

## AK Cook Inlet Salmon Set Gillnet Fishery

**Fishing gear type:** Gillnet

**Current category:** Category II\*

**Basis for current classification on the LOF:** The total annual mortality and serious injury of humpback whales (Central North Pacific stock) in this fishery is greater than 1% and less than 50% of the stock's Potential Biological Removal (PBR) level.

**Current list of marine mammal species/stocks injured/killed (a <sup>(1)</sup> indicates those stocks driving the fishery's classification):** Beluga whale, Cook Inlet; Dall's porpoise, AK; Harbor porpoise, Gulf of Alaska (GOA); Harbor seal, GOA; Humpback Whale (Central North Pacific)<sup>(1)</sup>; Steller sea lion, Western U.S.

**Estimated number of current participants:** 738

**Take Reduction Teams/Plans that affect this fishery:** None.

**Year added to the LOF:** 1996

**Category when originally listed:** Category II

**Basis for original classification on the LOF:** This fishery was categorized as a Category II based on logbook data. Observer coverage were inadequate to determine mortality and serious injury levels across all fisheries, but available data suggested that, if observer data were available, the data would likely indicate that serious injury and mortality levels were greater than 10% of PBR for each stock with which this fishery interacts. Data suggests that levels of mortality and serious injury would be similar to those in other Category II set gillnet fisheries which interact with similar marine mammals species, especially for harbor porpoise.

**Estimated number of participants when originally listed:** 633

**Past names, if any:** None.

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**Gear description/method for fishing:** This fishery uses set gillnet gear with continuous soak times during the opener<sup>†</sup>. In the Upper Cook Inlet, the catch is picked from the net (i.e., the net is tended) each day during a slack tide; while the catch is picked from the net every 2-6 hours in the Lower Cook Inlet. The net becomes dry with low tide.

**Target species:** Salmon.

**Spatial/temporal distribution of effort:** The fishery generally operates from June 2 to mid-September in Cook Inlet. Fishing effort occurs during the day and night in the Upper Cook Inlet; while fishing effort occurs only during the day in the Lower Cook Inlet, except during fishery extensions.

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\*The fishery is classified based on mortalities and serious injuries of a marine mammal stock greater than 1% and less than 50% (Category II) of the stock's Potential Biological Removal (PBR) level.

† Salmon may only be fished commercially during periods known as openers established by the AK Department of Fish and Game (ADFG) in-season. Openers may last days or weeks. The ADFG posts weekly notices of fishing openers and announces the openers on regular radio channels. Fishing periods are often extended by emergency order during the last 24 hours of the opener.

**Levels of observer coverage each year<sup>‡</sup>:** Observer coverage is calculated by the percentage of fishing days observed. Observer coverage was 7.3 % and 8.3% in 1999 and 2000, respectively. The fishery was not observed from 1990-1998, and 2001-2005.

**Management and regulations:** This fishery is managed by the AK Department of Fish and Game as a limited entry fishery with gear restrictions on the mesh and net size, and area closures.

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**History of Changes on the LOF**

2009 LOF: Estimated number of participants updated from 745 to 738.

2007 LOF:

- Elevated from a Category III to a Category II based on a documented mortality of a humpback whale (Central North Pacific stock), in 2005. This single event translated to an annual average mortality of 0.2 animals/year, or 1.55% of PBR (PBR=12.9).
- Humpback whale (Central North Pacific) added to list of species killed injured with the subscript "1," indicating that takes of this stock are driving the classification of the fishery.

2003 LOF: Reclassified from a Category II to a Category III based on observer data from 1999-2000. Only one serious injury of a harbor porpoise (GOA) was observed, which is less than 1% of PBR, and no serious injuries or mortalities were observed in any other stocks. Reclassification was also supported by an analysis of all interactions in the fishery from 1995-2000.

2001 LOF:

- Estimated number of participants updated from 604 to 745.

1999 LOF:

- Dall's porpoise (AK) added to list of species/stocks incidentally killed/injured. The 1997 SAR reported that one mortality was recorded in logbook records in 1990 and 1992. Logbook data for drift and set gillnet fisheries were combined. As a result, some of the mortalities may have occurred in the drift gillnet.
- An observer program was instigated to observe interactions with Cook Inlet Belugas for 1999-2000.
- Estimated number of participants updated from 645 to 604.

1998 LOF:

- The stock of harbor porpoise on the list of species killed/injured in this fishery was changed from "AK" to "GOA."
- Estimated number of participants updated from 633 to 645.

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<sup>‡</sup> Observer coverage levels include the latest information reported in the most current final Stock Assessment Reports (SAR).