



# SUBSISTENCE OVERVIEW

PRESENTATION TO THE ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES  
ANCHORAGE, ALASKA - JANUARY 13, 2026



**Lauren Sill and Greg Russell**  
Oral report: RC 3 Tab 8  
Written report: RC 3 Tab 4

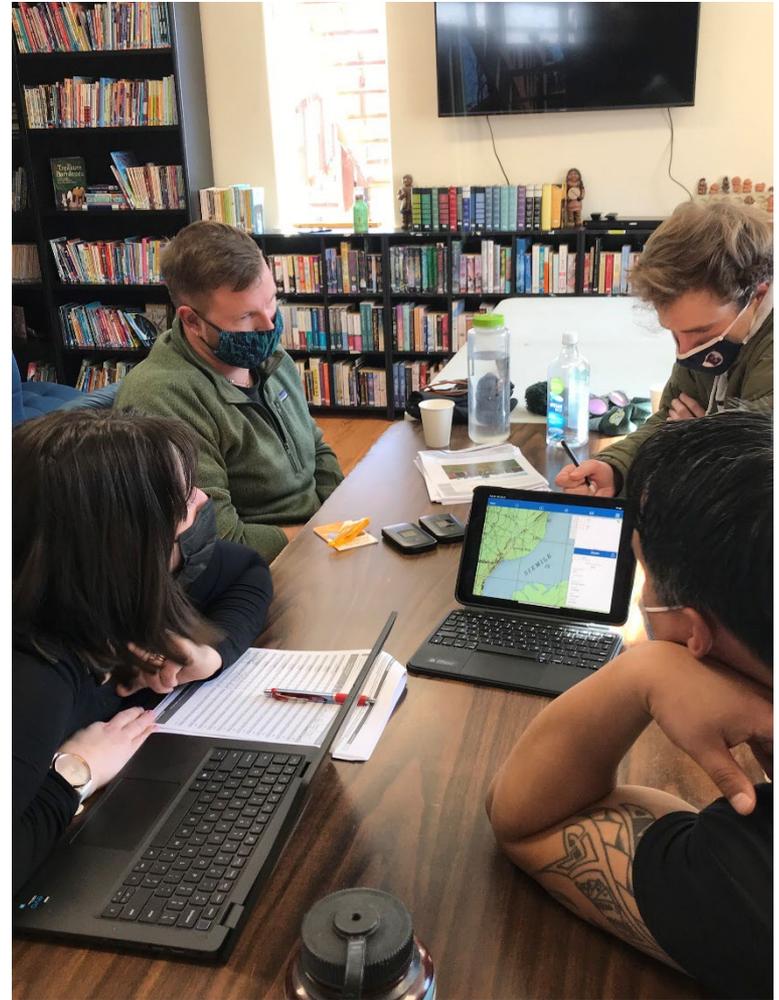


# ADF&G DIVISION OF SUBSISTENCE

**Mission** Scientifically gather, quantify, evaluate, and report information about customary and traditional uses of Alaska's fish and wildlife resources.

**C&T** Customary and traditional uses

**ANS** Amounts reasonably necessary for subsistence



Survey with a Nondalton resident, 2022

# ADF&G SUBSISTENCE RESEARCH

 Quantitative and qualitative research

 Most projects are partnerships

 Research guided by ethical principles

 Participation is voluntary and confidential

 Community review of draft data



Community scoping meeting, Perryville 2025

# COMPREHENSIVE HOUSEHOLD HARVEST SURVEYS

## Research Focus

- Methods of harvesting and processing
- Harvest and use estimates
- Sharing of wild foods
- Search areas
- Trends in resource use
- Demographics and income

- 📌 Goal: “holistic” understanding of mixed cash-subsistence economy and subsistence ways of life



ADF&G researcher and local research assistant conduct a household harvest survey in Pelican, 2024



# ETHNOGRAPHY

## Semi-structured Interviews



Key respondent interview, Unalaska, 2021

## Participant Observation



Participant observation in Slana River, 2013

## Life History Mapping



Life history mapping in Kodiak, 2023

# FINDING SUBSISTENCE DATA

The screenshot displays the Alaska Department of Fish and Game website. At the top, the navigation bar includes the department logo and the text "Alaska Department of Fish and Game" and "Active Online Subsistence Surveys". The main content area features three dashboard cards. The top card, "Community Subsistence Information System", is highlighted with a yellow circle. It includes a photo of a ptarmigan, a description of the dashboard's purpose, and an "Explore" button. Below it are two other cards: "Subsistence Community Profile Dashboard" with a photo of a fox, and "Subsistence Fisheries Data Dashboard" with a photo of people in a boat. Each card includes a "User Guide" and an "Explore" button.

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sb/CSIS/>

Technical Paper No. 510

## Lake Clark National Park and Preserve: Harvest and Use of Wild Resources in Nondalton and Port Alsworth, 2021

by  
Lauren A. Sill,  
Chance Wilcox,  
Bronwyn Jones,  
and  
Margaret Cunningham

May 2025

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Division of Subsistence



<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/publications/>

# SUBSISTENCE REGIONS



ern Region

ern Region

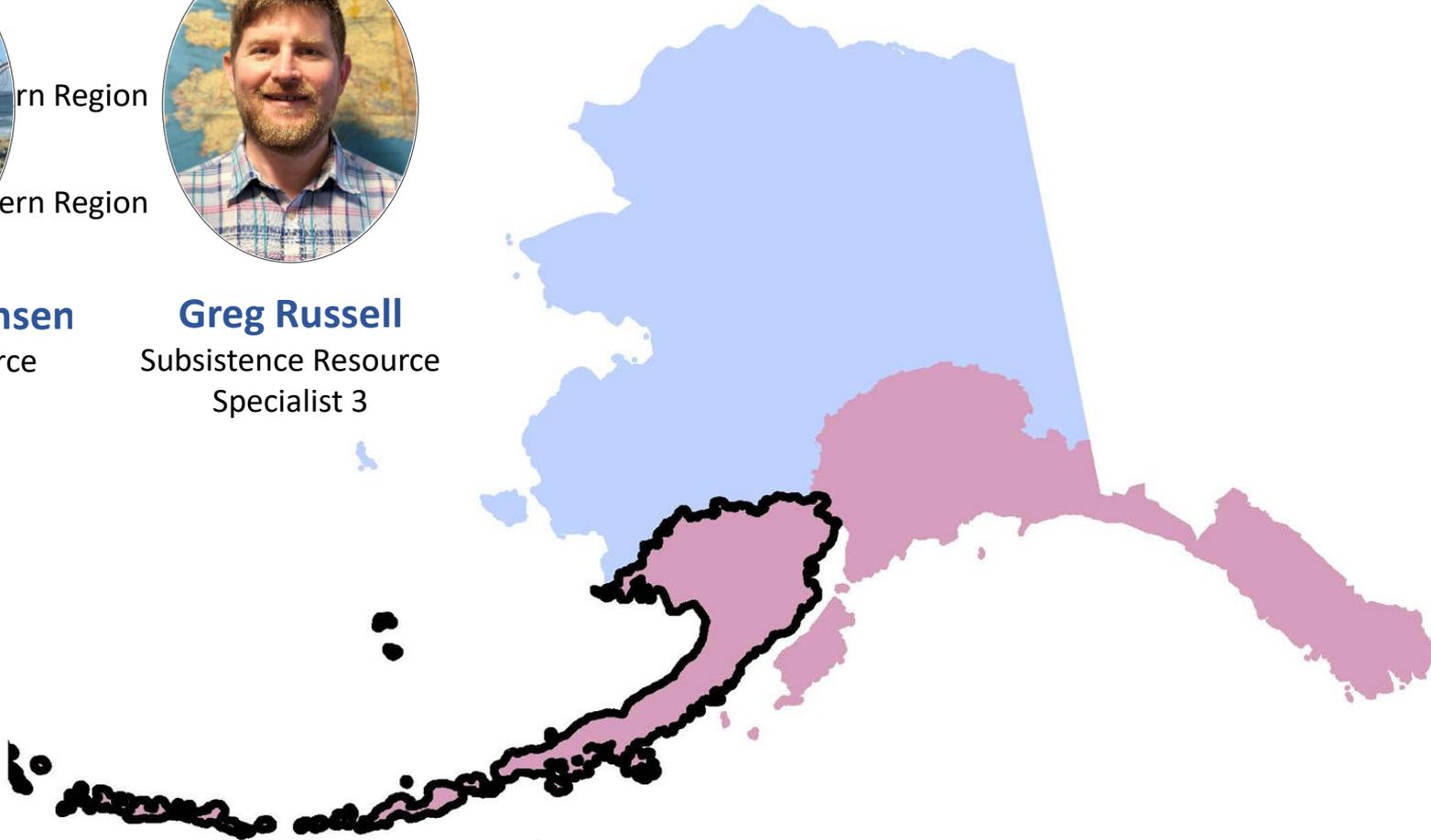
**Maddie Christiansen**

Subsistence Resource  
Specialist 2



**Greg Russell**

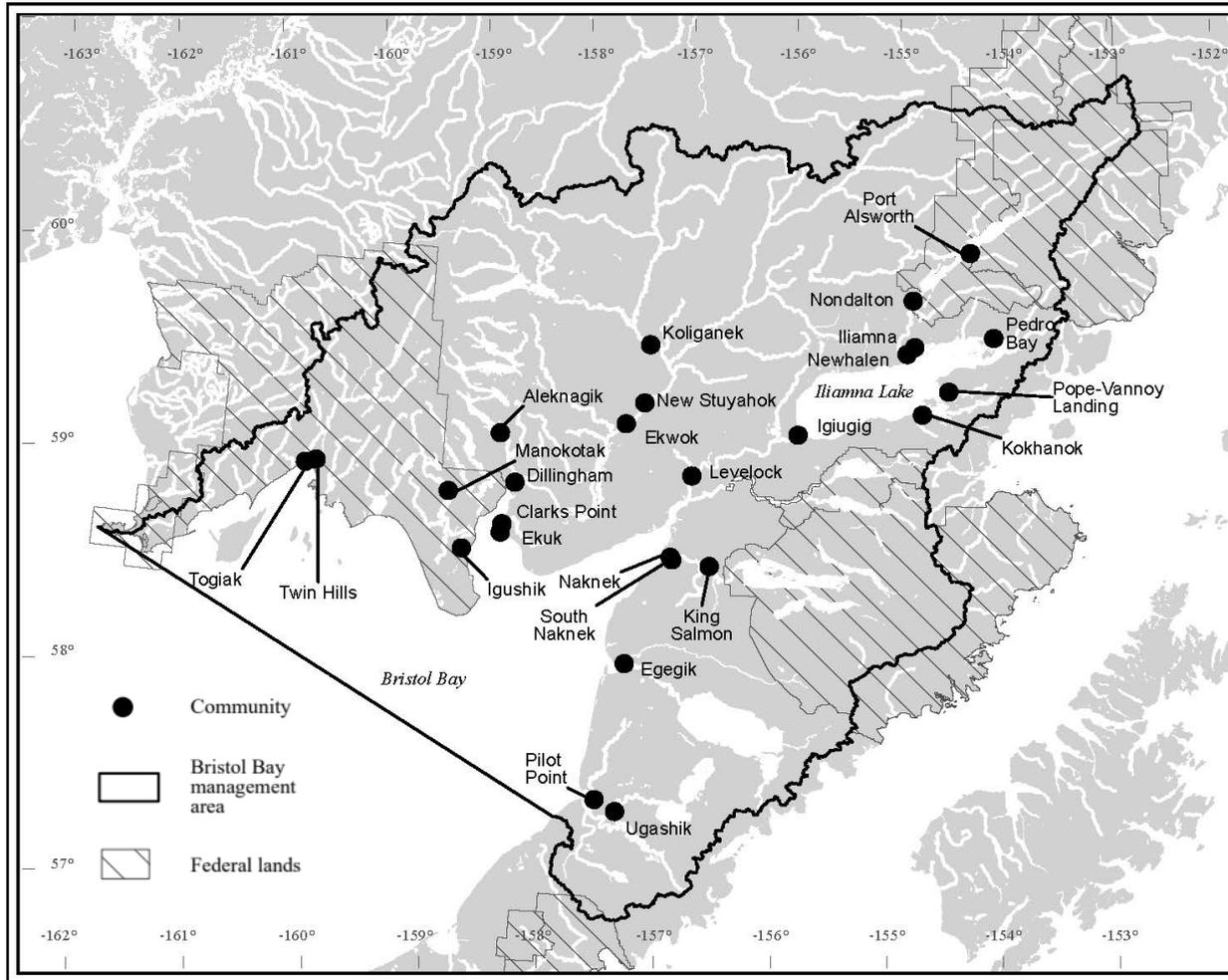
Subsistence Resource  
Specialist 3



**Southwest  
Region**



# OVERVIEW OF BRISTOL BAY AREA



## Population

- 6,198 people
  - 74% AK Native
  - Central Yup'ik, Dena'ina Athabascan, Alutiiq

## Communities

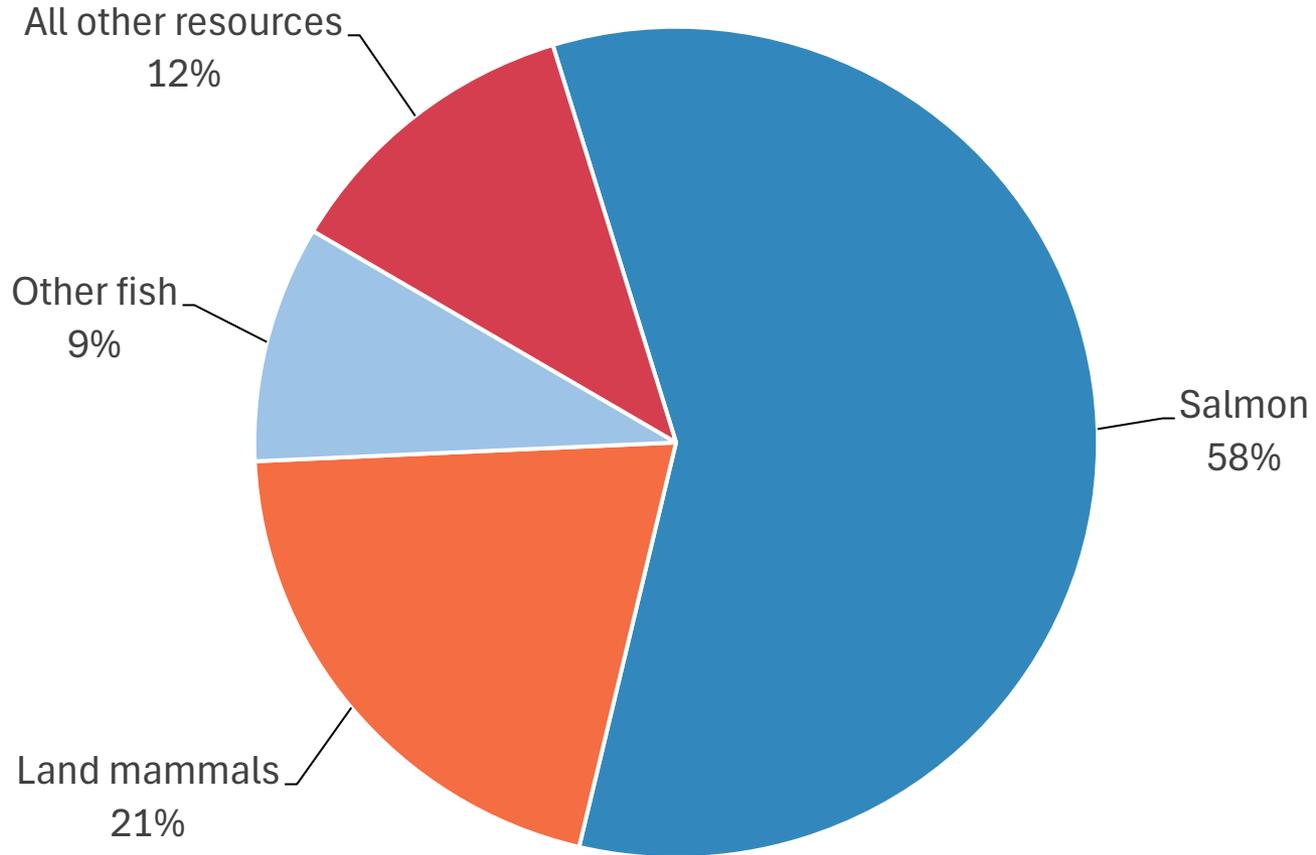
- 26 communities
- Regional centers of Dillingham and Bristol Bay Borough

## Economy

- Fisheries: commercial, sport, and subsistence
- Seasonal



# HARVEST COMPOSITION, 1987-2018



# ETHNOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND: SALMON

- **Long term use**
- Always a **central role**
- **Species:** king, sockeye, chum, pink, and coho; redfish
- **Timing:** mid-May through October
- **Preservation:** drying, smoking, half-drying, canning, fermenting, jarring, freezing, salting
- **Gear:** set gill nets, rod and reel, seines, commercial retention



Nondalton Fish Camp



Redfish ready for processing

# ETHNOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND: SALMON

- **Access:** skiffs, commercial fishing boats, ATVs, on foot
- **Location:** fish camps, near communities, lakes, river corridors, coasts
- Extended **family groups:** Roles assigned by gender and age
- **Sharing:** Within and between communities
- Maintaining **kinship** and **social ties**
- Changing use of **fish camps**



Fish drying, Iliamna



Preserving fish in Nondalton: salting eggs and jarring salmon



# SUBSISTENCE SALMON

## C&T Finding

 All finfish of the Bristol Bay Area

## ANS: 157,000 - 172,171 salmon

 includes 55,000 - 65,000 Kvichak River drainage sockeye salmon;

 does not include salmon stocks in the Alagnak River

## All Alaska Residents

 75% of subsistence salmon permits issued to Bristol Bay residents



# SUBSISTENCE SALMON

## Permits

- Required. One per household

## Gear

- Set and drift gillnet
- Dip net, spear, beach seine
- Varies by area

## Season

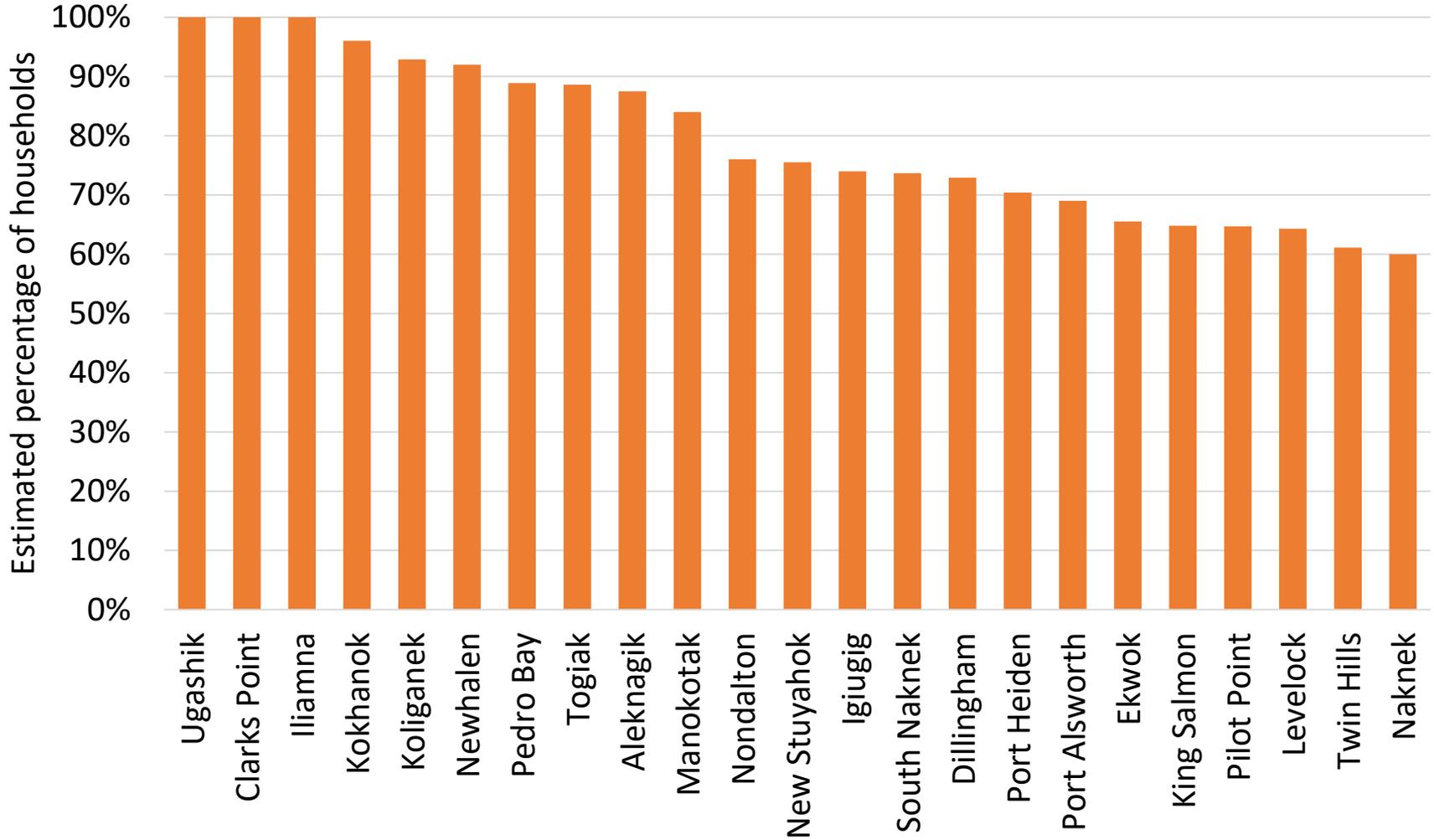
- Inside commercial districts
- Outside commercial districts

## Limits

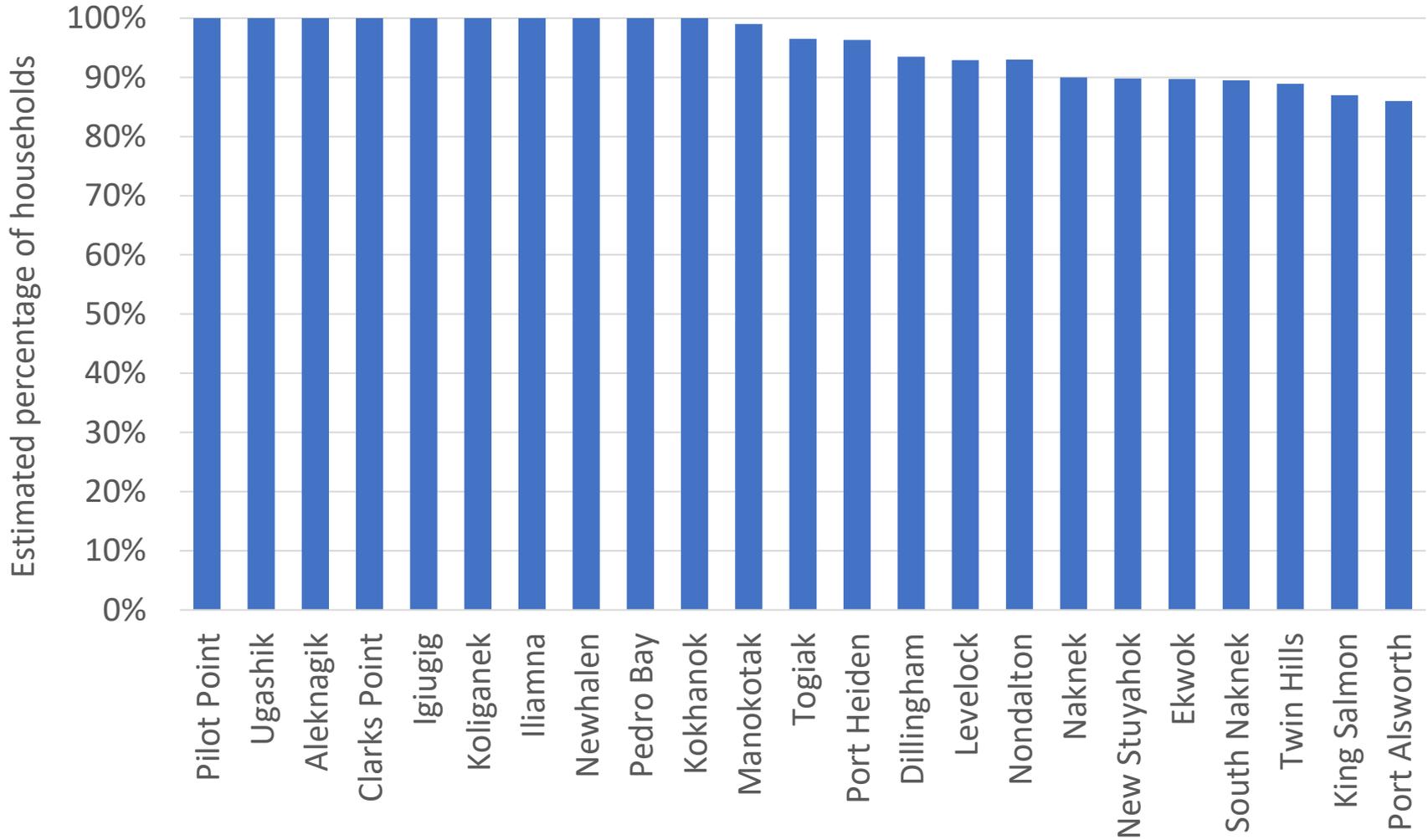
- Naknek District: 200 sockeye salmon after August 15
- All other districts: None



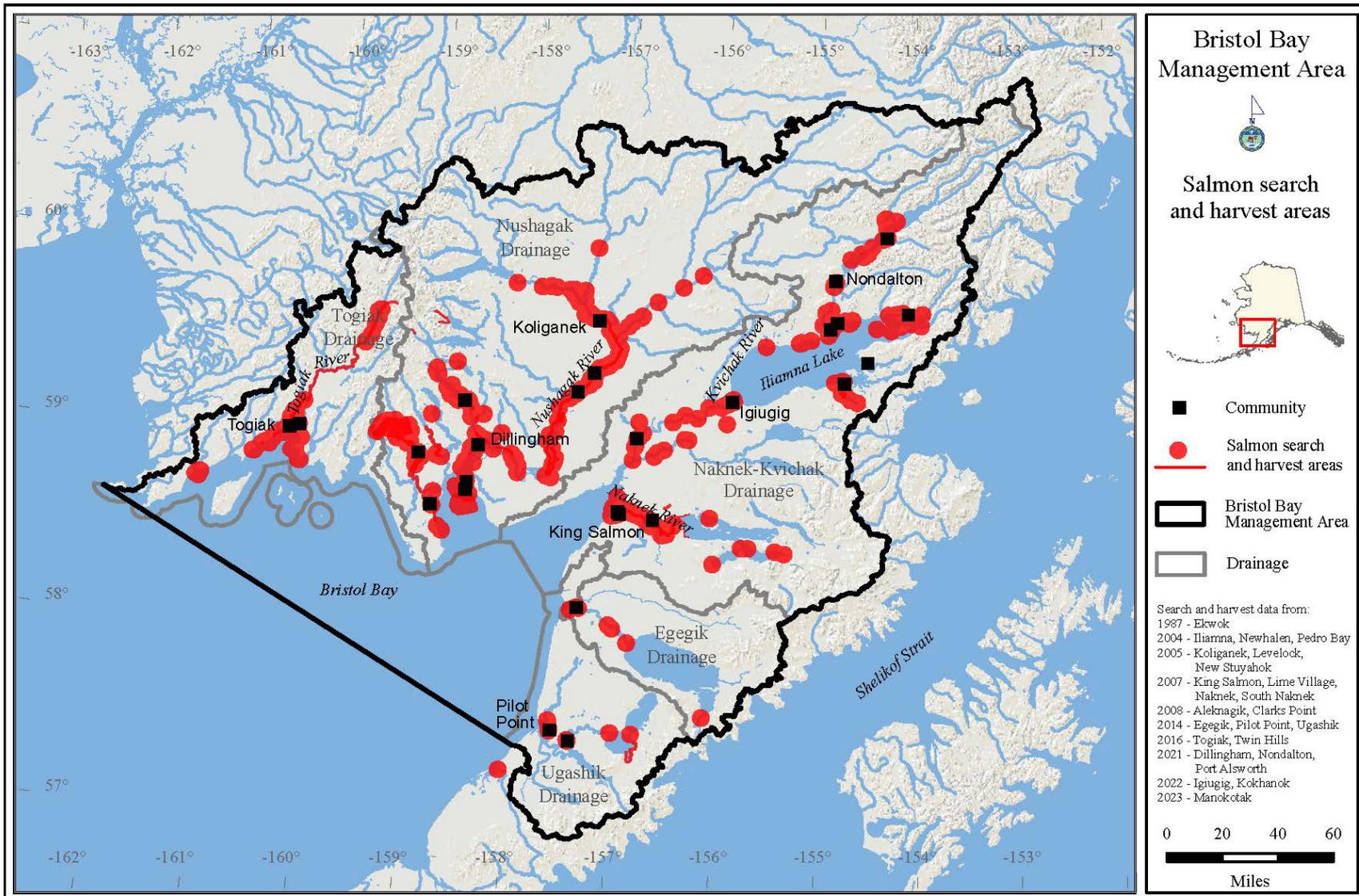
# HOUSEHOLDS SALMON FISHING, 1987-2023



# HOUSEHOLD USE OF SALMON, 1987-2023



# SEARCH AND HARVEST AREA MAPPING



# SUBSISTENCE SALMON PERMITS

- Available online, ADF&G offices, area vendors
- Harvest calendar
- Approx 1,100 permits
- Average 65% return rate
- Trends over time



Alaska Department of Fish & Game  
Bristol Bay Subsistence Salmon Fishery Permit  
ALASKA RESIDENTS ONLY  
Return this permit by October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2024

Issuing Community: \_\_\_\_\_  
Permit No.: \_\_\_\_\_  
Year: 2024  
Official Use Only

First Name: Rick Initial: Last Name: Blaine

Permanent Mailing Address: 1942 Casablanca Wy City: Anchorage

State: AK Zip Code: 99507 Phone Number: 907 014 1989 Number of year-round residents in household: 4

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Only ONE Subsistence Salmon permit may be issued to each household per year.

Please list the **HOUSEHOLD** members who will assist in operation of the Subsistence Net:  
1. Ilsa Lund 2. Victor Laszlo 3. Sam  
4. \_\_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_\_ 6. \_\_\_\_\_

Drainage to be fished: Naknek  Kvichak Egegik Ugashik Nushagak Togiak  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

Primary fishing location (specific): Lake Iliamna

Permit holders are responsible to verify allowed gear types and fathoms of net permitted for the area they intend to fish. Enter this link online for the regulations: <https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishregulations.Subsistence>

Please select gear type you will be using:  
Dip net  Set gear Seine Drift net Spear Other \_\_\_\_\_

I understand that I am applying for a subsistence fishing permit for my household in accordance with current regulations and hereby swear the information contained on this application is a true statement as witnessed by my signature below; and that I have been an Alaska resident for the last calendar year.

Applicant's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Authorizing Officer signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

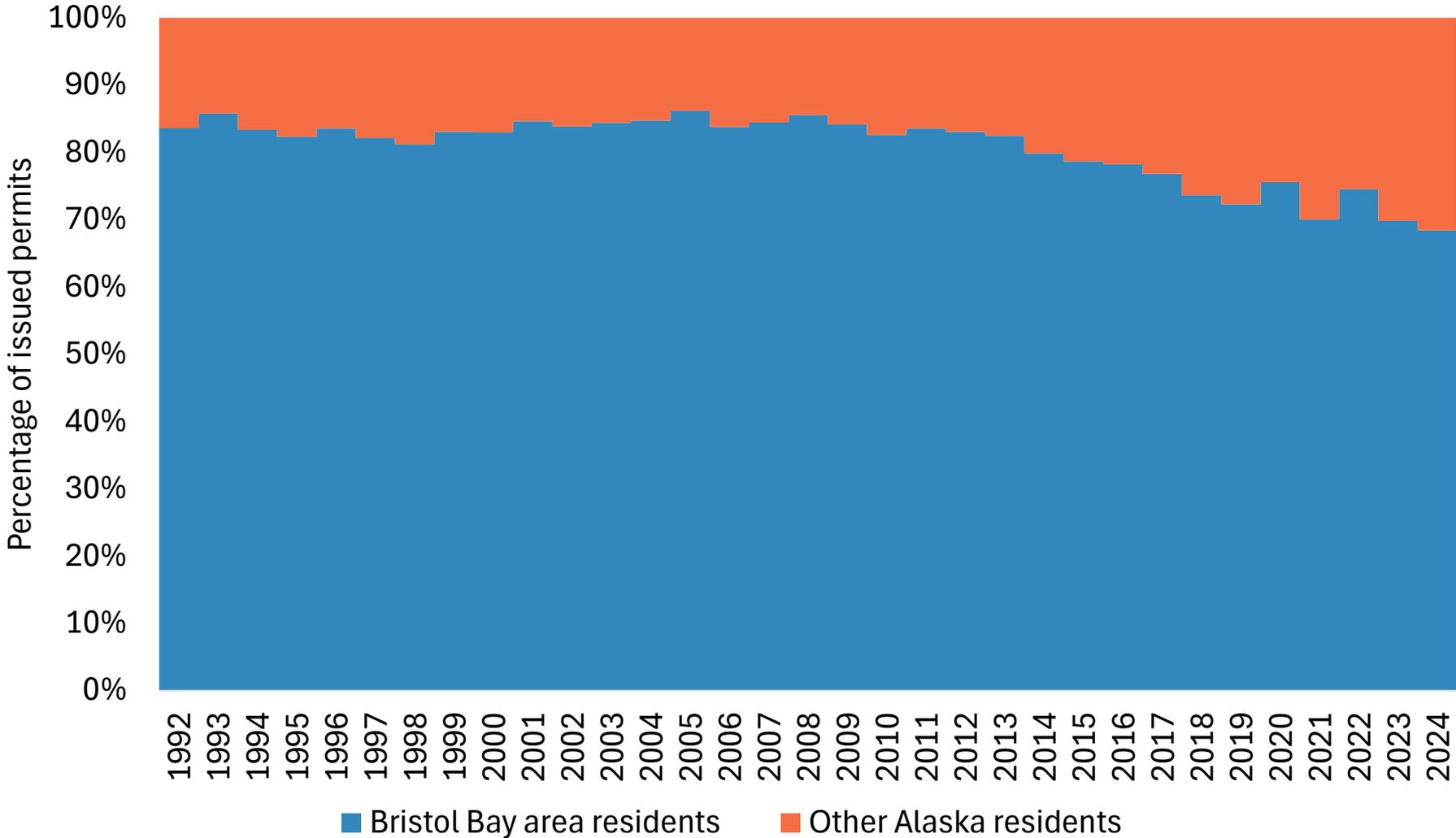
2. Fish caught for subsistence use may not be sold or allowed to enter commercial use.  
3. An accurate record of fish taken under authority of this permit must be returned to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game when the permit expires. Failure to return subsistence catch records is grounds for denial of future permit privileges.  
4. Commercially-caught salmon may also be utilized for subsistence purposes and must be reported on the back of this form as well as on a Commercial Fish Ticket.

Return form to:  
Division of Subsistence, ADF&G, 333 Raspberry Rd. Anchorage, AK 99518  
Email [dfg.sub.permits@alaska.gov](mailto:dfg.sub.permits@alaska.gov)

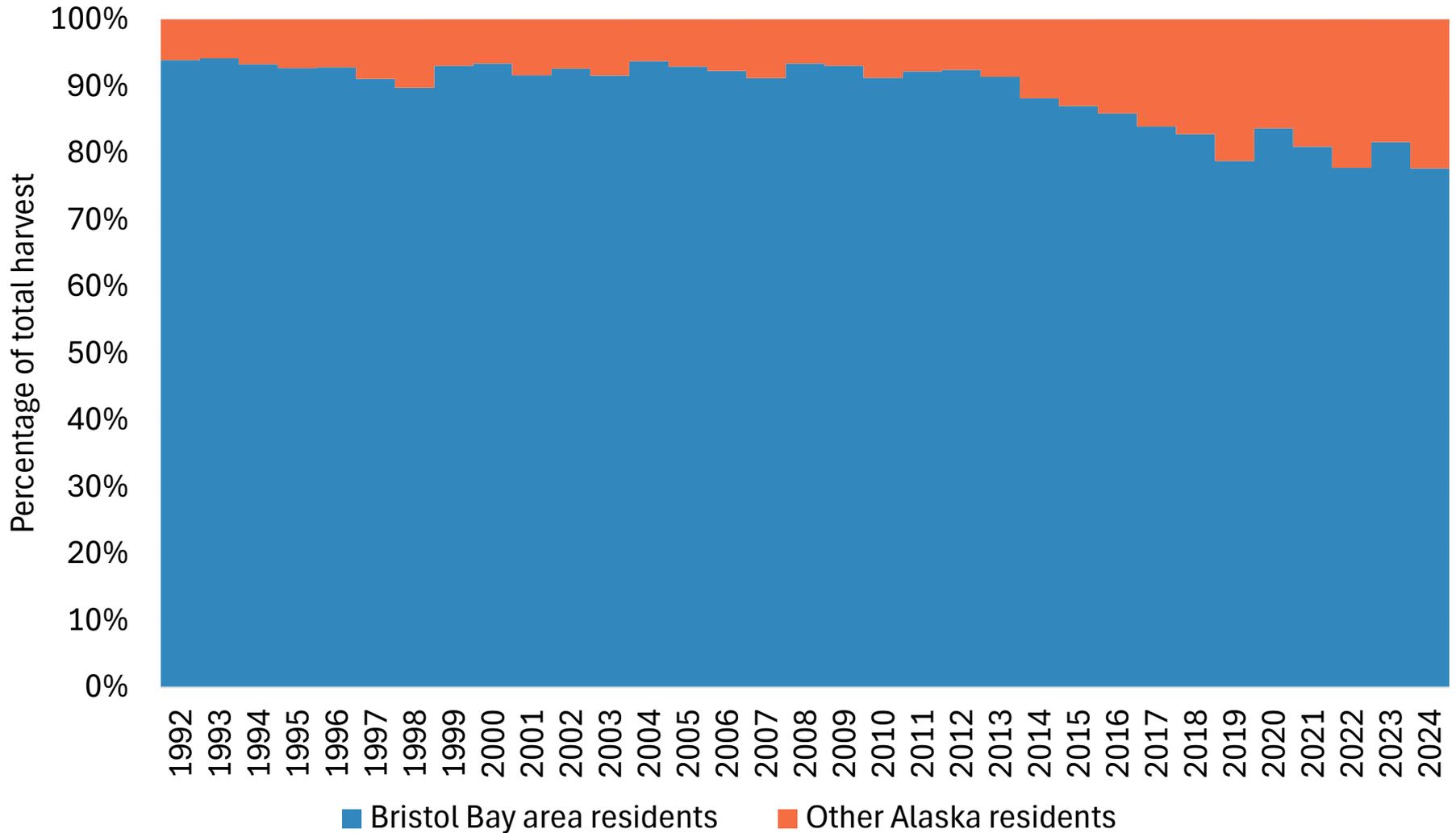
Revised 02/2023



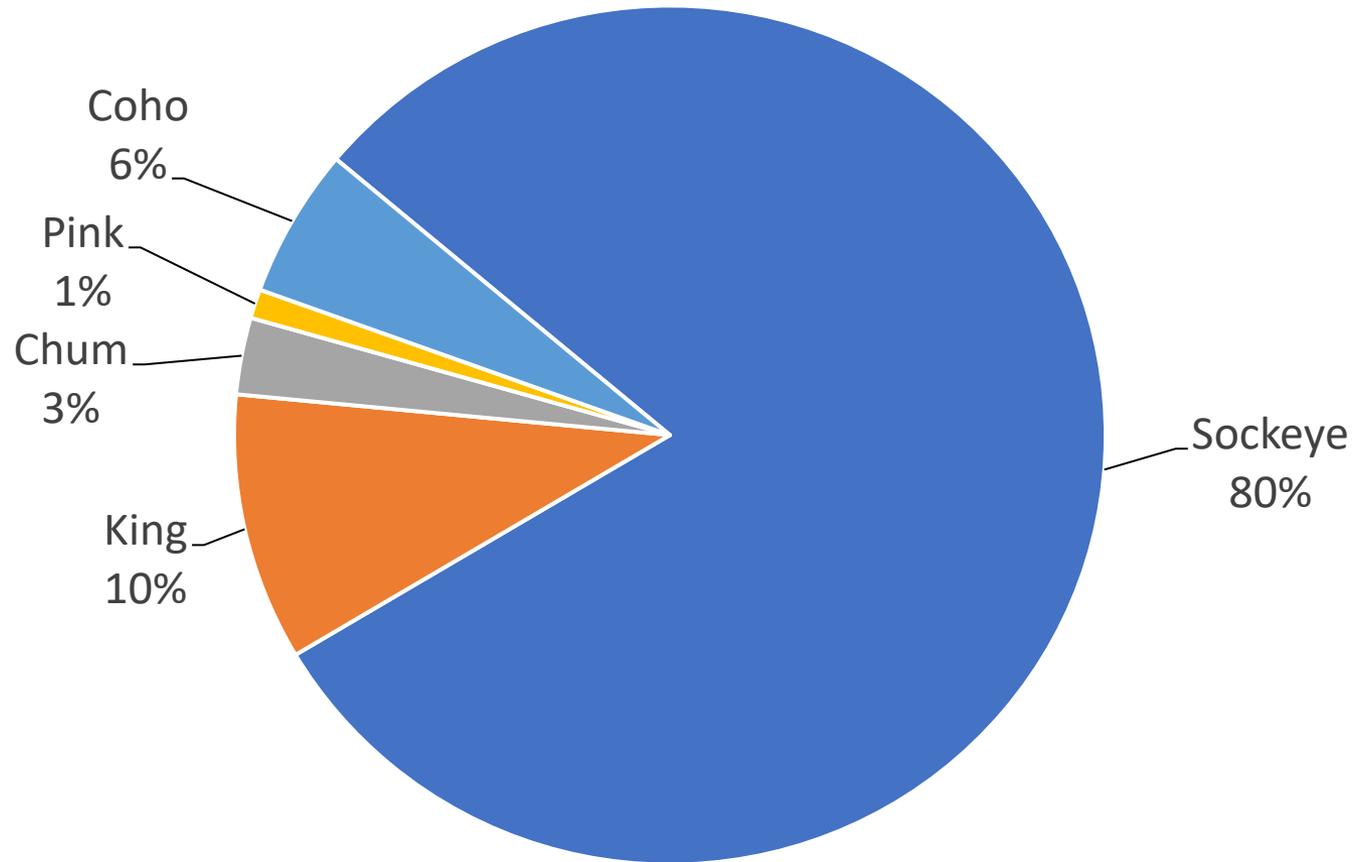
# SUBSISTENCE PERMITS BY RESIDENCE



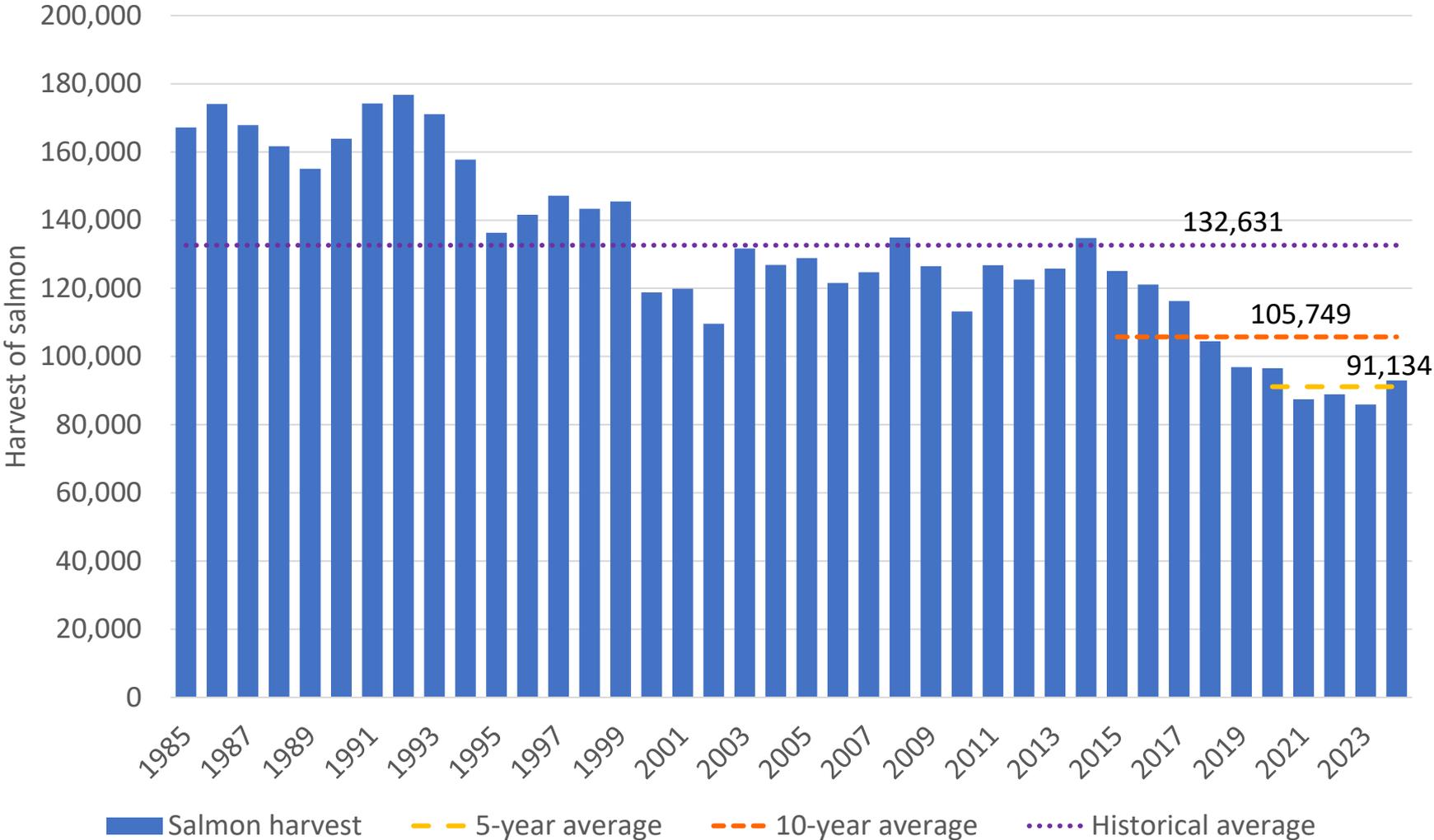
# HARVEST BY RESIDENCE



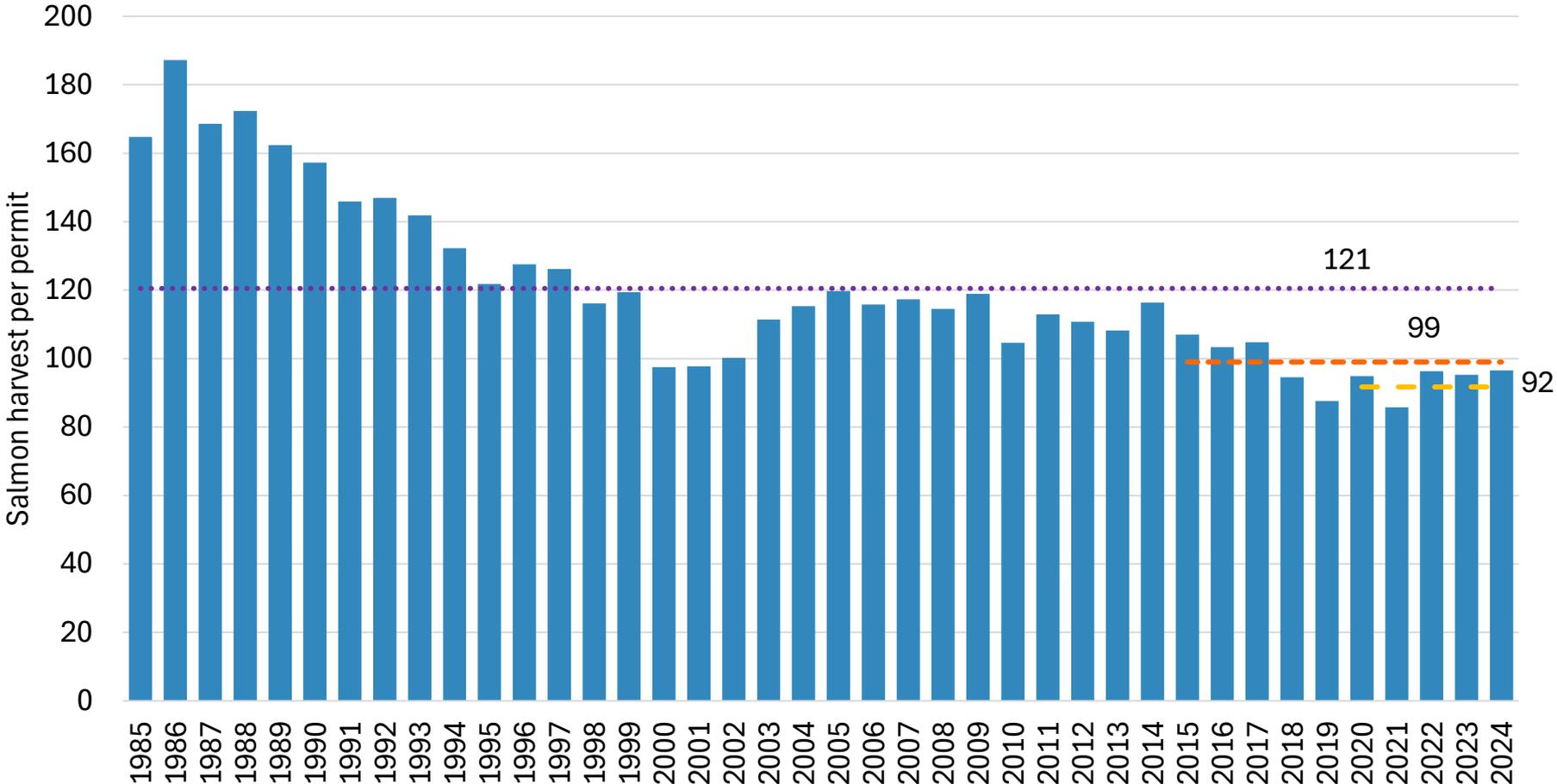
# HARVEST COMPOSITION 2015-2024



# SALMON HARVEST 1985-2024



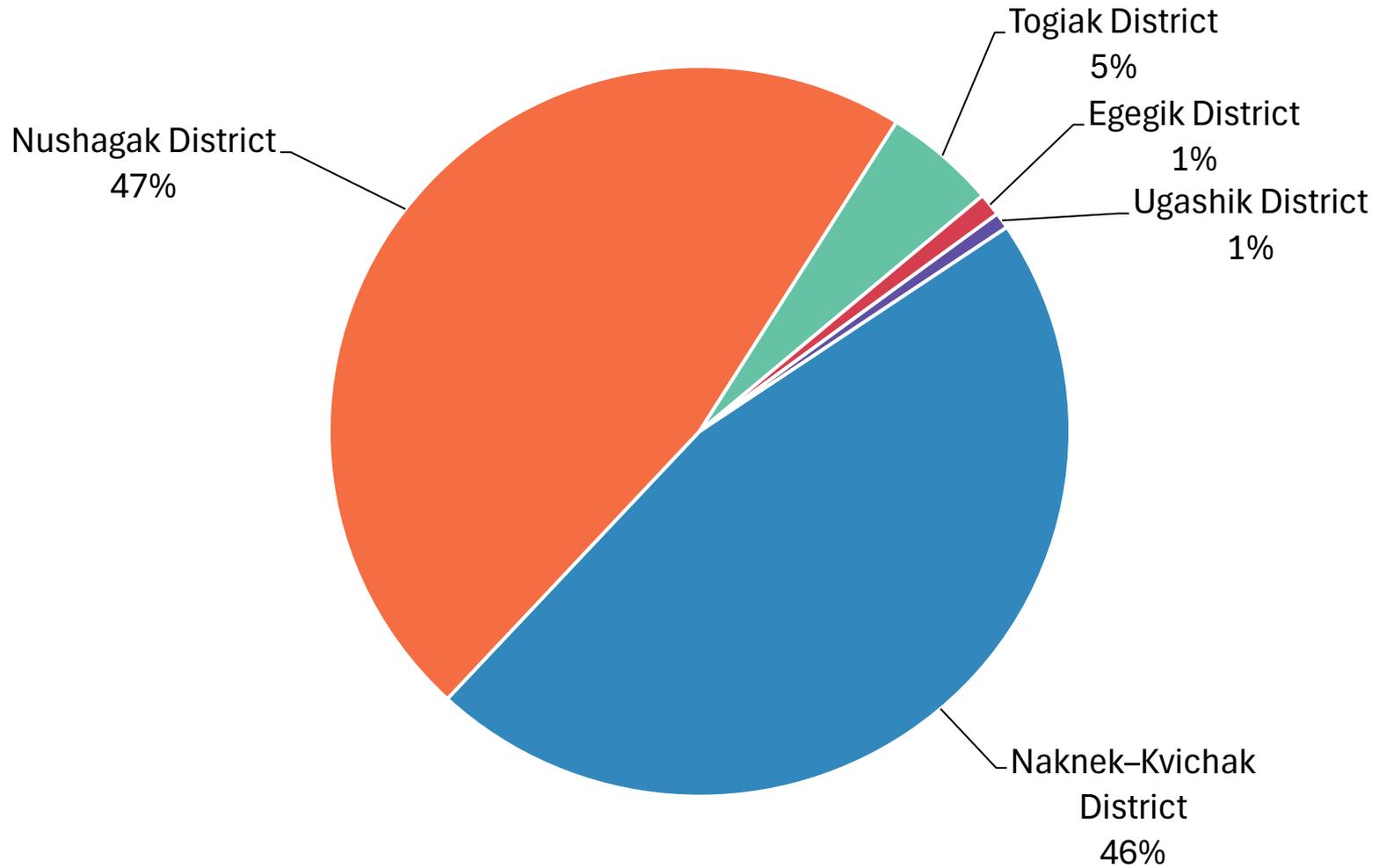
# SALMON HARVEST PER PERMIT 1985-2024



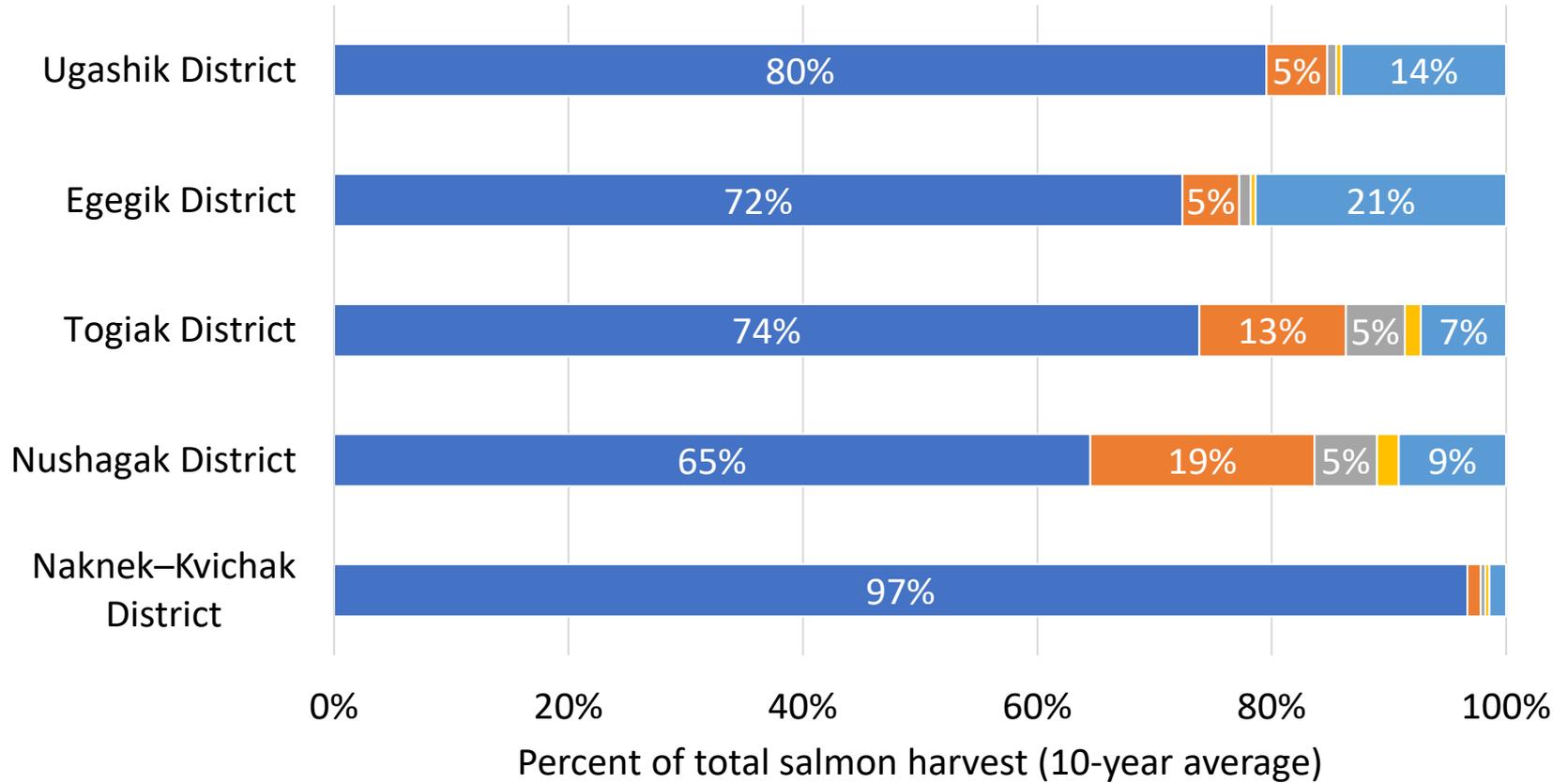
■ Salmon per permit 
 — 5-year average per permit 
 - - - 10-year average per permit 
 ⋯ Historical average per permit



# HARVEST BY DISTRICT 2015-2024



# HARVEST COMPOSITION 2015-2024



Note Unlabeled percentages are <5%.

■ Sockeye ■ King ■ Chum ■ Pink ■ Coho



# ETHNOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND: NONSALMON

**Species:** Arctic grayling, Alaska blackfish, burbot, Dolly Varden, lake trout, longnose sucker, northern pike, smelts, rainbow trout, whitefishes

**Season:** Year-round

**Location:** Often close to communities, but will travel for preferred locations

**Access:** Skiff and snowmachine



A variety of nonsalmon fish drying, Lake Clark



Whitefish, Igiugig

# ETHNOGRAPHIC BACKGROUND: NONSALMON

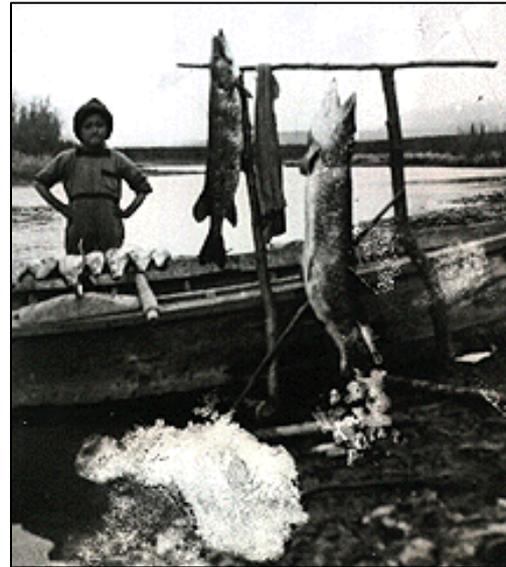
**Gear:** Depends on season and species.  
Traps, seines, jigging through ice, nets in open water

Traditionally **chumming** has been used to attract nonsalmon fish

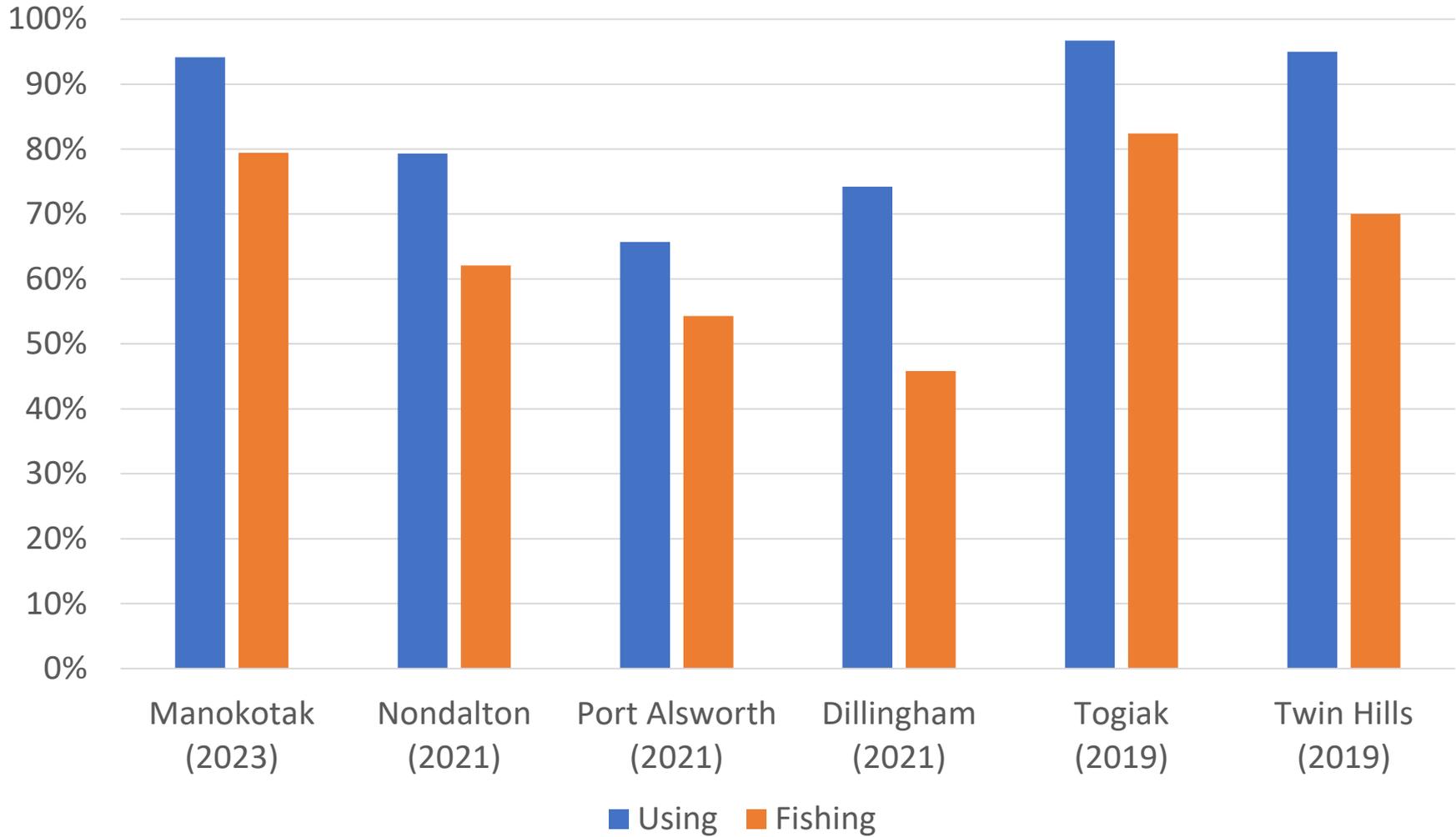
**Mode of production:** Varies. Groups of related men, groups of women, mixed gender groups, relatives and friends

**Processing:** Responsibility of women

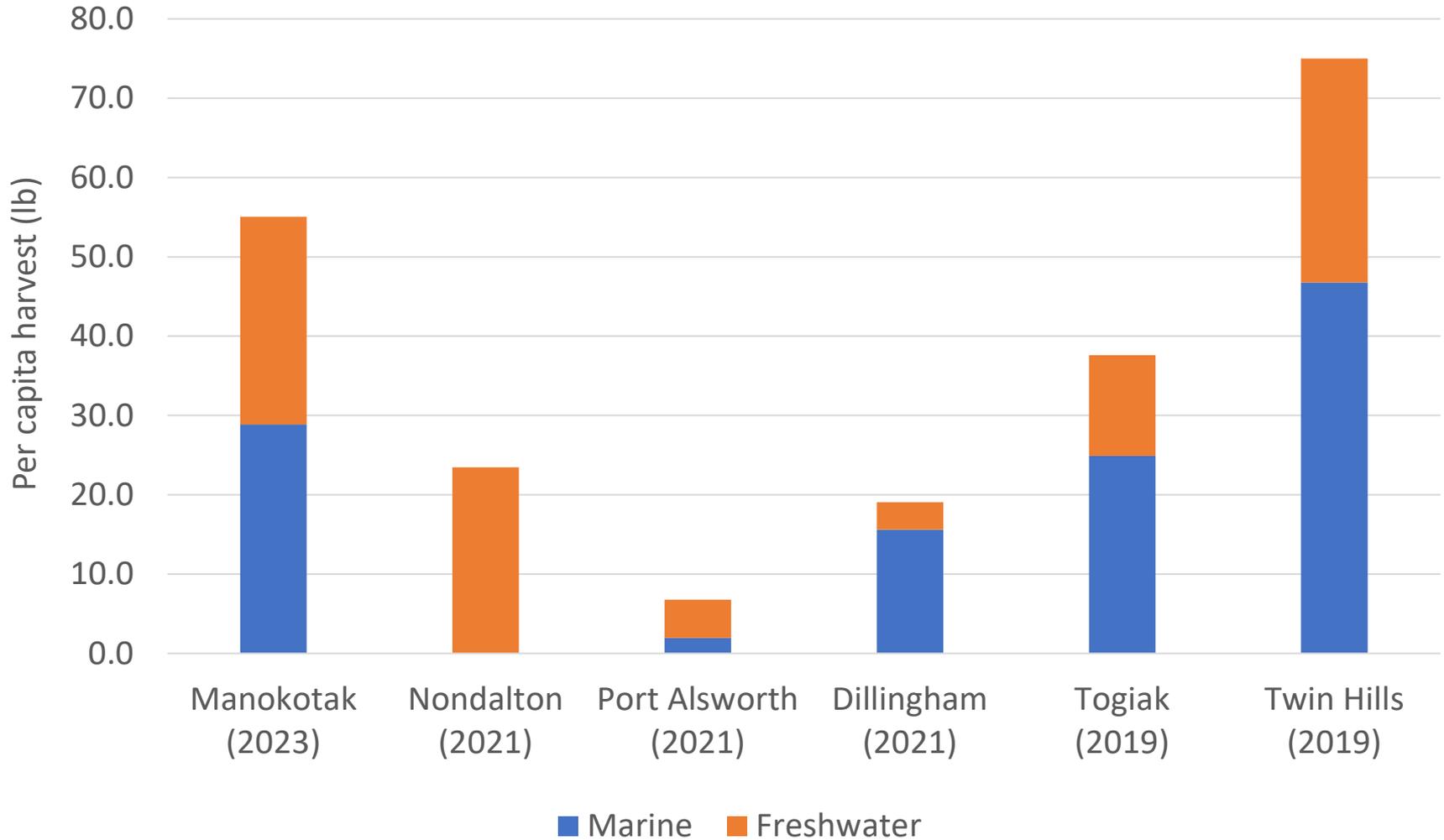
**Preservation:** Drying, half-drying, salted, smoking, frozen, fresh



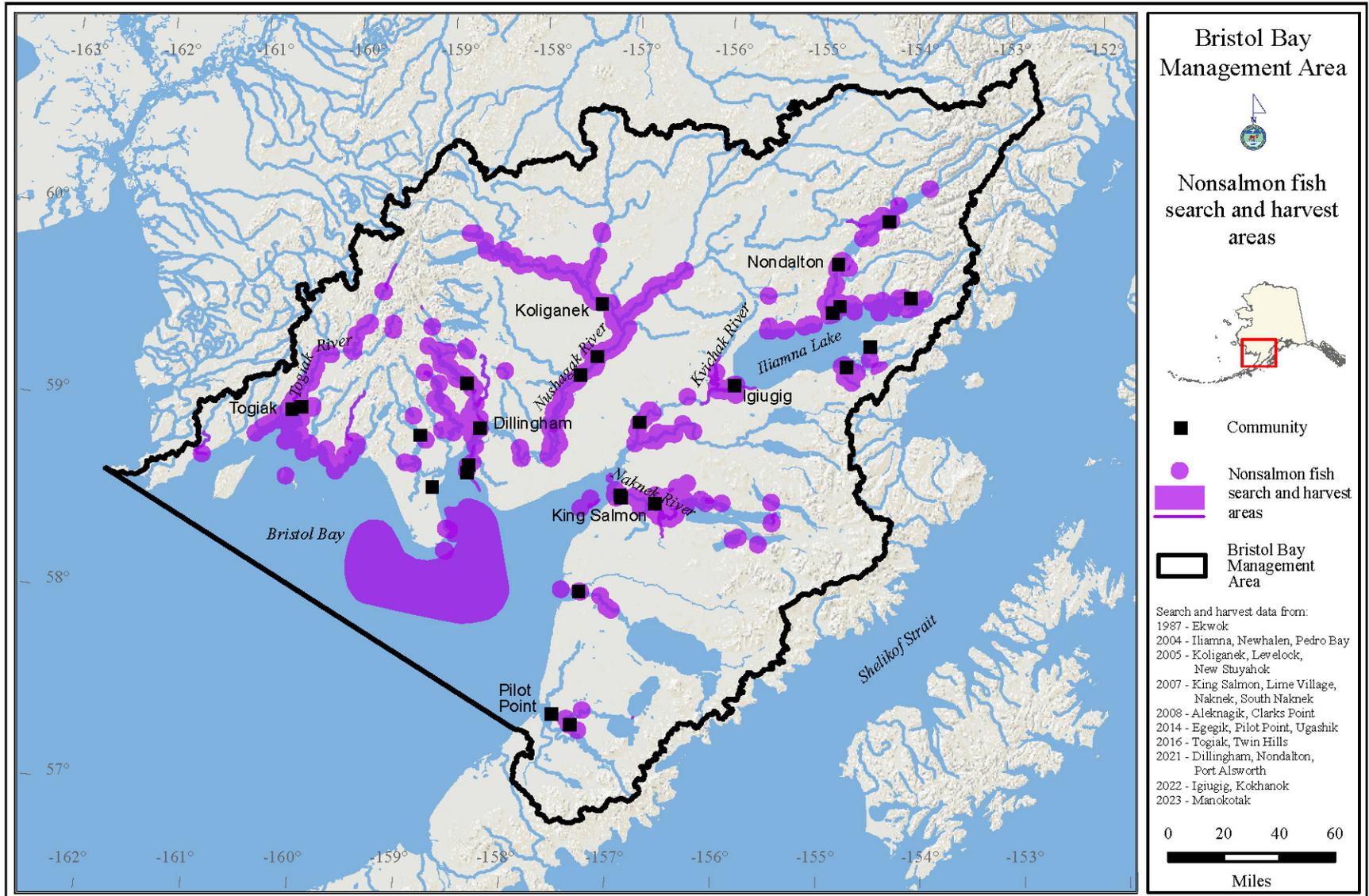
# NONSALMON HARVEST AND USE



# NONSALMON HARVEST COMPOSITION



# NONSALMON FISHING AREAS



# SUMMARY

- Salmon composes over one-half of the total wild foods harvest
- Sockeye salmon composes most of the salmon harvest
- Regional variability

- The majority of Bristol Bay households use and fish for salmon
- Recently, fewer permits issued
- Subsistence harvests have been declining

- Nonsalmon fish also widely harvested and used

# ADF&G SUBSISTENCE WORK

## Current Projects

- NPS Katmai
- OSM Manokotak

## Research Needs

- Sharing Networks
- Community updates
- Permit validity
- Permit outreach

## Partnerships

- BBNA
- Local governments and tribal organizations



Lewis Point Fish Camp

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**Community Subsistence Harvest Information System**

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sb/CSIS/>

**Division Technical Paper Series**

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/publications>

**Thank you to all the Bristol Bay residents who participated in this research!**



Newhalen