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2022 Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Islands Salmon Season Summary

The following is an overview of the 2022 Alaska Peninsula, Aleutian Islands, and Atka-Amlia Islands Areas (Figure 1; Area M) commercial salmon fishing season. Total preliminary harvest presented from the 2022 commercial salmon fishing season should closely approximate final harvest numbers for all species. The 2022 commercial salmon harvest in Area M totaled 14,406 Chinook, 7,974,936 sockeye, 54,306 coho, 5,869,506 pink, and 828,343 chum salmon (Table 1). Subsistence salmon harvest for 2022 will be reported in the 2023 annual management report (AMR). Data detailed in this report are considered preliminary. Preliminary exvessel value of salmon harvested in Area M totaled \$62,835,368 (Table 2). Exvessel value information was generated from fish tickets and does not include postseason adjustments paid to fishermen.

Table 1.—Alaska Peninsula, Aleutian Islands, and Atka-Amlia Islands commercial salmon harvest, 2022.

Location	Number of Salmon					Total
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	
North Peninsula	887	3,604,235	7,711	12,362	14,095	3,639,290
South Peninsula	13,519	4,370,701	46,595	5,857,144	814,248	11,102,207
Aleutian Islands	0	0	0	0	0	0
Atka-Amlia Islands	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	14,406	7,974,936	54,306	5,869,506	828,343	14,741,497

Table 2.—Preliminary commercial exvessel values by fishery and species, 2022.

Location	Value					Total
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	
South Peninsula	\$17,513	\$26,057,318	\$67,455	\$6,157,612	\$1,170,131	\$33,470,030
Northwestern District	\$0	\$342,114	\$138	\$4,028	\$30,599	\$376,878
Northern District	\$26,403	\$28,895,898	\$43,475	\$12,227	\$10,457	\$28,988,461
Total	\$43,916	\$55,295,330	\$111,068	\$6,173,866	\$1,211,188	\$62,835,368
Aleutian Islands total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Atka-Amlia Islands total	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Total	\$43,916	\$55,295,330	\$111,068	\$6,173,866	\$1,211,188	\$62,835,368

Note: Due to rounding of cents, totals may differ by small amounts.

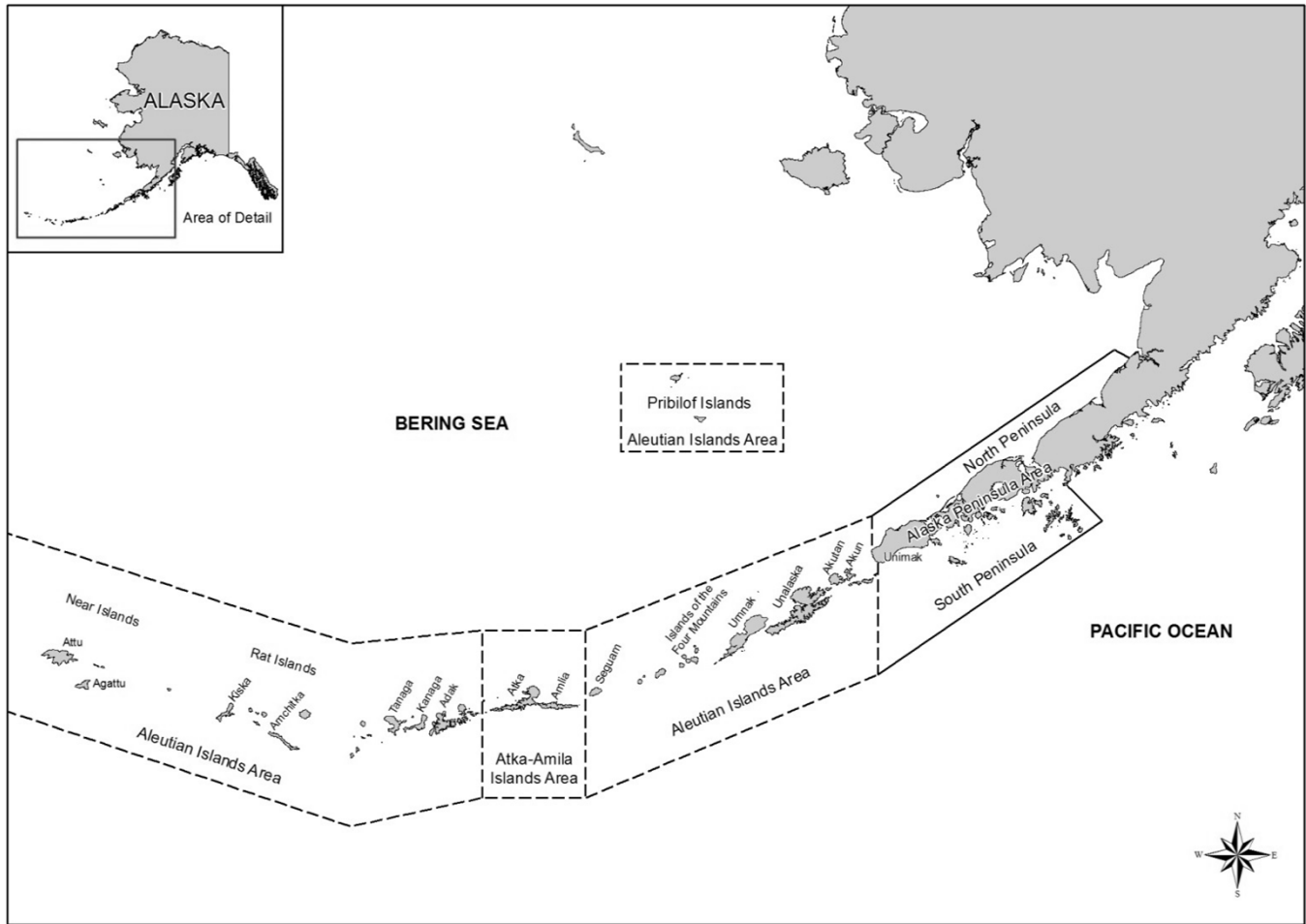


Figure 1.—Map of the Aleutian Islands, Atka-Amilia Islands, and Alaska Peninsula Management Areas, also known as Area M.

SOUTH ALASKA PENINSULA

South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June Fisheries

During the February 2019 Alaska Peninsula, Aleutian Islands, and Chignik meeting, the Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF, board) made changes to the *South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June Salmon Management Plan* (5 AAC 09.365) by amending subsection (d) that establishes the June fishing schedule. The first commercial fishing period in 2022 began on June 6 at 10:00 a.m. for set gillnet gear only and closed at 10:00 p.m. on June 8. Beginning at 6:00 a.m. on June 10, all gear types began an 88-hour fishing period which ended at 10:00 p.m. on June 13. This fishing period was followed by a closure of 32 hours for all gear types. The commercial salmon fishery then reopened for three more 88-hour fishing periods for all gear types, separated by closures of 32 hours. The final commercial fishing period in June ended at 10:00 p.m. on June 28.

In addition to the scheduled fishing periods during the month of June, the harvest of sockeye salmon in the “Dolgoi Island area” as described by the Western Alaska Salmon Stock Identification Program (WASSIP) was monitored through fish ticket information. By regulation, once the harvest of sockeye salmon reaches 191,000 fish, the waters of the West Pavlof Bay Section south of Black Point and the waters of the Volcano Bay Section close to

commercial salmon fishing for the remainder of the June fishery and through July 25 (Figure 2). Commercial fishermen operating in the South Central and Southwestern Districts during June are advised that short notice closure of the designated “Dolgoi Island area” will occur in the likely event the harvest of sockeye salmon approaches the 191,000 fish. The department will, to the extent practical, give a minimum of 6-hours’ notice of closure to all gear types. In 2019, the board closed the “Dolgoi Island area” to purse seine gear in June. The harvest limit was not reached in the June fishery in 2022. A total of 29,911 sockeye salmon were harvested in the “Dolgoi Island area” in June, and a total of 61,448 sockeye salmon were harvested from July 1 through July 25.

Due to concerns of low forecasted chum salmon returns to systems within the Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim (AYK) region, test fisheries were conducted on June 8, 9, and 10, by the commercial purse seine fleet in the Unimak District and Shumagin Islands Section of the Southeastern District. The purse seine fleet voluntarily stood down during the first day of the commercial opening on June 10 to conduct the test fishery and reduced fishing time in subsequent openings during June to ensure that the chum salmon harvest was near or below the historical harvest levels during the South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June fishing periods.

During the March 26–April 2, 2022, Board of Fisheries meeting, the Chignik River early-run sockeye salmon were designated a Stock of Management Concern. The Chignik Intertribal Coalition and the Area M Seiners Association submitted Record Copy 104 through board member Mitchell directing the department to reduce fishing time for purse seine gear in the Shumagin Islands Section of the Southeastern District during the 2022 salmon season if the Chignik River early-run sockeye salmon escapement was not projected to be met. Due to the late-timing and poor passage of early-run sockeye salmon to the Chignik River, three commercial fishing periods were reduced from 88-hour fishing periods to 40-hour fishing periods on June 15, 20, and 25, in the Shumagin Islands Section of the Southeastern District for purse seine gear only.

The commercial salmon harvest for the June fishery consisted of 3,204 Chinook, 3,905,017 sockeye, 169 coho, 1,201,771 pink, and 544,097 chum salmon (Table 3). The sockeye and chum salmon harvest in the South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June fisheries was above the most recent 10-year average of 1,346,251 sockeye salmon and 501,974 chum salmon.

Table 3.–Total salmon harvests in numbers of fish for the South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June fisheries, excluding home pack and the department test fishery, 2022.

	Number of salmon					
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
South Unimak	1,760	3,085,650	158	1,078,474	366,240	4,532,282
Shumagin Islands	1,444	819,367	11	123,297	177,857	1,121,976
Total	3,204	3,905,017	169	1,201,771	544,097	5,654,258

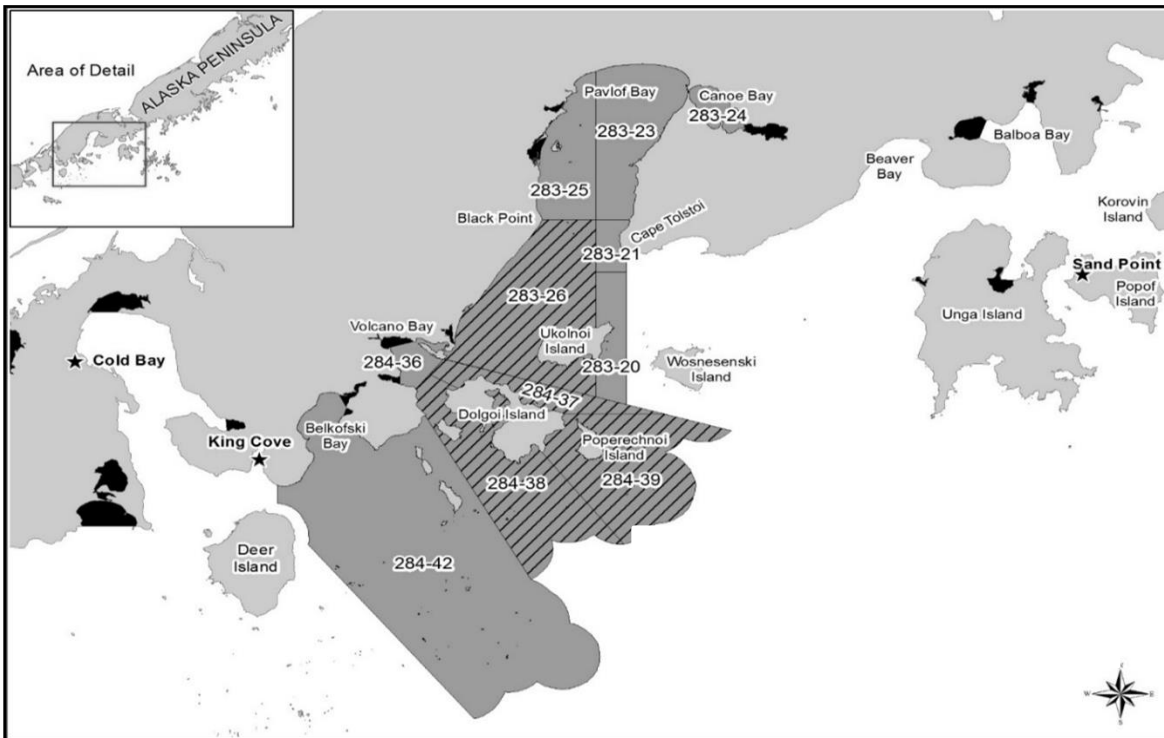


Figure 2. – Map depicting to the “Dolgoi Island area” for the June Management Plan and the areas that close (hash marked areas) after 191,000 sockeye salmon have been harvested (in all gray areas). This area is closed to seine gear in June as per the 2019 BOF regulatory changes.

Southeastern District Mainland Fisheries

From June 1 to July 25, the Southeastern District Mainland (SEDM; excluding the Northwest Stepovak Section (NWSS) beginning July 1) is managed based on the strength of the Chignik sockeye salmon run. During years in which it appears that sockeye salmon harvest will be greater than 600,000 fish in the Chignik Management Area (CMA), and the first run begins to develop as anticipated, followed by a commercial salmon opening in the CMA, commercial salmon fishing can be allowed in the East Stepovak, Stepovak Flats, Northwest Stepovak, Southwest Stepovak, Balboa Bay and Beaver Bay Sections of the SEDM. However, in 2022, the early run for sockeye salmon returning to Chignik River developed late and harvest over 600,000 fish did not occur before the allocation period ended on July 25. The only fishing opportunity that occurred in SEDM during the allocation period occurred within Orzinski Bay of the Northwest Stepovak Section.

Beginning July 1, the NWSS of SEDM is managed on the strength of the Orzinski Lake sockeye salmon run. In 2022, the overall escapement of sockeye salmon into Orzinski Lake was strong with 17,083 fish escaping past the weir. This passage exceeded the lower bound of the sustainable escapement goal (SEG) of 15,000–20,000 sockeye salmon. The strong sockeye salmon run into Orzinski Lake allowed for continuous fishing within Orzinski Bay from July 10 until July 31. From August 2 through August 14, commercial salmon fishing within Orzinski Bay was open for two 132-hour fishing periods, then opened concurrently with the remainder of SEDM with 132-hour fishing periods through the end of the commercial salmon fishing season. All fish harvested in the NWSS during the allocation period were harvested within Orzinski Bay (Table 4).

From July 26 through August 31, the SEDM is managed based on the abundance of local salmon stocks. Commercial salmon fishing in SEDM began on August 15 with an 85-hour fishing period for set gillnet and seine gear from 8:00 a.m. Monday, August 15, in the Beaver Bay, Balboa Bay, Southwest Stepovak, Northwest Stepovak, and East Stepovak Sections of the Southeastern District. After additional aerial surveys were conducted, SEDM was extended to the full fishing period that is permitted during this timeframe. By regulation, there shall be at least one closed 36-hour period within a seven-day period in the SEDM (5 AAC 09.360 (l)(2)). Commercial salmon fishing closed for 36 hours at 9:00 p.m. August 18. Adequate escapement of pink and chum salmon in the SEDM allowed for maximum fishing opportunity in the SEDM through September 1.

In September, the SEDM is managed based on coho salmon harvest strength, although pink and chum salmon escapement is also taken into consideration. There was one opening in September. Total salmon harvest in the SEDM was 231 Chinook, 41,140 sockeye, 4,884 coho, 376,602 pink, and 35,970 chum salmon (Table 4).

Table 4.—Preliminary Southeastern District Mainland salmon harvest, excluding home pack and the department test fishery, 2022.

Location	Number of Salmon				
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum
June 1–June 30	0	0	0	0	0
July 1–July 25 SEDM ^a	0	0	0	0	0
Total SEDM harvest in allocation	0	0	0	0	0
July 1–July 25 NWSS ^b	7	14,326	2	7,236	431
July 26–September 30	224	26,814	4,882	369,366	35,539
Total	231	41,140	4,884	376,602	35,970

^a Southeastern District Mainland (excluding Northwest Stepovak Section).

^b All fishing in the NWSS during the allocation period occurred inside Orzinski Bay.

South Peninsula Post-June Fishery

Prior to the South Peninsula post-June fishery, the department conducts a test fishery to determine immature salmon abundance in the Shumagin Islands. Test fisheries occurred on July 2, 3 and 5, and resulted in an average of 55.0, 56.8, and 17.3 immature salmon per set, respectively. The average number of immature salmon per set was below the regulatory threshold of 100 immature salmon gilled per set on all three days test fishing occurred, and the Shumagin Island Section opened to all gear types for the July 6 commercial salmon fishing period.

From July 6 through July 31, there was one 33-hour fishing period, followed by a 63-hour closure, followed by six 36-hour fishing periods separated by 60-hour closures.

During August, the post-June fishery is managed based on the abundance of local pink and chum salmon stocks. In September and October, management focuses on coho salmon returns, though the status of late pink and chum salmon returns may also be taken into consideration. Dry conditions in early August resulted in low water in streams and prevented fish from moving inriver. Heavy rains on August 9 brought water levels up to flood conditions, and high, muddy water along with poor flying weather prevented aerial surveys until August 13. Good escapement was seen on August 13, and the commercial fishery was opened on August 15. The number of pink

salmon and chum salmon returning to local streams was above minimum escapement objectives throughout a majority of August, resulting in extensive commercial fishing opportunity. Coho salmon catch per unit effort in September allowed for commercial fishery openings until participation in the fishery ceased. Participation in September was minimal. The total commercial harvest for the South Peninsula post-June fishery (including the SEDM from July 26–October 31) was 10,308 Chinook, 450,832 sockeye, 46,424 coho, 4,648,137 pink, and 269,680 chum salmon (Table 5).

In 2022, 245 permit holders participated in commercial salmon fisheries along the South Peninsula, which is comparable to the most recent 10-year average of 246 permit holders.

Table 5.–Post-June South Peninsula commercial salmon harvest, excluding home pack and the department test fishery, 2022.

Location	Number of Salmon				
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum
South Peninsula Post-June harvest	10,084	424,018	41,542	4,278,771	234,141
Post-June SEDM harvest (July 26– October 31)	224	26,814	4,882	369,366	35,539
Total Post-June harvest	10,308	450,832	46,424	4,648,137	269,680

South Peninsula Escapement

The South Peninsula sockeye salmon escapement of 56,723 fish (Table 6) was within the management objective range of 48,200–86,400 fish. Escapement into Orzinski Lake of 17,283 sockeye salmon was within the SEG of 15,000–20,000 fish. Escapement into Mortensen’s Lagoon (3,900 sockeye salmon) was within its SEG range of 3,200–6,400 fish. Escapement into Thin Point Lagoon (15,300 sockeye salmon) was within the SEG range of 14,000–28,000 fish. Pink salmon total indexed escapement of 5,177,350 fish (Table 6) was above the SEG range of 1,750,000–4,000,000 fish. Chum salmon total escapement of 398,302 fish (Table 6) was within the cumulative district escapement goal range of 330,400–660,800 fish. Escapement into chum salmon index streams was within the goal range of 218,300–410,600 with a peak index escapement of 349,450 chum salmon. Coho salmon surveys were conducted during the last week of August and first week of September. Though these aerial surveys do not represent peak survey counts, a greater effort was taken during the 2022 season to better estimate coho salmon escapement. An estimate of coho salmon escapement for the South Alaska Peninsula, as of September 5, was 26,375 coho salmon (Table 6). 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 preventing aerial surveys from being conducted during peak coho salmon runs.

Table 6.—South Peninsula salmon escapement by species and year, 2012–2022.

Year	Number of salmon				
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum
2012	0	56,300	7,910	478,910	205,242
2013	0	37,386	ND	2,320,790	502,600
2014	0	37,670	9,050	1,340,380	313,545
2015	0	96,110	2,320	7,820,800	906,420
2016	0	120,170	ND	1,038,160	626,776
2017	0	113,042	5,100	5,663,637	1,773,626
2018	0	15,617	ND	732,422	344,830
2019	0	31,667	ND	4,236,700	672,475
2020	0	34,169	ND	3,209,750	415,570
2021	0	59,699	ND	4,388,100	483,200
2022	0	56,723	26,375	5,177,350	398,302
2012–2021 average	0	60,183	6,095 ^a	3,122,965	624,428

^a Average does not include years where no surveys were completed.

Aleutian Islands Fishery and Escapement

The Aleutian Islands Area may open to commercial salmon fishing by emergency order if adequate escapement is observed and there is interest from the fishing industry. No surveys were flown in 2022, and no commercial salmon fishing occurred.

NORTH ALASKA PENINSULA

Commercial Harvest

In 2022, 166 Area M permit holders participated in commercial salmon fisheries along the North Alaska Peninsula (Figure 3). The North Alaska Peninsula has an overlap area which allows Area T (Bristol Bay) permit holders to fish in areas that they historically did prior to statehood during certain times of the year. There was no effort by Area T permit holders. The number of Area M permit holders participating in 2022 was similar to the most recent 10-year average of 164 but was below historical numbers observed during the 1990s which peaked at 364 permits in 1992.

The North Alaska Peninsula fishery is predominantly a sockeye salmon fishery; although, depending on market conditions, directed Chinook, coho, and chum salmon fisheries occur in some locations. During even-numbered years, depending on market conditions, pink salmon runs are at times targeted in the Northwestern District.

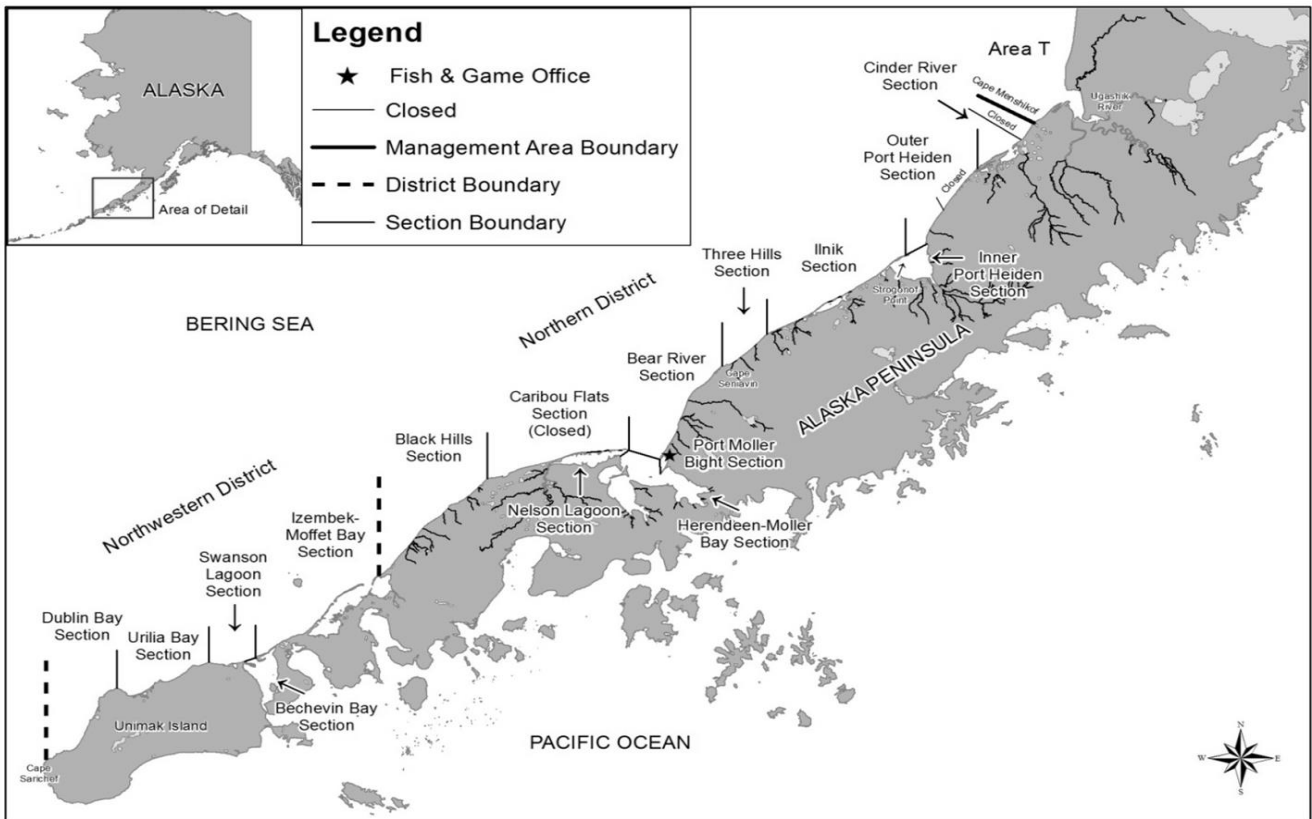


Figure 3.—Alaska Peninsula with North Alaska Peninsula commercial salmon fishing districts depicted.

In 2022, the harvest of 3,604,235 sockeye salmon on the North Alaska Peninsula was above both the projected harvest and the 10-year average of approximately 2.0 million and 2.3 million fish, respectively (Table 7). The harvest of 7,711 coho salmon was below both the projected harvest and the 10-year average of approximately 60,000 and 54,000, respectively. The harvests of Chinook, pink, and chum salmon were all below both the projected harvests and the 10-year averages (Table 7).

Table 7.—The 2022 North Alaska Peninsula commercial salmon harvest, excluding home pack and department test fishery, the 2022 projected harvest, and 2012–2021 average harvest.

	Number of salmon				
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum
2022 season total	887	3,604,235	7,711	12,362	14,095
Projected harvest	2,300	2,000,000	60,000	50,000	100,000
2012–2021 average	1,907	2,300,095	54,088	75,764	138,770

Northwestern District

In the Northwestern District during the 2022 commercial salmon fishery, a total of 0 Chinook, 56,020 sockeye, 98 coho, 4,041 pink, and 9,357 chum salmon were harvested (Table 8). A total of 11 permit holders participated in the fishery, consisting of 3 purse seiners and 8 drift gillnetters.

Table 8.–Northwestern District commercial salmon harvest, excluding home pack, by section, all gear combined, 2022.

Location	Number of Salmon				
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum
Dublin Bay Section	0	0	0	0	0
Urilia Bay Section	0	45,306	1	642	29
Swanson Lagoon Section	0	120	0	7	12
Bechevin Bay Section	0	0	0	0	0
Izembek-Moffet Bay Section	0	10,594	97	3,392	9,316
2022 Northwestern District total	0	56,020	98	4,041	9,357
2012–2021 Northwestern District average	13	40,063	5,653	33,793	98,043

In the Northwestern District, the chum salmon escapement of 47,200 fish (Table 9) was well below the chum salmon SEG of 100,000–215,000 fish. This escapement estimate represents a minimum; the actual escapement was likely greater due to poor survey conditions in one of the major chum salmon producing streams (the Joshua Green River) in the Northwestern District. The sockeye salmon escapement for 2022 in the Northwestern District was within the escapement objective range of 52,600–106,000 fish with a total escapement of 62,480 fish (Table 9).

Table 9.–Northwestern District salmon escapement by species and section, 2022.

Location	Number of salmon				
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho*	Pink	Chum
Urilia Bay Section	0	40,370	ND	0	0
Swanson Lagoon Section	0	0	ND	0	0
Bechevin Bay Section	0	0	ND	26,000	10,900
Izembek-Moffet Bay Section	0	22,110	ND	4,300	36,300
Northwestern District total	0	62,480	ND	30,300	47,200

* No coho salmon survey information due to departure of department staff prior to coho salmon arrival in streams.

Black Hills Section

Harvest effort in the Black Hills Section usually occurs when other sections are not open. Due to fishing opportunity during 2022 in the Bear, Three Hills, and Ilnik Sections of the Northern District, effort by the drift gillnet fleet in the Black Hills Section (Figure 3) was limited and occurred primarily during the last week of July and first two weeks of August. A total of 189 sockeye salmon (Table 10) and 2 chum salmon were harvested in the Black Hills Section in 2022. Weekly fishing periods occurred throughout the season in the Black Hills Section. North Creek is the only system in the Black Hills Section with a sockeye salmon escapement goal. The 2022 North Creek salmon escapement of 9,900 sockeye salmon was within the escapement goal range of 7,500–10,000 fish.

Table 10.—North Alaska Peninsula sockeye salmon commercial harvest, excluding home pack and department test fishery, by statistical area or combination of statistical areas, 2022.

Area ^a	Sockeye salmon harvest	Percent of total
Northwestern District		
311-20 Dublin Bay, 311-32 Uria Bay, 311-52 Swanson Lagoon	45,426	1.26
311-60 Bechevin Bay	0	0.00
312-20 Izembek Lagoon, and 312-40 Moffet Bay	9,382	0.26
311-58, 312-10 Outside Izembek-Moffet	1,212	0.03
Northwestern District total	56,020	1.55
Northern District		
313-10 Black Hills Section	189	0.01
313-30 Nelson Lagoon Section	58,499	1.62
314-20, 314-30 Herendeen-Moller bays ^a	0	0.00
314-12, 315-11 Bear River and Port Moller Bight	146,087	4.05
315-20 NE Bear River	105,186	2.92
Bear River total (314-12,315-11,315-20)	251,273	6.97
316-10 Three Hills Section	58,341	1.62
316-20 Ilnik SW of Unangashak Bluffs	498,934	13.84
316-25 Ilnik NE of Unangashak Bluffs	1,587,368	44.04
Ilnik Section total (316-20,316-22,316-25)	2,086,302	57.88
317-20 Inner Port Heiden Section	0	0.00
317-10 Outer Port Heiden Section	1,093,611	30.34
318-20 Cinder River Section ^b	0	0.00
Northern District total	3,548,215	98.45
North Peninsula total	3,604,235	100.00

^a Some statistical areas are combined because the low number of participants makes the information confidential.

^b No commercial salmon fishing effort in this area.

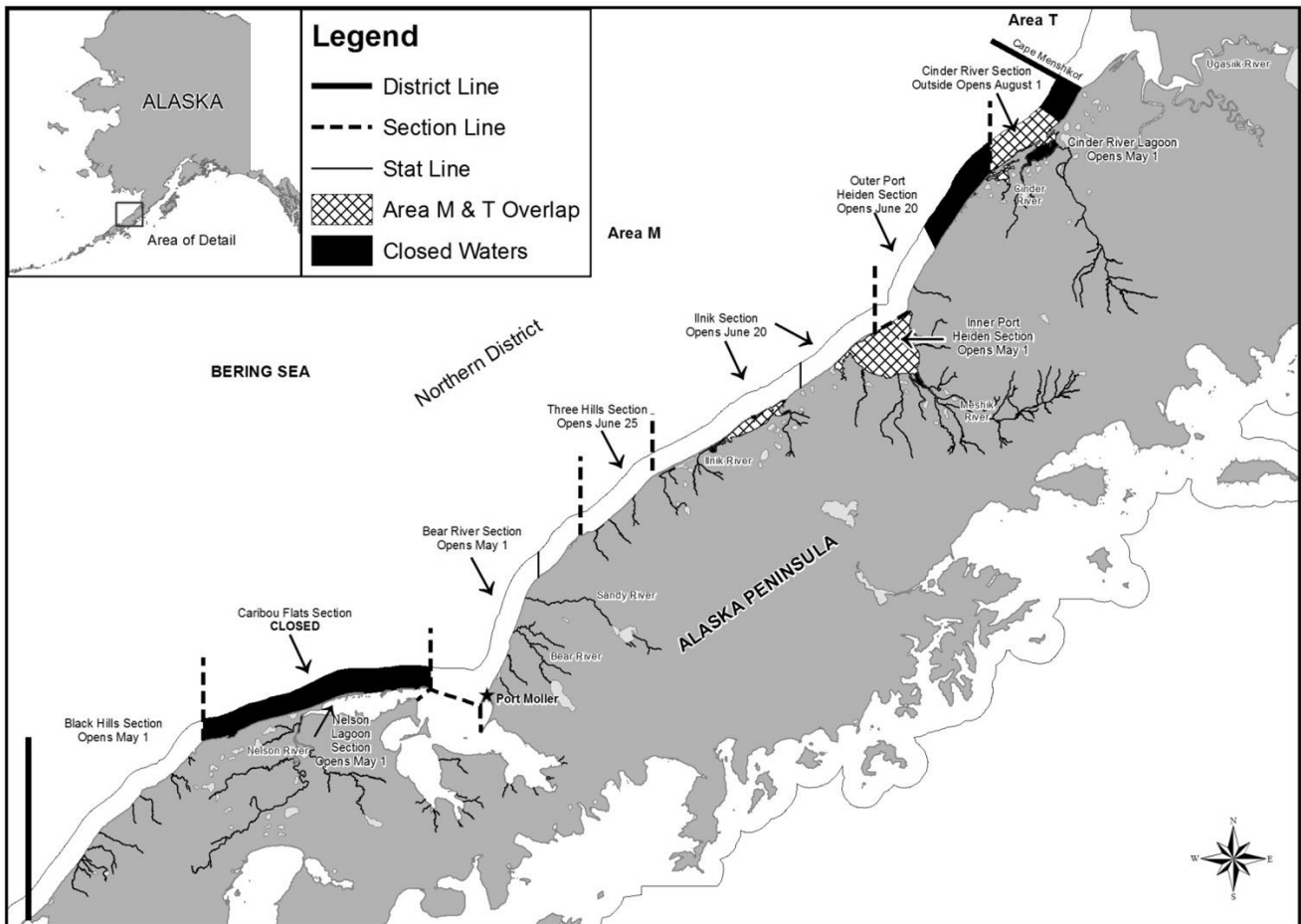


Figure 5.—Northern District commercial salmon fishing sections with earliest opening dates depicted.

Nelson Lagoon Section

Commercial fishing within the Nelson Lagoon Section was consistent with the weekly fishing periods described in regulation. The department only restricted one weekly fishing period by reducing the fishing period by 24 hours, and another weekly period was delayed by 48 hours to allow a longer closure window for additional escapement. The Nelson (Sapsuk) River (Figure 5) total run of 156,499 sockeye salmon (includes harvest and escapement) was well below the estimated forecast of 285,000 sockeye salmon, and the lowest return since 1974. From the total run, 58,499 sockeye salmon were harvested in Nelson Lagoon (Table 10) and 98,000 fish escaped (Table 11) into the Nelson River. The harvest in Nelson Lagoon was well below the historical 10-year average of 194,326 sockeye salmon. The 2022 sockeye salmon escapement into Nelson River met the biological escapement goal (BEG) of 97,000–219,000 fish (Table 11).

Beginning August 15, the Nelson Lagoon Section is managed based on local coho salmon runs. In 2021, a total of 21,500 coho salmon were observed in Nelson River, exceeding the Nelson River SEG threshold of 18,000 fish. Throughout the 2022 season a total of 4,537 coho salmon were harvested, which is below the recent 10-year average of 24,982 coho salmon.

Table 11.—Northern District sockeye salmon escapements and goals, 2022.

	Escapement	Escapement Goal Range
Nelson (Sapsuk) River ^a	98,000	97,000–219,000
Sandy River ^a	44,000	34,000–74,000
Ilnik River ^a	110,500	40,000–60,000
<i>Bear Lake early run</i> ^a	365,699	176,000–293,000
<i>Bear Lake late run</i> ^a	151,301	117,000–195,000
Bear Lake total ^a	517,000	293,000–488,000
Subtotal for systems with weirs ^a	769,500	464,000–841,000
Subtotal for systems without weirs	268,330	88,400–188,800
Northern District total	1,037,830	552,400–1,029,800

^a Includes an estimate of sockeye salmon after removal of the weirs.

Bear River and Three Hills Sections

As specified by the Northern District Salmon Fisheries Management Plan (5 AAC 09.369), the Bear River Section (Figure 5) opens to commercial salmon fishing on May 1 while the Three Hills Section opens June 25. Both areas are managed based on the sockeye salmon run strength into Bear and Sandy Rivers. The early sockeye salmon run at Bear River was on time, and weekly interim escapements objectives were within expected ranges during June before trending above the weekly interim escapement goals from mid-July onwards. The Bear River Section was closed on June 21 and then opened on July 8 for a weekly fishing period. Extensions to weekly fishing periods occurred for the rest of the month of July, with one 60-hour closure starting on July 15, before the section closed on July 29 in preparation for the late run of sockeye salmon.

The late run of sockeye salmon at Bear River, which starts on August 1, was slow to develop and weaker than expected. Commercial harvest opportunity for late-run sockeye salmon opened on August 9. No extensive closures during the season were necessary, as interim escapements were met throughout the month of August.

A total of 251,273 sockeye salmon were harvested in the Bear River Section during 2022, and 58,341 sockeye salmon were harvested in the Three Hills Section (Table 10).

The Bear River early-run (through July 31) sockeye salmon escapement of 365,699 fish exceeded the escapement goal of 176,000–293,000 fish (Table 11). The Bear River late-run (after July 31) sockeye salmon escapement of 151,301 fish was within the late-run sockeye salmon escapement goal range of 117,000–195,000 fish. The Bear River season total sockeye salmon escapement was 517,000 fish (Table 11), which surpassed the combined early- and late-run sockeye salmon escapement goal of 293,000–488,000 fish. The 2022 Sandy River sockeye salmon escapement of 44,000 fish (Table 11) was within the escapement goal range of 34,000–74,000 fish.

Ilnik Section

In 2022 the Ilnik River system sockeye salmon escapement through the weir was 110,500 fish (Table 11), above the Ilnik River escapement goal range of 40,000–60,000 fish. By regulation, the Ilnik Section can open to commercial salmon fishing on June 20. Sockeye salmon escapement into Ilnik River was above interim

escapement objectives during both June and July. A total of 2,086,302 sockeye salmon were harvested in the Ilnik Section, above the recent 10-year average of 965,602 fish (Table 10).

Beginning August 15, the Ilnik Section is managed for coho salmon runs into Ilnik Lagoon, however most fishing effort at this time continues to target sockeye salmon. During 2022, a total of 403 coho salmon were harvested in the Ilnik Section.

Inner and Outer Port Heiden Sections

Aerial escapement surveys of the Meshik River began in late June and continued throughout the season. Subsequent surveys occurred throughout the season, and the final sockeye salmon escapement into the Meshik River system was 112,700 fish, above the escapement goal range of 48,000–86,000 sockeye salmon. This includes escapement into the Meshik River and tributaries, as well as Red Bluff and Yellow Bluff creeks.

Fishing time in the Outer Port Heiden Section (Figure 5) is based on Meshik River sockeye salmon abundance unless management actions are taken for the conservation of Ugashik River sockeye salmon in the Egegik District. By regulation, the Outer Port Heiden Section may open to commercial salmon fishing from June 20 to July 31. The weekly fishing periods in the Outer Port Heiden Section are scheduled from 6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday. The Outer Port Heiden Section opened on June 23 and had openings of no more than 2½ days per week until the section closed on July 28. In 2022, a total of 1,093,611 sockeye salmon (Table 10) were harvested from the Outer Port Heiden Section. The 2022 sockeye salmon harvest in the Outer Port Heiden Section was above the 10-year average harvest of 504,512 sockeye salmon.

Cinder River Section

No commercial salmon harvest effort occurred in the Cinder River Section in 2022 despite weekly commercial salmon fishing openers throughout the season. The total Cinder River (including Mud Creek) sockeye salmon escapement estimate of 120,900 fish was within the escapement goal range of 36,000–94,000 fish.

Northern District Escapement for Other Species

Chinook Salmon

Nelson River is the only river in Area M with a Chinook salmon escapement goal. At the Nelson River weir, a total of 3,785 Chinook salmon escaped through the weir, meeting the escapement goal of 2,400–5,000 fish. The total Northern District Chinook salmon escapement of 12,174 fish was near the recent 10-year average of 11,639 fish.

Coho Salmon

Coho salmon surveys were conducted on major Northern District streams in early September, which is before the peak of the coho salmon run. Budgetary and logistical constraints do not permit coho salmon surveys to take place any later in the fall. Coho salmon runs continue through September and into October, therefore escapements tabulated from aerial surveys are considered minimum estimates. The total coho salmon escapement in the Northern District during 2022 was 190,700 fish, below the 10-year average of 195,452 fish. Both the Nelson and Ilnik Rivers have coho salmon lower bound escapement goals in the Northern District. The Nelson River escapement of 21,500 coho salmon exceeded the lower bound escapement goal of 18,000 fish. A total of 36,200 fish were observed during early September in the Ilnik River in 2022, which exceeded the lower bound escapement goal of 9,000 fish. It is expected that more coho salmon entered the Ilnik and Nelson River systems

during September and October. The coho salmon escapement into the Cinder River was 35,000 fish, and 96,000 coho salmon escaped into the Meshik River system (Meshik River and Landlocked Creek) as observed by aerial survey.

Chum Salmon

The total chum salmon escapement in the Northern District during 2022 was 119,782 fish, within the district wide chum salmon escapement goal range of 119,600–239,200 fish and below the most recent 10-year average of 186,874 fish. The bulk of the chum salmon escapement occurred in the Black Hills Section (29,700 fish) and the Inner Port Heiden Section (42,550 fish).

Pink Salmon

There are no escapement goals for pink salmon in the Northern District. In some years, depending on market conditions, a directed pink salmon fishery may occur, however, this did not happen in 2022. A total of 39,289 pink salmon were observed in the Northern District during 2022.