
ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

NEWS RELEASE



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2018 SOUTHEAST ALASKA TROLL CHINOOK SALMON HARVEST ALLOCATION AND CHINOOK SALMON MANAGEMENT RESTRICTIONS

Sitka... The Alaska Department of Fish and Game announced today that under Chinook salmon management provisions of the Pacific Salmon Treaty (treaty), the 2018 abundance index (AI) for Southeast Alaska (SEAK) has been calculated to be 1.07, which results in an all-gear harvest limit of 144,500 treaty Chinook (non-Alaska hatchery-produced Chinook). However, in response to conservation needs for SEAK, Transboundary River (TBR), and Northern British Columbia Chinook salmon stocks, a 10% reduction to the all-gear harvest limit will be implemented. This reduction results in an all-gear harvest limit of 130,000 Chinook salmon, with a corresponding troll treaty harvest allocation of **95,700 Chinook salmon** or 59,080 fish lower than the preseason limit available in 2017.

The all-gear harvest limit for SEAK is determined by the Chinook Technical Committee of the Pacific Salmon Commission and is based on the forecast of an aggregate abundance of Pacific Coast Chinook salmon stocks subject to management under the treaty. The SEAK, TBR, and Northern B.C. (Nass and Skeena rivers) Chinook salmon stocks are experiencing unprecedented levels of poor production; record low runs were observed for many of these stocks in 2017. Forecasts indicate continued poor levels of production in 2018. In an effort to bolster spawning escapements, Alaska and Canada are coordinating fisheries management to minimize harvest of these depressed Chinook salmon stocks. The agreed to 10% reduction is directly related to treaty obligations when multiple stocks are not meeting escapements under extraordinary circumstances. In these instances, provisions of the treaty allow for invoking additional harvest reductions (within each respective country) to avoid shifting harvest pressure on other migrating Chinook salmon stocks. More information about the basis for 2018 Chinook salmon conservation measures in SEAK is publicly available ([link provided below](#)).

The summer commercial troll harvest allocation is calculated by subtracting the treaty Chinook salmon harvested in the winter and spring troll fisheries from the annual troll treaty allocation. The winter fishery is generally managed to not exceed the guideline harvest level of 45,000 treaty Chinook salmon for the season. This year, the winter troll fishery closed March 15 under provisions of the Unuk River Chinook salmon action plan with a preliminary harvest of 11,219 treaty Chinook.

While there is no explicit guideline harvest level for Chinook salmon harvested in the spring fisheries, they are managed to limit the harvest of treaty Chinook salmon; non-Alaska hatchery fish are counted towards the annual treaty harvest limit of Chinook salmon while many of the Alaska hatchery fish are not. Since spring fisheries will be in progress through June 30, preliminary harvest estimates for treaty Chinook salmon in the spring fisheries will not be determined until late June.

The summer fishery will be managed to harvest 70% of the remaining fish on the troll allocation in the first summer Chinook salmon opening in July, with the remainder available for harvest in a second opening, which typically occurs in August. The decision as to whether the first summer opening will be managed in season rather than for a fixed number of days will be announced just prior to the July 1 opening.

As a reminder, the Unuk River and the Chilkat and King Salmon Rivers Chinook salmon action plans were adopted by the Alaska Board of Fisheries in 2018 to provide direction for measures to conserve these stocks. Management actions are being taken across all SEAK fisheries, including sport, commercial, personal use, and subsistence, to reduce harvest of wild Chinook salmon.

The Unuk River Chinook salmon action plan restricts spring troll fisheries to terminal harvest areas, waters in close proximity to hatchery facilities or release sites, and in areas that have been identified as having low proportional harvests of wild stock SEAK/Yakutat Chinook salmon. In addition to the conservation measures of this action plan, supplementary actions for conservation of SEAK and TBR Chinook salmon stocks will include May-June fisheries in select terminal harvest areas and a few defined spring troll fishery areas located on the outside coast to target Alaska hatchery Chinook salmon.

A news release concerning spring troll and terminal harvest area opportunities for 2018, and the 2018 Spring Troll Fishery Management Plan, will be available online and in area offices by mid-April, with initial areas opening as early as May 1.

For complete details of the **Chinook salmon action plans for the Unuk, Chilkat, and King Salmon Rivers see the links below:**

- Unuk River King Salmon Stock Status and Action Plan, 2018:
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/FedAidPDFs/RIR.1J.2018.04.pdf>
- Chilkat River and King Salmon River King Salmon Stock Status and Action Plan, 2018:
<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/FedAidPDFs/RIR.1J.2018.05.pdf>

SEAK Chinook salmon all-gear allocation press release:

- http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=pressreleases.pr&release=2018_04_03_2

The Basis for 2018 Chinook Salmon Conservation Measures in Southeast Alaska:

- http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/home/news/pressreleases/pdfs/basis_for_2018_chinook_conservation_se.pdf

News releases web site: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=news.main>

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