

On-Time Advisory Committee Comment List

Alaska Board of Fisheries | March 8, 2021

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Anchorage Fish and Game Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes
For Tuesday, February 9, 2021 via Zoom

1. Meeting was called to order by the chair at 6:10 PM
2. Establish a Quorum, Members present: Martin Weiser, Kevin Taylor, Willow Hetrick, Matt Moore, Neil DeWitt, Bryce Eckroth, Ernie Weiss, Rick Rodgers, Georgeanna Heaverly, Lynette Moreno Hinz, Joel Doner

Members Absent Excused: Tyler Loken, JR Gates

Members Absent Unexcused: Phil Calhoun, Shawna Williams-Buchanan, Jim Nabulsi

3. List of User groups present: None
4. Introduce Fish and Game staff present:
Charity Lehman, Tim Spivey
5. Public present: Scott Crowther
6. Approve the Agenda
Agenda approved unanimously
7. Approve January 14, 2021 minutes.
Minutes approved unanimously
8. Public Testimony
None
9. 40 mile caribou herd update from Jeff Gross, area biologist for the 40 mile herd.
Postponed
10. Old Business

1 Update on AC Elections 2021- Do not foresee any elections prior to Fall 2021 when we can have in person meetings. We will have 10 seats open when the next election occurs.

2 Update on BOF/BOG meetings for 2021-2022. Discuss changes to meeting schedules for 2021-2022.

BOG voted to shift their regular meeting cycle forward one year. The proposals/meetings schedule for this year will occur next year. BOF chose



to double up the meetings for the next cycle even though the Governor's budget is inadequate to support this level of meetings. The Anchorage AC is unanimously opposed to this shift and would prefer that the BOG and BOF follow the same model. We are all volunteers and we do not have unlimited time to commit to reviewing proposals. When meetings are doubled up our AC cannot meet 5 days a week to adequately discuss all of the proposals and review the relevant information. When we signed up to be members of the AC we agreed to the scheduled time commitment that it typically takes. We did not agree to double the workload. Most of us have jobs and family commitments. Doubling up on cycles will place an unfair burden on ACs, F & G staff and the stakeholders. It also goes against the goal of not having a region reviewing proposals for both fish and game in the same cycle.

11. New Business

1. Discuss Reauthorizations of the antlerless moose hunts in our unit: the 20 Mile and JBER hunts which are proposals 177 and 178.

The Anchorage AC voted 10-0 in support of proposal 177.
The Anchorage AC voted 10-0 in support of proposal 178.

12. Adjourn 6:34 PM



Submitted By
Ben Allen
Submitted On
3/2/2021 6:42:20 PM
Affiliation
Chignik AC, Vice Chair

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March 2, 2021

Alaska Department of Fish and Game,

Boards Support Section

Glenn Haight
P.O. Box 115526

Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526

RE: Scheduling of the 2022 Area M/Chignik Finfish BOF meeting

Dear Chairperson Carlson-Van Dort and Alaska Board of Fisheries members:

During today's Chignik AC meeting, the quorum of members unanimously agreed that it was in the best interest of Chignik stakeholders to submit a letter requesting that the Area M/Chignik Finfish BOF meeting continue to remain scheduled in February of 2022.

We appreciate that the Board is willing to put in the hard work involved in doubling the meeting schedule next year to get back on the regular schedule. We are grateful that the Board did not delay the Area M/Chignik Finfish meeting for a year.

The Chignik sockeye fishery has failed for the past three years – the early run in all three years, the late run in 2018 and 2020. And Chignik's hard times are not over. The forecast for the 2021 season indicates only 165,000 harvestable sockeye as compared to a traditional average of 1.5 million. In consequence it is crucial that the Board meeting schedule be maintained to address Chignik's conservation concerns.

While challenging, your current plan of doubling next year's meeting schedule is not impossible as some suggest. Neither are the budget challenges unsurmountable. While we understand that there will be pressure for the Board to reconsider, we appeal to you to remain committed to doubling the meeting schedule next year. But in any case, please keep the current schedule for the Area M meeting in February of 2022 because Chignik's conservation concerns are not an issue that can afford to wait.

Sincerely,

Benjamin Allen

Chignik AC, Vice Chair



**Fairbanks
Fish & Game Advisory Committee**

**Interior Region
Fish & Game Advisory Committees**

Kirk Schwalm
Chairman
PO Box 83825
Fairbanks, AK 99708

Central
Delta Junction
Eagle
Fairbanks
GASH
Koyukuk River
Lake Minchumina
McGrath

Middle Nenana River
Middle Yukon River
Minto-Nenana
Ruby
Stony Holitna
Tanana-Rampart-Manley
Upper Tanana Fortymile
Yukon Flats

To: Members of the Alaska Board of Fisheries
From: Fairbanks Advisory Committee
Date: March 2, 2021
Re: Hatchery Committee meeting 2021

The Alaska Board of Fisheries is vested with statutory authority to amend private non-profit (PNP) hatchery permits by regulation relating to the number of eggs taken, terminal harvest by hatcheries, and the location of such harvest. AS 16.10.440(b). This authority has been recognized by the Attorney General as follows, "Alaska Board of Fisheries has authority to modify releases in a hatchery permit." That authority can only be exercised if the Board takes an active interest in understanding what our 26 commercial PNP hatcheries are doing, where they are doing it, and their effect on wild salmon.

The BOF Hatchery Subcommittee was first organized in 1999 but did not meet after 2002, leaving a period of over 15 years without Board of Fisheries oversight. In March of 2018, the BOF re-established the hatchery committee as a "committee of the whole" with the intent of holding an annual non-regulatory reporting meeting. Subsequent hatchery meetings were held in 2019 and 2020.

As of March 2021, no hatchery meeting is scheduled until January 2022, because of COVID-19 considerations. We request the Board reconsider a meeting to occur via Zoom, in April or May of 2021. This, and all subsequent hatchery meetings, should be recorded for public access.

With many of our wild stocks in crisis, and the hatcheries continuing to increase production and expand remote release sites without Board oversight, the FAC requests the Board hold a hatchery meeting in 2021 rather than defer to 2022, when its calendar will be full with regulatory meetings. We are concerned the Board will be too busy in 2022 to meaningfully address hatchery issues.

In 2022 the Board will be addressing a number of hatchery proposals and regulatory changes that seek to limit Department and Board oversight and enhance the ability



of hatcheries to bypass any public process in pursuit of their commercial enhancement.

Increased egg take and—resultant remote releases have consistently increased almost every year to a current take of over 2 billion eggs and 1.8 billion released hatchery fish, primarily low value, but highly voracious and fast growing, pinks and chums. Over the past 20 years, the Board largely abandoned its statutory authority to—amend original hatchery—permit alteration requests to increase egg take, expand release sites and increase terminal harvest to fund their increasingly expensive operations. The inherent questions are about the sustainability of this practice economically and biologically.

Chinook salmon, the preferred food of Alaskans, have been in precipitous decline statewide. This has had a severe impact on all user groups. Sockeye, coho and chum salmon have had extreme regional variations. Conversely, hatchery pink salmon abundance has raised concern over impacts on wild stock.

Many believe that hatchery overproduction of pinks and chums into a nutritionally strained North Pacific are a cause of drastic declines in both numbers and size of wild sockeye, coho and Chinook. Multiple peer reviewed scientific papers support this belief.

In addition, hatchery fish that stray into streams supporting wild stocks are also of great concern as hatchery fish spawn with wild fish and dilute the natural genetic adaptations that have sustained these stocks over thousands of years. In 2011 the department launched a study that may exceed \$16,000,000 to quantify hatchery straying and fitness (productivity) of wild stocks in Prince William Sound (PWS) and Southeast (SE). The Alaska Hatchery Research Project (AHRP) included hatchery paid scientists, corporate aquaculture employees and hatchery producer's industry representatives who help shape the methodology and scope of the study.

Straying data was collected between 2013-2015. The method used by the hatchery research group called into question the validity of the method used to weight hatchery proportions and selection of streams over time. The protocol had called for results based upon the sum of live and dead salmon at the time that samples were collected yet Table 2 of the 2014 Annual Progress Report (Knudsen et al. 2015) states that straying proportions were measured based only upon carcass counts, despite knowing that wild fish generally enter streams earlier and therefore become carcasses earlier than the hatchery strays. This bias toward counting less strays combined with the biased selection of index streams farthest away from hatcheries boasting larger numbers of wild fish lead the department to issue a "technical paper" where prominent biologists - questioned the method of selecting streams with a concern of bias in favor of collecting low straying numbers.

The technical paper (curiously not published in the "technical papers" section of the Research Program's website) suggested several methods to correct the data to



more accurately reflect the percentage of straying fish over the entire PWS and SE. None of these suggestions were adopted by the aquaculture dominated research team. In 2019 concerning initial results in the fitness of hatchery fish was seen by genetics. A preliminary report from AHRP found that hatchery females were significantly less productive (fitness) than wild fish and retained 49% of their eggs after spawning. This concern continued in 2020 in a power point presentation presented to the Board at the Hatchery Committee meeting.

The AHRP was supposed to release its report on straying pink salmon and the effect on productivity upon the first generation of hatchery-wild pink salmon hybrids in 2018. The research program drafted a manuscript on straying in 2019 to be "peer reviewed" before publication that was anticipated at the end of 2020. Now, 10 years into the study and with funds drying up, the research group has yet to publish final reports. In the meantime, hatchery production continues to ramp up in remote areas with no oversight by the Board. Successive generations of interbreeding (introgression of hatchery genes into wild genes) since 2015 makes delayed reports on productivity less useful as most PWS Pink Salmon now carry at least some inferior genetic traits of the hatchery strays. The sustainability of Alaska's wild stocks in light of competition with hatchery stocks remain unaddressed.

Alaska Salmon producers rely on the Marine Stewardship Council's (MSC) recognition of our Salmon Fisheries being "sustainable." That certification expires in 2024. Many consumers and retailers will not sell Salmon that was not sustainably harvested. A key measure of sustainability, according to the MSC, requires the applicant to show "It is highly likely that the enhancement activities do not have significant negative impacts on the local adaptation, reproductive performance or productivity and diversity of wild stocks." British Columbia was forced to suspend its "sustainable fishery" certification in 2019 due to its failure to comply with the above requirement (and other deficiencies). Alaska will have to face the same issues as British Columbia in a couple years when it must re-apply for its sustainably certificate.

Alaska cannot prove that its hatchery program does not cause "significant negative impacts on the local adaptation, reproductive performance or productivity and diversity of wild stocks."

In fact, the opposite appears to be true, and it appears that the \$16,000,000 research program designed to address the effects of hatchery straying on wild stocks, may never release final reports that directly address the question of whether enhancement activities have a negative impact productivity of wild fish. The manuscript has been in review for 2 years now and funding is running short. The PNP's have only contributed 1,053,000 of the 10,000,000 cost to date for the research program and have stated they may no longer contribute anything to the effort, though required to by the terms of their permits. As with the genetic marking study of Copper River Salmon, final reports that cast a negative light on commercial



fish management, or may cause Alaska to lose its “Sustainable Fishery” certification can be delayed or suspended under the guise of lack of funding to complete or assess ongoing research projects. It is possible this very expensive multi-year research project may claim that funding issues hampers its ability make final assessments and issue a final report on whether hatchery strays reduce the productivity of wild stocks. This report is necessary for continuing the MSC “sustainability label” but it appears that the Salmon Producers, through ASMI, perhaps in anticipation of losing MSC certification, are developing their own certification program based on principles developed by the United Nations that were clearly drafted to address net pen farming of non-native species, and shrimp and other shellfish.

The Board cannot answer these questions if it doesn't have a meeting.

The Board, at its meeting, should ask the hatchery producers and ADF&G whether they expect to be re-certified by the MSC in 2024. And if not, what does that mean for the future of Alaska's commercial salmon industry which has only survived in a market increasingly dominated by farmed Atlantic salmon due to clever marketing including labeling their ranched fish “Wild caught” rather than wild?

The research team has already recognized that after several generations of wild fish breeding with hatchery strays, the ability to measure effects on productivity diminish or evaporate completely. In other words, delayed reporting on the effects of hatchery fish on wild fish until wild fish are so homogenized by inferior hatchery genetics could result in finding of “no significant adverse effects” despite undeniable loss of productivity or fitness of wild stocks.

Those with a vested economic interest in hatchery fish understand that we may soon reach a point where hatchery fish genetically overtake wild fish in PWS and SE, such that we can never truly protect wild stocks. The Board cannot continue to defer and delay action on hatcheries until this occurs.

A good example of what happens when the Board doesn't pay attention to hatcheries occurred in 2014, when the Board was not holding annual hatchery meetings. The SE regional hatchery planning team met in Juneau and approved a number of Hatchery Permit Alteration Requests (PAR) to increase production. These increased production requests were submitted by various Hatcheries operators run by commercial fishers. One hatchery requested that their permit be amended to allow the release of 50 million chums into Crawfish Inlet. The department objected, as did the Sitka Tribe, voicing concern over possible negative effects on wild stocks returning to the inlet. Crawfish creek was one of the streams selected by the research team to study straying in 2013-2015 and they found very little straying in those years. The team compromised and approved the release of 30 million fry into an inlet located in a wilderness area that previously had no hatchery releases. By 2019, Otolith sampling by the department found that 90-99% of the fish returning to



this index stream were hatchery fish. If the Board had exercised its authority to regulate hatcheries in 2014, and the public thereby allowed to participate, it is likely the departments concerns over straying, as expressed in the private hatchery team meeting, may have been heeded and that ill-advised request to dump an additional 50 million fish into a sensitive area for wild stocks would have been rejected.

Roe stripping for caviar and related carcass dumping by hatcheries in years of large returns have eliminated roe sales by other commercial groups and have caused the price of pinks and chums to plummet. When prices drop due to the glut of hatchery fish flooding the market, the industry response is to increase production. The Board has authority over egg taking, including stripping eggs and wasting the meat, yet former commissioners (Kevin Duffy memo attached) have usurped this authority to authorize wanton waste without involvement of the Board.

If the Board holds its hatchery meeting in 2021, it could request the update of the current results of the Hatchery Research fitness study and request the research teams peer reviewed report promised to the Board and public on straying and other possible negative interactions between hatchery and wild stocks. This important information must be transparent and made public and available after 10 years of study.

The Board's understanding of these negative interactions was a primary mandate of the Sustainable Salmon Policy (5 AAC 39.222). Management principles and criteria: "As a management principle, the effects and interactions of introduced or enhanced salmon stocks on wild stocks should be assessed. Wild stocks should be protected from adverse impacts from artificial propagation and enhancement efforts. Managers should use a conservative approach..."

Managers are not using a conservative approach in part because decisions to increase production of hatchery fish are being made by the industry to modify their own permits without the checks and balances of amendments by regulation through the Board process to assess the effects and interactions to protect wild stocks from adverse impacts.

As interactions increase with increased hatchery production, more is learned about these interactions, and it does not bode well for preservation of Alaska's wild salmon. The FAC is concerned that unless the Board begins to take an active interest in hatchery operations and begins exercising its regulatory authority to control egg take and terminal harvest size and location, our wild stocks will continue to suffer from increased competition for food in the ocean and from the weakening of genetics from hatchery strays that have swarmed into wild salmon spawning streams.

The meeting could be held via Zoom and recorded at very little cost. The Board has time and an unused budget for 2021. It should hold its annual hatchery meeting this



year instead of deferring it to 2022 to keep up to date on important results from the Alaska Hatchery Research Program.

Attachments: Technical paper; Minutes of SE team meeting approving release into Crawfish inlet; Assistant Attorney General Petersons authority of the Board on hatcheries AS 16.10.440(b).

Thank you for consideration,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Kirk Schwalm'.

Kirk Schwalm - Chairman



Minutes
Joint Northern/Southern Southeast Regional Planning Team Meeting
Tuesday, April 8, 2014
Glacier Room
Aspen Suites Hotel
8400 Airport Boulevard
Juneau, Alaska 99801

Chair:

Flip Pryor, Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) CF Division, Resource Development, Douglas

ADF&G RPT Representatives:

Brian Frenette, Division of Sport Fish (SF), Douglas

Lowell Fair, Division of Commercial Fisheries (CF), Fisheries Management, Douglas

Ron Josephson, CF, PNP Hatcheries, Juneau

Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association (SSRAA) RPT Representatives:

Chris Guggenbickler, Gillnet, Wrangell

John Peckham, Seine, Ketchikan

Dave Otte, Troll, Ketchikan

Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association (NSRAA) RPT Representatives:

Kevin McDougall, Gillnet, Juneau

Sven Stroosma, Seine, Bellingham/Mt Vernon

George Eliason, Troll, Sitka

Non-Regional Hatcheries with a Northern Southeast Region RPT Representative:

Eric Prestegard, Douglas Island Pink and Chum, Inc. (DIPAC) (ex officio)

Commerce, Community, and Economic Development Representatives:

Andy Macaulay, Division of Investments, Juneau (ex officio)

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service RPT Representatives:

Sheila Jacobson, USFS (ex officio)-(teleconference).

SSRAA Staff: Ketchikan

John Burke, General Manager

Sue Doherty, Research Manager

Bill Gass, Production Manager

Bret Hiatt, Operations Manager

NSRAA Staff: Sitka

Steve Reifentstahl, General Manager

Scott Wagner, Operations Manager

ADF&G Staff:

Judy Lum, SF, Douglas

Dan Grey, CF, Sitka-(teleconference)

Lorraine Vercesi, CF, Juneau

Pattie Skannes, CF, Sitka

Mark Stopha, CF, Juneau

Sam Rabung, CF, Juneau

Peter Bangs, CF, Juneau



Michelle Morris, CF, Juneau

Other Participants:

Kathy Hansen, SEAFSA, Juneau
Bart Watson, Armstrong-Keta Inc., Juneau
Jake Musslewhite, Armstrong-Keta Inc., Juneau
Lars R. Stangeland, DIPAC Board, Juneau
Jeff Lundberg, Klawock River Hatchery, Klawock
Tom Gemmell, USAG, Juneau
Charles McCullough, NSRAA, Petersburg
Jim Andersen, Division of Economic Development, Juneau
Dave Ohmer, Trident Seafoods, Petersburg
John Joyce, NOAA, Auke Bay Lab, Juneau
Max Worhatch, USAG, Petersburg
Martin Lunde, SEAS, Juneau
Justin Peeler, NSRAA, Seine, Sitka
Mitch Eide, NSRAA, Seine, Petersburg- (teleconference)

1.0 **Call to order.** Flip Pryor called the meeting to order at 8:10 a.m.

2.0 **Introduction/Public Comment.** Pryor noting the meeting was being recorded for the purpose of keeping the minutes. Comments from the public were accepted throughout the meeting.

3.0 **Amend or approve agenda.** Two items were added to the agenda; a discussion on the calculation of king and coho salmon values and a presentation on the history of private non-profit (PNP) hatchery permitted capacities vs actual eggs collected by year.

Action: VOTE: the agenda was **APPROVED** by unanimous consent.

4.0 **Review recommendations from the December 5, 2013 meeting in Ketchikan.**

Southern Southeast Regional Planning Team

- 1) Carried a motion to recommend approval of a SSRAA permit alteration request (PAR) to move a portion of existing Whitman Lake Hatchery coho salmon production that is traditionally released at Neets Bay to Anita Bay and Nakat Inlet.

Northern Southeast Regional Planning Team

- 1) Failed to carry a motion to recommend approval of a DIPAC PAR to add a new king salmon remote release site at Lena Cove.

5.0 **Approve minutes from December 5, 2013 meeting in Ketchikan.**

Action: Guggenbickler **MOVED** and Josephson **SECONDED** to recommend **APPROVAL** of the minutes from the December 5, 2013 meeting in Ketchikan. **VOTE:** the vote unanimously **CARRIED**.



6.0 Action Items:

Southern Southeast Regional Planning Team

6.1 Whitman Lake Hatchery PAR to increase permitted capacity from 1.5 million to 2.1 million green eggs and adds Ketchikan Creek as a remote release site for up to 100,000 king salmon smolt. Additional king salmon production from this PAR is currently slated for Neets Bay.

Introduction: (Bill Gass, Operations Manager, SSRAA) Deer Mountain Tribal Hatchery (DMTH), which has been run by Ketchikan Tribal Hatchery Corporation since 1994, closed in June 2013. DMTH was run as a three species hatchery with a permitted capacity of 133,000 king salmon eggs, with the goal of releasing 100,000 king salmon smolt into Ketchikan Creek. The hatchery provides SSRAA with the opportunity to produce 500,000 king salmon smolt. The Ketchikan Creek release will be 100,000 king salmon smolt and an additional 400,000 king salmon smolt will be available for release elsewhere. Neets Bay is considered the default remote release site as Neets Bay Hatchery has a permit to release 1.5 million king salmon and is currently only releasing 750,000 king salmon. Whitman Lake Hatchery (WLH) is the only hatchery that uses Chickamin River stock king salmon. Returns to DMTH would provide a backup king salmon brood source for WLH. It will take about five years before Chickamin River stock returns to DMTH can be used as a backup brood source for WLH. Previously, DMTH utilized Unuk River stock king salmon and those fish will be returning for the next several years. Once Chickamin River stock king salmon has been established at DMTH, the hatchery will be operated as a satellite facility to WLH.

Discussion: The department has processed, at SSRAA's request, a management feasibility analysis for DMTH, but has not received a hatchery permit application for DMTH yet. The department is concerned about the Unuk River not meeting escapement for the last two years. The department notes that an increase of king salmon releases in the area will almost certainly mean increased fishing effort, which could lead to harsher management action in order to meet escapement in the Unuk River. A department representative voiced concern that THAs have not been sampled well enough to determine if the department is adequately protecting wild stocks. The Neets Bay terminal harvest area (THA) common property fishery is sampled at approximately 2% for three years but the most recent two years the fishery was sampled at 10 to 20%; the cost recovery fishery is well sampled. In 2013, three wild Unuk River tags were recovered in the early rotations of the chum salmon common property fishery. A SSRAA representative pointed out that several systems are assessed in the area and the Unuk River is the only river not meeting escapement, which suggests that the problem is not tied to a specific fishery. The commercial fisheries in Neets Bay are targeting chum salmon and the addition of the return on 400,000 king salmon smolt is not going to attract more commercial effort to the Neets Bay chum salmon fishery. Furthermore, the fishery in the area that is least assessed for coded wire tags is the Clover Pass to Bushy Point sport fishery. In 2013, the primary component of the king salmon return was made up of five-year-old fish from brood year 2009 (BY09). There were a total of 36 wild Unuk River king salmon tags recovered from 53,000 BY09 Unuk River king salmon that were tagged. In 2014, there will be less chance of recovering Unuk River king salmon tags as there were only 17,000 BY10 fish tagged. The department pointed out the conundrum is we want an increased catch of king salmon in our fisheries, but as the number



of hatchery fish increases in the corridor fisheries, the amount of effort in those corridors will increase, and the number of wild fish intercepted in the process will increase. The SSRAA board would like to put the additional production where they would most likely be caught by the troll fleet; they don't necessarily have to go to Neets Bay.

Action: Josephson **MOVED** and Guggenbickler **SECONDED** to recommend **APPROVAL** of the Whitman Lake Hatchery PAR to increase permitted capacity from 1.5 million to 2.1 million green eggs and add Ketchikan Creek as a remote release site for up to 100,000 king salmon smolt. **VOTE:** the motion **CARRIED** by a vote of 5/0, with one vote abstaining.

6.2 Burnett Inlet Hatchery PAR to add Anita Bay as a remote release site for coho salmon incubated at Burnett Inlet Hatchery and reared at Neck Lake.

Introduction: This PAR is a housekeeping measure. At the fall meeting, the Southern Southeast Regional Planning Team (SSERPT) recommended approval of a SSRAA PAR to move Whitman Lake Hatchery coho salmon production that had traditionally been released at Neets Bay to Anita Bay. That PAR overlooked the portion of eggs that are taken at Whitman Lake Hatchery and then transported to Burnett Inlet Hatchery to hatch, before being transported for remote release.

Discussion: There was no discussion.

Action: Guggenbickler **MOVED** and Otte **SECONDED** to recommend **APPROVAL** of the Burnett Inlet Hatchery PAR to add Anita Bay as a remote release site for coho salmon incubated at Burnett Inlet Hatchery and reared at Neck Lake. **VOTE:** the motion **CARRIED** unanimously.

6.3 Port Saint Nicholas Hatchery PAR to add 20 million chum salmon eggs and adds a remote release site at Port Asumcion, on Baker Island.

Introduction: (Jeff Lundberg, Klawock River Hatchery manager, Prince of Wales Hatchery Association (POWHA)) The PAR is being requested to diversify POWHA's production. In 2013, Klawock River Hatchery had a record return of coho salmon but a single specie cost recovery is not covering the costs of operation. Port Saint Nicholas Hatchery is a small hatchery owned by the City of Craig and run by POWHA. There is room in the building and enough water to incubate chum salmon. There is no intention of building a broodstock program.

Discussion: Klawock River Hatchery has made significant changes to staff and fish culture practices in the last few years which have led to significant increases in production. In 2013, 8.2% of the commercial troll coho salmon harvest came from Klawock River Hatchery. POWHA is in serious financial trouble. The SSRAA board has committed to support POWHA with up to \$500,000 per year for the next three years in order to help maintain POWHA financially, which allows for continued production. The DIPAC board recently voted to contribute \$500,000 to SSRAA for the POWHA support. Adding a chum salmon program at Port Asumcion adds financial security to POWHA by diversifying their cost recovery options. The commercial fisheries will occur inside the bay proper, not in front of the bay. There will be some overlap in the return timing of these chum salmon and wild sockeye with Treaty and subsistence implications. The department will require otolith marking and sampling in the special harvest area which could include sampling of sockeye



salmon. Cost recovery catches will also be monitored for interception of pink and king salmon. The weir at Klawock River Hatchery can be monitored for increased chum salmon presence, but most chum salmon spawn below the weir. Port Armstrong Hatchery was mentioned as a possible broodstock source, but the department is more comfortable with the use of SSRAA chum salmon stock which originated with Carroll River fish. It will be a significant effort for SSRAA to provide 20 million chum salmon eggs annually. Discussion resulted in an estimate that it will take six to ten million chum salmon eggs, assuming normal marine survival rates, to provide a good financial return on the Port Asumcion program. A motion was carried to amend the PAR from 20 million chum salmon eggs to eight million chum salmon eggs. It was noted that there is no short-term solution for SSRAA to provide 20 million chum salmon eggs annually. Eight million eggs will provide a large enough return to evaluate the program and provide a cost recovery harvest.

Action: Peckham **MOVED** and Guggenbickler **SECONDED** to amend the PAR from 20 million to eight million chum salmon eggs. **VOTE:** the motion to amend **CARRIED** unanimously. **VOTE:** to recommend **APPROVAL** of the Port Saint Nicholas Hatchery PAR to add eight million chum salmon eggs and add a remote release site at Port Asumcion, on Baker Island **CARRIED** unanimously.

6.4 Klawock River Hatchery PAR to add a remote release site at Port Asumcion for up to two million coho salmon smolt.

Introduction: (Jeff Lundberg, Klawock River Hatchery manager, POWHA) This PAR was submitted in conjunction to the chum salmon PAR. It only makes financial sense to move coho salmon to Port Asumcion if the chum salmon infrastructure is in place. The idea of moving the coho salmon to Port Asumcion is to take pressure off the Klawock River. Moving two million coho salmon to Port Asumcion could remove 40,000 adult coho salmon that otherwise will return to Klawock River.

Discussion: The department suggested starting the project at 250,000 differentially tagged coho salmon smolt. The department would like to see increased tagging on the smaller release to evaluate straying into other west Prince of Wales systems, with the Klawock River being the most likely location for detecting any propensity of this release to stray. Klawock River Hatchery uses both otolith marks and coded wire tags to mark their coho salmon. The cost recovery harvest will be sampled for tags but that sampling will also indicate whether wild stock fish are being harvested in the cost recovery fishery. A gear group representative stated that the return on a 250,000 release didn't seem large enough to attract much commercial interest, which could lead to more of a straying problem. The POWHA representative pointed out that the cost recovery return on a 250,000 release might not be enough to pay for two employees for an additional three weeks, especially if the coho salmon contributions to the commercial fleet are as high as Klawock River Hatchery has been the last couple years (70%). A SSRAA representative penciled the numbers out to a 20,000 fish return, which means 6,000 fish to cost recovery, or roughly 40,000 pounds of coho salmon. A cost recovery harvest of that magnitude would gross approximately \$70,000 annually, which would pay for the fishery and allow for evaluation of the return, but would not generate enough money to help pay down POWHA's debt. A discussion revolved around the pros and cons of approving a permit that included step-wise increases versus approving a permit at a lower number knowing that an increase will be requested in a few years. The difficulty with step-wise increase permits is looking back on



them, years later, and trying to evaluate the intention of the trigger points and decide if the contingency has been met. It is much cleaner to approve a permit increase and understand that another increase will be requested after a few years of evaluating the returns.

Action: Josephson **MOVED** and Frenette **SECONDED** to **AMEND** the PAR from two million coho salmon smolt to 250,000 coho salmon smolt released at Port Asumcion. **VOTE:** the motion to amend **CARRIED** by a vote of 4/1, with one vote abstaining.

Josephson **MOVED** and Peckham **SECONDED** to recommend **APPROVAL** of the Port Saint Nicholas Hatchery PAR to add a remote release site at Port Asumcion for up to 250,000 coho salmon smolt. **VOTE:** the motion **CARRIED** unanimously.

Northern Southeast Regional Planning Team

6.5 Hidden Falls Hatchery PAR to amend conditional chum salmon capacity for Gunnuk Creek Hatchery from 45 million to 55 million green eggs.

Introduction: (Steve Reifenstuhl, General Manager, NSRAA) Gunnuk Creek Hatchery is currently permitted to take 65 million chum salmon eggs, with 55 million of those eggs for release at Southeast Cove. This PAR would allow Hidden Falls Hatchery to take 55 million chum salmon eggs, incubate them to fry, and then release them at Southeast Cove.

Discussion: Southeast Cove special harvest area has been in existence since 1987. Gunnuk Creek Hatchery is not financially viable and is not planning to operate this year. The permitted chum salmon capacity to release at Southeast Cove remains with Gunnuk Creek Hatchery. This PAR acts as a stopgap to allow Hidden Falls Hatchery to take the chum salmon eggs for the Southeast Cove program while details of Gunnuk Creek Hatchery's future get sorted out. Last year, Hidden Falls Hatchery took 20 million chum salmon eggs that were transported to Gunnuk Creek Hatchery as eyed eggs, plus another 10 million chum salmon eggs that were hatched at Hidden Falls Hatchery and transported as fry to Southeast Cove as part of a cooperative program. This summer, NSRAA plans to take 35 million chum salmon eggs that will be hatched at Hidden Falls Hatchery and transported as fry to Southeast Cove. Hidden Falls Hatchery will require more incubators and some other additional infrastructure to produce the full 55 million eggs for Southeast Cove. Hidden Falls Hatchery will differentially otolith mark the chum salmon and sample the cost recovery harvest. There will be several years of overlap between Gunnuk Creek Hatchery produced fish and NSRAA production. The value of Gunnuk Creek Hatchery fish captured in cost recovery will be going to the Department of Commerce.

Action: Eliason **MOVED** and McDougall **SECONDED** to recommend **APPROVAL** of the Hidden Falls Hatchery PAR to amend conditional chum salmon capacity for Gunnuk Creek Hatchery from 45 million to 55 million green eggs. **VOTE:** the motion **CARRIED** unanimously.

6.6 Sawmill Creek Hatchery PAR to add 50 million chum salmon eggs and add Crawfish Inlet as a remote release site.



Introduction: (Steve Reifentstahl, General Manager, NSRAA) NSRAA has been searching for a new chum salmon program since 1999. Recently, NSRAA has submitted two management feasibility requests with the department; one in Excursion Inlet and the other for Pelican. The department did not review either of those sites favorably. NSRAA requested the department look at the geography of northern Southeast Alaska and come up with a list of possible sites the department might consider for a new pink or chum salmon program. The department produced a report with several areas that could possibly work for a new release site, but the document was not intended to be a guarantee that any PAR submitted for one of those locations will pass without question. NSRAA chose Crawfish Inlet as a new release site based on the report and the ability to utilize Sawmill Creek Hatchery. There will need to be several modifications made to the facility and there will be difficult operational challenges, but there is water available to handle the requested production. The PAR is requesting 50 million chum salmon eggs. Medvejie Creek Hatchery fall chum salmon stock will be used, which will require approximately 50,000 additional adult chum salmon for broodstock. The eggs would be taken at Medvejie Creek Hatchery and transported to Sawmill Creek Hatchery for incubation. In the spring, the fry will be moved from the incubators into transfer tanks, held for 24 hours, and then transported by boat to Crawfish Inlet for short-term rearing and release. Crawfish Inlet is approximately 40 miles by boat from Sawmill Creek Hatchery. The return on a 50 million chum salmon egg program, given current marine survival (2%) and price (\$.55/lb.), would generate a four million dollar fishery. If all four million dollars went to the troll fleet, they would be in their lower end of their target allocation of enhanced salmon range. The findings of the Alaska Board of Fisheries (**Southeast Alaska Area Enhanced Salmon Allocation Management Plan (5 AAC 33.364) Finding #94-02-FB**) lists three tools for making adjustments to the distribution of harvest to meet allocation percent goals: 1) special harvest area management adjustments; 2) new enhanced salmon production; and 3) modification of enhancement projects production, including remote releases. This PAR uses the second and third tool to address the current allocation imbalance. This PAR also could test the theory heard many times during allocation discussions; that trollers can harvest all the returning fish in a THA if they are given exclusive rights to the area. NSRAA will ask for the THA to be permitted for all three gear groups, and the NSRAA board will use the THA as a tool to address allocation imbalances. Crawfish Inlet was chosen to minimize wild stock interaction. There should be very few non-target species caught in the THA located in the bay. There may be some non-target species caught in the troll fishery that is open in front of Crawfish Inlet in August. As the fishery targeting the Crawfish Inlet return is ramping up, sampling should be able to identify if too many non-target species are being harvested. If a problem is identified, the Crawfish Inlet fishery could be pulled back into the THA to minimize non-target species catch. The 50 million chum salmon egg increase was not chosen arbitrarily; the return on a 50 million chum salmon egg release is what is necessary to give the fishermen a return on investment that is large enough to justify the amount of money NSRAA plans to invest in this new project.

Discussion: The stock composition of Medvejie Creek Hatchery fall chum salmon is 18% three-year-olds. If 50 million chum salmon eggs are taken in 2014, the first return would be approximately 170,000 adults in 2018 (all three-year-olds), and 810,000 adults in 2019 (three and four-year-olds), and a full component (three, four, and five-year-olds) in 2020. Medvejie Creek Hatchery takes 20 million eggs for release at the hatchery to provide broodstock for the chum salmon program. It may be difficult to produce the entire 50 million chum salmon eggs for the Crawfish Inlet release every year. West Crawfish Inlet has a summer chum salmon return that is used by the department as an



indicator stock. The West Crawfish Inlet chum salmon stock was sampled last year as part of the straying study and found to have very few hatchery fish straying into the system. The department may require NSRAA to continue to sample the West Crawfish Inlet system after the straying study work is completed. The department feels that 20 million chum salmon eggs is a conservative baseline level for evaluation of a new chum salmon program. An NSRAA gear representative noted there is a difference when comparing Crawfish Inlet and Port Asumcion; the Port Asumcion project is primarily trying to generate cost recovery for POWHA while the Crawfish Inlet project is being developed to create commercial fishing opportunity. The department's biggest concern with this project is potential straying into the West Crawfish Inlet chum salmon indicator stream. The department would like to start with lower numbers and ramp the program up if no problems develop when the fish return. An NSRAA gear representative noted that if the return is not large enough to attract gear effort, especially with the troll fleet, then the evaluation of the fishery may not be accurate. The ideological argument; in order to truly test a new program, the program has to be tested at full production to see if there are any problems, but testing at full production requires an understanding that the program would ramp down if problems are discovered. An NSRAA representative noted that the 50 million chum salmon egg number was derived from a business goal. Furthermore, the department adopting an arbitrary 20 million egg starting point for chum salmon projects changes how an association can operate. At this point the discussion revolved around how the department chose the starting point of 20 million and whether there was a chance of increasing that number. NSRAA felt the number was arbitrary and a complete surprise, especially as it was presented as policy or a long standing guideline. The department projected a 500,000 adult chum salmon return from a 20 million egg program, which they feel is a significant enough return to evaluate the program while also making contributions to the commercial fleet. A department motion to amend the PAR from 50 million to 20 million chum salmon eggs for Crawfish Inlet failed to carry by a vote of 3-3. The votes were split between the department and industry representatives. The PAR was tabled until the department had a chance to talk with genetics staff.

Sitka Tribe of Alaska (STA) submitted a letter in opposition to the NSRAA PAR to take 50 million chum salmon eggs for release at Crawfish Inlet. STA believes this release site will have a negative impact on resident salmon stocks in Crawfish Inlet, on subsistence sockeye salmon returning to Necker Bay, on the Sitka Sound herring stock, and the wilderness character of the area surrounding Crawfish Inlet.

The funding for the current straying study should take the project through 2016. Additional funding is available with the goal of continuing the project through 2023. The West Crawfish Inlet summer chum salmon are in the stream by the first week of August, which should provide segregation from the Medvejie Creek Hatchery fall chum salmon. The department was willing to agree to a 30 million egg amendment if: 1) NSRAA commits to sampling the West Crawfish Inlet index stream, if it is not already being sampled in the current straying study; 2) the terminal harvest will be sampled for wild stock interception; 3) NSRAA will be required to clean up the special harvest area if there is a buildup of returning hatchery chum salmon. NSRAA staff suggested a management plan that provides a cleanup fishery by cost recovery seine or commercial net gear, as necessary, to minimize straying concerns and evaluate the efficiency of the troll fishery.

Action: McDougall **MOVED** and Eliason **SECONDED** to **AMEND** the Sawmill Creek Hatchery PAR from 50 million to 30 million chum salmon eggs and add a remote release site at Crawfish



Inlet. **VOTE:** the motion to amend **CARRIED** unanimously. The vote to recommend approval **CARRIED** unanimously.

6.7 Medvejie Creek Hatchery PAR to add Crawfish Inlet as a remote release site for up to 600,000 Andrews Creek stock Chinook salmon smolt.

Introduction: (Scott Wagner, Operations Manager, NSRAA) The PAR adds a remote release site in Crawfish Inlet of up to 600,000 Andrews Creek stock king salmon smolt of current Medvejie Creek Hatchery production. This project works in conjunction with the chum salmon project. The freshwater rearing of these king salmon occurs at Medvejie Creek Hatchery. The fish will be transported to Crawfish Inlet and held for approximately three weeks of saltwater rearing before release. The king salmon project will utilize the same pen complex that was used for rearing chum salmon. Currently, this king salmon production is released at Halibut Point Marine and Bear Cove.

Discussion: Currently, there is not much king salmon troll effort in Crawfish Inlet in the summer fishery. Necker Bay and Whale Bay appear to have more king salmon troll effort. NSRAA king salmon are coded-wire-tagged at a rate of 9-10%. Commercial king salmon fisheries are sampled well for coded wire tags.

Action: McDougall **MOVED** and Stroosma **SECONDED** to recommend **APPROVAL** of the Medvejie Creek Hatchery PAR to add Crawfish Inlet as a remote release site for up to 600,000 Andrews Creek stock Chinook salmon smolt. **VOTE:** the motion **CARRIED** unanimously.

6.8 Port Armstrong Hatchery PAR to increase permitted capacity of pink salmon from 85 million to 135 million green eggs and adds Port Herbert as a remote release site for up to 85 million eggs.

Introduction: (Jake Musslewhite, Operations Manager, Armstrong-Keta, Inc. (AKI)) Port Armstrong Hatchery is currently permitted for 85 million pink salmon eggs with their progeny all released from the hatchery. This PAR increases the permitted capacity of pink salmon eggs to 135 million eggs and adds Port Herbert as a remote release site where AKI plans to operate cost recovery operations. The increase of 50 million pink salmon eggs was chosen for financial reasons. The pens will be located in front of Nakvassin Creek, which is a partial barrier system with sockeye salmon as well as summer coho salmon. Port Armstrong Hatchery pink salmon have a later return timing than the sockeye and coho salmon returns to Nakvassin Creek. Cost recovery would begin in mid-August, which is after most sockeye salmon have moved into the lake and the coho salmon staging in front of the creek would be protected from cost recovery harvest. Moving the progeny of 85 million pink salmon eggs to Port Herbert shifts the production currently happening at Port Armstrong up a couple bays to the north, further away from the Port Alexander area troll fishery. The returning adults should be caught in the same fisheries as the current release and may increase seine catches further up the eastern Baranof Island shoreline. Port Armstrong Hatchery has had a long-term decline in pink salmon marine survivals, possibly due to lack of near-shore marine habitat or predation. Diversifying the pink salmon release could lead to better marine survivals. The initial plan is to move the progeny of 50 million pink salmon eggs to Port Herbert and release the progeny of 35 million eggs from the hatchery. The hatchery can incubate an additional 20 million pink salmon eggs with relatively minor



modifications to the hatchery. The other 30 million pink salmon eggs will require major modifications or new infrastructure.

Discussion: The department position on the Port Armstrong Hatchery PAR is to limit the increase in pink salmon eggs to 20 million and add Port Herbert as a remote release site for progeny of 20 million eggs. An AKI representative noted that limiting the project to 20 million pink salmon eggs gives the project only marginal financial viability. The project is designed to increase common property contribution and diversify cost recovery harvest. The donor stock for Port Armstrong Hatchery pink salmon is Sashin Creek, which is approximately five miles away from Port Herbert. Concern was expressed from an industry representative about trying to pencil out a financial plan for a new project when the department is going to start with an arbitrary low number and then not commit to when another increase can happen or how big that increase could be. The department will continue to review each PAR on a case by case basis. AKI would like to request an increase in chum salmon for a release at Port Lucy. It will be a number of years before that program would be able to contribute any fish. The pink salmon release at Port Herbert will make contributions much more quickly. Some people in the upper levels of the department are not comfortable permitting facilities for more eggs than they are capable of producing, thus creating unused capacity on the books. Port Armstrong Hatchery is capable of rearing an additional 20 million eggs at this time. A department representative suggested we approve a 20 million egg increase now, because that is what can be incubated this year, and then be open for another request for increase at the fall meeting. A discussion revolved around whether or not the increase of 20 million eggs is going to limit the release at Port Herbert to 20 million eggs. The department contacted the Department of Genetics over the lunch break to discuss this PAR. Port Armstrong Hatchery, Sashin Creek (pink salmon donor stock), and Port Herbert are all within ten miles of each other. Department of Genetics was more concerned with the area increase than the number released at Port Herbert given that the population structure is much shallower for pink salmon than it is with chum salmon. The department suggested an increase of 20 million eggs (85 million pink salmon eggs to 105 million pink salmon eggs) with the progeny of up to 55 million pink salmon eggs being released at Port Herbert. The Port Herbert release will be differentially marked from the Port Armstrong Hatchery release. Sashin Creek will be sampled to initially look for differential stray rates between the two release sites into Sashin Creek. If significant or differential stray rates are detected, an increased sampling effort will be implemented. The Port Herbert terminal fishery will be sampled for wild stock interception. AKI will be required to clean up the special harvest area if there is a buildup of returning hatchery fish.

The Chatham Trollers submitted a letter in opposition the Port Armstrong Hatchery PAR. They noted that shifting the project from Port Lucy to Port Herbert removes their objection regarding shifting seiners into a troll only area. However they still oppose the project based on: 1) the increase in pink salmon reducing the available feed fish in the area, increasing the number of pink salmon caught during the coho salmon troll fishery, and the increased seine interception of treaty king salmon while pursuing pink salmon; 2) the stray potential of the pink salmon as they pulse in and out of a bay with a wide entrance (unlike Port Armstrong that has a narrow entrance which allows the fish to be corralled as soon as they enter the bay for the first time); 3) the increased time the seine fleet will spend in south Chatham Strait because of the added pink salmon production will preclude trolling in the area during the peak of the coho salmon return.



Dave Turcott, a troll from Sitka, submitted a letter in support of the Port Armstrong Hatchery PAR. He noted he has been trolling the area since 1967, served briefly on the AKI board, and helped start NSRAA while he was teaching marine science at Sheldon Jackson College. He does not believe this increased pink production will negatively impact the productivity of the region. He views this project as way to make AKI more financially stable, which will allow them to continue to produce king and coho salmon for the troll fleet.

Amendment: At the fall 2014 meeting in Petersburg, the RPT unanimously voted to approve an amendment acknowledging the SSRAA troll representative stating that Alaska Trollers Association was opposed to the AKI pink salmon project.

Action: Josephson **MOVED** and Frenette **SECONDED** to **AMEND** the Port Armstrong Hatchery PAR to increase permitted capacity of pink salmon from 85 million to 105 million green eggs and add Port Herbert as a remote release site for up to 55 million eggs. **VOTE:** the motion to amend **CARRIED** unanimously. The vote to recommend approval **CARRIED** unanimously.

Joint Southeast Regional Planning Team

6.9 Update on the current state of enhanced salmon allocation.

Introduction: (Flip Pryor, Region One Resource Development Biologist, ADF&G) distributed a Power-Point presentation entitled “Preliminary 2013 and Final 2012 Allocation Estimates of Enhanced Salmon in Southeast Alaska” prior to the meeting. The allocation value is equal to the number of fish harvested, multiplied by the average weight, multiplied by the price per pound. If applicable, the value of roe sold from special harvest areas (SHAs) is added into the appropriate value equation. The Hidden Falls tax assessment value is subtracted from the NSRAA chum salmon seine value. The number of fish harvested by gear group comes from the hatchery operator annual reports. The average weights come from the Region 1 BOF Report and from SSRAA (applied to SSRAA produced chum salmon in net fisheries). All the prices come from the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission.

The target troll allocation is 27–32%. The final 2012 troll value is 11%, which brings the 2008–2012 five-year average to 16%. The preliminary 2013 value is 24%, which brings the preliminary 2009–2013 five-year average to 17%.

The target seine allocation is 44–49%. The final 2012 seine value is 49%, which brings the 2008–2012 five-year average to 43%. The preliminary 2013 value is 40%, which brings the preliminary 2009–2013 five-year average to 43%.

The target gillnet allocation is 24–29%. The final 2012 gillnet value is 39%, which brings the 2008–2012 five-year average to 41%. The preliminary 2013 value is 36%, which brings the preliminary 2009–2013 five-year average to 40%.

Discussion: To account for the tax assessment, the annual amount of the Hidden Falls Hatchery cost recovery goal is subtracted from the gross value of the Hidden Falls Hatchery chum salmon seine fishery.



6.10 Chum salmon troll fishery management plan analysis.

Introduction: (Pattie Skannes, Regional Troll Biologist, ADF&G) A handout was distributed before the meeting titled, “Troll Chum Salmon Fishery Analysis”. Prior to the Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) meeting in 2012, the JSERPT requested the department collect data on troll chum salmon fisheries from 2012-2014 and develop draft management plans for fisheries at Homeshore, West Behm Canal, Cholmondeley Sound and other fisheries that may develop. Through the 2012 BOF process, the District 12 and District 14 Enhanced Chum Salmon Troll Fisheries Management Plan was adopted and will sunset on December 31, 2014. This analysis includes, a listing of current chum salmon management plans, troll chum and king salmon harvest, effort and stock composition data for District 12 and 14 fisheries, since those fisheries are managed for both chum and king salmon. Wild chum salmon escapements and escapement goals are also discussed.

Discussion: The department provided these data as an informational item and will continue to collect data again in 2014. A gillnet representative noted that in 2013, only 80% of the chum salmon harvested in the Homeshore fishery were otolith marked. Furthermore, a portion of the remaining 20% (59,066 chum salmon) would almost certainly be harvested by the gillnet fleet, so if the Homeshore troll fishery is to continue, the unmarked fish should somehow be included in the allocation calculation. A department representative noted the Homeshore example is what he has been stressing for years; new or expanded fisheries targeting hatchery fish may have unintended consequences, so we need to proceed with caution when considering new or increased hatchery releases. There was a discussion, driven by the gillnet representatives, about opening up the allocation plan and possibly include the value of wild fish caught in fisheries targeting enhanced fish. There was a discussion about possible hook mortality on juvenile king salmon caught during the chum salmon troll fishery. Several people attending the meeting were aware that Joe Orsi (NOAA) has observed a relatively high rate of juvenile king salmon with hook damage while conducting the Southeast Coastal Monitoring Study, which is a near shore trawl study that collects data at set locations every summer.

6.11 Calculations of king and coho salmon values in the allocation formula.

Introduction: There has been some question about whether or not the true value of king and coho salmon is being captured in the allocation formula. A specific example of the possible problem is troll caught king salmon. The king salmon caught in the spring fishery are primarily enhanced fish and have a higher value per fish than king salmon caught in the summer fishery, where the majority of king salmon are harvested. If average prices are used for the entire season is the value of the enhanced king salmon caught in the spring fishery being fairly calculated?

Discussion: A meeting is scheduled for tomorrow (April 9th) to discuss what the perceived problems are and how they might be addressed. Attendance will include the department, hatchery representatives, and CFEC staff. The goal was to address the problem after the December meeting and have the solutions figured out before this meeting, but the issue is complex and the logistics of scheduling the meeting did not work out to accomplish that goal.



6.12 Joint Southeast Regional Planning Team report on Southeast Allocation of Enhanced Salmon.

Introduction: The JSERPT annually writes a letter to the commissioner on the status of allocation in Southeast Alaska. That document usually includes a list of things that have happened recently or are about to happen that may have an effect on the allocation situation.

Discussion: A discussion occurred around what increases in production are expected to return in the next few years. SSRAA recently added two million additional fall coho salmon production to be released at Neets Bay, Anita Bay, and Nakat Inlet. In 2014, returns from 1.2 million of that increase will be coming back to Neets Bay. The Anita Bay and Nakat Inlet increase will start to return in 2015. The SSRAA PAR that was recommended for approval today increases overall king salmon production by 400,000 smolt. That increase could be in the water in two years. NSRAA has recently made some changes to coho salmon production but no increased returns are expected in 2014. Deer Lake has increased up to a three million egg goal. Hidden Falls Hatchery is experimenting with overwintering coho salmon in saltwater. Sawmill Creek Hatchery continues to build its broodstock program which will lead to increased releases in the next few years. NSRAA has also reinstated the coho salmon lake rearing program, which puts fry into several lakes on southern Baranof Island. In 2014, Macaulay Hatchery (DIPAC) will release an additional 750,000 coho salmon over their traditional release number.

The gear group representatives stayed behind after the rest of the agenda was completed to continue to craft the letter to the commissioner. The letter below summarizes the discussions and conclusions of the Joint Southeast Regional Planning Team:

Rough Draft 4/08/14

Letter to Commissioner from RPT.

The JRPT reviewed the final allocation estimates of the value of enhanced salmon in Southeast Alaska for 2012 and the preliminary estimates for 2013. The gillnet fleet is above its allocation range and has been for more than three consecutive years of five-year rolling averages. The seine and troll fleets continue to be below their allocation ranges for more than three consecutive years of five-year rolling averages. In the last few years the seine percentage has been increasing and the gillnet percentage has been decreasing. The troll fleet has been well below its range in five-year rolling averages since the establishment of the allocation plan, although the troll fleet increased its value substantially in 2013.

We note the following.

The seine opportunities allowed at Amalga Harbor have helped the seine fleet get closer to its range. Beginning in 2014 the first returns of an additional 10 million chum salmon release to Kendrick will help the seine fleet, and the first returns of an additional 12 million chum salmon release at Neets Bay will help all three fleets, but especially trollers and seiners.



Efforts continue to be made to improve chum salmon harvest opportunities for the troll fleet and the troll fleet is increasing its success at harvesting chum salmon.

SSRAA has established a Neets Bay Harvest Fund, which is intended to provide regular and increased chum salmon harvesting opportunities for trollers. DIPAC has contributed to this fund. The fund will also increase opportunities for net fishermen, but will likely help seiners more than gillnetters.

Hatchery operators continue to increase production of Chinook and coho salmon, which are the targeted troll species. SSRAA is pursuing operation of Deer Mountain Hatchery which could lead to the production of an additional 400,000 Chinook salmon smolts. The increased coho salmon releases at Neets Bay, Anita Bay, and Nakat Inlet were a result of an industry consensus position adopted by the Board of Fisheries in 2008. In 2014, progeny from 1.2 million additional coho salmon eggs will be returning to Neets Bay. In 2015, progeny from 800,000 additional coho salmon eggs will be returning to Anita Bay and Nakat Inlet. Increased coho salmon production at Deer Lake and changes to coho salmon rearing strategies at Hidden Falls Hatchery should lead to increased coho salmon returns in 2015. Sawmill Creek Hatchery coho salmon broodstock development continues to build which should lead to increased coho salmon releases in the next few years. DIPAC will release an additional 750,000 coho salmon this spring in association with building improvements made to the Macaulay Hatchery.

Increases in chum salmon production have been permitted and in the future will help all three gear groups. Chum salmon releases at Crawfish Inlet are intended to significantly help trollers by giving the troll fleet some preference of harvest in the THA and exclusivity of harvest in nearby waters.

We recognize that all of the changes in production and fishing opportunities may not get the fleets within their ranges. Certainly there is substantial effort in this regard and it appears likely that the efforts will help. This is assuming things out of the control of the industry and the department (like varying prices, wild stock opportunities, and survival rates) remains stable.

The JRPT had a long and serious discussion about the allocation plan, the difficulties in getting the troll fleet in their range and that there may be a need to ask the Board of Fish to reconvene the allocation task force for an open discussion of the Southeast Enhanced Salmon Allocation Plan. This will be an agenda item for the JRPT at the fall 2014 meeting.

The JRPT will submit three placeholder proposals (5 AAC 33.376. District 13: Deep Inlet Terminal Harvest Area Salmon Management Plan, 5 AAC 33.383 District 7: Anita Bay Terminal Harvest Area Salmon Management Plan, 5 AAC 29.114 District 12 and Districts 14 Enhanced Chum Salmon Troll Fisheries Management Plan) regarding the sunseting regulations by the April 10th deadline. In December the JRPT will review all proposals related to enhanced allocation and will consider recommending actions to the Board of Fisheries.

Action: Peckham **MOVED** and Stroosma **SECONDED** to **APPROVE** the letter on the status of allocation of enhanced salmon in Southeast Alaska and submit it to the commissioner. **VOTE:** the motion **CARRIED** by a vote of 5-0.



7.0 Information and Discussion Items.

7.1 Keta River king salmon broodstock development project update.

Introduction: (John Joyce, NOAA/Auke Bay Lab) In 2013, the first egg take occurred on the Keta River king salmon broodstock development project with logistical support from ADF&G and AKI. There are plans for egg takes over next two years. The 2013 permit was for 20 pair of king salmon and gametes were extracted from 17 females and 20 males. Approximately 60,000 fry were recently ponded into freshwater rearing ponds. The interest in the Keta River stock is based on the large size of the adults and high abundance of natural zero check fish. If the broodstock is successfully developed for production hatchery releases, it would increase the overall genetic diversity of the hatchery program. The plan is to do a traditional one check rearing program with the Keta River stock at Little Port Walter and compare the success of the Keta River fish with the Unuk River stock king salmon that are currently reared at Little Port Walter. The Unuk River stock king salmon program has 30 years of baseline data from production at Little Port Walter. In the second and third year, the broodstock goes up to 40 pair. If a full complement of eggs is collected, a portion of those will be raised as traditional one checks and a portion will be raised as zero checks. The success of both rearing methods will be compared to the success of the Unuk River stock king salmon.

Discussion: There was a discussion about starting a broodstock with just 20 pair. The lower number was a product of poor escapement in 2013. The Unuk River stock was founded on 250 base pair, but the Chickamin River stock was founded on a base of just eight pair. Remote egg takes are dependent on run strength and can be further limited by logistical problems. The fish were in the river during the last week of August and the first week of September.

7.2 Armstrong-Keta, Inc. future production plans.

Introduction: (Bart Watson, General Manager, AKI) AKI would like to increase contributions to common property fisheries and possibly increase marine survivals by adding remote release sites. Originally, AKI was planning on submitting two additional PARs for review at this meeting; one for a chum salmon release at Port Lucy, and a pink salmon release in Port Malmesbury. AKI plans to submit a PAR to increase chum salmon capacity and add Port Lucy as a remote release site at the fall RPT meeting.

Discussion: There was no additional discussion.

7.3 Ron Josephson's presentation.



Introduction: (Ron Josephson; Section Chief, Fisheries Monitoring, Permitting and Development; ADF&G) Ron put together a series of graphs from the enhancement program annual report. The graphs show the difference between permitted capacity and actual production by year since the 1970's. Hatchery production increased dramatically in the 1980's. There was a period in the 1990's when unused permitted capacity was taken off the books. Overall hatchery production has been relatively stable since the early 1990's, despite having some recent increases in permitted capacity. The statewide pink salmon production has been stable but under permitted capacity since the late 1980's. Regions such as Kodiak, Cook Inlet, and Southeast have been producing pink salmon below permitted capacity in most years, while Prince William Sound has been operating at permitted capacity since the late 1990's. Statewide, chum salmon permitted capacity has had slow steady growth since the late 1990's. Chum salmon production has been generally much closer to permitted capacity levels than pink salmon production.

Discussion: None

8.0 Additional Business: None

9.0 Next meeting is scheduled for the first week of December and will be associated with the Seine and Gillnet Task Force meetings.

10.0 Adjourn the main meeting at 4:30 p.m. Industry representatives of the JSERPT worked on the letter to the commissioner until 6:30 p.m.



Kevin C. Duffy, Commissioner

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Press Release: August 11, 2003

Contact: Geron Bruce (907) 465 - 6151

**ROE RECOVERY FISHERY AUTHORIZED FOR THE ESTHER
TERMINAL AREA IN PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND**

Sunday, August 10, Kevin C. Duffy, Commissioner, Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) authorized a roe harvest for hatchery pink salmon in the Wally Noerenberg Hatchery terminal and special harvest areas located on Esther Island in Prince William Sound. A portion of the unexpectedly large run of pink salmon has escaped harvest and the fish are deteriorating beyond a point of being marketable.

◆To prevent further waste, straying of hatchery salmon, and accumulation of large numbers of dying salmon on the beaches of Prince William Sound, allowing a roe harvest is consistent with maximum and wise use of the resource, Duffy said. ◆We have about 10 million more pinks than expected this year in Prince William Sound and additional common property and cost recovery harvests have not been able to handle all these fish. This is the appropriate decision under the circumstances.◆

Many fishermen participated in yesterday◆s roe harvest fishery. Another opening will be authorized for today and each day as long as processors accept fish or until the excess pink salmon have been cleaned up. The department estimates that somewhere between 2 and 4 million pinks would go to waste without the authorization for a roe recovery fishery.

The preseason common property harvest forecast for the four Prince William Sound hatcheries plus wild stocks was 17 million pinks. Current estimates are that 21.9 million have been



harvested under common property fisheries and 9.1 million through cost recovery harvests. An additional 11 million pink salmon are expected with 5 million of those to be harvested for cost recovery. The harvest estimates total 35-36 million of the nearly 40 million pinks available for harvest in the sound this year.

The state is requiring all harvests be recorded on ADF&G fish tickets, reporting the date, time, location, and quantity of roe harvested, as well as the total number of salmon carcasses. The disposal of pink salmon carcasses must comply with all applicable federal, state, and local laws.

Processors, catcher/processors, and the hatchery operator participating in the roe fishery should contact the Department of Environmental Conservation to make sure their operations are in compliance with regulations regarding appropriate disposal.

In the ADF&G preseason processing capacity survey, processors in Prince William Sound indicated they would process roughly 115 million pounds of pink salmon. All of the major processors, with one exception, have processed more fish than indicated in the survey. The projection is that well over 115 million pounds of pink salmon will be processed this year in Prince William Sound.

###



Alaska Hatchery Research Program

Technical
Document:¹
#

Title: Potential Issues and Solutions for Estimating Unbiased Area-Wide Hatchery Salmon Straying Proportions **Version:** 1.0
Authors: R. Brenner, A. Munro, and S. Moffitt
Date: March 2, 2021

Abstract

The second priority question of the Alaska Hatchery Research Program aims to elucidate the extent and annual variability in straying of hatchery pink salmon in Prince William Sound (PWS) and chum salmon in PWS and Southeast Alaska (SEAK). The purpose of this technical document is to discuss factors that influence estimates of hatchery straying proportions, given the study design, and explore methods that might account for these drivers and reduce bias in estimates. This technical document follows a review of methods and draft estimates of hatchery pink salmon straying to PWS and SEAK streams for the ongoing hatchery salmon evaluation (2013–2015) and comparisons with previous hatchery salmon straying studies in these areas (1995–2011). Based on results from previous studies, the proportion of hatchery salmon strays in streams is influenced by a variety of factors, including: distance to a hatchery release location, the number of salmon within the sampled stream (spawning escapement), and run timing of hatchery and wild components. Other factors, including the location of release sites in relation to migratory pathways, harvest, environmental conditions, and broodstock characteristics may also influence hatchery straying. We present several considerations and possible solutions for estimating the mean hatchery fraction of the spawning population across all streams given the design of the current study.

Background of AHRP

Extensive ocean-ranching salmon aquaculture is practiced in Alaska by private non-profit corporations (PNP) to enhance common property fisheries. Most of the approximately 1.7B juvenile salmon that PNP hatcheries release annually are pink salmon in Prince William Sound (PWS) and chum salmon in Southeast Alaska (SEAK; Vercesi 2014). The large scale of these hatchery programs has raised concerns among some that hatchery fish may have a detrimental impact on the productivity and sustainability of natural stocks. Others maintain that the potential for positive effects exists. To address these concerns ADF&G convened a Science Panel for the Alaska Hatchery Research Program (AHRP) whose members have broad experience in salmon

¹ This document serves as a record of communication between the Alaska Department of Fish and Game Commercial Fisheries Division and other members of the Science Panel of the Alaska Hatchery Research Program. As such, these documents serve diverse ad hoc information purposes and may contain basic, uninterpreted data. The contents of this document have not been subjected to review and should not be cited or distributed without the permission of the authors or the Commercial Fisheries Division



27 enhancement, management, and natural and hatchery fish interactions. The AHRP was tasked
28 with answering three priority questions:

- 29 I. *What is the genetic stock structure of pink and chum salmon in each region (PWS and*
30 *SEAK)?;*
31 II. *What is the extent and annual variability in straying of hatchery pink salmon in PWS and*
32 *chum salmon in PWS and SEAK?; and*
33 III. *What is the impact on fitness (productivity) of natural pink and chum salmon stocks due*
34 *to straying of hatchery pink and chum salmon?*

35 **Goal**

36 The goal of this technical document is to describe some of the factors that contribute to hatchery
37 salmon straying and recommend possible strategies to account for these factors when estimating
38 the extent and annual variability of hatchery salmon straying for this program.

39 **Introduction**

40 This technical document focuses on the second priority question of the AHRP: *What is the extent*
41 *and annual variability in straying of hatchery pink salmon in PWS and chum salmon in PWS and*
42 *SEAK?* We make the assumption that **extent** and **annual variability**, collectively, refer to:
43 proportions of hatchery salmon strays within streams; the temporal variability of hatchery
44 straying across- and within years; and the spatial variability of straying. Previous studies in PWS
45 and SEAK suggest that the proportion of hatchery pink and chum salmon in streams is
46 influenced by a variety of factors including: distance to hatchery release location, the number of
47 salmon within the sampled stream (i.e. spawning escapement), and run timing of hatchery and
48 wild components. Other factors, including the location of release sites in relation to migratory
49 pathways, harvest pressure, within-year environmental conditions, and broodstock characteristics
50 may also influence hatchery straying; however, the singular effects of these factors are difficult
51 to measure and are not addressed in this document. Given this, sampling and analysis protocols
52 capable of accounting for spatial, temporal, and other gradients of hatchery salmon straying are
53 necessary for producing an unbiased estimate of the mean fraction of hatchery fish across all
54 streams for management units (e.g., for district or area). In this document, we describe some of
55 the trends and types of variability observed in hatchery salmon straying in PWS and SEAK and
56 recommend possible strategies to account for these patterns when estimating the extent and



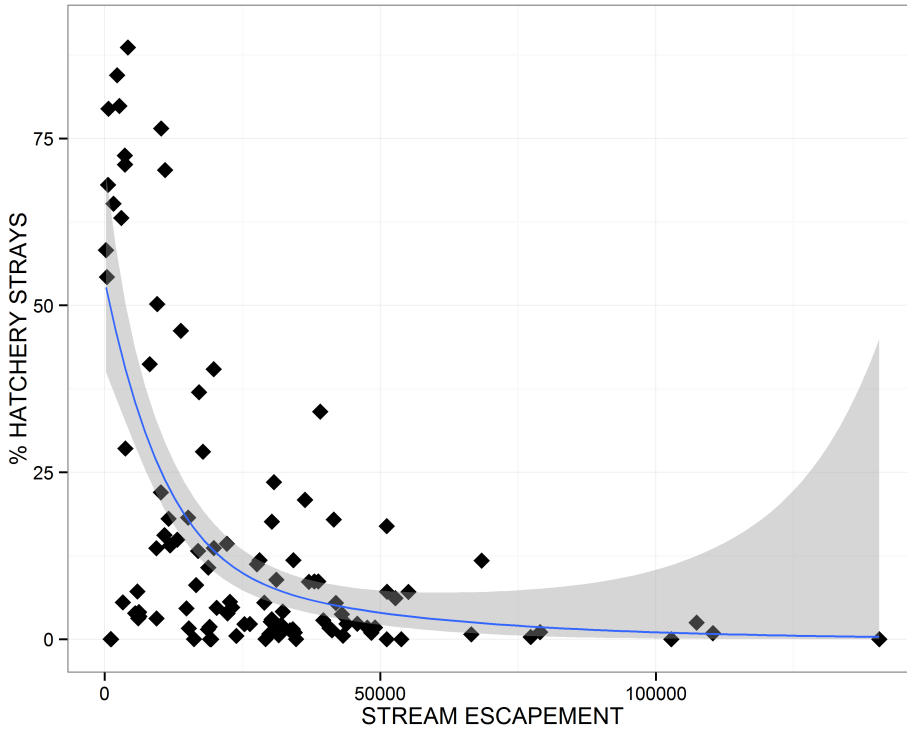
57 annual variability of hatchery salmon straying for the AHRP. Our suggestions should also be
58 broadly applicable to other areas for which hatchery salmon straying is assessed.

59 **Trends and Types of Variability of Hatchery Salmon Straying**

60 *Relation between percent hatchery strays and escapement*

61 Streams sampled for the current AHRP studies conducted in PWS and SEAK were selected from
62 aerial index streams (AIS) flown by ADF&G biologists to assess populations of pink and chum
63 salmon, "...with probabilities proportional to their size, based on the 25-year average of
64 spawning abundance indices..." (Knudsen et al. 2015). Thus, the sampling design was done in a
65 manner that favored the inclusion of streams with larger spawning escapements. Furthermore,
66 aerial index streams themselves were not selected randomly, and may not have spawning
67 populations or locations that are representative of the ~1,000 streams listed in the Anadromous
68 Waters Catalog (AWC) for PWS pink and chum salmon (Fried et al. 1998), or the approximately
69 1,200 streams listed for SEAK chum salmon (Geiger and McPherson 2004). Rather, AIS for
70 PWS were chosen for the management objective of surveying a large portion of the overall
71 spawning population (escapement) and have substantially larger escapements of pink and chum
72 salmon compared to non-index streams (Fried et al. 1998). For SEAK, aerial survey streams for
73 chum salmon were chosen based on several criteria, including the long-term consistency of
74 survey data, but streams selected as AIS in SEAK are also thought to be the more productive
75 chum salmon systems in this region (Geiger and McPherson 2004). Therefore, streams selected
76 for the present AHRP study are skewed towards those with large spawning escapements, because
77 only AIS were considered for the initial selection, and then the larger of these were favored for
78 being chosen for sampling. This selection process presents a challenge for producing an unbiased
79 estimate of straying proportions across all streams because escapement size is a significant
80 covariate in determining straying proportions (Figures 1 and 2): streams with larger escapements
81 tend to have a lower percentage of hatchery strays due to the dilution of hatchery strays by
82 natural spawners. Accordingly, these data suggest that it would not be appropriate to apply
83 straying proportions for streams with large escapements to those containing substantially smaller
84 escapements, or vice versa.

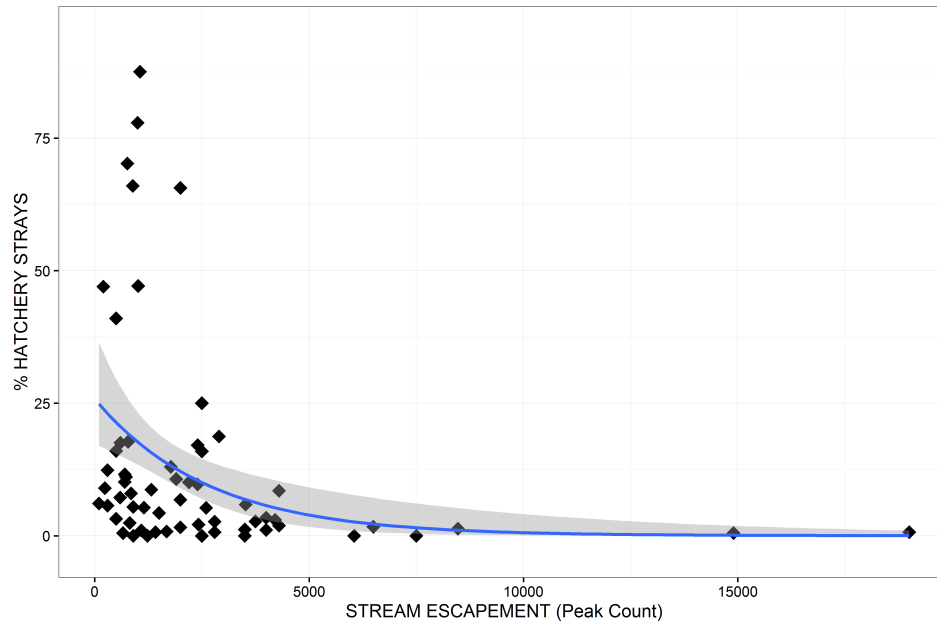
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87 Figure 1. Percentage of stray hatchery pink salmon in PWS streams (2008–2010) versus
88 estimated total annual escapement to that stream (data from Brenner et al. 2012). The blue line is
89 a general additive model (GAM) fit and the shaded area is 95% confidence intervals. The model
90 assumes a quasi-Poisson distribution.

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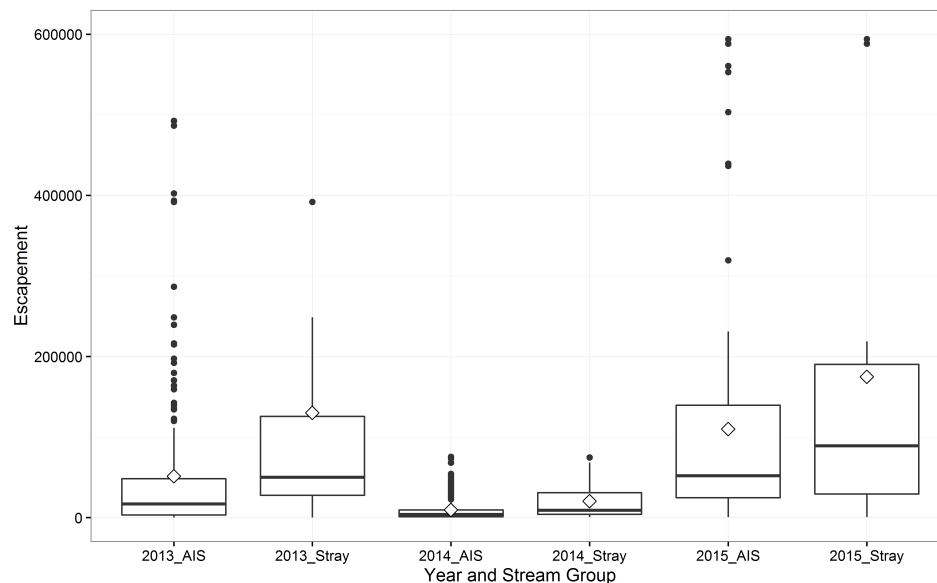
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93 Figure 2. Percentage of stray hatchery chum salmon in SEAK streams (2008–2010) versus
94 estimated peak counts for that stream (data from Piston and Heinel 2012). The blue line is a
95 general additive model (GAM) fit and the shaded area is 95% confidence intervals. The model
96 assumes a quasi-Poisson distribution.

97

98 To illustrate differences in escapements between streams surveyed for the current study and the
99 overall AIS, in Figure 3 we show boxplots of pink salmon escapements for PWS streams. As
100 would be expected from a study that selected streams in proportion to escapement size, median
101 pink salmon escapement is always larger for the streams selected for the AHRP study compared
102 to overall AIS, such that: hatchery-wild study streams > AIS > overall streams.

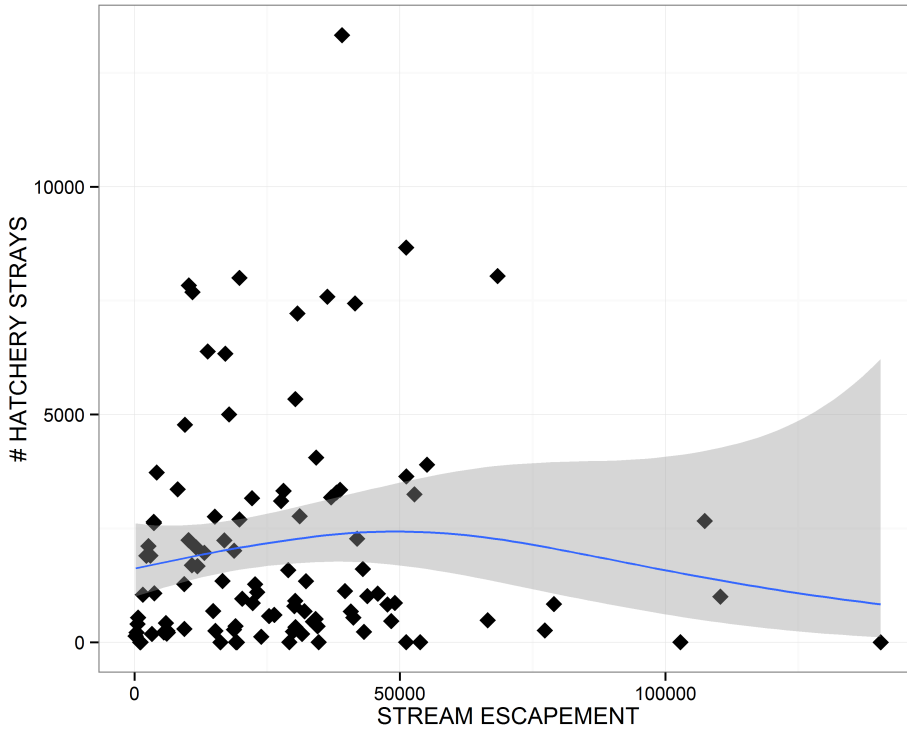
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105 Figure 3. Box plots of estimated stream escapements for aerial index streams (AIS) and those
106 selected for the AHRP straying project (Stray) for PWS. Median escapements for each group are
107 indicated by black horizontal lines and correspond to: 16,924 (2013 AIS) vs. 50,059 (2013
108 Stray), 3,862 (2014 AIS) vs. 9,099 (2014 Stray), and 51,792 (2015 AIS) vs. 89,133 (2015 Stray).
109 Mean escapement is indicated by diamonds. Escapement estimates have been adjusted for stream
110 life and observer efficiency.

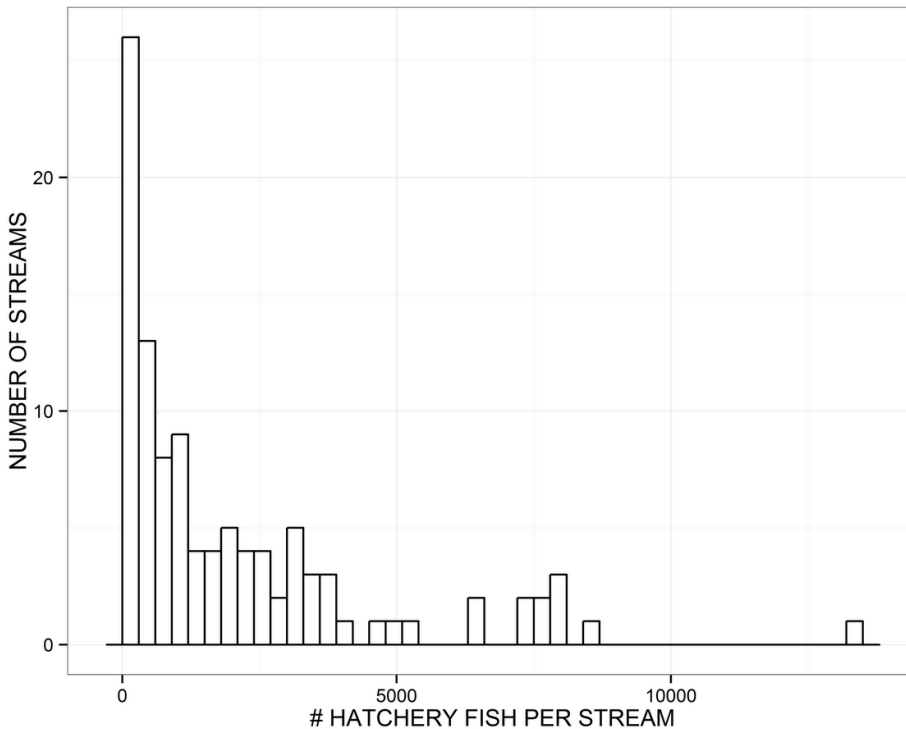
111 In addition, the mean *number* of hatchery pink salmon in wild-stock streams appears to be
112 relatively fixed (but with a high variance) across streams with low and average escapements
113 (Figure 4), and then declines slightly in streams with the highest escapements. This may provide
114 an avenue for estimating total numbers of stray hatchery fish in streams across a region. Figures
115 1, 2 and 4 also illustrate why the possible ecological and genetic consequences of straying could
116 be more pronounced in systems with relatively smaller escapements, as these systems tend to
117 have higher proportions of hatchery fish. Hatchery escapements into streams (Figure 5) do not
118 appear to be normally distributed. Rather, as would be expected for count data, the number of
119 hatchery salmon likely follows a Poisson or negative binomial distribution and is right skewed.
120 This is an important consideration if using this relationship for estimating the overall numbers
121 and variance of hatchery fish across a district or region.



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123 Figure 4. Estimated hatchery pink salmon escapement in streams versus estimated total annual
124 escapement (2008-2010) from area-under-the-curve estimates (data from Brenner et al. 2012).
125 The blue line is a GAM fit and the shaded area 95% confidence intervals. In this case we
126 assumed that the number of hatchery strays in streams followed a quasi-Poisson distribution.

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129 Figure 5. Estimated number of hatchery pink salmon per stream in PWS, for 37 streams sampled
130 2008–2010 (Data from Brenner et al. 2012).

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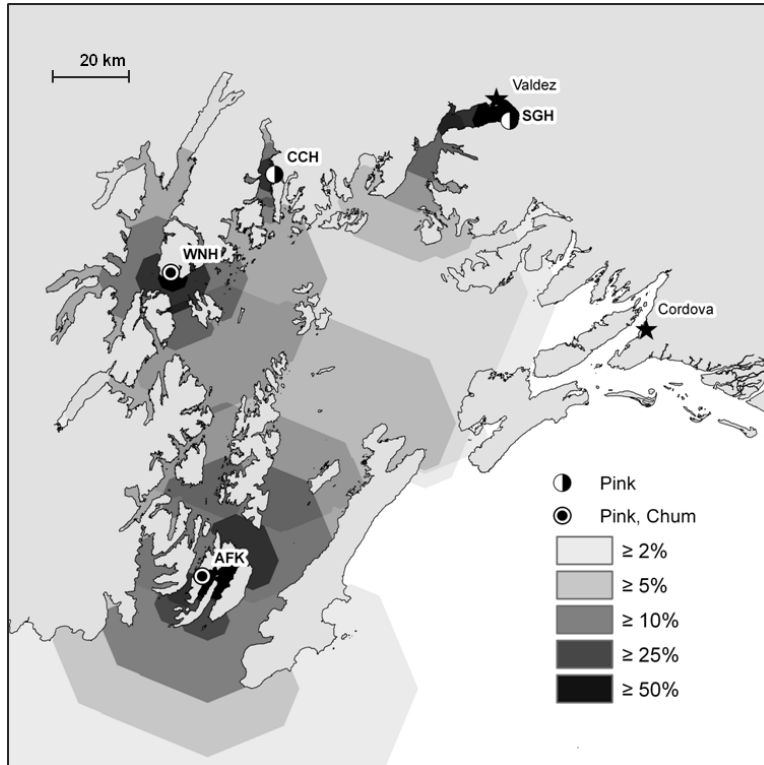
132 *Spatial Trends in Straying*

133 There is a long history of aerial surveys in PWS and SEAK (Fried et al. 1998, Geiger and
134 McPherson 2004), and, over the years, streams have been added or removed for various reasons
135 from the suite of streams used to estimate the escapement index. Some of the streams removed
136 from the AIS in PWS have been those in areas surrounding hatcheries. For example, Cannery
137 Creek was formerly an aerial index stream (flown 1963–1982) that contained as many as 35,000
138 pink salmon during individual surveys (AUC estimates would be considerably greater than this),
139 but was removed following the advent of the Cannery Creek Hatchery. All AIS were also
140 removed from within the Port of Valdez and Valdez Arm north of Sawmill Bay, mostly because
141 of airspace restrictions near the pipeline terminal and Valdez airport; flown 1963–1997. In
142 addition, there are no aerial index streams within the immediate area (~13 km radius)
143 surrounding the Wally Noerenberg Hatchery (WNH) on Esther Island. Streams adjacent to WNH



144 were listed within the 1968 AWC (J. Johnson *pers. comm.*), and remained listed as recently as
145 1977 (Pirtle 1977), but were removed sometime after this; possibly due to the establishment of
146 that hatchery in 1985. As places lacking AIS, these areas were not represented within the
147 sample-space considered for the current AHRP study, even though some of them had substantial
148 escapements prior to the advent of the hatchery program (e.g., Pirtle et al. 1972). The paucity of
149 sampled streams close to some hatcheries may be somewhat problematic for achieving the stated
150 goals of this study because straying proportions are, to a large extent, a function of distance from
151 release facilities (Figures 6 and 7; Brenner et al. 2012, Joyce and Evans 2000, Knudsen et al.
152 2015, Piston and Heintl 2012).

153 Estimation of the hatchery fraction of the overall spawning population should, ideally, account
154 for the strong spatial trend of straying (Figures 6 and 7). The goal of estimating the extent and
155 annual variability of straying could be partially achieved by using non-linear models to estimate
156 straying proportions or numbers as a function of distances from release locations (e.g., Figure 6).
157 Data to parameterize such models could be obtained from previous studies of hatchery salmon
158 straying (Brenner et al. 2012, Joyce and Evans 2000, Piston and Heintl 2012). After choosing the
159 most parsimonious model for a given broodline (even years and odd years for pink salmon) and
160 hatchery, these models could then be fit to the data for the existing study. In this way, mean
161 values of stream straying proportions could be pulled from the estimated proportions of strays
162 across all AIS. This method would not address the issue of using larger AIS for the study design,
163 but—in the absence of additional sampling—corrections for non-AIS in PWS could come from
164 methods within Fried et al. (1998), which estimated overall escapement into non-AIS. Such an
165 exercise may also help to resolve discrepancies in estimated wild salmon escapements using
166 extrapolations from aerial surveys and those provided within the AHRP draft reports.

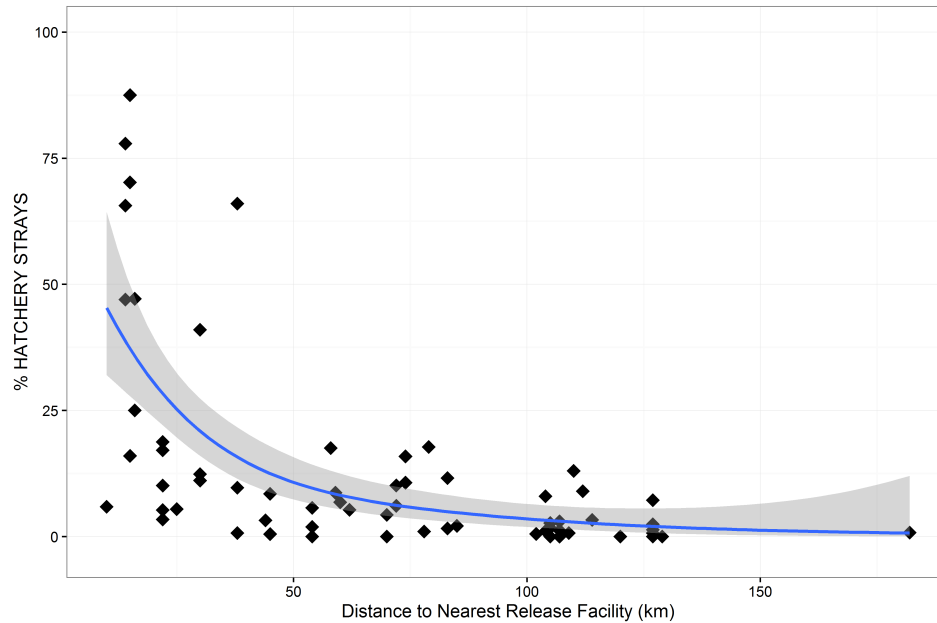


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168 Figure 6. Spatial trends in hatchery pink salmon straying in PWS in 2009. The density of strays
169 was generated in GIS from four separate models used to estimate the proportion of hatchery fish
170 in streams as a function of distance from each release facility (from Brenner et al. 2012).

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174 Figure 7. Percentage of stray hatchery chum salmon in SEAK streams (2008–2010) versus
175 distance to the nearest chum salmon release facility (data from Piston and Heinel 2012). The blue
176 line is a GAM fit and the shaded area 95% confidence intervals. In this case we assumed that the
177 number of hatchery strays in streams followed a quasi-Poisson distribution.

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179 *Temporal Trends in Hatchery Salmon Straying*

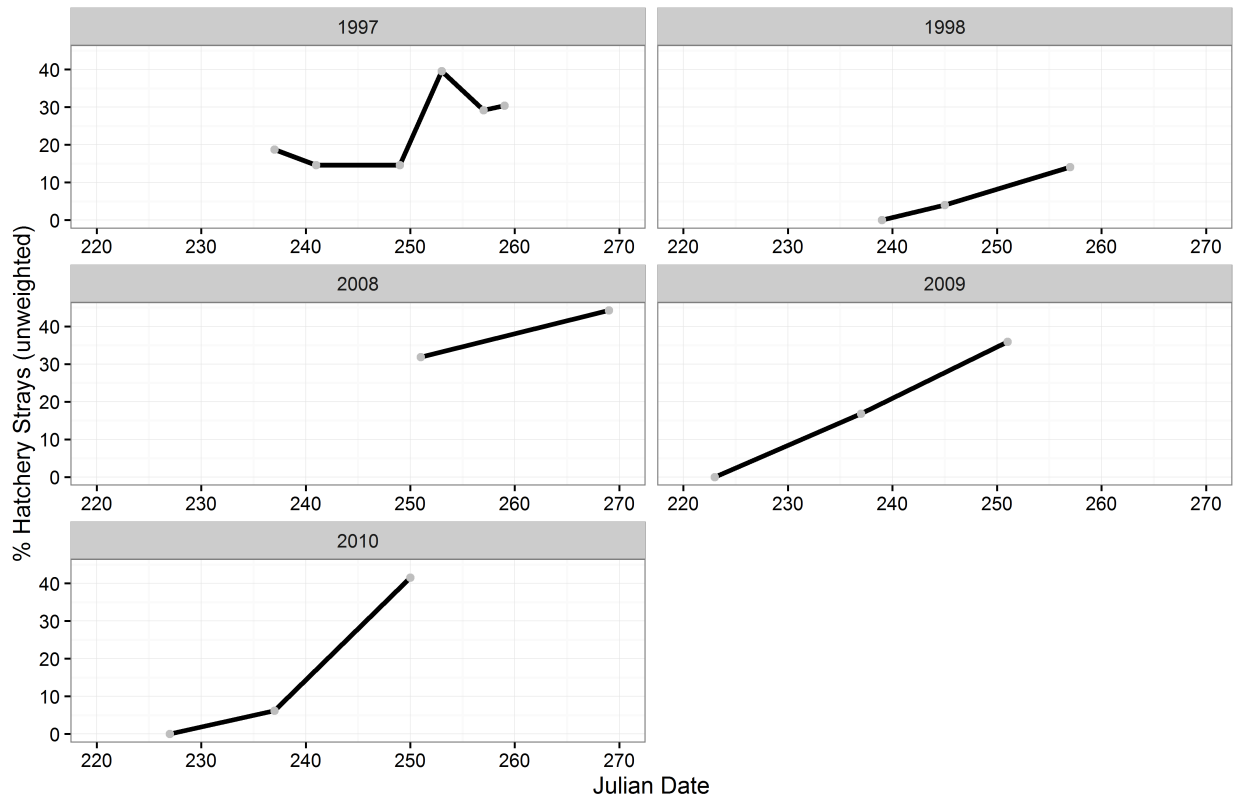
180 The change in hatchery straying proportions across the spawning season has been documented
181 by previous studies for PWS for pink and chum salmon (Figure 8, Brenner et al. 2012, Joyce and
182 Evans 2000). In SEAK, temporal changes in hatchery chum salmon strays also exist; however,
183 the run timing of multiple hatchery and wild components is more complicated (Andy Piston,
184 *pers. comm.*) than PWS, where all hatchery chum salmon return during a similar time period.
185 The current experimental design and analysis does acknowledge temporal trends in straying with
186 stratified sampling, but draft AHRP reports could be clarified with a more detailed explanation
187 for how temporal weighting was conducted. For example, it would be useful if assumptions
188 about stream life, observer efficiency, carcass residency, and correlations between ground and
189 aerial counts were provided and accounted for in analyses (e.g., Fried et al. 1998).



190 We do have questions about the validity of the method used to weight hatchery proportions in
191 streams over time. Notably, the current protocol calls for weighting based upon the sum of live
192 and dead salmon at the time that samples were collected (Equation 5 of Knudsen et al. 2015).
193 However, Table 2 of the 2014 Annual Progress Report (Knudsen et al. 2015) states that straying
194 proportions were only weighted based upon carcass counts, not live counts. In contrast, the
195 original Request for Proposals of the AHRP stated that weighting would be based on aerial
196 survey estimates. Regardless of whether ground or aerial estimates are used to assess stream
197 escapement, we believe that the weighting method should be based upon an integrated estimate
198 of escapement over time. Such an integrated estimate—area-under-the-curve—is already
199 being used to evaluate escapement goals for pink and chum salmon in PWS (e.g., Moffitt et al.
200 2014). For SEAK, peak counts of escapement are also based on aerial survey estimates (Geiger
201 and McPherson 2004). Point estimates of escapement can be integrated across time and
202 combined with assumptions about stream life (e.g., Fried et al. 1998), and carcass residence in
203 streams, to produce a weighting of hatchery straying proportions that accounts for annual trends
204 in escapement (Brenner et al. 2012). In contrast, it has been our experience that salmon carcasses
205 can quickly wash out of streams, making them an ephemeral and unreliable indicator of overall
206 escapement into a system, and therefore a poor choice for weighting of hatchery proportions
207 across a season. The 2014 AHRP report also acknowledges that high water events flush
208 carcasses out of streams (Knudsen et al. 2015). We note that ADF&G already uses integrated
209 weighting approach to estimate salmon stock components in escapement samples and harvests in
210 fisheries across Alaska. For example, scales, otoliths, and genetic tissues collected during the
211 course of a run for which strata estimates sum to total escapement or harvest, etc. Thus, for a
212 variety of reasons, we suggest that the AHRP use weighting methods that can be linked to
213 integrated measures of abundance; thereby making estimates of hatchery proportions consistent
214 with existing ADF&G assessment methods and previous studies that have evaluated straying
215 (Brenner et al. 2012).

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219 Figure 8. Example of temporal trends in hatchery salmon straying proportions based on
220 proportions of hatchery pink salmon carcasses sampled from Snug Harbor Creek in PWS from
221 1997 to 2010 (Brenner et al. 2012).

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Discussion and Summary

224 Data from previous hatchery salmon straying studies conducted in PWS and SEAK suggest that
225 the proportion of hatchery strays in streams is a function of distance to release facility, time, and
226 the size of wild escapements. It is recommended that known drivers be taken into account in
227 analyses to meet the objective of producing an unbiased estimate of the hatchery fraction of the
228 spawning population across all streams. Other factors, including the location of release sites in
229 relation to migratory pathways, harvest pressure, within-year environmental conditions, and
230 broodstock characteristics may also influence hatchery straying. The singular effects of these
231 additional factors may be more difficult to discern; however, they should be considered for
232 analyses.



233 The AHRP annual reports note differences in escapement estimates between the current study
234 and those produced by ADF&G's aerial survey program (Knudsen et al. 2015). We suggest that
235 these discrepancies could—at least in part—be attributed to some of the points we have
236 addressed within this technical document. For example, excluding spawning areas, not
237 accounting for spatial patterns in straying, not sampling across the full range of possible stream
238 escapements, and not weighting straying proportions according to overall escapement could bias
239 estimates of hatchery and wild escapement. Not accounting for major covariates can be indicated
240 by overdispersion (the variance being larger than the mean), and can be exacerbated by zero-
241 inflation (more zeros in the data than would be expected). Overdispersion can be a product of
242 count data in general and not accounting for major covariates within models in particular (Zuur
243 et al. 2009). Figures 1, 2, 4 and 7 show a very wide range of hatchery straying proportions and
244 number of hatchery fish across stream escapements and, without accounting for distance to
245 release facility or other drivers, these data appear to exhibit overdispersion: the mean hatchery
246 straying proportions is a small fraction of the variance for years we have examined. In addition,
247 the histogram of hatchery stays (Figure 5) suggests an inflation of the number of streams with
248 zero hatchery fish. Zero-inflation is also quite common (normal) in count data and could come
249 about as a result of the reduced probability to detect hatchery strays within streams having larger
250 escapements (Figures 1 and 2) or, as previously discussed, a sampling design that biases against
251 streams that have hatchery strays. Zuur et al. (2009) presents an excellent discussion of how to
252 account for overdispersion and zero-inflation in a variety of ecological models that use count
253 data.

254 Herein, we have proposed some possible solutions for analyzing data collected during the course
255 of the AHRP project in order to meet the objective of quantifying the extent and annual
256 variability of pink and chum salmon straying in PWS and SEAK. Most notably, we suggest the
257 inclusion of data from previous studies and modeling approaches to account for known spatial
258 trends in straying and the influence of stream escapement size on straying proportions. The
259 benefits of using previous studies to extrapolate straying proportions across areas are that it
260 would take advantage of a rich source of available data to fill in gaps within the current study
261 design, which did not stratify across gradients that are important determinants of straying—
262 distance from release facility and escapement size. Using this approach may necessitate pooling
263 data across years, which would nullify annual variance estimates of straying proportions. If



264 straying proportions exhibit a strong covariance across streams, replicates from individual
265 streams taken across years could still be used to estimate spatial trends in straying.

266 Another possible approach is to limit the interpretation of the result to the subset of larger AIS
267 surveyed during this study; at the exclusion of extrapolating to other streams, or areas not
268 surveyed. This approach has the benefit of not having to address the issues of spatial gradients in
269 straying proportions or stream escapements. However, without extrapolating stream proportions
270 to larger areas, key objectives of this study would not be achieved and the data collected from the
271 ocean sampling portion of this study may be of limited use.

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Acknowledgments

274 We thank Andy Piston, Chris Habicht, Dr. Dion Oxman, Ben Williams, and Kyle Shedd for
275 many helpful comments and suggestions.

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Questions for the AHRP

- 278 1) Are the issues highlighted in this technical document deserving of a solution? If so:
279 2) What solution(s) do you think are most appropriate to account for spatial gradients in stream
280 straying proportions for the purpose of estimating mean straying proportions across a larger
281 area?
282 3) What solution(s) do you think are most appropriate to address the influence of escapement
283 size on stream straying proportions for the purpose of estimating straying proportions across
284 a diversity of stream escapements?
285 4) What solution(s) do you think are most appropriate to address concerns that weighting of
286 straying proportions using carcass counts is not indicative of cumulative stream
287 escapement?
288 5) How would the issues raised in this technical document influence escapement estimates of
289 wild and hatchery fish into streams published in initial AHRP reports?

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AHRP Review and Comments

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2020 BOF HATCHERY COMMITTEE

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CE-Cl_cFz8&feature=youtu.be

begins around 7:32

Assistant Attorney General Aaron Peterson on
BOF Hatchery Oversight Authority (BOFHOA)

CHAIR MORISKI:

Seven board members present 3:43 pm. Next item on our agenda is Department of Law briefing on Board of Fish extent of authority and ADFG's extent of authority related to hatcheries

Mr Peterson are you ready to give us some information

AARON PETERSON:

Yes, I am Thank-you Mr Chair

So first I will give a brief overview

I talked to the board a little bit at the Lower Cook Inlet meeting in Seward and much of the remarks that I made there, directly relate back to a memo that was authored by a couple of assistant attorneys general from 1997. That memo is on the website for today's meeting as well, and that information is still relevant, because there has been basically no change, in the past twenty three years.

There has been one case that talked about the primary statute 16.10.440b and I'll talk about that a little bit, but essentially that memo from the department of law has been the consistent guidance for the better part of the last three decades and it continues to be that, from the Department of Law.

So there are three primary points, that I concluded with, at the Lower Cook Inlet And I will start with them here.

1. The permitting and administration of hatcheries rests with the department of Fish and Game.
2. The board has some indirect control over hatchery production by virtue of its authority to amend hatchery permits with respect to Special Harvest Areas (SHA) and the harvest of broodstock and cost recovery fish. The boards authority to amend permits is limited to terms in the permit relating to the



- The source and number of salmon eggs
 - the harvest of fish by hatchery operators and
 - the specific locations designated by the department for harvest
3. Though the board may affectively amend hatchery permits by regulation in a manner that may affect hatchery fish production, previous guidance by the department of law is that the board may not
- one: adopt regulations that effectively veto or override a fundamental policy decision regarding whether to authorize the operation of a particular hatchery or
- two: adopt regulations preventing the department from exercising its authority to permit a hatchery operation.

So, let me go through a little bit of how I get to that point.

So first the broad permitting authority detailed in Title 16 assigns primary responsibility for whether to authorize the operation of a PNP hatchery to the commissioner and the department of Fish and Game.

And, the board may exercise, as I said, indirect authority of hatchery production by:

- regulating the harvest of hatchery related hatchery released fish in the common use fishery,
- hatchery broodstock,
- cost recovery harvest and
- by amending hatchery permits related to the source and number of salmon eggs
- hatchery harvested and the designation of the special harvest areas

But board action that effectively revokes or prevents the issuance of a hatchery permit is probably not authorized

The board regulations over the authorities is governed primarily by

16.05.251

16.10.440

16.05.730

And of course 16.05.251 is the boards general rulemaking power of statute



And these powers include setting time, area, methods and means, and the limitations for the taking of fish, and of course setting quotas, bag limits, and harvest levels, the standard board authority.

The boards authority also extends to the regulations of harvest of hatchery fish and egg collection and existing regulation's such as

5AAC 40.005 which explains board authority over hatchery produced fish, reflect that principle as well.

AS 16.10.440 is the statute that relates to releasing fish and subsection a., of that statute confirms that fish released by hatcheries are available for common use and subject to the regulations by the board until they return to the hatchery harvest area.

And Subsection b, is sort of the primary thing that this all turns on, I'll read that in the entirety

AS 16.10.440. Regulations Relating to Released Fish.

(b)The Board of Fisheries may, after the issuance of a permit by the commissioner, amend by regulation the terms of the permit relating to the source and number of salmon eggs, the harvest of fish by hatchery operators, and the specific locations designated by the department for harvest. The Board of Fisheries may not adopt regulations or take any action regarding the issuance or denial of any permits required in AS [16.10.400](#) - [16.10.470](#).

And I mentioned at the top that there has been one case that talked about that statute 16.10.440b in the past 20 years and that was a case called

O'Callaghan v Rue and that was in the year 2000 and in that case the supreme court said quote:

"The power to modify permit terms is shared. It lies with the commissioner in the first instance, but is subject to the ultimate control by the board. citing 16.10.440b

That was not, I should caution you, the central holding of that case. That is not precedent. It was dicta, but it's the only case where the supreme court talked about this statute so it is worth noting.



AS 16.05.730 Management of Wild and Enhanced Stocks of Fish, requires the Board of Fish to manage all stocks consistent with the sustained yield of wild stocks, and the statute requires the board to consider the need of enhancement projects to obtain broodstock when allocating enhanced fish stocks and authorizes the board to direct the departments management to achieve adequate return for broodstock.

The board may also consider the need for enhancement projects to harvest and sell fish to obtain funds for project operation and may direct the department to provide a reasonable harvest of fish to the hatchery for those purposes and may adopt management plans to provide fish to the hatchery to obtain funds for the purposes allowed by statute.

Than finally, I would point out that in 16 05.251 - 89 the board is specifically authorized to adopt regulations.

Quote: “Prohibiting and regulating live capture possession transport or release of native or exotic fish or their eggs” Unquote:

but that may not apply to hatchery fish. The more specific statute on point of 16.10.440b doesnt specifically authorize the board to adopt regulations that amend the terms of the permits that govern the release of hatchery fish. Those things that relate to hatchery fish

And regardless the board is delegated that authority to the commissioner by adopting 5AAC 41.

But, so one of the things that I went back and looked at after the Lower Cook Inlet meeting was the legislative history related to specifically to 16.10.440b and I found a couple of things that I thought were notable there:

First: in April 24 of 1979, the legislative council wrote a a sectional analysis of the bill to a senator Kerttula, I might be mispronouncing that, but, it reads as follows:

“Section 2 of the bill amends 16.10.440b, the effect of the amendment would be to limit the regulatory power of the Board of Fisheries in relation to the provisions of AS 16 10.470, these sections of law relating to salmon hatchery permits. Currently the Board of Fisheries has the power, under this section to promulgate regulations necessary to implement these sections.



The proposed amendment would limit the boards regulatory power in this specific area by allowing the board to adopt regulations amending the terms of permits issued under 16.10. 400-470 which relate to the harvest of broodstock, by hatchery operators and the specific locations designated by the department for harvest by the hatchery operators.

The amendment would specifically provide that the board may not adopt regulations or take any action regarding the issuance or denial of the permit.

So an amended 440b the legislature equivocally limited the boards authority over hatcheries there is no question about that.

But, it did not strip the board of all authority. It seems pretty clear from the legislative history, that if the legislature had wished to do that, they simply would have repealed 16.10.440b.

Further in March 15 of 1979, the House journal explained that one of the purposes of amending that section of 440b was to clarify that the board does not have the authority to promulgate regulations regarding the Department of Commerce and Economic Development. It was unclear from the history if that had been an issue but that was specifically noted in the house journal that that was part of the reason for the amendment.

And The final thing I want to point out from the House Journal is the following passage:

“The amendment clarifies the role of the Board of Fisheries. The role of the Board of Fisheries as envisioned by the original legislation was to regulate the harvest of salmon returning to the waters of the state.

That role extends to regulating those fish that are returning as a result of releases from natural systems and also from hatchery releases.”

There are provisions in other portions of the Non Profit hatchery act which allow the designation of specific locations for the harvest of salmon by the hatchery operator for sale, and use of the money from that sale, for the specific purposes stated in AS 16.10.450.

The added language clarifies that the Board of Fisheries may adopt regulations relating to the harvest of the fish by hatchery operators at these specifically designated locations.”



And the legislative history on this amendment was not very, there was not very much of it, there was a couple of recordings, a few hand written letters and then the house journal and the legislative sectional analysis from the legislative attorney. Then there was quite a bit of other material that didn't relate to the amendment subsection 440 b so these were the highlights that directly relates to the question that comes up now.

It doesn't do anything to undermine the consistent advice that the Department of Law has been giving the Board for the better part of the last three decades it generally affirms the advice that has been given as recently as the Lower Cook Inlet meeting and as far back at least as the 1990's.

So with that I'd answer any questions about this and I will certainly attempt to if there are any.

CHAIR MORISKI:

Thank-you Mr. Peterson. Mr. Wood

JOHN WOOD:

I am going to try to approach this systematically so we narrow down to where this question of what jurisdiction this body has or does not have.

Clearly the law is crystal clear that only the commissioner has the right to issue or revoke a permit correct?

AARON PETERSON:

That's correct That is in the statute

JOHN WOOD:

The only exception to where the board may have some jurisdiction falls within that 440b where it makes specific mention of the authority of the Board to amend a permit. Is that correct?

AARON PETERSON:

Through the chair, member wood, I think the most direct authority is in 16.10.440b. There is also some implied authority in 16.05.730 and there is general authority in 16.05.251 the general enacting statutory authority of the Board.



JOHN WOOD:

Okay, for my purposes of the Board, the question right now I want to focus on right now is 440b and looking at the memorandum and I don't know the PC number of it, but Ashburn and Mason maybe PC 31, legal opinion, went through what they conceived or perceived rather as the legislative intent, that the eggs being taken back then were from the wild stocks as opposed to hatchery eggs and that was the justification for doing what they did in implementing section b.

Looking at it in greater detail if that were the only purpose in mind, I don't understand what the necessity for the additional language they put in there saying the board of fisheries may not adopt any regulations nor take any action regarding the issuance or denial of the permit, and then they go forward and say or would have the effect of negating a permit.

So my question I guess to you is , It seems clear, there is nothing scientific about the terms used that this board does have the ability to amend a permit for the stated purposes in 440b. with relating to the source and number of salmon eggs of the fish by hatchery operations at specific locations designated by the department for harvest.

Under what authority would anybody claim otherwise?

AARON PETERSON:

Through the chair member Wood

I wouldn't presume to know why someone would argue other than or that that statute means something other than exactly what it says. I mean I could probably construct an argument that, well yes I could actually.

In Alaska there is a sort of general statutory construction theory that is relatively prevalent in most states and in the federal system, known as the plain language mean right?

But in Alaska our courts have said that the meaning behind the statute...the intent of the statute, can overcome that plain language I don't have the exact citation in front of me

JOHN WOOD:

Isn't that one of ambiguity in the interpretation in the language?



AARON PETERSON:

It's a sliding scale

JOHN WOOD:

mmhem

AARON PETERSON:

So if the language is very clear and takes very strong very overwhelming legislative authority to the contrary to overcome that plain language. If there is ambiguity, then the legislative history indicating alternative meaning doesn't have to be as strong.

JOHN WOOD:

Do you see any ambiguity in the wording of that subsection??

AARON PETERSON:

Do I?

JOHN WOOD:

Yes!

AARON PETERSON:

NO, and again I'll point out the consistent advice from the department of law has been that that statute means what it says. Um and so that has been the consistent advice from the Department for the better part of three decades.

JOHN WOOD:

Thank-you very much I have no other questions.

CHAIR MORISKI

Mr. Payton

ISRAEL PAYTON:

Thanks, I'm going to ask you the same questions in a different way I guess. In your opinion, does the statement the number of salmon eggs apply to both wild broodstock and returning hatchery broodstock?

AARON PETERSON:



Through the chair member Payton, um

The advice from the department of law has been yes that it does and that's as I said before been consistent through the memo and if you were to look at the house journal talking about 440b it specifically says the role extends to regulating those fish that result, which are returning as a result of natural systems and also from hatchery releases so that's from the house journal from 1978 no I'm sorry 1979 talking about the purpose of that bill.

CHAIR MORISKI:

Further Board questions from Mr. Peterson
Hearing none thank-you Mr. Peterson



Homer Fish & Game Advisory Committee
Jan. 26, 2021
Zoom Virtual Meeting

- I. **Call to Order:** 6:03 pm by Dave Lyon, chair
- II. **Roll Call**
Members Present: Dave Lyon (chair), George Matz (secretary), Lee Martin, Joey Allred, Michael Craig, Doug Malone, Malcolm Milne, Matt Hakala, Morgan Jones, Dan Anderson, William Roth, Bob Nathanson.
Members Absent: Thomas Hagberg (vice chair), Marvin Peters, Wes Humbyrd, Joe Martishev,
Number Needed for Quorum on AC: 8
List of User Groups Present: None
- III. **Fish and Game Staff Present:** Charity Lehman, Jason Herreman.
- IV. **Guests Present:** Bob Shavelson, Tom Young, Sue Christensen.
- V. **Approval of Agenda:** Yes
- VI. **Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:** NA
- VII. **Reports:** See below
- VIII. **Public Comment:** None
- IX. **Old Business:** None
- X. **New Business:** Charity reviewed recent decisions by the Boards of Game and Fisheries regarding meeting schedules under Covid conditions. As she reiterated in her email today, at a Jan 19 Joint Board Committee Meeting, “All 6 board members at the committee meeting agreed that it was best to avoid full regulatory meetings via Zoom, and consequently that it was best to postpone in-person meetings for the current meeting cycle to the 2021/22 meeting cycle.” At a BOG Jan. 21 work session, “The BOG voted to shift their regular meeting cycles forward by one year... The board will hold a one day regulatory meeting on March 18, 2021 via Zoom to address antlerless moose reauthorizations, brown bear tag fee exemptions, and Proposal 194.” At a Jan. 25 special meeting, “The BOF voted to postpone the current cycle’s PWS/Southeast & Yakutat meetings to the 2021/22 meeting cycle. In contrast to the BOG, however, they did not postpone the 2021/22 meetings for the Bristol Bay – AYK cycle. They chose instead to double up on meetings next cycle in order to stay on the current 3-year schedule.” The current budget may not be enough to fund these extra meetings.



In our discussion on the new schedules, we objected to the BOF doubling-up on meetings. In response, a motion was made, seconded, and passed unanimously to oppose this.

The Homer Fish and Game Advisory Committee strongly opposes the Board of Fisheries decision to attempt to hold two board cycles in the same year. The proposed schedule puts an enormous and unreasonable burden on ADF&G Staff, Board Support Staff, the 84 Fish and Game Advisory Committees, stakeholders, and the general public. Having two cycles will also strain budgets of all parties involved in the process. Please reconsider your decision.

XI. **Next meeting date:** Tues, Feb. 16, 2021.

We next considered the antlerless moose proposals for our area.

Alaska Board of Game Proposals			
Proposal Number	Proposal Description		
Support, Support as Amended, Oppose, No Action	Number Support	Number Oppose	Comments, Discussion (list Pros and Cons), Amendments to Proposal, Voting Notes
179	Reauthorize the antlerless moose season on Kalgin Island in Unit 15B		
Support	12	0	This is routine and there wasn't any discussion.
180	Reauthorize the antlerless moose season in Unit 15 C.		
Support	12	0	This is routine and there wasn't any discussion.

Jason Herreman reviewed the Kenai Peninsula harvest statistics for this last year. One thing that stood out was the increase harvest in black bears. There was a serious failure in the berry crop on the south side of the bay this year, which probably contributed to this. Jason also introduced the new biologist, Nick Fowler, for the Kenai Peninsula.

Normally, we hold elections in January. This wasn't done this year, so those serving terms that would have expired are given extended terms. We won't be holding any elections until we can meet in person.

Bob Shavelson of Cook Inlet Keeper gave a short presentation on the inadequacies of the Lower Cook Inlet oil and gas lease sale draft EIS that BOEM released before the change of administrations. The AC generally agreed to having a resolution objecting to the hurried EIS. The resolution passed with 11 in favor and 1 abstaining. The reason for the abstention was concern that this was beyond the purview of the AC.



Sue Christensen gave a brief greeting from the Kachemak Bay Citizen Advisory Board expressed their desire to attend our meetings and maintain communication between the committees on items of mutual interest.

Adjournment: 7:20

Minutes Recorded By: George Matz

Minutes Approved By: _____

Date: _____



February 27, 2021

Alaska Board of Fisheries
Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Boards Support Section
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526

Re: March 8, 2021 BOF Meeting

Dear Chairperson Carlson-Van Dort and the Alaska Board of Fisheries,

The Ketchikan Advisory Committee met in two sessions February 22 and February 25, 2021 to consider the sunset provisions and the future meeting schedule. Below is a summary of our actions and comments

- **Proposal 276** Extending sunset dates for 3 regulations (**Support 9/0**)

Regarding the meeting schedules moving forward, the advisory committee also unanimously voted to support the meeting dates of January 4 – 15, 2022 for the Southeast and Yakutat Finfish and Shellfish meeting. Major factors leading to this decision are as follows-

- All areas are treated the same, everyone shares the burden
- Keeps the BOF and BOG cycles in sync
- Fisheries data for the 2021 fishery will be available to inform decisions
- Safer for staff, communities, and stakeholders
- It is in the current budget
- It is a doable work load for Board Support and the Department staff needing to attend
- AC's should be able to hold in-person meetings to solicit public opinion
- Facilitates full participation from the public

We find any November 2020 date problematic for a number of reasons. For the AC to review 154 proposals over a zoom format and adequately solicit public participation is our main angst, along with the fact that many stakeholders will be actively participating in their fisheries in November. The points that 2021 data will not be available to inform our decisions and that stakeholders and industry are on record as **not** supporting a November meeting date also are of concern to us.

Respectfully,

Ketchikan Fish and Game Advisory Committee



Ketchikan Advisory Committee Minutes

Date: 2/25/2021

Location: Zoom

Call to Order: 5:33 pm

Roll Call:

Name	Seat	Check if present	Interests/Representation
John Scoblic	Chair	Present	Commercial Seafood Processing
Sue Doherty	Vice Chair	Present	SEAS President, Salmon Enhancement (retired)
Russell Miller	Secretary	Present	Commercial Seafood Processing
Matt Allen	Secretary	Present	Salmon Enhancement, hunting, sport fishing, trapping
Beau Dale		Present	4 th generation Alaskan, hunter, fisherman, local locksmith
Clay Bezenek	Alternate	Present	Comm/Sport Fisherman, all around concerned citizen
Daryle James	Saxman	Present	Was a Commercial Fisherman, Fisherman, Hunter, Subsistence
Don Westlund		Absent	
Ginger Fox	Saxman	Present	Community of Saxman
Joe Roth		Absent	
Chris Foster	Alternate	Absent	Hunter, Fisherman
Kenny Shaw		Absent	
Nick Martin	Alternate	Absent	
Perry Leach		Absent	
Randy Williams		Absent	
Rudy Franulovich		Present	SEAK Gillnet
Devin Dalin		Absent	

Introductions:

Ketchikan AC members, ADFG Department Staff, Public in attendance

Public Present:

Nick Hashagan, Bob Jahnke, Joe Berry



Department Present:

Jessalynn Rintala (Board Support), Tessa Hasbrouck (ADFG, Wildlife), Ross Dorendorf (ADFG, Wildlife), Glenn Haight (Executive Director BOF)

Meeting Agenda:

Old business items:

1. BOF Meeting Schedule

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulations/regprocess/fishesboard/pdfs/2020-2021/mar/notice.pdf>

2. BOF Prop 276

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulations/regprocess/fishesboard/pdfs/2020-2021/proposals/276.pdf>

3. BOG Prop 194

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulations/regprocess/gamesboard/pdfs/2020-2021/proposals/194.pdf>

New business:

1.) Discussion and Voting on Old Business

Approval of Meeting Agenda

Doherty, move to adopt

Miller, second

Passes Unanimously 9-0

Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes:

Miller, move to adopt

Doherty, second



Passes Unanimously 9-0

Chairman's Report:

Scoblic, thank you everyone for your engagement. Regardless of how BOF goes forward we have 154 proposals to review. We should continue forward with this process with particular attention to King Salmon and Rockfish, there is a lot of interest in those areas. I would like to go to Glenn Haight. Glenn is going to address the issue of BOF scheduling. Thank you for being with us.

Haight, we have gone through an exercise to see how we could make the scheduling work. We have posted a memo on the meeting page for BOF. What drives a lot of the schedule is facility availability and Ted Ferry is the obvious place to do it. They did have a slot available in November but for many reasons we are recommending the first few weeks in January. The timing they have available will give us 12 days, possibly 13 days. If the BOF agreed to have it, it would be between the 4th and the 15th.

We were unable to get a budget amendment in the Governor's amended budget. Normally the Governor will forward the budget to the Legislature on December 15th. Thirty days after the legislative session starts the Governor is able to amend that budget. That would have had to have happened last week and it did not include an adjustment. The BOF has the ability to lobby the Legislature to allow for a revision. I am not sure how they will do that but we will find out during the March 8th meeting.

Doherty, thank you for being here. Is there not a concern that we do not have a full Board to conduct business for the rest of the year? Is that correct?



Haight, the court decision was really between December 16th and January 18th. The statute says the governor will appoint members and a joint meeting of the legislature will come together to approve those and if they don't do that they are rejected. There are no provisions for the circumstance where a global pandemic prevents a session from occurring. The Legislature developed language that would allow them to postpone that decision. That time was December 15th. The Governor extended that time and that was what the Legislature was challenged with. Those nominations are good for a two year period. If you are rejected you can't serve again. After those two years you can be nominated and serve. We have several recent examples of that. The Governor reappointed those 4 members in questions. Mr. Woods, Jensen, Williams, Ms. Mackenzie. Their work should be considered good to go unless a judge says otherwise. Long story short, we think they are good to go.

Scoblic, we really appreciate the report and we appreciate your support, that's what we needed to hear.

Committee Reports:

No committee reports.

Public Comment:

Jahnke, I like the idea of a wolf management committee. The public is invited into that. One of my biggest concerns is that what goes on in Unit 2 to slide into Unit 1a. I think that puts an overburden on hunters and trappers in Unit 2. It's not just POW, there are many islands, a lot of roadless areas. This may really put a burden on trappers. I think seven days is a little too short. I understand the State is a little under the gun from those suing. Trappers in Unit 2 shouldn't be burdened anymore.



Berry, I think a wolf committee is a good idea and I would like to be a part of it. I think the seven day sealing period might burden some trappers not wanting to travel into some of the bigger communities to seal every week. I'm all for any sort of progressive movement on the management of these wolves as long as we can keep it positive.

Scoblic, the goal of the committee would be to do a deeper dive into the issue and report back to the AC.

Old Business:

Youth Outreach

Dale, I talked to Bob and was informed that his granddaughter moved to Petersburg.

Scoblic, that's good information. She attended a lot of meetings and participated. I hope she's doing well in Petersburg.

BOF Meeting Schedule

Doherty, I make a motion the Ketchikan AC sends a letter to BOF expressing their thoughts surrounding the meeting schedules outlined in the email shared with the AC

Fox, second.

Bezenek, move to adopt.

Fox, second.

Doherty, the email that was sent out contains points we felt should be included in the letter. We should review, discuss and make edits.

Scoblic, the first thing that should be edited is the fact there is no budget to do two meetings. We can also edit that the meeting would be January 4th in Ketchikan at the Ted Ferry Civic Center.



Bezenek, the most important thing to me is that the meeting is in Ketchikan. After that, I want the meeting to be valuable with input from everybody so it's open and honest for the public to comment on. I'm going to leave the budget up to them.

Doherty, I'm going to share my screen so we can go through this point by point.

Scoblic, we need to change the language so it reads that we support having the meeting at the traditional time, January 4th to the 15th.

Miller, we should put forward a letter supporting a January 4th meeting with our reasons why rather than a pros and cons of the two options.

Scoblic, that is exactly what we are doing. There was a strong push for BOF to have two meetings, starting with a November meeting in Ketchikan. We want a meeting in Ketchikan in January of 2022. Are there any concerns to anything we are proposing here?

Doherty, I would like to articulate that if the BOF attempts to have a meeting in November it will be more than an arduous effort to go through 154 proposals in the format that we have and the time we have available to us currently.

This is where Zoom froze up for me. Please add anything you feel needs to be added.

Bezenek, we have already been negatively impacted and would be doubly so if we have a meeting in November,

Dale, didn't we have some scheduling issues if we had a meeting in November?

Scoblic, the issue would be with fishermen fishing for sea cucumbers, shrimp, geoduck, longlining.

- State holders and industry do not support a November meeting.



- Many fishermen will still be actively participating in their fisheries.

Allen, I'd like to make a suggestion. Where it says that everyone who wants a vaccination will have had a vaccination and that it will be safer for people and communities. I don't want to presume that we will be at that point with vaccinations. Maybe we can just say

- Safer for staff and communities

Scoblic, if we vote to write this letter and affirm these bullet points can we further affirm that the Chair, Vice Chair and Secretaries will look things over before we submit it.

Bezenek, I would be fine with that.

Allen, I'm not really seeing anything that indicates if we have this meeting in November rather than January it's going to be a burden on the public who need to participate in this process.

Scoblic, let's add

- A January meeting would more fully engage the public.

Miller, call the question.

Scoblic, is there any opposition to writing a letter to BOF indicating we would prefer a meeting in January with all the aforementioned pros and cons attached.

Passes Unanimously 8-0

Proposal 276

Scoblic, this is a Board generated proposal that addresses three issues/plans which will sunset in SEAK. This will allow orderly salmon fisheries in Deep Inlet, Anita Bay and Hawk Inlet.

Bezenek, move to adopt.



Fox, second.

Bezenek, this has already been fleshed out with the interested parties. This allows us to run the fisheries without any undo problems. It kicks it down the road another year so it can be addressed by BOF. That is why I support it.

Doherty, there is an error in the Department proposal. The conclusion for why this needs to happen is wrong, they are working to fix that. All the background information is correct.

Scoblic, we recognize that the Departments report to the Board has an inaccuracy in it. The error has been identified and should be reversed before it is deliberated at the board level. It is our intent that these fisheries will continue as they have through the 2021 season.

Bezenek, call the question.

Passes Unanimously, 8-0

Scoblic, I think we should try to have a couple more meetings before herring happens and people get busy, as early as a few weeks from now. We should prioritize King Salmon, Rockfish and other proposals the Ketchikan AC has put forward.

Fox, we should have shorter meetings but more of them.

Scoblic, I would encourage us to get out and get input from the community.

Meeting Date:

No meeting scheduled.

Adjourn: 7:18pm



Ketchikan Advisory Committee Minutes

Date: 2/22/2021 Location: Zoom

Call to Order: 5:31 pm

Roll Call:

Name	Seat	Check if present
John Scoblic	Chair	Present
Sue Doherty	Vice Chair	Present
Russell Miller	Secretary	Present
Matt Allen	Secretary	Present
Beau Dale		Present
Clay Bezenek	Alternate	Excused
Daryle James	Saxman	Excused
Don Westlund		Absent
Ginger Fox	Saxman	Present
Joe Roth		Present
Chris Foster	Alternate	Absent
Kenny Shaw		Absent
Nick Martin	Alternate	Absent
Perry Leach		Absent
Randy Williams		Absent
Rudy Franulovich		Present
Devin Dalin		Present

Introductions:

Ketchikan AC members, ADFG Department Staff, Public in attendance

Public Present:

Norm Arriola, Frank James Sr., Walter Brinkman (UAS Fairbanks), Nick Hashagan



Department Present:

Annie Barthalomew (Board Support), Tessa Hasbrouck (ADFG, Wildlife), Ross Dorendorf (ADFG, Wildlife)

Meeting Agenda:

Old business items:

1. Youth Outreach

New business:

1. BOF Meeting Schedule

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulations/regprocess/fishesboard/pdfs/2020-2021/mar/notice.pdf>

2. BOF Prop 276

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulations/regprocess/fishesboard/pdfs/2020-2021/proposals/276.pdf>

3. BOG Prop 194

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/regulations/regprocess/gamesboard/pdfs/2020-2021/proposals/194.pdf>

Allen, move to adopt

Doherty, second.

Fox, calls the question

Passes Unanimously 10-0

Previous Meeting Minutes:

Scoblic, we were able to meet before Covid really gripped Alaska on March 3rd, 2020. We discussed youth outreach, shrimp proposals and King salmon stocks of concern on the Unuk river. Business included proposals we wrote and submitted, the recognition of the stepping



down of Norm Skan and promotion of Randy Williams from Alternate to full voting member of the AC.

Doherty, moves to adopt

Allen, second.

Fox, calls the question

Passes Unanimously

Chairman's Report:

Scoblic, I'm meeting virtually today from Kodiak where I will be for the next few weeks. We've had some interest from a member of the community in joining the AC. We will continue to pursue that interest. Tonight I'm hoping for a brief meeting to provide the context for our next meeting in the next few days. I'd like to thank the Department for being here and would like to ask Ross if he would like to speak now or wait until we get to the wolf proposal.

Dorendorf, I'll wait until we get to the proposal.

Committee Reports:

No committee reports.

Public Comment:

Arriola, good evening, I am from Ketchikan. As we are all aware our fisheries were devastated by global warming and a two year drought in SE, AK. Sockeye have been decimated from out of state fishermen who come up to fish every summer. Our King salmon are very low. It won't be long to where there will no longer be any King salmon. Neets Bay Chum salmon and pink salmon were low. Coho are next. My



recommendation is to close herring fishing for the next four years. Thousands of tons of herring have been shipped out of Alaska since I was a youngster. Thank you for allowing me to speak.

James Sr., Fish and Game is really going to have to open their eyes and ears to what is going on, what is happening with our salmon. I'm not attempting to push blame. I've been a Fisher for 49yrs. A prominent BC scientist told me that hatchery fish are going to wipe out wild stocks. Too many fish are going out to the ocean. If you look at South America, Russia, Central Alaska, what is being put out there is going to kill off wild stock and themselves. Someone has to look into this.

I agree with Norman, we have to bring the herring back.

Old Business:

Scoblic, I reached out to Emily Ramsey about her interest in becoming an AC member. Hopefully we will see her at the next meeting. I talked with Jessalynn Rintala, it is entirely up to us how we appoint a youth AC member. The other person who may have interest is Rose Jahnke.

New Business:

Scoblic, BOF should have met in Ketchikan this January. It was postponed until April, in the meantime there was a Joint Board meeting where they talked about postponing for one year. BOF met and decided they would try to not only catchup PWS, SEAK meetings but would continue on with what was already on the schedule. In other words, they want to take up two Board cycles in one year. We have the opportunity to provide comment. If there is an in-person meeting it will be held in Ketchikan. This meeting could happen in November or January. Both of those things could benefit our community. One of



those could benefit our community and our fisheries the best. I will yield to Sue.

Doherty, the Board meeting on March 8th will be via Zoom. There will be no public comment and they will definitively decide when the SE meeting in Ketchikan will be. Board Support staff is responsible for determining the feasibility of the meeting. The November date is available in Ketchikan. The overwhelming response of the stakeholders who provided testimony in the January meeting was to shift the meeting back a year. We can comment about whether it makes sense to double up. Some things to consider, there is no current budget. Board Support staff is limited. We barely get information or finalized information by the time we have normal meetings. We have 154 proposals for our area in which we will have to comment on and we don't meet in the summer. These meetings will have to occur over Zoom. It will be difficult to get input from the community. We will end up with diminished community input.

I have some points I have articulated in writing. If we have a November meeting a lot of onerous will be placed upon the AC's to digest and comment on all these proposals.

Scoblic, my personal opinion, as one committee member, I think putting 2 cycles into one year is going to be fraught with problems.

- 1.) Budgetary constraints with the AK State Budget.
- 2.) Lack of Data. We are not going to have the data we need by November. We barely get the information we need by January.

Why would the Board want to do twice the amount of work rather than the normal amount of work? I'm a strong advocate of having the BOF in Ketchikan, of having the meeting in Ketchikan in 2022. I believe it will be safe at that time.



Doherty, ACR's are still available as an avenue to pursue new, urgent issues. It is going to be difficult for the BOF to do a good job. I would like to see the AC put ideas to paper for the next meeting.

Roth, I'm up for pushing BOF off a year.

Scoblic, we have been accused in the past of not being very mindful of the Game side of things. I worry that we may relapse if the BOF follows through with some of its schedule proposals. We have a strong Game presence on our AC and I worry those voices won't be able to inform the BOG. In the past it took several meetings to go through proposals. I'm looking around and people are going to have to make a decision in October if they are going to go to work to feed their families or are they going to attend meetings. It's just a real poor time in November.

Between Sue, Russell, Matt and myself we can come up with some bullet points to present to the committee for the next meeting.

Proposal 276 bundles up three issues with sunset dates. If BOF doesn't act they will lapse. I feel it is important that they be renewed.

Doherty, there are three regulations that will sunset in SE if they are not renewed.

- 1.) 5AAC.33.366 Northern Southeast Seine Salmon Fishery Management Plan.
- 2.) 5AAC.33.376 Deep Inlet Terminal Harvest Area Salmon Management Plan
- 3.) 5AAC.33.383 District 7: Anita Bay Terminal Harvest Area Salmon Management Plan

There is broad industry support for renewing or extending these plans for 2021.



If allowed to sunset they will revert to previous regulations. The current regulations were determined by interested gear groups based on enhanced allocation and data. In Anita Bay and Deep Inlet, instead of rotations of 1 to 1 it will revert back to 2 to 1 gillnet vs. seine. If the Northern Southeast plan lapses there will be no plan, no cap on sockeye harvest.

This is a Board generated proposal that extends the plans into 2021.

Scoblic, this keeps things the same until they are able to have a full Board meeting whether that occurs in November of 2021 or January 2022.

Franulovich, am correct in assuming that the Point Marsden, Hawk Inlet sockeye cap would remain at 15,000.

Scoblic, correct.

Franulovich, if this were to lapse would Deep Inlet revert back to 2 to 1 from 1 to 1.

Doherty, yes.

Franulovich, I think this should be allowed to lapse because Crawfish Inlet is an exclusive seine area with a large amount of chums in there.

Doherty, the industry, the United Southeast Gillnetters, the Seiners the Trollers, SEAGO, ALPHA, SEAFA all signed on that, in lieu of being able to present the allocation picture to the Board we should agree to what was agreed upon previously. It's a contentious issue every three years. Under the circumstances this is our best option.

Franulovich, what are the allocation numbers for 2020. Are they out.

Doherty, Gillnetters are up over allocation, Seiners are within allocation, Trollers below. Gillnetters are down a peg or two but are still over.



Franulovich, what are the percentages?

Doherty, I don't know, it's a 5yr rolling average, one year shouldn't make a difference.

Franulovich, we just don't know what is going to happen in Lynn Canal and Deep Inlet and I really think Gillnetters need the opportunity to go 2 to 1.

Doherty, SSRAA has decided that they are going to take the bulk of Anita for cost recovery. They are also taking the two peak weeks out of Kendrick and Nakat. The amount they are going to take out of Kendrick is going to be more than Nakat. We can go back and forth over who is over and under but that is almost beside the point. We need to determine whether we support this Board proposal.

Franulovich, I will support the idea but I also want to put forward that the Gillnetters are getting short changed in Deep Inlet.

Scoblic, we are going to go forward with the Board of Game wolf Proposal 194.

Dorendorf, prior to 2018 we managed by Emergency Order. We had a set amount of animals we were looking to harvest and would shut down by EO. This was put into place due to potential listing of the Alaska Archipelago wolf as an endangered species. It wasn't a very popular management strategy. We had a rebound in the population and we decided we could go to a time based management strategy in Unit 2. That would give trappers a set season length.

Board of Game set up a population objective. We want to have between 150-200 wolves. We also decided we did not need the 14 day sealing period and it was relaxed to 30 days post season. Unforeseen was that our model works better when we know when wolves are removed from the landscape.



There has been another petition to list the wolf. This is a little bit different than previous petitions. Instead of the entirety of their range it's focused on just SEAK. It wants to make the wolves of Unit 2 a distinct population segment and they couldn't do it when considering their entire range. A listing could mean no hunting or trapping season. We are trying to collect the best information we can. A seven day sealing period would allow us to do that.

Roth, would changing the sealing period and shortening it allow you to shut the season by EO.

Dorendorf, this is specifically targeted at trapping. We are trying to avoid closure by EO, we want to manage by season length. It's predictable and easier to plan around for trappers. If something catastrophic happens I could close by EO but I don't want to do that.

Scoblic, is this trying to get at the best data in a more timely and effective manner?

Dorendorf, we want the best possible data. We are trying to work with all groups to show we can manage these animals rather than the Fish and Wildlife Service through a listing. That is the main thing we are trying to avoid. We want a hunting and trapping season for wolves to continue and we are confident we can do so. This is a piece of the puzzle.

Allen, have you had an opportunity to receive any information or input from residents of Unit 2.

Dorendorf, this is our first opportunity outside of email. Some AC's will be having meetings shortly.

Allen, I had the opportunity to listen into a teleconference last October/November put on by ADFG and the USFS regarding wolf management in Unit 2. The overwhelming public comment was one of



frustration regarding the current management. I would anticipate that there would be some further frustration with this proposal even though I believe it is a relatively simple ask.

Dorendorf, avoiding an ESA listing is paramount. It will impact all residents of SE AK.

Doherty, I am worried that we are going to start drawing lines at borders. Is the Department finding any evidence they are genetically diverse and a separate population.

Dorendorf, it was determined that the Alexander Archipelago wolf is genetically distinct when compared to mainland and interior wolves. We can detect an individual which allows us to model and provide a population estimate. That's why we are putting forward this sealing proposal.

Dalin, are the boards located on the road system or off the road system?

Dorendorf, all of our hair boards are essentially on the road system. We have had help from the Nature Conservancy and Hydaburg, a little bit on the Kasaan peninsula and Sukkwan Island. We have to check the boards every 7 days and it is logistically difficult and expensive to do much off the road system. For our samples we generate a density estimate that we extrapolate out to the areas we don't cover. We typically cover 60-70% of Unit 2.

Dalin, with all your boards on the road system, what is to say the wolves aren't being pushed off the road system due to hunting and trapping pressure?

Dorendorf, we don't have a way to estimate in those areas we aren't sampling. We extrapolate out from where we are sampling. I don't



have any evidence to say the wolves are being pushed. Wolves are highly territorial and they will kill one another.

Allen, I would like to recommend a presentation at a more opportune time regarding this issue. I have a lot of questions but want to stick to the intent of this proposal. I think a more well informed AC and community would certainly be beneficial.

Dorendorf, of course.

Scoblic, we have our next meeting scheduled. I hope our next meeting will go smoothly. I do not want to stifle debate. Susan, Russell, Matt and I will come up with some bullet points to share with the AC regarding the proposals we discussed tonight. I'd like to thank everyone for their time.

Meeting Date:

February 25th, 2021 via Zoom

Adjourn: 7:08pm



Koyukuk River Fish and Game Advisory Committee

Interior Region Fish and Game Advisory Committees

Jack Reakoff
Chairman
114 Newhouse Rd
Wiseman Village, AK 99790

Central	Middle Nenana River
Delta Junction	Middle Yukon River
Eagle	Minto-Nenana
Fairbanks	Ruby
GASH	Tanana-Rampart-Manley
Koyukuk River	Upper Tanana/Fortymile
McGrath	Yukon Flats

February 2, 2021

Alaska Board of Game
Larry Van Daele, Chairman

Alaska Board of Fish
Marit Carlson-Van Dort Chairman

Dear Board members,

The Koyukuk River Advisory Committee has identified a serious issue regarding how the Advisory Committees generated comments are not read into the record, or used in some cases, when the Boards are deliberating proposals.

As you are aware the Advisory Committees spend considerable time promulgating or deliberating proposals that would affect the resources and people of Alaska, especially in our home area of expertise. The comments are forwarded to the Board of Game or Fish for their statutory considerations during deliberations.

The Advisory Committee chair or designee typically presents the ACs' position and justification to the Board at the beginning of the meeting, during public comments. These AC comments are mixed with literally tens or hundreds of comments regarding all of the proposals on the Boards meeting agenda.

The glaring issue for this committee, as well as the other 80-some odd committees, is how the Boards are using the statutory comments. When the proposal is brought up for deliberation AC comments are rarely referenced.

The Advisory Committees, as well the general public listening into the BOG or BOF meeting in person, or virtual, do not hear the record reflect what the ACs' positions are regarding the proposals.

The majority of public and especially the various other ACs are never informed what all the committees had to say. We have heard the Board members ask questions of the ADFG staff regarding conditions or information contained in the ACs' comments. ADFG staff rarely looks at, or considers AC comments, so adlib an answer to the best of their knowledge. Several members of the Board apparently do not look at the AC comments when they ask ADFG questions, which are answered in the AC comments.



Therefore, it is very apparent the deliberation process is not serving the public, the Advisory Committees, the Boards of Game or Fish deliberations, or the audio record. We recommend the Board address this blind spot in the process; by having Board Support staff read into the audio record the AC comments during proposal presentation. The public that is listening, including the ACs and Boards of Game or Fish will be better much better served through a transparent process.

Thank you for your consideration,
Jack Reakoff Chairman Koyukuk AC



February 15, 2021

Alaska Board of Fisheries

Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Boards Support Section

P.O. Box 115526

Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526

Dear Chairperson Carlson-Van Dort and Alaska Board of Fisheries members-

The Petersburg Advisory Committee met on February 11, 2021 via Zoom, expedited through board support. The purpose of our meeting was to hold elections for seats that had expired in June 2020, to comment on Proposal 276, to comment on meeting dates, and to discuss addressing proposals for the yet to be determined SE Finfish and Shellfish Meeting.

The Petersburg AC, by unanimous consent, **supports Proposal 276**. It was noted that it was a sensible fix to a very unique problem, and that the gear groups affected by the regulations are proponents for this fix.

Our committee also unanimously supported moving all regulatory cycle meetings out 1 year, as SE and PWS have been. It was noted that if the other cycled meetings were kept to their three years, SE and PWS would be subject to a four-year cycle, followed by a two-year cycle. It was expressed that while there was a sense of urgency by some stakeholders to maintain three-year cycles outside of SE and PWS, it was unfair and discriminatory to saddle two regions being impacted for two cycles to maintain the three-year cycle. It was noted that moving the cycles a year out would actually save the state money, and at the time of this writing, no supplemental ADF&G budget for 2021 had been submitted to the legislature, and it was unclear if there would be support of such a budget. It was mentioned that having the meetings stacked into the 2021/2022 meeting season would extraneously challenge board support's ability to manage those meetings. Maintaining the three-cycle moving forward by stacking the meetings could lead to having our regions meeting at a time of year when many stakeholders were still actively fishing, and would not allow full and robust AC participation, or full committee attendance to comment on proposals before the on-time comments due date. While no date recommendations have come forth for the proposed meetings in 2021/2022, our AC maintains our preference for a January meeting date for our SE Finfish and Shell fish meeting. This would allow us our usual time frame for meetings and commenting, and likely allow for our AC's representative participation in the meeting.

Our committee declined taking up proposals for our meeting, as many members had not had an opportunity to review proposals. This is our first cycle since books for our AC had not been provided. Board support has committed to printing and mailing proposals to our members who did not have the resources available to download and print the 173-page book. It was also noted that since there would be another fishing season before the meeting, that positions could change on many of the proposals. It was also mentioned that if the meeting were held in the fall rather than January, that there would be very incomplete data that would be important in discussing allocative proposals. This is especially



important as there are currently many action plans in our region regarding stocks of concern. There are Action Plans being developed by the department, and the board should recognize the importance of the best, most recent data being considered in formulating those plans. The board should also recognize that if we were to prosecute the current meeting schedule decided on January 25, 2021, that there would only be two years on an Action Plan, which would in all likelihood, because three years is the usual re-visit time frame, end up being 5-year Action Plans, which could have a draconian effect on fishing opportunity for all users.

The boards decision to stuff four meetings into a two-meeting time frame has taken in our view, what was a state problem, and made in a regional one. The peculiarities surrounding this discussion shouldn't allow for irregularities for specific regions, particularly if there is a more cost effective, reasonable alternative that would allow for clarity and consistency.

Sincerely,

Max Worhatch, Petersburg AC Chair



March 2, 2021

Dear Board of Fisheries members,

The Sitka AC met on February 3, 2021 to hold elections, review proposals, and discuss the proposed schedule for the Board of Fisheries 2021-2022 meeting cycle. The Sitka Fish and Game Advisory Committee decided to resubmit its comments from the Joint Board meeting and supports postponing the Southeast and Yakutat Finfish and Shellfish meeting until January 2022.

Thank you for your time and your consideration.

Sincerely,

John Murray, Vice-Chair, Sitka Fish and Game Advisory Committee



Sitka, Alaska January 15, 2021

Dear Joint Boards members, staff, and participating public,

The Sitka AC met on the 13th of January to comment on the consideration of rescheduling meetings due to the unresolved Covid-19 pandemic. The Sitka AC understands how important the Board processes are for conservation, management, and sharing of our fish and wildlife resources. We applaud the decision by the joint boards to consider rescheduling the meetings during the time of Covid for multiple reasons but will focus on the questions asked about in the announcement.

1. Conduct some or all of the meetings through web conferencing.

The members of our committee are starting to become familiar with zoom, google conferencing, and other web meeting teleconference tools. However, Zoom or other contemporary on-line meeting apps will not replicate the traditional process of representatives of all user groups, staff, and Board members together. All of these platforms have a learning curve before they can be used effectively. Based on our experience with this on a smaller scale and the mixed level of abilities with these technologies across our committee, we believe virtual meetings are an inadequate substitute for in person meetings. To jump directly from our traditional meeting system to virtual meetings could also jeopardize the Board members decisions and Alaska's fish and wildlife management. The complexities of resolving issues around fish and wildlife conservation, management, and enforcement will not be communicated efficiently to board members without direct back and forth in-person meetings. Group and individual negotiations will be minimized. We believe in person meetings are essential for the best decisions to be made and for public confidence in the Boards processes, decisions, and resulting regulations. Therefore, our AC strongly recommends no web conferencing for the major BOF and BOG meetings to consider proposals.

2. Should meetings be postponed until the 2021/2022 meeting cycle?

The Sitka AC strongly recommends postponing meetings, particularly SE fisheries and wildlife proposal meetings until at least January of 2022. Many of us in SE Alaska are fishing in the spring and in the fall. A spring or fall meeting in SE either in person or by web conferencing will disenfranchise us and many of our Sitka area stakeholders due to potential conflict with major commercial fishing openings or sport hunting seasons.



3. Impacts on the public.

We feel there will be negative impacts to public participation if the BoF or BoG regulatory meetings are held over Zoom. There are concerns that the limitations of the technology will limit the public's ability to participate and lead to issues in equity. Regarding public comment opportunities, participation may be hindered or limited due to the barriers of this technology, including access and the skills required for effectively utilizing these alternative platforms. We are also concerned that many folks in rural areas or otherwise may not have the same access to technology or the internet for a variety of reasons. We also recognize the challenges of the past year and acknowledge that the beginning of the global COVID pandemic coincided with the deadline for submitting proposals for this regulatory cycle. We recognize that these issues may have also caused difficulty for various other ACs to complete their work on time and meet the proposal submission deadline. We would like to see an additional opportunity for proposals to be submitted. Due to the nature of the 3 year cycle, if this opportunity is not provided, those proposals that may not have met the deadline will require waiting another 3 or 4 years before they can be considered.

We suggest the following measures for mitigation of these issues:

- a) Re-open an opportunity to submit new proposals for 30 days after the Boards announcement of new meeting dates.
- b) Extend the comment period until the usual deadline before meetings

Thank you for your time and your consideration.

Sincerely,

Heather Bauscher, Chair Sitka Fish & Game AC