

**PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND/COPPER RIVER
REGIONAL FISHERIES PLANNING TEAM**

*Using Biology, Finance, Land, Engineering and Public Input
to Enhance Prince William Sound/Copper River Area Fisheries*

April 23, 2014

Cora Campbell
Commissioner
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Dear Commissioner Campbell:

The Prince William Sound/Copper River Delta Regional Planning Team (RPT) would like to thank the Commissioner for her time and for allowing the RPT to provide input into the important salmon enhancement activities in this area. As you are aware, the RPT provides the public with an opportunity to comment on and be heard regarding enhancement activities that are being proposed in this area. The RPT also provides an opportunity for formal interaction between the Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the representatives of the Area E regional aquaculture association otherwise known as the Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation (PWSAC). The RPT meeting was noticed as required in 5 AAC 40.350. This memo summarizes the actions taken by the RPT at the April 7, 2014 meeting in Cordova. The meeting dealt with the Annual Management Plans (AMPs) from the PWSAC hatcheries of Armin F. Koernig, Wally Noerenberg, Cannery Creek, Main Bay, and Gulkana as well as a Permit Alteration Request (PAR) and hatchery AMP for Solomon Gulch from the Valdez Fisheries Development Association (VFDA).

Many of the details of the Annual Management Plans for all the hatcheries had been worked on in advance by the department staff and the hatchery operators, which resulted in only a few minor changes at the RPT. The main discussion revolved around the PAR from VFDA. The PAR was asking for a 70 million pink salmon egg increase in the Solomon Gulch hatchery permit. After some discussion the RPT unanimously approved a phased approach to the PAR recommending a 20 million pink salmon egg increase in the permitted capacity beginning in 2016 with an additional 20 million pink salmon egg increase in 2018 pending the completion of the required hatchery infrastructure modifications. Further increases are not recommended until more comprehensive research directed at better understanding total wild stock returns, stock identification and run timing are implemented.

After completing action on the VFDA PAR the Solomon Gulch hatchery AMP was brought to the table, discussed and passed unanimously to recommend approval.

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- Deputy Game
- Asst CO Hepler
- Asst CO Bdford
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- Legis Liaison
- Federal Fish
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- Boards
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- Habitat *5/16/14*
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The PWSAC AMPs for Main Bay, Cannery Creek, Wally Noerenberg, and Armin F. Koernig hatcheries were all brought to the table and passed unanimously without modification and recommended for approval.

The Gulkana hatchery AMP did involve some discussion when brought to the table regarding the existing marking program. The current type of mark is not conducive to inseason management and the chemical used to make the mark is being permitted annually under the federal investigation of a new animal drug (INAD) permit. This permit may not be renewed in future years. PWSAC wishes to discontinue that mark and use coded wire tags. There are problems with the use of coded wire tags as well. Some changes were made to the proposed AMP for this hatchery which provides for a joint study group to review the existing marking program and make a recommendation for future marking of salmon from this hatchery by December 15, 2014. The AMP was amended to provide for some flexibility in determining the type of mark to be applied in 2015 to salmon produced at this hatchery. The amendment requires a mark to be applied, but that mark will be determined by the study group. With that amendment in place the Gulkana hatchery AMP was passed unanimously with a recommendation for approval.

The Prince William Sound/Copper River RPT appreciates your time in reviewing these documents and we look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Timothy L. Joyce". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Timothy L. Joyce
Chairman, PWS/CR RPT

cc. RPT members

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