



Nick Dudiak Fishing Lagoon-Homer Spit

The Nick Dudiak Fishing Lagoon (aka the fishing hole) is located on the iconic Homer spit within Kachemak Bay in the community of Homer.

Although most anglers heading to Homer are destined for a saltwater excursion for halibut, there's a diversity of additional sport fishing opportunities to consider.

The fishing hole is an easily accessible shore-based sport fishing location that is popular with both Homer area residents and visiting anglers alike.



Stocking

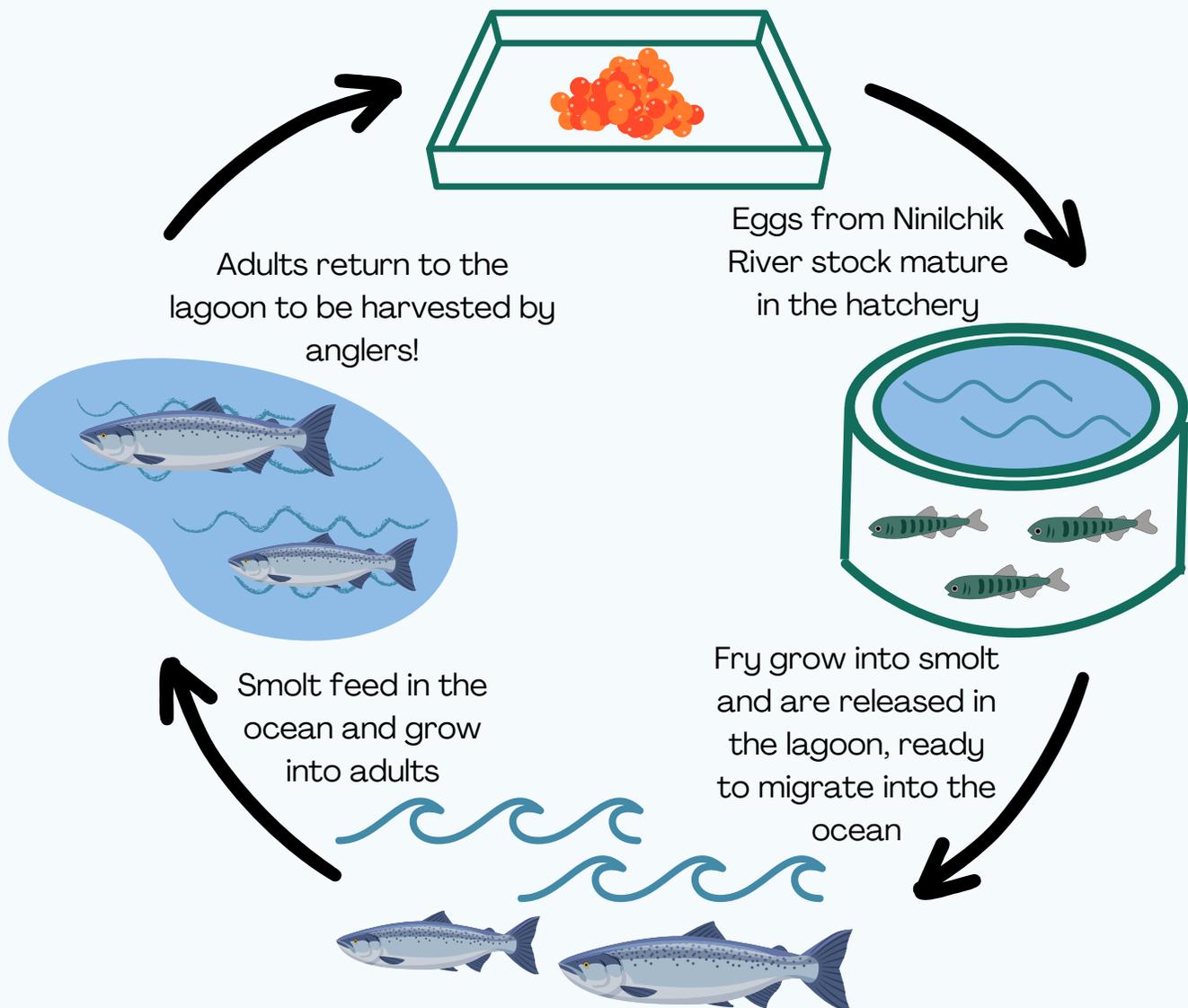
Although there is no shortage of water on the Homer spit, the Nick Dudiak Fishing Lagoon is actually a man-made facility that was first stocked with salmon in 1984.

This stocking program is considered a terminal fishery which means there is no freshwater or spawning habitat for salmon, so smolt have to be stocked every year to produce annual runs of returning salmon. Currently ADF&G stocks approximately 315,000 king salmon smolt and 115,000 coho salmon smolt each year. These stocking levels typically result in a harvest of 1,000-2,000 king salmon and 1,000-5,000 coho salmon annually.

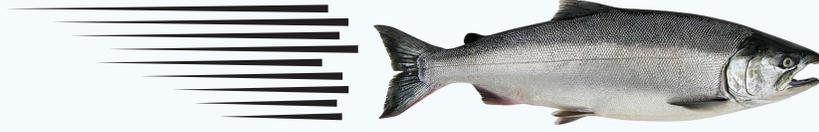


Stocking

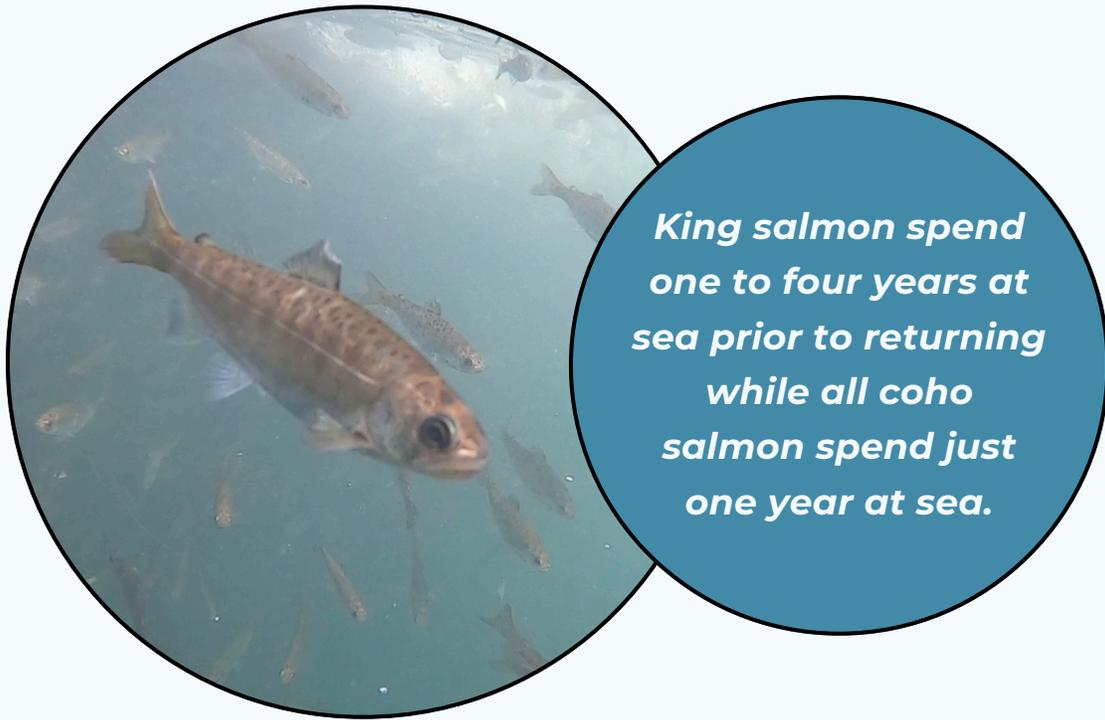
The broodstock used for this stocking program are Ninilchik River hatchery king salmon that return to spawn in the Ninilchik River each year. All king and coho salmon smolt are produced by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Sport Fish Division's William Jack Hernandez Hatchery in Anchorage.



Returning Salmon



Due to the imprinting process during stocking, salmon have an ability to return to the fishing lagoon despite there not being freshwater. King salmon mostly start showing up in fishable numbers around Memorial Day weekend, typically the run peaks in mid-June, and wraps up by the end of June.



King salmon spend one to four years at sea prior to returning while all coho salmon spend just one year at sea.

Coho salmon start arriving to the fishing hole soon after the king salmon run in early July, peak in early August, and are all harvested by late August. Coho salmon range in size from 4-12lbs. King salmon are mostly in the 8-17 lbs. range but can weigh up to 30 lbs.

Trip Planning



As far as trip planning goes it doesn't get much simpler than fishing at the fishing hole. It's easily reachable by car and provides a great opportunity for anglers to harvest returning salmon from shore.

Most anglers fish from inside and just outside the mouth of the lagoon in rubber boots. Waders can be helpful for fishing outside of the lagoon as the tide starts flooding into the lagoon and as the tide leaves the lagoon. For those looking to make a weekend out of a fishing trip, but there are several campgrounds on the spit, including one right nextdoor.



ADF&G
Online Store



ADF&G
Mobile App

Fishing licenses and king salmon stamps can be purchased online at the ADF&G online store, on the ADF&G mobile app, from local vendors, or by stopping at the Fish and Game office. Always review current regulations and check for emergency orders.



Bait and tackle can be bought from local vendors. If you don't have a fishing rod, the Homer ADF&G office has a Rod Loaner program.

What to use



The most common setup is a stout spinning rod with a reel capable of holding a couple hundred yards of 20lbs test. Lighter medium action spinning rods can make fishing for coho salmon more fun.

Anglers are successful at enticing both king and coho salmon to bite with bait, but lures such as spinners work well at times too. Plug cut herring or a chunk of herring or mackerel are also effective.



Size 4/0 and 5/0 hooks are the most effective size for king salmon and sizing down to 3/0 hooks works well for coho salmon.

Cured salmon roe clusters on an egg-loop around 18 in. under a bobber is arguably the most effective and popular way to entice a bite at the fishing hole.



Since salmon mostly swim around the fishing hole just under the surface, using fly fishing gear is an option when it's less crowded with other anglers.



For fly fisherman, it's probably best to explore through the fly box a bit, but size 2-4 leeches and streamers would be a good place to start. Dolly Llamas, flash flies, and leech patterns are common patterns for targeting king and coho salmon.

When to Fish



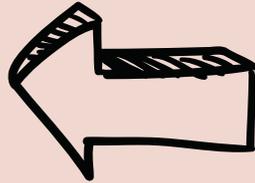
Both king and coho salmon are morning biters, but if getting up at 4 am is not your idea of fun, then you'll want to focus your efforts on fishing through the tidal exchanges. The best time to fish inside of the lagoon around the entrance is during an incoming tide which starts around when the tide height is near 11 feet. Anglers tend to find success outside the lagoon during the outgoing tide. The best time to fish within the remainder of the lagoon is anyone's guess but fish are consistently caught around high tide and for the next hour.

Don't miss out on two youth-only fishery days, the first Saturday in June and August every year!

Snagging in the Lagoon

In all Nick Dudiak Fishing Lagoon waters, snagging is prohibited in regulation; however, when a surplus of fish build up in the fishing hole snagging may open by emergency order. If snagging does open, it usually occurs in late June or early July for king salmon and mid-August for coho salmon.

It's best to be prepared with some safety equipment such as sunglasses and pliers. Most try to snag salmon with weighted treble hooks.



Homer Fishing Information

~ Pacific Salmon Identification ~

Chinook (king) Salmon



- Spots on back and both lobes of the tail
- Black mouth with a black gumline

Coho (silver) Salmon

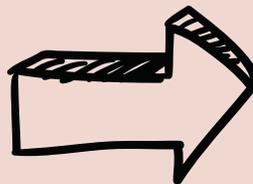


- Spots on back and upper lobe of the tail
- Black mouth with a white gumline

Marine Phase



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