

RUN FORECASTS AND HARVEST PROJECTIONS  
FOR 1997 ALASKA SALMON FISHERIES AND REVIEW OF THE 1996 SEASON:  
THE SHORT VERSION

Edited by

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Alaska salmon biologists are expecting the 1997 statewide catch to be very close to the all-species 1996 harvest. The outlook calls for a total 1997 catch of 171 million salmon distributed as 579 thousand chinook salmon, 45.5 million sockeye salmon, 6.74 million coho salmon, 100 million pink salmon, and 17.8 million chum salmon. Table 1 shows specific projection numbers, by species and fishing area.

The 1996 all-species salmon harvest reached 176 million. The catch would have been higher had there been additional markets. The 1996 catch was down from an incredible 218 million salmon harvested in 1995. Even though the catch declined slightly, the value of the commercial salmon fishery declined even more. The estimated exvessel value of the 1996 catch was \$365 million, down from estimated exvessel values for the 1995 fishery of \$461 million and for the 1994 fishery of \$468 million. The 1996 harvest was distributed as 512 thousand chinook salmon, 50.2 million sockeye salmon, 6.06 million coho salmon, 97.6 million pink salmon, and 21.1 million chum salmon. Table 2 provides harvest numbers by specific fishing area and Table 3 provides harvest statistics in thousands of pounds.

The following briefly describes Alaska Department of Fish and Game formal forecasts of the major pink and sockeye runs, which make up about 85% of the expected 1997 harvest. For sockeye salmon, the Bristol Bay forecast calls for a slight drop in harvest. Last year's catch of sockeye salmon in Bristol Bay was 29.6 million, while the 1997 catch is predicted to be near 24.8 million. The forecast for upper Cook Inlet sockeye salmon is for a run of 6.8 million and a catch of 5.3 million. As for pink salmon, we are expecting a statewide harvest of 100 million fish, which compares to the 1996 harvest of 97.6 million. Forecasters in southeast Alaska expect a strong run of pink salmon, which means they expect a harvest between 26 and 48 million. Biologists in Kodiak expect a run of 23.9 million pink salmon with a catch of 21.6 million. Forecasters in Prince William Sound expect a pink salmon run of 32.9 million, with 20.5 million available for the common property fishery and 9.7 million available for hatchery cost recovery.

Look for inseason harvest information, postseason statistics, and preseason outlooks on the World Wide Web at <http://www.state.ak.us/local/akpages/FISH.GAME/adfghome.htm>.

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Table 1. Preliminary projections of 1997 Alaska commercial salmon harvests by fishing area and species, in thousands of fish.

Fishing Area	Species					Total
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	
Southeast Region	233	2,570	3,900	37,000	11,200	54,900
Prince William Sound						
<i>Common Property</i>	60	2,160	612	20,500	1,320	24,700
<i>Cost Recovery</i>	3	188	24	9,700	460	10,400
Upper Cook Inlet	15	5,300	300	50	200	5,900
Lower Cook Inlet	2	228	13	3,110	65	3,400
Bristol Bay	81	24,800	100	0	900	25,900
Central Region	161	32,700	1,000	33,400	2,900	70,300
Kodiak Area	20	3,500	320	21,600	700	26,100
Chignik	7	1,550	220	1,000	230	3,000
South Peninsula	10	2,750	300	7,200	1,500	11,800
North Peninsula	15	2,300	180	5	200	2,700
Aleutian Islands	0	0	0	0	0	0
Westward Region	52	10,100	1,020	29,800	2,630	43,600
AYK Region	133	118	818	51	1,100	2,220
Statewide Total	579	45,500	6,740	100,000	17,800	171,000

Columns and rows do not total exactly due to rounding.

*Modified January 29, 1997*

Table 2. Preliminary 1996 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>	208	2,800	3,100	64,500	15,300	85,900
Prince William Sound	57	3,010	459	26,000	2,110	31,600
Upper Cook Inlet	14	3,880	321	243	157	4,620
Lower Cook Inlet	1	443	11	450	3	910
Bristol Bay	88	29,600	123	40	841	30,700
<b>Central Region</b>	160	36,900	910	26,700	3,110	67,800
Kodiak Area	13	4,970	202	3,500	544	9,230
Chignik	3	1,960	193	184	100	2,440
South Peninsula	5	1,540	279	2,190	776	4,790
North Peninsula	5	1,910	157	54	68	2,190
Aleutian Islands	—	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Westward Region</b>	26	10,400	831	5,920	1,490	18,700
<b>AYK Region</b>	118	122	1,220	489	1,170	3,120
<b>Total Alaska</b>	512	50,200	6,060	97,600	21,100	176,000

Missing data indicates no harvest, and zeros indicate harvest activity but <1,000. Columns and rows do not total exactly due to rounding.

*Modified January 27, 1997*

Table 3. Preliminary 1996 Alaska commercial salmon harvests by fishing area and species, in thousands of pounds.

Fishing Area	Species					Total
	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	
<b>Southeast Region</b>	3,430	17,900	23,900	226,000	142,000	413,000
Prince William Sound	1,410	19,300	3,700	93,600	18,360	136,000
Upper Cook Inlet	308	24,100	2,090	680	1,570	28,700
Lower Cook Inlet	22	2,750	72	1,260	30	4,100
Bristol Bay	1,580	186,000	836	140	6,140	195,000
<b>Central Region</b>	3,320	232,000	6,700	95,700	26,100	364,000
Kodiak Area	178	28,300	1,700	12,000	4,500	47,000
Chignik	54	13,500	1,380	700	770	16,400
South Peninsula	104	9,400	1,790	5,500	6,000	22,800
North Peninsula	104	11,700	1,005	135	480	13,400
Aleutian Islands	—	—	—	—	—	—
<b>Westward Region</b>	440	62,900	5,880	18,000	11,800	100,000
<b>AYK Region</b>	2,100	950	9,390	1,516	9,000	23,000
<b>Total Alaska</b>	9,300	314,000	45,900	341,000	189,000	900,000

Missing data indicates no harvest, and zeros indicate harvest activity but <1,000.  
Columns and rows do not total exactly due to rounding.

*Modified January 27, 1997*

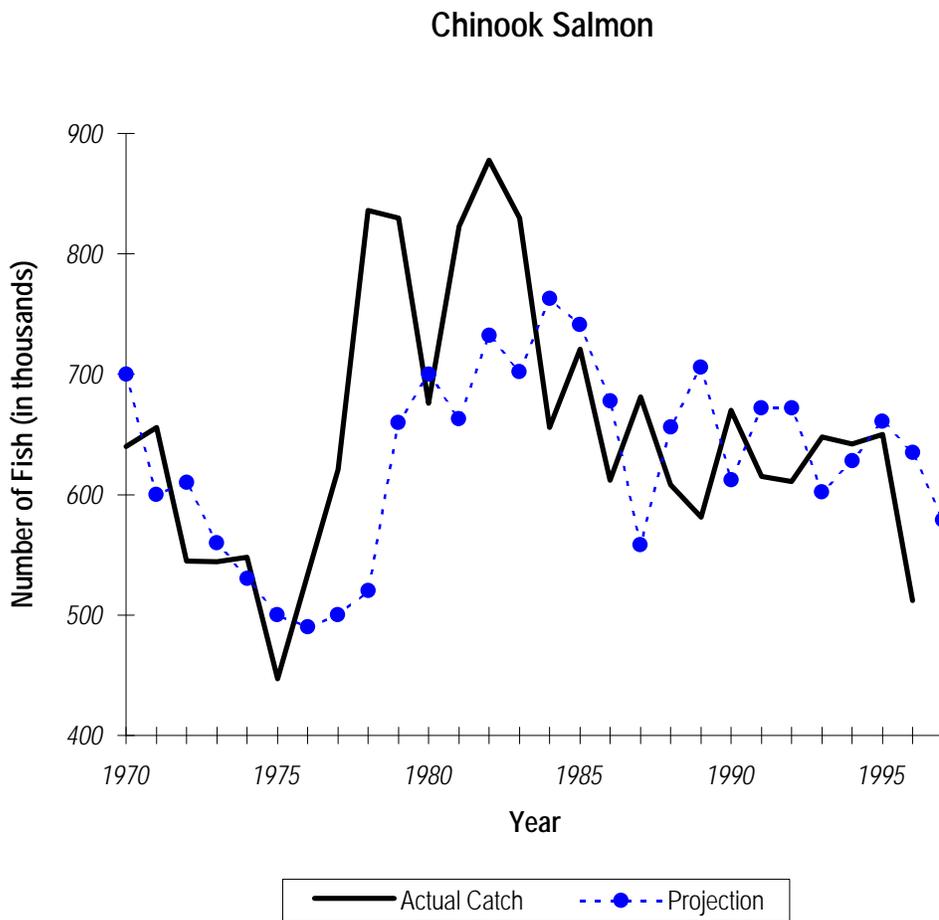


Figure 1. Relationship between actual catch and projected catch, in thousands, for Alaskan chinook salmon from 1970 to 1996, with the 1997 projection.

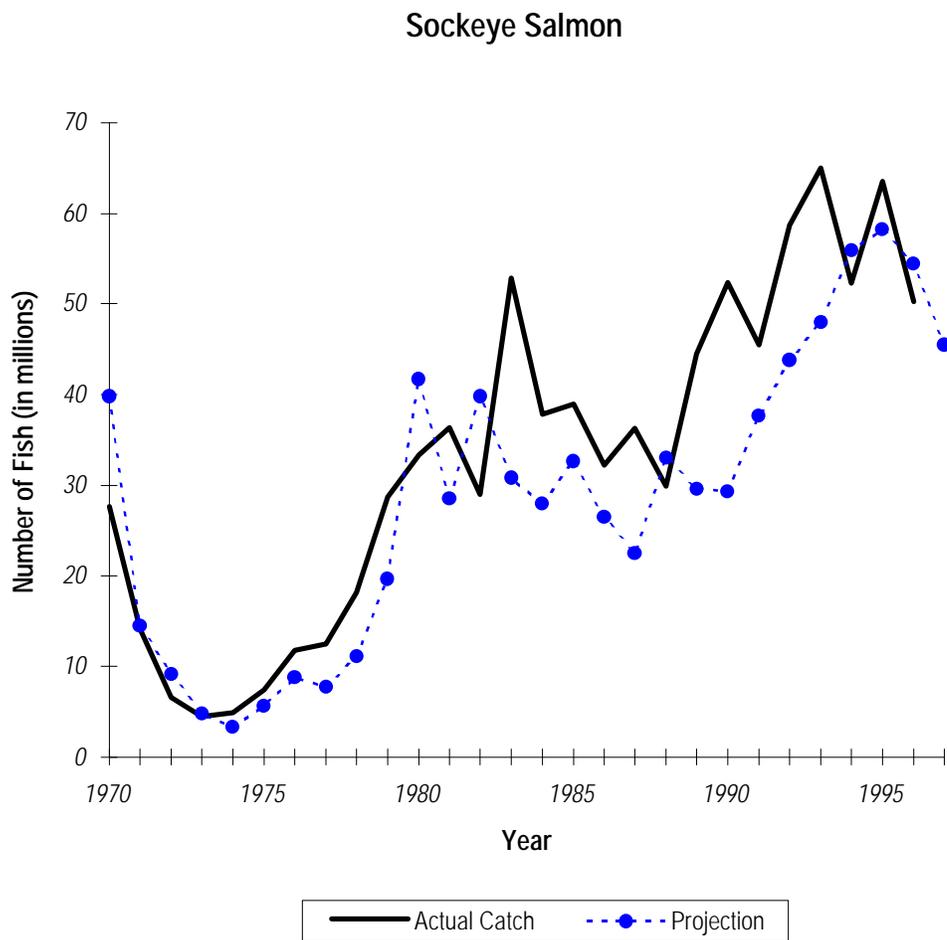


Figure 2. Relationship between actual catch and projected catch, in millions, for Alaskan sockeye salmon from 1970 to 1996, with the 1997 projection.

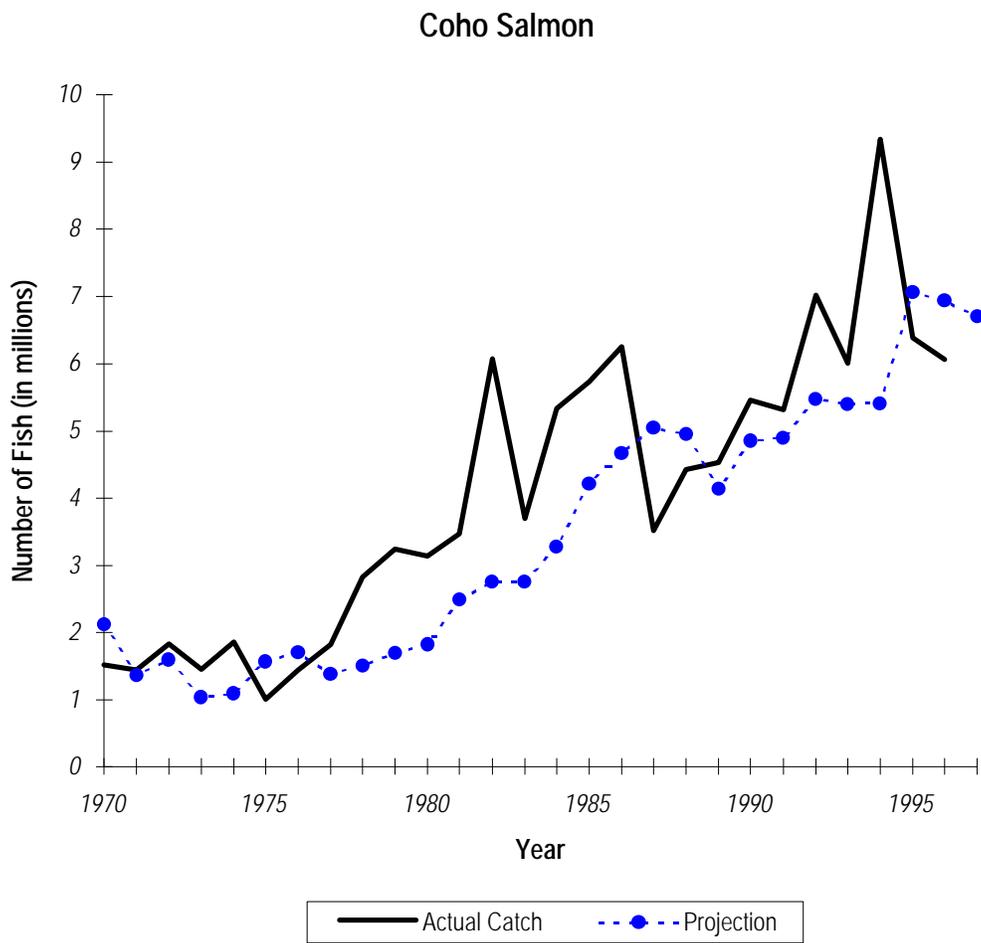


Figure 3. Relationship between actual catch and projected catch, in millions, for Alaskan coho salmon from 1970 to 1996, with the 1997 projection.

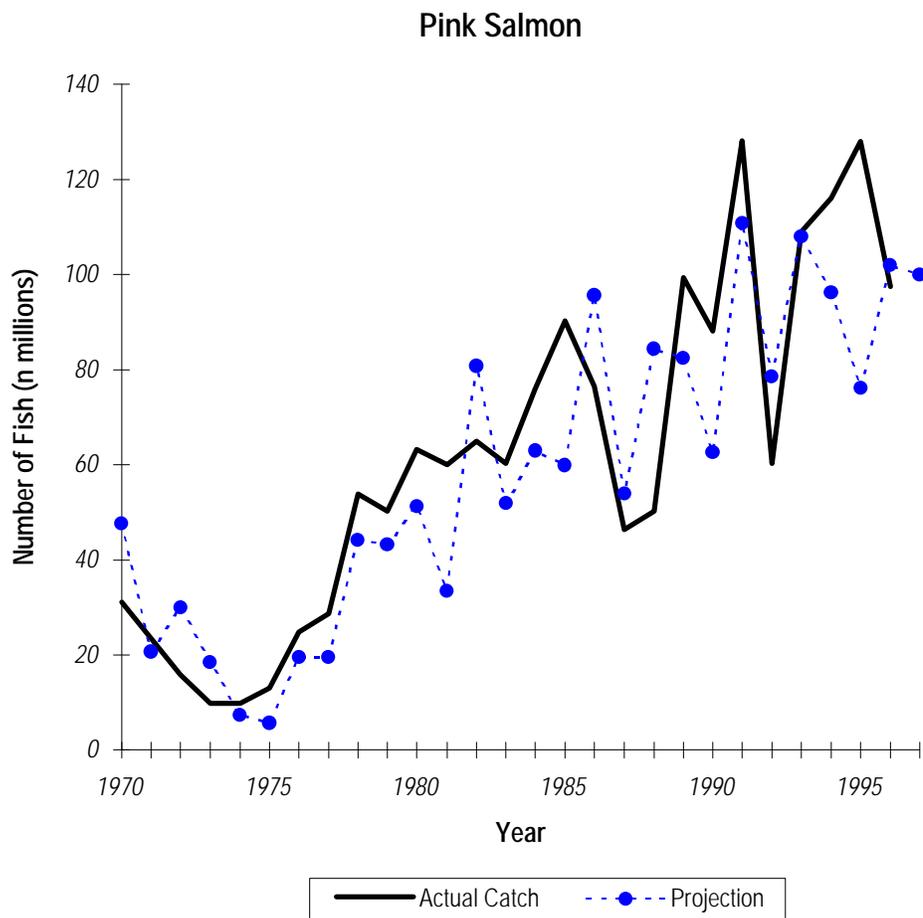


Figure 4. Relationship between actual catch and projected catch, in millions, for Alaskan pink salmon from 1970 to 1996, with the 1997 projection.

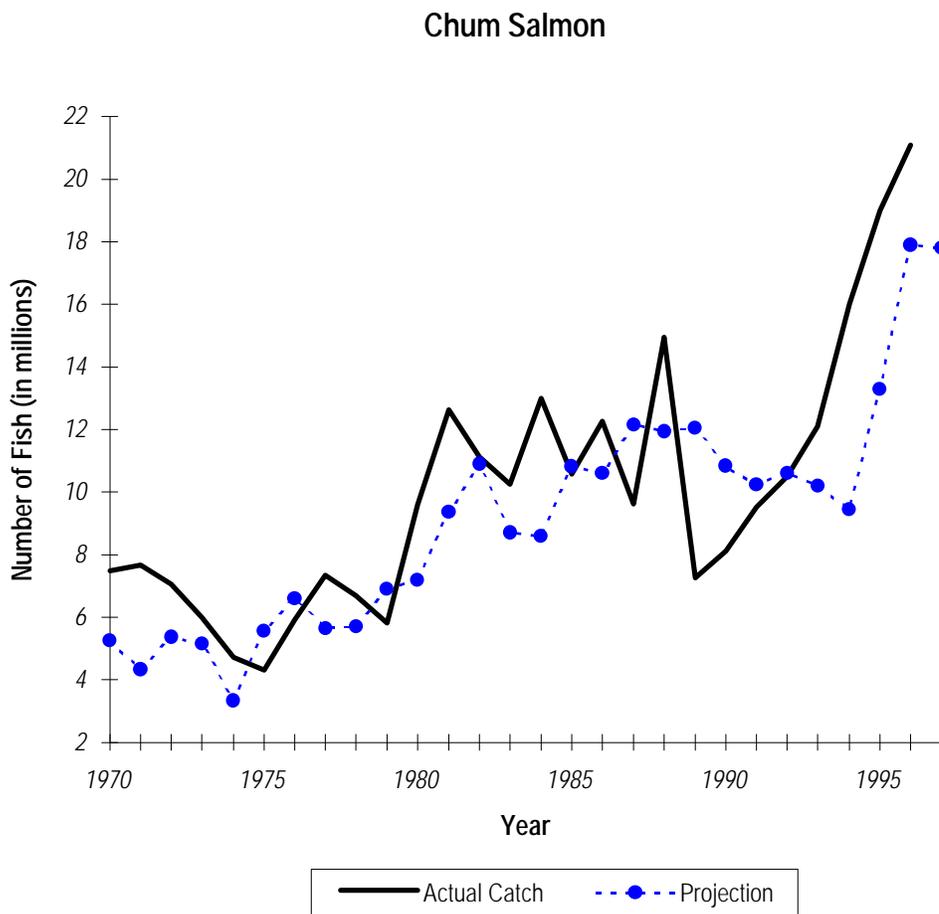


Figure 5. Relationship between actual catch and projected catch, in millions, for Alaskan chum salmon from 1970 to 1996, with the 1997 projection.