

Fishery Management Report No. 16-02

**South Alaska Peninsula Salmon Annual Management
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by

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SOUTH UNIMAK AND SHUMAGIN ISLANDS JUNE FISHERIES

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The first documented commercial harvests from the South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June fisheries occurred in 1911 (Appendix B1). During the early to mid-1960s, the South Unimak and Shumagin Islands fisheries were open to commercial salmon fishing 5 days per week. From 1967–1970, fishing occurred 7 days per week. Special regulatory meetings were held annually and resulted in different regulations every year from 1971–1974 (Appendix B2).

In 1975, the Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) implemented an allocation plan in which the South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June fisheries were granted an annual guideline harvest level (GHL) relative to the projected Bristol Bay inshore sockeye salmon harvest (Appendix B2). Based on historical catch data, 6.8% of the forecasted inshore Bristol Bay harvest was allocated to the South Unimak June fishery and 1.5% was allocated to the Shumagin Islands June fishery. Portions of the GHL were assigned to discrete time periods so the harvest would be spread throughout June. Concerns over large harvests of chum salmon in the early 1980s, combined with a weak Yukon River fall chum salmon run, resulted in a chum salmon cap that, if reached, would result in closure of the fishery for the remainder of June. Between 1986 and 2000, the chum salmon cap was as high as 700,000 fish (1992–1997) and as low as 350,000 fish (1998–2000; Appendix B2).

In January 2001, the BOF modified the South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June salmon fishery management plan. These modifications were in effect through the 2003 season and included eliminating the sockeye salmon GHL and the chum salmon cap. From June 10 through June 24, fishing time for any gear group was limited to 16 hours per day. Gear type constraints were also imposed on the number of consecutive fishing days allowed within a 7-day period (Appendix B2). After June 24, in either the South Unimak or Shumagin Islands fisheries, if the sockeye-to-chum salmon ratio for all gear types was 2:1 or less on any day, the next fishing period was 6 hours in duration for all gear groups in that fishery. If the sockeye-to-chum salmon ratio was 2:1 or less for 2 consecutive fishing periods in either fishery, the season was closed for the remainder of June for all gear types. If the sockeye-to-chum salmon ratio was greater than 2:1, a 6-hour fishing period could be extended to a maximum of 16 hours.

In February 2004, the board modified the *South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June Fisheries Management Plan* (5 AAC 09.365) by establishing a fishing schedule that began at 6:00 AM on June 7 and ended at 10:00 PM on June 29. Fishing periods were 88 hours in duration interspersed by 32-hour closures, except for the final fishing period of 64 hours. This schedule provided 416 hours of concurrent opportunity for all gear types. In addition, the South Unimak fishery was expanded to include the entire Southwestern District and the West and East Pavlof Bay sections of the South Central District (Appendix B1 and B2).

2015 MANAGEMENT PLAN

In 2013, the BOF discussed proposed changes to the June Management Plan. During the meeting, discussions focused on chum salmon harvest and Chinook salmon harvest in June. A number of proposals and amendments were put before the board that included, but were not