

North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NORTH PACIFIC SALMON CATCHES REMAIN HIGH IN THE WEST BUT DECLINE IN THE EAST

Victoria, B.C., Canada (May 19, 2017)—The North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) announced preliminary North Pacific-wide total salmon catches for 2016, as reported by its member countries Canada, Japan, Korea, Russia, and United States. Pacific salmon abundance in the North Pacific, as indexed by aggregate commercial catches, remains at near all-time high levels. A total of 0.85 million metric tonnes (439.5 million fish) was caught in 2016, slightly less than previous even-numbered years. Salmon catches tend to be less in even than odd-numbered years because the most frequent species in the catch, pink salmon, are less abundant in even-numbered years.

The member nations' portions of the total catch included 51% by Russia (439.5 thousand metric tonnes), 33% by the United States (280.4 thousand metric tonnes; Alaska—271.8 thousand metric tonnes), 13% by Japan (111.3 thousand metric tonnes), 3% by Canada (21.5 thousand metric tonnes), and less than 1% by Korea (256 metric tonnes).

Pink salmon constituted the majority of the total commercial catch (41% by weight) followed by chum (33%) and sockeye salmon (21%). Coho comprised 3% of the catch, Chinook salmon was 1%, and each of cherry salmon and steelhead trout were < 1% of the catch by weight.

Pink and chum salmon dominate Asian catches. In general, catches remain high and in 2016 were within the range of catches for recent even-numbered years. The total North Pacific pink salmon catch was 353.2 thousand metric tonnes, with the majority caught by Russia (75% of the total by weight). The total catch of chum salmon was 285.2 thousand metric tonnes, and the largest portion of the catch was shared by Russia (41%) and Japan (34% of the total by weight).

In North America, the relative abundance of salmon species varies from north to south. In Alaska, pink and sockeye salmon are the primary species, followed by chum salmon. In Canada, sockeye, pink, and chum salmon have historically comprised the largest catch, while in Washington, Oregon, and California, Chinook, chum and coho salmon are the most abundant species. In 2016, unusually low catches of pink salmon resulted in relatively low total catches of salmon in North America.

Hatchery releases of salmon and steelhead from NPAFC member countries totaled approximately 5.1 billion fish in 2016, similar to numbers over the last three decades. Hatcheries released 1,959 million fish (38% of the total) in the United States, 1,898 million (37%) in Japan, 967 million (19%) in Russia, 282 million (6%) in Canada, and 22 million (< 1%) in Korea.

Hatchery releases were mostly chum (3,340 million, 65%) and pink salmon (1,227 million, 24%), followed by Chinook (238 million, 5%), sockeye (220 million, 4%), and coho salmon (76 million, 2%), steelhead trout (20 million, less than 1%), and cherry salmon (8 million, less than 1%).

Table 1. Preliminary 2016 commercial salmon catches in Canada, Japan, Korea, Russia, and the United States. Commercial catches by foreign fleets in the Russian EEZ are not included. Japanese catch data are based on Fisheries Research Agency data sources, not official statistics. Commercial catch weight for Alaska is based on landed weight (Alaska Department of Fish and Game).

(a) Preliminary 2016 commercial catch in millions of fish.

	Sockeye	Pink	Chum	Coho	Chinook	Cherry	Steelhead	Total
Canada	0.758	1.759	3.262	0.274	0.214	-	-	6.267
Japan	0.000	9.170	29.255	0.001	0.001	-	0.000	38.427
Korea	-	-	0.085	-	-	-	-	0.085
Russia	21.159	214.120	38.834	2.705	0.151	0.006	-	276.975
USA	53.269	39.429	16.945	4.323	1.088	-	0.053	115.107
Alaska	53.226	39.429	15.945	3.919	0.434	-	0.001	112.955
WOC	0.043	0.000	1.000	0.404	0.654	-	0.052	2.152
Total	75.186	264.478	88.381	7.304	1.453	0.006	0.053	436.861

WOC: Washington, Oregon, and California

(b) Preliminary 2016 commercial catch in metric tonnes (round weight).

	Sockeye	Pink	Chum	Coho	Chinook	Cherry	Steelhead	Total
Canada	1,843	3,443	14,011	946	1,246	-	-	21,489
Japan	2	14,160	95,911	2	7	1,187	0	111,269
Korea	-	-	256	-	-	-	-	256
Russia	50,016	264,998	116,636	6,990	820	9	-	439,469
USA	131,274	70,583	58,457	14,473	5,444	-	182	280,414
Alaska	131,212	70,583	54,444	13,094	2,488	-	1	271,822
WOC	62	0	4,013	1,379	2,956	-	181	8,591
Total	183,135	353,184	285,272	22,411	7,517	1,196	182	852,897

WOC: Washington, Oregon, and California

Table 2. Preliminary 2016 hatchery releases in NPAFC member countries in millions of fish.

	Sockeye	Pink	Chum	Coho	Chinook	Cherry	Steelhead	Total
Canada	145.154	10.938	79.938	7.951	37.377	-	0.360	281.717
Japan	0.073	123.377	1,766.773	-	-	7.694	-	1,897.917
Korea	-	-	21.950	-	-	-	-	21.950
Russia	14.276	198.263	749.578	3.891	0.988	0.282	-	967.278
USA	60.558	894.315	721.441	63.900	199.565	-	19.488	1,959.266
Alaska	48.667	893.756	667.365	30.741	11.865	-	-	1,662.394
WOCI	11.891	0.559	44.076	33.160	187.700	-	19.488	296.872
Total	220.061	1,226.893	3,339.680	75.742	237.930	7.976	19.848	5,128.128

WOCI: Washington, Oregon, California, and Idaho

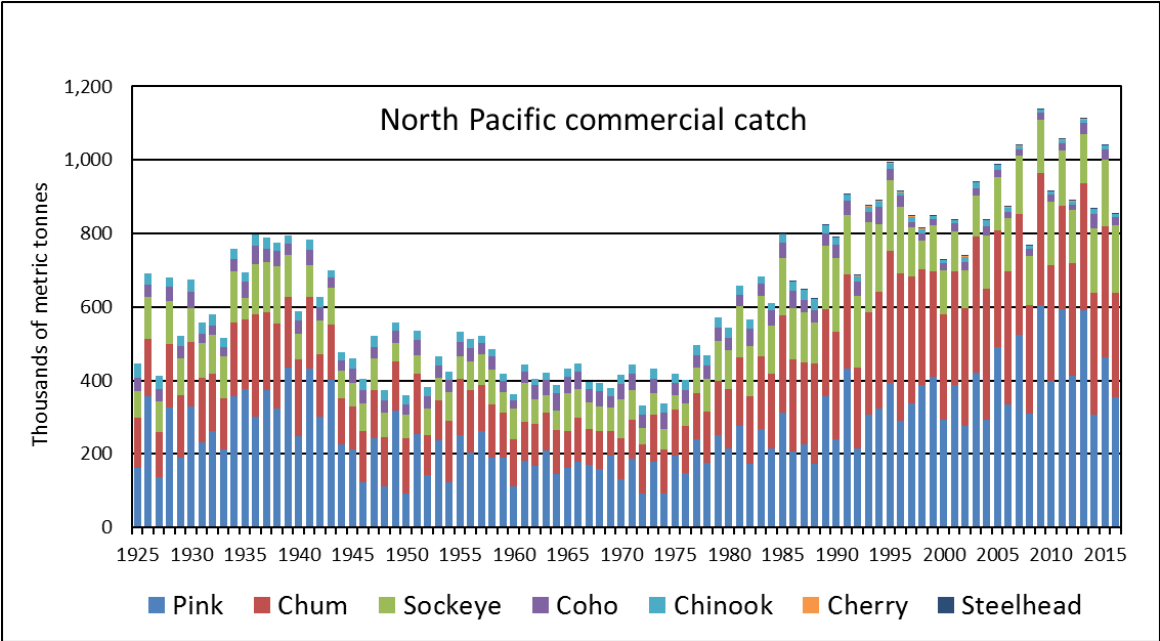


Figure 1. North Pacific commercial catch (thousands of metric tonnes) of Pacific salmon by species from 1925 to 2016 (2016 catches are preliminary).

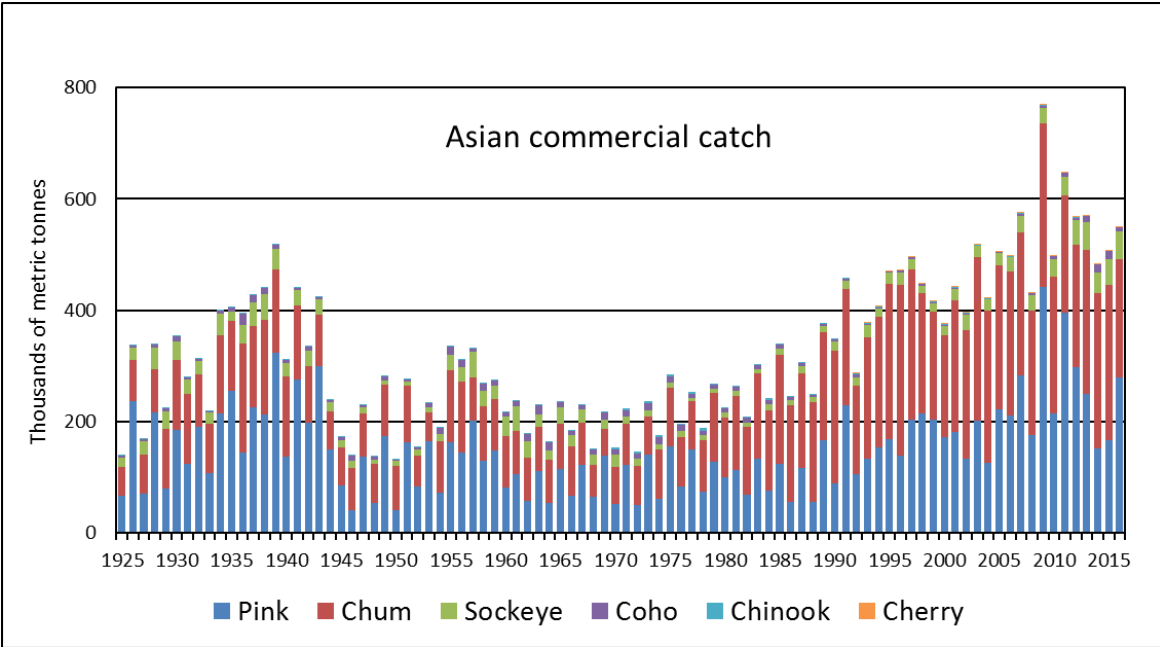


Figure 2. Asian commercial catch (thousands of metric tonnes) of Pacific salmon by species from 1925 to 2016 (2016 catches are preliminary).

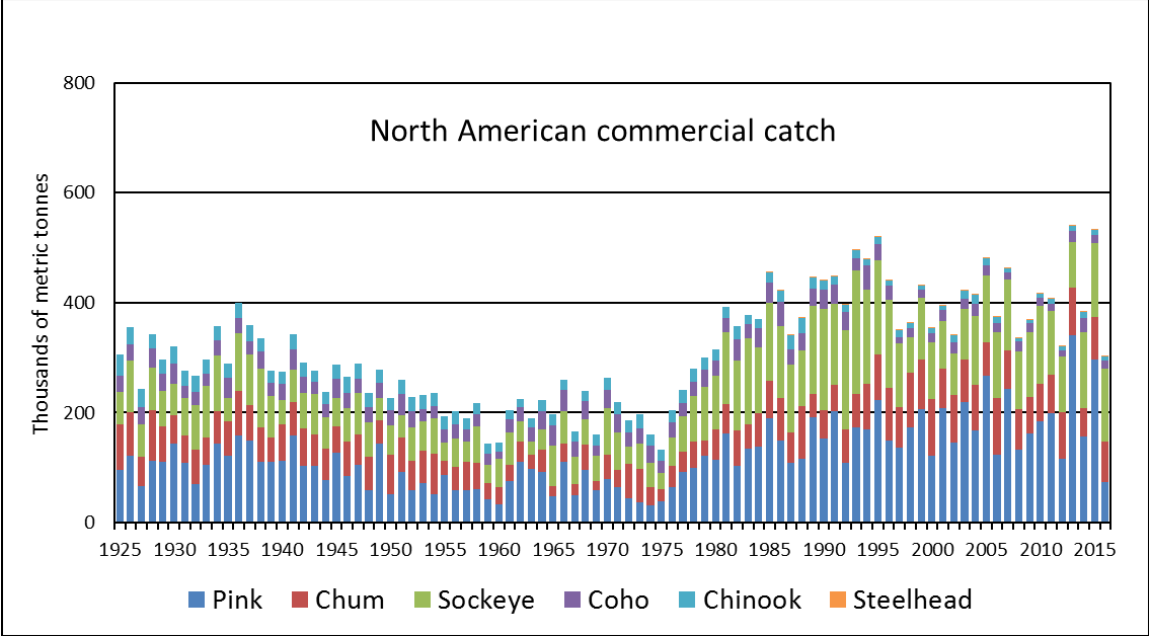


Figure 3. North American commercial catch (thousands of metric tonnes) of Pacific salmon by species from 1925 to 2016 (2016 catches are preliminary).

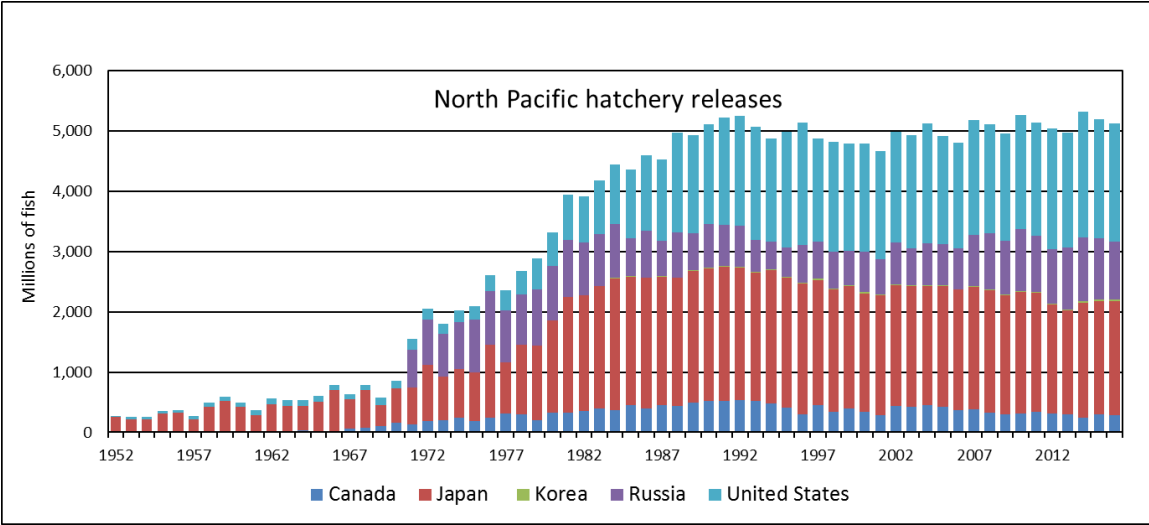


Figure 4. Annual North Pacific hatchery releases (millions of fish) of Pacific salmon by member countries from 1952 to 2016.

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About NPAFC

The NPAFC is an international organization that promotes the conservation of Pacific salmon (chum, coho, pink, sockeye, Chinook, and cherry salmon) and steelhead trout in the North Pacific and its adjacent seas, and serves as a venue for cooperation in and coordination of scientific research and enforcement activities. The NPAFC Convention Area is located in international waters north of 33°N latitude in the North Pacific, Bering Sea and the Sea of Okhotsk. NPAFC member countries include Canada, Japan, Republic of Korea, Russian Federation, and United States of America.
