

Fact sheet and results of failed Cook Inlet commercial fishing salmon management plans

1. Cook Inlet has some of the largest wild nature runs of pink, coho, king, chums, steelhead and the second largest natural run of sockeye salmon next to Bristol Bay.
2. Cook Inlet sockeye have the widest range of age class in North America: three to seven years olds, which gives Cook Inlet the largest sockeye and highest market demand.
3. Cook Inlet salmon are of the highest quality and are sold mostly to the fresh markets in the lower 48. They fetch the highest prices and help establish the Alaska seafood brand as the most recognized brand in the US which helps raise the prices for other Alaska salmon fisheries. Price-wise, a Cook Inlet sockeye salmon is worth two to three times more than a sockeye from some other areas.
4. Over 80% of the harvestable surplus is not harvested by anyone and is also excess to escapement. This over-escapement produces smaller returns.
5. This monetary loss is ten to thirty million dollars first transaction commercial value annually.
6. The state loses one to two million dollars from forgone fish tax revenue annually.
7. The lost food source to consumers is millions of high protein meals annually.
8. Lost jobs, instability and economic harm fishermen, businesses and communities.
9. The drift fleet restrictions and Susitna escapements are still being based on thirty years of documented faulty sonar data. The systems are meeting and exceeding the escapements of sometimes two to three hundred percent. This also holds true with other Cook Inlet systems, the Kenai, Kasilof and Crescent.
10. Susitna salmon production capabilities and escapement goals must be scientifically updated due to the changing dynamics of mother nature and urbanization: habitat destruction, urban runoff, impaired waters, catch and release mortality, warm waters (sometimes lethal), invasive species (northern pike), disease, poaching, flooding, etc.
11. There are no Biological Escapement Goals (BEG) on any of the major sockeye producing systems in Upper Cook Inlet. Escapement goals are SEGs or some other non-BEG goal.
 - These goals, plus the current management plans with mandatory time and areas restriction are designed to and do over-escape the major sockeye systems not only on large returns but also small returns.
12. ADF&G funding has been cut for the Kenai and Kasilof king and sockeye smolt out migration weirs along other weirs throughout the Cook Inlet Basin. The Crescent River Sonar (a 30 plus year program with valuable data) has also been cut. The data from these projects are key to management indices. Without this data and without the drift fleet's regular in-season harvest information, the managers are unable to do reliable in-season calibrating of run strength, species composition, age classes, etc.