



2025

ANNUAL
PERSONAL USE FISHERY
REPORT



MEMORANDUM

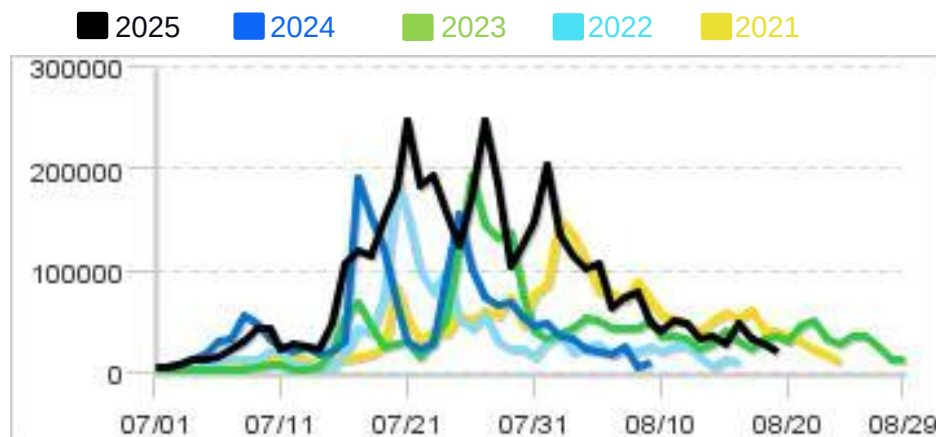
TO: Mayor Gabriel and Council Members
THROUGH: Terry Eubank, City Manager
FROM: Tyler Best, Parks and Recreation Director
DATE: 10/23/25
SUBJECT: 2025 Dipnet Report – Parks and Recreation

General Overview

The Dipnet Fishery started July 10th and continued through July 31st. Alaska Residents were able to participate in the Fishery from 6:00 a.m. to 11:00 p.m. until July 17th, when it became open 24 hours a day through July 31st. This is the fourth consecutive year the fishery has been open for 24 hours a day.

The river's escapement totaled over 4.2 million fish, exceeding the sustainable escapement goal for sockeye by over 2.9 million, and more than doubling last year's total escapement of 1.9 million fish.

The following table depicts the daily escapement for the duration of the summer over the last five years.



This year, the peak of the run occurred slightly later than in recent years. Typically, a single, distinct spike in fish escapement is seen in late July. However, in 2025, there were three significant escapement peaks during the last 10 days of July. Approximately 1.3 million fish entered the river after the dipnet fishery closed on July 31, meaning about 69 percent of the total escapement

occurred before the closure. In comparison, last year, only about 250,000 fish escaped after the closure.

Operational Changes in 2025

Three notable operational changes occurred during the 2025 season:

- Additional signage was installed along the bluff in front of Toyon Way. Temporary signs were used throughout the summer, and permanent signage is now in place to support erosion control efforts.
- Additional parking signage and controls were added at North Beach, Little League, and the Softball parking lots to improve traffic flow and reduce congestion. Clearly defining parking areas was a key focus to support enforcement efforts.
- Approximately 25 single-use day parking spaces were added to the Little League parking lot, helping to reduce daytime traffic congestion on the beach.

Dipnet App

2025 marked the ninth anniversary of the Dipnet Kenai smartphone app. Use of the app was down about 74 percent from the five-year average, which may indicate a need for an update or the beginning of a phased transition away from the app.. The Administration is reviewing options that include transitioning away from the app and directing users to the Dipnet section of the City website. With improvements in progressive web technologies, the website can now provide the same accessibility and functionality as an app without requiring users to download or maintain a separate application.

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	5yr Average	Diff from Avg
Pageviews	228,600	156,600	192,400	131,200	115,600	46,200	128,400	-74%
Sessions	99,300	81,400	97,600	71,500	64,700	29,600	68,960	-57%
Unique Sessions	40,100	32,500	33,900	28,500	25,100	10,700	26,140	-59%
Downloads	4,057	3,190	3,719	2,087	2,197	806	2,400	-66%

Parks and Rec

The Parks and Recreation Administrative staff interviewed and hired all temporary positions for the PU Fishery, excluding the temporary enforcement officers. Fourteen temporary employees were employed, including six beach cashiers, two dock cashiers, five dock attendants, and one beach attendant. There is a budget for two beach attendants, but one of them dropped out before the fishery started, and the remaining candidate was more than happy to take over their duties to help cover the beach by working extended hours.

The Parks and Recreation Staff worked in late June and early July to help set up the Fishery. This includes building temporary fencing to protect the dunes, installing signage, painting parking lines, and setting up the North Beach Bypass Lane. Throughout the Fishery, the park's staff serves as support staff, including mechanical repairs, supply runs, directing traffic, covering shifts, and cleaning beaches, bathrooms, and parking lots.

Alaska Mission and Retreats, also known as the Salmon Frenzy, partnered with the City of Kenai

and brought various groups of volunteers to serve hot dogs and coffee during the peak days of the fishery. At North Beach, they helped direct traffic and pick up litter on the beaches.

The Kenai Nordic Ski Team coordinated with the City of Kenai to provide two clean-up days a week for the duration of the Fishery. At the end of the Fishery, the team went through and helped clean the beach and parking lots. Our department provided them with trash bags, gloves, and trash grabbers. The City compensated the Nordic Ski Team two thousand dollars for this service.

Public Works

The Street Division helps set up the Fishery by placing over 100 jersey barriers for the direction of traffic, placing the fee shacks, installing temporary access roads at both beaches, and maintaining the bypass lane off of Spruce Street. The Streets Division also helps coordinate the installation of no-wake zone buoys and related signage, both on the river and along the riverbank. During the Fishery, Streets helps maintain the roads by grading them and applying calcium chloride to keep the beach and dock areas accessible and safe.

Financial Report

Capital Improvements

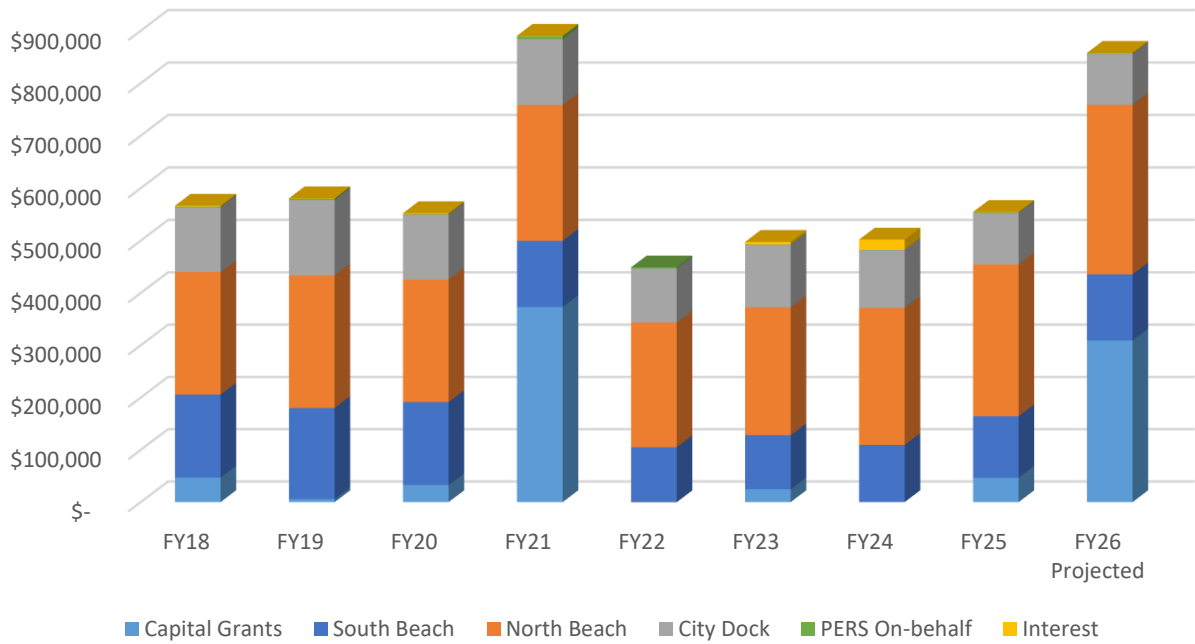
There is \$309,132 remaining in a State of Alaska legislative grant for dipnet improvements on the City's north and south beaches. The grant language was amended to include the City Dock Facility, and per resolution No. 2025-02, the remaining balance was budgeted to a project to replace floats and perform concrete repairs at the City Dock.

FY26 Revenues

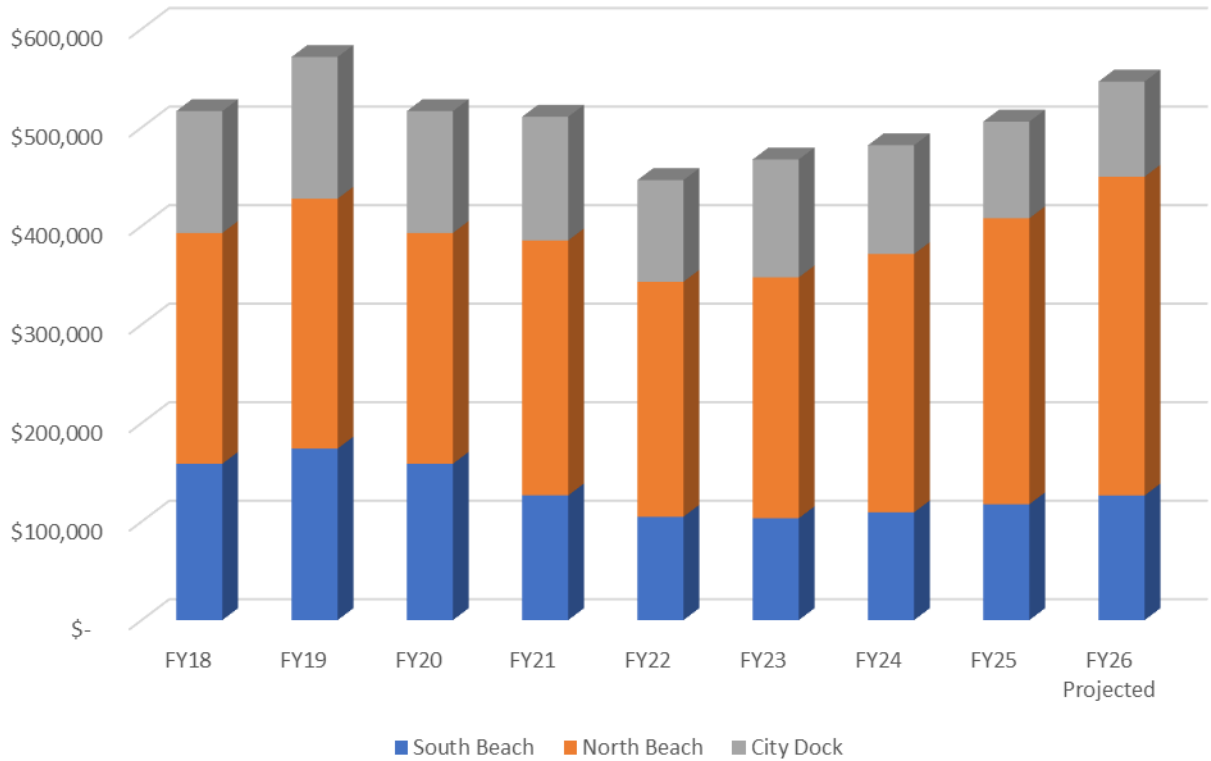
FY26 fees collected increased 8.0% over FY25. FY26 fishery revenues, not including capital grant revenues and net of sales tax and transaction fees, are projected to be \$546,605, which is \$42,455 greater than budgeted and \$40,619 more than FY25 fishery revenues. Capital grant revenue is projected to be \$309,132, assuming complete expenditure of the remaining state grant. A comparison of FY26 fishery revenue to prior years is shown below. The breakdown by site and service for FY18 through FY26 is based upon actual transactions.

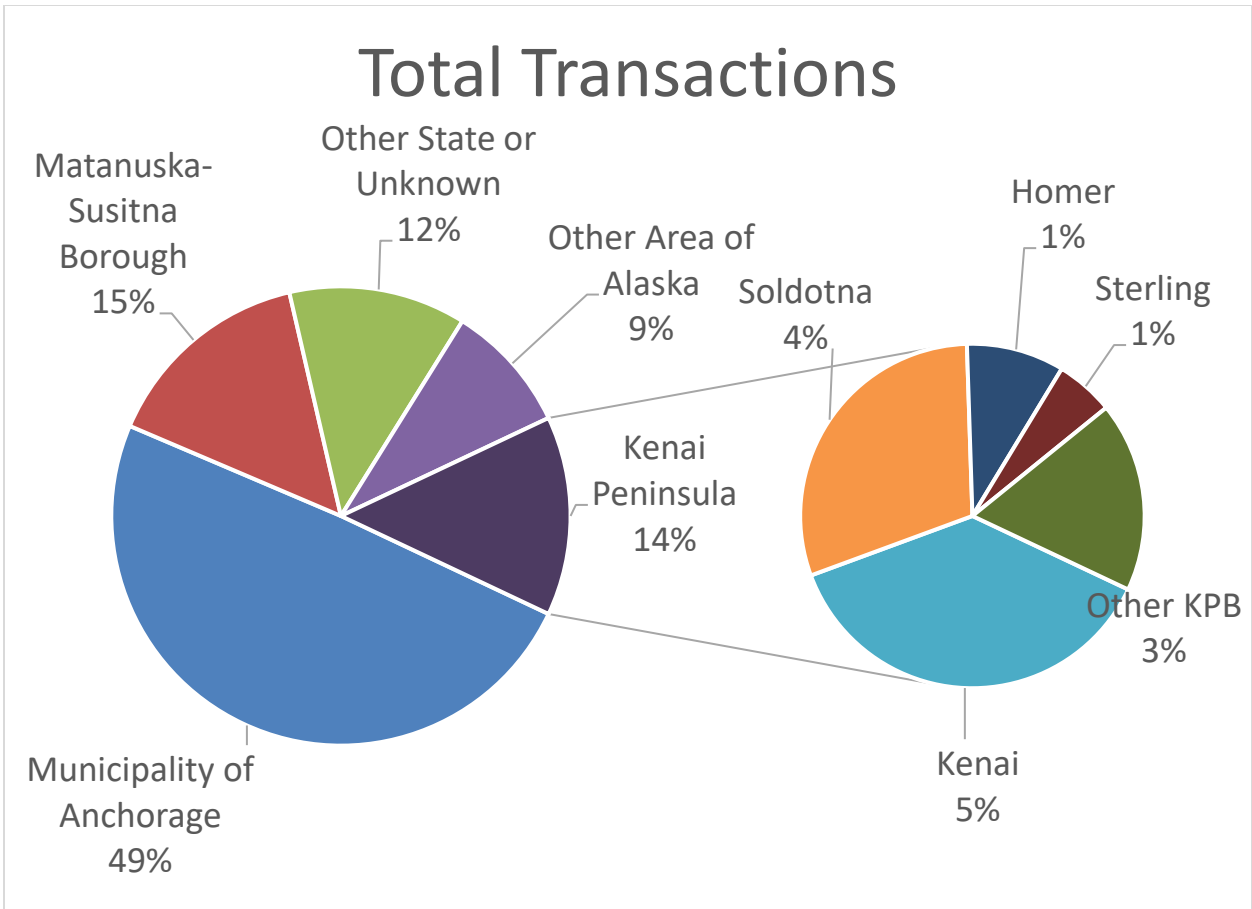
	7/1/2017	7/1/2018	7/1/2019	7/1/2020	7/1/2021	7/1/2022	7/1/2023	7/1/2024	7/1/2025
	6/30/2018	6/30/2019	6/30/2020	6/30/2021	6/30/2022	6/30/2023	6/30/2024	6/30/2025	6/30/2026
	<u>FY18</u>	<u>FY19</u>	<u>FY20</u>	<u>FY21</u>	<u>FY22</u>	<u>FY23</u>	<u>FY24</u>	<u>FY25</u>	<u>FY26 Projected</u>
South Beach	\$158,665	\$174,115	\$158,665	\$126,577	\$104,940	\$103,400	\$109,361	\$117,627	\$126,566
North Beach	234,298	253,622	234,297	258,782	238,471	244,436	262,202	290,242	323,474
City Dock	123,612	143,821	123,613	125,534	103,171	119,881	110,384	98,117	96,565
Interest	1,522	671	1,522	750	(4,412)	4,755	19,502	750	750
PERS On-behalf	1,546	2,688	1,546	5,688	2,394	694	549	1,270	1,270
Capital Grants	46,920	5,770	32,699	373,076	-	24,579	-	46,569	309,132
Total	<u>\$566,563</u>	<u>\$580,687</u>	<u>\$552,342</u>	<u>\$890,407</u>	<u>\$444,564</u>	<u>\$497,545</u>	<u>\$501,998</u>	<u>\$554,575</u>	<u>\$857,757</u>

Total Revenue by Source



Total Participant Revenue





Total transactions in 2025 were up 5% from 2024, and up 2% from the 5-year average. Person-session data collection was inconsistent this year and will not be included in this report. North Beach continues to increase participation, while participation at the dock continues to decline, with a 6% decrease year over year. South Beach had an increase of 5% this year, marking the second year-over-year increase since 2020. North Beach now accounts for 64% of all transactions, with South Beach at 21% and the dock at 15%. The percentages of participants from different regions were likely impacted by inconsistent data collection, but the trend continues with the Kenai Peninsula being 15-20% of all participants.

Future Considerations

North Beach Third Shack

This recommendation has been brought forward in the past years, but will now be removed. The addition and improvements to the bypass lane have met the need for this option to prevent traffic from backing up onto the spur highway.

Pedestrian Pathway to Beach

An alternative to installing a third shack is to address the high pedestrian traffic along Spruce Street, where fishery visitors often walk to the fee shacks. A dedicated pedestrian or bike pathway could help reduce congestion by separating foot and vehicle traffic along the road. This pathway would also benefit residents and beachgoers, enhancing safety and accessibility for all users.

Improve North Beach Parking Lot

Consideration of a paved parking lot at North Beach would significantly improve parking organization and overall operations. Installing permanent lines would reduce confusion, help manage traffic flow, and minimize recurring complaints from visitors. A paved surface would also enhance maintenance efficiency, provide a safer and more durable parking area, and support long-term operational needs for the park.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Knackstedt and Council Members

THROUGH: Terry Eubank, City Manager

FROM: Jay Teague

DATE: October 28, 2025

SUBJECT: 2025 Dipnet Report – Fire & EMS

For the 2025 season, we had 16 dipnet fishery-related calls compared 13 in 2024. KFD responded to 5 dipnet-related EMS calls, and 1 Fire call. We conducted 4 dipnet “no wake” patrols in coordination with KPD.

The Fire Department had the following service calls directly related to Dipnet Season:

Fires: (1)

Trauma Related Calls: (1)

Medical/Illness Calls: (4)

Cardiac Arrest: (0)

Boat Rescues: (6)

Boat Patrols: (4)

Technical/Rope Rescues: (0)

MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor Gabriel and Council Members

THROUGH: Terry Eubank, City Manager

FROM: Dave Ross, Police Chief

DATE: September 15, 2025

SUBJECT: **2025 Dipnet Report - Police**

The 2025 Dipnet fishery opened on July 10 and ended as scheduled on July 31. From July 18 until the end of the fishery on July 31, the fishery was open 24 hours per day. In 2025 the City employed five temporary enforcement officers (TEOs) dedicated to Police dipnet operations. There were five TEOs the majority of the fishery, with one having some schedule limitations related to his joining the military. Significant 2025 Police dipnet information includes:

- Police handled 70 dipnet-related calls for service during the month of July, approximately 9% more than 2024. Those calls included a wide variety of issues: 7 (9-1-1) misdials, 8 parking problems, 2 traffic congestion, 6 motor vehicle crash, 7 traffic offense complaints, 11 lost & found property, 5 disorderly complaints, 2 camping complaints, 2 lost children, and 20 miscellaneous calls for service.
- Despite the very large influx of people on the busiest weekend there were no major police incidents to report during the fishery.
- TEOs wrote 102 dipnet related citations (primarily for paid parking and other parking related violations).
- Salmon Frenzy volunteers were again present to support the fishery.
- The Police Department worked with the Parks Department to improve the layout and signage at the overflow parking at the softball fields, which worked well this year.