



Advisory Announcement

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2024 Lower Cook Inlet Commercial Salmon Fishery Season Summary

The 2024 Lower Cook Inlet Area commercial salmon harvest was 321,000 fish. The harvest was composed of 120 Chinook, 301,100 sockeye, 140 coho, 16,700 pink, and 3,300 chum salmon (Table 1), of which 166,300 (52%) were commercial harvest and 155,100 (48%) were hatchery cost recovery. Total commercial harvest value was estimated to be \$2.5 million. In 2024, the Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association (CIAA) cost recovery goal of \$2.5 million was not attained with approximately \$1.3 million achieved. All data in this summary are preliminary.

Southern District

The 2024 preseason commercial harvest forecast for the Southern District was 71,800 sockeye and 141,800 pink salmon with an additional 71,000 hatchery-produced sockeye and 735,000 hatchery pink salmon available in special harvest areas (SHAs). The purse seine harvest was 9 Chinook, 79,360 sockeye, 31 coho, 303 pink, and 352 chum salmon with 9 permit holders reporting deliveries. This compares to previous 10-year average harvests of 88 Chinook, 59,056 sockeye, 1,236 coho, 181,290 pink, and 1,247 chum salmon.

Total sockeye salmon commercial seine harvest from hatchery subdistricts in the Southern District was 155,216 fish, with 49% of that hatchery cost recovery, and the remainder (79,221 fish) commercial harvest. Total pink salmon seine harvest from the Tutka Subdistrict was 7,445 fish with approximately 2% of those harvested by commercial permit holders and the remainder (7,287 fish) taken for cost recovery. Hatchery returns of sockeye salmon were above preseason projections, and below that for pink salmon.

The 2024 set gillnet harvest was 102 Chinook, 23,065 sockeye, 42 coho, 1,128 pink, and 1,219 chum salmon with 21 permits reporting deliveries. The previous 10-year average harvests for this gear type were 378 Chinook, 24,113 sockeye, 2,417 coho, 21,288 pink, and 4,462 chum salmon.

Southern District pink salmon escapement was 10,760 fish and below the sustainable escapement goal (SEG) of 50,000–110,000. The sustainable escapement goal (SEG) for pink salmon in the Southern District is 50,000–110,000. Pink salmon escapement of 10,760 and was below this goal. Chum salmon escapement in the Southern District was 1,928 fish and within the SEG range of 1,500 – 5,000 fish. Escapement at the English Bay River weir was 19,529 sockeye salmon which is above the SEG range of 6,300–12,200 for this system.

Outer District

The 2024 preseason commercial harvest forecast for the Outer District was 22,200 sockeye, 398,900 pink, and 23,700 chum salmon. The harvest from the seven permit holders that delivered, was 1 Chinook, 35,017 sockeye, 25 coho, 70,091 pink, and 1,693 chum salmon. This harvest compares to previous 10-year average harvests of 30 Chinook, 10,650 sockeye, 379 coho, 1.1 million pink, and 53,784 chum salmon.

Pink salmon escapement to Outer District index streams of 51,694, was below the Outer District SEG of 105,000 – 235,000 fish. Chum salmon escapement in the Outer District of 11,146 fish was below the 17,500–32,000 fish SEG. The Desire Lake sockeye salmon escapement of 12,250 was above the 4,800 – 11,900 SEG range. Delight Lake sockeye salmon escapement was 8,410 and within the 5,100 – 10,600 SEG range.

Kamishak Bay District

The 2024 preseason commercial harvest forecast for the Kamishak Bay District was 63,600 sockeye, 120 coho, 11,200 pink, and 8,300 chum salmon. Cook Inlet Aquaculture Association (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 due to fewer than three permit holders reporting deliveries from this area. In addition, 30,899 sockeye salmon were harvested by CIAA from the Kirschner Lake SHA for cost recovery.

Pink salmon escapement to this district was 2,743 and below the 35,000 – 150,000 SEG range. Chum salmon escapement was 32,538 and below the 50,000 – 115,000 SEG range. Sockeye salmon escapement to Chenik Lake and Amakdedori Creek were within their respective SEG ranges. Sockeye salmon escapement to Mikfik Lake was not fully enumerated due to an issue with the remote video monitoring system that occurred on July 6; escapement through that date was 241 sockeye salmon.

Eastern District

Due to small runs in the last 10 years, no wild stock sockeye or pink salmon were forecasted to be available for commercial harvest from the Eastern District in 2024. CIAA forecasted a total run of 111,500 sockeye salmon to Resurrection Bay release sites with 91,200 fish needed for broodstock and cost recovery. Total cost recovery harvest from this district was 40,024 sockeye salmon. An additional 2,774 sockeye salmon were donated to the public by CIAA. Commercial harvest numbers for this district are confidential due to fewer than three permit holders reporting harvests. The previous 10-year commercial harvest average for sockeye salmon is 4,888 fish. CIAA passed 13,894 sockeye salmon through the Bear Creek weir in 2024. However, 2,173 sockeye salmon were subsequently removed from Bear Lake for broodstock, leaving a final spawning escapement of 11,721 fish, which is above the SEG of 700–8,300. Hatchery returns of sockeye salmon to this district were below preseason anticipated levels. The only other index stock in the Eastern District is Aialik Lake sockeye salmon which exceeded the SEG.

Table 1. Lower Cook Inlet commercial salmon harvest based on preliminary fish ticket data, 2024.

District (or hatchery)	Permits	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
Southern District	9	9	79,360	31	303	352	80,055
Outer District	7	1	35,017	25	7,091	1,693	43,827
Eastern and Kamishak districts	<3	-----confidential-----					
Purse seine preliminary total	10	10	128,138	56	7,397	2,047	137,648
Southern District	21	102	23,065	42	1,128	1,219	25,556
Set gillnet preliminary total	21	102	23,065	42	1,128	1,219	25,556
Commercial common property preliminary total		112	151,203	98	8,525	3,266	163,204
Hatchery cost recovery preliminary harvests							
Tutka Lagoon SHA		0	55,072	0	8,141	0	63,213
Hazel Lake SHA		0	6,247	0	1	0	6,248
China Poot SHA		0	14,676	0	1	1	14,678
Resurrection Bay SHA		0	40,024	0	0	3	40,027
Kirschner Lake SHA		0	30,899	0	2	3	30,904
Hatchery preliminary total			146,918	0	8,145	7	155,070
Hatchery donated fish		0	2,774	0	0	0	2,774
Commercial homepack		3	206	39	21	3	272
LCI preliminary total harvest		115	301,101	137	16,691	3,276	321,320

*Note: Harvests from areas where there were fewer than 3 permit holders reporting deliveries are confidential.