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NORTH ALASKA PENINSULA SALMON
MANAGEMENT PLAN, 1994

By

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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 1994.

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).

The projected 1994 catch of approximately 2.5 million sockeye salmon for the entire North Peninsula (Urilia Bay to Cinder River) is about two-thirds of the 1993 record harvest of nearly 3.9 million salmon. The bulk of the projected 1994 harvest is expected to be taken from the Harbor Point to Strogonof Point and Nelson Lagoon fisheries.

During the fall of 1991, the Alaska Board of Fisheries implemented a closure in most of the South Peninsula prior to July 20. A change in major South Peninsula fishing areas may cause a shift in gear to the North Peninsula. If this occurs, it may be necessary to reduce fishing time in the Northwestern District and the Herendeen-Moller Bay Section to protect smaller salmon stocks.

FISHERY ANNOUNCEMENTS AND CATCH REPORTING

Inseason 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 local processors and fishers.
2. Transmitted over one or more of the following frequencies: SSB 3261, SSB 4125, VHF 6, and VHF 72.

Buyers must report their salmon purchases by species (in both numbers of fish and pounds) and send fish tickets to either of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game offices in Cold Bay or Port Moller. As in 1992, that portion of the Northern District from Herendeen Bay to Strogonof Point will be managed from the Port Moller office, while the remaining North Peninsula will be managed from Cold Bay. Daily harvest reports and fish tickets should be directed to the appropriate area office as soon as possible on the morning following a fishing day. Contact can be made over VHF 6, VHF 72 (Port Moller), or SSB 4125. Buyers may also phone or fax their information to:

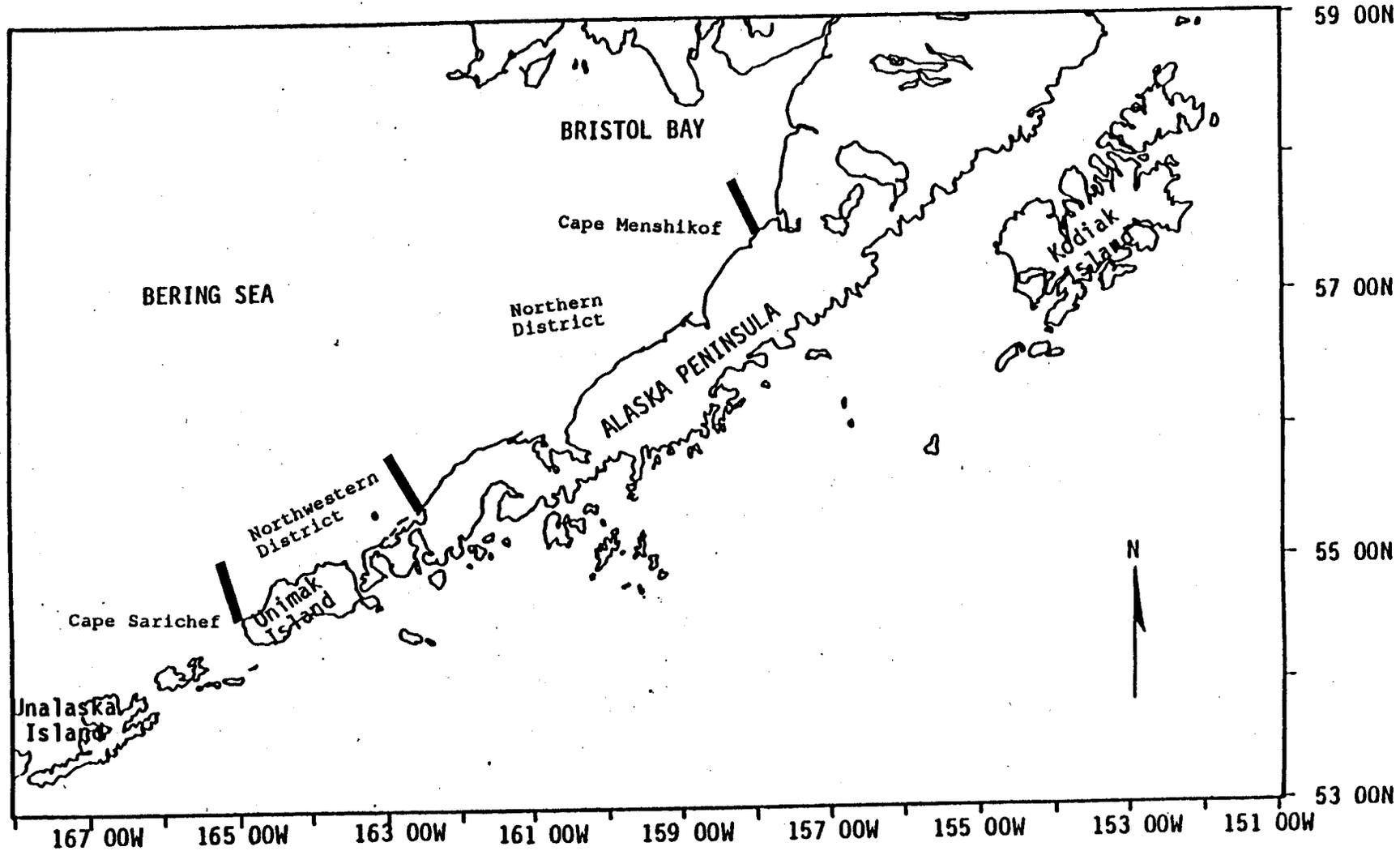


Figure 1. The North Alaska Peninsula with the Northwestern and Northern Districts shown.

Port Moller:

Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
P.O. Box PML
Port Moller, AK 99571-8999
phone (907) 987-2216
fax (907) 987-2215
VHF 72

Sand Point:

Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
P.O. Box 123
Sand Point, AK 99661
phone (907) 383-2066
fax (907) 383-2606
VHF 6

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, SSB 4125

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 1992-94 Commercial Finfish Regulation book and is dependent on the day of the week that the opening date occurs. An exception is the Black Hills Section which will be open 6:00 a.m. Monday until 6:00 p.m. Wednesday prior to July 4 (Table 1). The season in the Urilia Bay Section will be delayed until June 27, unless sockeye escapements warrant an earlier opening. Delaying the season at Urilia Bay will assist with rebuilding the early segment of the sockeye run.

Table 1. Scheduled North Peninsula fishing periods, 1994.

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
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	

-Continued-

Table 1. (page 2 of 2)

Section	Open Season	Fishing Period
Black Hills ^a	May 1 - July 4	6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday
	July 5 - 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 ^b	June 28 - 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

^a Due to declining chinook salmon stocks, the fishing periods prior to July 4 are reduced to 6:00 a.m. Monday to 6:00 p.m. Wednesday.

^b It is apparent that the early portion of the Urilia Bay sockeye run has been overfished, with escapements being achieved during late June and July. Consequently, in 1994 the Urilia Bay Section will remain closed to commercial salmon fishing until Monday June 28 unless observed escapements justify an earlier opening.

Northwestern District

Dublin Bay Section. Chum salmon openings will be by the 1992-94 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, however, that portion of the Herendeen-Moller Bay Section enclosed by a line from Entrance Point to Harbor Point (Port Moller Bight) will be managed on the basis of Bear River sockeye stocks. Due to potential changes in South Peninsula fishing areas, 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. Pink salmon that enter into Herendeen Bay will be prosecuted in fisheries by emergency order without jeopardizing local chum salmon stocks.

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 Bear River season escapement goal is 200,000 - 250,000 sockeye salmon for all stocks combined.

Table 2. Bear River sockeye salmon escapement goals.

Date	Cumulative Sockeye Escapement Goal
Early-Run Component:	
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
Mid-Run Component:	
July 16 - August 5	40,000 - 50,000 ^a
Late-Run Component:	
Post August 5	50,000 - 75,000 ^b
Season Total	200,000 - 250,000

^a Escapement that occurs in excess of the upper interim escapement goal for the July 11-15 period (15,000 fish), will be applied to the mid-run (July 16-August 5) escapement goal. However, no more than 20,000 fish shall be credited to the July 16-August 5 period. This will aid ADF&G in managing the Bear River sockeye salmon runs more effectively when the run is earlier than expected, such as in 1993.

^b Escapement occurring during the August 1-5 period that results in the total escapement to exceed the 50,000 fish upper escapement goal range for the July 16-August 5 period (40,000 to 50,000), will be applied to the late run escapement goal (post August 5). However, no more than 25,000 fish shall be credited to the post August 5 goal. This will aid ADF&G in managing the Bear River sockeye salmon runs more effectively when the run is earlier than expected, such as in 1993.

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

The number of jack sockeye salmon in the Bear River escapement is an important consideration. If the number of jack salmon (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 Sandy River sockeye salmon escapement goal is 20,000-30,000 using aerial surveys (Table 3) and 40,000-60,000 using weir counts (Table 4). Each interim goal is depicted for both aerial survey and weir counts. If unavailable due to difficulties with the weir such as washout, aerial surveys will be used to manage the fisheries. Since 1994 is the first season that a weir will be

used for daily counts, the Sandy River escapement interim goals were determined from tower counts in the early 1960's, and will be used as a guide for the 1994 season for obtaining a constant escapement throughout the entire run.

Table 3. Sandy River sockeye salmon escapement goals.

Date	Weir Count	Cumulative Number Aerial Survey
June 15	2,000 - 3,000	1,000 - 1,500
June 30	8,000 - 12,000	4,000 - 6,000
July 4	20,000 - 30,000	10,000 - 15,000
July 8	30,000 - 44,000	15,000 - 22,000
July 13	36,000 - 54,000	18,000 - 27,000
July 25	40,000 - 60,000	20,000 - 30,000
Season Total	40,000 - 60,000	20,000 - 30,000

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, a portion of the Bear River Section may be closed and the Three Hills Section may remain open to achieve the escapement goal while providing fishing opportunity and avoiding escapement surplus. If escapement into Ilnik and/or Ocean River (if Ocean River flows directly into the Bering Sea) are lacking substantially and area closures in the Ilnik Section are not effective, the eastern portion of the Three Hills line may be moved to the west to provide for a larger closed water area in an attempt to increase the Ilnik escapement (Table 2).

Table 4. Sockeye salmon stocks used to manage four sections in the Northern District.

Section	Stocks	
	Pre-July 16	Post July 15
Bear R.	Bear R.	Bear R.
Three Hills	Bear R., Ilnik R.	Bear R.
Ilnik	Ilnik R., Bear R., Ugashik R. ^a	Bear R.
Nelson Lagoon	Sapsuk R. ^b	Sapsuk R.

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

^b Commonly known as Nelson River.

During the chinook salmon run in June, management decisions, including extended closed waters or no further extensions beyond the standard fishing week, regarding sockeye salmon fisheries may be conservative to protect local chinook stocks if escapements warrant.

Ilnik Section. The Ilnik Section (Figure 2), including the area outside of Ilnik Lagoon, will be managed prior to July 16 for Ilnik sockeye stocks (Table 1). Time and area closures may be considered prior to July 16 if there are conservation concerns for Bear and Ugashik Rivers. If Bear and Ugashik Rivers sockeye 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 stocks (Table 1). However, if 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 methods 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 season escapement goal based on aerial survey counts are 20,000 - 30,000 salmon.

Table 5. Ilnik River sockeye salmon escapement goals if Ocean River flows into Ilnik Lake.

Date	Weir Count	Cumulative Number Aerial Survey
June 15	4,000 - 6,000	2,000 - 3,000
June 25	8,000 - 12,000	4,000 - 6,000
July 1	16,000 - 24,000	8,000 - 12,000
July 4	20,000 - 30,000	10,000 - 15,000
July 7	32,000 - 48,000	16,000 - 24,000
July 11	36,000 - 54,000	18,000 - 27,000
July 15	40,000 - 60,000	20,000 - 30,000
Season Total	40,000 - 60,000	20,000 - 30,000

If problems arise with the weir, such as difficulty obtaining counts due to the weir washing out, then daily counts for those days which the weir was not used will be obtained by using Ilnik Lagoon commercial salmon harvest rates, aerial surveys, or pre-washout weir counts and post-washout counts, or a combination of these methods.

A sockeye salmon 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

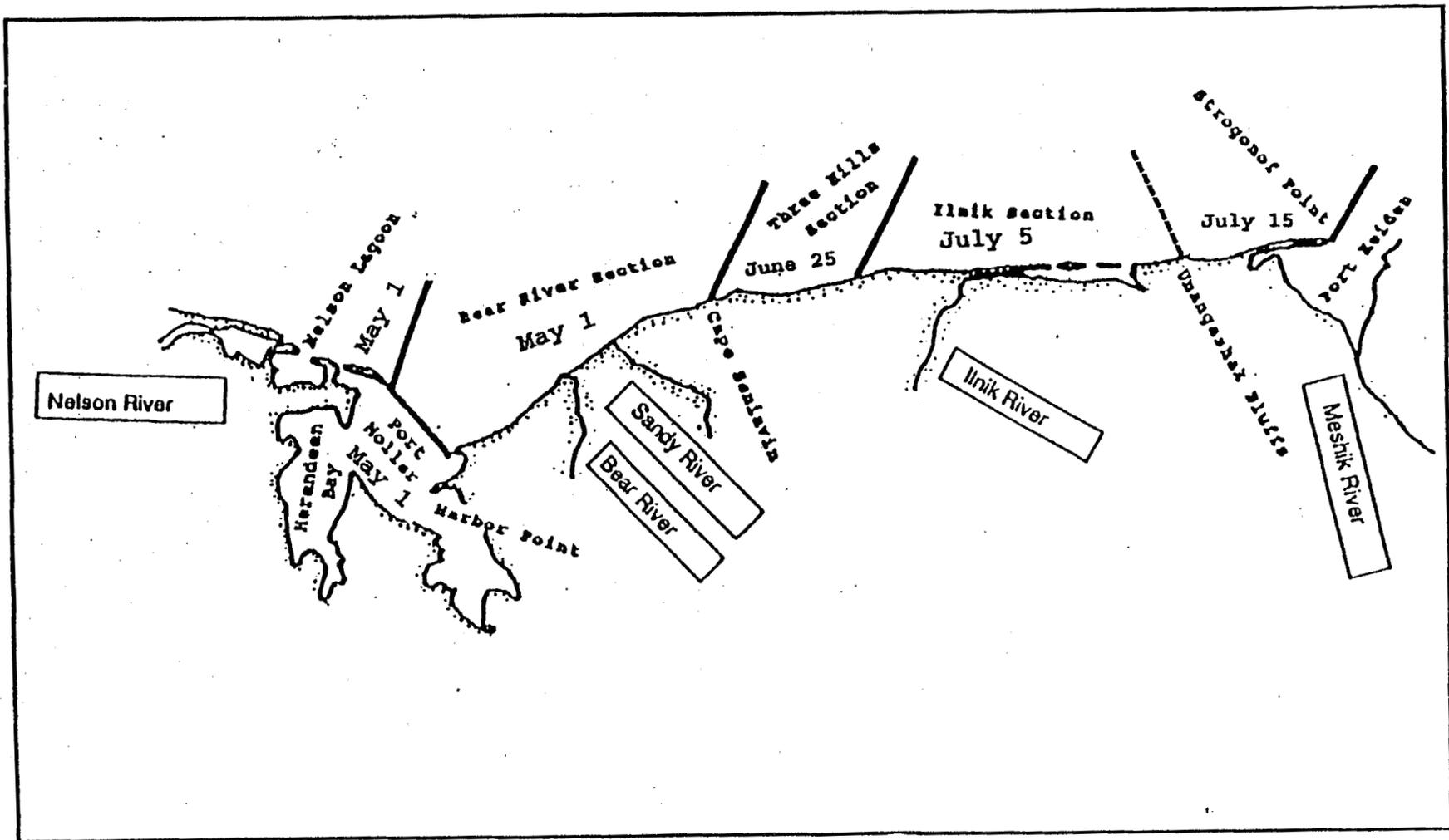


Figure 2. Nelson Lagoon to Strogonof Point reach, with district sections, commercial salmon season opening dates, and major sockeye salmon systems depicted.

escapement spawned in Ocean River. If Ocean River flows into the Bering Sea, the Ocean River escapement goal will be subtracted from the Ilnik escapement goal.

Table 6. Ocean River sockeye salmon escapement goals (only needed if Ocean River flows directly into the Bering Sea).

Date	Cumulative Number Aerial Survey
June 15	400 - 600
June 25	800 - 1,200
July 1	1,600 - 2,400
July 4	2,000 - 3,000
July 7	3,200 - 4,800
July 11	3,600 - 5,400
July 15	4,000 - 6,000
Season Total	4,000 - 6,000

Nelson Lagoon Section. The sockeye salmon escapement goal for the Nelson River system is established at 100,000 - 150,000. Based on timing of sockeye escapements and a midpoint escapement goal of 125,000 sockeye, a schedule of periodic inseason escapement goals past Nelson (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 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.

Table 7. Nelson (Sapsuk) River weir sockeye salmon escapement goals.

Date	Mid-point 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
Season Total	100,000-150,000

The number of jack sockeye salmon (age X.1) in the Nelson River system is an important consideration. If the number of jack salmon 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.

Table 8. Nelson Lagoon sockeye salmon catch schedule.

Date	Number of Sockeye/Period
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

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.

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

It is anticipated that no more than three fishing days per week will be allowed during the fall coho season in Nelson Lagoon, until the escapement is adequate to warrant additional fishing time.

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