

4K95-20

SOUTH UNIMAK AND
SHUMAGIN ISLANDS JUNE SALMON FISHERY
MANAGEMENT PLAN, 1995

By

Arnie Shaul
and
Jim McCullough

Regional Information Report¹ No. 4K95-20

Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Commercial Fisheries Management and Development Division
211 Mission Road
Kodiak, Alaska 99615

April 1995

¹The Regional Information Report Series was established in 1987 to provide an information access system for all unpublished division reports. These reports frequently serve diverse ad hoc informational purposes or archive basic uninterpreted data. To accommodate timely reporting of recently collected information, reports in this series undergo only limited internal review and may contain preliminary data; this information may be subsequently finalized and published in the formal literature. Consequently, these reports should not be cited without prior approval of the author or the Division of Commercial Fisheries.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | <u>Page</u> |
|---|-------------|
| LIST OF TABLES | i |
| LIST OF FIGURES | i |
| INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| MANAGEMENT PLAN | 1 |
| SOCKEYE ALLOCATIONS | 3 |
| CHUM SALMON CAP | 3 |
| SAFEGUARDS TO PREVENT EXCEEDING THE CHUM SALMON CAP | 3 |
| TABLES | 5 |
| FIGURES | 7 |

LIST OF TABLES

| <u>Tables</u> | <u>Page</u> |
|---|-------------|
| 1. South Unimak June salmon harvest, in number of fish, by species, 1985-94 | 5 |
| 2. Shumagin Islands June salmon harvest, in number of fish, by species, 1985-94 | 5 |
| 3. Combined South Unimak-Shumagin islands June salmon harvest, in number of fish, by species, 1985-94 | 6 |

LIST OF FIGURES

| <u>Figure</u> | <u>Page</u> |
|--|-------------|
| 1. Map of the South Unimak June fishery | 7 |
| 2. Map of the Shumagin Islands Section with the statistical salmon fishing areas shown | 8 |

INTRODUCTION

This document is intended to provide commercial fishers and buyers with pertinent management information and guidelines that are required to be adhered to when participating in the South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June commercial salmon fisheries.

The first fishing period may be as early as June 11, however, the opening may be delayed if an unacceptably high number of chum salmon are present. Chum salmon abundance will be determined by test fishing and also by information given to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) from subsistence fishermen.

Inseason announcements will be broadcast over A.M. radio station KSPD, VHF 6, VHF 73, SSB 3230, SSB 3261, and SSB 4125. Information may also be obtained over the ADF&G record-a-phone in Sand Point at 383-2334 (383-ADFG).

As required by 5 AAC 39.130.(B)(8)(A) buyers must report daily their salmon purchases by species, (in both numbers of fish and pounds) and number of deliveries by gear to either ADF&G offices in Cold Bay and Sand Point or to the ADF&G representative on the grounds at South Unimak aboard an enforcement vessel. Catch reports must be made as soon as possible on the morning after a fishing day. Contact can be made over VHF 6, SSB 3230, or SSB 4125. Buyers may also phone or fax their information in, either to the Cold Bay or Sand Point offices.

| | | |
|------------|---------------------|---------------|
| Cold Bay | Telephone: 532-2419 | Fax: 532-2470 |
| Sand Point | Telephone: 383-2066 | Fax: 383-2606 |

Fish tickets must be given to the ADF&G representative at South Unimak or mailed to one of the addresses listed below:

Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
P.O. Box 50
Cold Bay, AK 99571

Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game
P.O. Box 129
Sand Point, AK 99661

Fish tickets, if mailed, must arrive in Sand Point or Cold Bay ADF&G offices within seven days of the purchase date or be hand delivered to an ADF&G representative on the fishing grounds. If delivering fish tickets within seven days to ADF&G causes undue inconvenience, other arrangements can be made, but processors must contact ADF&G.

MANAGEMENT PLAN

The department will manage the fishery from the beginning to minimize the chum salmon harvest while attempting to harvest the sockeye salmon allocation.

The South Unimak fishery includes the following locations as shown in Figure 1:

- A. Unimak District: includes all waters on the south side of Unimak Island between a line extending from Scotch Cap (54°24' N. lat., 164°47'36" W. long.) through the easternmost tip of Ugamak Island (54°12'42" N. lat., 164°45'48' W. long.), and a line extending 115° from Cape Pankof Light (54°39'36" N. lat., 163°03'36" W. long.), including the Sanak Islands.
- B. Bechevin Bay Section of the Northwestern District

The following portions of the Southwestern District:

- C. Those waters of the Southwestern District in addition to the Ikatan Bay Section (but does not include closed waters as described under 5 AAC 09.350) listed below:
 - 1. Ikatan Bay Section
 - 2. Those waters north and west of a line from Cape Pankof Light to Thin Point (54°57'26" N. lat., 162°33'12" W. long.).
 - 3. The waters enclosed by a line from Thin Point to Stag Point (54°10' N. lat., 161°53'45" W. long.) to Dolgoi Cape (55°03'45" N. lat., 161°44' W. long.) and from Bluff Point (55°10' N. lat., 161°53'45" W. long.) to Arch Point (55°12'20" N. lat., 161°54'15" W. long.).

The Shumagin Islands fishery includes only the Shumagin Islands Section of the Southeastern District (Figure 2).

Fishermen should be aware that waters closed (5 AAC 09.350) to commercial salmon fishing as specified in the regulation book are in effect during June. There is no change as to the legal gear types in a given location other than what is specified in the most recent commercial salmon fishing regulation book (i.e., the locations added to the South Unimak fishery in 1990 **did not** increase the area open to drift gillnetting).

During June the area in the vicinity of Sanak Island (bounded by 54°33'06" N. lat., the latitude of Hague Rock and east of 163°03'48" W. long., the longitude of Cape Pankof Light south of Hague Rock as shown in Figure 1) will not open to commercial salmon fishing by emergency order. Historically, commercial salmon fishing records indicate a very limited to non-existent fishing effort in this area, although during 1990-91, fishing interest had increased. Even though the fishing effort is light (i.e. less than 4 boats) the high chum per sockeye ratio could result in substantial numbers of chum salmon being harvested, if effort were allowed in the area.

The time period covered by the South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June Fishery Management Plan (5 AAC 09.365) is June 11-30. Even though the management plan covers June 11 through

June 30, the first fishing period may occur sometime after June 11. Historical data indicates sockeye to chum ratios are often too low on June 11-13.

SOCKEYE ALLOCATIONS

The 1995 South Unimak June sockeye allocation is 2,987,000 fish. The Shumagin islands June sockeye allocation is 659,000 fish. The combined South Unimak-Shumagin Islands sockeye allocation is 3,646,000.

CHUM SALMON CAP

The Alaska Board of Fisheries has placed a 700,000 chum salmon harvest limit (chum cap) on the South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June fisheries combined. If the chum cap is reached, the fisheries will close regardless of how many sockeye salmon remain unharvested from the allocation. The Board of Fisheries has indicated that keeping the chum salmon catch below 700,000 has precedence over harvesting the sockeye allocation.

SAFEGUARDS TO PREVENT EXCEEDING THE CHUM SALMON CAP

ADF&G may take the following actions to limit the harvest of chum salmon:

1. Curtailment or complete closure of any location demonstrating substantially higher chum to sockeye ratios than other major harvest locations.
2. Possible reductions in the duration of fishing periods for seiners and drift gill netters (the Board of Fisheries intended set gill net fishing periods to be at least 16 hours in duration when it is necessary to shorten fishing periods to reduce the harvest of chum salmon).
3. After the harvest figures have been reported and all fishing effort accounted for, the fishery may be reopened on short notice, depending on the need to maximize fishing time to harvest sockeye salmon. The commercial fishery will not reopen until all harvest figures have been reported. The length of openings will be dependent on the chum to sockeye salmon ratio.

4. After the chum harvest has exceeded 500,000, it may be necessary to shorten or close (depending on how close to 700,000, the cumulated chum catch is) the Cape Lutke Section. This location produced sudden high increases in chum salmon catches in late June during 1981 and 1991, and was the main cause for the 1991 cap being exceeded. ADF&G recognizes substantial fishing effort is required at Cape Lutke to harvest a large South Unimak sockeye allocation.
5. As the harvest of chum salmon approaches 700,000 fish, the fishery will become more and more restricted as to the length of fishing periods and possibly area open to commercial salmon fishing
6. After June 24, the Board of Fisheries restricted the length of commercial salmon fishing periods for seine and drift gillnet gear in either the South Unimak or Shumagin Islands fisheries to six hours per day if the sockeye to chum salmon ratios are two to one or lower. If the ratio of sockeye salmon to chum salmon is two to one or less for any three aggregate days in either of the two fisheries, then that fishery will be closed to all gear types for the balance of June.

Management action taken shall demonstrate that the maximum or less harvest of 700,000 chum salmon supersedes attempts to reach the sockeye salmon guideline harvest levels.

ADF&G will remain flexible, recognizing that inseason conditions often require actions different from general situations spelled out in a preseason management plan. ADF&G encourages suggestions from the public, Fish and Game Advisory Committees, fisheries organizations, and processors in reviewing the management of this fishery.

When ADF&G announces a fishing period in the South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June fisheries, a time and frequency will be listed as to when fishermen should listen for a regulation update.

Table 1. South Unimak June salmon harvest, in number of fish, by species, 1985-94.

| Year | Chinook | Sockeye | Coho | Pink | Chum |
|--------------------|---------|-----------|-------|-----------|---------|
| 1985 | 4,101 | 1,454,969 | 2 | 69,811 | 324,825 |
| 1986 | 1,363 | 315,370 | 1 | 150,674 | 252,721 |
| 1987 | 4,017 | 653,536 | 380 | 11,342 | 406,077 |
| 1988 | 2,125 | 474,457 | 11 | 86,678 | 464,765 |
| 1989 | 2,263 | 1,347,547 | 0 | 154,168 | 407,635 |
| 1990 | 8,465 | 1,090,710 | 1 | 444,442 | 455,238 |
| 1991 | 3,066 | 1,216,035 | 5 | 500,922 | 670,409 |
| 1992 | 2,373 | 2,046,022 | 3 | 501,127 | 323,891 |
| 1993 | 4,587 | 2,366,573 | 506 | 37,735 | 381,941 |
| 1994 | 4,468 | 1,001,250 | 1,271 | 1,731,741 | 374,409 |
| 1985-94 Average | 3,683 | 1,196,647 | 218 | 368,864 | 406,190 |

Table 2. Shumagin Islands June salmon harvest, in number of fish^a, by species, 1985-94.

| Year | Chinook | Sockeye | Coho | Pink | Chum |
|--------------------|---------|---------|-------|---------|---------|
| 1985 | 1,676 | 336,431 | 2,466 | 36,804 | 109,004 |
| 1986 | 532 | 156,027 | 1 | 141,315 | 99,048 |
| 1987 | 1,146 | 140,567 | 0 | 5,640 | 37,064 |
| 1988 | 1,939 | 282,230 | 244 | 93,546 | 61,946 |
| 1989 | 495 | 396,958 | 0 | 45,067 | 47,528 |
| 1990 | 1,868 | 255,585 | 0 | 70,798 | 63,501 |
| 1991 | 1,407 | 333,272 | 7 | 118,215 | 102,602 |
| 1992 | 1,387 | 411,834 | 1 | 140,963 | 102,312 |
| 1993 | 4,879 | 607,171 | 727 | 43,401 | 150,306 |
| 1994 | 3,122 | 460,013 | 308 | 760,773 | 207,756 |
| 1985-94 Average | 1,845 | 338,009 | 375 | 145,652 | 98,107 |

^a Numbers of salmon do not include test fish catches.

Table 3. Combined South Unimak-Shumagin Islands June salmon harvest, in number of fish^a, by species, 1985-94.

| Year | Chinook | Sockeye | Coho | Pink | Chum |
|--------------------|---------|-----------|-------|-----------|---------|
| 1985 | 5,777 | 1,791,400 | 2,468 | 106,615 | 433,829 |
| 1986 | 1,895 | 471,397 | 2 | 291,989 | 351,769 |
| 1987 | 5,163 | 792,964 | 380 | 16,982 | 443,019 |
| 1988 | 4,064 | 756,687 | 255 | 180,224 | 526,711 |
| 1989 | 2,758 | 1,744,505 | 0 | 199,235 | 455,163 |
| 1990 | 10,332 | 1,344,529 | 1 | 515,047 | 518,545 |
| 1991 | 4,473 | 1,548,930 | 12 | 619,137 | 772,705 |
| 1992 | 3,760 | 2,457,856 | 4 | 642,090 | 426,203 |
| 1993 | 9,466 | 2,973,744 | 1,233 | 81,136 | 532,247 |
| 1994 | 7,590 | 1,461,263 | 1,579 | 2,492,514 | 582,165 |
| 1985-94 Average | 5,528 | 1,534,328 | 593 | 514,497 | 504,236 |

^a Numbers of salmon do not include test fish catches.

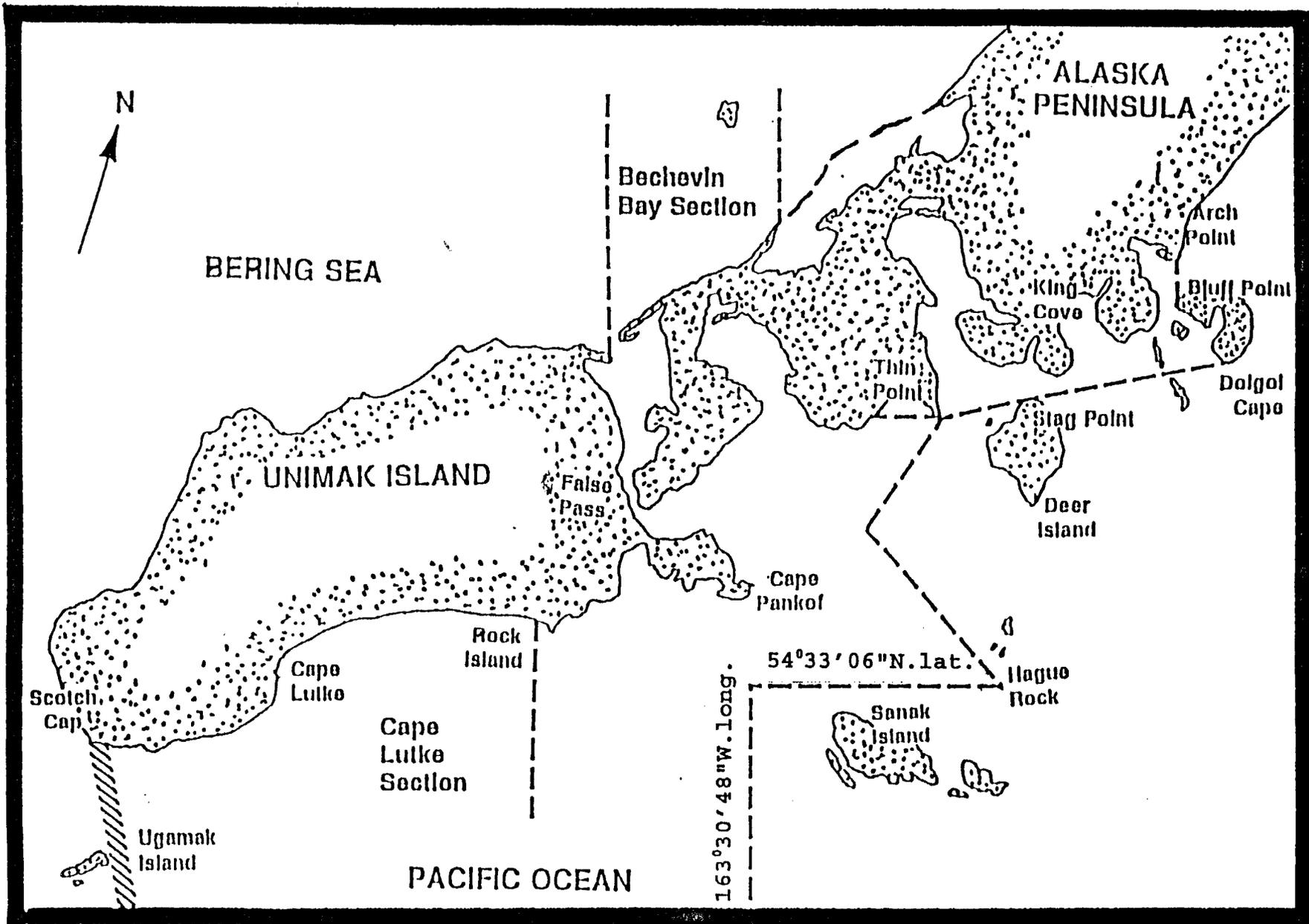


Figure 1. Map of the South Unimak June Fishery.

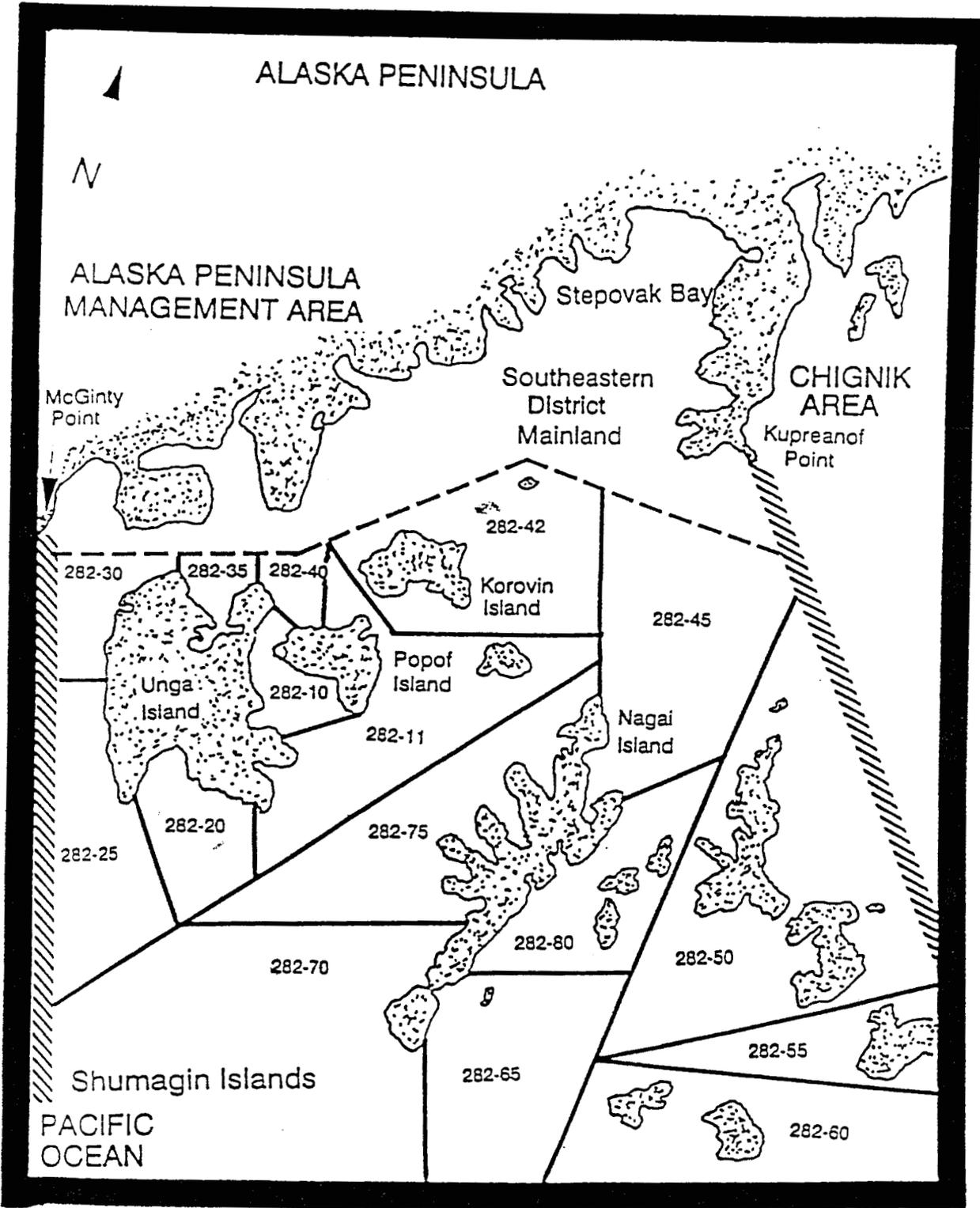


Figure 2. Map of the Shumagin Islands Section with the statistical salmon fishing areas shown.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game administers all programs and activities free from discrimination based on race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, marital status, pregnancy, parenthood, or disability. The department administers all programs and activities in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972.

If you believe you have been discriminated against in any program, activity, or facility, or if you desire further information please write to ADF&G, P.O. Box 25526, Juneau, AK 99802-5526; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4040 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 300 Webb, Arlington, VA 22203 or O.E.O., U.S. Department of the Interior, Washington DC 20240.

For information on alternative formats for this and other department publications, please contact the department ADA Coordinator at (voice) 907-465-6077, (TDD) 907-465-3646, or (FAX) 907-465-6078.