

## **Juneau Featured On Major U.S. Fishery Port List**

*City cited as 45th most lucrative fisheries port in U.S. in 2004*

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Juneau Empire

Juneau, Alaska

November 23, 2005

Commercial fishermen landed almost twice as much fish in Juneau in 2004 as they did the previous year.

Juneau's commercial fish landings in 2003 comprised 8.4 million pounds of fish. In 2004, the landings rose to 15 million pounds, according to a federal report released Tuesday.

In 2003, the ex-vessel value of Juneau's fish landings was \$13.5 million. In 2004, the value of Juneau's landings rose to \$21.5 million, according to the Fisheries of the United States report, published annually by the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Juneau was the 45th most lucrative U.S. port for commercial fisheries in 2004, according to the report. The city also was the 49th largest U.S. port by the volume of its commercial fish landings.

Though it may come as a surprise to some in Juneau, the capital has had a toehold on the top 50 list of commercial fishing ports for several years, said Chris McDowell, a seafood industry analyst for the McDowell Group.

"Juneau is well-situated to handle fresh salmon," McDowell said.

Juneau also has become an increasingly important port for halibut and black cod in Southeast Alaska, he added.

For context, the city receives nowhere near as many pounds of fish as the other Southeast Alaska ports of Petersburg, Sitka, or Ketchikan.

Petersburg ranked 12th on the top 50 list of ports by volume, landing 103 million pounds of fish in 2004.

Juneau's landings have been increasing for the last few years, though, and the city is better situated than other Southeast Alaska towns to handle large quantities of fresh fish sent to the Lower 48 by airplane.

In the past year, "The demand for wild salmon really heated up in the domestic market," McDowell said.

With the addition of Alaska Glacier Seafood's new fish processing plant in Auke Bay this year, fish also are becoming a stronger revenue source for the city government, McDowell said.

In the past year, the city has seen a 35 percent increase in revenue from the state-levied tax on raw fish, said Craig Duncan, the city's finance director.

The state collects the raw fish tax income and sends back half of the amount it receives back to the city or borough where the fish were landed.

The actual dollars provided to Juneau increased from \$220,000 to \$298,000 in the past year. All of the funds are allocated to the city's harbor operations, Duncan added.

According to the report, Alaska led all states by the volume and the ex-vessel value of its commercial fishery landings. In 2004, Alaska landings comprised 5.4 billion pounds at a value of 1.2 billion dollars.

Dutch Harbor-Unalaska was the leading U.S. port by quantity and New Bedford, Mass., was the leading U.S. port in terms of value.