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NORTH ALASKA PENINSULA SALMON
MANAGEMENT PLAN, 1992

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
LIST OF TABLES	i
LIST OF FIGURES	i
INTRODUCTION	1
REGULATION CHANGES FOR 1992	1
FISHERY ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CATCH REPORTING	3
NORTH PENINSULA MANAGEMENT STRATEGY	4
SOCKEYE SALMON	6
Northwestern District	6
Dublin Bay Section	6
Urilia Bay Section	6
Swanson Lagoon Section	6
Bechevin Bay Section	6
Izembek-Moffet Bay Section	6
Northern District	6
Herendeen-Moller Bay Section	6
Bear River and Three Hills Sections	6
Ilnik Section	8
Nelson Lagoon Section	9
CHINOOK, CHUM AND COHO SALMON	10

LIST OF TABLES

<u>Table</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Sockeye salmon stocks used to manage four sections in the Northern District	7

LIST OF FIGURES

<u>Figure</u>	<u>Page</u>
1. Map of the North Alaska Peninsula with the North-western and Northern Districts shown	2

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this document is to provide commercial fishermen and buyers with the pertinent information and guidelines that will be used to manage the commercial salmon fisheries of the North Peninsula during 1992.

The Alaska Peninsula Management Area consists of the North and South Peninsula. The North Peninsula consists of the Northern and Northwestern Districts, and encompasses Bering Sea coastal waters from Cape Menshikof west to Cape Sarichef. The Northern District includes all waters between the westernmost tip of Cape Menshikof and the southernmost tip of Moffet Point, while the Northwestern District includes all waters between Moffet Point and Cape Sarichef light on Unimak Island (Figure 1).

A catch of approximately 1.8 million sockeye salmon is projected for the entire North Peninsula (Urilia Bay to Cinder River) during 1992, with the bulk of the catch being harvested in the Nelson Lagoon and Harbor Point to Strogonof Point fisheries. The projected catch is 600,000 below the 1991 harvest of 2.4 million sockeye salmon, and below the 1982-91 average sockeye salmon harvest of 1.96 million fish.

During the fall of 1991, the Alaska Board of Fisheries implemented a closure in most of the South Peninsula prior to July 20. This delay of fishing in major South Peninsula harvest locations is expected to cause a shift in gear to the North Peninsula. Consequently, it may be necessary to reduce fishing time in the Northwestern District and the Herendeen-Moller Bay Section.

REGULATION CHANGES FOR 1992

At the November, 1991 Alaska Board of Fisheries meeting the following regulatory changes were made:

1. Increase the maximum gill net depth to 90 meshes in the Northwestern District.
2. Eliminate gill net mesh size restriction in the Bear River Section after July 20.
3. In the Ilnik, Outer Port Heiden, and Cinder River Sections, the seaward end of a set gill net shall be no further than one-half mile from the terrestrial vegetation line of the beach, or in the Seal Islands within one-half mile of the mean high water mark.
4. In Swanson Lagoon, no more than 50 percent of the outlet channel may be blocked by any gear at any stage of the tide.

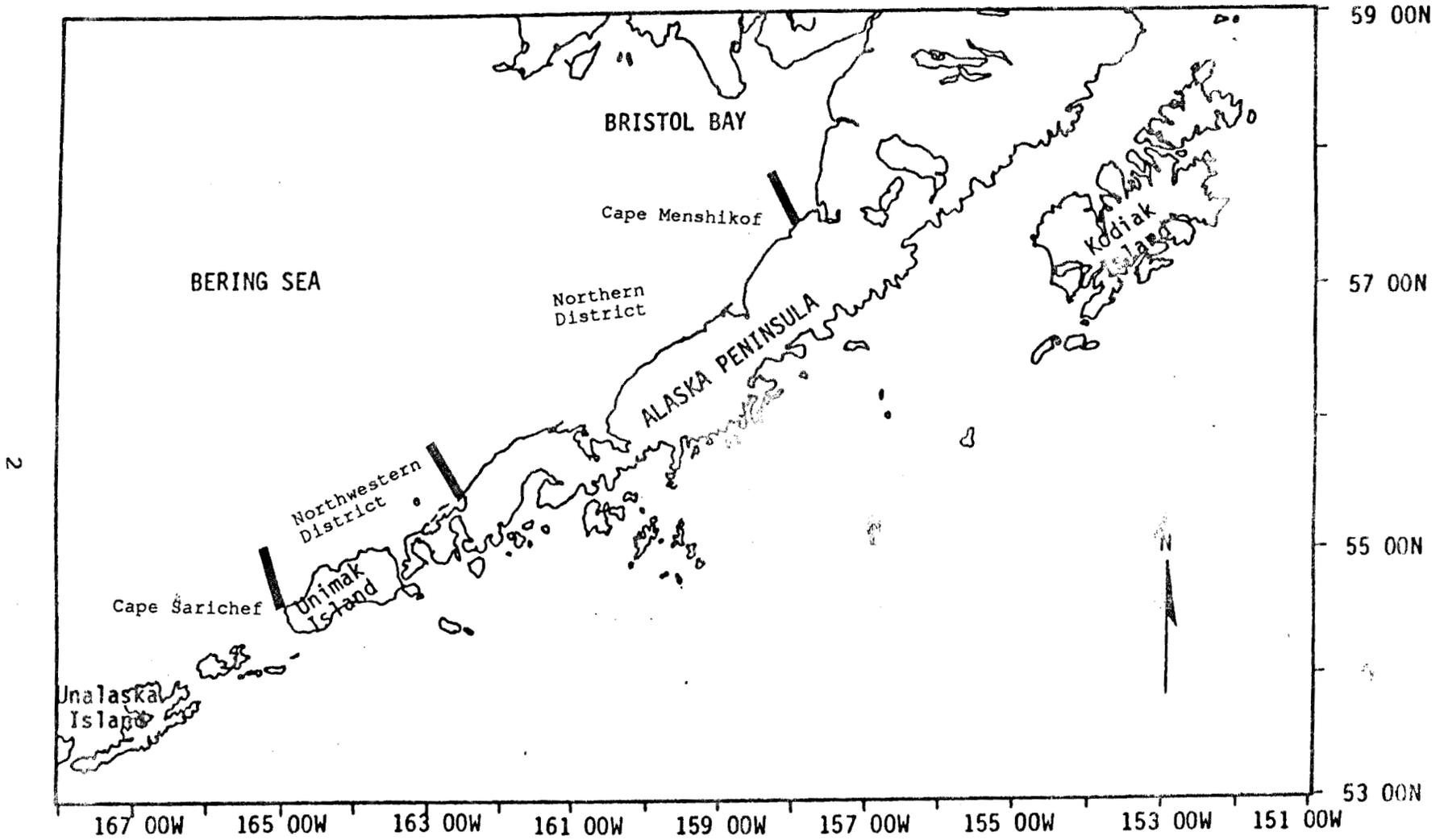


Figure 1. Map of the North Alaska Peninsula with the Northwestern and Northern Districts shown.

5. During June 1 through August 31, the closed waters of Swanson Lagoon will include all waters enclosed by a line from 55°02'12" N. lat., 163°38'42" W. long to 55°01'58" N. lat., 163°38'18" W. long.

After August 31, the closed waters of Swanson Lagoon are expanded to include all waters enclosed by a line from 55°02'12" N. lat., 163°38'42" W. long to 55°02'07" N. lat., 163°39'44" W. long.

6. The closed waters of the Unangashak River are expanded to include all waters east of 159°15'04" W. long.

7. The closed waters of Cinder River Lagoon (Shagong) are expanded to include all waters enclosed by a line from 57°19'48" N. lat., 158°08'24" W. long to 57°21'18" N. lat., 158°02'38" W. long.

A complete listing of the regulations are in the 1992-93 Commercial Finfish Regulation booklet available at all Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) offices.

FISHERY ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CATCH REPORTING

In-season emergency orders and news releases will be made available to the industry and the public by one or more of the following methods:

1. To the buyers for conveyance to the fishermen.
2. Broadcast over the local radio station (Sand Point).
3. Transmitted over one or more of the following frequencies:
SSB 3261, SSB 4125, VHF 6, VHF 70, and VHF 73.
4. The ADF&G record-a-phone in Sand Point (383-2334).

Buyers must report their salmon purchases by species (in both numbers of fish and pounds) or send fish tickets to either of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game offices in Cold Bay, Sand Point, or Port Moller. Catch reports should be made as soon as possible on the morning following a fishing day. Contact can be made over VHF 6, VHF 70 (Port Moller), or SSB 4125. Buyers may also phone or fax their information to:

Cold Bay:
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
P.O. Box 50
Cold Bay, AK 99571
phone (907) 532-2419
fax (907) 532-2470
VHF 6

Sand Point:
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
P.O. Box 129
Sand Point, AK 99661
phone (907) 383-2066
fax (907) 383-2606
SSB 4125, VHF 6

Port Moller:
Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
Port Moller, AK 99571
phone (907) 987-2216
fax (907) 987-2215
VHF 70

NORTH PENINSULA MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The North Peninsula salmon fisheries will be managed on the basis of ~~catch per unit-effort indicators and relative abundance~~ of fish as determined by escapement surveys and weir counts. The basic fishing week, during the open season, will be as listed in the 1992-93 Commercial Finfish Regulation book, and is dependent on the day of the week that the opening date occurs on. The indicated fishing period and subsequent fishing periods will be established by emergency order.

SECTION	OPEN SEASON	FISHING PERIOD
Cinder River, outside Cinder River Lagoon.	August 1 - September 30	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday
Cinder River, inside Cinder River Lagoon	May 1 - September 30	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday
Outer Port Heiden	No open season	
Inner Port Heiden	May 1 - September 30	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday
Ilnik Section outside Ilnik Lagoon between Three Hills and Loran C line 9990-Y-33265 running off of Ilnik (Unangashak) Bluffs.	July 5 - September 30	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday
Ilnik Section between Loran C line 9990-Y-33265 and Strogonof Point.	July 15 - September 30	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday
Ilnik Section inside Ilnik Lagoon	May 1 - September 30	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday
Three Hills	June 25 - June 30	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday
Three Hills	July 1 - September 30	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Thursday
Bear River	May 1 - June 30	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday

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SECTION	OPEN SEASON	FISHING PERIOD
Bear River	July 1 - September 30	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Thursday
Herendeen-Moller Bay Section, enclosed by a line from Harbor Point to Entrance Point	May 1 - September 30	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Thursday
Herendeen-Moller Bay Section, not enclosed by a line from Harbor Point to Entrance Point	May 1 - July 20	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Thursday
Nelson Lagoon	May 1 - June 15	6:00 a.m. Monday to 12:00 Midnight Wednesday
Nelson Lagoon	June 16 - August 15	6:00 a.m. Monday to 12:00 Midnight Thursday
Nelson Lagoon	August 16 - September 30	6:00 a.m. Monday to 12:00 Midnight Wednesday
Caribou Flats	No open season	
Black Hills	May 1 - September 30	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Friday
Izembek-Moffet Bay	June 1 - August 10	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Thursday
Swanson Lagoon	June 1 - August 10	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Thursday
Urilia Bay	June 1 - August 10	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Thursday
Dublin Bay	July 10 - August 10	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Thursday
Bechevin Bay	June 1 - September 30	By Emergency Order Only

SOCKEYE SALMON

Northwestern District

Dublin Bay Section. Chum salmon openings will be by the 1992-93 Commercial Finfish Regulation book, unless escapement objectives are not being met.

Urilia Bay Section. Sockeye salmon will be managed in the Urilia Bay Section, until September when the section will be managed for coho salmon.

Swanson Lagoon Section. Sockeye and chum salmon stocks will be managed from aerial escapement surveys until September when the section will be managed for local coho salmon.

Bechevin Bay Section. The Bechevin Bay will open concurrently with the Ikatan Bay Section (part of South Peninsula) during June. In July, the Bechevin Bay Section will initially be open on the same weekly fishing schedule as the balance of the Northwestern District. The extent of further openings will depend on the strength of local chum and pink salmon stocks.

Izembek-Moffet Bay Section. Chum salmon are the principal species found in this section. Management decisions will be based on aerial escapement surveys and catch per unit effort data.

Northern District

Herendeen-Moller Bay Section. The Herendeen and Port Moller Bay fisheries will be managed for chum salmon stocks. Due to the recent Board of Fisheries changes to the South Peninsula fisheries, it is anticipated that additional purse seine gear effort may occur within this section. Management decisions will be based on escapement that will be monitored by aerial surveys and catch information.

Bear River and Three Hills Sections. The Bear River sockeye salmon escapement goal is divided into several segments to ensure that all stocks contributing to the Bear River run receive adequate escapement. The season escapement goal is 200,000 - 250,000 sockeye salmon for all stocks combined.

Bear River Sockeye Salmon Escapement Goal

<u>Early-Run Component:</u>		Cumulative
<u>Date</u>		<u>Sockeye Escapement Goal</u>
June 15		2,000 - 5,000
June 20		5,000 - 15,000
June 25		15,000 - 40,000
June 30		40,000 - 80,000
July 5		80,000 - 100,000
July 10		100,000 - 110,000
July 15		110,000 - 125,000
<u>Mid-Run Component:</u>		
July 16 - August 5		40,000 to 50,000
<u>Late-Run Component:</u>		
Post August 5		50,000 to 75,000
Season Total		200,000 to 250,000

If one of the above escapement targets is not achieved, the fishery will be curtailed to the extent necessary so that the proceeding escapement target will be reached.

The number of jack sockeye salmon in the Bear River escapement is an important consideration. If the number of jacks (length < 400 mm mid eye to fork of tail or age x.1) is above 10%, as determined by the ADF&G weir crew, the escapement goal may be raised to compensate for the imbalance. Typically, the number of jack salmon is less than 10%.

The Three Hills Section will be managed for Bear River sockeye salmon (Table 1), and other sockeye salmon systems in the Bear River Section. At times when escapement objectives in Bear River are not being met, the Bear River Section may be closed and the Three Hills Section may be opened to achieve the escapement goal but still provide fishing opportunity and avoid excessive escapement.

Table 1. Sockeye salmon stocks used to manage four sections in the Northern District.

Section	-----Date-----	
	Pre-July 16	Post July 15
Bear R.	Bear R.	Bear R.
Three Hills	Bear R.	Bear R.

-Continued-

Table 1. (page 2 of 2)

Section	Date	
	Pre-July 16	Post July 15
Ilnik	Ilnik R., Bear R., Ugashik R. ¹	Bear R.
Nelson Lagoon	Sapsuk R. ²	Sapsuk R.

¹ Bear River and Ugashik River stocks will be considered only if a conservation concern exists.

² Commonly known as the Nelson River.

Ilnik Section. The Ilnik Section, including the area outside of Ilnik Lagoon, will be managed prior to July 16 for Ilnik sockeye salmon stocks (Table 1). Time and area closures may be considered prior to July 16 if there are conservation concerns for Bear and Ugashik Rivers. Assuming the Bear and Ugashik Rivers sockeye salmon runs are expected to meet escapement requirements, fishing time in the Ilnik Section will be as listed in the regulation book, unless the Ilnik River sockeye salmon escapement goal is not being achieved. Time and area adjustments will be considered if this occurs. Post-July 15, the Ilnik Section will be managed for Bear River sockeye salmon stocks (Table 1). However, if the Ilnik and Ugashik Rivers runs are late and escapement requirements are not being met, an extension on July 15 may be needed to ensure escapement.

Sockeye escapement goals for Ilnik River are provided for both method of assessing escapement, weir counts and aerial surveys. The escapement goal utilizing weir enumeration is 40,000 - 60,000 salmon. The department will utilize weir counts in determining escapement and will only utilize aerial survey counts if difficulties arise which result in either losing a portion or all of the weir. The escapement goal based on aerial survey counts are 25,000 - 50,000 salmon.

Ilnik River sockeye salmon escapement goals if Ocean River flows into Ilnik Lake:

Date	Cumulative Number	
	Weir Count	Aerial Survey
June 15	4,000 - 6,000	2,500 - 5,000
June 25	8,000 - 12,000	5,000 - 10,000
July 1	16,000 - 24,000	10,000 - 20,000
July 4	20,000 - 30,000	12,500 - 25,000
July 7	32,000 - 48,000	20,000 - 40,000
July 11	36,000 - 54,000	22,500 - 45,000
July 15	40,000 - 60,000	25,000 - 50,000
Season Total	40,000 - 60,000	25,000 - 50,000

A sockeye escapement goal for the Ocean River was derived from escapement surveys when the river flowed directly into the Bering Sea in 1972-75, 1986, and 1987 and not into Ilnik Lake. When this occurs, many of the fish to Ocean River do not pass through the Ilnik River, and therefore would not pass the weir. For the years noted above, on average 20% of the run spawned in Ocean River.

Ocean River sockeye salmon escapement goals (only needed if Ocean River flows directly into the Bering Sea):

Date	Cumulative Number Aerial Survey
June 15	500 - 1,000
June 25	1,000 - 2,000
July 1	2,000 - 4,000
July 4	2,500 - 5,000
July 7	4,000 - 8,000
July 11	4,500 - 9,000
July 15	5,000 - 10,000
Season Total	5,000 - 10,000

Nelson Lagoon Section. The sockeye salmon escapement goals in the Sapsuk River system (also known as the Nelson River weir) are established at 100,000 - 150,000. Based on timing of sockeye salmon escapements for the years 1977-1982 and a midpoint escapement goal of 125,000 sockeye, a schedule of periodic in-season escapement goals past Sapsuk River weir will be utilized.

Because escapements past the weir lag a significant period of time (up to seven days) following passage through the fishery, total daily catches of sockeye salmon in the fishery will also be considered in evaluating run strength. The following schedule of periodic daily sockeye catch levels and escapement goals will be used as a guideline in managing the fishery.

Sapsuk Weir Sockeye Salmon Escapement Schedule

Date	Goal
June 30	30,000
July 5	65,000
July 10	90,000
July 15	110,000
July 20	115,000
July 25	120,000
July 30	122,000
August 5	123,000
August 10	124,000
August 15	125,000

Nelson Lagoon Sockeye Salmon Catch Schedule

<u>Date</u>	<u>Number of Sockeye/Period</u>
June 15-20	1,000-2,000
June 21-25	2,000-3,000
June 26-30	4,000-5,000
July 1-5	4,000-6,000
July 6-10	3,000-5,000
July 11-15	2,000-3,000
July 16-20	1,000-2,000
July 21-25	1,000-2,000

The number of jack sockeye salmon (age X.1) in the Nelson River system is an important consideration. If the number of jacks is excessively high (> 10%), as determined by the weir crew and from catch samples, the escapement goal may be raised to compensate for the imbalance.

There will be four days fishing each week during June 16 - 30; additional time will be added if daily sockeye salmon catches substantially exceed the schedule, indicating a strong sockeye run. However, if it is evident before June 30 that the sockeye run is weak, then the number of fishing days will be reduced. Any predominance of chinook salmon gear in the fishery will be taken into account in evaluating sockeye catches. After June 30, fishing periods will be dependent upon escapement in relation to the escapement schedule and daily catch levels. If escapements past Sapsuk River weir cannot be determined then daily catch rates (primarily) and daily catch per boat (secondarily) will be utilized to evaluate strength of the run and to establish fishing periods accordingly. During the peak of the fishery, approximately June 25 - July 5, a healthy sockeye run would provide consistent daily boat averages of at least 300 - 400 sockeye salmon. Probable effect of minus tides on escapement will also be considered. The strength of the chinook salmon run will be a major factor which will be considered in making management decisions during June.

CHINOOK, CHUM, AND COHO SALMON

To provide more protection for chinook salmon stocks in Nelson Lagoon, fishing periods through June 15 are limited to 6:00 a.m. Monday to 12:00 p.m. midnight Wednesday.

The 1992 North Peninsula chum salmon harvest is anticipated to be 250,000, which is above the 1991 harvest of 191,000 but below the 1982-91 average of 366,000. Major chum harvest areas include the Northwestern District and Herendeen and Port Moller Bays in the Northern District. Management of chum salmon will be based on escapement into systems within these districts.

The North Peninsula coho salmon harvest averaged 188,000 fish between 1982-1991. There is no indication that the 1992 run will greatly differ from the 10-year average. The Northwestern District coho salmon fishery will be opened by emergency order, probably in early September. Factors affecting the Northwest District openings and duration of openings are: 1) the presence of chum and sockeye salmon and, 2) coho salmon run strength. To spread out effort, it is desirable to open the Northwestern District at the same time as the Southwestern District of the South Peninsula. Northern District coho salmon runs will begin in mid-August. Fishing periods will initially be the same as listed in the 1992-93 Commercial Finfish Regulation book for each respective section. Adjustments will be made as the season progresses. It is anticipated that no more than three fishing days per week will be allowed during the fall coho season in Nelson Lagoon. Increases gear efficiency and effort has caused closures of the entire Nelson Lagoon Section in early September during 1985, 1986, and 1987.

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