

2008 Southeast Alaska Drift Gillnet Fishery Management Plan

by

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Weights and measures (metric)		General		Measures (fisheries)	
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	Mathematics, statistics	
meter	m	south	S	<i>all standard mathematical signs, symbols and abbreviations</i>	
milliliter	mL	west	W	alternate hypothesis	H _A
millimeter	mm	copyright	©	base of natural logarithm	<i>e</i>
		corporate suffixes:		catch per unit effort	CPUE
Weights and measures (English)		Company	Co.	coefficient of variation	CV
cubic feet per second	ft ³ /s	Corporation	Corp.	common test statistics	(F, t, χ^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	>
Time and temperature		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 ₂ , etc.
second	s	United States of America (noun)	USA	minute (angular)	'
		U.S.C.	United States Code	not significant	NS
Physics and chemistry		U.S. state	use two-letter abbreviations (e.g., AK, WA)	null hypothesis	H ₀
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)	α
direct current	DC			probability of a type II error	
hertz	Hz			(acceptance of the null hypothesis when false)	β
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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**2008 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 2008. 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, 2008.

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 2008.

For the period 1998 to 2007, an average of 479 Southeast Alaska drift gillnet limited entry permits were issued annually, of which an average of 82% are actively fished each year. In 2007, 476 permits were issued, of which 391 (82%) were actively fished. A historic low of 348 permits were fished in 2004. Drift gillnet landings have averaged approximately 4.1 million salmon annually over the past 10 years from 1998 to 2007, and 2.7 million salmon since statehood from 1960 to 2007. Of the total commercial salmon harvest in Southeast Alaska, the most recent 10-year average drift gillnet fishery harvests have included 41% of the sockeye, 17% of the chum, 12% of the coho, 2% of the pink, and 7% of the Chinook salmon (1998 to 2007 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 beginning in 2005 and 2006. Forecast returns were insufficient for a directed fishery on the Taku in 2007 or 2008. District 8 had a third consecutive directed Stikine Chinook fishery in 2007 and will have a fourth directed fishery in 2008. 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 2007 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 pre-season harvest forecast for pink salmon. ADF&G also derives pre-season 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 pre-season 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 for 2008 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 2008 Stikine River preseason terminal run forecast of 43,000 large adults will allow an Alaskan harvest of approximately 10,000 fish in District 8 by all gear groups including directed harvest by drift gillnet. The Taku River preseason terminal run forecast of 39,400 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 2008 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. DIPAC has forecast 224,000 enhanced sockeye to Port Snettisham.

The projected region wide forecast of hatchery chum salmon returns for 2008 is expected to be 9.2 million. This includes 2.51 million to four DIPAC locations, 3.45 million to two NSRAA locations, 1.98 million to four SSRAA locations, 1.16 million to two Kake locations, and 0.1 million to AKI to one location. A portion of these returns above broodstock needs and cost recovery harvests may be intercepted in traditional drift gillnet fisheries in Districts 1, 6, 8, 11, and 15 as well as in terminal area drift gillnet fisheries in Boat Harbor, Deep Inlet, Anita Bay, Neets Bay, and Nakat Inlet. Chum salmon harvests in combined regional drift gillnet fisheries has averaged 2.0 million fish per year over the recent 10-year period from 1998–2007. Of the total harvest in numbers for all species chum salmon accounts for half of the salmon harvested in the drift gillnet fisheries.

Overall, returns of coho salmon should be near the 20-year average. The Alaska hatchery coho salmon contributions to drift gillnet fisheries were 23% in 2002, 30% in 2003, 20% in 2004, 20% in 2005, 9% in 2006, and 22% in 2007.

The 2008 Southeast Alaska pink salmon harvest forecast in 2008 is 19 million, with a range of 10 to 34 million fish. The major portion of the pink salmon harvest will be taken by purse seine gear. Additional enhanced pink salmon production of up to 1.7 million is not expected to affect the drift gillnet fishery harvests.

MANAGEMENT APPROACH

A flexible management approach is required because of the 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. Gillnet fishermen 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 2008 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 has become a major factor in the management of the Southeast Alaska drift gillnet fisheries, including coho and summer chum salmon throughout the region and sockeye salmon in District 11. 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 and management decisions outside of terminal areas will focus on the conservation of wild stocks.

WEEKLY FISHING ANNOUNCEMENTS

Inseason management of the 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 weekly fishing announcements will be issued to include all areas in the region. 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 the Memorial Day Holiday, 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, if it occurs, will open at 12:01 P.M. if an allowable catch becomes available after 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 2008 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.

2008 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 average in 2007. The return of chum salmon to Fish Creek, located in upper Portland Canal, was 14,200 (below the recent 10-year average of 30,000). ADF&G will pay close attention to Portland Canal chum salmon in 2008 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 January 2008, the bi-lateral Northern Panel and the NBTC finalized and agreed upon the run reconstruction of the Nass River for 2006. 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 2007 was 390,000 fish. That allowed for a harvest of approximately 31,000 Nass River sockeye salmon at Tree Point in 2007.

The Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) has a preseason expectation for 2008 returns of approximately 479,000 Nass River sockeye salmon (Northern Boundary Technical Committee Report). If the forecast is accurate, then the AAH for Tree Point will be approximately 38,500 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 2008. Information concerning SSRAA forecast returns is included under the THA Fisheries section of this plan.

Pink Salmon

Pink salmon returns are expected to be below average to southern Southeast Alaska in 2008. If the actual returns come back as forecasted, the Tree Point drift gillnet fishery may have two, four, and five-day fishing weeks during 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 20, 2008) 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 2008 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 15, 2008. The length of subsequent fishing periods up to the start of the PSMP on July 20 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 20, 2008. The overall pink salmon return to southern Southeast Alaska is expected to be below average in 2008. If the returns come in as predicted then beginning in mid-July through the end of August, Tree Point drift gillnetters can anticipate reduced fishing periods compared to 2007.

In 2008, management of the Southeast purse seine fishery is anticipated to be similar to the 2006 season. 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 during the time period when the District 1 pink salmon management plan was in effect.

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, 2008.

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.

2008 OUTLOOK

Chinook salmon

This will be the fourth 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 2008 will allow a commercial fishery. The forecast of the Stikine stock returning to District 8 is approximately 43,000 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 approximately 10,000 fish. The preseason forecast is slightly larger than last year, and may result in more time and/or area than last year's openings. The 2008 Anita Bay Chinook total run forecast is 11,000 fish.

Sockeye Salmon

The 2008 Stikine River sockeye salmon return is expected to be above average although the official forecast is not out yet. The 2007 Tahltan sockeye salmon escapement fell within the goal range of 18,000 to 30,000 fish for the sixth consecutive year. The 2008 Tahltan Lake sockeye salmon return is expected to be above the 1998–2007 average. The Tuya Lake enhanced sockeye salmon return is expected to be higher than last year and well above the ten-year average. Returns of mainstem Stikine River sockeye salmon stocks are expected to be below the ten-year average. 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 an above-average Tahltan Lake run, like the run anticipated this year, significant numbers of sockeye could be present as early as statistical week 25 (June 15) 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 2008. Returns in the last three years were minimal and due to the limited number of returning fish, the program has been discontinued.

Pink Salmon

The 2008 Southeast Alaska pink salmon forecast is much lower than average and may potentially result in a total harvest as poor as the 2006 season. This will most likely result in minimal openings in District 6 throughout August.

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. Anita Bay is expecting a total run of 242,000 summer chum salmon in 2008. Returns to Anita Bay have typically peaked during statistical weeks 30, 31 or 32 (July 20, July 27 or August 3). Summer chum salmon production from Ketchikan area hatcheries is expected to once again be significant. 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 2008 are expected to increase from last year. The combined 2007 returns to Neck Lake and Burnett Inlet in upper Clarence Strait were approximately 58,000 coho salmon. The 2008 returns forecasted for Neck Lake and Burnett Inlet are 51,000 and 14,000 coho. The 2007 coho salmon return to Anita Bay was approximately 18,000 fish. The 2008 forecast estimates a total return of 17,000 fish. Approximately 190,000 fall coho salmon returned to enhancement projects in the Ketchikan area in 2007. Total forecast coho returns for 2008 to Ketchikan area coho enhancement projects are 247,000, and include: Neets Bay (197,000), Nakat Inlet (24,000) and Herring Cove (26,000). Wild coho salmon returns for 2008 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 (August 31); 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 2008 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 A.M. on Monday, May 5 and will most likely remain open for a period of 24 hours. 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. The current forecast may allow for slightly increased openings in respect to time and/or area compared to last year's one-day openings with the flats closed. It is not known at this time if the old Stikine closure lines will be utilized for the initial openings. These lines would 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 predominantly derived from returning Chinook salmon caught and tagged 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, 2006, and 2007 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 2008 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 8 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 above average and returns to the Mainstem are expected to be 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 for six of the past seven 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, stat weeks 29, 30, and 31, will have a maximum fishing time in District 6 of two days.

This conservation period will occur one week earlier than last year and will likely not involve the large Sumner Strait closure that was used for one week last season.

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 8) through the first Saturday in August (August 2) and, 2) from the first Sunday in September (September 7) 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.

2008 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 2008 preseason forecast of 39,400 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 2008 is expected to be slightly below average. This is based on both spawner-recruit analysis and a sibling forecast. The 2003 main parent year escapement of 160,400 fish was above the PST escapement goal 75,000 fish, and the 10-year average escapement of approximately 111,300 sockeye salmon. The 2004 parent year had an escapement of 106,700 fish. Adult returns to date from the joint U.S./Canada Taku River sockeye salmon enhancement project at Tatsamenie Lake have been low and the number of enhanced sockeye salmon returning to Tatsamenie Lake is not expected to contribute significant numbers of fish to harvest in 2008. Escapement through the Speel Lake weir of the 2003 parent year was 7,000 sockeye salmon, and the escapement in 2004 was 7,800 sockeye salmon, both close to average and within the escapement goal range of 4,000–13,000 sockeye salmon. The peak aerial survey estimates for Crescent Lake escapements in parent year 2003 was 5,600 fish, and in 2004 was 5,300 fish. The 1998 to 2007 average is 6,250 fish. Enhanced sockeye salmon returning to the Douglas Island Pink and Chum, Inc. (DIPAC) Snettisham Hatchery, based on DIPAC's forecast is 224,000 fish, greater than last year's return of 122,000.

Chum Salmon

Approximately 1,096,000 summer chum salmon are forecast to return in 2008 from DIPAC hatchery releases in Gastineau Channel, and 95,000 chum salmon from Limestone Inlet remote releases. The total estimated DIPAC chum salmon contribution to the Section 11-B drift gillnet fishery is 488,000 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 2008. Parent year pink salmon escapements to District 11 were average overall but numbers through the Canyon

Island fish wheel were well above the odd-year average, and indicated above 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 below average Parent-year escapements of coho salmon to Canadian portions of the Taku River were 134,500 fish in 2004, and 91,600 in 2005. The smolt outmigration of 2007 was below average at 1,300,000 fish. DIPAC projects a 2008 return of approximately 28,000 hatchery coho salmon from their smolt releases into Gastineau Channel.

MANAGEMENT GOALS

Management goals for the 2008 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 2008 preseason forecast of 39,400 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 P.M. 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 15) 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.

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.

Coho and Fall Chum

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 2008 Juneau Golden North Salmon Derby (August 8–10). Consequently, during Statistical Week 33, the District 11 gillnet fishery will not open until Monday, August 11.

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 Chilkoot and Chilkat River mainstem sockeye, coho and fall chum

salmon stocks have been very productive and meeting escapement goals. Fall chum salmon returns have improved in the 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. Production of Chilkat Lake sockeye salmon has been in decline since 2005. The department believes that the decline in Chilkat Lake sockeye salmon production is caused by a downturn in zooplankton production from 2001 through 2003. Zooplankton production has improved since 2004.

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 goals 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 have been based on a mark-recapture program that has been in place since 1994. Starting in 2008, a DIDSON (Dual frequency identification sonar) will replace mark-recapture and weir count methods in estimating escapement of Chilkat Lake sockeye salmon. The weir will remain in the outlet slough to assist in collecting biological samples and the DIDSON will enumerate sockeye salmon as they migrate through the weir boat gate opening.

MANAGEMENT GOALS

Specific management goals for the 2008 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 from DIDSON counts at the outlet of Chilkat Lake.
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.

2008 OUTLOOK

Sockeye Salmon

The 2008 total forecast return of Chilkat Lake sockeye salmon is again expected to be below average. Smolt information collected each spring forms the information base to predict future returns of this stock. Due to strong flow reversals and very high water levels in the spring of 2005 and 2006, the quality of the smolt data was not sufficient enough to estimate the total out migration of sockeye salmon smolt in those years. Based on parental year escapement and zooplankton density during the two years the fry reared in Chilkat Lake, the expected Chilkat Lake sockeye salmon return in 2008 is expected to be below average. The 2008 run size of Chilkat River mainstem sockeye salmon is expected to be above average.

Escapement estimates to Chilkat Lake were within the sustainable escapement goal range for the dominant brood years (2002 and 2003) for the 2008 return. Although no smolt estimates are available for the dominant smolt years (2005 and 2006) for the 2008 return, the average size and weight of age-1.0 and age-2.0 smolt sampled were near or above the historical average indicating improved rearing conditions in Chilkat Lake. A lower than average return of Chilkat Lake sockeye salmon is again expected in 2008.

Mark-recapture estimates of the Chilkat River mainstem sockeye salmon escapements in 2003, 2004, and 2005, (the dominant parent-years) were 37,000, 44,000, and 52,000 fish, respectively. The estimates of abundance for the 2008 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 well above average indicating that the 2008 return of age-0.3 fish to the mainstem Chilkat River may be above 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 2008 are expected to be above the previous ten year average of approximately 107,000 fish. The Chilkoot Lake sockeye salmon weir count during the dominant parental brood year (2003) for the 2008 return was 74,500 fish. The escapement was within the desired escapement goal range for this stock. The Chilkoot River weir is used to monitor this stock inseason.

The 2004 fall sockeye salmon juvenile hydroacoustic and zooplankton estimate was above average, the dominant brood year sockeye salmon juveniles would have been rearing in the lake. Management will be monitoring the escapements during 2008 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 2004 was near the 1976–2006 average and well above the previous 10-year average. Age composition of the 2007 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 above average run of Berners Bay sockeye salmon is expected in 2008. 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%), 1.2 (12%), and age-1.3 (68%). Age compositions of 2-ocean age fish in the 2007 escapement were just above the historical average indicating an above average predicted return of 3-ocean age (dominant) fish in 2008. The 2004 and 2005 commercial harvest of Berners Bay and Chilkat River mainstem sockeye salmon was estimated at 34,000 and 13,000 fish respectively. This harvest was well above average for 2004 and slightly below the historical average of 14,000 fish in 2005.

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 2008 is approximately 319,000 hatchery chum salmon. This forecast is similar to the actual total return to the Boat Harbor THA in 2007 and 1.8 times the 1998–2008 the Boat Harbor Terminal harvest area average. The pre-season projection for the Amalga Harbor project is approximately 1.007 million fish, just under the 1994–2007 average of 1.1 million fish.

Peak aerial escapement counts of summer chum salmon in Sawmill Creek in 2003, 2004, and 2005 were 550, 1,000, and 900 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 27,000, 15,000, and 22,400 fish respectively. All peak counts conducted during these brood years were well above the prior-ten-year average. Based on parental-year escapement counts, the wild summer chum salmon return in 2008 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 2008 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 45,700 and 55,400 fish (2004 and 2005). 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 13,000 and 1,400 fish respectively, well below average for this system but an improvement over previous years. The total drainage wide estimated escapement in 2004 and 2005 based on mark-recapture methods was 310,000 and 202,000 chum salmon. The estimate in 2004 is well above the 2002–2005 average mark-recapture estimate of 221,000 fish but and near this average in 2005.

The fishery performance in the dominant parental brood years (2004 and 2005) was near 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 below 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 2004 and 2005 escapements to Berners Bay (14,450 and 5,220) were well above (2004) and within (2005) the escapement goal range of 4,000 to 9,200 fish.

Sport Fish Division has been conducting coho salmon smolt coded wire-tagging (CWT) studies on the Chilkat River to estimate smolt size, age structure, production of coho salmon smolts and marine survival of coho salmon since 1999. The 2004 and 2005 Chilkat River fish wheel catch of 1,745 and 1,450 coho was below the 1997–2007 average of 2,530 fish. Index escapement for coho salmon in 2004 and 2005 was 67,400 and 38,400 fish, respectively. These escapement counts were within the escapement goal range for both years. The District 15 gillnet catch of 52,000 coho salmon in 2004 and 28,000 in 2005 was below the previous ten-year average for both brood years. The below average prediction for Lynn Canal coho stocks is based on recent marine survival trends. Prior to 2004, the average marine survival for years 1999–2003 for Chilkat River coho salmon is 11.5%. In recent years, the average marine survival has dropped to 7% in years 2005–2007. The 2007 return exhibited a marine survival rate of 4.2% (lowest on record).

Chinook Salmon

The 2008 preseason escapement forecast for mature (\geq age 1.3) Chilkat River Chinook salmon is estimated to be below average and near the lower end of the biological escapement goal range of 1,750–3,600 fish.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

In 2008, 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 in excess of escapement needs.

Section 15-A

Section 15-A will open for two days south of the latitude of Seduction Point beginning 12:01 P.M. Sunday June 15 (statistical week 25) with no mesh restriction. If the Chilkoot River weir count through June 12 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 12, 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 near the lower end of 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 salmon return, it is likely that openings in northern Section 15-A will be similar to openings during 2007. 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. Six-inch minimum mesh size gear restrictions may be in place to reduce the harvest rate on Chilkat Lake sockeye salmon during the summer season. 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 statistical week 34 (August 17) 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 2007.

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. Since the preseason forecast is for a below average return of coho salmon for Lynn Canal, it is unlikely that openings within Berners Bay will occur in 2008.

Section 15-C

Section 15-C will open for two days beginning 12:01 P.M. Sunday, June 15 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 Terminal Harvest Area).

Due to the below average 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 and gear 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 3rd or 4th 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, (June 29). 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 strategy is to decrease the harvest rate on 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 six 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 area.

Fall season management will begin in statistical week 34 (August 17) 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 and fall chum salmon in Section 15-C in excess of escapement needs. Fishing time will be limited from 2 to 3 days each week in the fall season.

In order to avoid conflicts with sport fisheries, the District 15 drift gillnet fishery will not be open concurrent with the 2008 Juneau Golden North Salmon Derby (August 8–10). Consequently, during Statistical Week 33, the District 15 gillnet fishery will not open until Monday, August 11.

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 respectfully 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 2008 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 1,450,000 chum salmon to the Deep Inlet remote release site and the Medvejie Hatchery in 2008. Cost recovery and broodstock goals for the Deep Inlet returns are 274,000 fish and 60,000 fish respectively, allowing for a common property harvest of approximately 1,116,000 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 2.19 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 May 4 in order to provide for common property harvest of king salmon returning to the Medvejie Hatchery. NSRAA expects a return of 43,000 Chinook salmon to Medvejie Hatchery in 2008. THA rotational gear fisheries are scheduled to begin on Sunday, May 4 and continue through June 28 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 2008, drift gillnet fishermen will be required to fish with a minimum mesh size of 6 inches prior to June 21. 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 June 29 – July 26 and August 10–23, 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 June 29 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 27, 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 1-21 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 2008 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 2008 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 2008, SSRAA is expecting a total return of 997,000 million summer chum, 213,000 fall chum, 197,000 coho, and 15,400 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. June 10. During this time the fishery will be open concurrently to drift gillnet, purse seine, and troll

gear unless closed by emergency order. On June 11 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, 2008 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, 2008.

Terminal Area—Nakat Inlet [5 AAC 33.372]

The Nakat Inlet THA includes the waters of Nakat Inlet between 54°50' N. latitude and 54°56' N. latitude. In 2008, approximately 163,000 summer chum, 76,000 fall chum, and 24,000 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 Nakat Inlet THA will be open from June 1 to November 10 concurrently to gillnet and troll gear. During the 2006 season the southern line was extended by emergency order to include those waters north of Surprise Point at 54°49.10' N. latitude. For 2007, the southern line was extended and the northern closure line at 54°56.00' N. latitude was deleted by emergency order. The 500 yard stream closure regulation [5 AAC 39.290 (1)] remained in effect. For the 2008 salmon fishing season, the southern line will again be extended to Surprise Point and the northern closure line at 54°56.00' N. latitude deleted by emergency order.

Terminal Area—Crystal Lake [5 AAC 33.381]

The initial projected Crystal Lake Chinook salmon total return is 10,000 adults. In the Wrangell Narrows (District 6) terminal area, around 5,700 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 2008 will be available for commercial troll catch in the terminal area. No terminal gillnet fishery is expected to occur in 2008.

The total Crystal Lake Hatchery coho salmon return is expected to be 2,600; of that, an estimated 1,000 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 2008.

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 2008, approximately 242,000 summer chum, 11,000 Chinook and 17,000 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 68,000 chum, 4,300 Chinook and 1,400 coho will be available for harvesting in the rotational fisheries.

The Anita Bay THA will be open to the harvest of salmon by troll, drift gillnet and purse seine concurrently from 12:01 A.M. Thursday, May 1 through the end of May. In the beginning of

June, the Anita Bay THA will be open according to a rotational schedule for purse seine/drift gillnet fisheries. This schedule will be released sometime in late April or early May. The rotational schedule will remain in place until the second week of October at which point the terminal area will be open to all gear groups concurrently until November 10.

DOUGLAS ISLAND PINK AND CHUM INC. TERMINAL AREA FISHERIES

Terminal Area–Boat Harbor

Projections for the Boat Harbor Terminal Harvest Area in 2008 are approximately 319,000 fish. This forecast is similar to the actual total return to the Boat Harbor THA in 2007 and 1.8 times the 1998–2008 the Boat Harbor Terminal harvest area average. The preseason projection for the Amalga Harbor project is approximately 1.007 million fish, just under the 1994–2007 average of 1.1 million fish.

The Boat Harbor Terminal Harvest Area (THA) will be opened for extended periods beginning in week 27, (June 29). 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 strategy is to decrease the harvest rate on 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 six 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 area.

Special Harvest Area–Speel Arm

The forecast total return of Snettisham Hatchery sockeye salmon in 2008 is 224,000 fish. This is a decrease from last year's total return of approximately 122,000 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. 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.

FISHERY CONTACTS

The following people are Division of Commercial Fisheries contacts for this management plan:

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Assistant Area Management Biologist
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Wrangell, AK 99929
(907) 874-3822

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, 2007.

Area	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
District 1						
Traditional (Tree Point)	1,599	66,822	27,503	339,992	233,118	669,034
Terminal Harvest Area	458	1,348	2,387	20,994	156,626	181,813
Annette Island	894	13,318	28,795	242,444	153,080	438,531
District 6						
Traditional (Prince of Wales)	2,144	92,481	80,573	383,355	297,998	856,551
District 7						
Terminal Harvest Area	3,167	194	3,202	1,865	92,576	101,004
District 8						
Traditional (Stikine)	17,595	70,580	19,880	39,872	177,547	325,474
District 11						
Traditional (Taku/Snettisham)	1,452	112,425	22,394	100,375	590,169	826,815
Terminal Harvest Area	0	0	0	0	0	0
Hatchery Cost Recovery	0	72,569	0	0	0	72,569
District 13						
Terminal Harvest Area	2,568	1,163	1,170	8,015	113,546	126,462
District 15						
Traditional (Lynn Canal)	971	144,274	17,938	73,144	564,289	800,616
Terminal Harvest Area	92	12,524	199	16,638	258,869	288,322
Subtotals						
Traditional	23,761	486,582	168,288	936,738	1,863,121	3,478,490
Terminal harvest areas	6,285	15,229	6,958	47,512	621,617	697,601
Common Property Total	30,046	501,811	175,246	984,250	2,484,738	4,176,091
Hatchery Cost Recovery	0	72,569	0	0	0	72,569
Annette Island	894	13,318	28,795	242,444	153,080	438,531
Misc. ^a	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	30,940	587,698	204,041	1,226,694	2,637,818	4,687,191

^a 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, 1998 to 2007.

Year	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
1998	1,160	160,657	60,548	650,268	556,143	1,428,776
1999	1,844	160,053	64,534	611,613	181,674	1,019,718
2000	1,196	94,720	19,577	424,672	218,818	758,983
2001	1,393	80,440	36,420	521,645	252,438	892,336
2002	1,127	121,116	68,724	515,395	174,794	881,156
2003	829	105,878	97,538	626,916	322,608	1,153,769
2004	2,069	142,763	50,820	409,429	327,439	932,520
2005	1,711	80,027	65,353	559,296	252,630	959,017
2006	2,271	63,368	31,271	216,779	297,660	611,349
2007	2,057	68,170	29,890	360,986	389,744	850,847
Ave. 1998 to 2007	1,566	107,719	52,468	489,700	297,395	948,847

Table 3.—Southeast Alaska annual Prince of Wales (District 6) traditional drift gillnet salmon harvest, in numbers, by species, 1998 to 2007.

Year	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
1998	518	113,435	273,197	502,655	332,022	1,221,827
1999	518	104,835	203,301	491,179	448,409	1,248,242
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	110,574	613,436
2005	1,572	110,192	114,440	461,187	198,564	885,955
2006	1,948	91,980	69,015	149,907	268,436	581,286
2007	2,144	92,481	80,573	383,355	297,998	856,551
Ave. 1998 to 2007	1,266	105,631	160,245	376,923	255,210	899,275

Table 4.—Southeast Alaska annual Stikine River (District 8) traditional drift gillnet salmon harvest, in numbers, by species, 1998 to 2007.

Year	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
1998	460	22,031	19,206	39,246	41,057	122,000
1999	1,049	36,601	28,437	48,552	117,196	231,835
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	7,410	103,392	26,617	20,439	37,996	195,854
2005	26,969	99,465	42,203	106,395	150,121	425,153
2006	29,985	61,298	34,430	56,810	343,637	526,160
2007	17,595	70,580	19,880	39,872	177,547	325,474
Ave. 1998 to 2007	8,548	45,218	24,708	41,251	96,701	216,426

Table 5.—Southeast Alaska annual Taku/Snettisham (District 11) traditional and terminal harvest area drift gillnet salmon harvest, in numbers, by species, 1998 to 2007.

Year	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
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	1,698	293,043	22,646	123,026	237,122	677,535
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	283,756	45,769	154,640	131,757	618,267
2005	23,301	106,048	21,289	182,778	93,700	427,116
2006	11,261	262,527	60,145	191,992	382,952	908,877
2007	1,452	112,425	22,394	100,375	590,169	826,815
Ave. 1998 to 2007	4,727	183,538	29,089	123,190	323,342	663,886

Table 6.—Southeast Alaska annual Lynn Canal (District 15) traditional and terminal harvest area drift gillnet salmon harvest, in numbers, by species, 1998 to 2007.

Year	Chinook	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
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	109,560	35,638	21,001	759,357	925,853
2001	1,672	147,811	34,606	67,718	445,578	697,385
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	745,450	1,047,801
2005	711	65,469	27,947	209,833	326,895	630,855
2006	344	145,579	55,133	94,700	1,094,212	1,389,968
2007	1,063	156,798	18,137	89,782	823,158	1,088,938
Ave. 1998 to 2007	738	125,208	42,257	81,813	576,622	826,638

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	1,105,000	200,000	905,000	124,890	48,140	-194,715
2007 ^a	390,243	165,056	225,187	31,076	46,775	-179,015
2008 ^b	479,000	200,000	279,000	38,502		

^a Preliminary Information

^b DFO (Department of Fisheries and Oceans) forecast