

2023 Summary

BRISTOL BAY SPORT FISH MANAGEMENT AREA



Naknek River

Based on inseason information from anglers and guides, inriver king salmon abundance appeared to be below average with the run appearing to be slightly late and fishing generally being below average. Effort appeared to be near average.

Management Actions

- No management actions were implemented during the 2023 sport fishery season.

Alagnak River

Inseason reports from anglers and guides indicated a below average inriver abundance of king salmon with the run appearing to be slightly late and fishing generally being below average. Effort appeared to be near average.

Management Actions

- On July 4, 2023, prohibited sport fishing between ADF&G regulatory markers posted near the Alagnak River counting towers during operation of the Alagnak River salmon enumeration project.

Nushagak-Mulchatna River

The preliminary estimate of king salmon passing the Portage Creek sonar was 31,499 salmon. King salmon are managed to achieve an inriver return of 95,000 fish, to provide for a sustainable escapement goal (SEG) of 55,000 - 120,000 spawning salmon.

Commercial, sport, and subsistence catch information indicated slightly late run timing with a return that was well below the historical average. Approximately 6,847 king salmon were harvested in the Nushagak district commercial fishery. Harvest estimates for the sport and subsistence fisheries are not currently available. Reports from creel staff, anglers, guides, and subsistence users suggest a low abundance. Effort appeared to be near recent averages.



Management Actions

- On July 7, 2023, the bag and possession limits for king salmon, 20 inches or greater in length, were reduced to one fish with an annual limit of two, only one of which may be 28 inches or greater in length in the Nushagak-Mulchatna River drainage.
- On July 13, 2023, retention of king salmon of any size and the use of bait were prohibited in the Nushagak-Mulchatna River drainage.

Togiak River

Based on inseason reports from anglers, guides, and subsistence users, inriver king salmon abundance was below average with the run appearing to be near average timing. Fishing success was generally below average for the duration of the run from late June through late July. Effort appeared to be well below historical averages and can likely be attributed to new regulations going into effect this season that restrict harvest and area available for king salmon fishing.

Management Actions

- No management actions were implemented during the 2023 sport fishery season.



Naknek River

The sockeye salmon escapement was within the Sustainable Escapement Goal (SEG) range of 800,000 - 2.0 million fish for the Naknek River with an estimate of 1,156,206 million salmon.

Management Actions

- No management actions were implemented during the 2023 sport fishery season.

Kvichak River

The sockeye salmon escapement was within the SEG range of 2.0 - 10.0 million fish for the Kvichak River with an estimate of 3,751,686 million salmon.

Management Actions

- No management actions were implemented during the 2023 sport fishery season.

Alagnak River

The sockeye salmon escapement exceeded the lower bound SEG of 320,000 minimum fish with an estimate of 1,099,050 million salmon.



Management Actions

- On July 4, 2023, an emergency order was issued restricting sport fishing between ADF&G regulatory markers posted near the Alagnak River counting towers during operation of the Alagnak River salmon enumeration project.
- On July 12, 2023, the bag and possession limits for sockeye salmon were increased to ten fish in all waters of the Alagnak River drainage.

Nushagak-Mulchatna River

The sockeye salmon escapement exceeded the SEG range of 370,000 - 900,000 fish with an estimate of 1,772,676 million salmon.

Management Actions

- On June 30, 2023, the bag and possession limits for sockeye salmon were increased to 10 fish in all waters of the Nushagak-Mulchatna drainage.

Wood River

The sockeye salmon escapement exceeded the SEG range of 700,000 - 1.8 million fish with an estimate of 2,648,616 million salmon.

Management Actions

- On June 30, 2023, the bag and possession limits for sockeye salmon were increased to 10 fish in all waters of the Wood River drainage.

Togiak River

The sockeye salmon escapement was within the SEG range of 120,000 - 270,000 fish with an estimate of 268,218 salmon.

Management Actions

- No management actions were implemented during the 2023 sport fishery season.



Naknek River

Based on reports from creel staff, anglers, and guides, inriver abundance of coho salmon was average for the duration of the run from late July through early September, with the peak occurring during mid-August. Effort appeared to be near average.



Management Actions

- No management actions were implemented during the 2023 sport fishery season.

Nushagak-Mulchatna River

Sport and subsistence catch information indicated an average return during 2023. Approximately 7,098 coho salmon were harvested in the commercial fishery in the Nushagak district. Harvest estimates for the sport and subsistence fisheries are not available; however, angler, guide, and subsistence user reports suggest an average harvest in the sport and subsistence fisheries. Effort appeared to be near average.

Management Actions

- No management actions were implemented during the 2023 sport fishery season.

Togiak River

Based on reports from anglers and guides, inriver abundance was good for the duration of the run from early August through mid-September. Effort appeared to be near average.

Management Actions

- No management actions were implemented during the 2023 sport fishery season.



Table 1 – Select Southcentral Region Salmon Escapement Goals and Escapements for king salmon, 2014 to 2023 (preliminary).

System	2023 Goal Range		Type	Initial Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Preliminary	
	Lower	Upper											2022	2023
KING SALMON														
<i>Bristol Bay</i>														
Nushagak River	55,000	120,000	SEG	2013	70,482	98,019	125,368	56,961	97,239	47,882	43,032	55,222	44,434	31,499
Alagnak River	2,700		LB SEG	2007	NC	917	1,283	435	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
<i>Kodiak/Alaska Peninsula</i>														
Karluk River	3,000	6,000	BEG	2011	1,182	2,777	3,434	2,600	3,155	3,898	3,344	2,796	2,629	378
Ayakulik River	4,800	8,400	BEG	2017	789	2,392	4,594	3,712	2,149	1,948	2,402	2,961	2,845	590
Chignik River	1,300	2,700	BEG	2002	2,895	2,041	1,843	1,137	825	1,517	1,278	1,072	661	267
Nelson River	2,400	5,000	BEG	2019	3,801	2,440	4,618	1,502	5,022	11,653	2,298	4,539	3,785	4,078
<i>Upper Cook Inlet</i>														
Alexander Creek	1,900	3,700	SEG	2020	911	1,117	754	170	296	1,297	596	288	NC	NC
Campbell Creek	380		LB SEG	2011	274	654	544	475	287	393	154	339	423	171
Chuitna River	1,000	1,500	SEG	2002	1,398	1,965	1,372	235	939	2,115	869	806	NC	372
Chulitna River	1,200	2,900	SEG	2020	1,011	3,137	1,151	NC	1,125	2,765	845	1,535	NC	494
Clear (Chunilna) Creek	eliminated (see Talkeetna Stock)			2020	1,390	1,205	NS	780	940	1,511				
Crooked Creek	700	1,400	SEG	2002	1,411	1,456	1,747	911	714	1,444	830	594	735	500
Deshka River	eliminated (see Deshka Stock)			2020	16,335	24,316	22,874	11,383	8,544	9,711				
Deshka Stock	9,000	18,000	BEG	2020							10,638	18,674	5,440	3,741
Eastside Susitna Stock	13,000	25,000	SEG	2020							14,995	15,208	7,654	Pending
Goose Creek	eliminated (see Eastside Susitna Stock)			2020	232	NC	NC	148	90	NC				
Kenai River - Early Run (all fish)	eliminated ^a			2017	5,311	6,190	9,177							
Kenai River - Early Run (large fish)	2,800	5,600	SEG	2017										
	3,900	6,600	OEG	2017				6,726	2,910	4,128	2,439	4,045	2,047	1,975
Kenai River - Late Run (all fish)	eliminated ^a			2017	17,451	22,642	18,790							
Kenai River - Late Run (large fish)	13,500	27,000	SEG	2017				20,615	17,289	11,638				
	15,000	30,000	OEG	2020							11,909	12,176	13,952	14,502 ^c
Lake Creek	eliminated (see Yetna Stock)			2020	3,506	4,686	3,588	1,601	1,767	2,692				
Lewis River	eliminated			2020	61	5 ^b	0	0 ^b	0	0 ^b				
Little Susitna River (Aerial) ^c	700	1,500	SEG	2020	1,759	1,507	1,622	1,192	530	NC	NC	889	NC	NC
Little Susitna River (weir)	2,100	4,300	SEG	2017				2,531	549 ^a	3,666	2,445 ^d	3,121	2,288	799 ^e
Little Willow Creek	eliminated (see Eastside Susitna Stock)			2020	684	788	675	840	280	631				
Montana Creek	eliminated (see Eastside Susitna Stock)			2020	953	1,416	692	603	473	789				
Peters Creek	eliminated (see Yetna Stock)			2020	1,443	1,514	1,122	307	1,674	1,209				
Prairie Creek	eliminated (see Talkeetna Stock)			2020	2,812	3,290	1,853	1,930	1,194	2,371				
Sheep Creek	eliminated (see Eastside Susitna Stock)			2020	262	NC	NC	NC	334	NC				
Talachulitna River	eliminated (see Yetna Stock)			2020	2,256	2,582	4,295	1,087	1,483	3,225				
Talkeetna Stock	9,000	17,500	SEG	2020							7,283	9,107	4,288	Pending
Theodore River	500	1,000	SEG	2020	312	426	68	21	18	201	111	38	NC	NC
Willow Creek	eliminated (see Eastside Susitna Stock)			2020	1,335	2,046	1,814	1,329	411	897				
Yentna Stock	16,000	22,000	OEG	2020							14,850	18,890	16,583	Pending
<i>Lower Cook Inlet</i>														
Anchor River	3,800	7,600	SEG	2017	2,497	10,241	7,146	5,796	3,162	5,691	3,558	4,300	3,147	23,338
Deep Creek	350		LB SEG	2017	601	535	NS	753	182	751	327	NC	NC	NC
Ninilchik River	750	1,300	SEG	2017	891	874	572	855	979	1,185	833	772	687	330

Note : NA = data not available; NC = no count; LB SEG = lower-bound SEG.

^a Kenai River king salmon all fish SEG's were eliminated and large fish goals were instituted

^b Lewis River mouth naturally obstructed.

^c Little Susitna River king salmon aerial survey goal is only used to assess escapement if weir count is not available.

^d Incomplete count because weir was pulled before end of run due to flood/fire evacuation, etc

^e Sonar assessment extended seven days, count August 20 was 13,257 large king salmon

Table 2 – Select Southcentral Region Salmon Escapement Goals and Escapements for sockeye and coho salmon, 2014 to 2023 (preliminary).

System	2023 Goal Range		Type	Initial Year	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	Preliminary	
	Lower	Upper											2022	2023
COHO SALMON														
<i>Kodiak/Alaska Peninsula</i>														
Buskin River	4,700	9,600	BEG	2014	7,345	3,363	2,513	5,559	1,066	5,537	630 ^a	7,919	2,526	NC
Olds River	500		LB SEG	2019	1,320	1,357	1,634	10,54	1,000	NS	794	923	1,129	NA
American River	400		LB SEG	2011	1,595	530	500	410	300	NS	279	297	360	NA
Pasagshak River	1,200		LB SEG	2011	4,934	1,790	667	701	1,200	488	2,031	4,721	618	NA
<i>Upper Cook Inlet</i>														
Fish Creek (Knik)	1,200	6,000	SEG	2020	10,283	7,912	2,484 ^a	8,966	5,022	3,025	4,555 ^a	6,424 ^a	NC ^a	1,534
Jim Creek	250	700	SEG	2020	122	571	106	5,646	758	162	735	1,499	1,899	378
Little Susitna River	9,200	17,700	SEG	2020	24,211	12,756	10,049	17,781	7,583	4,229	9,779 ^b	10,229 ^{bc}	2,792 ^{bc}	2,949 ^{bc}
Deshka River	10,200	24,100	SEG	2017				36,869	12,962	10,445	5,368 ^a	3,431 ^a	3,137 ^a	1,817 ^a
SOCKEYE SALMON														
<i>Bristol Bay</i>														
Kvichak River ^c	2,000,000	10,000,000	SEG	2010	4,458,540	7,341,612	4,462,728	3,163,404	4,398,708	2,371,242	4,030,968	4,703,520	4,224,882	3,751,686
Alagnak River (Tower) ^d	210,000		LB SEG	2018	200,524	5,770,650	NA	2,041,825	1,581,426	820,458	2,386,518	3,236,904	1,668,222	1,099,050
Alagnak River (Aerial) ^e	125,000		LB SEG	2016			696,400	629,200						
Naknek River	800,000	2,000,000	SEG ^f	2015	1,474,428	1,920,954	1,691,910	1,899,972	2,221,152	2,911,470	4,112,160	2,796,534	1,921,296	1,156,206
Egegik River	800,000	2,000,000	SEG	2015	1,382,466	2,160,792	1,837,260	2,600,982	1,608,354	2,340,210	2,389,728	1,832,196	1,786,152	1,562,700
Ugashik River	500,000	1,400,000	SEG	2015	640,158	1,564,638	1,635,270	1,186,446	1,167,792	1,547,748	1,745,940	2,859,930	1,436,784	1,128,896
Wood River	700,000	1,800,000	SEG	2015	2,764,614	1,941,474	1,309,707	4,274,224	7,507,254	2,073,276	2,243,886	4,410,156	3,747,612	2,648,616
Igushik River	150,000	400,000	SEG	2015	340,590	651,172	469,230	578,700	1,581,426	256,074	323,814	878,952	378,768	542,496
Nushagak River	370,000	900,000	SEG	2015	618,477	796,684	680,513	2,852,308	1,164,701	709,349	1,228,059	4,697,299	3,455,272	1,914,555
<i>Kodiak/Alaska Peninsula</i>														
Buskin River	5,000	8,000	SEG	2011	13,976	8,719	11,584	7,214	4,281	12,297	7,739	2,230	8,117	1,755
Afognak River	20,000	50,000	BEG	2005	36,345	38,151	33,167	22,151	17,601	26,817	24,284	31,997	29,509	35,559
Saltery River	15,000	35,000	BEG	2011	29,047	42,468	57,867	39,315	22,845	22,183	24,987	64,602	25,615	47,936
Pasagshak River	3,000		LB SEG	2011	1,582	2,077	7,053	11,021	2,019	4,537	3,522	8,551	4,377	4,345
Karluk River Early Run	150,000	250,000	BEG	2014	252,097	260,097	164,760	242,599	205,054	186,510	157,441	128,373	175,336	182,172
Ayakulik River Early Run	140,000	280,000	SEG	2011	210,040	218,178	182,589	204,497	266,333	279,639	220,935	265,756	251,690	200,143
Fraser River	75,000	170,000	BEG	2008	200,296	219,093	122,585	129,227	201,161	169,627	137,570	186,632	118,509	100,477
<i>Upper Cook Inlet</i>														
Fish Creek (Knik)	15,000	45,000	SEG	2017	43,915	102,309	46,202	63,882	72,157	76,264	64,408	99,324 ^a	58,333 ^a	44,960
Kasilof River	140,000	370,000	OEG	2020	439,977	470,679	239,981	358,724	394,309	378,416	545,654	521,859	971,604	932,896
Kenai River ^g	140,000	320,000	BEG	2020										
	OEG eliminated			2017	1,218,342	1,400,047	1,119,988							
	750,000	1,300,000	SEG	2017				1,071,064	886,761	1,457,031	1,505,940	2,148,955	1,263,170	2,046,439
	varies based on tier		Inriver					1,308,498	1,035,761	1,849,054	1,714,565	2,441,825	1,567,750	2,351,020
Russian River - Early Run	22,000	42,000	BEG	2011	44,920	50,226	38,739	37,123	44,110	125,942	27,103	46,976	61,098	66,818
Russian River - Late Run	44,000	85,000	SEG	2020	52,277	46,223	37,837	45,012	71,052	64,585 ^a	78,832	123,950	124,561	160,430
Chelatna Lake	20,000	45,000	SEG	2017	26,212	69,750	60,792	26,986	20,438	26,303 ^a	NC	NC	NC	NC
Judd Lake	15,000	40,000	SEG	2017	22,416	47,684	NA	35,731	30,844	44,145	31,220	49,250	38,442	NC
Larson Lake	15,000	35,000	SEG	2017	12,040	23,214	14,333	31,866	23,444	9,699	12,018	21,987	17,436	38,069
<i>Lower Cook Inlet</i>														
English Bay	6,000	13,500	SEG	2002	7,832	6,290	7,673	20,751	18,083	24,044	31,486	6,328	11,425	23,661
Delight Lake	5,100	10,600	SEG	2017	22,289	3,220	5,110	5,380	13,428	17,410	12,299	7,525	22,717	6,901
Desire Lake	4,800	11,900	SEG	2017	11,480	2,830	6,740	9,450	9,840	9,040	2,260	3,323	20,460	14,700
Bear Lake	700	8,300	SEG	2002	9,090	9,560	9,011	9,207	10,568	9,185	8,212	11,318	9,962	7,975

Note: NA = data not available; NC = no count; LB SEG = lower-bound SEG.

^a Incomplete count because weir was pulled before end of run due to flood/fire evacuation, etc

^b Preliminary escapement estimate uses weir count minus five year average harvest above the weir.

^c Prior to 2010 Kvichak River had a pre-peak/peak-cycle escapement goal of 6-10 million sockeye and an off-peak escapement goal of 2-10 million fish.

^d 2009 to 2015 Alagnak River sockeye salmon escapements for Alagnak River (Tower) escapement goal are expanded aerial surveys.

^e Alagnak River sockeye salmon aerial survey-based escapement goal will be used in years that the Alagnak River tower is not operated.

^f Naknek River has an OEG of 800,000-2,000,000 sockeye salmon when the Naknek River Special Harvest Area is open to fishing.

^g Kenai River sockeye salmon uses the best estimate of sport harvest upstream of sonar.

^h Weir not operational