

## Managers Still Cautious After Slight Increase In Harvest

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Casey Kelly/KMXT

Despite a recent up-tick in the harvest, fishery managers are continuing to be cautious about this year's Kodiak area commercial salmon season.

Alaska

Department of Fish and Game Area Management Biologist Jeff Wadle says the department started managing for pink salmon around the beginning of the month. The most recent 57-hour fishing period for the west and east sides of the island closed Sunday night. Wadle says there were encouraging signs, but the runs are still relatively slow.

1 (Salmon :42s "we're just not really sure yet.")

The most recent in-season estimate shows an all species catch of just over one-million, 800-thousand fish. About a million of those were sockeye, with another half-million pinks, and about 260-thousand chum salmon.

Wadle says the department's early run sockeye escapement goals were met on the south end of the island in the Alitak District. However, the Ayakulik and Karluk Rivers were below average for the first half of the season. Managers are now focused on making escapement for the late run sockeye and pinks.

The next island-wide 57-hour opener is scheduled to start Thursday, and Wadle says whether or not it gets extended depends on escapement and harvest numbers.

(Salmon 2 :19s "seeing some fish in the streams.")

Effort has been relatively slow so far this season, with only about 60 seiners taking part in the fishery. Prices have been averaging just over a dollar a pound for reds and about 22 cents a pound for pinks.

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