PERFORMANCE REPORT

STATE: Alaska **GRANT NO.:** F-10-33

GRANT TITLE: Sport Fish Investigations in Alaska

PERIOD COVERED: July 1, 2017 – June 30, 2018

STUDY NO. AND TITLE: S-1-15 Southeast Alaska Area Management Project

STUDY OBJECTIVES:

1. Evaluate the fisheries resources and fisheries of an area and develop management strategies and plans to assure sustained yield.

2. Provide information and comments to state agencies, federal agencies, private aquaculture associations, native corporations, private companies, or other groups on proposed land use plans or development activities about the potential impacts on sport fishery resources.

3. Monitor inseason stock status and use patterns on important fisheries to assure that management objectives are obtained.

4. Evaluate and recommend enhancement needs (including habitat enhancement and fish stocking).

5. Obtain information on public desires for fishing opportunities.

6. Evaluate the need for and recommend specific boating and non-boating sport fishery access projects.

7. Provide educational information to the public about aquatic resources and their conservation.

8. Recommend studies needed to provide data with which to effectively manage sport fisheries.

9. Steelhead and coho index surveys will be conducted to count adults returning to established index systems. All data will be compiled and integrated into existing databases providing a means of comparison across streams and years.

RESULTS/DISCUSSIONS:

Objective 1: Run forecasting tools were used to assist with inseason management decisions for select stocks. Managers tracked subsistence harvests, commercial harvests, recreational harvests, and inseason abundance estimates to ensure sustainable fish populations. Evaluation of existing management plans was ongoing during the reporting period; no new management plans were developed.

Objective 2: Information and comments were provided to ADF&G Habitat Division, USFS, and the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities relative to potential impacts of proposed land use activities on sport fishery resources. Comments were submitted relative to a total of four hydroelectric projects. These projects are located in the Juneau, Sitka, Ketchikan, and Prince of Wales Island management areas. All area management biologists provided data and input to private consulting firms and land management agencies involved with road maintenance/development, mining, and timber projects.

Objective 3: Area managers reviewed data from stock assessment projects and creel surveys, and conducted escapement index surveys for ascertaining run strength information for fishery management.

Objective 4: Area managers reviewed and revised annual hatchery management plans, statewide stocking plans, and stream habitat rehabilitation plans. Management staff provided information to USFS, schools, and a myriad of private and public groups relative to enhancement activities.

Objective 5: Information on public requests for fishing opportunities was gleaned through participation at public meetings, angler contacts, electronic inquiries, and direct interaction with the public at area offices. Information on public desires for fishing opportunities was also obtained while attending various meetings throughout the region.

Objective 6: Within all management areas, staff evaluated the need for improved access, and made and reviewed recommendations for specific boating and non-boating sport fishery access projects. Area management staff also visited access facilities to evaluate facility condition and maintenance needs.

Objective 7: Aquatic resource and conservation educational information was provided to the public through the department website, news releases, and oral presentations. Area management biologists participated in youth fishing days, fishing skills workshops, and various youth derbies throughout the region. Harvest and escapement information was conveyed to numerous anglers, fishing organizations, and businesses.

Objective 8: Reviews of studies needed to provide data for effective fishery management are ongoing.

Objective 9: A total of 24 surveys were conducted across the 10 steelhead index streams during 2018 (Table 1). Snorkel surveys started on April 26 and concluded on May 30. Bracketed peak counts were achieved on 3 index systems. The earliest bracketed peak count occurred on May 8 and the latest occurred on May 23. The bracketed peak or high count observed for each index stream ranged from a high of 233 at Ford Arm Creek and a low of 6 at Peterson Creek.

Coho index surveys were completed on 11 index systems in the Juneau, Sitka, and Prince of Wales Management Areas (Table 2). Surveys were conducted on foot (n=9) or by snorkeling (n=2) and occurred between early-October and mid-November, 2017. Counts ranged from a low of 20 (Peterson Creek) to a high of 1,803 (Harris River). Several of the systems were surveyed on multiple dates making it possible to obtain peak counts, as opposed to high counts which were not bracketed by lower counts occurring before and after.

Table 1.–Steelhead salmon snorkel survey counts and dates in the 10 Southeast Alaska index systems conducted in spring of 2018.

Index system	Anadromous Stream Number	Management Area	Survey Date	Count
Ward Creek	101-47-1050	Ketchikan	4/27/2018	28
Ward Creek		Ketchikan	5/10/2018	40
Ward Creek		Ketchikan	5/18/2018	70[b]
White River	101-45-10240	Ketchikan	4/26/2018	9[b]
White River		Ketchikan	5/3/2018	8
Eagle Creek	106-10-10300	Prince of Wales	5/1/2018	36
Eagle Creek		Prince of Wales	5/8/2018	67[a]
Eagle Creek			5/18/2018	50
Harris River	102-60-10820	Prince of Wales	4/30/2018	204[b]
Harris River		Prince of Wales	5/9/2018	165
Ford Arm Creek	113-73-10030	Sitka	5/2/2018	92
Ford Arm Creek		Sitka	5/9/2018	130
Ford Arm Creek		Sitka	5/23/2018	233[a]
Ford Arm Creek		Sitka	5/30/2018	204
Sitkoh	113-59-10040	Sitka	4/30/2018	37
Sitkoh		Sitka	5/8/2018	77[a]
Sitkoh		Sitka	5/16/2018	74
Petersburg Creek	106-44-10600	Petersburg/Wrangell	4/27/2018	175[b]
Slippery Creek	109-43-10030	Petersburg/Wrangell	5/3/2018	81[b]
Peterson Creek	111-50-10100	Juneau	5/3/2018	3
Peterson Creek		Juneau	5/10/2018	3
Peterson Creek		Juneau	5/17/2018	6[b]
Pleasant Bay Creek	111-12-10050	Juneau	5/8/2018	78[b]
Pleasant Bay Creek		Juneau	5/16/2018	64

[a] Represents bracketed peak count.

[b] Represents high count.

Table 2.–Listing of Southeast Alaska coho index systems, associated peak counts, and dates of survey during fall of 2017.

Index System	Anadromous Stream Number	Management Area	Survey Date	Count
Peterson Creek	111-50-10100	Juneau	10/10/17	20
Montana Creek	111-50-10500	Juneau	10/03/17	634
Sinitsin Creek	113-62-10080	Sitka	10/11/17	62
St. John Baptist Bay Creek	113-66-10060	Sitka	10/07/17	73
Eagle River	113-62-10050	Sitka	10/12/17	478
Nakwasina River	113-43-10010	Sitka	11/03/17	545
Starrigavan Creek	113-41-10150	Sitka	10/03/17	147
Shaheen Creek	103-90-10420	Prince of Wales Island	10/11/17	478
Maybeso Creek	102-60-10840	Prince of Wales Island	10/13/17	513
Harris River	102-60-10820	Prince of Wales Island	11/09/17	1,803
Saint Nicholas Creek	103-60-10590	Prince of Wales Island	11/13/17	159

EQUIPMENT:
During the grant period, we received pre-approval and purchased an outboard motor to aid in management. With a useful life of 10 years, we plan to use this motor for a variety of management activities for the duration of its useful life.

FINAL REPORT STATUS:

This report constitutes the final performance report of activities for Study S-1-17 during the F-10-33 grant period.

Activities conducted during this reporting period will be reported in a Fishery Management Report scheduled for publication in July 2019.

PREPARED BY: Bob Chadwick **DATE**: August 31, 2018