

MEMORANDUM

State of Alaska

Department of Fish and Game
Division of Commercial Fisheries

TO: Jeff Regnart 
Director
Division of Commercial Fisheries

DATE: May 6, 2014

PHONE NO.: 907-465-6423

Charlie Swanton 
Director
Division of Sport Fish

SUBJECT: Solomon Gulch Hatchery
Permit Alteration

THRU: Sam Rabung 
Coordinator
PNP Hatchery Program

FILE NO.: PNP Hatchery Permit #15

FROM: Lorraine Vercessi 
Assistant Coordinator
PNP Hatchery Program

Attached is a Notice of Permit Alteration (NPA) for Solomon Gulch Hatchery (SGH), operated by Valdez Fisheries Development Association (VFDA).

This proposed alteration, as amended, is for the addition of two separate increments of pink salmon capacity, together increasing permitted capacity from 230 million to 270 million green eggs. If the permit alteration is approved, the first increase would occur in 2016, adding 20 million pink salmon green eggs to the permitted capacity. An additional increase of 20 million pink salmon green eggs will occur in 2018, once VFDA is able to demonstrate the required physical capacity or delayed until hatchery modifications required to reach physical capacity are completed.

The stepwise approach of permitted capacity for this permit alteration request (PAR) allows VFDA to develop the necessary hatchery infrastructure to accommodate the increased production and evaluate the changes in hatchery operations and production. Incremental permit increases also allow for further evaluation of management feasibility and potential effects on the area's wild stocks. The purpose of the increases in production is to provide increased early season fishing opportunity to the Prince William Sound (PWS) purse seine fishery as adult pink salmon return. An ancillary benefit is that more pink salmon will be available in the PWS sport fishery.

The original VFDA PAR submitted for review requested 70 million pink salmon green eggs to be implemented over time with annual increases in green eggs, reaching the maximum capacity in three to five years. After review and discussions, the recommended permit alteration has been limited to 40 million pink salmon green eggs permitted as two increments as described above.

Pathology staff has reviewed this PAR and has no objection.

Genetic staff has reviewed this PAR and has concerns that the original proposal to increase permitted capacity by 70 million green pink salmon eggs would increase the risk of straying into streams utilized by wild stocks of salmon. Increased straying of hatchery-produced fish may increase the potential for genetic hybridization of stocks.

Management staff has reviewed this PAR and acknowledge that management of returns resulting from this increased production are likely feasible.

The PWS Regional Planning Team unanimously recommended to amend this PAR to “an increase in permitted capacity at Solomon Gulch Hatchery by 20 million eggs beginning in 2016. An additional 20 million green eggs recommended beginning 2018 are conditionally authorized pending completion of required hatchery infrastructure. Further increases are not recommended until more comprehensive research directed at better understanding total wild stock returns, stock identification and run timing are implemented.”

The PNP hatchery program coordinator has reviewed this PAR and recommends that the NPA be approved with the recommended amendment, as written, and stipulation.

Attachments: SGH NPA, Prince William Sound Regional Planning Team Recommendation, Pathology Recommendation, Cordova area Division of Commercial Fisheries staff review comments, Genetics staff review comments, PAR review memo, SGH PAR.



Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Private Nonprofit Salmon Hatchery

Permit No. 15

Notice of Permit Alteration

This notice, in conjunction with the existing private nonprofit salmon hatchery permit for Solomon Gulch Hatchery (SGH) operated by Valdez Fisheries Development Association (VFDA), increases the permitted capacity by 20 million green eggs, from 230 million to 250 million pink salmon green eggs, beginning in 2016.

An additional permitted capacity of 20 million green eggs will be added in 2018, increasing the permitted capacity from 250 million to 270 million pink salmon green eggs, contingent on demonstrated physical capacity for this level of production. Another notice of permit alteration will be issued in 2018 when physical capacity is achieved or delayed until completed.

The permitted capacity at SGH for other species remains at 2.0 million coho salmon green eggs and 300,000 Chinook salmon green eggs.

The SGH Basic Management Plan (BMP) must be updated to include permit alterations. All other terms and conditions of the permit remain as stated in the existing permit and BMP for SGH.

Approved: _____

Denied: _____

Charlie Swanton
Director
Division of Sport Fish

Date

5/14/14

Jeff Regnart
Director
Division of Commercial Fisheries

Date

5/7/14