

**A REVIEW OF THE 1993 COMMERCIAL  
SALMON FISHERIES IN ALASKA**

by

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## SUMMARY

The total 1993 commercial salmon catch in Alaska is estimated to be 193 million salmon (Table 1). Figure 1 shows the location of major fishing areas and Tables 2 through 5 provide detailed harvest estimates. The ex-vessel value of the 1993 salmon harvest appears to be near \$390 million — down dramatically from our estimate of \$575 million for the 1992 harvest. The 1993 all-species salmon catch set still another record, beating the previous record of 190 million set in 1991. The record catch between 1939 and 1983 remained at 126 million; remarkably, salmon harvest records were broken seven times between 1983 and 1993 (Rigby et al. 1991). Figure 2 provides a graphical summary of Alaskan salmon harvests, by species, from 1970 to 1993.

Detailed summaries of the previous year's commercial fishery and a forecast for the coming year has been available from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game since 1969 (ADF&G 1969–1984; Eggers 1985, 1986; Eggers and Dean 1987, 1988; Geiger and Savikko, 1989–1993; Geiger and Simpson 1994). An annual mail survey provides information on harvests in Alaska's sport fisheries. The most recent summary of this survey is Mills (1993), which covers the 1992 fishing year. The report on the 1993 fishing year should be out sometime in 1994. Information on subsistence harvests in Alaska during 1993 is not yet available.

Although statewide the 1993 fishery took a record number of salmon, the season will be remembered for its unexpected run failures and the resulting painful fisheries closures. Chum salmon failed to return throughout western Alaska — resulting in economic disaster. Even subsistence fisheries had to be closed in the Yukon drainage and elsewhere in western Alaska. The chum salmon failure was considered to be the most important news story of 1993 by the Alaska Public Radio Network, and the second most important story in Alaska by the Associated Press. This story took on such importance because people have few other resources throughout the affected region, and because of the cultural importance the returning salmon have in Alaska's Native populations. In another area of the state, both hatchery and wild pink salmon failed to return in expected numbers to Prince William Sound. Both run failures in western Alaska and in Prince William Sound are puzzling and still defy a good explanation.

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Table 1. Preliminary 1993 Alaska commercial salmon harvests by fishing area and species, in thousands of fish.

Fishing Area	SPECIES					Total
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	
<b>Southeast Region</b>	281	3,190	3,650	57,200	7,870	72,200
Prince William Sound	32	1,850	446	5,760	1,190	9,280
Upper Cook Inlet	19	4,730	289	103	121	5,260
Lower Cook Inlet	2	231	6	867	4	1,110
Bristol Bay	85	40,800	72	1	724	41,700
<b>Central Region</b>	138	47,600	812	6,730	2,040	57,300
Kodiak Area	42	4,380	313	34,000	588	39,300
Chignik	20	1,700	230	1,650	122	3,720
South Peninsula	14	3,650	212	9,670	1,000	14,500
North Peninsula	24	3,870	61	6	130	4,090
Aleutian Islands	0	0	0	0	1	1
<b>Westward Region</b>	100	13,600	816	45,300	1,840	61,700
<b>AYK Region</b>	129	167	730	158	360	1,543
<b>TOTAL ALASKA</b>	<b>648</b>	<b>65,000</b>	<b>6,010</b>	<b>109,000</b>	<b>12,100</b>	<b>193,000</b>

Columns do not total exactly due to rounding.

Revised March 22, 1994

Table 2. Preliminary 1993 Southeast Alaska commercial salmon harvests by fishing area and species, in thousands of fish.

Fishing Area	SPECIES					
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
Tree Point Drift Gillnet	1	394	32	481	383	1,290
Prince of Wales Gillnet	1	206	231	538	135	1,110
Stikine River Gillnet	2	77	14	40	23	155
Southern Districts Seine	6	1,530	358	36,400	1,560	39,900
Annette Island Fisheries	1	95	33	1,520	75	1,730
<b>Southern Southeast Total</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>2,300</b>	<b>668</b>	<b>39,029</b>	<b>2,180</b>	<b>44,190</b>
Taku-Snettisham Gillnet	7	172	65	17	166	427
Lynn Canal Gillnet	1	173	60	11	307	552
Yakutat Set Net	1	346	237	10	4	599
Northern Districts Seine	1	148	101	14,900	1,070	16,200
<b>Northern Southeast Total</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>839</b>	<b>464</b>	<b>14,900</b>	<b>1,550</b>	<b>17,800</b>
Southeast Troll 2/	227	25	2,390	903	526	4,070
Hatchery Terminal Area Fisheries						
Gillnet	7	0	14	0	388	410
Seine	2	17	13	2,100	1,970	4,100
Private Hatchery Fishery	24	8	97	294	1,250	1,672
Miscellaneous	2	5	2	27	10	46
<b>SOUTHEAST REGION</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>3,190</b>	<b>3,650</b>	<b>57,200</b>	<b>7,870</b>	<b>72,200</b>

1/ Excludes catch of four thousand small (<21") chinook salmon harvested by purse seine gear.

2/ Includes chinook salmon caught by troll gear from October 11, 1992 to September 30, 1993.

3/ Includes salmon that were confiscated, from sport fish derbies, or from commercial test fisheries and sold.

Columns do not total exactly due to rounding

Compiled January 16, 1994



Table 3. Preliminary 1993 Central Region, Alaska, commercial salmon harvests by fishing area and species, in thousands of fish.

Fishing Area	SPECIES					
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
Bering River	0	34	116	0	0	150
Copper River	30	1,400	281	10	13	1,730
PWS General	0	28	4	2,880	6	2,920
PWS Hatcheries	1	114	3	2,210	475	2,810
Coghill District /1	1	73	40	494	639	1,250
Unakwik District /1	0	15	0	7	1	22
Eshamy District	0	183	2	131	47	362
PWS Miscellaneous /2	0	7	0	26	5	38
Prince William Sound	32	1,850	446	5,760	1,190	9,280
Southern District	2	157	4	693	3	858
Kamishak District	0	68	0	4	1	73
Outer District	0	5	0	159	1	165
Eastern District	0	2	2	11	0	14
Lower Cook Inlet	2	231	6	867	4	1,110
Central District	15	4,580	191	93	96	4,980
Northern District	3	145	97	10	25	281
Upper Cook Inlet	19	4,730	289	103	121	5,260
Naknek-Kvichak	7	8,870	2	0	39	8,910
Nushagak District	62	5,330	14	0	415	5,820
Egegik District	1	21,800	41	0	49	21,900
Ugashik District	3	4,290	2	0	68	4,360
Togiak District	12	543	13	0	153	721
Bristol Bay Total	85	40,800	72	1	724	41,700
<b>CENTRAL REGION</b>	138	47,600	812	6,731	2,040	57,300

/1 Includes both seine and gillnet catches.

/2 Educational permits, confiscated fish, test fish, etc.

Columns do not total exactly due to rounding

Revised January 17, 1994

Table 4. Preliminary 1993 Westward Region, Alaska, commercial salmon harvests by fishing area and species, in thousands of fish.

Fishing Area	SPECIES					
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
Kodiak Area	42	4,380	313	34,000	588	39,300
Chignik Area	20	1,700	230	1,650	122	4,150
South Peninsula	14	3,650	212	9,670	1,000	14,500
North Peninsula	24	3,870	61	6	130	4,090
Alaska Peninsula Total	38	7,520	273	9,670	1,130	18,600
Aleutian Islands	0	0	0	0	1	1
<b>WESTWARD REGION</b>	100	13,600	816	45,300	1,840	61,700

Columns do not total exactly due to rounding

Updated March 22, 1994

Table 5. Preliminary 1993 Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim Region, Alaska, commercial salmon harvests by fishing area and species, in thousands of fish.

Fishing Area	SPECIES					Total
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	
Kuskokwim River	9	27	611	0	43	689
Kuskokwim Bay	18	140	76	0	52	286
<b>Kuskokwim Area Total</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>687</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>975</b>
Lower Yukon River	88	0	0	0	93	181
Upper Yukon River 1/	6	0	0	0	47	53
<b>Yukon River Total</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>234</b>
Norton Sound	9	0	43	158	54	264
Kotzebue Area	0	0	0	0	71	71
<b>AYK REGION</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>730</b>	<b>158</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>1,543</b>

1/ The Upper Yukon River catch includes the estimated harvest to produce roe sold.

Columns do not total exactly due to rounding

Updated March 22, 1994

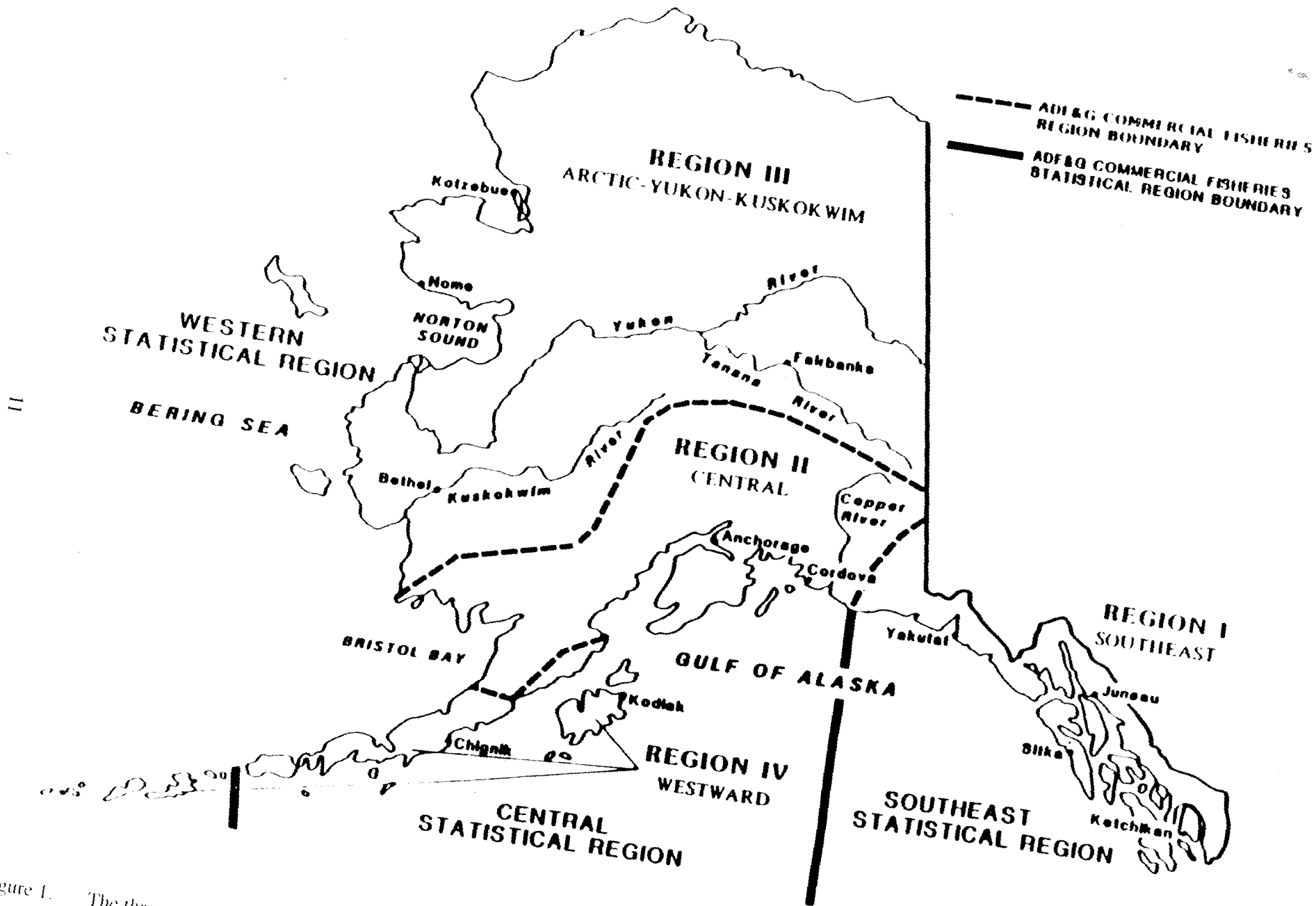


Figure 1. The three statistical regions (Western, Central, Southeastern) and the four fisheries regions (Westward, AYK, Central, Southeastern) of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Commercial Fisheries Management and Development Division.

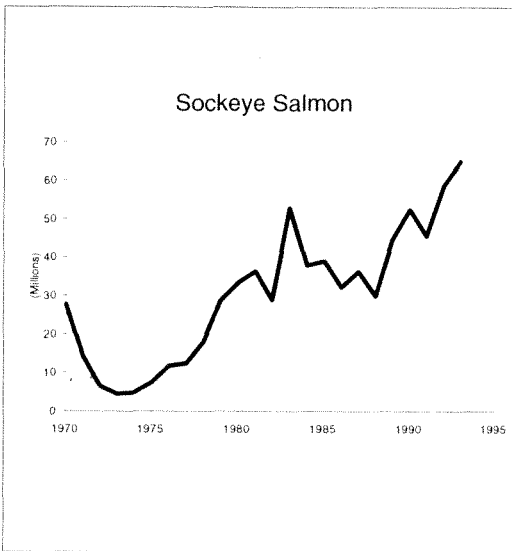
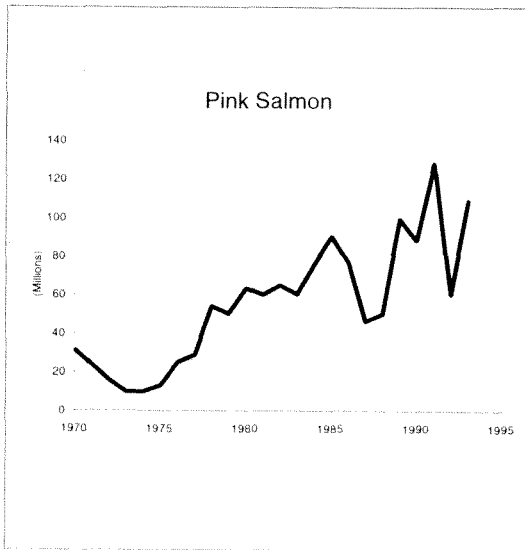
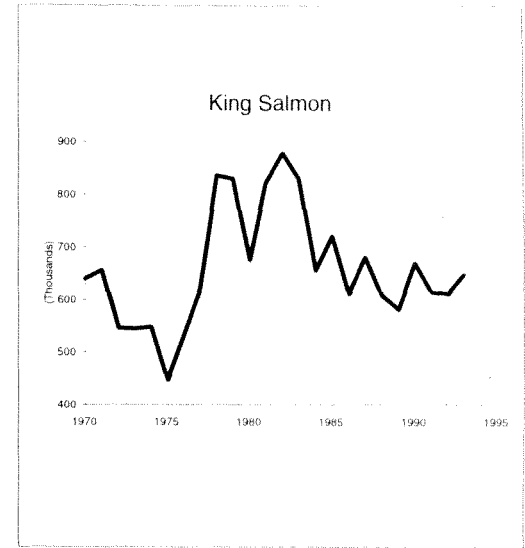
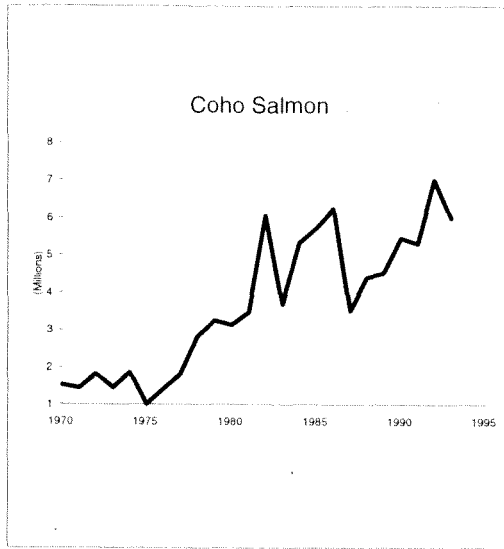
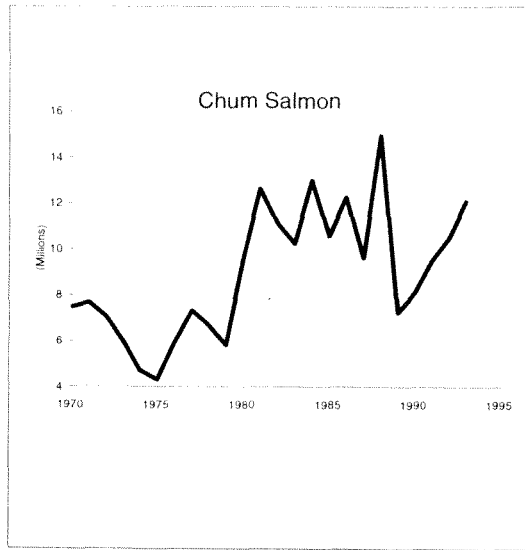


Figure 2. Commercial salmon catches in Alaska, by species, from 1970 to 1993.