NOAA FISHERIES

Sustainable Fisheries Alaska Region

Salmon Fishing in the Federal Waters of Upper Cook Inlet Small Entity Compliance Guide

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This Small Entity Compliance Guide satisfies the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 that requires a plain language guide to assist small entities. If you are required to comply with the regulations, you should consult and rely on the actual regulatory text. We cite the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) throughout this document and provide citations for specific regulations for your reference. These regulations are available online at the electronic CFR (eCFR),[1] which is frequently updated. Regulations for salmon fishing in the Federal waters of Cook Inlet can be primarily found under 50 CFR 679.110 through 679.119. More information about Federal salmon management in the Federal waters of Cook Inlet can be found on the NOAA Fisheries Alaska Region website.[2]

This is a summary of regulations governing recreational salmon fishing and commercial drift gillnet salmon fishing in the Cook Inlet Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) Area and is not the complete list of limitations and prohibitions. This summary only provides information on NOAA Fisheries regulations and does not provide information on the requirements of the United States Coast Guard or State of Alaska regulations governing salmon. Drift gillnet and charter vessel operators should consult these agencies for information on other applicable regulations.

The regulations in the CFR take precedence if a discrepancy occurs between them and the information in this guide.

[1] ecfr.gov
[2] www.fisheries.noaa.gov/alaska/commercial-fishing/salmon-management-federal-waters-cook-inlet-cook-inlet-eez

Table of Contents

Introduction 4
General program overview 4
Who is affected by this action and should read this guide? 4
Why is NOAA Fisheries managing salmon fishing in Federal waters in Cook Inlet? 4
What is the Cook Inlet EEZ Area affected by this action? 5
I will only fish in State waters or receive deliveries of fish caught in State waters. Do I need to comply with these Federal regulations? 6
Who is responsible for enforcing Federal regulations? 6
Commercial Sector 6
Permits 6
What permits are required to commercially harvest or purchase fish harvested in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area? 6
How do I apply for a Federal permit(s)? 7
How long will it take me to receive my Federal permit after my application has been submitted? 7
Is there any cost to get a permit? 7
Do I need to have my Federal permit(s) with me while operating? 7
Is a State of Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) limited entry permit for salmon required for me to commercially fish for salmon in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area? 7
Drift gillnet fishing 7
When is drift gillnet fishing permitted in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area? 7
Where can I fish during these openings? 8
Can I also fish in State waters after I begin fishing in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area? 8
What do I need to go drift gillnet fishing in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area? 8
What do I need to record in the logsheets and when? 9
What gear can I use? 10
Can I throw back or discard salmon I do not want to keep because of damage or other reasons? 10
What are the bycatch/incidental catch requirements? 10
Is delivering to tenders permitted in the Cook Inlet EEZ? 11
Processing 11
Is processing permitted on a fishing vessel in the Cook Inlet EEZ? 11
What do I need to do to process salmon harvested in the Cook Inlet EEZ? 11

Does a shoreside processor that only accepts deliveries from vessels fishing in State waters have to comply with these Federal requirements? 12
Registered Salmon Receivers 12
What is a registered salmon receiver (RSR)? 12
What must I do to act as an RSR of salmon harvested in the Cook Inlet EEZ? 12
If I have an SFFP, do I also need an RSRP? 13
I sometimes operate a truck to receive deliveries of salmon from the Cook Inlet EEZ Area, and sometimes I use a vessel or my dockside facility. Do I need an RSRP for each operation? 13
If I only accept deliveries from vessels fishing in State waters, do I have to comply with these Federal RSRP requirements? 13
If I have an RSRP, do I also have to comply with applicable State regulations? 13
Catch Limits/Total Allowable Catch 13
What is a Total Allowable Catch (TAC)? 13
For what stocks/species of salmon will TACs be set? 13
When will TACs be announced for each fishing season? 13
Where can I find the annual TACs? 14
What happens when a TAC is met? 14
How does NOAA Fisheries know if a TAC has been met? 14
Do fish caught by recreational fishing count towards the TAC? 14
How will I know whether the TAC has been met? 14
What if less salmon return than expected? 14
What if more salmon return than expected? 14
How are TACs (*i.e.*, catch limits) set? 15
What opportunities are there for public input in the TAC-setting process? 16
Recreational Fishing 17
When is recreational fishing permitted in the Cook Inlet EEZ? 17
What are the bag and possession limits? 17
Can I have a Federal bag limit in addition to a State bag limit? 17
What fishing gear may be used by recreational salmon anglers? 17
Are there additional Federal reporting requirements for charter vessels or recreational anglers? 17
Do charter and recreational fishing vessels need a VMS? 17
What permits and licenses are required for recreational fishing or charter boats? 18
Marine Mammal Reporting 18
Are requirements related to marine mammals and fishing in the EEZ affected by this action? 18

Contacts and Additional Information 18
Who can I contact with questions about the program? 18

Introduction

General program overview

On April 30, 2024, NOAA Fisheries published a final rule implementing Federal salmon management in the Federal waters of Upper Cook Inlet (referred to as the Cook Inlet EEZ Area) and this final rule was effective 30 days after publication. All salmon fishing in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area must comply with Federal regulations. The final rule, which outlines Federal requirements in more detail, can be found at the Federal Register: Fisheries of the Exclusive Economic Zone off Alaska; Amendment 16.[3]

NOAA Fisheries and the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) are responsible for management of the Cook Inlet EEZ Area. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game continues to manage salmon fishing within State of Alaska waters, which are all waters adjacent to the State of Alaska boundaries and shoreward of the EEZ off Alaska.

Who is affected by this action and should read this guide?

- Federal management includes requirements for commercial and recreational fishing in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area, with impacts on the following groups:
  - drift gillnet salmon fishermen;
  - recreational anglers fishing for salmon in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area;
  - charter boat operators fishing for salmon in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area;
  - processors accepting salmon caught in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area;
  - tender vessels accepting salmon caught in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area; and
  - other buyers and entities accepting deliveries of salmon caught in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area (for example, fish transporters, restaurants, and retail store owners purchasing unprocessed salmon caught in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area directly from harvesting vessels).

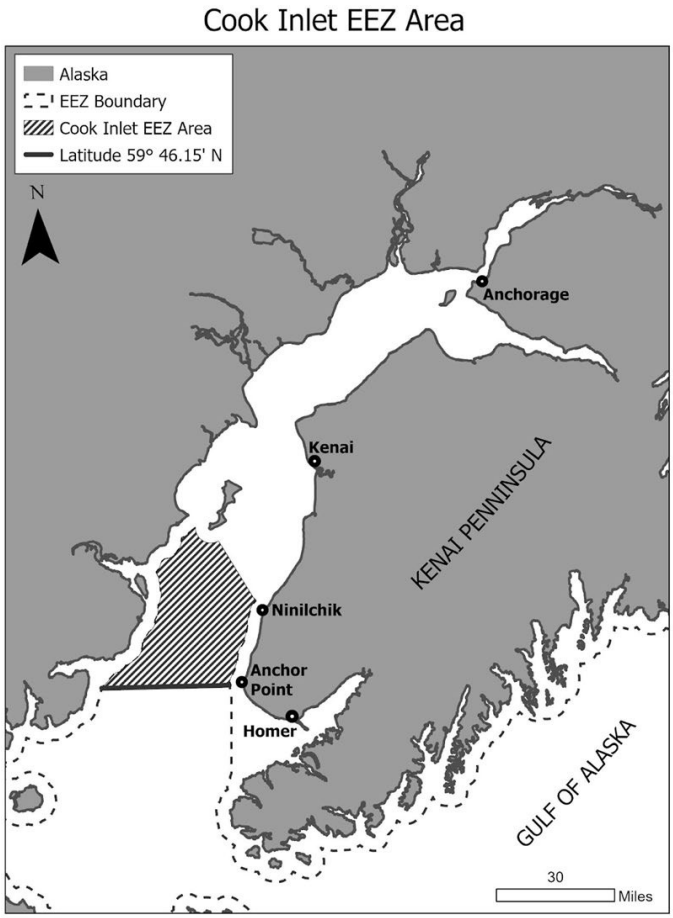
Why is NOAA Fisheries managing salmon fishing in Federal waters in Cook Inlet?

- Federal courts ruled that NOAA Fisheries and the Council must manage salmon fishing in the Federal waters in Cook Inlet in the Fishery Management Plan for the Salmon Fisheries in the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) Off Alaska[4] and Federal regulations under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act. For further background, review the supplementary information section of the proposed and final rules.[5]

[3] www.federalregister.gov/d/2024-08664
[4] www.fisheries.noaa.gov/management-plan/alaska-salmon-fisheries-management-plan
[5] www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/amendment-16-fmp-salmon-fisheries-alaska

What is the Cook Inlet EEZ Area affected by this action?

- The Cook Inlet EEZ Area is the subarea of Federal waters in the upper Cook Inlet north of a line at 59°46.15' N. The southern boundary is commonly referred to as the Anchor Point line. This area is depicted in the following figure.
- The 3 nm line for the Cook Inlet EEZ Area (file formats available: KML/KMZ, GPX, SHP) can be found at Cook Inlet EEZ Area Maps.[6]
- Electronic navigational charts (ENCs) for navigation in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area can be found at NOAA Electronic Navigation Charts.[7]
- Paper charts are to be used for reference only and not for navigational use for the Cook Inlet EEZ Area. Refer to ENCs for the most up-to-date navigational information.[8]
- This action does not change salmon management in Federal waters south of the Anchor Point line, which remain closed to commercial salmon fishing.



[6] www.fisheries.noaa.gov/sustainable-fisheries/cook-inlet-eez-area-maps
[7] www.nauticalcharts.noaa.gov/charts/noaa-enc.html
[8] www.charts.noaa.gov/InteractiveCatalog/nrnc.shtml#mapTabs-2

I will only fish in State waters or receive deliveries of fish caught in State waters. Do I need to comply with these Federal regulations?

- No.

Who is responsible for enforcing Federal regulations?

- The United States Coast Guard, NOAA's Office of Law Enforcement, and Alaska Wildlife Troopers within the Alaska State Troopers.

Commercial Sector

Permits

What permits are required to commercially harvest or purchase fish harvested in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area?

Table 1 - Permits

	Salmon Federal Fisheries Permit	**Salmon Federal Processing Permit**	**Registered Salmon Receiver Permit**	**Federal Fisheries Permit (groundfish)**
Vessels that only harvest salmon	Yes	No	No	If retaining groundfish
Vessels that both harvest and process salmon	Yes	Yes	No	If retaining groundfish
Processors located on the shore or stationary within State waters	No	Yes	No	No
Transporters and buyers that receive, but do not process, salmon from harvesters	No	No	Yes	No
Vessels that sell unprocessed catch directly to consumers	Yes	No	Yes	If retaining groundfish

How do I apply for a Federal permit(s)?

- Application forms for the Salmon Federal Fisheries Permit, Salmon Federal Processing Permit, and Register Salmon Receiver Permit can be found at Salmon Management in the Federal Waters of Cook Inlet.[9]
- Application form for the Federal Fisheries Permit can be found at Alaska Federal Fisheries Permit and Federal Processors Permits Applications.[10]
- Each application includes instructions on how to complete and submit it.

How long will it take me to receive my Federal permit after my application has been submitted?

- We encourage applying as soon as possible because you must have all applicable Federal permits before fishing for salmon in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area. We strive to process applications quickly but you should allow up to ten business days after RAM has received your application for us to process and issue new permits. Please allow additional time for periods of high application volume (e.g., immediately before the start of the fishing season) or if additional information is needed to process your application.

Is there any cost to get a permit?

- No.

Do I need to have my Federal permit(s) with me while operating?

- Yes, while operating, legible copies of the valid permit(s) must be available for inspection by authorized officers. Either paper or electronic format is acceptable.

Is a State of Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission (CFEC) limited entry permit for salmon required for me to commercially fish for salmon in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area?

- A CFEC permit is not required by Federal regulations. However, all salmon landings in Alaska must comply with all applicable State regulations, including the appropriate CFEC permit(s). For questions about State requirements, please contact the Alaska Wildlife Troopers (contact info below).

Drift gillnet fishing

When is drift gillnet fishing permitted in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area?

- The commercial salmon fishing season begins the fishing day on or after either the third Monday in June or June 19, whichever is later.
- For the 2026 season, the first fishing day begins on Monday, June 22.
- Fishing is allowed only at the following times, unless closed by NOAA Fisheries.

[9] www.fisheries.noaa.gov/alaska/commercial-fishing/salmon-management-federal-waters-cook-inlet-cook-inlet-eez

[10] www.fisheries.noaa.gov/permit/alaska-federal-fisheries-permit-and-federal-processor-permit-applications

    - From the beginning of the fishing season until July 15.
        - Mondays and Thursdays from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
    - From July 16 until July 31.
        - Thursdays from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
    - From August 1 until August 15.
        - Mondays and Thursdays from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- Commercial salmon fishing will close when a TAC is reached or August 15, whichever is earlier.

Where can I fish during these openings?

- All waters of the Cook Inlet EEZ Area.

Can I also fish in State waters after I begin fishing in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area?

- No. A drift gillnet vessel cannot fish in both State and Federal waters on the same calendar day.
    - All salmon caught in Federal waters must be landed before fishing for salmon on State waters.
    - Similarly, all salmon caught in State waters must be landed before fishing for salmon in Federal waters.
    - No recreational or subsistence caught salmon are permitted aboard a boat that is commercial fishing for salmon in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area.

What do I need to go drift gillnet fishing in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area?

- Salmon Federal Fisheries Permit (SFFP) - see Permits
    - An SFFP authorizes a drift gillnet vessel to fish for salmon in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area.
    - The vessel owner or operator must obtain the SFFP.
    - SFFPs are issued on a three year cycle. If you receive a permit in the middle of a permit cycle, it will be valid for less than three years.
    - If you surrender your SFFP, you cannot obtain another one until the end of the current three year cycle.
- Federal Fisheries Permits (FFP) (groundfish retention only)
    - A drift gillnet fishing vessel retaining groundfish in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area must, in addition to an SFFP, have a valid FFP with a groundfish endorsement.
- Vessel Monitoring System (VMS)
    - If a vessel has an SFFP, a vessel must also have an operational, transmitting VMS when fishing in any waters of Cook Inlet (even State waters) with drift gillnet gear aboard and the Cook Inlet EEZ Area is open to commercial salmon fishing.

    - To learn about purchasing and installing a VMS, the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission's VMS reimbursement program, and related information, see the Vessel Monitoring System Guide.[11]
- Recordkeeping and reporting requirements
    - The vessel operator must maintain a salmon drift gillnet vessel daily fishing log. The information that must be recorded in the log and entry timing requirements are described in Table 2 below [§ 679.115(c)(4)].
    - The vessel operator is legally responsible for complying with all recordkeeping and reporting requirements. Generally, information on harvest, receipts, discards, and transfers must be recorded and reported. [§ 679.115(a)(3)]. For specific reporting requirements, see § 679.115.
    - Downloadable PDF logsheets and instructions are available at Alaska Recordkeeping and Reporting Logbook Logsheets.[12]

What do I need to record in the logsheets and when?

Table 2 - Logsheet Recordings

Required information	Time limit for recording
1. SFFP number, set number, date and time gear set, date and time gear hauled, beginning and end positions of set, length of net deployed, total number of salmon, and estimated haul weight of groundfish for each set.	Within 2 hours after completion of gear retrieval.
2. Discard and disposition information.	Prior to landing.
3. Submit an accurate copy of the groundfish discards reported on the daily fishing logsheet to the shoreside processor or Registered Salmon Receiver receiving the catch.	At the time of catch delivery.
4. All other required information.	At the time of catch delivery.
5. Operator's signature on completed logsheets.	At the time of catch delivery.

[11] www.fisheries.noaa.gov/s3/2025-05/akr-vessel-monitoring-flyer-2025_0.pdf
[12] www.fisheries.noaa.gov/alaska/resources-fishing/alaska-recordkeeping-and-reporting-logbook-logsheets

What gear can I use?

- In general, Federal drift gillnet gear regulations are intended to allow use of existing drift gillnet gear used in Upper Cook Inlet.
- Drift gillnet is the only authorized commercial salmon fishing gear in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area.
- Size. The gillnet gear must be no longer than 200 fathoms (1.1 km) in length, 45 meshes deep, and have a mesh size of no greater than six inches (15.24 cm). [§ 679.118(f)]
    - While in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area, all vessels may deploy up to 200 fathoms of gear regardless of the number of CFEC permits held aboard a vessel. Vessels should be aware of State regulations that may limit the amount of drift gillnet gear they can have onboard while transiting State waters or landing fish in Alaska based on the number of CFEC permits held. For questions about these State requirements, please contact Alaska Wildlife Troopers (information below).
- Marking. The gillnet must be marked at both ends with buoys that clearly display the SFFP number. [§ 679.118(f)]
- Floating. Under most conditions, the gillnet float line and floats must be floating on the surface during fishing. Fixing the gillnet to the seafloor is prohibited. [§ 679.118(f)]
- Each person holding an SFFP and fishing in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area may use only one drift gillnet. [§ 600.117(b)(iv)]
- No fixing gear. It is prohibited to fix gear on the seafloor.
- No other gear. Other than the above-described gear, no other gear can be onboard the vessel. [§ 600.117(b)(iii)]

Can I throw back or discard salmon I do not want to keep because of damage or other reasons?

- No, discarding salmon is prohibited. All salmon deliveries must be recorded in the State of Alaska's electronic reporting system for commercial fishing landings - eLandings.[13]
- Non-salmon species may be discarded after being recorded on the logsheet.

What are the bycatch/incidental catch requirements?

- Drift gillnet vessels fishing in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area may retain and sell non-salmon bycatch, known as incidental catch, such as groundfish (*e.g.*, Pacific cod, pollock, flounder, etc.). This final rule allows retention of these species up to a specified Maximum Retainable Amount (MRA).
- A drift gillnet fishing vessel retaining groundfish in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area must, in addition to an SFFP, have a valid FFP with a groundfish endorsement.
- Table 10 to 50 CFR Part 679 establishes MRA percentages applied to the Cook Inlet EEZ Area. The basis species are salmon, which are classified as "Aggregated amount of non-groundfish species" in table 10 for the purposes of the calculation.

[13] www.elandings.alaska.gov/

- To obtain the MRAs for each incidental catch species, multiply the retainable percentage for the incidental catch species from table 10 by the round weight of salmon (Basis Species: Aggregated amount of non-groundfish species) on board.
- For example, if there were 100 pounds (45.36 kg) of salmon aboard the vessel, then 20 pounds (9.07 kg) of pollock and 5 pounds (2.27 kg) of aggregated rockfish could be retained, because pollock has a retainable percentage of 20 and aggregated rockfish has a retainable percentage of 5 in table 10 when the basis species is the aggregated amount of non-groundfish species (*i.e.,* salmon).
- Drift gillnet vessels fishing in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area may not retain any Pacific halibut.

Is delivering to tenders permitted in the Cook Inlet EEZ?

- No, a vessel operating in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area is prohibited from delivering to a tender in any EEZ waters.
- A vessel that has harvested salmon in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area may deliver to a tender in State waters.

A full list of prohibited activities is provided at § 679.117(b)(1).

Processing

Is processing permitted on a fishing vessel in the Cook Inlet EEZ?

- No, processing is prohibited in EEZ waters.
- Fishermen may gut, gill, and bleed fish but may not further process their catch, including by freezing, prior to landing.
- The Federal definition of "processing" can be found here.[14]

What do I need to do to process salmon harvested in the Cook Inlet EEZ?

- Permitting
    - To purchase and process salmon caught from the Cook Inlet EEZ, a Salmon Federal Processing Permit (SFPP) is required.
        - An SFPP is required for each facility.
        - SFPPs are issued on a one year cycle. If you receive a permit in the middle of a permit cycle, it will be valid for less than one year.
- Reporting
    - Who is responsible for ensuring compliance with reporting requirements at a shoreside processing facility?
        - The owner(s) of the shoreside processing facility.
    - What are the reporting requirements for shoreside processors?

[14] www.ecfr.gov/current/title-50/part-679#p-679.2(Processing%20or%20to%20process)

        - Processors must report all landings of salmon harvested from the Cook Inlet EEZ Area through eLandings by noon of the day after delivery is complete.
        - Record products that the facility custom-processed (*i.e.*, processed for a person who is not an owner of the facility). § 679.115(a)(6)
        - Each landing report must contain the delivery, catch, and discard or disposition information specified in § 679.115(b)(5).
- Restrictions
    - All processing of salmon harvested in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area must occur shoreside or on a floating processor located in State waters.
    - For a full list of prohibited activities related to processing, see § 679.117(b)(3).
- Comply with all applicable State requirements.

Does a shoreside processor that only accepts deliveries from vessels fishing in State waters have to comply with these Federal requirements?

- No.

Registered Salmon Receivers

What is a registered salmon receiver (RSR)?

- An RSR is an entity using a facility, vehicle, or vessel to receive landings of salmon but does not process them and is not affiliated or operated on behalf of a processor with an SFFP.
- Examples include catcher-sellers and transporters of unprocessed salmon from fishing boats to restaurants and retail stores.

What must I do to act as an RSR of salmon harvested in the Cook Inlet EEZ?

- Permitting.
    - An RSR must obtain a Registered Salmon Received Permit (RSRP), which under certain conditions set out in the permit, authorizes the receipt of a delivery of salmon harvested in the Cook Inlet EEZ for purposes other than processing or transporting elsewhere for processing.
    - An RSRP is only required for an operation if they are not affiliated with or operating on behalf of a processor holding an SFPP.
        - An entity that is operating on behalf of a specific processor does **not** need an RSRP and would be covered under that processor's SFPP.
        - An entity that receives salmon harvested in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area for transport to an unspecified processor does need an RSRP.
    - An RSRP expires and must be renewed after one year.

- Reporting.
    - Using eLandings, an RSR must submit a daily landing report that contains the delivery, catch, and discard or disposition information specified in § 679.115(b)(5).
- Comply with all applicable State requirements.

If I have an SFFP, do I also need an RSRP?

- No.

I sometimes operate a truck to receive deliveries of salmon from the Cook Inlet EEZ Area, and sometimes I use a vessel or my dockside facility. Do I need an RSRP for each operation?

- No, a single RSRP may be used for all of your company's operations.

If I only accept deliveries from vessels fishing in State waters, do I have to comply with these Federal RSRP requirements?

- No.

If I have an RSRP, do I also have to comply with applicable State regulations?

- Yes.

Catch Limits/Total Allowable Catch

What is a Total Allowable Catch (TAC)?

- NOAA Fisheries will annually establish catch limits for the commercial drift gillnet salmon fishery in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area and publish them as total allowable catch, or "TACs," in the *Federal Register*. A TAC is defined in the Federal regulations as the maximum amount of a stock, stock complex, or species, accounting for management uncertainty, that NOAA Fisheries may allow to be caught in a single season. [§ 600.310(g)(4)]

For what stocks/species of salmon will TACs be set?

- For the Cook Inlet EEZ Area, NOAA Fisheries will annually establish a separate TAC for each salmon species (*i.e.*, sockeye, chinook, coho, pink, and chum).

When will TACs be announced for each fishing season?

- NOAA Fisheries will publish final specifications for the Salmon Fishery in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area, including TACs, prior to the start of the commercial salmon fishing season each year, likely sometime in the spring.

Where can I find the annual TACs?

- Proposed and final TACs can be found published at Cook Inlet Salmon Harvest Specifications.[15]

What happens when a TAC is met?

- Because the Cook Inlet EEZ Area is a mixed stock fishery (*i.e.*, there are multiple stocks fished with the Cook Inlet EEZ Area), it is subject to weak stock management.
- Under weak stock management, if NOAA Fisheries anticipates that a TAC for any species or species complex may be met, NOAA Fisheries will close the Cook Inlet EEZ Area to drift gillnet fishing for all salmon.

How does NOAA Fisheries know if a TAC has been met?

- NOAA Fisheries will track harvest in the Cook Inlet EEZ Area and project the additional catch expected from each additional day that the season is open based on the number of participating vessels, catch rates, and other information.
- When it anticipates that the TAC would be exceeded by another day of fishing, or if a TAC is exceeded, NOAA Fisheries will close the Cook Inlet EEZ Area to commercial salmon fishing.

Do fish caught by recreational fishing count towards the TAC?

- No, recreational fishing catch does not count towards the commercial TAC.

How will I know whether the TAC has been met?

- NOAA Fisheries will announce a closure of the Cook Inlet EEZ Area by publishing a notice in the *Federal Register* and on NOAA Fisheries Information Bulletins.[16]

Where can I find inseason harvest data for the Cook Inlet EEZ Area commercial salmon fishery?

- Inseason salmon harvest data for the Cook Inlet drift gillnet fishery can be found on NOAA's Fisheries Catch and Landings page.[17]

What if less salmon return than expected?

- If the salmon returns are lower than expected, NOAA Fisheries may close the Cook Inlet EEZ Area before a TAC is reached to prevent overfishing by publishing a notice in the *Federal Register* and on NOAA Fisheries Information Bulletins.

What if more salmon return than expected; will NOAA Fisheries increase the TAC or allow more fishing periods?

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[15] www.fisheries.noaa.gov/alaska/commercial-fishing/cook-inlet-salmon-harvest-specifications
[16] www.fisheries.noaa.gov/news-and-announcements/bulletins
[17] www.fisheries.noaa.gov/alaska/commercial-fishing/fisheries-catch-and-landings-reports-alaska

- Regarding an increase to the TAC: NOAA Fisheries could only adjust the TAC for the Cook Inlet EEZ Area if there has been a change in the biological stock status and there are no conservation or management concerns for any species or stock that would also be harvested with additional fishing effort (50 CFR 679.25(a)(2)(vi)(C)). NOAA Fisheries must prevent overfishing on all stocks, including weaker, data-limited stocks of salmon, even if other stocks are highly abundant. NOAA Fisheries must have both sufficient time and information about all stocks to evaluate and adjust the TAC inseason and publish in the *Federal Register*.
- Regarding the number of fishing periods: No, the number of fishing periods is fixed in Federal regulations and additional fishing periods cannot be added inseason (50 CFR 679.118(e)(2)). Changes to the number of Cook Inlet EEZ fishing periods would need to go through the Council process and proposed and final rulemaking.

How are TACs (*i.e.*, catch limits) set?

- The North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) will annually recommend salmon TACs to NOAA Fisheries for review and approval. A TAC must be set equal to or less than acceptable biological catch.
- The TACs are based on the best scientific information available, as presented in the SAFE report with input from the Council's Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC). For information on development of SAFE reports, visit here.[18]
- The SAFE report is developed by NOAA Fisheries and contains, among other things, information on historic catch trends, conditions of salmon stocks *(e.g.*, Kenai river late-run and Kasilof river sockeye) or stock complexes (*e.g.*, Aggregate other sockeye salmon), and the assessment of social, economic, and ecosystem impacts resulting from current fishing levels.
- The Council may annually review the SAFE report and recommend proposed TACs to NOAA Fisheries. The public may provide input to the Council at its scheduled meetings.[19]
- NOAA Fisheries then publishes proposed TACs in the *Federal Register* and accepts public comments.
- After considering public comment, NOAA Fisheries will publish final harvest specifications, including TACs, prior to the start of the commercial salmon fishing season.
- For more information on the TAC setting process, see the Salmon Harvest Specifications.[20]

What opportunities are there for public input in the TAC-setting process?

- There are many opportunities for public input, including on the development of the salmon SAFE report, the SSC's evaluation of the salmon SAFE report, the Council's deliberation before it arrives at recommended TACs, and NOAA Fisheries' implementation of the TACs through the rulemaking process. For information about opportunities to participate in the Council process, visit here.[21]
- For a list of rules for which NOAA Fisheries is seeking public input, visit here.[22]

[18] www.fisheries.noaa.gov/alaska/population-assessments/alaska-stock-assessments
[19] www.npfmc.org/current-or-next-council-meeting/
[20] www.fisheries.noaa.gov/alaska/commercial-fishing/cook-inlet-salmon-harvest-specifications
[21] www.npfmc.org/how-we-work/how-to-participate/faq/
[22] www.fisheries.noaa.gov/rules-and-announcements/notices-and-rules

Recreational Fishing

When is recreational fishing permitted in the Cook Inlet EEZ?

- Unless closed by NOAA Fisheries, recreational fishing is open year-round.

What are the bag and possession limits?

- The following bag and possession limits generally apply.
    - For Chinook salmon:
        - April 1 to August 31 - one Chinook per day and one salmon of any size in possession; and
        - September 1 to March 31 - two Chinook of any size per day.
    - For coho (silver) salmon, sockeye (red) salmon, pink salmon, and chum salmon there is a combined limit of six salmon per day and six salmon in possession of any size.
        - No more than three of this combined limit may be coho salmon.
- NOAA Fisheries may also close retention of, or fishing for one or more salmon species if required for conservation. This supersedes the bag limits published in regulation. All inseason actions may be found on the Information Bulletins page.[23]
- Any salmon not returned to the water with a minimum of injury counts towards an angler's bag limit.

Can I have a Federal bag limit in addition to a State bag limit?

- No, all recreational fishermen are subject to the State bag limits, and those limits cannot be combined with Federal bag limits when transiting State waters or landing fish in Alaska.
    - For example, if State bag limits are less than Federal bag limits, the State limits determine how many fish can be caught and possessed in a single trip.
    - Please contact Alaska Wildlife Troopers below regarding State regulations.

What fishing gear may be used by recreational salmon anglers?

- Anglers may use hook-and-line gear with a single line per angler and a maximum of two hooks on the line.

Are there additional Federal reporting requirements for charter vessels or recreational anglers?

- No.

Do charter and recreational fishing vessels need a VMS?

- No.

[23] www.fisheries.noaa.gov/news-and-announcements/bulletins

What permits and licenses are required for recreational fishing or charter boats?

- Federal permits or licenses are not required to recreationally fish in the Cook Inlet EEZ. However, anyone recreationally fishing within the Cook Inlet EEZ Area must comply with all applicable State regulations, including having a valid State of Alaska sportfishing license. Please contact Alaska Wildlife Troopers below regarding State regulations.

Marine Mammal Reporting

Are requirements related to marine mammals and fishing in the EEZ affected by this action?

- This action does not change requirements under the Marine Mammal Protection Act (MMPA). Commercial fishers participating in fisheries classified as Category I or Category II in the MMPA List of Fisheries[24] are required to be registered under the Marine Mammal Authorization Program, which applies to both State and Federal waters. If you have a State and/or Federal fishing permit, you are not required to submit a Marine Mammal Authorization Program registration/renewal form. Your registration is automatic and will be automatically renewed. Participants in Category I and Category II fisheries are required to have the Marine Mammal Authorization Certificate on board during commercial fishing operations. You may download and print your Alaska Regional Office certificate from the Marine Mammal Authorization Program webpage.[25] For more information on the Alaska Marine Mammal Authorization Program, contact Suzie Teerlink at (907) 586-7240 (suzie.teerlink@noaa.gov).

Contacts and Additional Information

Who can I contact with questions about the program?

- General questions
  - Sustainable Fisheries Division at (907) 586-7228
- Permits - Restricted Access Management (RAM)
  - Permits Office
    - (800) 304-4846 Option #2
    - (907) 586-7474
    - ram.alaska@noaa.gov
- Enforcement
  - Alex Perry
    - (907) 271-3021
    - alex.perry@noaa.gov
  - Joseph Harwell
    - (907) 360-7245

[24] www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/list-fisheries-summary-tables#table-1-commercial-fisheries-in-the-pacific-ocean

[25] www.fisheries.noaa.gov/national/marine-mammal-protection/marine-mammal-authorization-program

        - joseph.harwell@noaa.gov
- For State regulations questions
    - Alaska Wildlife Troopers/Soldotna Dispatch Center at (907) 262-4453.