



ALASKA ECONOMIC
TRENDS

NOVEMBER 2015

**SEAFOOD
HARVESTING
IN ALASKA**

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE

The town of King Salmon

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF LABOR & WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

ALASKA ECONOMIC TRENDS

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SEAFOOD HARVESTING

Huge groundfish harvests boost overall job numbers

PAGE 4

By JOSHUA WARREN

KING SALMON, Alaska

The mouth of Bristol Bay and the gateway to Katmai

PAGE 8

By SARA WHITNEY

The MONTH in NUMBERS

PAGE 13

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**ALASKA DEPARTMENT
of LABOR
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ON THE COVER: Commercial fishermen in Alaska pose with halibut and sablefish
sometime in the early 20th century. Photo courtesy of Library of Congress
On page 4: Crab legs by Flickr user Lisa Maria
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Seafood industry is a vital piece of Alaska's economy



Heidi Drygas
Commissioner

I've heard people say that Alaska's economy is a three-legged stool consisting of "the oil industry, government, and everything else." However, the maritime industry is also vital for Alaska's economy. This month's *Trends* discusses seafood sector employment in detail.

Anyone who's been to Dutch Harbor, Dillingham, or just about any other coastal community understands that seafood is the bedrock of our coastal economy. But the fishing industry also has a tremendous impact on Southcentral, Alaska's population base. Anchorage is home to more skippers than any other community in Alaska, and 2,168 commercial permit holders live in Southcentral. Commercial seafood generates more than a billion dollars annually in Southcentral, and that doesn't include the economic impacts of sport fishing or the role of personal use fishing in filling Alaskans' freezers.

The Department of Labor and Workforce Development, representatives of the fishing industry, and the University of Alaska recently completed a Maritime Workforce Development Plan. The plan focuses on maritime workforce readiness, career pathways, and recruitment and retention. We are using a wide range of tools to meet these plan objectives. For example, AVTEC's Maritime Training Center offers dozens of courses and has a state-of-the-art marine simulator. Our Job Centers, which are located in communities across the state, connect Alaskans with job opportunities in the fishing industry. The Southwest Alaska Vocational Education Center, or SAVEC, which is located in King Salmon, focuses on workforce development in the fishing industry with maritime, safety, and related classes.

These workforce development efforts are part of Governor Walker's focus on Alaska Hire. There are a lot of good jobs in Alaska's fishing industry, and our goal

is to ensure as many Alaskans as possible can get these jobs. I've met with many seafood processors and other fishing industry representatives to talk about how we can work together to increase Alaska Hire.

This summer, I had the opportunity to visit several seafood processing facilities in Naknek and the SAVEC training center in King Salmon. Fishermen and processors in Naknek and King Salmon generate hundreds of millions of dollars in income, and are a reminder of how important the industry is for Alaska's economy. I saw firsthand how innovations in processing can expand markets for fresh frozen salmon and salmon roe, and how refrigerated seawater systems are improving the quality of Alaska's product at market. It is hard to appreciate the difficult and intense work on a slime line if you haven't spent time in a processing facility. I also appreciated learning about innovative business models, such as fishermen who cooperatively own seafood processing companies. Seafood has been around as long as people have been fishing, but Alaskans continue to innovate with seafood business models, processing equipment, and fishing boat technology.

Fortunately, policies that support the fishing industry also support a related renewable resource industry: tourism. The unspoiled landscapes that attract tourists also sustain our fisheries, and economic data show that Alaska's tourism and fishing industries have been growing in tandem. Unlike the construction and energy sectors, tourism and fishing actually benefit from lower oil prices. As oil prices remain low, our fishing and tourism industries are important engines of Alaska job growth. I look forward to continuing to work with employers to support both job growth and Alaska Hire in these vitally important sectors of Alaska's economy.



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SEAFOOD HARVESTING



Huge groundfish harvests boost overall job numbers

By **JOSHUA WARREN**

Alaska's commercial fishing employment grew by 0.7 percent in 2014, primarily driven by increased groundfish¹ harvests. Groundfish harvesting employment grew by 24.8 percent, or about 350 jobs, with gains in every month of the year.

¹Although sablefish (or black cod) is considered groundfish, it is categorized separately in this article. Here, groundfish refers primarily to walleye pollock and Pacific cod.

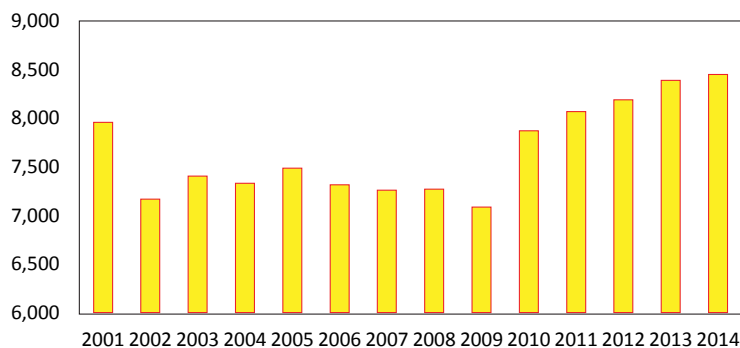
Although 2014's total statewide increase was smaller than prior years, the industry has gained jobs every year since 2009. (See Exhibit 1.)

Stellar groundfish year offsets salmon job losses

Most of the employment growth of the past few years was in salmon fisheries, which lost 37 jobs in 2014, or 0.7 percent. There were ups and downs from month to month but substantial decreases in the July peak.

1 Total Jobs Have Continued to Climb

AVERAGE MONTHLY SEAFOOD HARVESTING JOBS, ALASKA



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

These losses were more than offset by gains in groundfish harvesting and — to a much lesser extent — crab.

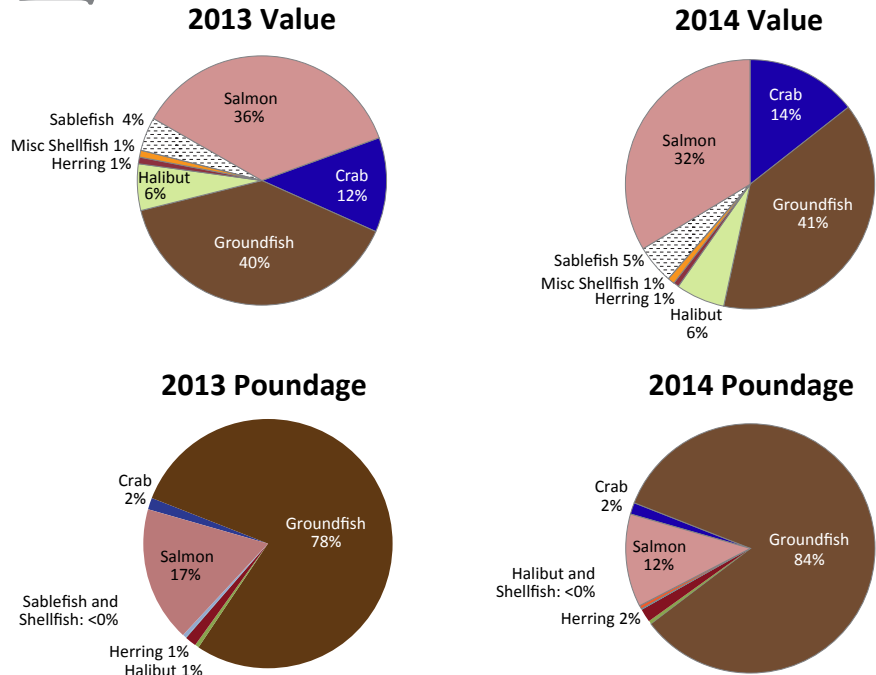
Groundfish, which already dominated poundage and value for all Alaska fisheries, increased its share of both in 2014. (See Exhibit 2.) The increased harvests bumped groundfish from 78 percent of Alaska harvest poundage in 2013 to 84 percent in 2014.

Groundfish harvests also spurred new employment records for March and December at 4,970 and 1,120 jobs, respectively. Those new winter records are still tiny compared to the July peak of 24,916 jobs, which is mostly salmon harvesters. The number of jobs in salmon harvesting still far eclipses other species. (See exhibits 3 and 4.)

Because of limits on the size and type of equipment salmon fishermen can use as well as the number of fishing days allowed, salmon harvests require more crew and effort to harvest the same value and volume as groundfish. The larger ships that fish the Bering Sea for pollock, for example, can do so with fewer crew members and may fetch higher total value because of the sheer mass of their catch.

2 Value and Poundage by Species

ALASKA, 2014 VERSUS 2013



Source: National Oceanic and Atmospheric Association, National Marine Fisheries Service

A bigger share of the U.S. total

According to the most recent report from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Alaska fisheries account for over half of total U.S. fish harvest volume and a third of the value.

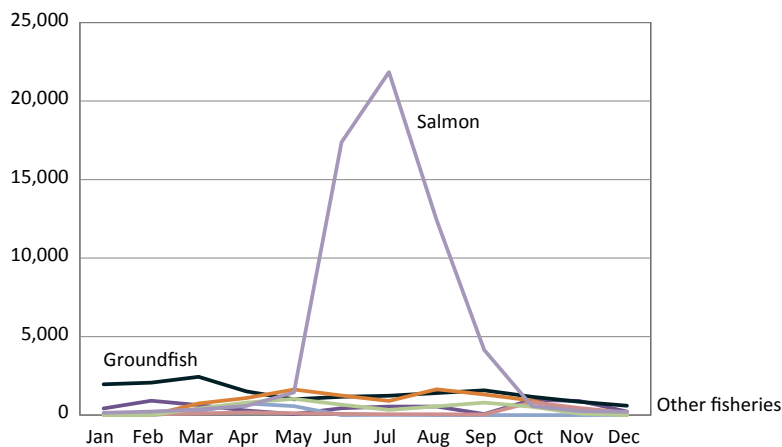
With the stellar groundfish harvests in 2014, Alaska gained a significant share of the U.S. total. In 2013, Alaska groundfish made up 64.3 percent of the total national groundfish harvest, which grew to 67.5 percent. Groundfish hasn't caught up with Alaska's percentage of U.S. salmon, though, which grew from 94.7 percent to 94.9 percent.

A mixed picture in other fisheries

Sablefish, herring, and shellfish fisheries lost a considerable number of jobs in 2014, although these fisheries are smaller and

3 Most Jobs in Seasonal Salmon Harvests

ALASKA, 2014

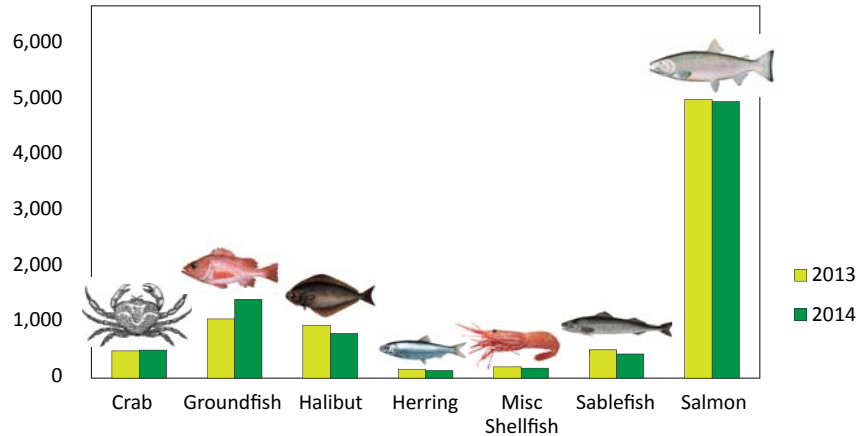


Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

4

Salmon Top Average Monthly Jobs

ALASKA, 2014 VERSUS 2013



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

have less effect on total statewide harvesting employment.

Losses for sablefish and shellfish were spread evenly throughout the year, but most of the loss in herring was due to no activity in June versus 258 June jobs the year before. That single month of loss produced a precipitous drop in the annual average for the herring fishery. June 2014's loss was a combination of almost no herring activity in the Northern Region and other regions ending fisheries in May that typically bleed into June.

Of those three fisheries, shellfish and herring are at their 2012 levels, which suggests 2013 could have been an outlier. In 2013, both fisheries had higher job levels than normal in their trailing months, which can greatly change the annual average. When fisheries typically last only two or three months, bleeding over into a fourth month can have a big effect on annual job numbers.

Crab harvesting gained 12 jobs, or about 2 percent. The crab fishery's strong growth in the second half of the year more than offset its losses of the late winter and early spring, although crab numbers are also a relatively small share of total harvesting jobs.

The top-ranking regions

Southeast's share of statewide harvesting jobs declined 2 percent in 2014 due to fewer salmon fishing jobs, but Southeast still has the highest percentage of industry employment in the state. (See Exhibit 5.)

The Aleutians and Pribilof Islands' second-place ranking in 2014 came from a diverse harvest, with triple-

digit average annual employment in salmon, halibut, groundfish, and crab harvesting. The Southcentral Region, which includes the Prince William Sound and Cook Inlet salmon fisheries and a halibut fleet, came in third behind the Aleutians.

Kodiak gains a little

Harvesting near Kodiak increased slightly overall, with its 0.7 percent job growth regaining some of the ground lost the year before. Most of Kodiak's fisheries were stable or growing over the year but that was mostly canceled out by the lack of a crab fishery opening, which would normally provide almost 200 jobs in January. The Department of Fish and Game shut down that fishery because tanner crab stock thresholds were not met.

As in other regions, groundfish fisheries gained a significant number of jobs in Kodiak, with an increase of 16.7 percent over the year.

Bristol Bay season goes long

Bristol Bay gained harvesting jobs again in 2014 after a strong 2013. Salmon provides nearly 98 percent of Bristol Bay's harvesting employment, so job growth was spread almost entirely across June, July, and August.

June and July have been gaining ground every year in recent history, but August employment was also high in 2014, which happens only occasionally depending on how late the season carries on. Bristol Bay's August employment was nearly double that of the previous August.

Small gains for Northern Region

The Northern Region's harvesting employment is small compared to the statewide numbers, so small job gains can produce big percent increases.

Northern Region gained 14 harvesting jobs in 2014, which was a 9.9 percent average monthly increase over 2013. The growth was entirely in salmon fisheries, at 28 jobs over the year. All other fisheries were down jobs from 2013 or closed.

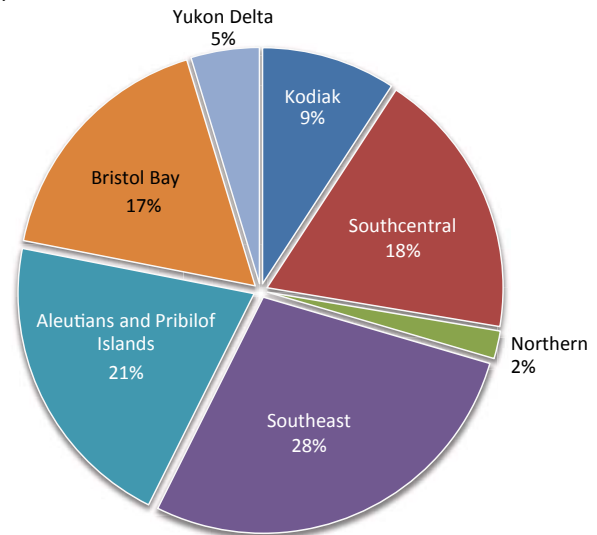
Aleutians gained jobs in 11 months of year

Harvesting in the Aleutians and Pribilof Islands gained more than 230 jobs in 2014. June was the only month that jobs went down, and the off-summer months had the most growth.

Groundfish was responsible for the area's employment gains throughout the year, similar to other Alaska regions. Most of the region's other fisheries lost jobs, especially salmon and halibut, which was the reason jobs fell in June.

5 Harvesting Jobs by Region

ALASKA, 2014



Note: Includes year-round workers only.

Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section

Southeast loses jobs but remains at typical level

Southeast fisheries lost more than 160 harvesting

Continued on page 12

About these numbers

Unlike the "nonfarm payroll employment" numbers published every month by state and federal statistical agencies, fish harvesting employment estimates can't be generated simply by asking employers how many people they had on their payroll in a certain month.

Instead, employment of a certain number of people has to be inferred from the fish or other seafood "landings" — the initial sale of the catch.

Because of the way the fisheries are managed — by permits that are generally associated with a specific type of gear, including boat size — a landing under a certain permit requires about the same number of people to be involved in the catch. Those num-

bers are called "crew factors."

For example, a certain permit to fish for king crab in Bristol Bay with pot gear on a vessel more than 60 feet long requires about six people to be involved in the crab harvest according to the survey responses of people who own those permits. So when a crab harvest is landed under that permit in a calendar month, we assume the permit generated six jobs in that month.

The jobs are assigned to a location based on harvest areas rather than by place of residence of the permit holder. That approach approximates what's done with payroll employment numbers, which are categorized by place of work rather than by the place of the workers' residence.

Most permits have a geographic designation for where the specific species can be harvested. Employment generated under permits that allow fishing anywhere in the state is assigned to a region by a different method (a special harvest area code).

The numbers are presented here as annual averages because that comes closest to the way payroll employment numbers are published and analyzed. Like construction and tourism jobs, seafood harvesting employment has much higher employment in the summer than in the winter. Averaging the seafood harvesting employment numbers across all 12 months allows for more meaningful comparisons between job counts in different industries.

King Salmon

Alaska



The mouth of Bristol Bay and the gateway to Katmai

By **SARA WHITNEY**

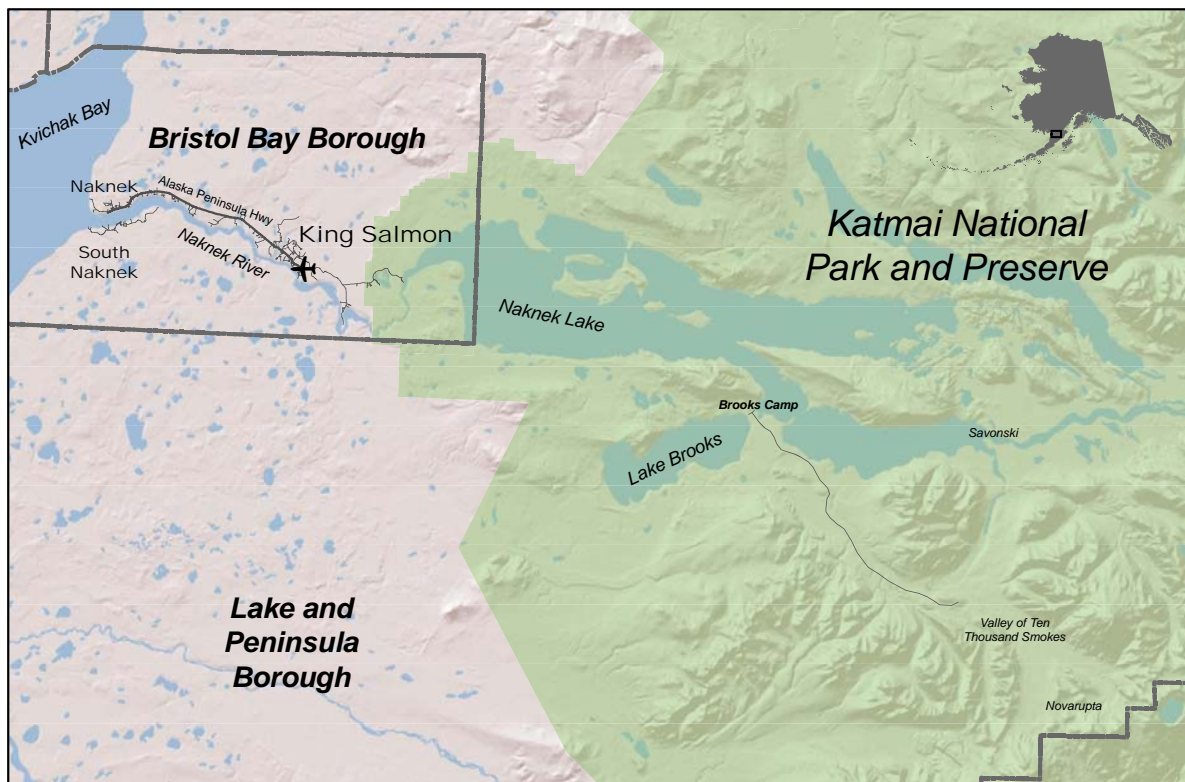
When the Novarupta volcano erupted in the Katmai area on June 6, 1912, the explosion was so loud that people heard it an hour later in Juneau, 750 miles away.

The largest volcanic eruption of the 20th century lasted for 60 hours and bathed a 2,500-square-mile area in darkness and several feet of ash. While no one was killed, the blast permanently altered the physical and cultural landscape.

Many Alaska Natives fled their villages. The hardest-hit was Savonoski, where residents were driven out by up to 700 feet of ash and resettled in what is now known as King Salmon. Today, King Salmon is a town of 335 people on the bank of the Naknek River, 293 air miles southwest of Anchorage and 15 miles up-river from the mouth of Bristol Bay.

Centuries of transformation

Before the catastrophe created what is now known as the “Valley of 10,000 Smokes,” the area around King



Source: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section



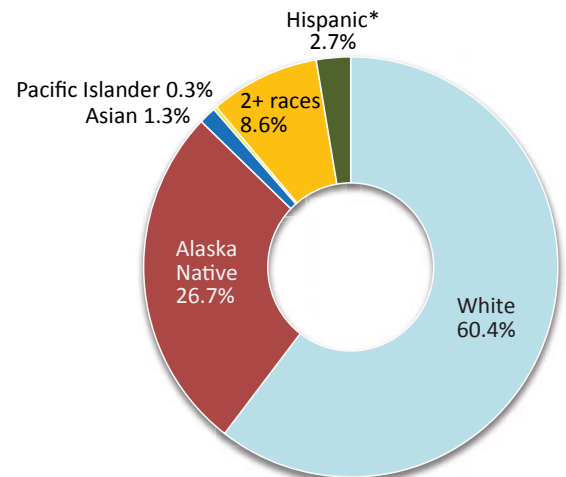
Above, the town of King Salmon on the Naknek River. Photo by Todd Radenbaugh

Salmon had already seen centuries of settlement and transformation. Artifacts as old as 6,000 years show the presence of Yupiks, Athabascans, and Aleuts. The area's location near the head of the bay, where the Alaska Peninsula meets the mainland, made it an ideal spot for tribes to gather with the return of the salmon each year.

Russian fur traders were also drawn to the area in the late 1700s, setting up camp 15 miles downriver in what is now Naknek. The area's fur trade didn't last long, but the Russians left a lasting mark on the area prior to the U.S. purchase by spurring development of the modern Bristol Bay economy, initially through the establishment of the Russian Orthodox Church.

The Homestead Act of 1862 granted the church title to much of the land on the north bank of the Naknek River, and the church provided surrounding lots to residents for development. The first salmon cannery opened on the Naknek River in 1890, replacing salteries as the way to preserve catches. Within a decade, 12 canneries were operating on the river. Today, there are six.

1 Racial and Ethnic Makeup KING SALMON, 2010 CENSUS

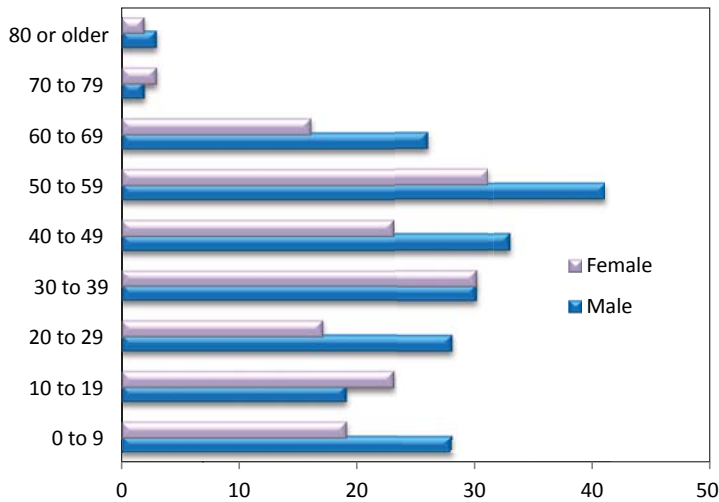


*Hispanics can be of any race.

Sources: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; and U.S. Census Bureau

2 Older, More Male Population

KING SALMON, 2010 CENSUS



Sources: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; and U.S. Census Bureau

Naknek, accessible by ice road during the winter. Together, these three communities make up 100 percent of the population of the Bristol Bay Borough, and functionally, the three form a single community. All three are census-designated places — the borough has no incorporated cities.

Despite being part of Bristol Bay Borough, King Salmon has the unusual distinction of being the borough seat of neighboring Lake and Peninsula Borough and home to Lake and Peninsula's School District. However, King Salmon has no public school of its own. Most students attend school in Naknek, which is the seat of the Bristol Bay Borough.

Age, racial makeup differs from statewide

The volcano and the influenza epidemic that followed in 1919 hit the indigenous population hard — according to oral history, only about three of the original families remained in the area in the aftermath. Their descendants form the modern King Salmon Tribe, which was federally recognized on Dec. 29, 2000.

But unlike much of Southwest Alaska, the town's population is majority non-Native, with 60.4 percent identified as white in the 2010 Census. (See Exhibit 1 and the sidebar on the next page.) Alaska Natives made up 26.7 percent, more than the statewide average of 15 percent at that time but much less than Southwest as a whole, which was 68.5 percent Native.

The military raised the area's profile

King Salmon's modern identity as a transportation hub started to take shape in the 1930s when the U.S. built an air navigation silo there. Then, at the beginning of World War II, the army built Naknek Air Force Base around the silo, which was a refueling stop and support base for air operations in the Aleutians.

When the base officially closed in 1993, it became a public airport, now classified as a primary commercial service airport. Though King Salmon only has a few hundred year-round residents, its airport is large enough for commercial summer service to Anchorage, provided by Alaska Airlines and PenAir. Katmai Air flies to Brooks Camp in Katmai National Park and Preserve, and a number of other companies provide year-round service to villages throughout Southwest and carry millions of pounds of freight and mail each year.

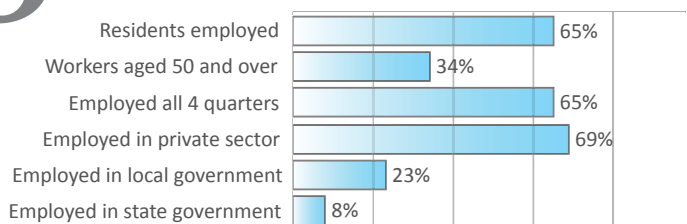
A strange borough role

King Salmon also serves as a transportation and shipment center for the giant Bristol Bay salmon fishery. Although the town has major air access, it isn't connected to Alaska's road system — it is, however, connected by a 15-mile road along the river to Naknek, home to the world's largest summer sockeye salmon run.

Across the river is the small community of South

3 King Salmon's Workers

RESIDENTS ONLY, 2014



Sources: Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section; and U.S. Census Bureau

About the data

Numbers for places as small as King Salmon can have large margins of error and are measured infrequently. The town's demographic data come from the 2010 Census because that level of detail is the most recent for a community of less than 1,000 people. Therefore, the accompanying statewide and regional numbers are also from 2010 to allow for comparison, even though more recent data are available for larger populations.

The most recent estimates for the state and regions were in 2014, and they give median ages of 34.4 for Alaska and 32.8 for the Southwest Region.

In 2014, the percent Native, alone or in combination with another race, was 19.5 percent for the state and 70.7 percent for Southwest.

Overall, the state population has aged since 2010 and the percentage of nonwhite residents has gone up.

King Salmon's demographics stand out in other ways, too, with an older population than the state as a whole. As of the 2010 Census, the most recent data available for a place that small, King Salmon was 56 percent male and had a median age of 39.1 — 40 for men and 38 for women. (See Exhibit 2.) The estimated statewide median at that time was 33.8 and for the Southwest Region it was 29.9.

The population has been declining since 1993, when it hit a peak of 820 residents. After the base closed, the population fell to 442 within seven years and has continued to decline since, to 374 in 2010 and 335 by 2014.

The military and tourism are major players in local economy

Although King Salmon's base officially closed in the 1990s, it's maintained under contract and the military keeps a considerable presence. The base is still used for missions by the Air Force, Army, Marines, Coast Guard, and the North American Air Defense, or NORAD. The Bristol Bay Borough and state government also use building space on the base.

King Salmon is also one of 35 global sites of the Super Dual Auroral Radar Network, or SuperDARN, which analyzes plasma structures and convection in the high-latitude ionosphere, gravity waves, and ionospheric irregularities.

Besides the base and the airport, King Salmon is notable for its fly-in fishing lodges and camps. The town

4 King Salmon a Costly Home

MILITARY OCONUS* INDEX, 2015

National average index value	100	King Salmon (incl Bristol Bay)	140
Anchorage	124	Kodiak	134
Barrow	158	Nome	158
Bethel	158	Petersburg	146
Clear AFS	126	Seward	132
College	126	Sitka	144
Cordova	140	Spuce Cape	138
Delta Junction	128	Tok	132
Fairbanks	126	Unalaska	138
Homer	140	Valdez	140
Juneau	134	Wainwright	158
Kenai (incl Soldotna)	140	Wasilla	122
Ketchikan	138	Other	158

*Overseas cost-of-living allowance. Does not include housing.
Source: Department of Defense, effective date January 2015

is both the gateway to Katmai National Park and Preserve and mere miles from Bristol Bay along the Naknek River, a location ideal for tourism. As of October 2015, the town had 97 active business licenses, the vast majority of which were in lodging, transportation, and other tourism or support businesses.

High wages for residents

The area's rich natural resources, strategic location, and role as a transportation center make it a source of high wages and a place with traditionally low unemployment, especially during the summer.

The town's residents have high median income compared to the rest of the state, although it's important to note these figures can have large margins of error. King Salmon had a median household income of \$84,583 in 2013 versus \$70,760 for the typical Alaskan household. Per capita, the town's income for residents was \$44,125, and for Alaska it was \$32,651.

Income is everything a person brings in per year from all sources, so in addition to wages from a job it includes investments, rents, benefits, retirement, and government payments called transfer receipts. Because King Salmon has an older population, it has a considerable number of retired residents.

In 2014, 65 percent of the population worked for an employer for at least part of the year. The most common payroll jobs were in trade/transportation and local government. (See Exhibit 3.)

However, self-employment is substantial. Although most fishermen aren't included in the jobs data, salmon is a major part of the town's economy. King Salmon residents' gross earnings were a reported \$7.74 million in 2014, and although its fisheries earnings are

far eclipsed by Naknek, about \$2.37 million came just from salmon fishing. That number doesn't include fisheries with fewer than three permit holders, nor does it capture the substantial value of subsistence fishing to the area.

Housing is cheaper, but everything else is high

King Salmon has a lower overall cost-of-living than many rural communities, but that's mostly because of relatively inexpensive housing, an expense that eats up the largest chunk of most households' income.

The Council for Community and Economic Research's latest estimates put the area's costs at about 1.5 percent less than the Alaska average and 3.6 percent less than Anchorage. C2ER measures the area's costs at Naknek, a reasonable proxy for King Salmon, where housing costs are 30.9 percent less than Anchorage.

Most other costs are considerably higher, though — especially energy. Because King Salmon, Naknek, and South Naknek all run on diesel power, utilities in the area run 28.6 percent higher than in Anchorage.

The local electrical cooperative has explored cheaper alternative energy sources since the 1990s, including wind, coal-bed methane, and geothermal due to the area's volcanic activity. After an unsuccessful attempt to drill for geothermal energy, Naknek Electrical Association, which serves all three communities, filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in 2011.

As of August 2015, a gallon of propane in King Salmon cost \$11.65, and in July a gallon of heating fuel was \$4.73. Transportation costs are also high, at 34.4 percent above Anchorage. As of the second quarter of 2013, gasoline was \$5.70 a gallon. Groceries were also higher than Anchorage by 16.3 percent.

The military includes King Salmon as one of its "overseas locations," as it does with all Alaska places, in its cost-of-living index called OCONUS. With a value of 100 as the national baseline, OCONUS ranked King Salmon at 140 in 2015. (See Exhibit 4.) OCONUS doesn't include housing costs in its index, which is why it shows King Salmon as more expensive than Anchorage.

Sara Whitney is the editor of *Alaska Economic Trends*. Reach her in Juneau at (907) 465-6561 or sara.whitney@alaska.gov.

SEAFOOD HARVESTING

Continued from page 7

jobs in 2014, with some loss in most species. While this 6.5 percent decrease seems large, it returns Southeast to its typical job levels and to about what they were in 2012.

One exception was Southeast's crab fishery, which gained 29 jobs from the prior year for 19.6 percent growth. This is partially because crab didn't hit a record the year before like most of the region's fisheries, leaving it room to grow. The gains for crab didn't offset salmon job losses, however, as salmon dominates Southeast harvesting.

Southcentral hits record

Seventy-seven percent of Southcentral's harvesting jobs are in salmon fisheries, which grew steadily over the year and hit records in 2014. These gains produced 2.4 percent growth, or almost 30 additional jobs. All of Southcentral's other fisheries registered job losses — even groundfish, which grew almost everywhere else.

Because all fisheries except salmon lost jobs in 2014, the region's harvesting employment levels were down overall. However, like Southeast, Southcentral hit new records during most of 2013, so even with 2014's losses the region is still well above its historical harvesting job levels.

Joshua Warren is an economist in Juneau. Reach him at (907) 465-6032 or joshua.warren@alaska.gov.

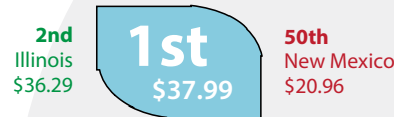
The Month in Numbers

Area Unemployment Rates

	Prelim.		Revised
SEASONALLY ADJUSTED	9/15	8/15	9/14
United States	5.1	5.1	5.9
Alaska Statewide	6.4	6.6	6.8
NOT SEASONALLY ADJUSTED			
United States	4.9	5.2	5.7
Alaska Statewide	5.7	5.5	6.2
Anchorage/Mat-Su Region			
Municipality of Anchorage	4.7	4.5	4.9
Matanuska-Susitna Borough	6.9	6.7	7.2
Gulf Coast Region			
Kenai Peninsula Borough	6.7	6.0	7.0
Kodiak Island Borough	4.0	3.9	4.6
Valdez-Cordova Census Area	6.2	5.3	7.2
Interior Region			
Denali Borough	4.6	3.7	5.0
Fairbanks North Star Borough	4.7	4.5	5.1
Southeast Fairbanks CA	9.1	9.0	11.5
Yukon-Koyukuk Census Area	14.9	15.0	16.7
Northern Region			
Nome Census Area	10.4	11.3	11.8
North Slope Borough	5.7	5.4	5.5
Northwest Arctic Borough	14.6	14.4	16.0
Southeast Region			
Haines Borough	5.7	5.1	6.6
Hoonah-Angoon Census Area	9.8	9.8	10.4
Juneau, City and Borough	4.0	3.9	4.4
Ketchikan Gateway Borough	5.1	4.7	6.3
Petersburg Borough	7.0	5.9	8.2
Prince of Wales-Hyder CA	9.6	9.8	10.9
Sitka, City and Borough	3.8	3.4	4.1
Skagway, Municipality	4.3	4.2	4.1
Wrangell, City and Borough	6.1	5.8	7.1
Yakutat, City and Borough	5.6	6.1	6.1
Southwest Region			
Aleutians East Borough	3.5	2.9	4.5
Aleutians West Census Area	2.9	2.7	4.2
Bethel Census Area	13.6	14.1	16.0
Bristol Bay Borough	6.0	3.9	6.4
Dillingham Census Area	10.2	7.7	11.1
Kusilvak Census Area	19.5	21.2	21.4
Lake and Peninsula Borough	9.4	10.7	12.3

How Alaska Ranks

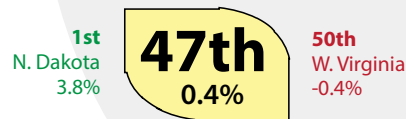
Average Hourly¹ Earnings, Construction



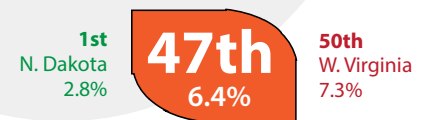
Average Hourly¹ Earnings, Prof and Business Svcs



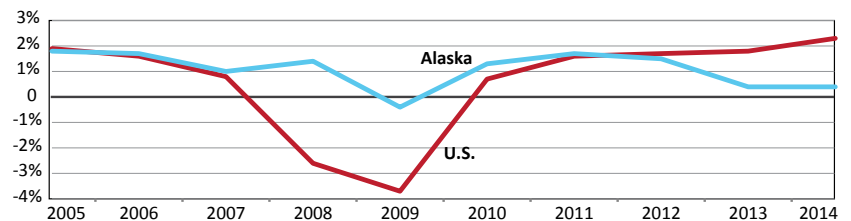
Job Growth²



Unemployment Rate³



Job Growth in Alaska and the Nation⁴



All data sources are U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Research and Analysis Section, unless otherwise noted.

¹September 2015

²Annual average percent change, 2014; Maine and Utah also had 0.4 percent job growth

³Seasonally adjusted September rates

⁴Annual average percent change

Employer Resources

Veterans Job Fair among the largest hiring events

For many years, Alaska and the nation have honored veterans during the month of November. Veterans Day, observed on Nov. 11, is the anniversary of the World War I armistice that ended hostilities in the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of 1918. Alaska has also instituted "Hire a Veteran Month" in November, beginning with a proclamation by the governor and led by the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

The department will host its annual Alaska Veterans Job Fair on Nov. 13 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the University Center Mall at 3801 Old Seward Hwy in Anchorage. More than 120 employers and 1,000 highly qualified job seekers are expected to attend this event. This is one of the largest hiring fairs in Alaska, and every year many Alaska employers use this event to discover valuable military talent that proves highly profitable.

Did you know? Over the past few years, the Society for Human Resource Management conducted

multiple studies to identify the top critical skills and resources needed for businesses in the changing workforce. Ninety percent of respondents said their recent veteran hires possessed some of the most highly desired skills including adaptability, dependability, problem solving, leadership, follow-through, the ability to work as part of a team, and a strong sense of responsibility. According to SHRM's findings, these skill sets make candidates with a military background "highly desirable contributors to an organization's performance."

Employers who want to learn more about these programs, or the other great reasons to hire veterans, can contact their nearest Alaska Job Center or call (877) 724-2539. For more information about Alaska's Veteran Services, go to jobs.alaska.gov/veterans/ employer/.

Employer Resources is written by the Employment Training Services Division of the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.

Safety Minute

How to stay safe and comfortable while fishing

Fishing is one of the biggest benefits of living in Alaska. Being safe is just as important as landing that trophy fish. Here are some pointers to ensure your time on the water is safe, fun, and productive.

- Wear proper clothing. The weather can change quickly, especially over water, so pack layers and rain gear.
- Water can increase UV intensity by up to 50 percent, so wear sunscreen. Apply liberally to dry skin and reapply every two hours. Don't forget your ears.
- Protect your eyes from UV radiation with UV-blocking sunglasses and broad-brimmed hats.
- Learn how to swim and use caution around water.
- Wear a personal floatation device any time you are on a boat or around deep or fast moving water. Children should wear PFDs around all water.
- Use the buddy system. Make sure you let someone know where you will be and when you will

return.

- Don't forget the cooler. Fishing works up an appetite so pack plenty of food and water.
- Carry a first aid kit with bandages, antiseptic, pain reliever, and anti-inflammatories.
- Bring bug dope — it *is* Alaska.

Remember, the more comfortable you are the longer you'll be able to fish. And the longer you fish, the more you may catch.

The Alaska Occupational Safety and Health Consultation and Training program wants to keep you safe in the workplace as well. We provide free and confidential workplace evaluations and can provide assistance in developing safety and health programs. Contact AKOSH C&T at (800) 656-4972.

Safety Minute is written by the Labor Standards and Safety Division of the Alaska Department of Labor and Workforce Development.