

# **2007 Southeast Alaska Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan**

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<b>Weights and measures (metric)</b>		<b>General</b>		<b>Measures (fisheries)</b>	
centimeter	cm	Alaska Administrative Code	AAC	fork length	FL
deciliter	dL	all commonly accepted abbreviations	e.g., Mr., Mrs., AM, PM, etc.	mid-eye-to-fork	MEF
gram	g	all commonly accepted professional titles	e.g., Dr., Ph.D., R.N., etc.	mid-eye-to-tail-fork	METF
hectare	ha	at	@	standard length	SL
kilogram	kg	compass directions:		total length	TL
kilometer	km	east	E		
liter	L	north	N	<b>Mathematics, statistics</b>	
meter	m	south	S	<i>all standard mathematical signs, symbols and abbreviations</i>	
milliliter	mL	west	W	alternate hypothesis	H <sub>A</sub>
millimeter	mm	copyright	©	base of natural logarithm	<i>e</i>
		corporate suffixes:		catch per unit effort	CPUE
<b>Weights and measures (English)</b>		Company	Co.	coefficient of variation	CV
cubic feet per second	ft <sup>3</sup> /s	Corporation	Corp.	common test statistics	(F, t, $\chi^2$ , etc.)
foot	ft	Incorporated	Inc.	confidence interval	CI
gallon	gal	Limited	Ltd.	correlation coefficient	
inch	in	District of Columbia	D.C.	(multiple)	R
mile	mi	et alii (and others)	et al.	correlation coefficient	
nautical mile	nmi	et cetera (and so forth)	etc.	(simple)	r
ounce	oz	exempli gratia	e.g.	covariance	cov
pound	lb	(for example)		degree (angular)	°
quart	qt	Federal Information Code	FIC	degrees of freedom	df
yard	yd	id est (that is)	i.e.	expected value	<i>E</i>
		latitude or longitude	lat. or long.	greater than	>
<b>Time and temperature</b>		monetary symbols		greater than or equal to	≥
day	d	(U.S.)	\$, ¢	harvest per unit effort	HPUE
degrees Celsius	°C	months (tables and figures): first three letters	Jan, ..., Dec	less than	<
degrees Fahrenheit	°F	registered trademark	®	less than or equal to	≤
degrees kelvin	K	trademark	™	logarithm (natural)	ln
hour	h	United States	U.S.	logarithm (base 10)	log
minute	min	(adjective)		logarithm (specify base)	log <sub>2</sub> , etc.
second	s	United States of America (noun)	USA	minute (angular)	'
		U.S.C.	United States Code	not significant	NS
<b>Physics and chemistry</b>		U.S. state	use two-letter abbreviations (e.g., AK, WA)	null hypothesis	H <sub>0</sub>
all atomic symbols				percent	%
alternating current	AC			probability	P
ampere	A			probability of a type I error	
calorie	cal			(rejection of the null hypothesis when true)	$\alpha$
direct current	DC			probability of a type II error	
hertz	Hz			(acceptance of the null hypothesis when false)	$\beta$
horsepower	hp			second (angular)	"
hydrogen ion activity	pH			standard deviation	SD
(negative log of)				standard error	SE
parts per million	ppm			variance	
parts per thousand	ppt, ‰			population	Var
volts	V			sample	var
watts	W				

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**2007 SOUTHEAST ALASKA DRIFT GILLNET FISHERY  
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This management plan provides an overview of the expected salmon run sizes, management issues, and harvest strategies for the Southeast Alaska drift gillnet fisheries in 2007. Drift gillnet fisheries are planned at Tree Point and Portland Canal (District 1), Prince of Wales and Stikine River (Districts 6 and 8), Taku River/Snettisham (District 11), Lynn Canal (District 15), and in the following terminal hatchery areas: Neets Bay (District 1), Nakat Inlet (District 1), Anita Bay (District 7), Speel Arm (District 11), Deep Inlet (District 13), and Boat Harbor (District 15).

Key words: Southeast Alaska, drift gillnet, management plan, salmon, outlook, forecast, terminal harvest area, hatchery, 2007.

## **INTRODUCTION**

This management plan provides an overview of the expected salmon run sizes, management issues, and harvest strategies for the Southeast Alaska drift gillnet fisheries in 2007.

For the period 1997 to 2006, an average of 481 Southeast Alaska drift gillnet limited entry permits were issued annually, of which an average of 87% are actively fished each year. In 2006, 477 permits were issued, of which 361 (76%) were actively fished. A record low of 348 permits were fished in 2004. Drift gillnet landings have averaged approximately 4.0 million salmon annually from 1997 to 2006 and 2.6 million salmon from 1960 to 2006. Of the total commercial salmon harvest in Southeast Alaska, the most recent 10-year average drift gillnet fishery harvests have included 42% of the sockeye, 17% of the chum, 11% of the coho, 3% of the pink, and 6% of the Chinook salmon (1997 to 2006 data).

The drift gillnet fishery primarily targets Chinook salmon during the spring season; sockeye, pink, and chum salmon during the summer season; and coho and chum salmon during the fall season. The first commercial fisheries directed at harvesting Stikine and Taku River Chinook salmon since the 1970s took place in 2005 and 2006, and District 8 will have its third consecutive directed Stikine Chinook fishery in 2007. Chinook salmon fisheries also occur in terminal hatchery areas in the spring.

There are five traditional drift gillnet fishing areas in Southeast Alaska: District 1 (Tree Point and Portland Canal), District 6 (Prince of Wales), District 8 (Stikine), District 11 (Taku-Snettisham), and District 15 (Lynn Canal). In addition, drift gillnet fisheries occur in several Terminal Harvest Areas (THAs) adjacent to hatchery facilities and at remote release sites throughout the region. Each of these gillnet fisheries are discussed separately in this management plan. A summary of the 2006 season drift gillnet harvest for each species by fishery area and type is presented in Table 1. The most recent 10-year historical harvests and average harvests are presented in Table 2 for Tree Point, Table 3 for Prince of Wales, Table 4 for Stikine River, Table 5 for Taku River, and Table 6 for Lynn Canal.

## **SALMON RETURN EXPECTATIONS**

In Southeast Alaska, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) issues a region wide preseason harvest forecast for pink salmon. ADF&G also derives preseason forecasts for several specific stocks including Taku and Stikine River Chinook salmon, Stikine River sockeye salmon, and other Chinook salmon stocks. Private non-profit hatchery operators also derive preseason forecasts for salmon returning to many enhancement projects throughout Southeast Alaska. The projected returns of sockeye, chum, and coho salmon presented in this management plan are

qualitative and should not be considered official department forecasts. These return projections are calculated primarily from parent-year catch and escapement data and are expressed in terms of probable magnitude of return relative to historic levels.

Significant in 2007 are forecast returns of Chinook salmon to the Stikine and Taku Rivers. The United States and Canada successfully negotiated abundance based fishery regimes for those two stocks in February 2005. A major component of the negotiations was specific harvest shares for both countries that are referred to as Allowable Catch (AC). A preliminary AC is calculated using preseason forecasts of terminal run for each stock. The Stikine River preseason terminal run forecast of 37,500 large adults will allow an Alaskan harvest of about 6,100 fish in District 8 by all gear groups including directed harvest by drift gillnet. The Taku River preseason terminal run forecast of 38,700 large adults does not result in a U.S. AC. The ACs for each river will be adjusted as inseason information on run strength becomes available. The harvests of Stikine and Taku River Chinook salmon in Districts 8 and 11 above base harvest levels will not count against the 2.9% drift gillnet harvest ceiling allowed under Chinook salmon allocation plan adopted by the Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF). Most Alaska hatchery produced Chinook salmon harvested in drift gillnet fisheries do not count against the harvest ceiling mandated by the BOF allocation plan.

The Stikine River sockeye forecast has not as yet been updated, however returns in 2007 are expected to be above average. Returns to the Taku River, are expected to be near average, returns to Chilkoot Lake are expected to be above average, and returns to Chilkat Lake are expected to be below average.

The projected region wide harvest of chum salmon is anticipated to be 15.7 million including 13.2 million of hatchery fish and 2.5 million of wild stocks. These return levels are above the recent 10-year average of 11.6 million. Chum salmon harvest in drift gillnet fisheries has averaged 17% of the regions net fishery salmon harvests or 1,931,000 fish in the recent 10-year period from 1997–2006. Returns of hatchery-produced summer chum salmon are expected to contribute significantly to District 1, 6, 8, 11, and 15 gillnet fisheries.

Overall, returns of coho salmon should be near the 20-year average, due, in part to significant hatchery contributions. The Alaska hatchery coho salmon contributions to drift gillnet fisheries was 23% in 2002, 30% in 2003, 20% in 2004, 20% in 2005, and 9% in 2006.

The pink salmon harvest in 2007 is predicted to be *Strong* to *Excellent*, with a potential total Southeast Alaska harvest of 47 million fish, with a range of 36 to 58 million fish. The major portion of the pink salmon harvest will be taken by purse seine gear.

## **MANAGEMENT APPROACH**

A flexible management approach is required because of the lack of accurate preseason forecasts and uncertainty of salmon run size to the drift gillnet fishing areas. Thus, this management plan presents only a general outlook of how the season is expected to develop. Some specific management approaches may be altered depending on in-season assessments of salmon run strength. Gillnetters are encouraged to contact ADF&G management staff listed at the end of this plan for more detailed information.

The primary objectives for management of the 2007 drift gillnet fishery are:

1. Obtain overall salmon spawning escapements with the best possible distribution to all systems;
2. Provide for orderly fisheries while harvesting those salmon in excess of escapement needs;
3. Promote the harvest and processing of good quality salmon within the constraints dictated by run size;
4. Manage for a total Southeast drift gillnet Chinook salmon harvest ceiling of 2.9% of the all-gear quota, exclusive of Alaskan hatchery-produced fish;
5. Minimize, to the extent possible, the interception of salmon destined for locations where weak returns are expected;
6. Manage Districts 1, 6, 8, and 11 drift-gillnet fisheries consistent with the provisions of the U.S./Canada Pacific Salmon Treaty (PST);
7. Manage hatchery THA's in accordance with provisions in existing THA management plans adopted by the Alaska Board of Fisheries;
8. Manage Districts 8 and 11 directed Chinook salmon fisheries for all-gear harvests as provided under the PST.

Achievement of these management objectives will be accomplished by inseason adjustments of fishing time and area to control harvests in specific areas in accordance with salmon run strength and timing. Comparisons of current-year fishing performance to historical fishing success (i.e., catch per unit effort, or CPUE analysis) are a major component of inseason run strength assessment. This approach assumes catch rates are an accurate reflection of run strength by time period and can be relied upon to indicate salmon escapements through the fishing area.

Past experience has demonstrated that management of salmon fisheries based only on fishery performance or Catch per Unit of Effort (CPUE) data can be misleading, especially for mixed-stock fisheries. Therefore, other available run-strength indicators will also be used including spawning escapements, stock composition estimates, test fishing, observed salmon concentrations in sanctuary areas, catches from other fisheries, and salmon run timing models.

The increasing availability of hatchery-produced salmon, in particular coho and summer chum salmon region wide and sockeye salmon in District 11, has become a major factor in the management of the Southeast Alaska drift gillnet fisheries. Where inseason management is based on fishery performance, it may be difficult to gauge natural stock run strength if significant numbers of hatchery fish are present in the catch. Where possible, the hatchery component of the catch will be separated when evaluating fishery performance.

## **WEEKLY FISHING ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Inseason management of District 1 drift gillnet fishery is conducted by the Ketchikan area management staff; Districts 6 and 8 by the Petersburg and Wrangell area staff; District 11 by the Juneau area staff; and District 15 by the Haines area staff. Because permit holders can move freely among all drift gillnet fisheries, the Southeast regional office will coordinate weekly fishing announcements for all areas. These will normally be released simultaneously in all area offices by mid-afternoon each Thursday during the fishing season.

## **WEEKLY FISHING PERIODS**

Weekly fishing periods in most traditional areas can generally be expected to begin on Sundays at 12:01 p.m.. However, the directed Chinook salmon drift gillnet fisheries in Districts 8 and 11 will open on Mondays, except following Memorial Day Holliday when the fisheries will open on Tuesday. The District 8 directed Chinook salmon fishery will open at 8:00 a.m. and the District 11 directed Chinook salmon fishery will open at 12:01 p.m. if an allowable catch becomes available once inseason run strength is analyzed. Fishing periods in hatchery THAs, including the Northern and Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association's (NSRAA and SSRAA) terminal fisheries in Deep Inlet, Anita Bay, Neets Bay, and Nakat Inlet will be in accordance with rotational harvest management plans for drift gillnet, seine, and troll fisheries adopted by the Alaska Board of Fisheries.

## **FULL RETENTION**

ADF&G will require full retention (5 AAC 39.265) of all salmon harvested in the Deep Inlet THA net fisheries from the onset of the 2007 season. This regulation may be implemented by emergency order in other areas of Southeast Alaska if necessary after consultation with the Alaska Wildlife Troopers (AWT). Further details regarding the implementation of this regulation will be announced at later dates.

## **U.S./CANADA PACIFIC SALMON TREATY**

The PST will influence management of Districts 1, 6, 8, and 11 drift gillnet fisheries [5AAC 33.361]. The management provisions specified by the PST will be considered separately under the specific management plan for each respective fishery. Fishermen are encouraged to contact local ADF&G staff for more detailed information concerning Alaska's PST obligations under the 10-year agreement signed in 1999 and the Chinook salmon annex signed in 2005.

## **CHINOOK SALMON**

The need for management measures to comply with the drift gillnet harvest quota for Chinook salmon will depend on inseason evaluation of Chinook salmon catch rates relative to the 2.9 % drift gillnet allocation of the Treaty fish harvest ceiling [5AAC 29.060]. If the need arises, nighttime fishing closures may be implemented in certain areas to reduce the incidental catch of immature, "feeder" Chinook salmon. Management measures to limit the drift gillnet harvest of PST Chinook salmon have not been necessary during recent years.

The District 15 drift gillnet fishery will be managed in accordance with provisions in the Lynn Canal and Chilkat River Chinook Salmon Fishery Management Plan [5AAC 33.384].

Drift gillnet fisheries will target Chinook salmon in District 8. Only historic base level catches will be counted towards the PST fish ceiling [5AAC 29.060 (b)(2) and (e)].

## **TREE POINT AND PORTLAND CANAL FISHERY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Tree Point and Portland Canal drift gillnet fishing area consists of regulatory Sections 1-A and 1-B. This fishery targets summer chum and sockeye salmon early in the season, followed by pink salmon, and finally fall chum and coho salmon at the end of the season.

## **2007 OUTLOOK**

### **Chum Salmon**

Chum salmon returns to natural spawning systems have increased in recent years after a series of poor returns to Portland Canal. Chum salmon escapements to systems in Boca de Quadra and Behm Canal were generally strong in 2006. The return of chum salmon to Fish Creek, located in upper Portland Canal, was 43,000 (well above the recent 10-year average of 27,000). ADF&G will pay close attention to Portland Canal chum salmon in 2007 and will take necessary management action early in the season to ensure adequate escapements of these stocks. ADF&G will conduct aerial surveys starting in late-June to determine the strength of returning chum salmon to these areas.

### **U. S./Canada Tree Point Fishery Agreement**

In the spring of 1999, the United States and Canada negotiated a 10-year annex for the Tree Point fishery. The new agreement calls for the following:

Manage the Alaskan District 1 drift gillnet fishery to:

1. Achieve an annual catch share of Nass River sockeye salmon of 13.8% of the Annual Allowable Harvest (AAH) of the Nass River sockeye salmon stocks that year;
2. Carry forward from year to year annual deviations from the prescribed catch share arrangement.

### **Nass River Sockeye Salmon Annual Allowable Harvest**

The AAH each year will be calculated as the total run of adult Nass River sockeye salmon in that year less the escapement target of 200,000 fish. In the event that the actual Nass River spawning escapement for the season is below the target level, the actual spawning escapement will be used in the AAH calculations.

The total run calculation includes the catches of Nass River sockeye salmon in the principal boundary area fisheries and the spawning escapement to the Nass River watershed. This includes the catch of Nass River sockeye salmon in Alaskan Districts 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6 net fisheries, Canadian Areas 1, 3, 4, and 5 net fisheries and Canadian Nass in-river fisheries. Catches in other boundary area fisheries may be included as jointly agreed by the Northern Boundary Technical Committee (NBTC).

Although the management intent shall be to harvest salmon at the AAH percentage, it is recognized that overages and underages will occur and an accounting mechanism is required. The payback mechanism for the fishery will be based on the number of fish a party is over or under its AAH.

The management intent for the fishery shall be to return any overages to a neutral or negative balance as soon as possible. After five years of consecutive overages, a management plan must be provided to the Northern Panel with specific management actions that will eliminate the overage. The accrual of underages is not intended to allow either Alaska or Canada to modify its fishing behavior in any given year, nor to harvest the accrued underage.

During the Pacific Salmon Commission meeting in February 2007, the bi-lateral Northern Panel and the NBTC finalized and agreed upon the run reconstruction of the Nass River for 2005. The performance of the Tree Point drift gillnet fishery under the 1999 agreement is shown in Table 7.

Preliminary reports indicate that the total sockeye salmon return to the Nass River in 2006 was 1,105,000 fish. That allowed for a harvest of approximately 125,000 Nass River sockeye salmon at Tree Point in 2006.

The Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) has a preseason expectation for 2007 returns of approximately 828,000 Nass River sockeye salmon (Northern Boundary Technical Committee Report). If the forecast is accurate, then the AAH for Tree Point will be approximately 87,000 Nass River sockeye salmon.

### **Chum and Coho Enhancement**

Hatchery returns of summer chum, fall chum, and coho salmon to SSRAAs enhancement projects are expected to contribute significantly to the Tree Point gillnet fishery in 2007. Information concerning SSRAA forecast returns is included under the THA Fisheries section of this plan.

### **Pink Salmon**

Pink salmon returns are expected to be strong to southern Southeast Alaska in 2007. If the actual returns are as strong as forecasted, the Tree Point drift gillnet fishery should have four and five - day fishing weeks during initial periods of the District 1 Pink Salmon Management Plan (PSMP; 5 AAC 33.360).

The PSMP establishes drift gillnet fishing time in Section 1-B in relation to District 1 purse seine fishing time when both gear types are concurrently harvesting the same pink salmon stocks. By regulation, the plan starts on the third Sunday in July (July 15, 2007) with the following fishing time schedule:

1. When the purse seine fishery is open for any portion of one day during a fishing week, the drift gillnet fishery must be open for 48 hours during the same fishing week;
2. When the purse seine fishery is open for any portion of two days during a fishing week, the drift gillnet fishery must be open for 96 hours during the same fishing week;
3. When the purse seine fishery is open for any portion of three or more days during a fishing week, the drift gillnet fishery must be open for 120 hours during the same week.

### **MANAGEMENT GOALS**

Management goals for the 2007 Tree Point drift gillnet fishery are as follows:

1. Manage the fishery in accordance within the PSMP (5 AAC 33.360);
2. Manage the fishery consistent with the current provisions of the PST (5 AAC 33.361).

### **MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The Tree Point gillnet fishery will open by regulation in Section 1-B for four days beginning at 12:01 P.M., Sunday, June 17, 2007. The length of subsequent fishing periods up to the start of the PSMP on July 15 will be based on the strength of wild stock sockeye and chum salmon returns to Alaskan and Canadian waters. The effort levels at Tree Point will also influence the amount of time the fishery is given up to the start of the District 1 PSMP.

As in recent years, the catch of hatchery-produced, summer chum salmon returning to the Nakat Inlet release site will not be included in the evaluation of natural stock fishery performance. The

contribution of Nakat Inlet chum salmon will be estimated by inseason analysis of otolith marked fish. Hatchery chum salmon have contributed as much as 90% of weekly harvest at Tree Point and as much as 70% of the total harvest in recent years.

The PST requires that the harvest of natural stocks of chum salmon returning to Portland Canal streams be minimized to ensure rebuilding of these stocks. As a result, no fishing should be expected in Section 1-A for Portland Canal chum salmon unless it is determined that a harvestable surplus exists. Any management decision to fish Portland Canal must assume there is sufficient additional surplus fish to support a Canadian as well as an Alaskan fishery.

The Section 1-B drift gillnet fishery will be managed according to the District 1 PSMP starting July 15, 2007. The overall pink salmon return to southern Southeast Alaska is expected to be strong in 2007. If the returns come in as predicted then beginning in mid-July through the end of August, Tree Point drift gillnetters can anticipate four- and five-day fishing periods.

In 2007, management of the Southeast purse seine fishery is anticipated to be similar to the 2005 season with a four day on/one day off fishing schedule beginning in late July or early August. This should allow for five-day fishing weeks at Tree Point beginning in late July or early August. In 2006 the purse seine fleet did not fish more than two days in any given week so Tree Point gillnetters never opened for more than four days.

Fall management at Tree Point starts after the end of the pink salmon season. During the fall season the Tree Point fishery targets primarily fall chum and coho salmon. Little is known about the stock composition of the chum and coho salmon harvest at this time of the year. However, if the estimated exploitation rate of the Hugh Smith Lake coho salmon stock, which reaches 80% in some years, holds true for adjacent areas then wild coho salmon stocks in the surrounding Tree Point area may benefit from a closing date at Tree Point of approximately September 20. Due to the uncertainties of the escapement levels of the stocks being harvested, the documented high exploitation rate of Hugh Smith Lake coho salmon, and the high preponderance of hatchery fish in the harvest, ADF&G will continue to take a conservative approach to the fall season at Tree Point. However, fishing periods will be allowed after September 20 if fisheries performance data indicates above average returns of wild chum and coho salmon. During recent years, approximately 50% of the fall chum and coho salmon have been hatchery fish. Nakat Inlet fish not harvested in the common property fisheries can be harvested in the Nakat Inlet THA, which remains open to commercial fishing through November 10, 2007.

### **Hugh Smith Lake Sockeye Salmon**

The BOF, during the 2006 meeting in Ketchikan, removed the formal designation of the Hugh Smith Lake sockeye salmon as a *stock of concern*. With this change the Hugh Smith Lake Sockeye salmon Action Management Plan is no longer in effect. However, ADF&G will continue to closely monitor the system and, if escapement levels are below that needed to reach the lower end of the escapement goal of 8,000, both the District 1 gillnet fleet and the District 1 purse seine fleet may need to be restricted in order to reach the escapement goal.

## **PRINCE OF WALES AND STIKINE FISHERIES**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Prince of Wales (District 6) drift gillnet fishery occurs in the waters of northern Clarence Strait and Sumner Strait, in regulatory Sections 6-A, 6-B, and 6-C, and portions of Section 6-D. The Stikine fishery encompasses the waters of District 8 surrounding the terminus of the Stikine

River. Due to their close proximity, management of these fisheries is interrelated, resulting in some major stocks being subject to harvest by both fisheries. Two distinct management areas exist within each district: the Frederick Sound (Section 8-A) and Wrangell (Section 8-B) portions of District 8, and the Sumner Strait (Section 6-A) and Clarence Strait (Sections 6-B, 6-C, and 6-D) portions of District 6. The harvest of terminal hatchery returns to the Crystal Lake and Anita Bay hatchery facilities will be discussed in the THA Fisheries portion of this management plan.

## **2007 OUTLOOK**

### **Chinook Salmon**

This will be the third consecutive year of directed Stikine Chinook salmon fishing as the BOF was able to reopen the fishery in 2005 due to successful negotiations with Canada on abundance based fishing regimes and harvest sharing. Preseason forecasts indicate that the return of Stikine Chinook salmon in 2007 will allow a limited commercial fishery. The forecast of the Stikine stock returning to District 8 is approximately 37,500 Chinook salmon over 28 inches. This is above the escapement point-goal of 17,400 fish. The preseason total allowable catch for all Alaska gear groups is about 6,100 fish. Although the preseason forecast is significantly smaller than the last two years, it is sizeable enough to allow limited fishing starting on May 7.

### **Sockeye Salmon**

The 2007 Stikine River sockeye salmon return is expected to be significantly above average. The Tahltan sockeye salmon escapement goal of 24,000 fish was achieved in 2006 for the fourth consecutive year. The 2007 Tahltan Lake sockeye salmon return is expected to be more than the 2006 return and well above the 1997–2006 average. The Tuya Lake enhanced sockeye salmon return is expected to be higher than last year. Significant returns of 4 year old fish occurred in 2006, indicating the returns of 5 year old fish in 2007 may be substantially higher than average. Returns of mainstem, Stikine River sockeye salmon stocks are expected similar to the past 3 years. Due to the near identical return timing of the Tahltan Lake and Tuya Lake stocks, any open fishing periods in District 8, and to a limited extent in District 6, will be determined by the actual inseason abundance of the wild Tahltan Lake stock. Typically, the Tahltan Lake and Tuya Lake sockeye run timing peaks in statistical week 27 or 28 (July 1 or July 8) through the District 6 and District 8 fisheries. During a large Tahltan Lake run, like the run anticipated this year, significant numbers of sockeye could be present as early as statistical week 25 (June 17) and as late as statistical week 31. The returns of local area sockeye salmon stocks should be similar to the past four years. Parent-year escapements into Salmon Bay, Red Bay, and Luck Lake were near or above the average of the previous four years. Very few enhanced sockeye salmon will be returning to Neck Lake in 2007. Returns in 2005 and 2006 were minimal and due to the limited number of returning fish, the program has been discontinued.

### **Pink Salmon**

Large numbers of pink salmon are forecasted to return to District 6 spawning streams, and fisheries targeting pink salmon should be extensive. Parent-year escapements to District 6 were good.

## **Chum Salmon**

No directed fishing occurs on chum salmon in either District 6 or 8. Chum salmon are caught incidentally in fisheries targeting sockeye, pink, and coho salmon. Significant returns of chum salmon to Anita Bay, as well as Ketchikan area hatcheries, may result in increased harvests in Districts 6 and 8. Chum salmon releases from Earl West Cove were discontinued in 2000 and production at this site was moved to Anita Bay. Anita Bay is expecting a total run of 1.2 million summer chum salmon in 2007. Returns to Anita Bay, and previous returns to Earl West Cove, have typically peaked during statistical weeks 30, 31 or 32 (July 22, July 29 or August 5). Summer chum salmon production from Ketchikan area hatcheries is expected to be higher than in 2006. Chum salmon returning to the Ketchikan area hatchery facilities migrate through District 6 and are expected to contribute significantly to the harvest in this district.

## **Coho Salmon**

The overall coho salmon returns for 2007 are expected to be slightly larger than the 2006 returns. The combined 2006 returns to Neck Lake and Burnett Inlet in upper Clarence Strait were approximately 36,000 coho salmon. The 2007 returns forecasted for Neck Lake and Burnett Inlet are 68,000 and 8,000 coho. The 2006 coho salmon return to Anita Bay was approximately 25,000 fish, much larger than the forecast of 15,000. The 2007 forecast estimates a total return of 15,000 fish. Approximately 100,000 fall coho salmon returned to enhancement projects in the Ketchikan area in 2006. Total forecast coho returns for 2007 to Ketchikan area coho enhancement projects are 173,000, and include: Neets Bay (150,000), Nakat Inlet (14,000) and Whitman Lake (9,000). Wild coho salmon returns for 2007 are expected to be similar to the long-term average. Extended fishing periods in Districts 6 or 8 could occur beginning in Statistical Week 36 (September 2); however, actual fishing periods will be determined weekly inseason, based on wild coho salmon harvest rates.

## **MANAGEMENT GOALS**

Management goals for the District 6 and District 8 drift gillnet fisheries for the 2007 season are as follows:

1. Achieve the Stikine River Chinook salmon escapement goal while harvesting the Alaskan share of the Chinook salmon in excess of the goal;
2. Achieve the Tahltan Lake sockeye salmon escapement goal while maximizing the harvest of Tahltan Lake sockeye above that goal and maximizing the harvest of Tuya Lake sockeye salmon;
3. Achieve pink salmon spawning escapement goals in District 6 and District 7;
4. Achieve good spawning escapements of sockeye salmon in local Alaskan systems;
5. Manage the District 6 and District 8 drift gillnet fisheries consistent with the provisions of the PST (5 AAC 33.361).

## **MANAGEMENT PLAN**

### **Chinook Salmon**

The first opening of the Chinook salmon season will start in District 8 at 8:00 AM on Monday, May 7 and close at 8:00 AM on Tuesday, May 8. The length of subsequent openings each week will depend upon the number of boats fishing, the number of Chinook salmon harvested, and

results from stock assessment projects. However, fishermen should expect openings to be only 24 hours in length for the first two to three openings. The old Stikine closure lines will be in effect for the initial openings. These lines will close waters inside a line from Babler Point to Hour Point along the shore of Wrangell Island to Point Highfield to the southern end of Liesnoi Island to the southern end of Greys Island to the small island near the eastern entrance of Blind Slough to the nearest point of Mitkof Island to the prominent point of Mitkof Island nearest Coney Island to the northern end of Coney Island to a point 500 yards north of Jap Creek on the mainland shore. The allowable harvest for the first two to three weeks of the fishery will be based upon the preseason forecast. The final two to three weeks of the fishery will be based upon inseason projections, which are derived from returning Chinook salmon caught at the marking sight near Shakes Slough on the Stikine River.

The Board of Fisheries adopted a minimum mesh restriction of seven inches for the District 8 directed Stikine Chinook gillnet fishery. Based on inseason surveys from the 2005 and 2006 fisheries, the mesh restriction will result in increased Chinook harvest while minimizing the harvest of steelhead. The standard 300-fathom length and 60 meshes deep net restrictions will be used in this fishery.

The Board of Fisheries adopted specific closed waters for the District 8 fishery. There are six areas where Chinook salmon are usually concentrated that can possibly be closed to drift gillnetting for varying lengths of time. These closures are designed to provide sport fishermen with exclusive areas for fishing without interference from commercial fishing gear and/or to provide increased protection for steelhead returning to Petersburg Creek and to Bear Creek on Mitkof Island.

Closed waters for drift gillnetting in District 8 include areas near Babler Point, Wrangell Harbor, and the Nose on Woronkofski Island, Woodpecker Cove, Bear Creek, and Point Frederick to Beacon Point. The exact closed waters will be identified in the drift gillnet news release prior to each opening. Most closures will remain in effect throughout the entire fishery, through the second Saturday in June. The two exceptions are the Nose and Woodpecker Cove Area closures. These closures will only be in effect if the gillnet fishery is open for more than 48 hours. The closure from Point Frederick to Beacon Point will continue during the sockeye fishery to protect Petersburg Creek sockeye stocks.

In District 8, for the week before Memorial Day, the drift gillnet fishery will be limited to a maximum of 2 days to prevent conflicts with the Chinook salmon derbies in Petersburg and Wrangell. There will be no openings on weekends or holidays to decrease any potential conflict with sport fishermen.

Drift gillnet fishermen are asked to notify management biologists, who will be monitoring the fishery, of any incidence of steelhead. For the 2007 season, any steelhead retained during the directed Chinook salmon fishery must be recorded on fish tickets.

Chinook salmon less than 28" that are harvested in the commercial drift gillnet fisheries may be retained and sold as usual. Chinook salmon less than 28" in length and those of Alaska hatchery origin will not be counted against the Alaskan share of the allowable harvest. Processors are requested to identify the numbers of Chinook salmon less than 28" on the fish tickets as well as the numbers of Chinook salmon 28" or greater. ADF&G samplers working at the processing facilities will identify hatchery-reared Chinook salmon so those fish are not counted against the Alaskan share of the harvest.

## **Sockeye Salmon**

The first sockeye opening will begin on Sunday, June 10 for a minimum of one day. Current indications point towards an overall above-average return of sockeye salmon to the Stikine River. Returns to Tahltan Lake are expected to be well above average and returns to the Mainstem are expected to be at or below average. Subsequent openings will be determined inseason based on catches and stock proportion data. If inseason catch and stock data indicate that the Tahltan sockeye salmon return is strong, then more liberal fishing periods and/or mid-week openings will be allowed in District 8. Extended fishing time is most likely to occur during the last two weeks of June and the first two weeks of July when the bulk of the Tahltan Lake sockeye run is passing through District 8. Reduced fishing time in District 8 to conserve Stikine River mainstem sockeye salmon in mid July may occur. Extended fishing time in District 6 will be based primarily on the abundance of sockeye salmon from local island stocks.

The sockeye salmon fishery in both districts will be managed in accordance with the Transboundary Rivers (TBR) Annex of the Pacific Salmon Treaty. The Annex allows the District 6 fishery to be managed for harvesting local Alaskan sockeye stocks and normally is not influenced under most conditions by the presence of sockeye salmon stocks of Stikine River origin. Management of the District 8 fishery is based on the need to harvest sockeye salmon of Stikine River origin, as allowed by the sharing provisions of the TBR Annex, and the conservation of the resource.

Management actions during the sockeye salmon fishing season will be based on analysis of CPUE and stock identification data to determine the availability of Stikine River fish. These stock abundance indicators, along with fishery performance and stock composition data obtained from a Canadian test fishery, will be incorporated into a Stikine sockeye salmon management model. As the season progresses, this model will be the primary method used to estimate the availability of sockeye salmon for harvest by the Alaskan drift gillnet fishery in District 8 and the Canadian inriver fisheries. Any conservation measures required for Stikine River sockeye salmon are implemented first in District 8 followed by Sumner Strait in District 6. Reductions in fishing time, area or district wide closures will be used when conservation measures are needed. All openings will be based upon the most recent Stikine sockeye model update and the current weekly sockeye salmon harvest.

The numbers of Stikine River sockeye generally begin to decrease in mid-July and other stocks including McDonald Lake sockeye salmon begin to pass through the fishery. McDonald Lake sockeye escapements have been below the escapement goal during five of the past six seasons. Because of an increasing concern for this productive system, a more conservative fishing regime will occur during the peak of the McDonald Lake sockeye salmon return. Therefore, three openings from mid-July through early August will have a maximum fishing time in District 6 of two days. In addition, during the second week of this time period, the western portion of Sumner Strait will be closed west of a line from Point Colpoys to Mitchell Point.

Any announcements of fishery extensions or mid-week openings will be made on the fishing grounds by 10:00 AM of the last day of the regular fishery opening. Open area and fishing time during any extensions may not necessarily be the same as the general weekly opening.

## **Pink Salmon**

Pink salmon normally begin entering District 6 in significant numbers by the third or fourth week of July. The early portion of the pink salmon fishery will be managed primarily on CPUE

and parent year escapement. By mid-August, pink salmon destined for local systems will begin to enter the fishery in greater numbers and at that time, management will be based on observed escapements.

### **Coho Salmon**

The coho salmon season will begin during late August or early September. Management of the District 6 fishery will be based predominantly on wild stock CPUE. Crystal Lake Hatchery, Burnett Inlet Hatchery, facilities in the Ketchikan area, the Anita Bay remote release site, and the Neck Lake remote release site at Whale Pass all contribute coho salmon to the District 6 and District 8 fisheries. Inseason estimates from coded-wire tag recovery data will be used to identify the hatchery component of the harvest.

### **Screen Island Shore Drift Gillnet**

Regulation 5 AAC 33.310(c)(2)(B) allows drift gillnetting along the Screen Island shore of Section 6-D only during the early and late portions of the season. Specifically, this area encompasses those waters of Section 6-D west of a line from Mariposa Rock Buoy to the northernmost tip of Point Harrington to a point on the shore of Etolin Island at 56°09.60' N. latitude, 132°42.70' W. longitude to the southernmost tip of Point Stanhope. Actions by the BOF, based on an agreement between drift gillnet and purse seine representatives at the board meeting in February of 2000 increased the fishing time for drift gillnetting in this area by one week on each end of the closure. The periods when fishing may be allowed are now: 1) from the second Sunday in June (June 10) through the first Saturday in August (August 4) and, 2) from the first Sunday in September (September 2) until the season is closed. During this time, drift gillnetting is allowed during the same time periods that the adjoining waters of Section 6-C are open.

## **TAKU/SNETTISHAM GILLNET FISHERY**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The Taku/Snettisham (District 11) gillnet area encompasses Section 11-B (Taku Inlet, Port Snettisham, and Stephens Passage north of Midway Island) and Section 11-C (Midway Island south to a line from Point League to Point Hugh). This fishery has traditionally targeted sockeye salmon during the early portion of the season and fall chum and coho salmon later in the season. In recent years, the fishery has also targeted hatchery summer chum and sockeye salmon. Since 2005, a directed Chinook salmon fishery will occur in District 11 when run strength is sufficient.

### **2007 OUTLOOK**

#### **Chinook Salmon**

In 2003 the BOF adopted regulatory language establishing directed Chinook salmon commercial drift gillnet and sport fisheries in Taku Inlet contingent upon the outcome of Pacific Salmon Treaty negotiations with Canada. The directed Chinook salmon fishery in District 11 had been closed since 1975 in order to rebuild Taku River stocks. In February 2005, negotiations with Canada successfully established agreed upon abundance based fishing regimes and harvest sharing arrangements. The result of this agreement allowed directed Chinook salmon fishing in District 11 for the first time in 30 years. The BOF met in January 2006, and using guidelines suggested by the Taku Chinook Salmon Workgroup and Juneau Advisory Committee, adopted new regulations concerning the District 11 directed Taku Chinook salmon fishery. The 2007 pre-season forecast of 38,700 large Chinook salmon is insufficient to open the fishery at the

beginning of May. Near the end of May however, the inseason terminal run projection may provide the basis for a fishery. If the opportunity does arise, plans for the fishery will be announced in late May.

### **Sockeye Salmon**

The total return of wild Taku River sockeye salmon in 2007 is expected to be average. This is based on both spawner-recruit analysis and a sibling forecast. The 2002 main parent year escapement of 103,500 fish was above the PST escapement goal 75,000 fish, and about equal to the 10-year average escapement of approximately 102,000 sockeye salmon. The 2003 parent year had an escapement of 160,400 fish. Adult returns to date from the joint U.S./Canada Taku River sockeye salmon enhancement project at Tatsamenie Lake have been very low and the number of enhanced sockeye salmon returning to Tatsamenie Lake is not expected to contribute significant numbers of fish to harvest in 2007. Escapement through the Speel Lake weir of the 2002 parent year was 5,000 sockeye salmon, and the escapement in 2003 was 7,000 sockeye salmon, both below average but within the escapement goal range of 4,000–13,000 sockeye salmon. The peak aerial survey estimates for Crescent Lake escapements in parent year 2002 was 10,000 fish, and in 2003 was 5,600 fish. The 1990 to 2006 average is 7,700 fish. Enhanced sockeye salmon returning to the Douglas Island Pink and Chum, Inc. (DIPAC) Snettisham Hatchery, based on DIPAC's forecast is 193,000 fish, less than last year's return of 330,000.

### **Chum Salmon**

Approximately 2,194,000 summer chum salmon are forecast to return in 2007 from DIPAC hatchery releases in Gastineau Channel, and 130,000 chum from Limestone Inlet remote releases. The total estimated DIPAC chum salmon contribution to the Section 11-B drift gillnet fishery is 773,000 fish. Additional fishing time can again be expected south of Circle Point in order to harvest summer chum salmon returns to the Limestone Inlet remote release site. As in recent years, ADF&G may consider the option to implement a six-inch minimum mesh size restriction south of Circle Point to reduce the harvest rate on wild sockeye salmon returning to Crescent and Speel lakes. Returns of fall chum salmon to the Taku River are expected to be poor.

### **Pink Salmon**

Returns of pink salmon to District 11 systems are expected to be average in 2007. Parent year pink salmon escapements to District 11 were average overall but numbers through the Canyon Island fish wheel were below the odd-year average, and indicated below average escapement in the Taku River. The pink salmon program at DIPAC has been discontinued.

### **Coho Salmon**

Returns of Taku River coho salmon are expected to be good. Parent-year escapements of coho salmon in Canadian portions of the Taku River were 183,000 fish in 2003, and 133,000 in 2004. The smolt outmigration of 2006 was above average at 1,980,000 fish. DIPAC projects a 2007 return of approximately 36,000 hatchery coho salmon from their smolt releases into Gastineau Channel.

## **MANAGEMENT GOALS**

Management goals for the 2007 Taku/Snettisham drift gillnet fishery are as follows:

1. Provide for sufficient salmon spawning escapements to Taku River, Port Snettisham, and Stephens Passage streams while harvesting those fish in excess of escapement needs;
2. Monitor the incidental harvest of Chinook salmon to stay within the BOF Southeast drift gillnet allocation of 2.9% of non-Alaska hatchery Chinook salmon;
3. Manage the fishery consistent with current provisions of the PST (5 AAC 33.361);
4. Maximize the harvest of hatchery-produced chum salmon returning to Limestone Inlet while minimizing the incidental harvest of Port Snettisham wild sockeye salmon;
5. Manage the return of enhanced Port Snettisham sockeye salmon consistent with the Board of Fisheries Snettisham Hatchery Management Plan (5 AAC 33.378);
6. Manage the Speel Lake sockeye salmon return to achieve an escapement to the lake of between 4,000 to 13,000 spawners. This goal is a biological escapement goal based on an updated analysis completed during the winter of 2002–2003;
7. Manage the District 11 directed Chinook salmon fishery to harvest large adult Chinook salmon in accordance with the PST Treaty and the BOF District 11 Chinook salmon management plan.

## **MANAGEMENT PLAN**

The District 11 gillnet fishery will be managed in accordance with the TBR Annex of the PST. Harvest sharing arrangements for Chinook, sockeye, and coho salmon through the 2008 fishing season are specified in the annex.

### **Chinook Salmon**

The 2007 preseason forecast of 38,700 large Chinook salmon is insufficient to open the District 11 drift gillnet directed Chinook salmon fishery at the beginning of May. Near the end of May however, the inseason terminal run projection may support a fishery. If the opportunity does arise, plans for the fishery will be announced in late May.

If directed Chinook salmon fishing in Section 11-B is supported by inseason stock assessment data, openings will begin on a Monday at 12:01 PM and close at 12 NOON on the day specified in a news release. There will be no openings on weekends or holidays. The length of subsequent openings will depend upon the numbers of boats fishing, the numbers of Chinook salmon harvested, and results from stock assessment projects.

Regulations adopted by the BOF in 2006 provide for a 7-inch minimum mesh size restriction through the third Saturday in June for the District 11 fishery. The standard 200 fathom length and 60 meshes deep net restrictions will be used in this fishery.

The waters open to drift gillnet fishing prior to the third Sunday in June are the waters of Section 11-B north of the latitude of Graves Point Light. The western boundary is the 11-A / 11-B section boundary (Point Bishop to Point Arden).

Chinook salmon less than 28" that are harvested in the commercial drift gillnet fisheries may be retained and sold as usual. Chinook salmon less than 28" in length and those of Alaska hatchery origin will not be counted against the Alaskan share of the allowable harvest. Processors are requested to identify the numbers of Chinook salmon less than 28" on the fish tickets as well as the numbers of Chinook salmon 28" or greater. Fish and Game samplers working at the

processing facilities will identify hatchery-reared Chinook salmon so those fish are not counted against the Alaskan share of the harvest.

## **Sockeye Salmon**

Section 11-B will open for directed sockeye salmon fishing on the third Sunday in June (June 17) for a three-day fishing period. Subsequent openings will be based on inseason fishery performance and stock assessment information. The Canadian inriver gillnet fishery is allocated 18% of the total allowable catch (TAC) of wild Taku sockeye salmon originating from Canadian portions of the Taku drainage, and can harvest 20% of inriver escapements above 100,000 sockeye salmon. Harvests of sockeye salmon produced from joint U.S./Canada enhancement programs in the Taku River are to be shared equally by the two countries. The incidental harvests of coho salmon in the Canadian directed sockeye salmon fishery are allowed with directed harvests of 3,000 to 10,000 coho salmon, depending on run size.

The District 11 fishery will be managed through mid-August primarily on the basis of sockeye salmon abundance. Run strength will be evaluated using fishery catch and CPUE data and weekly inriver run size estimates derived from the Taku River fish wheel mark-recapture project operated at Canyon Island. Contribution of enhanced stocks of sockeye salmon will be estimated inseason by analysis of salmon otoliths sampled from the commercial harvests. The age and stock compositions of the harvest of wild sockeye salmon will be estimated after the fishing season by analysis of scale pattern and parasite incidence data from commercial catch samples.

The return of enhanced Port Snettisham sockeye salmon will be managed according to the Board of Fisheries' Snettisham Hatchery Management Plan. The plan provides basic guidelines for managing enhanced sockeye salmon production from Port Snettisham including the following provisions, in order of priority:

1. Sustainable production of wild sockeye salmon from Crescent and Speel Lakes;
2. Management of enhanced Snettisham sockeye salmon returns may not prevent achieving escapement goals or PST harvest sharing agreements for Taku River salmon stocks;
3. Assessment programs shall be conducted to estimate Snettisham wild sockeye salmon stock escapements and contributions of enhanced sockeye salmon to the District 11 commercial fishery;
4. Common property harvests in the Speel Arm SHA shall be conducted by limiting time and area to protect wild sockeye salmon returns.

Peak migration timing for wild Snettisham sockeye salmon through Stephens Passage is normally from mid-July through the first week in August.

Management of the fishery in Stephens Passage south of Circle Point will focus on conservation of the wild Snettisham sockeye salmon stocks, particularly in July. However, extended fishing time is expected in Stephens Passage south of Circle Point to harvest the return of enhanced summer chum salmon to the Limestone Inlet remote release site. ADF&G may implement a six-inch minimum mesh size restriction in Section 11-B south of Circle Point beginning in early July to minimize the incidental harvest of wild Port Snettisham sockeye salmon during these openings. The mesh restriction in Section 11-B, if implemented, may be relaxed at the end of July or after the peak migration timing of wild Snettisham sockeye salmon stocks through Stephens Passage.

## DIPAC Speel Arm Special Harvest Area

Common property fishery openings are expected to occur during August in the DIPAC Speel Arm SHA, which is located in waters of Speel Arm north of 58°03.42' N. latitude. Timing of these openings will depend on DIPAC progress toward brood stock and cost recovery goals and the sockeye salmon escapement to Speel Lake. DIPAC cost recovery efforts in the SHA during July will be limited to waters in the immediate vicinity of the hatchery where wild and hatchery stocks are well segregated.

Fishery management decisions for the Speel Arm SHA will be made jointly by ADF&G and DIPAC. As mentioned above, ADF&G and industry formalized the notification procedure for any extended fishery openings in Speel Arm.

The Southeast Alaska Drift Gillnet Task Force agreement specified:

1. That ADF&G include notice in the Southeast Alaska Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan that extended openings in Speel Arm could be expected on short notice once Speel Lake escapement goals are met;
2. That ADF&G include notice in the region wide news release on or near the end of July that extended openings in Speel Arm could be expected on short notice once Speel Lake escapement goals are met;
3. If an announcement is made for extended fishing time in Speel Arm, ADF&G shall provide a minimum of **six hours** notice from the time of the news release to the time the fishery opens.

A personal use fishery will be allowed in Sweetheart Creek to ensure enhanced returns to this site are fully utilized; Sweetheart Creek is naturally blocked to anadromous fish migration several hundred yards upstream from the mouth. The Sweetheart Creek personal use fishery will be open seven-days per week.

Pink salmon will be harvested in Section 11-B incidental to the sockeye salmon and enhanced summer chum fisheries. Fishing time for a directed pink fishery in Section 11-C will depend upon the strength of pink salmon returns in lower Stephens Passage, Seymour Canal, and the northern portions of District 10. Returns will be closely monitored and if surpluses are present, openings could occur in August.

Beginning in mid-August, management of the Taku/Snettisham gillnet fishery will be based on the run strength of coho and fall chum salmon. The TBR Annex of the PST calls for the U.S. to manage its fisheries to achieve a minimum above-border run size of 38,000 coho salmon. Inseason management will be based on evaluation of the fishery catch, effort, and CPUE relative to historical levels, inriver run size estimates from the Taku River mark-recapture project, and recovery of coded wire tagged wild Taku River and hatchery coho salmon in marine fisheries. Coho salmon is the primary species managed during the fall season, but area and time restrictions may be necessary to further protect the weaker fall chum salmon returns.

In order to avoid conflicts with sport fisheries, the District 11 drift gillnet fishery will not be open concurrent with the 2007 Juneau Golden North Salmon Derby (August 3–5). Consequently, during Statistical Week 32, the District 11 gillnet fishery will not open until Monday, August 6.

# LYNN CANAL FISHERY

## INTRODUCTION

The Lynn Canal drift gillnet fishery operates in the waters of District 15. The district is divided into three regulatory sections: 15-A (upper Lynn Canal), 15-B (Berners Bay), and 15-C (lower Lynn Canal). The Lynn Canal drift gillnet fishery targets sockeye, summer chum, coho, and fall chum salmon. Chinook and pink salmon are taken incidentally.

The sockeye salmon runs in Lynn Canal have historically been among the largest in Southeast Alaska. The coho salmon run to the Chilkat River is also among the largest in northern Southeast Alaska. In recent years Lynn Canal sockeye, coho and fall chum salmon stocks have been productive and meeting escapement goals. Fall chum salmon returns have improved in last several years since a decline in abundance beginning in 1989. Results from aerial escapement information and mark-recapture work, indicate improved returns of Chilkat River fall chum salmon.

Sockeye salmon are targeted from June through early September. The primary stocks originate from Chilkat Lake, Chilkoot Lake, Berners Bay rivers, and mainstem spawning areas of the Chilkat River. Hatchery and wild summer chum salmon are harvested from late June through early August. Fall chum and coho salmon are targeted from September through early-October. The primary fall chum salmon stocks originate in the Klehini and Chilkat rivers and the primary coho salmon stocks originate from the Chilkat and Berners Bay rivers.

In 2006, the Board of Fisheries modified the escapement goals for Chilkoot and Chilkat Lake sockeye salmon. Escapement goals for Chilkoot Lake sockeye salmon have not changed overall, but will no longer have separate escapement goal for the early and late run segments. Weekly escapement goals are based on the historical run timing of sockeye salmon through the Chilkoot River weir. Chilkat Lake sockeye salmon escapement goals are now based on a mark-recapture program that has been in place since 1994. The mark-recapture program replaces reliance of weir counts at the outlet of Chilkat Lake to determine escapement of this stock.

## MANAGEMENT GOALS

Specific management goals for the 2007 Lynn Canal drift gillnet fishery are as follows:

1. Obtain an escapement of between 50,000 and 90,000 sockeye salmon to Chilkoot Lake.
2. Obtain an escapement of between 80,000 and 200,000 sockeye salmon to Chilkat Lake. The escapement will be monitored in season by the lower Chilkat River fish wheel project and the final escapement will be derived post season from mark-recapture methods.
3. Manage the commercial drift gillnet fishery in a manner that is consistent with the Lynn Canal and Chilkat River king salmon fishery management plan. Obtain an escapement of between 1,750–3,500 three-ocean age and older Chinook salmon to the Chilkat River.
4. Obtain a peak foot escapement count between 4,000 and 9,200 coho salmon to Berners River.
5. Obtain a peak index stream count for Chilkat River drainage coho salmon that corresponds to an escapement of 30,000–70,000 fish.

6. Provide for sufficient chum, coho, and pink salmon spawning escapements to the Chilkat, Chilkoot, and Berners rivers and other Lynn Canal systems, while harvesting those fish in excess of escapement needs.
7. Harvest all DIPAC hatchery-produced chum salmon available in the Boat Harbor Terminal Harvest Area while conserving wild stock summer chum salmon migrating to streams along the western shoreline of Lynn Canal.

## **2007 OUTLOOK**

### **Sockeye Salmon**

The 2007 total forecast return of Chilkat Lake sockeye salmon is approximately 140,000 fish. The expected return is about 70% of the 1976 to 2005 historical average of 206,000 fish. The 2007 run size of Chilkat River mainstem sockeye salmon are expected to be near average.

Escapement estimates to Chilkat Lake were within the sustainable escapement goal range for the dominant brood years (2001 and 2002) for the 2007 return. The dominant smolt years for the 2006 return (2004 and 2005), were estimated to be approximately 1.46 and 1.30 million fish. The sockeye salmon smolt abundance estimates during years 2004 and 2006 were just below the historical 1997–2006 average of 1.55 million smolt. The average weight and length of age-1.0 Chilkat Lake sockeye salmon smolt in 2004 and 2005 were near the historical average. This information suggests an average total return of 2-year ocean-age fish and a below average 3-year ocean-age fish return. A lower than average return of Chilkat Lake sockeye salmon is expected in 2007.

Mark-recapture estimates of the Chilkat River mainstem sockeye salmon escapements in 2002, 2003, and 2004, (the dominant parent-years) were 39,000, 36,100, and 42,900 fish, respectively. The estimates of abundance for the 2007 returns are above the historical 1997–2006 average of 34,000 fish for all brood years. The dominant age classes for this run includes age-0.2 (21.1%), age-0.3 (39.2%), and age-1.3 (25.8%) fish. The proportion of age-0.2 fish from the 2006 escapement was near average indicating that the 2007 return of age-0.3 fish to the mainstem Chilkat River may be about average in run strength. The Lower Chilkat River fish wheel project has been providing inseason stock assessment and post-season escapement estimates of Chilkat River mainstem sockeye salmon since 1994.

Total returns of Chilkoot Lake sockeye salmon in 2007 are expected to be above the long-term average of approximately 170,000 fish. The Chilkoot Lake sockeye salmon weir count during the dominant parental brood year (2002) for the 2007 return was 58,400 fish. The escapement was within the desired escapement goal range for this stock. The Chilkoot River weir is used to monitor this stock inseason.

Although the 2003 fall hydroacoustic estimate was well above average, zooplankton abundance was below average during 2003; the dominant brood year sockeye salmon juveniles would have been rearing in the lake. Management will be monitoring the escapements during 2007 closely and will implement management decisions to the commercial drift gillnet salmon fishery to target escapement levels near the mid-point of the escapement goal range for Chilkoot Lake sockeye salmon.

The total return of Chilkoot Lake sockeye salmon in 2002 was near the 1976–2006 average and well above the previous 10-year average. Age composition of the 2006 escapement was near average for most of the dominant age classes. Given this information, ADF&G is expecting an above average return of Chilkoot Lake sockeye salmon and will base management decisions for the District 15 drift gillnet fishery on inseason information.

An average run of Berners Bay sockeye salmon is expected in 2007. Escapements are monitored by aerial surveys conducted on Berners Bay streams beginning in late July. Peak aerial escapements to Berners Bay streams were above average for all brood years. The average dominant age classes for Berners Bay streams are age-0.3 (15.4%), 1.2 (13%), and age-1.3 (67.4%). Age compositions of 2-ocean age fish in the 2006 escapement were near the historical average indicating an average predicted return of 3-ocean age (dominant) fish in 2007. The 2003 and 2004 commercial harvest of Berners Bay and Chilkat River mainstem sockeye salmon was estimated at 12,600 and 33,600 fish respectively. This harvest was below but close to the historic 1976–2006 average harvest of 14,400 fish for 2003 and well above average for 2004.

### **Summer Chum Salmon**

The majority of the summer chum salmon harvest is comprised of hatchery fish from remote release sites at Boat Harbor and Amalga Harbor in section 15-C. Smaller numbers of wild chum salmon are produced from local area streams such as Sawmill Creek and Berners Bay streams on the eastern side of Lynn Canal. The Endicott, Beardslee, and St. James rivers located on the western side of Lynn Canal are also important wild chum salmon producers. These stocks are important contributors to the wild summer chum salmon harvest in the lower Lynn Canal drift gillnet fishery.

Projections for the Boat Harbor Terminal Harvest Area for 2007 is approximately 545,000 hatchery chum salmon. This forecast is similar to the actual total return to the Boat Harbor THA in 2006 and 3.4 times the 1991–2006 average. The preseason projection for the Amalga Harbor project is approximately 1.6 million fish, 1.4 times the 1994–2006 average of 1.1 million fish.

Peak aerial escapement counts of summer chum salmon in Sawmill Creek in 2002, 2003, and 2004 were 399, 550, and 1,000 fish respectively. The peak aerial escapements are well below the 1997–2006 average for this index system for all brood years. Cumulative peak counts of chum salmon in western Lynn Canal streams for the same brood years were 8,600, 27,100, and 15,000 fish respectively. All peak counts conducted during these brood years were near or exceeded the prior-ten-year average. Based on parental-year escapement counts, the wild summer chum salmon return in 2007 should be average to above average in run strength but at a much lower scale than the hatchery summer chum salmon return.

### **Fall Chum Salmon**

The 2007 return of the Chilkat River drainage fall chum salmon stock is expected to be above average. For the Chilkat River, the peak aerial survey counts were 42,600 and 45,700 fish (2003 and 2004). These counts were well above the peak aerial escapement count average of 22,800 for both years. Peak aerial counts in the Klehini River were 4,000 and 13,000 fish respectively, well below average for this system but an improvement over previous years. The total drainage wide estimated escapement in 2003 and 2004 based on mark-recapture methods was 166,000 and 310,000 chum salmon. The estimate in 2003 is below the 2002–2005 average mark-recapture estimate of 221,000 fish but well above this average in 2004.

The fishery performance in the dominant parental brood years (2003 and 2004) was slightly below the 10-year average. Escapements of Chilkat River fall chum salmon since 1999 have improved and management strategies designed to reduce harvests of these stocks have been effective. Fish wheel catch, mark-recapture estimates and aerial escapement surveys have indicated an increasing trend in escapement since 1999.

### **Coho Salmon**

The Lynn Canal coho salmon return is expected to be about average during 2007. Coho salmon systems in the area include the Chilkat River, Berners River and Chilkoot River. Parent-year survey counts at the Chilkat River tributaries and Chilkoot River drainage were generally very good and above the ten-year average. The 2003 and 2004 escapements to Berners Bay were near the upper end of the escapement goal range (4,000 to 9,200).

Sport Fish Division has been conducting coho salmon smolt coded wire-tagging (CWT) studies on the Chilkat River to estimate smolt size, age structure, and production of coho salmon smolts since 1999. The 2006 trap CPUE of coho smolt of 8.1 smolt/trap-day was near the 1999–2006 average of 7.7 fish/trap-day. The 2003 and 2004 Chilkat River fish wheel catch of 5,300 and 1,745 coho exceeded the 1994–2006 average in 2003 and below this average in 2004. The District 15 gillnet catch of 57,100 coho salmon in 2003 and 52,000 in 2004 was above the previous ten-year average for both brood years. This data suggests an average coho salmon return in 2007.

### **Chinook Salmon**

The 2007 preseason forecast for mature ( $\geq$  age 1.3) Chilkat River Chinook salmon is estimated to be below average but within the biological escapement goal range of 1,750–3,600 fish.

## **MANAGEMENT PLAN**

In 2007, ADF&G intends to manage the summer Lynn Canal drift gillnet fishery to obtain the mid-points of the escapement goal ranges for stocks of Chilkoot Lake and Chilkat Lake sockeye salmon. The department intends to manage the fishery to minimize harvest of wild stock summer chum salmon while harvesting expected large returns of hatchery chum salmon. The fall Lynn Canal drift gillnet fishery will be managed to conserve Klehini River (early-run) fall chum salmon while providing opportunity to harvest Chilkat River fall chum and coho salmon.

### **Section 15-A**

Section 15-A will open for two days south of the latitude of Seduction Point beginning 12:01 PM Sunday June 17 (statistical week 25) with no mesh restriction. If the Chilkoot River weir count through June 14 is less than 2,500 sockeye salmon, the eastern side of Section 15-A will be closed. If the weir count is 2,500 sockeye salmon or greater on June 14, the eastern portion of 15-A may be opened. During the first three weeks of the season, Chilkat Inlet will be managed in accordance to the Chilkat River King Salmon Fishery Management Plan. Since the preseason forecast for Chilkat River drainage Chinook salmon is within the goal range, during the first two weeks of the season, Chilkat Inlet will be closed north of the latitude of Seduction Point. In week 27, Chilkat Inlet may be open south of the latitude of Glacier Point. In week 28, Chilkat Inlet may be open south of the latitude of Cannery Point or at the latitude of the northernmost tip of Kochu Island depending on the strength of the Chilkat Lake sockeye salmon return. It is likely that the northern boundary line within Chilkat Inlet will remain at the northernmost tip of Kochu

Island or Cannery Point for the remainder of the summer season if escapements of Chilkat Lake sockeye salmon are projected to be within the desired goal range. If the Chilkoot Lake sockeye salmon return is strong, all of Section 15-A south of the latitude of Seduction point may be opened during the fourth week of the season for 2 or 3 days. Since ADF&G is forecasting an above average return of sockeye salmon to Chilkoot Lake and a below average Chilkat Lake sockeye return, it is likely that openings in northern Section 15-A will be similar to openings during 2006. Decisions will be dictated by the results of various in season stock assessment programs operating on the Chilkat and Chilkoot River drainages. Additional fishing opportunity in Chilkoot Inlet north of the latitude of Mud Bay Point for 2 or 3 days or more in weeks 31 through 37 may be possible if the Chilkoot Lake sockeye salmon return is as strong as expected. If the inseason information system indicates that the Chilkat Lake sockeye salmon return is not forecasted to meet minimum escapement goals, limits in time and area of Section 15-A will be implemented until the department can project sockeye escapement within desired goal ranges. Data from the Chilkat River fish wheel mark-recapture program will be used to judge run strength inseason and escapement levels post season.

Fall fishery management in Section 15-A will begin from week 34 until the end of the season. As in recent years, the northern boundary line in Section 15-A will move southward in stages as the coho and fall chum stocks begin to migrate back to parental streams. Depending on effort levels, and coho and chum salmon run strength, fishing opportunity in Section 15-A may be similar to openings in 2006.

### **Section 15-B**

Based on inseason information for coho salmon to Berners Bay, Section 15-B may be opened from week 38 to the end of the season south of the latitude of Cove Point for 2 or 3 days each week. Inseason information collected from coded wire tag recoveries and commercial harvest from various gear types will provide the data to manage fishing opportunity in Section 15-B. Based on the preseason forecast, it is unlikely that openings within Berners Bay will occur in 2007.

### **Section 15-C**

Section 15-C will open for two days beginning 12:01 PM Sunday, June 17 with no mesh restriction. If the Chilkoot River weir count is less than 2,500 sockeye salmon through June 14, the eastern side of Section 15-C will be closed north of the latitude of Bridget Point (excluding the Boat Harbor THA).

Due to the expected returns of Chilkat Lake sockeye salmon, open fishing time in Section 15-C will be limited to 2 or 3 days (except for the Boat Harbor THA). If in season projections for the Chilkat or Chilkoot Lake sockeye salmon returns are below the escapement goal range, it is possible that additional time, area restrictions be placed in Section 15-C during the summer season to boost escapement of sockeye salmon at desired levels.

If sockeye salmon escapements fall short of inseason escapement objectives, openings of the small area in eastern Section 15-C defined as: the waters of Section 15-C from the eastern shoreline of Lynn Canal at the latitude of Vanderbilt Reef Light to Vanderbilt Reef Light and east of a line from Vanderbilt Reef Light to Little Island Light, may occur on the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> day of each opening during peak weeks (statistical weeks 27 through 31) of the hatchery chum salmon return. This strategy will be used to provide opportunity to harvest summer chum salmon

while reducing the harvest of sockeye salmon migrating through eastern Section 15-C. The decision to use this strategy will be considered based on Chilkat River fish wheel counts, Chilkat Lake and Chilkoot Lake weir counts and results from site-specific sampling of the commercial fishery.

The Boat Harbor Terminal Harvest Area (THA) will be opened for extended periods beginning in week 27, (July 2). The Boat Harbor THA is defined as: those waters within two nautical miles of the western shoreline of Lynn Canal south of the latitude of Danger Point at 58°41.73' N. latitude and north of a point 2.4 miles north of Point Whidbey at 58°37.05' N. latitude. The northern line of the Boat Harbor area will remain at the latitude of Danger Point through week 31. The purpose of this modified area is to decrease the harvest rate on wild Endicott River and other western Lynn Canal wild chum salmon stocks that migrate through this area during the summer season when large returns of hatchery chum salmon are present. This action has been in place for the last five seasons. Escapements of wild chum salmon to the Endicott River have improved because of this action.

The section within the Boat Harbor area west of a line from the entrance to the Boat Harbor proper area will be opened continuously beginning the first week of the season. This strategy will be used to harvest expected large returns of hatchery chum salmon that enter the Boat Harbor proper area with little risk to wild salmon stocks outside of this bay.

Fall season management will begin in late August or early September in Section 15-C. Management of Section 15-C during the fall season will be based on coho and fall chum salmon overall run strength and fishing effort levels. Commercial fishing effort will be directed at harvesting coho salmon in Section 15-C while conserving the harvest of early run fall chum salmon. Fishing time will be limited from 2 to 3 days each week, beginning in statistical week 34.

In order to avoid conflicts with sport fisheries, the District 15 drift gillnet fishery will not be open concurrent with the 2007 Juneau Golden North Salmon Derby (August 3–5). Consequently, during Statistical Week 32, the District 15 gillnet fishery will not open until Monday, August 6.

As in previous years, ADF&G's management crews, as part of the marine fishery performance project, will be on the fishing grounds during commercial fishing periods to sample sockeye and Chinook salmon and to monitor the fishery during each opening. ADF&G requests that commercially caught sockeye and Chinook salmon are retained in separate fish holds or totes so department staff can collect scale and length data from salmon while on the grounds monitoring the fishery. The sockeye salmon scale samples that are collected from the commercial gillnet fishery form the basis of our stock separation analysis and is a very important part of the management of this fishery. ADF&G vessels stand by on channel 10 VHF when on the fishing grounds.

## **TERMINAL HARVEST AREA FISHERIES**

During the 2007 season, drift gillnet terminal area fisheries can be expected in Deep Inlet, Neets Bay, Nakat Inlet, Anita Bay, Speel Arm, and Boat Harbor to harvest salmon returning to DIPAC, NSRAA, and SSRAA enhancement facilities.

## **NORTHERN SOUTHEAST REGIONAL AQUACULTURE ASSOCIATION TERMINAL AREA FISHERIES**

The terminal hatchery fishery at Deep Inlet will be managed jointly with NSRAA and according to Board of Fisheries management plans. The open gillnet fishing times and any modifications of the terminal fishing area will be announced by ADF&G news releases prior to, and during, the fishing season.

### **Terminal Area–Deep Inlet [5 AAC 33.376]**

NSRAA expects a return of 1,764,000 chum salmon to the Deep Inlet remote release site and the Medvejie Hatchery in 2007. Cost recovery and broodstock goals for the Deep Inlet returns are 355,000 fish and 60,000 fish respectively, allowing for a common property harvest of approximately 1,349,000 chum salmon by purse seine, drift gillnet, and troll gear. Actual numbers of chum salmon harvested for cost recovery will be adjusted to achieve a total weight of 2.84 million pounds. The majority of the common property harvest can be expected to occur in the Deep Inlet THA by drift gillnet and purse seine gear, but some harvest is likely outside the THA by troll and purse seine gear as well.

The Deep Inlet THA fishery will be managed jointly with NSRAA, and in accordance with the Deep Inlet Terminal Harvest Management Plan (5 AAC 33.376). The plan provides for the distribution of the harvest of hatchery-produced salmon between the purse seine and drift gillnet fleets. The ratio of gillnet fishing time to purse seine fishing time will be 2:1. Additionally, the Board of Fisheries has allowed trolling to occur when net fisheries are closed and when trolling does not interfere with cost recovery. The rotational fishery schedule will be announced in ADF&G News Releases prior to and during the season.

The NSRAA board has requested that the common property rotational fishery begin April 29 in order to provide for additional common property harvest of king salmon returning to the Medvejie Hatchery. NSRAA expects a return of 16,000 Chinook salmon to Medvejie Hatchery in 2007. THA rotational gear fisheries are scheduled to begin on Sunday, April 29 and continue through June 30 with four days of gillnet and two days of seine per week.

The Alaska Board of Fisheries during its January 2006 meeting adopted a regulation which allows ADF&G to require that commercial gillnets fished in the Deep Inlet THA prior to July 1 have a minimum mesh size of six inches. In 2007, drift gillnet fishermen will be required to fish with a minimum mesh size of 6 inches prior to June 20. The purpose of the minimum mesh restriction is to reduce the harvest of local wild sockeye salmon returning to Silver Bay that are passing through the Deep Inlet THA. The Board of Fish also closed a portion of the terminal harvest area, during the period May 1–21, the western boundary of the THA from Long Island to the Baranof Island shoreline will be moved eastward to 135° 21.52' W. longitude to exclude a small area traditionally used by trollers during that period.

The NSRAA Board decided at their March meeting in Sitka that cost recovery fishing will begin around July 1. THA openings during the periods July 1–28 and August 12–25, will be on a single rotation, of 2 days for gillnet and 1 day for seine per week, and area within Deep Inlet would be closed in order to help achieve the season's cost recovery goal, and to reach 50% of the cost recovery goal by August 1. Beginning July 1 a portion of Deep Inlet south of a line from 56°58.50' N. latitude, 135°16.50' W. longitude to 56°58.35' N. latitude, 135°17.10' W longitude will be closed, until cost recovery goals can be met. Cost recovery in the Deep Inlet THA is

scheduled to take a two-week break beginning about July 29, due to historically slow cost recovery harvest during this period. During this period inner Deep Inlet will be re-opened to commercial fishing and fishing will return to the double rotation schedule. The THA rotational schedule will change to two days of seine and four days of gillnet once NSRAA has reached or is close to reaching the cost recovery goal for the season. The change in schedule is expected to occur sometime during the mid-August period of peak returns. The NSRAA board has directed NSRAA staff to manage cost recovery fishing in-season in order to achieve the cost recovery goal.

The Deep Inlet THA is described as follows:

**Deep Inlet THA:** Deep Inlet, Aleutkina Bay, and contiguous waters south of a line from a point west of Pirates Cove at 135°22.63' W. longitude, 56°59.35' N. latitude to the westernmost tip of Long Island to the easternmost tip of Long Island to the westernmost tip of Emgeten Island to the westernmost tip of Error Island to the westernmost tip of Berry Island to the southernmost tip of Berry Island to the westernmost tip of the southernmost island in the Kutchuma Island group to the easternmost tip of the southernmost island in the Kutchuma Island group to the westernmost tip of an unnamed island at 135°17.67' W. longitude, 57°00.30' N. latitude to a point on the southern side of the unnamed island at 135°16.78' W. longitude, 57°00.08' N. latitude and then to a point on the Baranof Island Shore at 135°16.53' W. longitude 56°59.93' N. latitude with the following restrictions: all waters of Sandy Cove and Leesofskaia Bay will be closed.

During the period May 121 the waters of the Deep Inlet THA west of 135° 21.52' W Longitude will be closed.

In order to promote full utilization of salmon, to prevent waste of salmon, to determine harvest patterns of incidentally harvested coho and sockeye salmon, and to allow full and accurate reporting of returns, the Deep Inlet THA fishery will be managed in 2006 by emergency order under authority of 5 AAC 39.325 FULL RETENTION AND UTILIZATION OF SALMON. This requires that all salmon harvested in net fisheries are retained, utilized, and reported on fish tickets whether they are sold or retained for personal use.

During the 2007 season, the boundaries of the Deep Inlet THA may be changed by Emergency Order to help resolve conflicts between fishers and local private landowners, in the area, if they occur. Conflicts can be avoided by reducing boat wakes in areas near private docks, by reducing excessive noise and lights prior to openings, and by anchoring well away from private residences.

In early September the Deep Inlet THA boundaries may be adjusted by the department to reduce interception of wild coho salmon returning to Salmon Lake or hatchery coho salmon returning to Medvejie Hatchery needed for broodstock. THA boundary adjustments to protect coho salmon will be based on historic run timing and inseason observations of abundance. Since voluntary compliance with reporting of coho salmon in the Deep Inlet Terminal Harvest Area fishery has, in the past, been poor and the department needs detailed information on coho and sockeye salmon harvest patterns, personnel from the department or Alaska Bureau of Wildlife Enforcement may board some vessels and conduct hold inspections to ensure compliance or ADF&G staff may board some vessels in order to sample marked coho for coded wire tags.

## **Deep Inlet Cost Recovery**

Cost recovery management is planned such that NSRAA may conduct cost recovery in the Deep Inlet Special Harvest Area (SHA) and in the Silver Bay SHA. The Silver Bay SHA is expanded to include the waters of Eastern Channel and Silver Bay enclosed by a line from Entry Point Light, to the southernmost tip of Harris Island, to the southernmost tip of Galankin Island, to Simpson Rock Light, to the southernmost tip of Makhnati Island, to Sentinel Rock, to the westernmost tip of Cape Burunof, to a point west of Pirates Cove at 135° 59.35' N. lat., to the westernmost tip of Long Island, to the westernmost tip of Emgeten Island, to the westernmost tip of Error Island, to the northernmost tip of Luce Island, and to the westernmost tip of Silver Point; through July 22 and after 12:01am the day before the troll coho salmon fishery is reopened in August. The Silver Bay SHA, from July 22 to 12:01am the day before the end of August coho salmon fishery closure, includes the waters of Eastern Channel and Silver Bay south of a line from Entry Point Light to the southernmost tip of Harris Island, to the southernmost tip of Galankin Island, and east of a line from Galankin Island to the northernmost point of Silver Point; and the waters of Sitka Sound enclosed by a line from the southernmost tip of Galankin Island, to Simpson Rock light, to the Makhnati Island buy, to Black Rock, to the southernmost tip of Neva Island to the northernmost tip of Sasendi Island, from the southernmost tip of Volga Island , to the northernmost tip of Galankin Island. In addition, the Deep Inlet SHA is expanded to include the waters east of a line from the westernmost end of cape Burunof at 56°59.04' N Latitude, 135°23.23' W Longitude to a point west of Cape Burunof at 56° 59.11' N Latitude, 135° 23.59' W. Longitude to 57° 00.17' N Latitude, 135° 22.69' W. Longitude to the westernmost tip of Long Island.

## **SOUTHERN SOUTHEAST REGIONAL AQUACULTURE ASSOCIATION TERMINAL AREA FISHERIES**

The terminal hatchery fisheries at Neets Bay, Nakat Inlet, and Anita Bay will be managed jointly with SSRAA and according to Board of Fisheries management plans. The open drift gillnet fishing times will be announced via news releases prior to, and during, the fishing season and are subject to change during the season by EO if necessary.

### **Terminal Area–Neets Bay [5 AAC 33.370]**

The department in consultation with SSRAA, shall manage Neets Bay to include those waters of Neets Bay east of the longitude of the easternmost point of Bug Island to the closed waters at the head of the bay. From the second Sunday in June (June 10) through August 1, the Neets Bay THA shall include those waters of Neets Bay east of the longitude of Chin Point to the closed waters at the head of the bay.

In 2007, SSRAA is expecting a total return of 1,852,000 million summer chum, 463,000 fall chum, 150,000 coho, and 11,500 Chinook salmon to return to Neets Bay.

The Neets Bay fishery will open May 15 beginning at 12:01 a.m. and ending at 11:59 p.m. May 31. During this time the fishery will be open concurrently to drift gillnet, purse seine, and troll gear unless closed by emergency order. On June 1 through June 20, a rotational fishery according to 5 AAC 33.370 will be conducted for the drift gillnet and purse seine fleet.

It is anticipated that SSRAA will be conducting cost recovery operations throughout the summer in the Neets Bay THA and additional rotational fisheries will not occur until cost recovery needs have been met. Additional fisheries in Neets Bay will be opened by ADF&G via emergency

order in consultation with SSRAA. Effective 12:01 a.m., Sunday, October 14, 2007 the Neets Bay THA will be open to the harvest of salmon concurrently by drift gillnet, purse seine, and troll gear. The Neets Bay THA will close for the season at 11:59 p.m., Wednesday, November 14, 2007.

### **Terminal Area—Nakat Inlet [5 AAC 33.372]**

The Nakat Inlet drift gillnet fishing area includes the waters of Nakat Inlet between 54°50' N. latitude and 54°56' N. latitude. In 2007, approximately 614,000 summer chum, 25,000 fall chum, and 14,000 coho salmon are expected to return to Nakat Inlet. Peak chum salmon catches from these releases are expected between mid-July to mid-August for summer chum and late August to early September for fall chum and coho salmon.

The fisheries in Nakat Inlet will be opened by ADF&G via emergency order in consultation with SSRAA. During the 2006 season the southern line of the Nakat Inlet THA was extended to include those waters north of Surprise Point at 54°49.10 N. latitude. For the 2007 salmon fishing season this extension will remain in effect along with the removal of the northern closure line at 54°56.00. The 500 yard stream closure regulation [5 AAC 39.290 (1)] will remain in effect. Due to recent BOF changes the Nakat Inlet THA will open on June 1 for drift gillnet and troll gear only. Beginning on September 1, fishing with seine gear will be allowed on a rotational basis. On September 17, the fishery will open on a continual basis for drift gillnet, troll, and seine gear through November 10. The rotational fishery from September 1 through 16 according to 5 AAC 33.372 will be announced on a separate Nakat Inlet THA news release. Terminal Area—Wrangell Narrows-Blind Slough [5 AAC 33.381]

The projected Crystal Lake Chinook salmon total return is 8,700 adults. In the Wrangell Narrows (District 6) terminal area, around 5,500 are expected. Under provisions of the Wrangell Narrows-Blind Slough THA Management Plan the commercial fishery will be open to harvest 50% of the projected terminal return over 4,000 fish. Fish designated for commercial harvest in 2007 will be available for commercial troll catch in the terminal area. No terminal gillnet fishery will occur in 2007.

The total Crystal Lake Hatchery coho salmon return is expected to be 6,000; of that, an estimated 2,500 fish will be available for sport and commercial harvest in the Wrangell Narrows-Blind Slough area. No commercial gillnet fishery is expected on these fish in 2007.

### **Terminal Area—Anita Bay [5 AAC 33.383]**

The Anita Bay THA consists of the waters of Anita Bay west of a line from Anita Point to 56° 14.26' N. latitude 132° 23.92' W. longitude.

In 2007, approximately 1,161,000 summer chum, 2,750 Chinook and 15,000 coho salmon are expected to be returning in total. Based on very rough assumptions of returns to the terminal area, it is anticipated that approximately 600,000 chum, 500 Chinook and 1,500 coho will be available for harvesting in the rotational fisheries.

## **DOUGLAS ISLAND PINK AND CHUM INC. TERMINAL AREA FISHERIES**

### **Terminal Area—Boat Harbor**

Projections for the Boat Harbor Terminal Harvest Area in 2007 are approximately 545,000 fish. This forecasted return is similar to the actual total return in 2006 and 3.4 times the 1991–2006

average. The preseason 2007 projection for the Amalga Harbor project is approximately 1.6 million fish, 1.4 times the 1994–2005 average of 1.1 million fish.

The Boat Harbor THA will be open for extended periods of time beginning July 2. The Boat Harbor THA is defined as: those waters within two nautical miles of the western shoreline of Lynn Canal south of the latitude of Danger Point at 58°41.73' N. latitude and north of a point 2.4 miles north of Point Whidbey at 58°37.05' N. latitude. The northern line of the Boat Harbor area will remain at the latitude of Danger Point through August 11. The specific area within Boat Harbor proper area will be open continuously from the start of the season until closed.

### **Special Harvest Area–Speel Arm**

The forecast total return of Snettisham Hatchery sockeye salmon in 2007 is 193,000 fish. This is a decrease from last year's total return of approximately 330,000 fish. This return will be principally harvested in the traditional District 11 commercial gillnet fishery. Common property fishery openings are also expected to occur during August in the DIPAC Speel Arm SHA, which is located in waters of Speel Arm north of 58°03.42' N. latitude. Timing of openings in the SHA will depend on DIPAC's progress toward brood stock and cost recovery goals and the sockeye salmon escapement to Speel Lake. DIPAC cost recovery efforts in the SHA during July will be limited to waters in the immediate vicinity of the hatchery where wild and hatchery stocks are well segregated. Fishery management decisions for the Speel Arm SHA will be made jointly by ADF&G and DIPAC.

## FISHERY CONTACTS

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(907) 747-6688

Kevin Monagle or Dave Harris  
Area Management Biologists  
P.O. Box 240020  
Douglas, AK 99824  
(907) 465-4205

Scott Walker, Bo Meredith, or Justin Breese  
Area Management Biologists  
2030 Sea Level Drive, Suite 205  
Ketchikan, AK 99901  
(907) 225-5195

Dave Gordon or Eric Coonradt  
Area Management Biologists  
304 Lake Street, Room 103  
Sitka, AK 99835  
(907) 747-6688

William Bergmann or Troy Thynes  
Area Management Biologists  
P.O. Box 667  
Petersburg, AK 99833  
(907) 772-3801

Randy Bachman  
Area Management Biologist  
P.O. Box 330  
Haines, AK 99827  
(907) 766-2830

Scott Forbes  
Assistant Area Management Biologist  
P.O. Box 200  
Wrangell, AK 99929  
(907) 874-3822

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The following is a list of telephone numbers that may be called during the gillnet fishing season to obtain recorded announcements concerning areas open to gillnet fishing:

Ketchikan:	(907) 225-6870
Petersburg:	(907) 772-3700
Juneau:	(907) 465-8905
Haines:	(907) 766-2830

## **TABLES**

**Table 1.**—Southeast Alaska commercial drift gillnet salmon harvest, in numbers, by area, harvest type and species, 2006.

<b>Area</b>	<b>Chinook</b>	<b>Sockeye</b>	<b>Coho</b>	<b>Pink</b>	<b>Chum</b>	<b>Total</b>
District 1						
Traditional (Tree Point)	1,808	62,770	29,081	212,961	269,227	575,847
Terminal Harvest Area	463	598	2,190	3,818	28,433	35,502
Annette Island	509	8,101	25,404	137,321	131,510	302,845
District 6						
Traditional (Prince of Wales)	1,948	91,980	69,015	149,907	268,436	581,286
District 7						
Terminal Harvest Area	627	264	969	986	88,043	90,889
District 8						
Traditional (Stikine)	30,086	61,298	34,430	56,810	343,637	526,261
District 11						
Traditional (Taku/Snettisham)	11,242	134,781	59,422	185,102	381,837	772,384
Terminal Harvest Area	19	127,746	723	6,890	1,115	136,493
Hatchery Cost Recovery	0	51,454	0	139	12	51,605
District 13						
Terminal Harvest Area	718	651	1,486	32,874	651,689	687,418
District 15						
Traditional (Lynn Canal)	327	140,703	54,760	84,855	695,541	976,186
Terminal Harvest Area	17	4,876	373	9,845	398,671	413,782
<b>Subtotals</b>						
Traditional	45,411	491,532	246,708	689,635	1,958,678	3,431,964
Terminal harvest areas	1,844	134,135	5,741	54,413	1,167,951	1,364,084
<b>Common Property Total</b>	<b>47,255</b>	<b>625,667</b>	<b>252,449</b>	<b>744,048</b>	<b>3,126,629</b>	<b>4,796,048</b>
Hatchery Cost Recovery		51,454			12	51,466
Annette Island	509	8,101	25,404	137,321	131,510	302,845
Misc. <sup>a</sup>	0	1	0	9	36	46
<b>Total</b>	<b>47,764</b>	<b>685,223</b>	<b>277,853</b>	<b>881,378</b>	<b>3,258,187</b>	<b>5,150,405</b>

<sup>a</sup> Includes salmon that were caught in commercial test fisheries or confiscated and sold.

**Table 2.**—Southeast Alaska annual Portland Canal/ Tree Point (District 1) traditional and terminal harvest area drift gillnet salmon harvest, in numbers, by species, 1996 to 2006.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Chinook</b>	<b>Sockeye</b>	<b>Coho</b>	<b>Pink</b>	<b>Chum</b>	<b>Total</b>
1996	1,257	212,477	33,215	371,049	629,553	1,249,547
1997	1,608	169,614	28,229	380,957	409,591	991,996
1998	1,160	160,657	60,548	650,268	556,143	1,430,774
1999	1,844	160,053	64,534	611,613	181,674	1,021,717
2000	1,196	94,720	19,577	424,672	218,818	760,983
2001	1,393	80,440	36,420	521,645	252,438	894,337
2002	1,127	121,116	68,724	515,395	174,794	883,158
2003	829	105,878	97,538	626,916	322,608	1,155,772
2004	2,069	142,763	50,820	409,429	327,439	934,524
2005	1,711	80,027	65,353	559,296	252,630	961,022
Ave. 1996 to 2005	1,419	132,775	52,496	507,124	332,569	1,026,383
2006	2,271	63,368	31,271	216,779	297,660	613,355

**Table 3.**—Southeast Alaska annual Prince of Wales (District 6) traditional drift gillnet salmon harvest, in numbers, by species, 1996 to 2006.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Chinook</b>	<b>Sockeye</b>	<b>Coho</b>	<b>Pink</b>	<b>Chum</b>	<b>Total</b>
1996	644	311,100	224,129	188,035	283,290	1,007,198
1997	1,075	168,518	77,550	789,051	186,456	1,222,650
1998	518	113,435	273,197	502,655	332,022	1,221,827
1999	518	104,888	203,301	491,181	448,409	1,248,297
2000	1,220	90,076	96,207	156,619	199,836	543,958
2001	1,138	164,013	188,465	825,447	283,462	1,462,525
2002	446	56,135	226,560	82,951	112,541	478,633
2003	422	116,904	212,057	470,697	300,254	1,100,334
2004	2,735	116,259	138,631	245,237	110,480	613,342
2005	1,572	110,192	114,440	461,187	198,564	885,955
Ave. 1996 to 2005	1,029	135,152	175,454	421,306	245,531	978,472
2006	1,948	91,980	69,015	149,907	268,436	581,286

**Table 4.**—Southeast Alaska annual Stikine River (District 8) traditional drift gillnet salmon harvest, in numbers, by species, 1996 to 2006.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Chinook</b>	<b>Sockeye</b>	<b>Coho</b>	<b>Pink</b>	<b>Chum</b>	<b>Total</b>
1996	1,717	154,150	19,059	37,651	135,623	348,200
1997	2,566	93,039	2,140	65,745	38,913	202,403
1998	460	22,031	19,206	39,246	41,057	122,000
1999	1,049	36,548	28,437	48,550	117,196	231,780
2000	1,671	15,833	5,651	9,497	40,337	72,989
2001	7	610	10,731	11,012	5,397	27,757
2002	25	208	21,131	4,578	2,017	27,959
2003	312	42,158	38,795	76,113	51,701	209,079
2004	2,735	116,259	138,631	245,237	110,480	613,342
2005	26,969	99,465	42,203	106,395	150,121	425,153
Ave. 1996 to 2005	3,751	58,030	32,598	64,402	69,284	228,066
2006	30,086	61,298	34,430	56,810	343,637	526,261

**Table 5.**—Southeast Alaska annual Taku/Snettisham (District 11) traditional and terminal harvest area drift gillnet salmon harvest, in numbers, by species, 1996 to 2006.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Chinook</b>	<b>Sockeye</b>	<b>Coho</b>	<b>Pink</b>	<b>Chum</b>	<b>Total</b>
1996	2,659	199,014	33,633	12,660	352,730	600,696
1997	2,804	94,745	3,515	51,424	176,864	329,352
1998	794	69,677	28,713	168,283	296,111	563,578
1999	1,949	79,686	17,308	59,316	429,359	587,618
2000	1,154	185,956	7,828	58,696	669,435	923,069
2001	1,692	292,100	22,359	122,776	235,807	674,734
2002	1,850	204,103	40,464	78,624	231,936	556,977
2003	1,467	238,160	24,338	114,166	170,874	549,005
2004	2,345	283,629	45,769	154,640	131,162	617,545
2005	23,316	106,035	21,289	182,778	93,700	427,118
Ave. 1996 to 2005	4,003	175,311	24,522	100,336	278,798	582,969
2006	11,261	262,527	60,145	191,992	382,952	908,877

**Table 6.**—Southeast Alaska annual Lynn Canal (District 15) traditional and terminal harvest area drift gillnet salmon harvest, in numbers, by species, 1996 to 2006.

Year	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
1996	642	149,578	52,658	2,607	415,930	621,415
1997	838	118,828	15,572	53,437	462,330	651,005
1998	682	134,937	26,118	32,351	160,669	354,757
1999	559	163,560	35,350	62,737	351,251	613,457
2000	297	109,510	35,638	21,001	758,248	924,694
2001	1,672	147,811	34,606	67,718	445,565	697,372
2002	582	82,014	77,941	88,044	665,398	913,979
2003	663	95,111	59,742	53,621	394,250	603,387
2004	805	151,245	51,960	98,341	744,615	1,046,966
2005	711	65,469	27,947	209,833	326,895	630,855
Ave. 1996 to 2005	745	121,806	41,753	68,969	472,515	705,789
2006	344	145,579	55,133	94,700	1,094,212	1,389,968

**Table 7.**—Performance of the Tree Point drift gillnet fishery sockeye salmon harvest under the 1999 agreement.

	Nass River Total Return	Nass River Escapement	Allowable Nass River AAH	Allowable Alaska Harvest (13.8%)	Actual Nass River Alaska Harvest	Cumulative: +overage/ (-underage)
1999	842,806	200,000	642,806	88,707	129,794	41,087
2000	625,983	200,000	425,983	58,786	46,305	28,606
2001	580,616	167,258	413,358	57,043	55,096	26,659
2002	1,403,976	200,000	1,203,976	166,149	90,553	-48,937
2003	1,176,261	200,000	976,261	134,724	72,743	-110,918
2004	985,227	200,000	785,227	108,361	110,337	-108,942
2005	666,248	200,000	466,248	64,342	55,319	-117,965
2006 <sup>a</sup>	1,105,000	200,000	905,000	124,890	53,354	-189,501
2007 <sup>b</sup>	828,000	200,000	628,000	86,664		

<sup>a</sup> Preliminary Information

<sup>b</sup> DFO (Department of Fisheries and Oceans) forecast