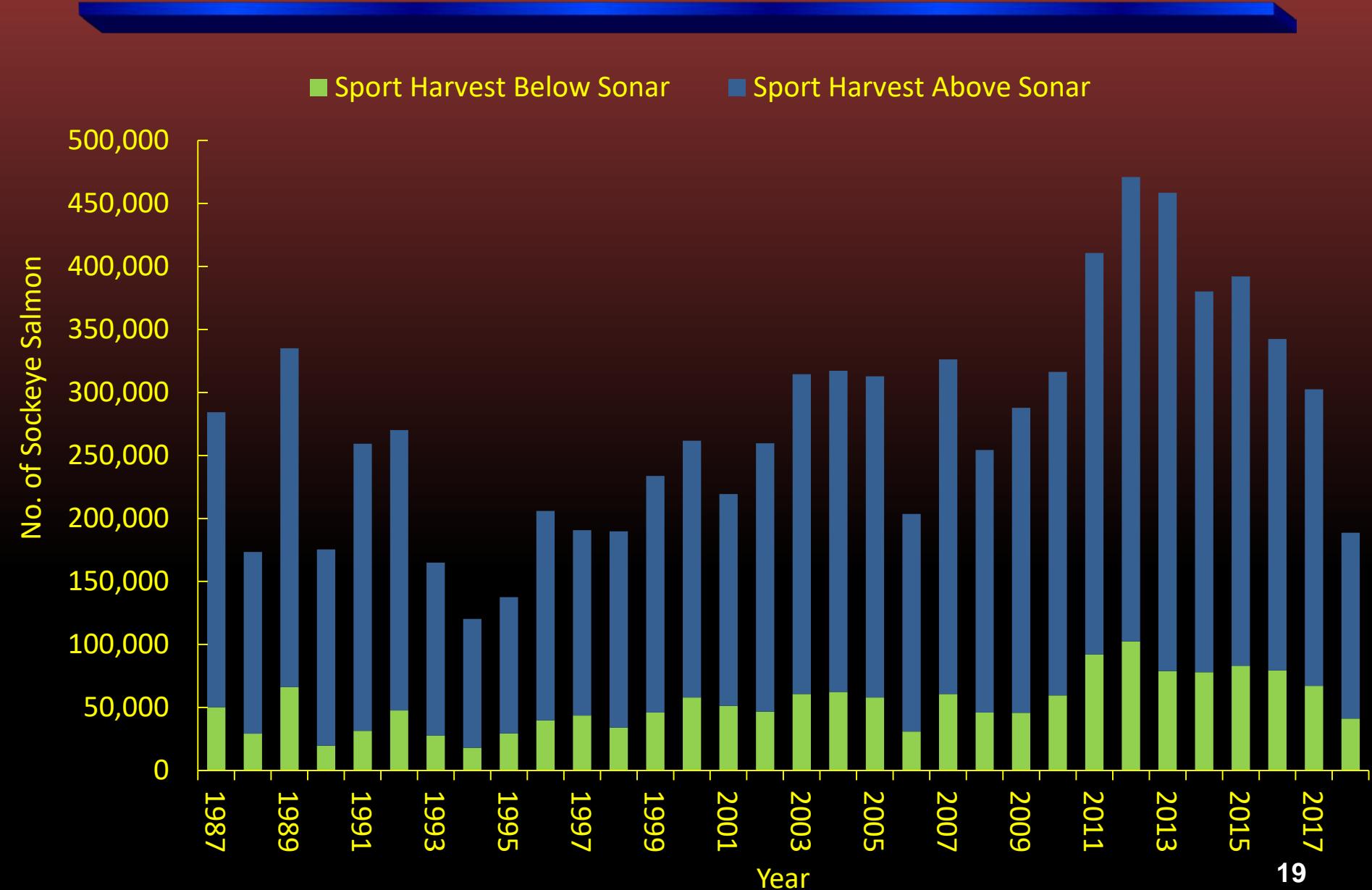
Russian River Early- and Late-Run Sockeye Salmon



Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Sport Fishery

- ❖ **Alaska's largest sport fishery for sockeye salmon**
 - Late June through August
 - Bag / Possession limit: 3 per day / 6 possession
 - Liberalized > 2.3 million fish
 - Restricted < 900,000 fish
 - Achieve SEG 700,000 – 1,200,000 sockeye salmon
 - Recommended change: 750,000 – 1,300,000 sockeye salmon

Kenai River Late-Run Sockeye Salmon Sport Harvest



Personal Use Fisheries

❖ **Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Permit**

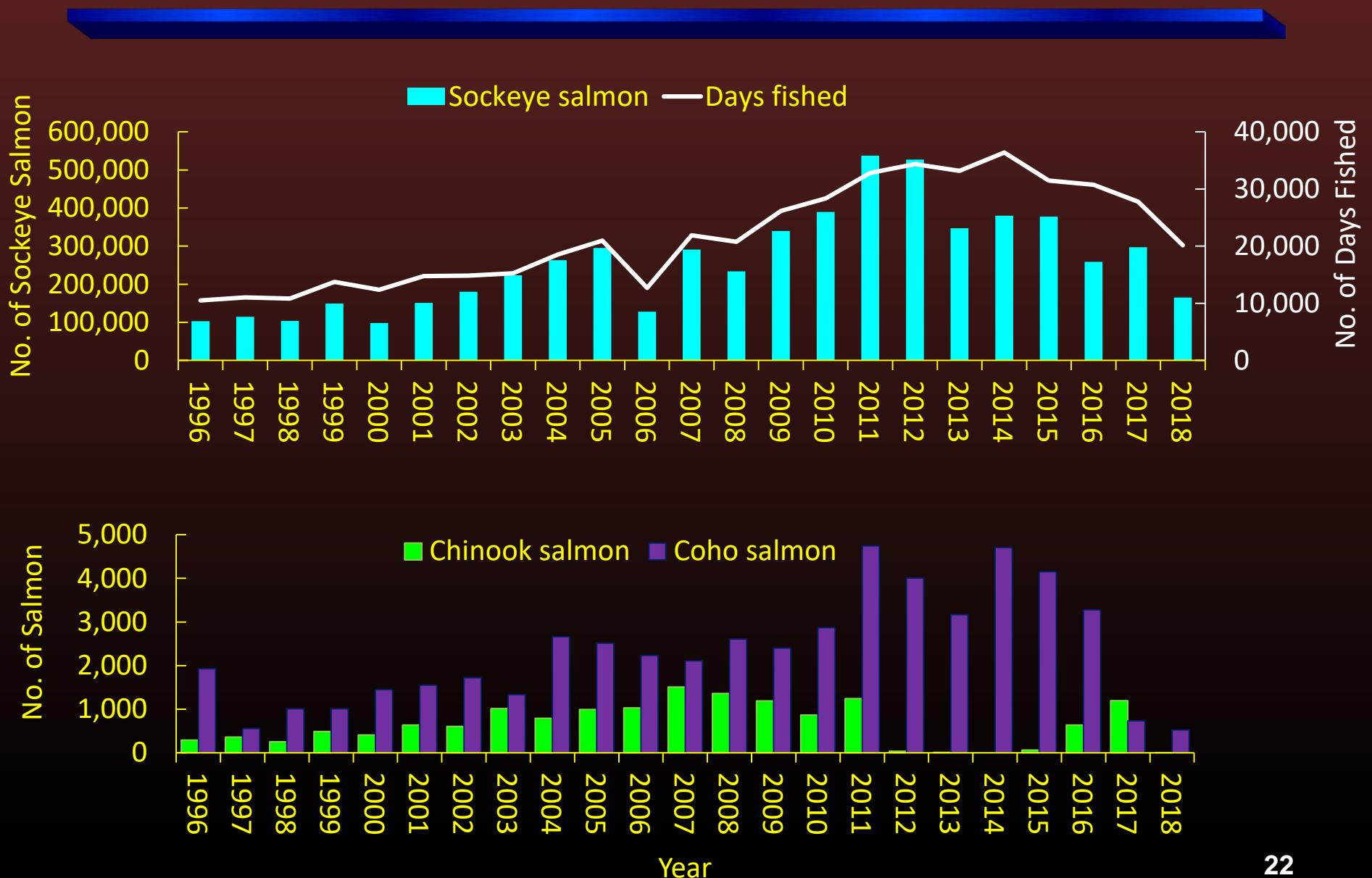
- Kenai River Dipnet, Kasilof River Gillnet, Kasilof River Dipnet, and Fish Creek Dipnet
- Average of ~ 32,000 permits
- Household permit harvest limit:
 - 25 salmon per head of household / 10 salmon per household member
 - 10 flounder

Kenai River Personal Use Dipnet Fishery

❖ **Upper Cook Inlet Personal Use Salmon Fishery Management Plan 5 AAC 77.540**

- Season dates: July 10 to July 31, 6:00 am to 11:00 pm
 - Liberalized > 2.3 million fish
 - Annual limit of 1 king salmon
 - Restricted in order to achieve the late-run sockeye salmon SEG and to conserve late run king salmon

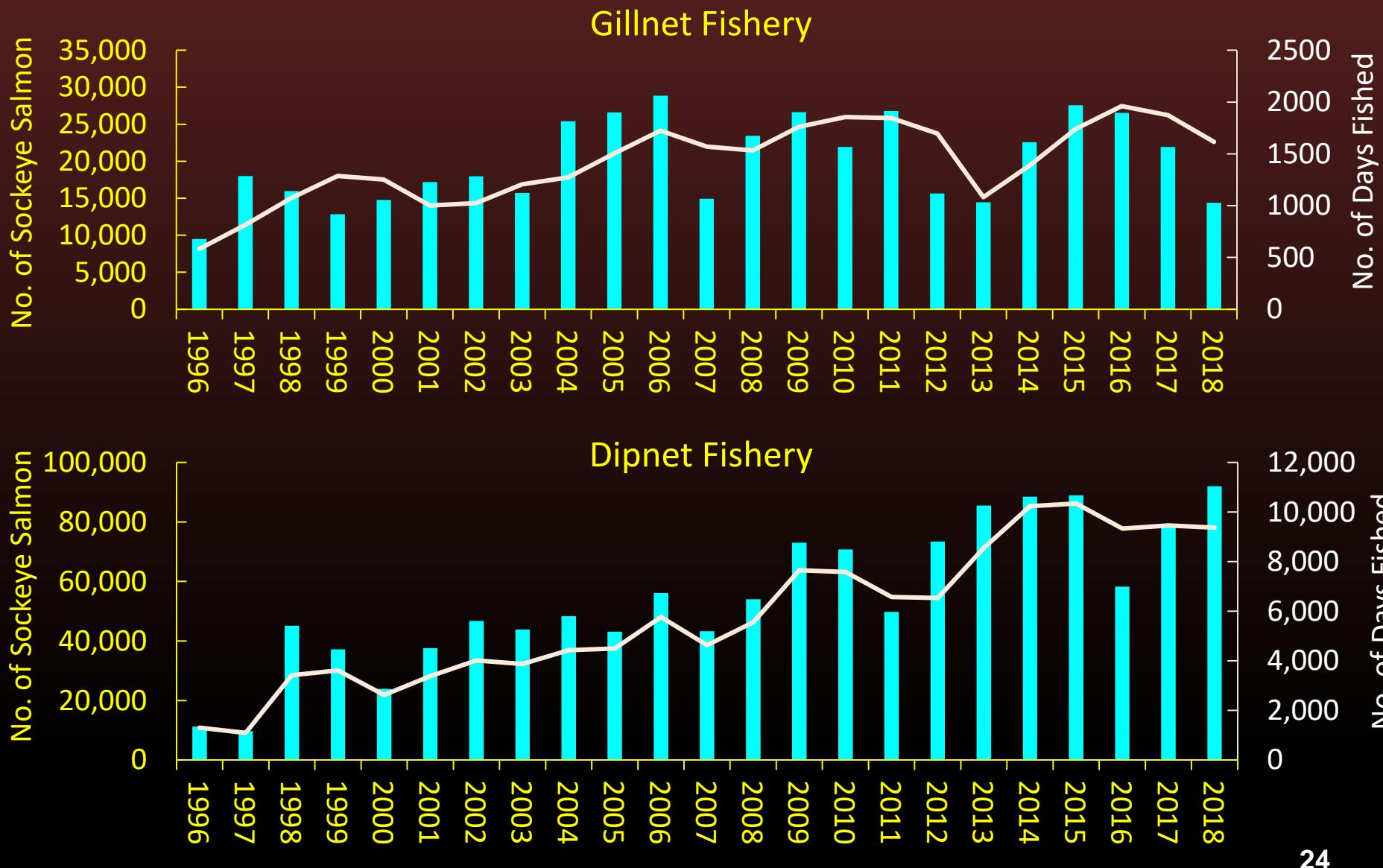
Kenai River Personal Use Harvest



Kasilof River Personal Use Gillnet and Dipnet Fisheries

- Set Gillnet Fishery: June 15 to June 24, 6:00 am to 11:00 pm
 - King salmon may be retained
- Dipnet Fishery: June 25 to August 7, 24-hours per day
 - King salmon may not be retained
- Personal use dipnet: achieve BEG 160,000 – 340,000

Kasilof River Personal Use Harvest

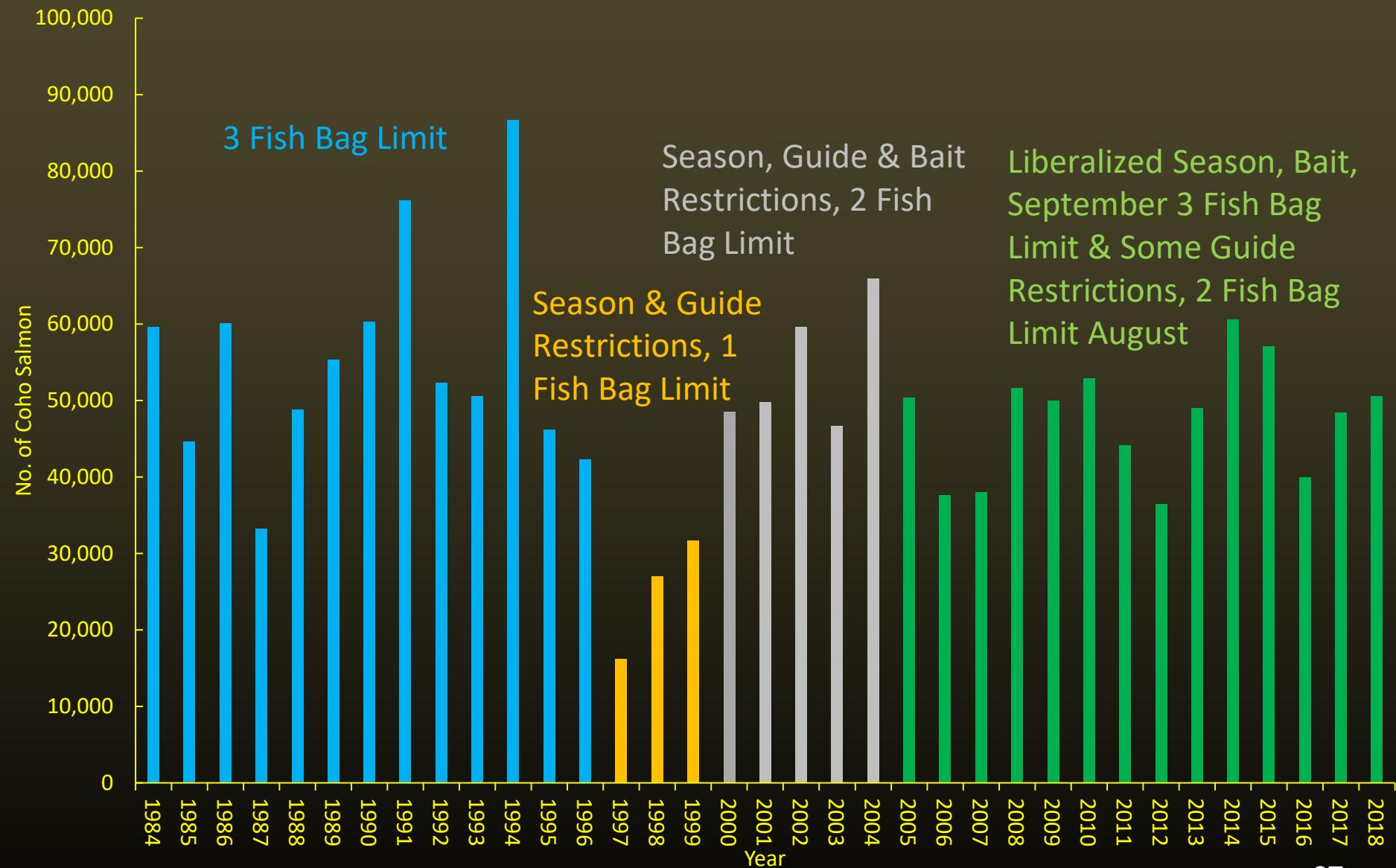




Kenai River Coho Salmon Management

- ❖ Kenai River Coho Salmon Management Plan 5 AAC 57.170
 - Guideline options to restrict
 - Provide unguided and guided sport fishing reasonable harvest opportunity
 - No inseason assessment
 - No escapement goal
 - Regulations
 - Maintain sustainable harvest opportunity

Kenai River Coho Salmon Sport Harvest



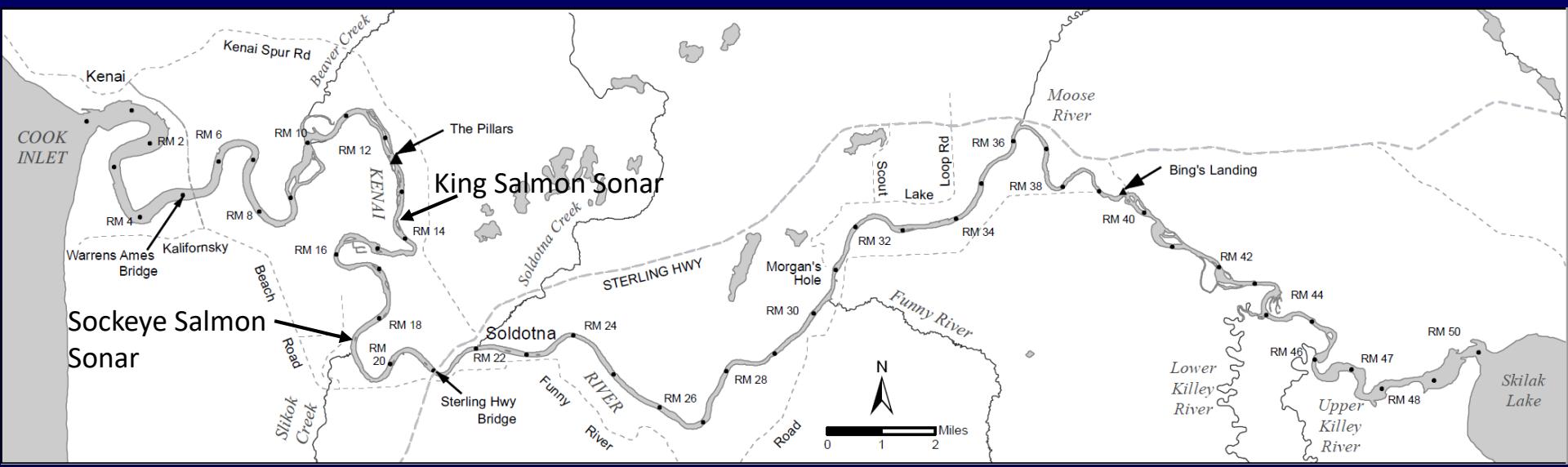
Kenai River Coho Salmon Summary

- Regulation changes stable to increasing harvest
- Total sport fishing effort (August) increasing
- Present exploitation higher than 49% (1999-2004)
- No coho salmon assessment
- High variability in annual run size

Questions?



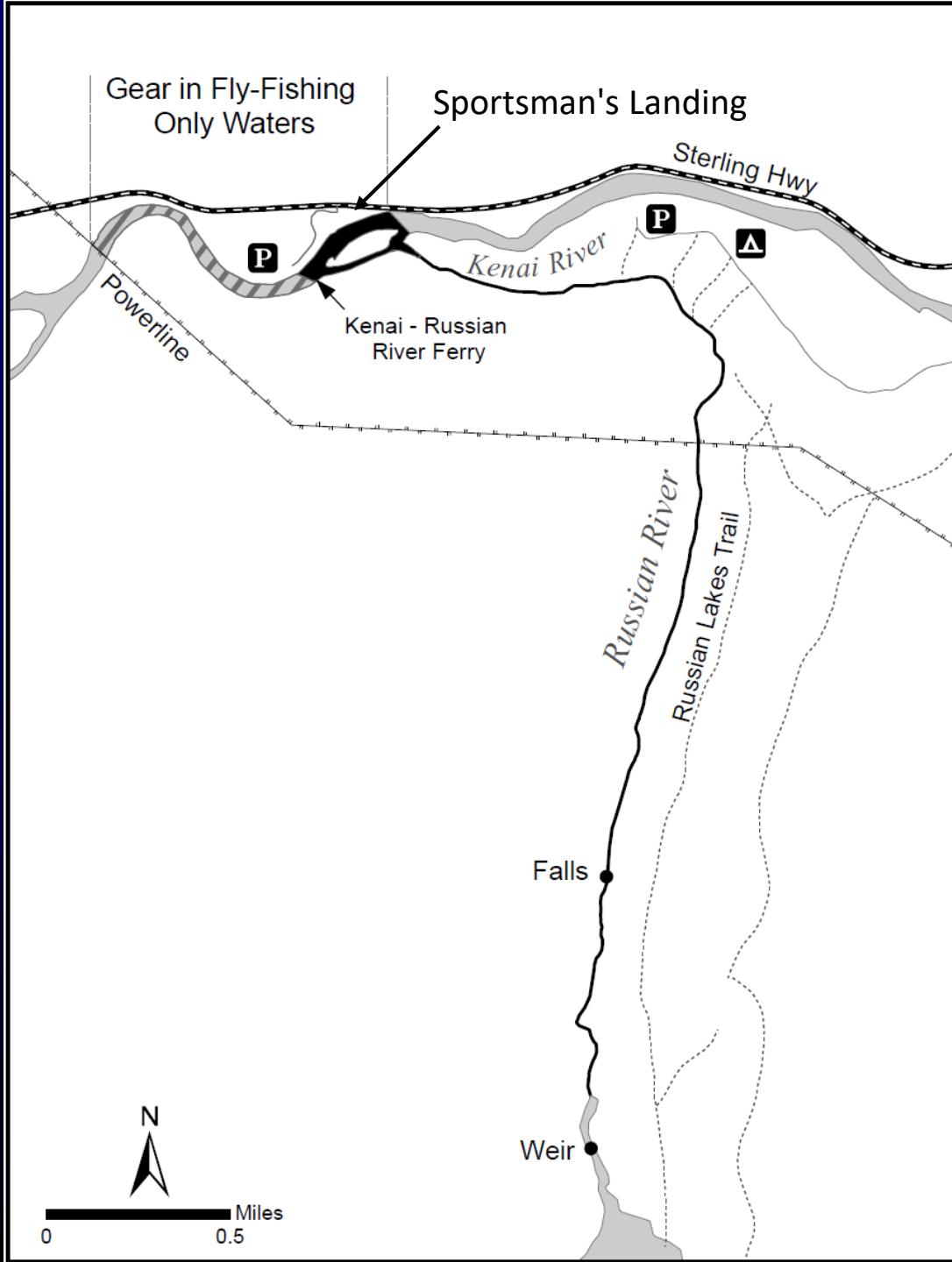
Lower and Middle Kenai River



Upper Kenai River

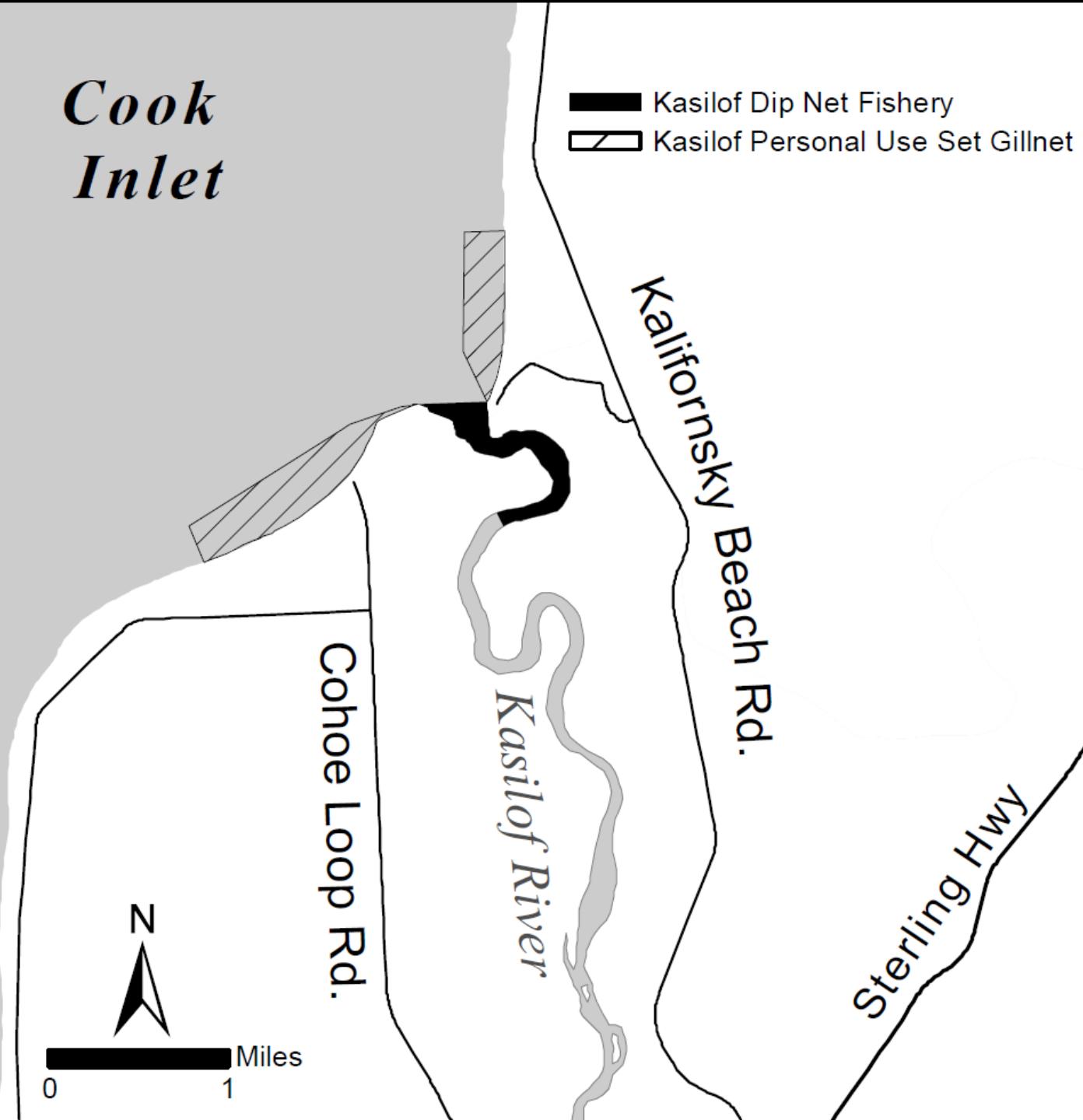


Russian River And Fly Fishing only waters

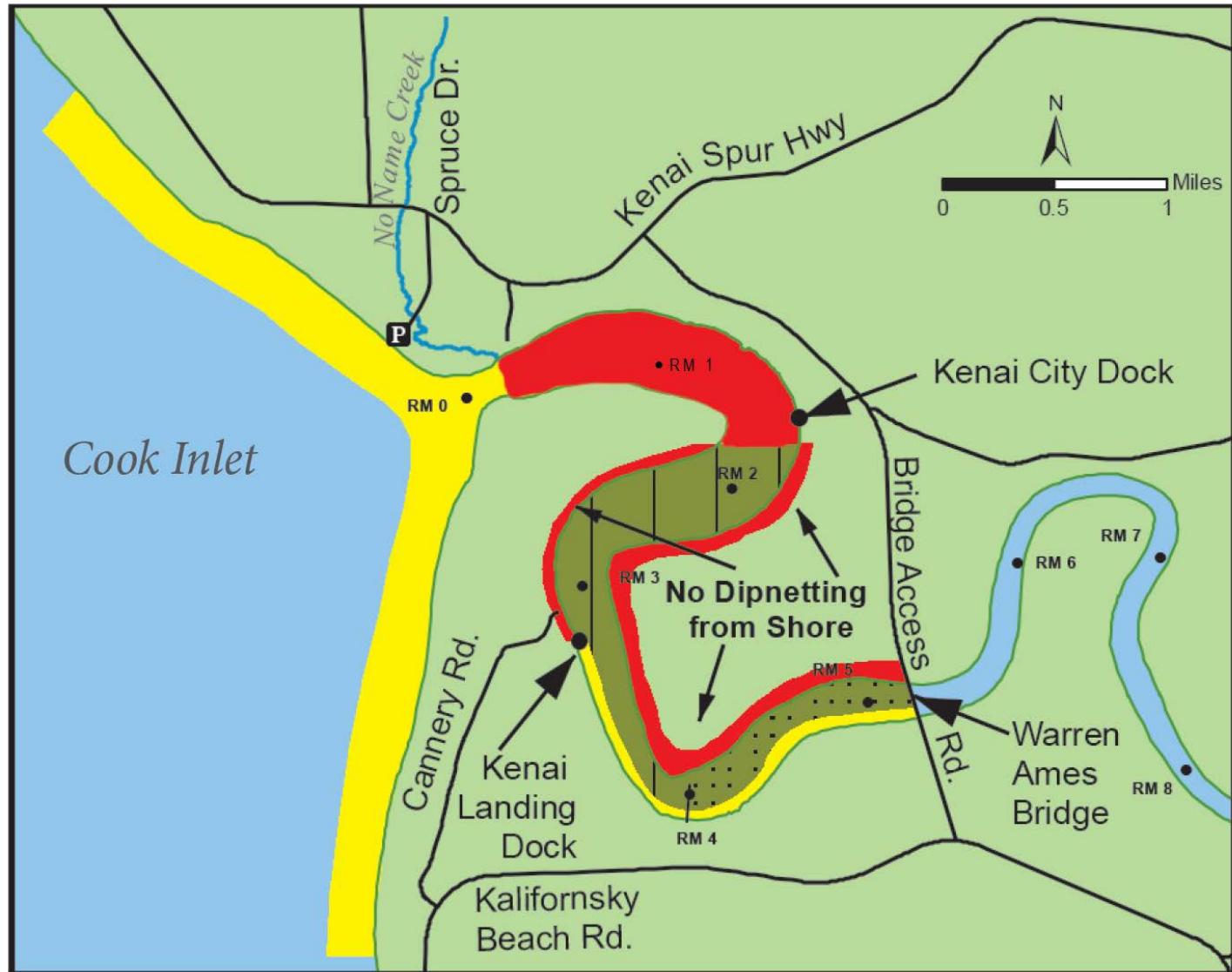


Kasiloof Personal Use Fisheries

Cook Inlet



Kenai Personal Use Fishery



Kenai River boat and shore dipnet areas



Open to dipnetting
from shore



Closed to dipnetting



Open to dipnetting from a
boat – No HP Limitation



Open only to dipnetting from
boat – 50 HP Limitation