

ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES  
COPPER RIVER SALMON MANAGEMENT PLAN

(Revised #79-51-FB)  
See also #77-25-FB

- I. INTRODUCTION: The purpose of this plan is to insure an adequate escapement of salmon into the Copper River system and to provide management guidelines for equitable allocation of the harvestable resource.
- II. COPPER RIVER SALMON RUN
- A. This policy governs only those salmon which pass the department sonar counters located at the Million Dollar Bridge.
  - B. The Commercial Fisheries Division shall manage the Copper River commercial fishery to attain a total escapement into the Copper River of 350,000 salmon to insure that adequate escapement reach the spawning grounds and provide for a sport and subsistence harvest. The desired weekly escapements are shown in Table 1.
  - C. The Commercial Fisheries Division shall manage the subsistence fishery on the Copper River consistent with AS 16.05.251(b) and to insure adequate escapement by restricting the subsistence harvest to the following levels (Table 2) based on escapement as determined by sonar evaluations and any other appropriate means.
  - D. The department shall prepare application forms to obtain information necessary to determine what persons are qualified to receive subsistence permits described in Section III.
- III. PERMITTING
- A. Subsistence Permits: Permits may be issued to persons who show the greatest level of need for subsistence salmon on the basis of:
    - Customary and direct dependence upon the resource as the mainstay of one's livelihood,
    - Local residency, and
    - Availability of alternative resources.
  - 1. Class A Permit: A Class A Permit may be issued to any person who satisfies all of the following criteria:
    - a. Dependency
      - i. 55 years of age or older
      - ii. Annual income of no more than the amount identified in 5 AAC 01.630(b) (2) (B) and as

the income criteria regulation may be from time to time amended.

- iii. Use of a fishwheel to catch fish in the Copper River in ten of the last twelve years.

b. Residency

- i. Proximity to the resource as determined by Copper River residency as follows:

A Copper River Basin resident is an Alaska resident (as defined in Title 16) who for the preceding twelve consecutive months has maintained his place of residence and voting residence (if applicable) in the area described below and who does not maintain a permanent residence or voting residence elsewhere. The area includes Game Management Units 11, 13-A, 13-B, 13-C, 13-D as described in 5 AAC 90.010 and the Jacksina River drainage to its confluence with the Nabesna River.

2. Class B Permit: A Class B Permit may be issued to any person who is a Copper River Basin resident as defined above.
3. Class C Permit: A Class C Permit may be issued to any state resident who applies to and is determined by the Commissioner of Fish and Game or his delegate as a person who satisfies all of the following criteria:
  - a. Household size of three persons or more,
  - b. Household having one or more persons over 55 years old,
  - c. No more than one full-time employed person in the household,
  - d. Participation in the fishery for eight of the last ten years, and
  - e. Annual household income not to exceed \$10,000.
4. Class D Permit: A Class D Permit may be issued to any resident of the State of Alaska as defined in Title 16.

B. Permitting

1. When escapements of less than 300,000 are projected, the face value (number of fish allowed per permit) of permits as described in 5 AAC 01.630 may be reduced to insure that all permittees would be allowed to fish.
2. When escapement projections improve significantly during the season, face values of permits may be increased up to

full value as described in 5 AAC 01.630.

3. Permits must be returned no later than October 31 or a permit for the following year may be denied as provided in 5 AAC 01.015(c).
4. During closed fishing periods, the Chitina permit issuing station may be closed or operated at reduced hours to reduce manpower costs.

C. Delayed Season Opening

When sonar counts prior to June 1 indicate less than 250,000 projected escapement, the subsistence season opening may be delayed up to ten days to allow more accurate assessment of run strength and confirm appropriate allowable harvest allocations.

IV. COPPER RIVER SUBSISTENCE CHINOOK SALMON FISHERY:

When the Copper River dip net subsistence fishery is closed to the taking of sockeye salmon, it may be open to the taking of chinook salmon between June 1 through July 10, up to seven days per week.

V. COPPER RIVER SUBSISTENCE COHO SALMON FISHERY:

If the Copper River subsistence fishery is closed or restricted because of an inadequate escapement of sockeye and chinook salmon, the fishery may be reopened September 1 for the taking of coho salmon, which constitute the majority of the salmon at that time. By September 1, the escapement of sockeye and chinook salmon has essentially passed through the area. Also by this time, the subsistence fishery effort has decreased and constitutes less than five percent of the total effort on the fishery.

VI. UPPER COPPER RIVER SOCKEYE SALMON SPORT FISHERY:

When projected sockeye salmon escapements to the upper Copper River fall below 250,000, sport fishing for sockeye salmon shall be closed.

VII. COPPER RIVER CHINOOK SALMON COMMERCIAL FISHERY:

During years when commercial sockeye salmon fishery closures are in effect, limited chinook salmon harvests may be allowed under the following conditions:

- A. The incidental catch of sockeye salmon may not exceed ten percent of chinook salmon weekly harvest quotas when less than 250,000 sockeye salmon escapement is projected. When 250-350,000 sockeye salmon escapement is projected, the incidental catch may not exceed twenty percent.
- B. Maximum drift gill net per vessel shall be 150 fathoms of 8 1/4-inch or larger mesh.
- C. Fishing periods may not exceed six hours in length and fishing time will be set to avoid periods of maximized catch potential.

There will be two fishing periods per week unless more than 80 percent of the week's quota is taken during the first period.

- D. When weekly quotas are not obtained, no more than ten percent of that quota may be taken in the following week.
- E. 1. Weekly quotas for 1980 are as follows:

<u>Week*</u>	<u>Harvest Allocation</u>
21	2,000
22	4,000
23	3,000
24	1,000

2. Adjustments of up to one week may be made in the overall harvest allocation timing to compensate for seasonal variations due to early or late spring breakup or other environmental conditions.

\* Statistical weeks are in numerical sequence beginning with week number one (1), which is the week ending with the first Saturday of the calendar year.

ADOPTED: January 11, 1980  
Anchorage, Alaska

VOTE: 6/0

Tab Expected upriver escapement by week based upon percent of average weekly sockeye salmon catch in the Copper River District to produce 350,000 de escapement and 250,000 minimum escapement.\*\*

Dates	Week	Average Catch	Years	Percent	Cumulative Percent	Minimum Escapement	Cumulative Escapement	Expected Average Escapement	Cumulative Expected Average Escapement	Minimum Expected Sonar Escapement (Cumulative)	Average Expected Sonar Escapement (Cumulative)
May 14-20	20	32,602	( 9)	4.7	4.7	11,750	11,750	16,440	16,440	*	*
21-27	21	102,868	(15)	14.8	19.5	37,000	48,750	51,790	68,230	11,750	16,440
28- 3	22	144,653	(16)	20.9	40.4	52,250	101,000	73,140	141,370	48,750	68,230
June 4-10	23	132,503	(18)	19.1	59.5	47,650	148,650	66,840	208,210	101,000	141,370
11-17	24	76,753	(18)	11.1	70.6	27,750	176,400	38,840	247,050	148,650	208,210
18-24	25	61,650	(18)	8.9	79.5	22,250	198,650	31,140	278,190	176,400	247,050
25- 1	26	48,838	(17)	7.0	86.5	17,500	216,150	24,490	302,680	198,650	278,190
July 2- 8	27	33,387	(18)	4.8	91.3	12,000	228,150	16,790	319,470	216,150	302,680
9-15	28	27,032	(18)	3.9	95.2	9,750	237,900	13,640	333,110	228,150	319,470
16-22	29	16,415	(18)	2.4	97.6	6,000	243,900	8,390	341,500	237,900	333,110
23-29	30	10,429	(18)	1.5	99.1	3,750	247,650	5,240	346,740	243,900	341,500
30- 5	31	4,660	(17)	0.7	99.8	1,750	249,400	2,440	349,180	247,650	346,740
Aug. 6-12	32	1,476	(17)	0.2	100.0	500	249,900	690	349,870	249,400	349,180
13-19	33	298	(13)	0.04		100	250,000	130	350,000	249,900	349,870
										250,000	
AVERAGE		693,564				250,000		350,000*	350,000***		350,000***

\* Escapement upriver.

\*\* 80,000 - 90,000 additional spawners required for Copper River Delta spawning areas.

\*\*\* Actual escapement requires subtraction of subsistence and sport fishery take.

Page 5 of 6  
#80-66+FB

TABLE 2: COPPER RIVER SUBSISTENCE FISHERY ALLOCATION PLAN

PROJECTED ESCAPEMENT	ALLOWABLE HARVEST	PERMITTEES <sup>1/</sup>	LEVEL OF PARTICIPATION
Less than 150,000	3-5,000	Class A <sup>2/</sup>	7 days/week
150-200,000	8-10,000	Class A Class B and C	7 days/week 2 days/week (Saturday-Sunday)
200-250,000	13-15,000	Class A Class D	7 days/week 2 days/week (Saturday-Sunday)
250-300,000	18-20,000	Class A Class D	7 days/week 3 days/week (Friday-Sunday)
300-350,000	23-25,000	Class A Class D	7 days/week 5 days/week (Thursday-Monday)
More than 350,000		Unrestricted	

<sup>1/</sup> No distinction is drawn to gear type.

<sup>1/</sup> Special permits are estimated to be 25-30 permits