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Advisory Announcement

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2024 KODIAK COMMERCIAL SALMON SEASON SUMMARY

The following is a brief overview of the 2024 Kodiak Management Area (KMA; Figure 1) commercial salmon season.

Commercial fishing effort in 2024 was well below average compared to recent years. Of the 585 eligible commercial salmon permits, a confidential amount made commercial landings. By gear type, only 117 purse seine and 107 set gillnet permit holders made deliveries in 2024. Less than three beach seine permits were fished in 2024. Participation rates for purse seine was the lowest on record (32%), and participation of set gillnet was well below average (57%; Table 1).

Table 1.– Commercial salmon fishery 2024 limited entry permit activity and 10-yr. averages, by gear type, in the KMA.

| Gear Type | 2024 Permits | | | 2014–2023 Average permits | | |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|---------------------------|--------------|---------------------|
| | Available | Fished | % of permits fished | Available | Fished | % of permits fished |
| Purse seine | 368 | 117 | 32% | 372 | 167 | 45% |
| Beach seine | 27 | ^a | ^a | 30 | ^a | ^a |
| Set gillnet | 188 | 107 | 57% | 188 | 138 | 73% |
| Total | 583 | ^a | ^a | 590 | ^a | ^a |

^a Confidential data.



Figure 1.–Map of the commercial salmon fishing districts in the KMA.

The 2024 commercial harvest (not including personal use or ADF&G test fishery) in the KMA was 1,486 Chinook salmon, 1,618,363 sockeye salmon, 63,898 coho salmon, 7,322,327 pink salmon, and 498,035 chum salmon. The total KMA salmon harvest of 9,504,109 was slightly below the 2024 forecast and below the previous 10-year average of approximately 23,529,136 fish (Table 2).

Table 2.–2024 commercial salmon harvest for KMA compared to the previous 10-year average and the 2024 harvest forecast.

| | Chinook | Sockeye | Coho | Pink | Chum | Total |
|----------------|---------|-----------|---------|------------|---------|------------|
| 2024 Harvest | 1,486 | 1,618,363 | 63,898 | 7,322,327 | 498,035 | 9,504,109 |
| 2014–2023 Avg. | 8,247 | 2,464,057 | 337,506 | 20,061,804 | 657,523 | 23,529,136 |
| 2024 Forecast | 9,500 | 2,981,000 | 271,500 | 9,560,000 | 540,000 | 13,362,000 |

Note: harvest numbers do not include harvest from the ADF&G test fisheries, personal use, or aquaculture carcass sales.

The estimated exvessel value of the 2024 fishery (not including hatchery cost recovery) was approximately \$14.2 million. This was one of the lowest exvessel values on record and well below the 10-year average exvessel value of \$33.5 million (Table 3).

Purse seine fishermen accounted for most of the total harvest (in number of fish), and their earnings averaged \$102,178 per fished permit. Set gillnet earnings averaged \$20,387 per permit fished while beach seine earnings were confidential.

Table 3.—Estimated commercial salmon harvest and value, by gear type, in the KMA, 2013–2024.

| Year | Total catch ^a | Total value ^b | Average exvessel value | | |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|----------|--------------|
| | | | Purse seine | Gillnet | Beach seine |
| 2014 | 13,995,803 | \$42,806,102 | \$183,451 | \$61,504 | \$23,796 |
| 2015 | 34,353,663 | \$34,381,769 | \$163,566 | \$29,953 | ^c |
| 2016 | 5,031,781 | \$14,509,665 | \$66,243 | \$25,972 | \$7,111 |
| 2017 | 29,978,602 | \$54,750,472 | \$277,675 | \$65,957 | \$19,216 |
| 2018 | 8,618,297 | \$27,263,475 | \$147,748 | \$35,118 | ^c |
| 2019 | 34,361,257 | \$45,823,478 | \$227,552 | \$38,725 | \$1,461 |
| 2020 | 23,898,965 | \$26,461,042 | \$157,217 | \$23,187 | ^c |
| 2021 | 27,275,959 | \$47,099,145 | \$250,550 | \$38,407 | ^c |
| 2022 | 17,202,482 | \$34,785,070 | \$182,515 | \$31,404 | ^c |
| 2023 | 26,402,522 | \$24,302,285 | \$131,586 | \$23,156 | ^c |
| 2024 | 8,466,072 | \$14,163,740 | \$102,178 | \$20,387 | ^c |
| <u>Recent 10-year average</u> | | | | | |
| 2014–2023 | 22,111,903 | \$33,473,739 | \$180,749 | \$37,398 | \$12,896 |

^a Number of fish: Does not include hatchery cost recovery, test fisheries, personal use, or carcasses sales.

^b Exvessel values based on inseason price estimates and do not include postseason adjustments.

^c Confidential data.

2024 Commercial Harvest Summary

Chinook Salmon

There are no directed Chinook salmon commercial fisheries in the KMA, but incidental commercial harvest occurs during targeted sockeye and pink salmon fisheries. The Karluk and Ayakulik Rivers both support small populations of Chinook salmon. By regulation, non-retention of Chinook salmon over 28 inches was implemented for the purse seine fleet areawide for the entire season. The 2024 commercial harvest of Chinook salmon in the KMA totaled 1,486 fish, which was below the previous 10-year average (8,247 fish) and the 2024 forecast (9,500 fish; Table 2). Due to commercial salmon restrictions because of weak early run sockeye runs, and restrictive pink salmon fishing periods, the 2024 harvest of Chinook salmon of 1,486 was the lowest in the past 42 years (excluding the 1989 Exxon Valdez year).

Sockeye Salmon

The 2024 commercial harvest of sockeye salmon totaled 1,618,363 fish. The harvest was below the recent 10-year average (2,464,057 fish) and the preseason forecast (2,981,000 fish; Table 2).

Early-season management for much of the westside of Kodiak Island is driven by Karluk River early-run sockeye salmon. The 2024 Karluk River early run was weak. Only two mandatory 33-hour fishing periods were allowed in June along much of the westside of Kodiak Island until the management focus turned to pink salmon (July 6). A total of 117,045 sockeye salmon were harvested in early-season westside areas based on Karluk River early-run sockeye salmon and the beginning of the pink salmon fishery (June 1–July 15). Eighty nine percent of those sockeye salmon were harvested after July 5. Westside sockeye salmon numbers include an estimated contribution of 22,274 sockeye salmon from the enhanced Spiridon Lake sockeye salmon run harvested outside of the Spiridon Bay Special Harvest Area.

Late-season management for much of the westside of Kodiak is driven by the Kodiak Island pink and chum salmon fishery and the Karluk River late-run sockeye salmon run. Most of the wild pink salmon runs to the westside of Kodiak Island were below average, and very short weekly fishing periods were allowed in July and early August. The Karluk River late-run sockeye salmon run was average, and liberal fishing time was allowed in August and September. A total of 698,481 sockeye salmon were commercially harvested in late-season westside areas opened based on Karluk River late-run sockeye and westside Kodiak pink and chum salmon abundance. Westside sockeye salmon numbers include an estimated contribution of 90,875 sockeye salmon from the enhanced Spiridon Lake sockeye salmon run harvested outside of the Spiridon Bay Special Harvest Area.

The Ayakulik River early-run sockeye salmon run was weak, and very few fishing days were allowed in the Outer Ayakulik and Halibut Bay Sections of the Southwest Kodiak District during early-run sockeye salmon management. A total of 117,399 sockeye salmon were harvested in areas managed based on abundance of Ayakulik River early-run sockeye salmon.

The Ayakulik River late-run sockeye salmon run was also weak. A total of 62,707 sockeye salmon were harvested in areas managed based on Ayakulik River late-run sockeye. A total of 180,106 sockeye salmon were harvested from Westside sections managed based on abundance of Ayakulik River sockeye salmon.

Upper Station early-run sockeye salmon escapement was weak, and the traditional fishing areas of the Alitak District (i.e. purse seine and set gillnet sections) were open for very few weekly fishing periods in June. The Frazer Lake sockeye salmon escapement was below average, but escapement was adequate to allow for Alitak District early-run sockeye salmon for a commercial salmon fishery through July 15. The Alitak District early-run sockeye salmon harvest was approximately 3,337 fish.

Commercial set gillnet effort in the Alitak District was very low, and despite liberal fishing time, Upper Station late-run sockeye salmon escapement was above average. The Alitak District late-run sockeye salmon harvest was 236,859 fish. The total harvest of the Alitak District sockeye salmon was 240,196 fish.

Cape Igvak Salmon Management Plan: This regulatory management plan (5 AAC 18.360) allocates up to 7.5% of the total Chignik-bound sockeye salmon harvest to KMA fishermen in the Cape Igvak Section. Based on regulations, ninety percent (90%) of all sockeye salmon caught prior to July 5 in the Cape Igvak Section are considered to be Chignik-bound.

The Chignik early-run sockeye salmon run was stronger than the past few seasons, but the majority of the harvest was after the management plan timeframe, and the allocative and biological criteria were never met to allow fishing in the Cape Igvak Section. No sockeye salmon were harvested in the Cape Igvak Section through July 5.

North Shelikof Strait Sockeye Salmon Management Plan: From July 6 to August 1, this regulatory management plan (5 AAC 18.363) places harvest limits on areas along the Mainland District and northern Shelikof Strait to limit harvest of sockeye salmon that are considered Cook Inlet-bound. During the period that this management plan is in effect, KMA fisheries are managed based on local pink and chum salmon runs. If it appears that the sockeye salmon harvest will meet or exceed limits set by the management plan, then fisheries are to be restricted to inshore “Shoreward Zones” only, and offshore “Seaward Zones” are closed (Figure 2).

A department biologist was present on the grounds to determine the sockeye salmon catch and to facilitate orderly and short-notice closures if the harvest limits are met. No Seaward Zone closures were implemented in the North Shelikof Unit through August 1 because the cumulative sockeye salmon harvest never approached the 20,000

fish limit. The total July 6 to August 1 harvest in the North Shelikof Unit was 16,218 sockeye salmon, which included both the Shoreward and Seaward Zone harvests.

A Seaward Zone closure did not take place in the Cape Igvak Management Unit. The total July 6 to August 1 harvest in the Cape Igvak Management Unit was 20,490 sockeye salmon, which included both the Shoreward and Seaward Zone harvests. Because the Cape Igvak sockeye salmon cap is based on fish tickets, the department did not determine the 20,000 fish limit was met until after August 1.

No Seaward Zone closures were implemented in the Southwest Afognak Section through July 25. The cumulative sockeye salmon harvest never approached the 50,000 fish limit. The total July 6 to July 25 harvest in the Southwest Afognak Section Unit was 8,954 sockeye salmon, which included both the Shoreward and Seaward Zone harvests.

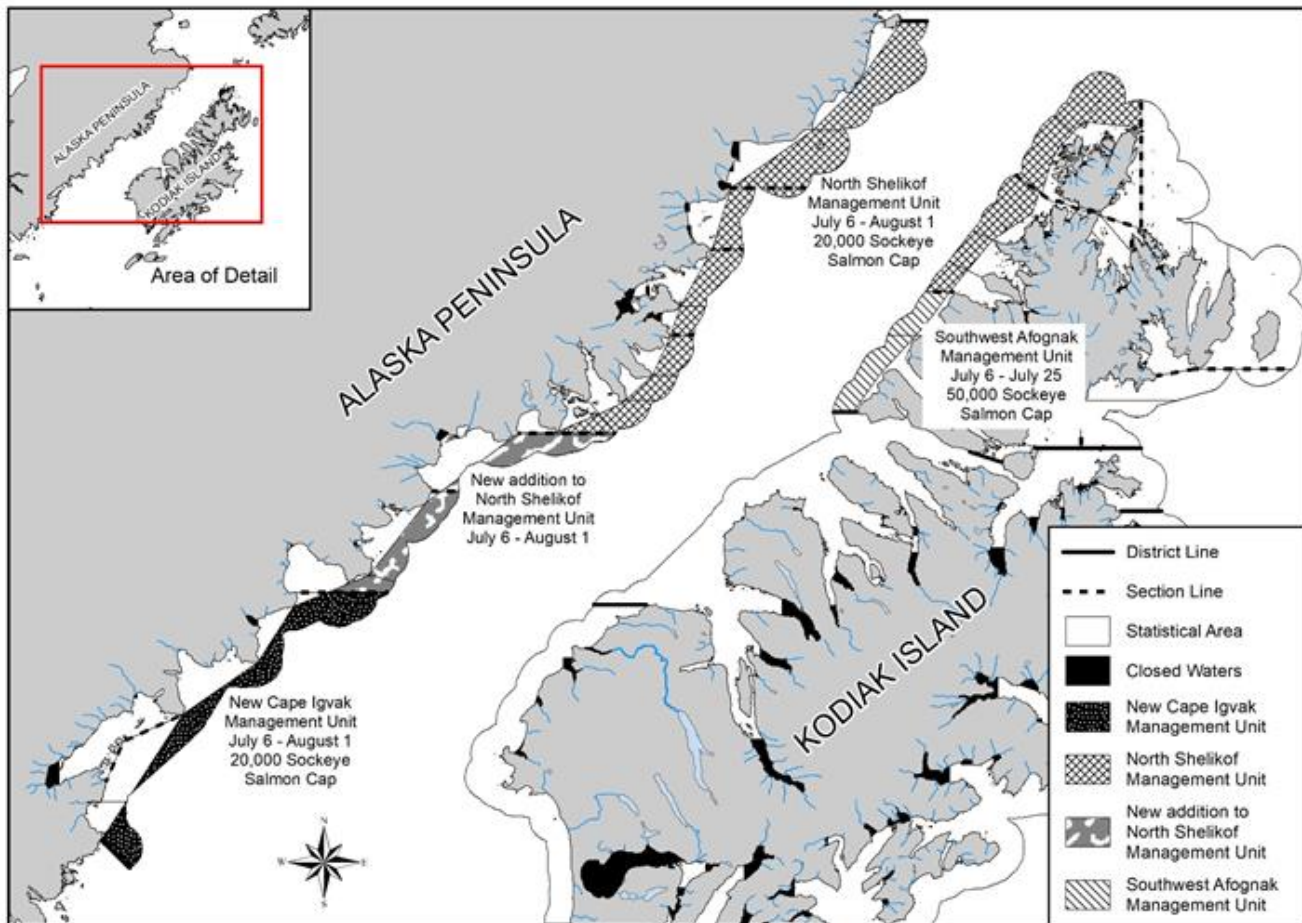


Figure 2.—Map of the North Shelikof Management Area.

Terminal and Special Harvest Areas: Some fisheries occur in areas where salmon enhancement projects create surplus production.

A confidential amount of sockeye salmon were harvested in the Foul Bay Special Harvest Area (SHA).

In the Spiridon Bay SHA (Telrod Cove) and the Spiridon Bay Section, about 168,918 sockeye salmon were harvested. Cost-recovery fish harvested by Kodiak Regional Aquaculture Association accounted for 16% of the harvest within the SHA or 26,374 fish. The harvest in the Spiridon Bay SHA and the Spiridon Bay Section

represents only a portion of the total harvest of Spiridon enhancement fish; the remainder is harvested in traditional pink and chum fisheries along the westside of Kodiak. It is estimated that approximately 113,149 Spiridon enhancement fish were harvested outside of Telrod Cove and the Spiridon Bay Section, bringing the total Spiridon enhancement sockeye salmon harvest to 282,067 fish, which was above the forecast.

The Kitoi Bay Hatchery harvest was 79,013 sockeye salmon, which was above the forecast. This includes the commercial harvest of both enhanced and wild salmon from the Inner Kitoi Bay, Outer Kitoi Bay, Duck Bay, and Izhut Bay Sections.

Coho Salmon

The commercial coho salmon harvest of 63,898 fish was well below the forecast and well below the previous 10-year average (337,506 fish; Table 2). The majority of the coho salmon were harvested on the Westside Kodiak fishery in August and September.

Pink Salmon

The 2024 KMA pink salmon harvest (including cost recovery) of 7,322,327 fish was below the forecast and the previous 10-year average harvest of 20,406,587 fish (Table 2). Pink salmon harvested in the areas managed on KMA wild stocks totaled 4,781,450 fish, which was slightly below forecast.

The Kitoi Bay Hatchery pink salmon run was also below average with 2,539,985 pink salmon harvested in sections near the hatchery and below the 2024 forecast (4,160,000 fish). Kitoi-bound pink salmon are likely harvested along the west and east sides of Kodiak and Afognak Islands. Likewise, additional wild stock salmon are likely harvested in areas associated with Kitoi Bay Hatchery. The department does not have a stock separation program for pink salmon and is unable to differentiate the KMA wild and hatchery stocks. Cost-recovery fish harvested by Kodiak Regional Aquaculture Association accounted for 39% of the harvest or 978,032 fish. An additional 293,412 pink salmon carcasses were also sold but not included in the totals.

Chum Salmon

Most of the KMA wild chum salmon are harvested during the directed pink and chum salmon fisheries in July. Most of the 2024 KMA chum salmon runs were weak. The 2024 KMA chum salmon harvest of 498,035 fish was below the 2024 forecast (540,000 fish). Additionally, the Kitoi Bay Hatchery chum salmon harvest of 376,272 chum salmon was well above the forecast (86,000 fish).

2024 Escapement Summary

Fish counting weirs were operated on eight systems in 2024, including the Karluk, Ayakulik, Upper Station, Dog Salmon, Litnik, Buskin, Saltery, and Pasagshak systems. Three observers also flew a record low 16 aerial surveys, and several observers conducted foot and skiff survey escapement estimates.

Chinook Salmon

The total Chinook salmon escapement (434 fish) was a record low, and below the previous 10-year average of 5,127 fish (Table 4). Escapement goals for Chinook salmon have been developed for the Karluk and Ayakulik Rivers, and escapements are estimated using fish counting weirs (Table 5).

The Chinook salmon escapement through the Karluk River weir was a record low (76 fish; Table 5) and below the biological escapement goal (BEG) range of 3,000 to 6,000 fish. Chinook salmon escapement through the Ayakulik River weir was a record low (354 fish; Table 5) and below the BEG range of 4,800 to 8,400 fish.

Sockeye Salmon

Sockeye salmon runs in many systems in the KMA were average to above average. Most sockeye salmon systems in the Kodiak Area met their established escapement goals, except the early runs to Karluk and Upper Station. (Table 5). The entire KMA estimated sockeye salmon escapement of 1,382,385 fish (Table 4) was below the previous 10-year average of 1,476,110 fish (Table 4).

Coho Salmon

Although the KMA has substantial coho salmon runs, the department no longer has the funds to monitor most stocks. The only established coho salmon escapement goals occur in the Northeast Kodiak and Eastside Kodiak Districts for the following systems: American (400 fish), Olds (1,000 fish), Buskin (4,700 to 9,600 fish), and the Pasagshak Rivers (1,200 fish). At the time of this report, the final estimated escapement numbers have not been finalized.

Pink Salmon

The KMA pink salmon escapement of 3,541,009 fish was below the previous 10-year average of 5,481,698 fish (Table 4). However, this should be seen as a minimal estimate given the lack of aerial surveys conducted due to an insufficient budget and increased costs. Pink salmon escapement goals have been established as aggregate goals for the entire Kodiak Archipelago and the Mainland District. The 2024 escapement for the Kodiak Archipelago (3,383,009 fish) was within escapement goal range of 2.0 to 5.0 million fish (Table 5). The Mainland District pink salmon escapement of only 158,000 fish was below average and below the established escapement goal range (250,000 to 1,000,000 fish; Table 5).

Chum Salmon

The overall KMA chum salmon escapement of 158,371 fish was very weak and below the previous 10-year average (373,482 fish; Table 4). A peak indexed escapement goal based on 17 streams on Kodiak Island has been established; the 2024 peak indexed escapement of 72,200 fish was below the goal of 101,000 fish (Table 5).

Table 4. Total salmon escapements in the KMA for all species in 2024 compared to average escapements from 2014 to 2023.

| Species | 2024 KMA escapement ^a | 2014–2023 average KMA escapement |
|---------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Chinook | 434 | 5,127 |
| Sockeye | 1,382,385 | 1,476,110 |
| Coho | 25,237 | 73,025 |
| Pink | 3,541,009 | 5,481,698 |
| Chum | 158,371 | 373,482 |

^a 2024 escapement estimates are the sum of all weir, aerial survey, and foot survey estimates. These are minimum estimates and are incomplete due to limited dates of weir operation and poor survey conditions. This includes escapement from all streams surveyed including many non-index streams that are not measured against established escapement goals.

Table 5. Salmon peak escapements and escapement goals by species in the KMA, 2024.

| Species | Stream District/System (stock) | Stream Number | Escapement Goal | | 2024 Peak Escapement |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| | | | Lower | Upper | |
| Chinook | | | | | |
| | Karluk | 255-101 | 3,000 | 6,000 | 76 |
| | Ayakulik | 256-201 | 4,800 | 8,400 | 354 |
| | | Total | 7,800 | 14,400 | 430 |
| Sockeye | | | | | |
| | Afognak | 252-342 | 20,000 | 50,000 | 32,218 |
| | Karluk | 255-101 | | | |
| | Early run | | 150,000 | 250,000 | 67,743 |
| | Late run | | 200,000 | 450,000 | 430,829 |
| | Ayakulik | 256-201 | | | |
| | Early run | | 140,000 | 280,000 | 221,701 |
| | Late run | | 60,000 | 120,000 | 96,293 |
| | Upper Station | 257-304 | | | |
| | Early run | | 43,000 | 93,000 | 30,252 |
| | Late run | | 120,000 | 265,000 | 222,131 |
| | Frazer Lake | 257-403 | 75,000 | 170,000 | 78,504 |
| | Buskin | 259-211 | 5,000 | 8,000 | 9,704 |
| | Pasagshak | 259-411 | 3,000 | | 7,641 |
| | Saltery | 259-415 | 15,000 | 35,000 | 66,110 |
| | | | 832,000 | 1,731,000 | 1,263,126 |
| Pink^a | | | | | |
| | Mainland District | | 250,000 | 1,000,000 | 158,000 |
| | Kodiak Archipelago | | 2,000,000 | 5,000,000 | 3,383,009 |
| | | Total | 2,250,000 | 6,000,000 | 3,541,009 |
| Chum^b | | | | | |
| | | Kodiak Archipelago | 101,000 | | 72,200 |
| | | Total | 101,000 | | 72,200 |

^a 2024 escapement estimates are the sum of all weir, aerial survey, and foot survey estimates. These may be minimum estimates only, and are incomplete due to limited dates of weir operation, and poor survey conditions.

^b The Kodiak Archipelago peak index escapement goal is based on 17 Kodiak Archipelago streams and does not represent actual the KMA chum salmon escapement.