

2026 ANNUAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

CRYSTAL LAKE HATCHERY

Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association

This Annual Management Plan (AMP) is prepared to fulfill the requirements of 5 AAC 40.840. This plan must organize and guide the hatchery's operations regarding production goals, broodstock management, and harvest management of hatchery returns. The plan must be developed with consideration of the hatchery's production cycle. The production cycle begins with adult returns, that lead to egg takes and end with fish releases. Action may be taken outside of the management plan if modified by emergency order. Inseason assessments and project alterations by Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association (SSRAA) or Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G or department) may result in changes to this AMP in order to reach or maintain program objectives. SSRAA will notify the ADF&G private nonprofit (PNP) hatchery program coordinator in a timely manner of any departure from the AMP. The ADF&G PNP coordinator will advise as to whether an amendment, exception report, or other action is warranted. No variation or deviation will be implemented until an AMP amendment has been approved or waived by both the department and SSRAA. This policy applies to all hatchery operations covered under the AMP.

1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 Introduction

Crystal Lake Hatchery (CLH) is operated by Southern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association (SSRAA) under contract with ADF&G, Division of Sport Fish. The CLH is located 17.5 miles south of Petersburg, just off Mitkof Highway near the City of Petersburg's hydroelectric power plant. Crystal Lake, at an altitude of 1,300 feet, supplies water to the power plant. The water then passes to the hatchery before flowing into lower Crystal Creek. The City of Petersburg is responsible for reliably supplying the hatchery with water flows as described in their FERC license to operate.

The CLH has two Chinook salmon projects:

Crystal Creek Chinook salmon: This program provides adult Chinook salmon returns to local sport and commercial fisheries in the Petersburg area, as well as providing Andrew Creek broodstock for the Crystal Creek and Anita Bay Chinook salmon programs. The production goal for this program is the release of 700,000 Andrew Creek stock Chinook salmon smolt at Crystal Creek.

Anita Bay Chinook salmon: This program provides adult Chinook salmon returns to local sport and commercial fisheries in the Wrangell area. The production goal of this program is the release of a minimum of 500,000 Andrew Creek stock Chinook salmon smolt at Anita Bay.

The Chinook salmon egg-take goal is 1.75 million green eggs with a release goal of a total of 1.2 million using a 10-year average of 84% green egg to eyed egg survival. Anticipated broodstock requirements to achieve the egg-take goal of 1.75 million green eggs are to spawn approximately 395 females and 395 males, and 650 additional un-spawned fish for a total of 1,440 fish, assuming:

- (a) Average fecundity of 4,430 eggs/female

- (b) 33% historical 10-year average female %
- (c) 17% broodstock holding mortality
- (d) 2% green/over-mature female spawners

The CLH also has a coho salmon program. The hatchery releases up to 180,000 coho salmon smolt annually into Crystal Creek.

1.2 *New this year (production, harvest management, culture techniques, etc.)*

In July of 2026, SSRAA is planning again to capture and transport returning adults in Blind Slough. This effort is directed at securing broodstock for the Andrew Creek stock Chinook that are reared at CLH. This includes both the release at CLH and the release at Anita Bay.

SSRAA will suspend the 100% adipose clipping of Chinook at CLH for brood year 2025 (BY25) and revert to the 20% adipose clip and tag rate.

Regarding Crystal Lake infrastructure improvements over the past year, the facility successfully transitioned from 20 older concrete raceways to 12 new aluminum raceways. This project was completed in October. Additionally, new plumbing was installed for the startup ponds in the Kmart building.

1.3 *New permits or permit amendments*

Release up to 50% of the coho production in the slough in October.

1.4 *Expected Returns*

Species, Run	Release Location	Total Return	Common Property Harvest	Return to Hatchery	Broodstock Needed	Excess Hatchery Return
Coho salmon	Crystal Creek	2,600	1,300	1,300	150	1,150 ^a
Chinook salmon	Crystal Creek	2900	1,400	1,500	1,440	60 ^a
Chinook salmon	Anita Bay	6800	6800	0	0	0

^a Donations, discards, and/or ground for fishmeal and oil.

1.5 *Production Summary*

Program Name	Brood Year	Planned Release Date	Number to Release	Life Stage	Type of Mark, % Marked
Crystal Creek coho salmon	2025	5/2027	125,000	Smolt	CWT, 15%
Crystal Creek Chinook salmon	2025	5/2027	780,000	Smolt	CWT, 20%
Anita Bay Chinook salmon	2025	5/2027	450,000	Smolt	CWT, 20%

In 2026 CLH plans to take 140,000 coho salmon eggs and 1.75 million Chinook salmon eggs. CLH is a backup egg source of Andrew Creek stock Chinook salmon eggs for both Northern Southeast Regional Aquaculture Association (NSRAA) and Douglas Island Pink and Chum, Inc. (DIPAC).

1.6 *Current Permitting*

CLH is operated by SSRAA under contract with ADF&G and not subject to a private non-profit hatchery permit. The *Statewide Stocking Plan for Recreational Fisheries* outlines the CLH program objectives and release numbers and locations. The current CLH operating plan capacity is 250,000 coho salmon eggs and four million Chinook salmon eggs.

2.0 **Fall Coho Salmon Production**

2.1 *Program details*

The program was established to mitigate losses to Crystal Creek spawning habitat associated with operations of the Blind Slough Hydroelectric project, run by the City of Petersburg. In addition, this program provides adult coho salmon returns to local sport, personal use, and commercial fisheries in the Petersburg area. The releases also ensure a sustainable broodstock for future hatchery releases.

Eggs are collected from coho salmon adults returning to CLH each fall. Up to 200,000 yearling coho salmon smolt produced from the collected eggs are released each May into Crystal Creek.

At least 20,000 smolt are marked with a coded wire tag (CWT) and a clipped adipose fin. Tagged fish are recovered at the rack and through port sampling performed by ADF&G.

2.2 *Egg Takes*

Program Name	Ancestral Stock	Egg Take Site	Primary or Alternate Source?	Current Year Egg Goal	Permitted Maximum
Crystal Creek coho salmon	Crystal Creek	CLH	Primary	140,000	250,000
Totals				140,000	250,000

2.3 *Broodstock capture method*

Coho salmon returning to CLH are hatchery-produced fish from Crystal Creek stock. Adult returns to CLH enter adult holding ponds through a fish ladder.

2.4 *Spawning*

Adult fish are dispatched with a blow to the head. Females are incision spawned into a bucket. Milt from two males is added to each bucket of eggs. An activator/extender solution is added to aid in fertilization. The buckets are then transported to the hatchery building and placed in incubator trays.

2.5 *Egg-take Schedule*

Egg takes occur in mid-October through early-December.

2.6 *Carcasses*

The number of carcasses generated from egg takes can be limited by the number of fish allowed into the holding pond. Carcasses will be given away to commercial fishermen for bait or transported to a local processor for disposal.

2.7 *Planned releases this calendar year of previous brood year's production*

Program Name	Brood Year	Release Date	Number to Release	Life Stage	Type of Mark, % Marked
Crystal Lake coho salmon	2024	4/26	130,000	smolt	15%, CWT

2.8 *Previous brood years that will remain in culture during the entire calendar year*

Program Name	Brood Year	Number Live (Jan. 1)	Life Stage	Type of Mark, % to Mark	Number to Release, Date
Crystal Lake coho salmon	2025	130,000	Eyed eggs	CWT @ 20,000 fish	120,000, 5/2027

2.9 *Operational diagram*

Egg take, incubation, rearing and release at CLH

2.10 Fish transport permits

FTP #	Egg take, transport, or release?	Transport From → To	Maximal #, Life Stage	Expires
08J-1013	Egg take & release	CLH to Crystal Creek	250,000 eggs 200,000 smolt	8/31/28

3.0 Chinook salmon

3.1 Program details

CLH has two Chinook salmon programs.

Crystal Creek Chinook salmon: This initiative supports adult Chinook salmon returns for local sport and commercial fisheries in the Petersburg area, providing sustainable production for CLH and Anita Bay using Andrew Creek stock. Our annual production goal is to release 700,000 Chinook salmon smolt into Crystal Creek at a target weight of 20 grams. For the 2026 release (BY24), 100% of the fish will have clipped adipose fins, with a CWT marking rate of 20%. Moving forward, SSRAA will revert to a 20% rate for both CWT marking and adipose fin clipping for Chinook production.

Anita Bay Chinook salmon: This program provides adult Chinook salmon returns to local sport and commercial fisheries in the Wrangell area. Each spring, 500,000 Andrew Creek stock Chinook are reared in freshwater raceways at the hatchery. In April, the salmon smolt are transported to saltwater net pens in Anita Bay for short-term rearing and release.

3.2 Egg Takes

Program Name	Ancestral Stock	Egg Take Site	Primary or Alternate Source?	Current Year Egg Goal	Permitted Maximum ^a
Crystal Creek Chinook salmon	Andrew Creek	CLH	Primary	1,000,000	3,000,000
Anita Bay Chinook salmon	Andrew Creek	CLH	Primary	500,000	3,000,000
Crystal Creek and Anita Bay	Andrew Creek	Macaulay Salmon Hatchery	Alternate	0	1,400,000
Crystal Creek and Anita Bay	Andrew Creek	Medvejie Creek Hatchery	Alternate	0	1,000,000
Total/Capacity				1,500,000	4,000,000^a

^a Operating plan capacity.

3.3 *Broodstock capture method*

Broodstock for the Crystal Creek and Anita Bay Chinook salmon programs are collected at CLH. Chinook salmon returning to CLH are an enhanced run of Andrew Creek stock. Adult returns enter holding ponds through a fish ladder. Additionally, SSRAA may conduct adult Chinook salmon collections in Blind Slough to help meet broodstock needs. If SSRAA has done everything feasible to achieve an Andrew Creek stock release at Anita Bay and there are less than 200,000 Andrew Creek-stock Chinook eggs available for release at Anita Bay in any one year (1,200,000 including eggs for Crystal Creek release), the void can be filled with up to 250,000 Chickamin River stock eggs, up to once every three years, and releases must be 100% adipose fin clipped.

3.4 *Spawning*

Eggs for the Crystal Creek and Anita Bay Chinook salmon programs are collected at CLH. Adult fish are dispatched with a blow to the head. Females are incision spawned into a bucket. Milt from two males is added to each bucket of eggs. An activator/extender solution is added to aid in fertilization. The buckets of eggs are immediately transported to the hatchery building and placed in incubator trays. Eggs are disinfected with iodophor. Family tracking is used to control bacterial kidney disease.

3.5 *Egg-take schedule*

Chinook salmon egg takes at CLH occur from early August to early September.

3.6 *Carcass disposal*

The number of carcasses generated from egg takes can be limited by the number of fish allowed into the holding pond. Carcasses will be given away to commercial fishermen for bait or transported to a local processor for disposal.

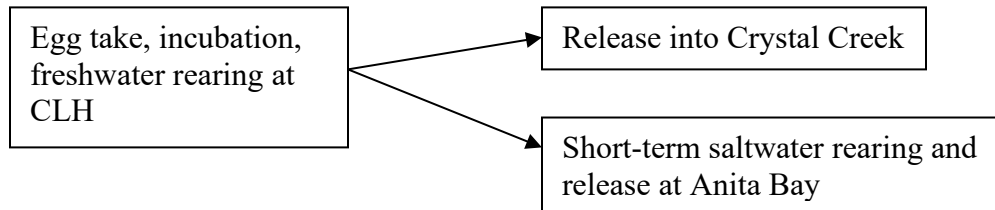
3.7 *Planned releases this calendar year of previous brood year's production*

Program Name	Brood Year	Planned Release Date	Number to Release	Life Stage	Type of Mark, Percent Marked
Crystal Creek Chinook salmon	2024	5/2026	569,000	Smolt	CWT, 20%
Anita Bay Chinook salmon	2024		0		

3.8 *Previous brood years that will remain in culture during the entire calendar year*

Program Name	Brood Year	Number Live (January 1)	Life Stage	Number to Release, Date
Crystal Creek Chinook salmon	2025	789,000	Sac fry	780,000 - 5/2027
Anita Bay Chinook salmon	2025	458,000	Sac fry	430,000

3.9 Operational diagram



3.10 Fish transport permits

Andrew Creek stock

FTP Number	Egg take, transport, or release?	Transfer From To	Maximal Number, Life Stage	Expires
03J-1006	Egg take, release	CLH to Crystal Creek	3,000,000 eggs	6/30/2027
08J-1021	Backup egg take, transport	Macaulay to CLH	1,400,000 eggs	12/31/2033
01J-1007	Backup egg take, transport	Medvejie to CLH	1,000,000 eggs	12/31/2031
01J-1002	Transport, release	CLH to Anita Bay	500,000 smolt	5/31/2028
08J-1018	Transport, release	CLH to NBH to Anita Bay	500,000 smolt	12/31/2032
13J-1003	Transport, release	CLH to City Creek	200,000 smolt	2/28/2028

Chickamin River stock

25J-1009	Egg take, transport, release	WLH to CLH to Anita Bay	250,000 eggs	8/15/2035
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4.0 Harvest Management

4.1 Harvest Areas

Terminal Harvest Areas

5 AAC 33.381. District 6: Wrangell Narrows-Blind Slough Terminal Harvest Area Salmon Management Plan.

5 AAC 33.383. District 7: Anita Bay Terminal Harvest Area Salmon Management Plan.

4.2 *Projected return this year*

Species, Run	Release Location	Total Return	Common Property Harvest	Return to Hatchery	Broodstock Needed	Excess Hatchery Return	Terminal/Sport Harvest
Coho salmon	Crystal Creek	2,600	1,300	1,300	150	1,150 ^a	0
Chinook salmon	Crystal Creek	2,900	1,400	1,500	1,440	60 ^a	0
Chinook salmon	Anita Bay	6,800	6,800	0	0	0	0

^a Donations, discards, and/or ground for fishmeal and oil.

4.3 *Common property fisheries management***Commercial Fisheries**Coho salmon

Coho salmon returning to CLH are harvested in the commercial troll fishery during the spring and summer seasons after June 1 as well as in the commercial drift gillnet fishery in Central Southeast Alaska waters. Terminal commercial drift gillnet fisheries have not occurred since 1996 and are not expected to occur unless the return is very large.

Chinook salmon

5 AAC 33.383. *District 7: The Anita Bay Terminal Harvest Area Salmon Management Plan* provides the framework for establishing common property purse seine, drift gillnet, and troll fisheries within the THA. The fishing ratio between purse seine and drift gillnet fleets and fishing start dates are determined by the Alaska Board of Fisheries. SSRAA, in conjunction with ADF&G, produces a fishing schedule every spring. In 2026, the Anita Bay THA initial opening will be delayed until June 1. The Anita Bay THA will be open continuously to harvest salmon with troll gear from 12:01 a.m., Monday, June 1, through, Tuesday, November 10. The Anita Bay THA will be open to harvest salmon with drift gillnet and purse seine gear concurrently from 5:00 a.m., Monday, June 1, through 12:00 noon, Friday, June 12, then on a rotational basis from 12:00 noon, Saturday, June 13, through 12:00 noon, Monday, August 31, then concurrently from 12:01 a.m., Tuesday, September 1, through 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, November 10. The Anita Bay THA will close for the season at 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, November 10, 2026. For full 2026 information and schedule of fishing by gear group see the Anita Bay THA advisory announcement issued April 14, 2026.

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareasoutheast.salmon>

Personal Use Fishery

A personal use coho salmon fishery occurs annually within the Wrangell Narrows-Blind Slough THA. The fishery generally starts mid-August, is restricted to fishing on Fridays, and is open for

four to five consecutive Fridays. The possession and annual limit is 25 coho salmon per household. Personal use fishermen must obtain a permit and have a valid sport fishing license.

Sport fisheries

Coho salmon

The sport bag and possession limits for coho salmon will be the same as the Southeast Alaska regional limits: 6 coho salmon per day and 12 in possession. Snagging coho salmon is not permitted during the summer in Blind Slough.

Chinook salmon

During 2026, the retention of Chinook salmon is prohibited in the majority of marine waters within the Petersburg/Wrangell area from April 1 through May 14. On May 15, 2026, the sport bag and possession limits for Chinook salmon in the Wrangell Narrows-Blind Slough THA will be established by emergency order (EO) effective through August 15, 2026, in accordance with the Wrangell Narrows-Blind Slough THA Management Plan. After this period, Chinook salmon regulations for the marine waters of Wrangell Narrows will reflect the most current Southeast Alaska regional Chinook salmon regulations. The fresh waters of Blind Slough upstream of the Blind River Rapids to Crystal Creek will be closed to all sport fishing from May 15 through August 15, 2026, unless opened by EO, to help achieve broodstock collection goals.

On June 1, 2026 opportunity to harvest Chinook salmon will open in Anita Bay with bag, possession and annual limits identical to the most current Southeast Alaska regional Chinook salmon regulations.

4.4 *Cost-recovery harvest management*

SSRAA's long-term goal is to have 75% of all fish produced harvested in common property fisheries, with the remaining 25% harvested by SSRAA for broodstock and to cover operating expenses. SSRAA has exceeded this goal many times, in large part because of better than average survival to adult of SSRAA chum releases and perhaps even more importantly the increased value of salmon in the marketplace. Though this remains SSRAA's goal, SSRAA annually adjusts the cost-recovery goal related to operational and capital expenses even if it exceeds this goal, or if it falls short.

5.0 APPROVAL

Recommendation for Approval: Crystal Lake Hatchery Annual Management Plan, 2026.

Tessa Frost, General Manager, SSRAA 6/12/2026

Katie Taylor, Area Management Biologist, Div. of Commercial Fisheries 7/2/2026

Jeff Rice, Area Management Biologist, Div. of Sport Fish 7/2/2026

Judy Lum, Regional Supervisor, Division of Sport Fish 6/22/2026

Anne ReynoldsManney, Regional Supervisor, Div. of Commercial Fisheries 6/14/2026

Lorna Wilson, PNP Coordinator, Division of Commercial Fisheries 7/2/2026

Approval:

The 2026 Annual Management Plan for Crystal Lake Hatchery is hereby approved.

Jason Dye, Deputy Director, Division of Sport Fish 7/7/2026

Forrest Bowers, Acting Director, Division of Commercial Fisheries 7/2/2026