

**Fishery Management Report No. 25-36**

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**Report on Selected Sport Fisheries of the Alaska  
Peninsula–Aleutian Islands Management Area,  
2015–2025**

by

**Tyler Polum**

**Mark Witteveen**

**And**

**Brianna Woolever**

December 2025

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Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Divisions of Sport Fish and Commercial Fisheries



## Symbols and Abbreviations

The following symbols and abbreviations, and others approved for the Système International d'Unités (SI), are used without definition in the following reports by the Divisions of Sport Fish and of Commercial Fisheries: Fishery Manuscripts, Fishery Data Series Reports, Fishery Management Reports, and Special Publications. All others, including deviations from definitions listed below, are noted in the text at first mention, as well as in the titles or footnotes of tables, and in figures or figure captions.

<b>Weights and measures (metric)</b>		<b>General</b>		<b>Mathematics, statistics</b>	
centimeter	cm	Alaska Administrative Code	AAC	<i>all standard mathematical signs, symbols and abbreviations</i>	
deciliter	dL	all commonly accepted abbreviations	e.g., Mr., Mrs., AM, PM, etc.	alternate hypothesis	$H_A$
gram	g	all commonly accepted professional titles	e.g., Dr., Ph.D., R.N., etc.	base of natural logarithm	$e$
hectare	ha	at	@	catch per unit effort	CPUE
kilogram	kg	compass directions:		coefficient of variation	CV
kilometer	km	east	E	common test statistics	(F, t, $\chi^2$ , etc.)
liter	L	north	N	confidence interval	CI
meter	m	south	S	correlation coefficient (multiple)	R
milliliter	mL	west	W	correlation coefficient (simple)	r
millimeter	mm	copyright	©	covariance	cov
		corporate suffixes:		degree (angular)	$^\circ$
<b>Weights and measures (English)</b>		Company	Co.	degrees of freedom	df
cubic feet per second	ft <sup>3</sup> /s	Corporation	Corp.	expected value	$E$
foot	ft	Incorporated	Inc.	greater than	>
gallon	gal	Limited	Ltd.	greater than or equal to	$\geq$
inch	in	District of Columbia	D.C.	harvest per unit effort	HPUE
mile	mi	et alii (and others)	et al.	less than	<
nautical mile	nmi	et cetera (and so forth)	etc.	less than or equal to	$\leq$
ounce	oz	exempli gratia (for example)	e.g.	logarithm (natural)	ln
pound	lb	Federal Information Code	FIC	logarithm (base 10)	log
quart	qt	id est (that is)	i.e.	logarithm (specify base)	log <sub>2</sub> , etc.
yard	yd	latitude or longitude	lat or long	minute (angular)	'
		monetary symbols (U.S.)	\$, ¢	not significant	NS
<b>Time and temperature</b>		months (tables and figures): first three letters	Jan, ..., Dec	null hypothesis	$H_0$
day	d	registered trademark	®	percent	%
degrees Celsius	°C	trademark	™	probability	P
degrees Fahrenheit	°F	United States (adjective)	U.S.	probability of a type I error (rejection of the null hypothesis when true)	$\alpha$
degrees kelvin	K	United States of America (noun)	USA	probability of a type II error (acceptance of the null hypothesis when false)	$\beta$
hour	h	U.S.C.	United States Code	second (angular)	"
minute	min	U.S. state	use two-letter abbreviations (e.g., AK, WA)	standard deviation	SD
second	s			standard error	SE
<b>Physics and chemistry</b>				variance	
all atomic symbols				population sample	Var
alternating current	AC			sample	var
ampere	A				
calorie	cal				
direct current	DC				
hertz	Hz				
horsepower	hp				
hydrogen ion activity (negative log of)	pH				
parts per million	ppm				
parts per thousand	ppt, ‰				
volts	V				
watts	W				

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PENINSULA–ALEUTIAN ISLANDS MANAGEMENT AREA, 2015–2025**

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## ABSTRACT

This report provides a description and detailed summary of the sport fisheries occurring within the Alaska Peninsula–Aleutian Islands Management Area. Estimates of sport fishing effort, harvest, and catch are summarized through 2024. All other information, including relevant stock assessments and management actions, are generally available through 2025. Included for each fishery are a short description, research activities, and recent fisheries performance.

Keywords: Alaska Peninsula–Aleutian Islands Regulatory Area, Chignik River, Nelson River, Cold Bay, Unalaska Island, Chinook salmon, *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*, coho salmon, *O. kisutch*, sockeye salmon, *O. nerka*, pink salmon, *O. gorbuscha*, chum salmon, *O. keta*, steelhead, rainbow trout, *O. mykiss*, halibut, *Hippoglossus stenolepis*, rockfish, *Sebastes* spp., lingcod, *Ophiodon elongatus*, sport fisheries, Alaska Board of Fisheries, fisheries management, escapement

## INTRODUCTION

This fisheries management report provides a summary of the sport fisheries occurring within the Alaska Peninsula–Aleutian Islands Management Area (APAIA; Figure 1), which is managed out of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), Division of Sport Fish (SF) Kodiak office. This report is provided for the Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF; Appendix B1), Fish and Game Advisory Committees (ACs), the general public, and other interested parties. Included is a description of the management area, and overview of fishery resources and management plans and policies. Fisheries are described and organized by species, management areas, subunits, and specific drainages or fisheries locations. A historical overview and description, historical harvests and salmon escapements, research and management objectives, and recent fishery performance are discussed for the primary sport fisheries throughout the area.

The mission of SF is to protect and improve the state’s fishery resources by managing for sustainable yield of wild stocks of fish, providing diverse sport fishing opportunities, and providing information to assist the BOF in optimizing social and economic benefits from sport fisheries. The guiding document for SF continues to be the Strategic Plan,<sup>1</sup> which highlights key issues currently facing SF and acts as a guide for division leaders and managers in decision making. To implement these goals, SF has in place a fisheries management process that includes an annual regional review of fisheries status and research needs, development of fisheries stock assessments, a formal operational planning process, use of biological and fishing effort data, and input from user groups to assess the need for and to develop management plans and regulatory proposals.

SF management and research activities are funded by ADF&G from the sale of state sport fishing licenses and by Federal Aid in Fisheries Restoration Act funds derived from federal taxes on fishing tackle and equipment and provided to states at a match of up to 3-to-1 with state funds. Additional funding specified for providing, protecting, and managing access to fish and game is provided through a tax on boat gas and equipment established by the Wallop-Breaux Act. Other peripheral funding sources may include contracts with various government agencies and the private sector, or in a few cases, State of Alaska general funds.

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<sup>1</sup> Division of Sport Fish Strategic Plan 2022–2027. Alaska Department of Fish and Game Division of Sport Fish. Available at [http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/fishing/PDFs/sport/Strategic\\_Plan.pdf](http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/fishing/PDFs/sport/Strategic_Plan.pdf).



Figure 1.—Map of the Alaska Peninsula–Aleutian Islands Area (APAIA).

This fisheries management report presents harvest information for the APAIA fisheries through 2024. Fisheries data that do not rely on harvest estimates, including salmon weir and survey counts, are presented through 2025 to give the most recent information available. Estimates of escapement rely on harvest estimates so escapements for 2025 will be presented in future reports when the 2025 harvest information becomes available. This report is organized into a management area overview, including a description of the management area and a summary of effort, harvest, and catch for the area, and sections describing significant area fisheries including specific harvest and catch by species and geographical region or drainage.

## **MANAGEMENT AREA OVERVIEW**

### **MANAGEMENT AREA DESCRIPTION**

The APAIA includes all fresh and salt waters of Alaska on the south side of the Alaska Peninsula, including Pacific Ocean drainages west of the longitude of Cape Douglas, all waters on the north side of the Alaska Peninsula, including Bering Sea drainages south of the latitude of Cape Menchikof, and all fresh and salt waters within and surrounding the Aleutian Islands as well as the Pribilof Islands (Figure 1). This area also has a subunit called the Unalaska–Dutch Harbor Road Zone.

The community of Unalaska–Dutch Harbor is the largest community in the APAIA, and there are more than a dozen smaller villages. Except for the road-accessible fisheries located on Unalaska and near the community of Cold Bay on the Alaska Peninsula, virtually all significant sport fishing opportunities in the APAIA are remote and relatively difficult to access. Principal landowners include the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, National Park Service, various Alaska Native corporations, and the State of Alaska.

Management and research operations for sport fisheries in the APAIA are administered through ADF&G SF for the Southcentral Region and are based in the Kodiak Area Office. During the report years 2015–2025, area staff members stationed in Kodiak included 3 permanent full-time Fishery Biologists, 1 Program Technician, several seasonal Fish and Wildlife Technicians, and high school interns. Additional support for the Kodiak office is provided through the regional headquarters office based in Anchorage. Programmatic functions of the Kodiak office include operating salmon counting weirs, collecting and analyzing biological samples, conducting angler creel and salmon escapement surveys, and implementing sport fisheries stocking projects.

### **FISHERY RESOURCES**

APAIA sport fishery resources include numerous pink (*Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*) and coho salmon (*O. kisutch*) runs that make up the majority of the freshwater fish resources in the area. Although fewer in number, there are also many sockeye (*O. nerka*) and Chinook salmon (*O. tshawytscha*) runs that are important for guided and unguided anglers. Chum salmon (*O. keta*) are one of the least exploited sport fish resources, although there are many chum salmon runs available to all users. In the APAIA, salmon runs are harvested primarily by the commercial fisheries, with sport and subsistence harvests composing just a small part of overall harvests, although they can be significant for individual salmon runs. APAIA salmon runs are characterized by low angler harvest and effort because most of the area is remote and sparsely populated near accessible salmon streams. APAIA streams and lakes also host numerous steelhead (*O. mykiss*) and rainbow trout (*O. mykiss*) populations.

Saltwater sport fish resources include saltwater salmon fisheries (e.g., Unalaska Bay area) but are primarily composed of harvests of halibut (*Hippoglossus stenolepis*), lingcod (*Ophiodon elongatus*), rockfish (*Sebastes* spp.), and Pacific cod (*Gadus macrocephalus*). There are also small sport harvests of crab and other shellfish. Most of the APAIA groundfish and shellfish harvests are commercial, and very little is due to sport anglers and subsistence users.

APAIA subsistence fisheries are highly important to local residents, and subsistence users often switch between sport fishing regulations and subsistence fishing regulations to fulfill subsistence needs because the 2 fisheries allow different gear types, limits, and often occur in different locations. Many anglers and subsistence users in the APAIA are also participants and business owners in the area's commercial fisheries, which is the primary economic activity within the APAIA. There are also a number of guided sport fisheries throughout the APAIA, primarily in freshwater areas, providing significant economic benefits to local communities, and guides are often the only means of accessing these fisheries for nonresidents (of the area) due to the remoteness and lack of local services within the APAIA.

## **ESTABLISHED MANAGEMENT PLANS AND POLICIES**

Codified regulations governing sport fisheries of the APAIA are established in Chapter 65, Title 5 of the Alaska Administrative Code (5 AAC 65). Regulatory provisions and policies of the area not specified in Chapter 65 may be found in the Chapter 75 administrative code pertaining to statewide regulation of Alaska sport fisheries and in the *Policy for the management of sustainable salmon fisheries* (5 AAC 39.222); *Policy for the management of sustainable wild trout fisheries* (5 AAC 75.222); and the *Policy for statewide salmon escapement goals* (5 AAC 39.223).

Fisheries regulations are developed within the established BOF process. Public input concerning regulatory changes and fishery allocation issues is accommodated in this process through various means including submission of proposals, direct testimony to the BOF, and participation in local fish and game AC meetings. The ACs have been established throughout Alaska specifically to provide a conduit for public access to the BOF and to assist the BOF in addressing fisheries issues. SF serves as technical advisor at both AC and BOF meetings. In this way, the meetings provide for direct public interaction with ADF&G staff involved with fish resource issues of local concern. In the APAIA, there are 6 ACs: Chignik, King Cove, False Pass, Nelson Lagoon, Sand Point, and Unalaska–Dutch Harbor. The BOF meets on a 3-year cycle for specific geographical areas and fish resource groupings. Regulatory proposals concerning the APAIA were addressed previously in February 2023. The next regularly scheduled BOF meeting for the APAIA is scheduled for February of 2026.

To resolve allocation conflicts between or within user groups while instituting effective conservation measures, the BOF may institute fishery-specific management plans and policies to guide ADF&G. These plans are meant to ensure sustained yield of fish resources in conjunction with the establishment of allocations based on management actions and guidelines; however, there are no management plans established for any APAIA sport fisheries at this time.

## **SPORT FISHING EFFORT, HARVEST, AND CATCH**

Sport fishing effort and harvest of sport fish species in the APAIA have been estimated and reported annually since 1977 using the Alaska Sport Fishing Survey (commonly referred to as the Statewide Harvest Survey [SWHS]), an annual questionnaire mailed to a stratified random sample

of (resident or nonresident) households with at least 1 valid fishing license.<sup>2</sup> The SWHS estimates both guided and unguided sport fishing effort in “angler-days,” which is the total number of days spent fishing by all anglers, plus angler harvest and (since 1990) total catch by fishing location. Estimates of harvest and catch are also available by species, but the SWHS does not estimate effort by species. Survey results for each year are not available until the following year; hence, the results for 2025 will not be available until fall 2026, so this report only contains SWHS results through 2024.

Between 2006 and 2016, freshwater harvest, catch, and effort were also reported by guided anglers in logbooks administered through the ADF&G Freshwater Logbook Program. The ADF&G Saltwater Logbook Program is ongoing and provides harvest, catch, and effort for guided saltwater anglers. These sources are considered a census of guided effort due to mandatory reporting. However, historical logbook information for APAIA is sparse because there were rarely more than 3 guide businesses operating in a specific fishery, resulting in confidential data.

The APAIA is within the SWHS reporting Area R, which is the Naknek River drainage–Alaska Peninsula reporting area. Area R SWHS statistics pertinent to the APAIA include those from sport fisheries occurring within and around the Alaska Peninsula south of a line from Cape Douglas around the Alaska Peninsula to Cape Menchikof and including the Aleutian Islands (Figure 1).

## **Effort**

An average of 13,401 angler-days were expended in APAIA waters from 2015 to 2024 (Table 1), which is less than 1% of the average statewide total and about 1% of the average for the Southcentral Region<sup>3</sup> during the same period.<sup>4</sup> During this 10-year period, effort in the APAIA peaked at 19,031 angler-days in 2018. In 2024, APAIA anglers accounted for 6,554 angler-days (Table 1).

Major APAIA fisheries occur in the vicinity of Cold Bay and in the Unalaska–Dutch Harbor Road Zone. Other relatively significant fisheries in the area consist of several drainages frequented by remote lodge operators based on the north side of the Alaska Peninsula such as the Nelson and Sandy Rivers and in the Chignik River drainage. Due to the remote location and corresponding high cost to access most fishing destinations within the APAIA, overall angler effort is modest compared to nearby management areas to the extent that during most years, estimates of effort are unavailable in most individual locations in the APAIA due to a lack of respondents to the SWHS.

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<sup>2</sup> Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996–present. Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 2025). Available from: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey/>.

<sup>3</sup> ADF&G, Division of Sport Fish, Southcentral Region (i.e., Region II) includes the following management areas: Anchorage Area, Bristol Bay, Kodiak–Aleutians, Lower Cook Inlet (Kenai), Northern Cook Inlet (Matanuska–Susitna), Prince William Sound Area, Seward–North Gulf Coast, and Upper Kenai Peninsula.

<sup>4</sup> Calculated from Table 1 and data obtained from the Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996–present. Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 2025). Available from: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey/>.

Table 1.—Total angler-days of sport fishing effort expended in Alaska Peninsula–Aleutian Islands Area waters, 2015–2024.

Year	Saltwater effort		Freshwater effort		Area total
	Angler-days	Percent (%) of area	Angler-days	Percent (%) of area	
2015	7,742	53	6,937	47	14,679
2016	4,990	47	5,549	53	10,539
2017	2,316	24	7,202	76	9,518
2018	8,243	43	10,788	57	19,031
2019	5,698	31	12,764	69	18,462
2020	6,341	45	7,688	55	14,029
2021	5,689	42	7,704	58	13,393
2022	3,363	24	10,453	76	13,816
2023	3,680	26	10,305	74	13,985
2024	2,091	32	4,463	68	6,554
Average 2015–2024	5,015	37	8,385	63	13,401

Source: Statewide Harvest Survey (SWHS) estimates from the Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996–present. Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 2025). Available from: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey/>.

Note: Does not include the streams in the Ugashik, Naknek or Egegik River drainages reported in the SWHS as Alaska Peninsula Drainages, or unspecified areas in the Alaska Peninsula or Aleutian Islands.

## Harvest

From 2015 to 2024, an average of 10,688 fish were harvested by anglers fishing APAIA waters (Table 2). Coho salmon made up the largest portion of the average harvest at 39% of all species, sockeye salmon were the next most common at 12%, and halibut and rockfish were also very common at 12% and 9% of the average harvest, respectively (calculated from Table 2). In 2024, a total of 7,490 fish were harvested by anglers in APAIA waters, and a majority of the total harvest was rockfish (35%) and coho salmon (25%). The next most common species in the harvest was halibut at 16% of the total harvest. Other species harvested in 2024 included Chinook salmon, pink salmon, chum salmon, lingcod, Pacific cod, black cod (*Anoplopoma fimbria*), and Dolly Varden (*Salvelinus malma*).

## Catch

In 2024, the proportion of total catch was greatest for coho salmon (39%), with rockfish (16%) and Chinook salmon (15%) following (calculated from Table 3). SWHS estimates of total catch (number of fish harvested plus number released; Table 3) by anglers fishing APAIA waters can be used to calculate release to harvest ratios (from Tables 2 and 3). Species with the highest release to harvest ratios in 2024 were Chinook salmon (25 were released for every 1 harvested), and steelhead and rainbow trout (none were harvested). Steelhead and rainbow trout are typically the primary catch-and-release species targeted by anglers in the APAIA; however, Chinook salmon have recently become more popular as a catch-and-release species. In contrast, species with the lowest release to harvest ratios (1 or less released for every 1 harvested) include sockeye salmon and most groundfish.

Table 2.—Statewide Harvest Survey estimates of the number of fish harvested by anglers fishing Alaska Peninsula–Aleutian Islands Area fresh and salt waters combined, 2015-2024.

Species	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Average 2015–2024
<b>Salmon</b>											
Pink	704	539	925	3,947	405	790	124	770	58	34	830
Coho	4,114	3,696	3,937	6,122	4,871	2,820	3,582	5,543	4,869	1,867	4,142
Sockeye	4,368	634	1,253	1,867	693	763	269	1,204	1,165	464	1,268
Chinook	551	533	764	1,005	584	65	22	205	107	150	399
Chum	17	152	161	44	228	0	198	368	0	66	123
<b>Groundfish</b>											
Halibut	778	1,657	409	1,055	1,623	775	847	519	860	1,163	969
Rockfish	2,086	1,023	339	1,970	1,929	1,093	510	382	568	2,657	1,256
Lingcod	120	42	0	40	320	50	123	117	135	138	109
Black cod	0	10	412	101	20	0	351	140	79	72	119
Pacific cod	1,065	845	686	1,104	1,165	471	310	296	239	704	689
<b>Trout and char</b>											
Dolly Varden	1,173	293	388	1,635	481	215	323	541	1,697	175	692
Rainbow trout	20	0	0	0	72	9	0	0	52	0	15
Steelhead	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other fish <sup>a</sup>	194	255	0	239	24	59	0	0	18	0	79
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,190</b>	<b>9,679</b>	<b>9,274</b>	<b>19,129</b>	<b>12,415</b>	<b>7,110</b>	<b>6,659</b>	<b>10,085</b>	<b>9,847</b>	<b>7,490</b>	<b>10,688</b>

Source: Statewide Harvest Survey (SWHS) estimates from the Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996–present. Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 2025). Available from: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey/>.

Note: Does not include the Ugashik, Naknek or Egegik River areas reported in the SWHS as Alaska Peninsula locations, or unspecified areas in the Alaska Peninsula or Aleutian Islands.

<sup>a</sup>. Includes lake trout (*Salvelinus namaycush*), sharks, shellfish, and other unspecified fish species.

Table 3.—Statewide Harvest Survey estimates of number of fish caught by anglers fishing Alaska Peninsula–Aleutian Islands Area fresh and salt waters combined, 2015–2024.

Species	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Average 2015–2024
Salmon											
Pink	7,593	2,448	5,674	8,183	6,173	2,640	1,807	7,215	1,996	381	4,411
Coho	21,899	17,938	13,084	21,555	25,614	7,165	10,895	19,795	22,928	10,238	17,111
Sockeye	5,827	1,144	2,595	3,309	2,648	1,086	2,855	2,990	2,438	1,132	2,602
Chinook	6,080	4,950	5,881	12,874	7,038	273	4,950	4086	3,266	3,884	5,328
Chum	4,923	3,366	1,873	2,165	7,331	1,911	1,307	6,497	1,502	885	3,176
Groundfish and shellfish											
Halibut	1,046	2,606	574	1,744	3,268	1,403	1,210	1,138	1,763	1,423	1,618
Rockfish	6,457	4,759	558	4,171	3,839	1,747	1,196	650	3,123	4,070	3,057
Lingcod	551	557	0	60	396	101	149	200	419	413	285
Black cod	0	260	824	733	20	279	351	168	79	72	279
Pacific cod	2,495	5,116	971	1,554	2,316	1,455	795	399	500	982	1,658
Trout and char											
Dolly Varden	9,592	8,462	8,262	11,000	6,365	4,992	3,261	7,276	4,484	937	6,463
Rainbow trout	1,256	700	844	2,959	1,011	1,105	1,736	1,064	1,165	154	1,199
Steelhead	237	324	1,022	2,235	1,144	1,176	931	223	522	555	837
Other fish <sup>a</sup>	1,112	522	379	322	1,897	100	0	0	258	950	554
<b>Total</b>	<b>69,068</b>	<b>53,152</b>	<b>42,541</b>	<b>72,864</b>	<b>69,060</b>	<b>25,433</b>	<b>31,443</b>	<b>51,701</b>	<b>44,443</b>	<b>26,076</b>	<b>48,578</b>

Source: Statewide Harvest Survey (SWHS) estimates from the Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996–present. Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 2025). Available from: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey/>.

Note: Does not include the Ugashik, Naknek or Egegik River areas reported in the SWHS as Alaska Peninsula locations, or unspecified areas in the Alaska Peninsula or Aleutian Islands.

<sup>a</sup>. Includes lake trout (*Salvelinus namaycush*), sharks, shellfish, and other unspecified fish species.

# CHINOOK SALMON FISHERIES

## AREAWIDE

### **Fishery Description**

APAIA Chinook salmon stocks include the Chignik, King Salmon, Bear, Meshik, Nelson, Sandy, and Cinder Rivers plus numerous other smaller drainages on the north side of the Alaska Peninsula, such as North Creek and Black Hills River. Exploitation rates by anglers on APAIA stocks are low to the extent that during most years, SWHS estimates of catch and harvest by drainage are unavailable. Although a variety of users harvest APAIA Chinook salmon from both fresh and salt waters, including commercial and subsistence fishers, the primary interest in utilizing these stocks has been from sport anglers.

Chinook salmon sport harvests in the APAIA are generally small, in part due to fishery restrictions and declining interest but also due to increased interest in catch-and-release fishing for Chinook salmon. Most harvest and effort for Chinook salmon occurs in the freshwaters of the APAIA, and marine harvests only make up a very small component of the overall Chinook salmon harvest.

Chignik River and Nelson River Chinook salmon are the only stocks with escapement goals. Weir counts typically peak in mid- or late July; however, the Nelson River run begins much earlier than the Chignik River run, typically with large numbers of fish entering the river by mid-June (Appendices A1 and A2). Because the Nelson River weir is located approximately 10 miles upstream from the mouth of the river, weir counts do not always reflect time of entry into the drainage for Chinook salmon.

### **Fishery Management Objectives and Activities**

The APAIA has a general Chinook salmon sport fishing season of 1 January through 25 July in regulation, although the Chignik River is an exception, where the season does not close until 9 August. An areawide bag limit of 2 Chinook salmon per day, 2 in possession, applies to the APAIA, with an annual limit of 5 for fish caught in fresh water. There are several exceptions to this: Nelson River Chinook salmon are catch-and-release only by regulation; Sandy River has a bag limit of 1 Chinook salmon per day, 2 in possession with an annual limit of 2; and King Salmon and Bear River drainages are restricted to harvest of Chinook salmon under 20 inches. All of these drainages have corresponding bait and hook restrictions.

Management objectives for APAIA Chinook salmon stocks are to achieve established escapement goals for the Nelson and Chignik Rivers. These runs are monitored annually for escapement using weir counts (Appendices A1 and A2), whereas spawning assessment of other stocks in the APAIA is limited to escapement index counts obtained from aerial surveys or partial counts at weirs. To ensure escapement goals are attained, sport harvests may be limited or increased by adjusting daily or seasonal bag limits, prohibiting bait, and reducing time and areas open to fishing via emergency order (EO). Stocks that consistently fall below escapement goal levels may be closed to sport fishing. In the last 10–15 years, unlike other Chinook salmon runs around the state, counts of APAIA Chinook salmon runs have remained generally stable, at least in the North Alaska Peninsula (NAP). However, the Chignik River, in the southern Alaska Peninsula has seen very small runs, and EOs with closures and gear restrictions have been used regularly to meet escapement goal objectives in the last 10 years (Table 4).

Table 4.–Emergency orders (EO) issued in 2023–2025 for Alaska Peninsula–Aleutian Islands Area sport fisheries.

Year	EO	Effective	Description
2023	2-KS-4-18-23	15 Mar	Prohibited retention of Chinook salmon in Chignik River and gear restricted to only 1 unbaited artificial lure or fly
	2-KS-4-37-23	5 Jul	Chignik River closed and gear restricted to only 1 unbaited artificial lure or fly
2024	2-KS-4-15-24	1 Jun	Chignik River closed and gear restricted to only 1 unbaited artificial lure or fly
	2-KS-4-22-24	13 Jun	Area closed to sport fishing for Chinook salmon in Chignik River drainage by EO 2-KS-4-15-24 is extended
2025	2-KS-4-15-25	1 Apr	Reduced the Chinook salmon bag and possession limit in the salt waters of the Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Islands Area to 1 fish
	2-KS-4-13-25	1 Jun	Chignik River closed and gear restricted to only 1 unbaited artificial lure or fly

## Recent Fishery Performance

Freshwater harvest of Chinook salmon estimated through the SWHS averaged 399 fish for the APAIA from 2015 through 2024, and during this same period, an average of 4,929 Chinook salmon were caught and released (Table 5). In 2024, an estimated 3,734 Chinook salmon were caught and released but estimated harvest was only 150 (Table 5).

Table 5.–Statewide Harvest Survey (SWHS) estimates of freshwater Chinook salmon harvest and release in the Alaska Peninsula–Aleutian Islands Area (APAIA), 2015–2024.

Year	Harvest	Release
2015	551	5,529
2016	533	4,417
2017	764	5,117
2018	1,005	11,869
2019	584	6,454
2020	65	208
2021	22	4,918
2022	205	3,881
2023	107	3,159
2024	150	3,734
Average 2015–2024	399	4,929

*Source:* Statewide Harvest Survey (SWHS) estimates from the Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996–present. Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 2025). Available from: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey/>.

*Note:* Does not include the streams in the Ugashik, Naknek or Egegik River drainages reported in the SWHS as Alaska Peninsula Drainages, or unspecified areas in the Alaska Peninsula or Aleutian Islands.

## CHIGNIK RIVER CHINOOK SALMON

### Fishery Description

The Chignik River drainage is located within the APAIA on the south side of the Alaska Peninsula, with the communities of Chignik Lagoon and Chignik Lake located on the drainage. The Chignik River extends approximately 2.5 miles (4 km) from Chignik Lake to Chignik Lagoon and is mainly accessible by boat from the 2 communities as well as the nearby village of Chignik Bay.

Chinook salmon normally return to the Chignik River between late June and mid-August, with peak immigration during mid to late July (Appendix A1). Anglers have historically targeted Chinook salmon in the Chignik River and in Chignik Lagoon, and the sport harvest was mainly attributable to guided anglers when the fishery was open, although there is a small amount of harvest from unguided anglers. The drainage has been closed to sport harvest of Chinook salmon for several years.

Due to a low level of angler effort, published catch and harvest estimates for Chignik River Chinook salmon are rarely available from the SWHS. Harvests of Chinook salmon from the Chignik River are small, like most Chinook salmon harvests in the APAIA, where harvests never exceed 300 fish in a single drainage annually according to previously available freshwater logbooks.<sup>5</sup> In most years, estimated harvest is less than 100 Chinook salmon in any single APAIA drainage (based on SWHS), and Chignik River Chinook salmon harvests are probably similar when a fishery is open to harvest.

### Research Activities and Recent Fishery Performance

Chignik River Chinook salmon escapements have been monitored with a weir that was established in 1922 and operated by ADF&G since 1959. The weir location is just above the Chignik Lagoon and is primarily used to count returning sockeye salmon, although it also covers the entirety of the Chinook salmon run. Daily weir counts are extrapolated from timed counts using underwater video for the first 10 minutes of each hour the weir is in operation. Due to a lack of available harvest information above the weir, a proxy Chinook salmon harvest of 100 fish is subtracted from the weir count to estimate escapement in season if the fishery is open to harvest and then this number is corrected postseason by the percentage of days the fishery was open during the Chinook salmon season. This proxy is based on historical harvests and observations by ADF&G staff on the river and recognizes harvest does occur, but that the actual number is unknown. This proxy number is also used by managers in season for making emergency order decisions for the sport fishery.

From 2015 to 2024, escapement estimates averaged 1,169 fish; the lowest escapement on record was 267 fish in 2023, which did not achieve the biological escapement goal (BEG)<sup>6</sup> of 1,300–2,700 (Figure 2). Escapements have not achieved the BEG in about half of recent years; however, the BEG was achieved in 2025 with 1,391 Chinook salmon counted (Figure 2). In response to these low runs, Chignik River Chinook salmon were designated a Stock of Concern at the 2023 BOF meeting. An action plan was developed for sport, commercial, and subsistence fisheries that includes a directive for ADF&G to adopt a conservative preseason management strategy for the Chinook salmon sport fisheries. Although the sport fishery has been closed annually by EO since

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<sup>5</sup> ADF&G Freshwater logbook database 2006–2016 (URL not publicly available as some information is confidential. Contact Division of Sport Fish, Research and Technical Services for data requests.)

<sup>6</sup> Biological escapement goal means the escapement that provides the greatest potential for maximum sustained yield.

2020, beginning in 2023, the drainage was closed preseason to sport fishing for Chinook salmon and there were preseason restrictions on the use of bait and treble hooks (Table 4). Beginning in 2024, the Chignik Lagoon was also closed to Chinook salmon fishing in an attempt to reduce directed harvest of Chignik River Chinook salmon as much as possible.

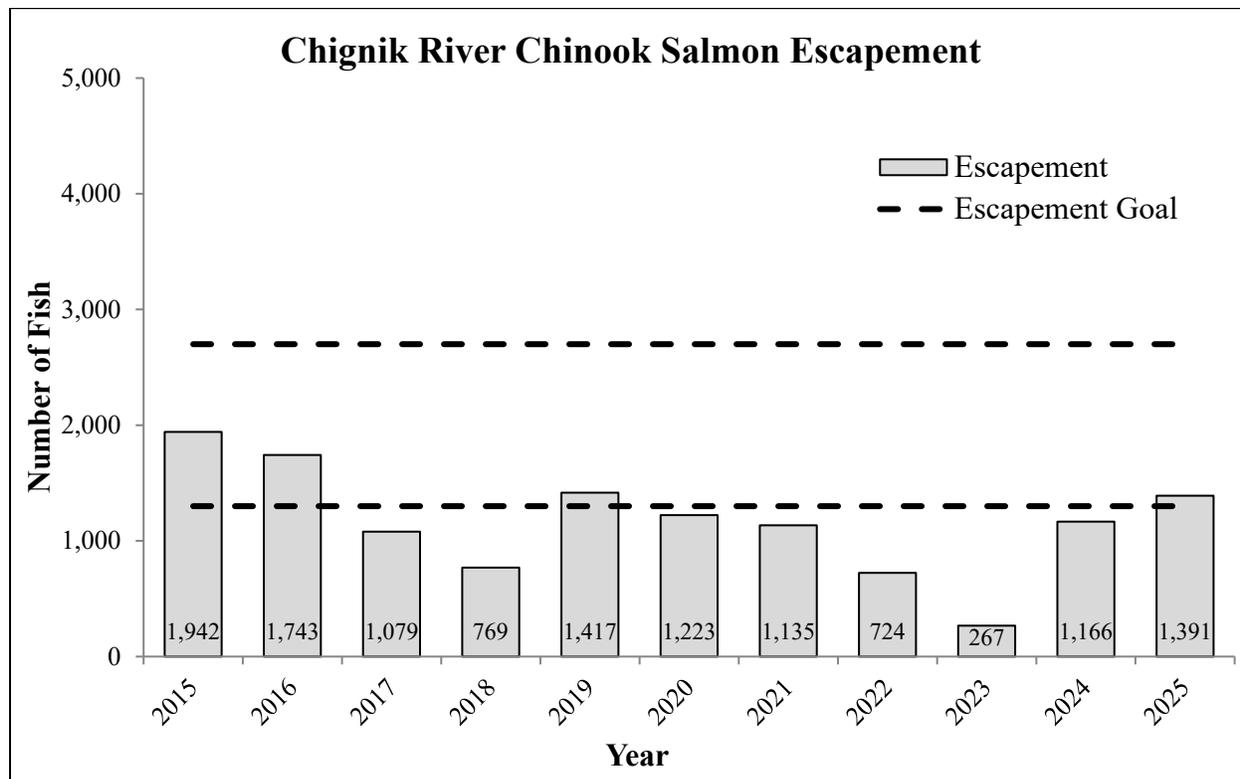


Figure 2.—Chignik River Chinook salmon escapement, 2015–2025.

Source: ADF&G Division of Commercial Fisheries, Kodiak, 2025.

Note: Escapement is estimated by subtracting a proxy of total inseason sport harvest above the weir (100 fish) from the annual weir count if the fishery is open to harvest and then this number is corrected postseason by the percentage of days the fishery was open during the Chinook salmon season

## NELSON RIVER CHINOOK SALMON

### Fishery Description

The Nelson River is located on the north side of the Alaska Peninsula near the village of Nelson Lagoon. The Nelson River is mainly accessible by boat from Nelson Lagoon or airplane via one of the guide services in the area. It is the only Chinook salmon run on the north side of the Alaska Peninsula with an established escapement goal. Like other nearby drainages in the NAP, it is among the most remote rivers in Alaska and access is difficult. Anglers target Chinook salmon throughout the drainage, and most of the sport fishing effort is by guided anglers.

Since 2011, the Nelson River has been a catch-and-release only Chinook salmon fishery by regulation, and no sport harvest of Chinook salmon occurs in the river. Due to the low level of angler effort, published catch estimates are rarely available from the SWHS.

## Research Activities and Recent Fishery Performance

Nelson River Chinook salmon escapements are monitored through operation of a weir established in 1989 about 10 miles upriver from Nelson Lagoon. Some Chinook salmon spawning does occur below the weir, and in most years, a post-weir aerial survey estimate of these Chinook salmon is added to the weir counts to get a total estimated escapement.

From 2015 to 2024, escapements averaged 4,475 fish. In 2025, the estimated escapement of 4,551 fish was within the BEG of 2,400–5,000 (Figure 3). Escapements have only fallen below the BEG once since 2015, with a count of 1,852 in 2017. The BEG has been exceeded several times since 2015, and the record count of 11,853 Chinook salmon occurred in 2019. The Nelson River, similar to other NAP Chinook salmon runs, has not seen the pronounced declines in Chinook salmon abundance noted in other areas of the State, and Chinook salmon runs have generally remained stable so far. Because there is essentially no harvest of Chinook salmon in the Nelson River by anglers, inseason management occurs only rarely for this run.

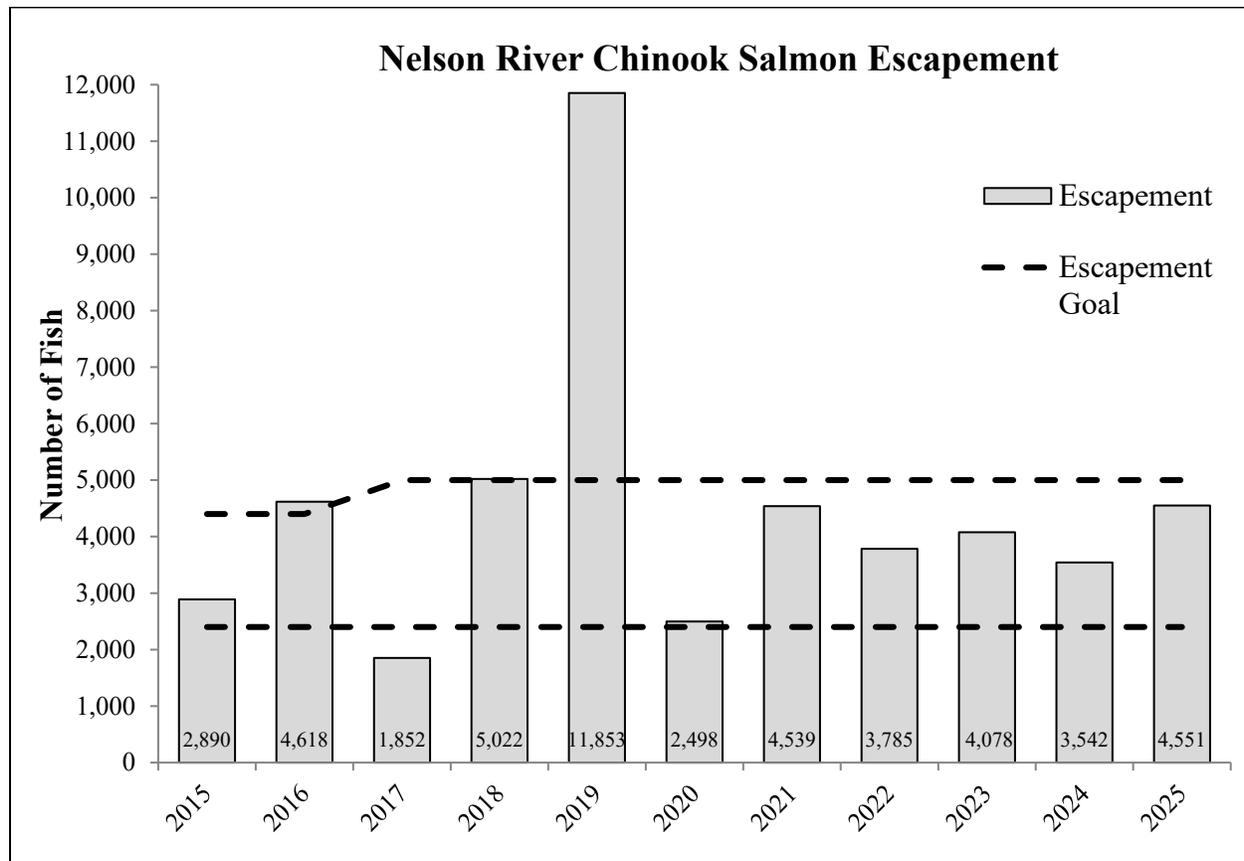


Figure 3.—Nelson River Chinook salmon escapement, 2015–2025.

Source: ADF&G Division of Commercial Fisheries, Kodiak, 2025.

Note: Escapement estimates include aerial survey estimates after the weir is pulled.

## OTHER CHINOOK SALMON FISHERIES

Other relatively accessible drainages include the Bear River and King Salmon River near the seasonal community of Port Moller. Several lodges as well as unguided anglers based in Port Moller fish these drainages for Chinook salmon, although angler effort is still too low to generate SWHS estimates and little information is available regarding these fisheries. A weir is operated on the Bear River near the outlet of Bear Lake; however, it captures only a small portion of the run because most Chinook salmon spawn below Bear Lake. Aerial surveys only capture a portion of these runs as well because the surveys are focused on counting other species and, in many areas, the drainages are too turbid to see fish except in a few clearwater tributaries. In general, these are relatively small runs that have low angler effort and harvest.

Other runs of Chinook salmon present in APAIA drainages include the Cinder, Sandy, and Meshik Rivers as well as numerous smaller rivers such as North Creek and Black Hills River. The remote location and associated high cost of accessing these fisheries has largely limited angling effort to clients at a small number of remote lodges offering virtually exclusive services. Very few unguided anglers frequent any of these fisheries and low effort precludes reliable estimates for catch and harvest from the SWHS. Aerial survey counts from 2015 to 2025 for these drainages show their smaller relative run sizes compared to Chinook salmon from the Chignik and Nelson Rivers (Table 6).

Table 6.—Weir and aerial survey counts of Chinook salmon in North Alaska Peninsula drainages, 2015–2025.

	North Creek <sup>a</sup>	Black Hills R. <sup>a</sup>	King Salmon R.	Bear R. <sup>b</sup>	Sandy R. <sup>c</sup>	Meshik R. <sup>a</sup>	Cinder R. <sup>a</sup>
2015	1,400	400	200	1,000	444	2,160	1,450
2016	900	200	1,100	950	331	800	3,250
2017	275	550	900	800	253	400	0
2018	500	350	400	1,200	272	400	1,400
2019	650	500	900	820	789	2,500	1,000
2020	0	600	625	0	99	325	0
2021	800	350	800	400	122	500	300
2022	400	625	175	0	62	1,100	1,200
2023	0	0	ns	ns	21	400	200
2024	300	ns	ns	ns	211	0	200
2025	0	500	400	150	1,100	350	550
Average 2015–2024	523	397	638	646	260	859	900

Source: ADF&G Division of Commercial Fisheries, Kodiak, 2025.

Note: “ns” means no survey.

<sup>a</sup> Aerial survey counts indicate fish observed and are not estimates of escapement. A count of 0 indicates no Chinook salmon were observed during that survey.

<sup>b</sup> Includes weir counts and postseason aerial surveys and are considered an estimate of escapement.

<sup>c</sup> Weir counts included through 2024. The 2025 count comes from an aerial survey because the weir project was discontinued.

## COHO SALMON FISHERIES

There are numerous coho salmon runs in the APAIA with the greatest angler effort concentrated near population centers where the easiest and least expensive access to sport fisheries is available. These primarily include streams in the Unalaska–Dutch Harbor Road Zone and near Cold Bay.

Other drainages in the APAIA support both guided and unguided fisheries targeting coho salmon but harvests in these areas are generally small compared to run abundance, and estimates of catch and harvest by individual location are rarely available from the SWHS.

Inseason management for coho salmon stocks is rarely conducted in the APAIA due to a lack of monitoring, and there are only 2 coho salmon escapement goals established for rivers in the area: the Nelson and Ilnik Rivers. Because of run timing and budgetary constraints, no coho salmon runs are counted using weirs in the APAIA. A small number of coho salmon runs are monitored through foot and aerial surveys, although these often occur after the sport fisheries are done for the season. Peak coho salmon run timing occurs in most systems in mid- to late September, well after weir projects have finished for the season, and after most aerial surveys have been conducted.

Harvests of coho salmon in the Unalaska–Dutch Harbor Road Zone and near Cold Bay can be significant relative to local run sizes; however, the fisheries are too small to generate estimates of harvest and effort from the SWHS due to low response rates in many years. Other coho salmon harvest and catch information for the APAIA is not available for the same reasons.

## **COLD BAY COHO SALMON**

### **Fishery Description**

The community of Cold Bay offers access to several drainages via a small road system popular with both guided and unguided anglers. There is a large airport with frequent flights as well as lodges, bed and breakfasts, rental vehicles, and guide services that cater to anglers and hunters coming to the community. The primary drainages utilized by anglers targeting coho salmon that are accessible from the community of Cold Bay are Russel, Trout, and Frosty Creeks. Most effort occurs in September when coho salmon runs generally peak, and many anglers arrive to both fish coho salmon and hunt waterfowl.

Harvests of Cold Bay area coho salmon are captured in most years in the SWHS estimates and are presented as an aggregate of all Cold Bay area drainages including Russel, Trout, and Frosty Creeks. During the period from 2015 to 2024, harvests ranged from 711 to 3,241 and averaged 1,697 coho salmon (Table 7).

### **Research Activities and Recent Fishery Performance**

Aerial surveys prior to 2008 captured coho salmon escapement in many years for Russel and Trout Creeks; however, since 2008, counts of coho salmon are mostly unavailable from these drainages because ADF&G staff usually leave the Cold Bay area prior to when most coho salmon spawn. Aerial surveys of these drainages were conducted in 2022 via both airplane and drone, providing peak spawning survey counts of 3,500 coho salmon in Russel Creek and 400 coho salmon in Trout Creek (Tyler Lawson, former Assistant Area Management Biologist, ADF&G Kodiak, personal communication).

Management of Cold Bay area coho salmon occurs via areawide sportfishing regulations that allow for a combined salmon, other than Chinook salmon, bag limit of 5 fish over 20 inches per day with 10 in possession. The bag limit can be any combination of coho, sockeye, pink, or chum salmon; and the limit for salmon under 20 inches is 10 per day. Management actions in the Cold Bay area are rarely instituted in season because inseason monitoring of coho salmon runs has only recently resumed.

Table 7.—Statewide Harvest Survey estimates of freshwater coho salmon harvest and catch for Cold Bay and the Alaska Peninsula–Aleutian Islands Area (APAIA), 2015–2024.

Year	Cold Bay <sup>a</sup>		Total APAIA <sup>b</sup>	
	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch
2015	1,924	2,740	3,250	20,916
2016	NA	NA	2,727	16,614
2017	2,198	5,112	3,673	12,417
2018	3,241	7,696	4,787	19,610
2019	2,015	4,036	4,407	22,444
2020	1,222	1,540	1,819	5,767
2021	NA	NA	2,958	9,743
2022	2,411	4,216	4,383	17,207
2023	1,554	8,236	4,257	22,170
2024	711	1,125	1,814	9,323
Average 2015–2024	1,697	4,338	3,408	15,621

*Source:* Statewide Harvest Survey (SWHS) estimates from the Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996–present. Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 2025). Available from: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey/>.

<sup>a</sup> SWHS estimates are not available (NA) for 2016 and 2021.

<sup>b</sup> Does not include streams in the Ugashik, Naknek or Egegik River drainages reported in the SWHS as Alaska Peninsula Drainages, or unspecified areas in the Alaska Peninsula or Aleutian Islands.

## UNALASKA BAY COHO SALMON

### Fishery Description and Management Activities

A small coho salmon fishery occurs in Unalaska Bay, with SWHS estimates available in some years for saltwater effort and harvest. Due to its proximity to the City of Unalaska, the fishery is primarily composed of unguided anglers. Occasional charter boat effort does occur in the area; however, there have never been more than 3 charter businesses operating so historical data collected by the Saltwater Logbook Program are confidential. Anglers target coho salmon by trolling throughout Unalaska Bay or by casting from shore near the streams or estuaries that flow into the bay.

Estimates of harvest of coho salmon from the SWHS in Unalaska Bay salt waters from 2015 to 2024 have ranged from 0 to 491 fish, with an average harvest of 124 fish during the same period (Table 8). In 2024, a harvest of 0 coho salmon was estimated for the Unalaska Island area.

Unalaska Bay has smaller salmon bag limits than the remainder of the APAIA. The Unalaska–Dutch Harbor Road Zone regulations limit the coho salmon bag limit to no more than 2 per day for waters inside of Unalaska Bay. This was enacted in recognition of the numerous small coho salmon runs in the area, many of which are accessible via road from the relatively large population center in Unalaska.

Table 8.—Statewide Harvest Survey estimates of Unalaska Island and Alaska Peninsula–Aleutian Islands Area (APAIA) saltwater coho salmon harvest and catch, 2015–2024.

Year	Unalaska Island		APAIA <sup>a</sup>	
	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch
2015	141	141	864	983
2016	11	11	969	1,324
2017	100	286	264	667
2018	121	121	1,335	1,945
2019	161	190	464	3,170
2020	491	491	1,001	1,398
2021	0	58	624	1,152
2022	108	108	1160	2588
2023	109	187	612	758
2024	0	862	53	915
Average 2015–2024	124	246	735	1,490

*Source:* Statewide Harvest Survey (SWHS) estimates from the Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996–present. Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 2025). Available from: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey/>.

<sup>a</sup> Does not include streams in the Ugashik, Naknek or Egegik River drainages reported in the SWHS as Alaska Peninsula Drainages, or unspecified areas in the Alaska Peninsula or Aleutian Islands.

## OTHER COHO SALMON FISHERIES

Other coho salmon fisheries in the APAIA are characterized by relatively low effort and exploitation rates throughout a number of very remote drainages. Guided anglers generally make up most of the effort due to the difficult access, although there are some exceptions near the smaller communities in the APAIA. Subsequently, due to low response rates in the SWHS, estimates of harvest and catch are only occasionally available for specific areas other than Cold Bay fresh waters and Unalaska Bay salt water. Freshwater harvests of coho salmon in the APAIA averaged 3,408 fish from 2015 to 2024, and 1,814 coho salmon were harvested in 2024 (Table 7). Combined saltwater harvests for the APAIA averaged 735 coho salmon from 2015 to 2024, and the harvest in 2024 was 53 fish (Table 8).

## SOCKEYE SALMON FISHERIES

Although there are many individual APAIA sockeye salmon stocks of interest to anglers, most stocks are lightly exploited by anglers relative to the size of the runs; the only exceptions to this are in the Unalaska Bay area where there are several road-accessible sockeye salmon runs, and to a lesser degree, the road accessible drainages near Cold Bay. Sockeye salmon bag limits in the APAIA fall under the general salmon, other than Chinook salmon, bag limit of 5 per day, with 10 in possession where there can be any combination of sockeye, coho, pink, and chum salmon.

## UNALASKA SOCKEYE SALMON

### Fishery Description and Research and Management Activities

Sockeye salmon runs near the City of Unalaska are generally accessible via the road system connected to the community. Sockeye salmon runs in the area are small but also lightly exploited by anglers because of significant restrictions on sport fishing in specific drainages as well as the Unalaska Bay area in general. Although sockeye salmon sport fisheries in the Unalaska–Dutch

Harbor Road Zone are small, they are important to the local community, particularly to those who do not own boats or gillnets that would allow them to participate in local subsistence fisheries. The sockeye salmon bag limit in the Unalaska–Dutch Harbor Road Zone is 2 per day and includes all waters of Unalaska Bay, including freshwater drainages flowing into the bay.

Three Unalaska area drainages support sockeye salmon runs and corresponding sport fisheries: Unalaska Lake drainage (also called Iliuliuk River or Town Creek), Summer Bay Lake, and Morris Cove Lake. The Unalaska Lake drainage flows through the City of Unalaska, and the entire drainage is closed to sport fishing for sockeye salmon in recognition of the small run size and potential for overharvest. Some harvest does occur on nearby Front Beach via snagging by anglers, although participation is too low in this fishery to generate estimates in the SWHS. Summer Bay Lake supports the largest sockeye salmon sport fishery in the Unalaska Bay area, which occurs almost exclusively in the salt water from the beach in front of the drainage, and fish are harvested via snagging. The outlet stream for Summer Bay Lake is closed to all fishing from the lake outlet to the mouth of the creek and virtually no sport fishing effort occurs in Summer Bay Lake. Morris Cove Lake supports the smallest of the sockeye salmon sport fisheries in the Unalaska area and probably the smallest of the sockeye salmon runs. Effort for this drainage occurs primarily when runs are periodically larger and is conducted by snagging from the beach. There is often a large beach berm in front of the drainage that makes fish passage difficult, and sockeye salmon can accumulate in the nearby salt water because of this. No special regulations apply to this drainage, other than the Unalaska–Dutch Harbor Road Zone salmon bag limits.

Management of sockeye salmon runs in the Unalaska area occurs through a reduced bag limit for sockeye salmon and the numerous special regulations pertaining to the drainages of Unalaska Bay. Prior to 2018, monitoring of Unalaska area sockeye salmon runs only occurred occasionally, with a handful of aerial and foot surveys and a weir briefly operated from 1998 to 2001 on the Summer Bay Lake drainage. However, drone surveys of sockeye salmon at Unalaska Lake (Iliuliuk River), Summer Bay Lake, and Morris Cove Lake have been conducted from 2018 to 2023 (Table 9; Fox and Whiteside 2020; Fox et al. 2021; Fox et al. 2022). Most recently, a weir project was initiated in 2024 to count Unalaska Lake bound sockeye salmon. In 2024, 46 sockeye salmon were counted, and in 2025, 2,441 sockeye salmon were counted (ADF&G Division of Commercial Fisheries, Kodiak, escapement database).

Table 9.–Peak drone survey counts of sockeye salmon on the Unalaska road system, 2018–2023.

Year	Iliuliuk River	Summer Bay Creek	Morris Cove Creek
2018	583	3,621	315
2019	350	2,575	376
2020	1,046	4,507	106
2021	261	1,001	ns
2022	115	760	27
2023	1,747	1,522	84
Average 2018–2023	684	2,331	182

Source: ADF&G Division of Commercial Fisheries, Kodiak, 2025.

Note: “ns” means no survey.

## OTHER SOCKEYE SALMON FISHERIES

Sport fishing effort for sockeye salmon in other areas of the APAIA is very low and only occasionally captured in the SWHS for estimates of harvest and effort. Notable sockeye salmon sport fisheries occur in the Cold Bay area, with estimates of sockeye salmon harvest available for many of the last 10 years. Estimates have averaged 327 harvested sockeye salmon from 2015 to 2024 (Table 10). The 2024 harvest estimate was 438 sockeye salmon. These estimates include the combined harvest for the area around the community of Cold Bay, with both guided and unguided effort focused on Mortenen’s Lagoon primarily in the past, but more recently focused on the Swan Lake run near Kinzarof Lagoon.

Numerous other drainages in the APAIA support small sockeye salmon sport fisheries, primarily by guided anglers. Nearly all of them are very remote, with difficult access. The lack of services throughout most of the APAIA precludes growth in sport fishing throughout the area. In 2024, the SWHS estimated a combined freshwater harvest of 464 sockeye salmon in the APAIA, and the 2015–2024 average harvest was 705 (Table 10).

Table 10.—Statewide Harvest Survey estimates of freshwater sockeye salmon harvest and catch in Cold Bay and the Alaska Peninsula–Aleutian Islands Area (APAIA), 2015–2024.

Year	Cold Bay <sup>a</sup>		Total APAIA <sup>b</sup>	
	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch
2015	NA	NA	1,138	2,583
2016	NA	NA	342	785
2017	26	66	926	1,959
2018	83	276	1,088	2,373
2019	239	239	496	2,451
2020	445	455	495	654
2021	NA	NA	145	1,619
2022	772	898	1054	2714
2023	283	377	900	2173
2024	438	438	464	942
Average 2015–2024	327	393	705	1,825

Source: Statewide Harvest Survey (SWHS) estimates from the Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996–present. Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 2025). Available from: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey/>.

<sup>a</sup> SWHS estimates are not available (NA) for 2015, 2016, and 2021.

<sup>b</sup> Does not include streams from the Ugashik, Naknek or Egegik River drainages reported in the SWHS as Alaska Peninsula Drainages, or unspecified areas in the Alaska Peninsula or Aleutian Islands.

## STEELHEAD–RAINBOW TROUT FISHERIES

Most angling effort on wild rainbow trout and steelhead populations within the APAIA target steelhead, the anadromous form of *O. mykiss*, although most streams in the APAIA support resident rainbow trout. Anglers that target other species also report incidental catches of resident rainbow trout. The Sandy River is the most popular stream for anglers targeting steelhead in the APAIA, and many anglers target the beginning of the run in September or combine waterfowl hunting and steelhead fishing in September and October. Steelhead runs in the APAIA generally peak in October, although very little is known about these runs. Other APAIA drainages supporting

steelhead runs include the Nelson and King Salmon River drainages. Rainbow trout populations are found in nearly all the larger APAIA drainages but have been particularly noted in the Aniakchak and Sandy Rivers, and lakes in the northern reaches of the area near Bristol Bay.

Management of steelhead and rainbow trout sport fisheries relies on conservative regulations, and rainbow trout and steelhead share a common bag limit. Restrictions on harvest include year-round catch-and-release only fishing within the Sandy River drainage, and an annual limit of 2 fish over 20 inches in all other APAIA fresh waters. Where harvest is allowed, the daily bag limit for steelhead is 2, only 1 of which may be longer than 20 inches. Historical harvest statistics available from the ADF&G freshwater logbook database<sup>7</sup> and the SWHS indicate that anglers rarely retain steelhead even when it is permissible. Angler reports and observations by ADF&G staff suggest that most of the targeted steelhead fishery is composed of anglers seeking only to catch-and-release steelhead, usually using fly-fishing gear. SWHS estimates of rainbow trout catch have averaged 1,199 from 2015 to 2024; the 2024 catch estimate was 154 (Table 11). Estimates of steelhead catch have averaged 837 during this same period and were 555 in 2024 (Table 11).

Table 11.—Statewide Harvest Survey estimates of steelhead and rainbow trout catch in the Alaska Peninsula–Aleutian Islands Area, 2015–2024.

Form	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Average 2015–2024
Rainbow trout	1,256	700	844	2,959	1,011	1,105	1,736	1064	1,165	154	1,199
Steelhead	237	324	1,022	2,235	1,144	1,176	931	223	522	555	837

Source: Statewide Harvest Survey (SWHS) estimates from the Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996–present. Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 2025). Available from: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey/>.

Note: Does not include the streams in the Ugashik, Naknek, or Egegik River drainages reported in the SWHS as Alaska Peninsula Drainages, or unspecified areas in the Alaska Peninsula or Aleutian Islands.

## GROUND FISH FISHERIES

### HALIBUT, ROCKFISH, LINGCOD

#### Fishery Description

The groundfish species most commonly targeted by anglers in APAIA marine waters is halibut, but lingcod and rockfish are also target species. Angler effort primarily occurs between May and September when the weather is best. Although all 3 species are harvested in many locations in the APAIA, a majority of the harvest is taken from waters around Unalaska Island, particularly in Unalaska Bay. Most angler effort that is not within a short boat ride from the City of Unalaska can be attributed to guided anglers, whereas unguided effort in the more remote areas is generally limited to anglers in remote villages in the APAIA.

Halibut is harvested throughout the APAIA, whereas rockfish and lingcod are not frequently caught or targeted on the north side of the Alaska Peninsula because little habitat supporting these species exists there. Therefore, most of the harvest comes from the south side of the Alaska Peninsula and the Aleutian Islands. Harvest estimates are unavailable in most areas of the APAIA

<sup>7</sup> ADF&G Freshwater logbook database 2006–2016 (URL not publicly available as some information is confidential. Contact Division of Sport Fish, Research and Technical Services for data requests.)

except Unalaska Island due to low response rates, and guided harvest information is confidential due to the low number of saltwater charter businesses in the area.

From 2015 to 2024, SWHS-estimated halibut harvests averaged 969 in the APAIA and 490 in the Unalaska Island area (Table 12). In 2024, an estimated 1,163 halibut were harvested in the APAIA, and an estimated 798 halibut were harvested in the Unalaska Island area.

During this same period, the SWHS estimates of annual rockfish harvest averaged 1,256 for the APAIA and 600 from the Unalaska Island area (Table 12). In 2024, the estimated APAIA and Unalaska Island area rockfish harvests were 2,657 fish and 1,961 fish, respectively.

For lingcod, the 2015–2024 average estimated harvest was 109 fish for the APAIA and 40 for Unalaska Island (Table 12). In 2024, the estimated harvest was 138 and 69 lingcod for the APAIA and Unalaska Island, respectively.

Table 12.—Statewide Harvest Survey estimates of halibut, lingcod, and rockfish harvest from Unalaska Island and the Alaska Peninsula–Aleutian Islands Area (APAIA), 2015–2024.

Year	Halibut		Rockfish		Lingcod	
	Unalaska Island	APAIA <sup>a</sup>	Unalaska Island	APAIA <sup>a</sup>	Unalaska Island	APAIA <sup>a</sup>
2015	157	778	334	2,086	0	120
2016	998	1,657	304	1,023	21	42
2017	280	409	143	339	0	0
2018	846	1,055	1,460	1,970	0	40
2019	712	1,623	885	1,929	244	320
2020	447	775	766	1,093	50	50
2021	0	847	0	510	0	123
2022	170	519	144	382	0	117
2023	490	860	0	568	18	135
2024	798	1,163	1,961	2,657	69	138
Average						
2015–2024	490	969	600	1,256	40	109

Source: Statewide Harvest Survey (SWHS) estimates from the Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 1996–present. Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 2025). Available from: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey/>.

<sup>a</sup> Does not include unspecified areas in the Alaska Peninsula or Aleutian Islands.

## Management Activities and Recent Fishery Performance

Halibut stocks throughout Alaska are managed by the federal government through an international treaty with Canada. Direct regulatory authority rests with the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC) and by delegation from the commission to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC). All regulations adopted for the halibut sport fishery by the State of Alaska must reflect those previously established in federal law.

The APAIA is encompassed primarily by subareas 3B, 4A, and 4B designated by the IPHC. Within these subareas, sport fishing regulations for guided and unguided anglers are the same, with a daily bag limit of 2 halibut and a possession limit of 4. A small portion of the APAIA, along the Shelikof Straight, falls in Area 3A and has an annually changing set of regulations for guided anglers including size limits, annual limits, 1 or more days per week closed, restrictions on the number of trips charter boats may take daily, and a limited entry permit requirement. Unguided anglers in this

area do not fall under this regulatory structure but have a bag limit of 2 fish per day and possession limit of 4.

Although rockfish harvest has been a point of concern in many other ADF&G management areas, harvest rates in the APAIA are low enough to be considered nominal relative to species abundance. Both pelagic and nonpelagic rockfish are harvested in APAIA waters, and catches of pelagic species consist primarily of black (*S. melanops*) and dusky (*S. variabilis*) rockfish, whereas nonpelagic catches consist mainly of yelloweye rockfish (*S. ruberrimus*). Pelagic species typically make up most of the rockfish catch. Although a portion of the annual rockfish catch is taken incidentally by anglers targeting halibut and salmon, there is also directed effort toward these species; however, effort in APAIA is very low for all groundfish species. Rockfish bag limits in the APAIA are 10 fish per day and can be any combination of species.

Lingcod harvests are small relative to the geographic area covered by the APAIA. Lingcod bag limits are 2 per day, but there is a season closure from January 1 through June 30 annually.

## **OTHER GROUND FISH**

Other groundfish species such as Pacific cod, kelp greenling (*Hexagrammos decagrammus*), and Atka mackerel (*Pleurogrammus monopterygius*) are harvested in APAIA waters; however, harvests are very small and mostly unaccounted for by SWHS estimates. There is increasing interest by anglers for other groundfish species besides rockfish and halibut, but it is unknown whether this will continue to be a trend like rockfish, or if anglers will focus on traditional species as targets and harvest other species opportunistically.

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**APPENDIX A: ALASKA PENINSULA–ALEUTIAN ISLANDS  
AREA CHINOOK SALMON WEIR COUNTS**

Appendix A1.–Chignik River Chinook salmon weir counts, 2015–2025.

Date	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
8 Jun	0	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
9 Jun	0	0	6	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
10 Jun	0	0	6	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
11 Jun	0	0	6	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
12 Jun	0	0	6	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
13 Jun	0	0	6	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
14 Jun	0	0	6	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15 Jun	0	0	6	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
16 Jun	24	12	6	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
17 Jun	42	12	6	18	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
18 Jun	60	18	6	18	12	0	0	0	0	0	0
19 Jun	60	18	6	18	12	0	0	0	0	0	0
20 Jun	78	18	6	18	24	0	0	0	0	0	0
21 Jun	84	30	6	18	24	12	0	0	0	0	0
22 Jun	84	66	6	18	30	18	0	0	0	0	0
23 Jun	84	90	6	48	42	18	0	0	0	0	0
24 Jun	96	108	6	66	48	24	0	0	0	0	0
25 Jun	114	144	12	78	54	30	0	0	0	0	0
26 Jun	126	186	12	79	54	42	0	6	0	0	0
27 Jun	146	198	36	97	54	48	0	6	0	0	0
28 Jun	212	228	55	109	60	48	0	12	0	0	0
29 Jun	212	276	67	121	72	55	6	12	6	0	0
30 Jun	260	306	85	127	84	61	12	12	12	0	6
1 Jul	284	372	127	127	108	68	18	12	12	0	24
2 Jul	326	450	157	139	156	80	19	19	12	0	48
3 Jul	375	498	199	157	193	98	19	43	18	18	54
4 Jul	400	576	235	163	265	134	31	61	18	30	78
5 Jul	505	636	277	170	307	194	37	79	30	66	97
6 Jul	621	750	303	176	349	194	55	80	42	66	127
7 Jul	759	855	306	184	439	242	98	128	48	90	175
8 Jul	831	933	309	202	489	266	122	170	48	120	265
9 Jul	904	1,017	327	215	531	290	159	206	48	168	289
10 Jul	952	1,095	352	229	639	326	207	218	48	174	319
11 Jul	1,000	1,143	394	261	747	339	243	248	54	180	349
12 Jul	1,144	1,198	430	315	813	381	285	260	60	186	386
13 Jul	1,216	1,246	478	345	885	411	318	278	90	210	435
14 Jul	1,294	1,300	538	358	945	459	348	290	103	234	508
15 Jul	1,338	1,348	587	418	999	513	396	332	127	295	520
16 Jul	1,380	1,390	629	466	1,059	567	414	392	145	391	586
17 Jul	1,410	1,438	653	509	1,083	615	439	428	145	469	670
18 Jul	1,417	1,450	672	545	1,113	657	469	470	151	523	706
19 Jul	1,448	1,504	678	605	1,119	693	535	482	151	565	736
20 Jul	1,460	1,516	702	641	1,155	783	559	500	151	639	814
21 Jul	1,467	1,536	732	653	1,209	813	631	518	157	693	892
22 Jul	1,473	1,560	769	659	1,245	826	721	536	157	771	940
23 Jul	1,534	1,578	799	672	1,257	857	787	554	163	819	977

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Date	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
24 Jul	1,576	1,608	823	678	1,293	863	883	560	169	873	1,079
25 Jul	1,601	1,626	847	690	1,323	911	937	578	187	897	1,115
26 Jul	1,661	1,632	901	708	1,342	929	979	596	193	909	1,127
27 Jul	1,685	1,650	931	721	1,348	977	991	608	211	928	1,139
28 Jul	1,740	1,668	931	739	1,384	1,001	1,027	626	229	982	1,151
29 Jul	1,758	1,668	937	757	1,408	1,043	1,057	639	229	982	1,175
30 Jul	1,764	1,698	949	763	1,420	1,049	1,064	670	235	994	1,187
31 Jul	1,788	1,716	973	775	1,427	1,062	1,076	676	241	1,012	1,205
1 Aug	1,814	1,740	985	781	1,463	1,069	1,076	676	241	1,030	1,235
2 Aug	1,844	1,752	1,009	782	1,487	1,099	1,094	682	241	1,048	1,241
3 Aug	1,856	1,752	1,009	788	1,493	1,117	1,100	688	241	1,055	1,259
4 Aug	1,886	1,777	1,009	788	1,493	1,129	1,112	700	242	1,062	1,265
5 Aug	1,904	1,777	1,015	794	1,493	1,147	1,118	700	242	1,070	1,271
6 Aug	1,929	1,783	1,027	794	1,493	1,171	1,118	700	248	1,070	1,283
7 Aug	1,941	1,795	1,027	794	1,493	1,201	1,124	712	254	1,072	1,301
8 Aug	1,971	1,795	1,045	794	1,493	1,207	1,124	724	260	1,096	1,325
9 Aug	1,983	1,795	1,045	794	1,493	1,219	1,124	736	260	1,109	1,343
10 Aug	2,007	1,801	1,051	806	1,499	1,225	1,124	736	260	1,109	1,355
11 Aug	2,019	1,825	1,057	818	1,505	1,237	1,142	736	260	1,116	1,361
12 Aug	2,019	1,831	1,069	825	1,505	1,237	1,154	742	261	1,117	1,373
13 Aug	2,024	1,837	1,069	825	1,511	1,237	1,154	748	261	1,123	1,373
14 Aug	2,024	1,837	1,081	825	1,511	1,243	1,154	748	267	1,123	1,373
15 Aug	2,030	1,843	1,093	825	1,517	1,249	1,160	748	267	1,129	1,373
16 Aug	2,036	1,843	1,111	825	1,517	1,249	1,172	748	267	1,135	1,379
17 Aug	2,042	1,843	1,111	825	1,517	1,255	1,172	748	267	1,135	1,379
18 Aug	2,054	1,843	1,117	825	1,517	1,267	1,172	748	267	1,135	1,379
19 Aug	2,054	1,843	1,118	825	1,517	1,278	1,172	754	267	1,148	1,379
20 Aug	2,054	1,843	1,130	825	1,517	1,278	1,172	754	267	1,154	1,385
21 Aug	2,054	1,843	1,130	825	1,517	1,278	1,172	754	267	1,160	1,385
22 Aug	2,054	1,843	1,130	825	1,517	1,278	1,172	754	267	1,160	1,385
23 Aug	2,054	1,843	1,130	825	1,517	1,278	1,172	760	267	1,166	1,385
24 Aug	2,054	1,843	1,130	825	1,517	1,278	1,172	760	267	1,166	1,385
25 Aug	2,054	1,843	1,131	825	1,517	1,278	1,172	760	267	1,166	1,391
26 Aug	2,054	1,843	1,137	825	1,517	1,278	1,172	760	267	1,166	1,391
27 Aug	2,054	1,843	1,137	825	1,517	1,278	1,172	760	267	1,166	1,391
28 Aug	2,054	1,843	1,137	825	1,517	1,278	1,172	760	267	1,166	1,391
29 Aug	2,054	1,843	1,137	825	1,517	1,278	1,172	761	267	1,166	1,391
30 Aug	2,054	1,843	1,137	825	1,517	1,278	1,172	761	267	1,166	1,391
31 Aug	2,054	1,843	1,137	825	1,517	1,278	1,172	761	267	1,166	1,391
1 Sep	2,054	1,843	1,137	825	1,517	1,278	1,172	761	267	1,166	1,391
Final	2,054	1,843	1,137	825	1,517	1,278	1,172	761	267	1,166	1,391

Source: ADF&G Division of Commercial Fisheries, Kodiak, 2025.

Note: The weir was installed by June 1 annually.

Appendix A2.–Nelson River Chinook salmon weir counts, 2015–2025.

Date	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 <sup>a</sup>	2023	2024	2025
16 Jun	186	237	52	19	34	2	0	26	1	0	187
17 Jun	204	237	60	19	205	2	0	35	2	0	225
18 Jun	241	264	72	19	206	9	0	35	7	0	444
19 Jun	246	265	76	20	210	9	0	38	48	6	563
20 Jun	281	265	84	20	210	9	0	39	104	22	896
21 Jun	292	290	159	43	210	9	86	39	194	53	1056
22 Jun	330	291	227	82	210	9	109	39	278	85	1145
23 Jun	339	291	248	183	211	9	133	159	339	132	1294
24 Jun	365	292	275	199	211	9	278	164	360	186	1353
25 Jun	366	369	302	253	338	11	497	344	454	243	1450
26 Jun	395	387	416	369	362	571	624	421	559	446	1561
27 Jun	396	389	429	373	544	725	831	429	688	487	1747
28 Jun	455	525	435	680	554	753	1329	448	873	639	1873
29 Jun	628	556	436	782	554	759	1580	598	987	906	1940
30 Jun	668	559	442	1,135	559	819	1730	602	1190	1046	2027
1 Jul	779	575	454	2,275	598	929	1795	619	1288	1128	2137
2 Jul	850	609	521	2,645	609	960	1827	651	1368	1312	2294
3 Jul	945	612	710	3,660	688	1015	1985	667	1442	1478	2376
4 Jul	1,189	622	744	4,076	877	1082	2202	811	1532	1555	2469
5 Jul	1,679	634	766	4,275	998	1125	2276	1201	1586	1742	2534
6 Jul	1,811	1,009	815	4,308	1,105	1,130	2,506	1,212	1864	1863	2631
7 Jul	1,911	1,038	824	4,349	1,465	1,133	2,539	1,233	2311	1961	2777
8 Jul	1,993	1,087	828	4,400	1,591	1,133	2,690	1,263	2494	2018	3047
9 Jul	2,023	1,203	869	4,541	2,258	1,140	2,841	1,282	2545	2206	3281
10 Jul	2,086	1,254	891	4,555	3,096	1,146	2,940	1,367	3042	2340	3348
11 Jul	2,090	1,442	902	4,563	3,202	1,161	3,011	1,516	3128	2482	3454
12 Jul	2,095	1,556	925	4,598	3,364	1,184	3,017	1,522	3203	2602	3526
13 Jul	2,145	1,760	941	4,608	4,543	1,191	3,046	1,546	3273	2683	3619
14 Jul	2,206	1,931	981	4,728	5,075	1,224	3,086	1,580	3375	2880	3683
15 Jul	2,226	2,119	1,003	4,829	5,265	1,271	3,103	1,650	3393	3035	3808
16 Jul	2,265	2,164	1,030	4,850	6,230	1,274	3,105	1,886	3423	3150	3891
17 Jul	2,275	2,245	1,172	4,890	9,052	1,287	3,295	1,982	3445	3230	4044
18 Jul	2,312	2,305	1,202	4,894	9,308	1,311	3,302	2,000	3487	3295	4131
19 Jul	2,372	2,433	1,204	4,929	9,690	1,345	3,326	2,001	3505	3319	4247
20 Jul	2,409	2,708	1,286	4,937	10,592	1,381	3,327	2,009	3653	3331	4251
21 Jul	2,421	2,971	1,312	4,972	10,663	1,383	3,400	2,087	3757	3331	4251
22 Jul	2,425	3,440	1,368	5,009	10,677	1,499	3,437	2,107	3899	3331	4251
23 Jul	2,437	3,550	1,415	5,022	11,103	1,509	3,541	2,114	3987	3331	4251
24 Jul	2,440	3,735	1,479	5,022	11,136	1,927	3,868	2,147	4013	3331	4251
25 Jul	2,440	4,039	1,494	5,022	11,171	1,943	4,034	2,148	4055	3331	4251
26 Jul	2,440	4,618	1,502	5,022	11,649	1,998	4,035	2,150	4078	3331	4251
27 Jul	2,440	4,618	1,502	5,022	11,653	1,998	4,161	2,152	4078	3331	4251
28 Jul	2,440	4,618	1,502	5,022	11,653	1,998	4,198	2,166	4078	3331	4251

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Date	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022 <sup>a</sup>	2023	2024	2025
29 Jul	2,440	4,618	1,502	5,022	11,653	1,998	4,219	2,303	4078	3331	4251
30 Jul	2,440	4,618	1,502	5,022	11,653	1,998	4,285	2,351	4078	3331	4251
31 Jul	2,440	4,618	1,502	5,022	11,653	1,998	4,351	2,416	4078	3331	4251
Final <sup>b</sup>	2,890	4,618	1,852	5,022	11,653	1,998	4,351	3,785	4078	3331	4251

<sup>a</sup> The weir was kept in place until August 19 in 2022 due to late run timing. Postweir aerial surveys were therefore not conducted.

<sup>b</sup> Includes postweir aerial survey estimate of spawning Chinook salmon below the weir.



**APPENDIX B: CROSS-REFERENCED ALASKA BOARD OF  
FISHERIES INFORMATION**

Appendix B1.–Reference information specific to 2026 Alaska Board of Fisheries proposals for Alaska Peninsula–Aleutian Islands Area (APAIA) sport fisheries.

Proposal	Proposal subject	Tables	Figures	Appendices
155	Amend the dates bait and treble hooks are allowed in the Bear and King Salmon Rivers	5 and 6	NA	NA
156	Prohibit retention of Chinook salmon 20 inches or greater in the Cinder, Meshik, Black Hills and North Creek drainages	5 and 6	NA	NA
157	Prohibit retention of Chinook salmon in the Sandy River	5 and 6	NA	NA
158	Prohibit retention of Chinook salmon in the Sandy River	5 and 6	NA	NA
159	Prohibit retention of Chinook salmon in the Sandy River and restrict the use of bait and treble hooks.	5 and 6	NA	NA
160	Prohibit retention of Chinook salmon in the Sandy River and restrict the use of bait and treble hooks	5 and 6	NA	NA
161	Create a Chinook salmon management plan for sport fisheries of the North Alaska Peninsula	5 and 6	3	A2