

Statement of FactsSubdistrict 6C (upper Tanana River) Subsistence  
Salmon Fishery Management Plan

1. Commercial, sport and subsistence fisheries occur throughout the main Yukon River and in several large tributary streams including the Koyukuk, Tanana and Porcupine Rivers.
2. Annual commercial salmon catches for the Yukon River drainage, including the Tanana River, have averaged 1,207,000 fish from 1976-1980. Species composition of this catch was 113,000 king, 1,075,000 chum and 19,000 coho salmon. Catches in the permitted subsistence fishery have averaged 352,000 fish (28,000 kings and 324,000 chums) for the same period.
3. The Yukon Management area is divided into six districts, some of which are further divided into subdistricts to facilitate catch and escapement data analyses and for application of different management strategies. Different harvest allocations, fishing times and gear restrictions are provided for each district due to varying run magnitudes, fishing efforts and fishing conditions.
4. District 6 consists of the Tanana River drainage which is divided into three subdistricts (6A, 6B, 6C). Subdistrict 6C is that portion of the Tanana River drainage located between the Wood and Chena Rivers; the permitted subsistence fishery also extends above the Chena River to the Salcha River.

5. District 6 contains active commercial and subsistence fisheries in each of its three subdistricts. (Salmon catches in <sup>the</sup> commercial and subsistence fisheries of the Tanana River drainage by subdistrict are presented in Table 1.)
6. Subdistrict 6C contains a relatively small commercial salmon fishery which was conducted by nine limited entry permit holders in 1980. (Average salmon catches per limited entry permit holder in the subdistrict 6C commercial fishery are presented in Table 2.)
7. Subdistrict 6C also contains an expanding permitted subsistence fishery which has come to include growing numbers of permittees from the Fairbanks area. (Table 3).
8. Additional commercial and subsistence salmon fisheries are located in the Tanana River downstream from subdistrict 6C; harvesting activities in these subsistence fisheries primarily occur in the vicinities of villages or near a former village site.
9. Permits have been required for participation in the subdistrict 6C subsistence fishery since 1973. The numbers of permittees and reported catches have increased substantially in recent years (Table 4).
10. The Board of Fisheries recognizes that historically certain groups of people living in the vicinity of the Tanana River have depended upon local, wild renewable resources for food and other products.

11. Fish resources from that portion of the Tanana River now designated subdistrict 6C have been important to the livelihoods of groups living in the area--not only to Native people who used these resources before Fairbanks was established, but also to the community of Fairbanks at a time when the area was relatively isolated, commercial markets were not readily accessible, and few alternatives to local resources were available.
  
12. Although the Fairbanks area has changed substantially since the time when the entire community depended upon local, wild resources for food and other products, the Subsistence Section's research data indicate that a variety of people currently participate in the permitted subsistence fishery (Caulfield 1980).
  
13. Among these participants may be groups whose uses of subdistrict 6C salmon properly should be considered to be customary and traditional.
  
14. To the extent that current uses are customary and traditional and are for the purposes listed in AS 16.05.940(26), they are entitled to the priority established by AS 16.05.251(b).
  
15. Because populations of salmon stocks have been adequate to support diverse uses in the past, regulations previously adopted by the Board of Fisheries have reflected the Board's view that opportunities to participated in the permitted subdistrict 6C fishery should be readily available.

16. However, the establishment of such opportunities in prior years does not reflect a final determination by the Board that all participants in the permitted subdistrict 6C subsistence fishery have engaged in customary and traditional practices and procedures.
17. Increased harvesting pressures on salmon stocks in subdistrict 6C have led the Board to conclude that customary and traditional practices and procedures should be identified and that the statutory priority should be implemented in order to protect sustained yield population levels of these stocks.
18. Accordingly, the Board concludes that opportunities for participation in the 1981 permitted subdistrict 6C subsistence salmon fishery should remain essentially unchanged.
19. Harvest information from returns of subsistence salmon fishing permits shows that the 1980 harvest of king salmon was 283, but the actual harvest may total about 400 king salmon because of estimated unreported catches.
20. Testimony presented by the Fairbanks Fish and Game Advisory Committee and the Department's Subsistence Section suggests that some persons who may apply for subsistence permits may not be able to satisfy fully their needs under present subsistence harvest limits.
21. Providing a moderate increase in the total subsistence harvest in subdistrict 6C will help assure that participants have the opportunity to satisfy their subsistence needs.

22. Allowing a moderate increase in the harvest quota for 1981 will insure that customary and traditional use patterns are given appropriate priority as required by AS 16.05.251(b) and will allow former permittees to continue their participation.
23. A moderately increased 1981 harvest quota combined with essentially unchanged opportunities for obtaining permits also will protect non-commercial, non-sport users from unnecessary restriction while the Department gathers data which the Board can use to delineate more precisely the limits of customary and traditional use in subdistrict 6C.
24. To the extent that the 1981 permitted subsistence <sup>salmon</sup> fishery in subdistrict 6C includes uses which are not customary and traditional, the Board's allocation decision is based on its authority under AS 16.05.251(a).
25. In order to accommodate a reasonable harvest increase in the permitted subsistence fishery and to protect the needs of sport and commercial users, a harvest quota of 750 king salmon and 4,000 chum and coho salmon combined (2,000 salmon harvest before August 15 and 2,000 salmon harvest after August 15) for the subdistrict 6C subsistence fishery is established.
26. Because of the limited nature of the king and chum salmon stocks in the upper portion of the Yukon and Tanana River drainages, prudent conservation indicated <sup>s</sup> moderate adjustment is required in the harvest by sport and commercial users to provide the additional harvest for the subsistence fishery.

27. Accordingly, the guideline harvest levels for the district 6 commercial fishery should be reduced by equivalent numbers of salmon. This decrease is only about 15% of the midpoint of the 1980 guideline commercial harvest range and only 6% of the average commercial salmon harvest actually made in the district during 1979-80.
28. Based on the best available scientific data, Yukon and Tanana River salmon stocks are currently sustaining maximum utilization. Some small stocks that spawn in extreme upstream areas may be overharvested due to the cumulative commercial and subsistence harvests along 700-1,000 miles of river. Upper Tanana River stocks are subjected to about 15-20 days open to commercial and subsistence fishing during their upstream migration.
29. Annual <sup>s</sup>escapement data for several Tanana River streams located upstream of Fairbanks are presented in Table 5. Chum salmon <sup>s</sup>escapements should not be allowed to decrease below 1980 levels. Although king salmon escapement in the Chena and Salcha Rivers have increased during the last two or three years, escapements of some small stocks (e.g., Goodpaster River) may not be adequate.

The Board of Fisheries finds that the transfer of not more than 350 king, 2,000 summer chum (before 8/15) and 2,000 fall chum salmon (after 8/15) from the commercial fisheries throughout the Tanana River (district 6) maximizes the benefits from the Yukon River salmon resource by adequately providing priority for subsistence uses while still providing adequate commercial fishing opportunities.

Signed Nick Szabo, Chairman  
Alaska Board of Fisheries

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Table 1. Salmon catches for commercial and subsistence fisheries in District 6, Yukon management area, 1979-1980.

KING SALMON			
	<u>Comm.</u>	<u>Subs.</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>1979</u>			
6A	101	269	370
6B	362	800	1,162
6C	370	264	634
	<u>833</u>	<u>1,333</u>	<u>2,166</u>
<u>1980</u>			
6A	92	346	438
6B	1,651	953	2,604
6C	333	282	615
	<u>2,076</u>	<u>1,581</u>	<u>3,657</u>
<u>Averages 1979-1980</u>			
6A	(97)	(308)	(404)
6B	(1,006)	(877)	(1,883)
6C	(3,521)	(273)	(625)
	<u>(1,455)</u>	<u>(1,457)</u>	<u>(2,912)</u>
SUMMER CHUM			
<u>1979</u>			
6A	338	1,939	2,277
6B	14,810	1,880	16,690
6C	-4,406	2,384	6,790
	<u>19,880</u>	<u>6,203</u>	<u>25,757</u>
<u>1980</u>			
6A	5,109	467	5,576
6B	29,365	3,570	32,935
6C	4,363	3,729	8,092
	<u>38,837</u>	<u>7,766</u>	<u>46,603</u>
<u>Averages 1979-1980</u>			
6A	(2,724)	(1,203)	(3,927)
6B	(22,088)	(2,725)	(24,813)
6C	(4,385)	(3,057)	(7,442)
	<u>(29,359)</u>	<u>(6,985)</u>	<u>(36,344)</u>

Table 1 Salmon catches for commercial and subsistence fisheries in District 6, Yukon management area, 1979-1980 (continued).

FALL CHUM			
	<u>Comm.</u>	<u>Subs.</u>	<u>Total</u>
<u>1979</u>			
6A	7,863	20,274	28,137
6B	28,515	31,645	55,160
6C	5,724	4,459	10,183
	<u>37,102</u>	<u>56,378</u>	<u>93,480</u>
 <u>1980</u>			
6A	7,451	6,770	14,221
6B	32,346	11,198	43,544
6C	4,055	1,975	6,030
	<u>43,852</u>	<u>19,943</u>	<u>63,795</u>
 <u>Averages</u> <u>1979-1980</u>			
6A	(7,657)	(13,522)	(21,179)
6B	(27,930)	(21,422)	(49,352)
6C	(4,890)	(3,217)	(8,107)
	<u>(40,477)</u>	<u>(38,161)</u>	<u>(78,638)</u>



Table 2. Average commercial salmon catch per fisherman, subdistrict 6-C, Yukon area, 1980.

No. Fishermen	Kings	Summer Chum	Fall Chum	Coho
9	37	485	200	19

Table 4 Subsistence fishery salmon data for subdistrict 6C, 1973-1980.

Year	# Permits	Catch		Kings
		Summer Chums	Fall Chums Cohos	
1973	22	771	886	26
1974	70	1373	1580	38
1975	36	751	864	32
1976	110	1314	1512	31
1977	89	118	607	81
1978	160	2729	1188	126
1979	249	2384	4459	264
1980	315	3729	4059	282

Table 5 Comparative salmon escapements in the upper Tanana River drainage, 1970-1980. #80-81B-FB

	King Salmon			Summer Chum Salmon
	Chena R.	Salcha R.	Goodpaster R.	Salcha R.
1970	-	1,882	-	7,879
1971	193 <sup>1/</sup>	1,159 <sup>1/</sup>	20 <sup>1/</sup>	306 <sup>1/</sup>
1972	138 <sup>1/</sup>	1,193	11	947 <sup>1/</sup>
1973	21	249	97	290
1974	1,035	1,857	-	8,040
1975	316	1,055	65	7,573
1976	531	1,691	24	6,474
1977	563	1,202		677
1978	1,726	3,499		5,405
1979	1,159	4,789		3,060
1980	2,541	6,757		4,140

Fall Chum Salmon - Upper Tanana R. <sup>2/</sup>

1972	23,295
1973	18,903
1974	16,102
1975	9,691 <sup>1/</sup>
1976	15,590
1977	31,311
1978	23,271
1979	42,384
1980	13,775

<sup>1/</sup> Poor or incomplete survey <sup>2/</sup> includes several spawning areas upstream of Fairbanks including Delta R. and Delta Clearwater Rivers.