

**Proposal 201: Background for
Customary and Traditional Use
Determination: Chitina Subdistrict
Salmon**

**Prepared by Division of Subsistence,
Alaska Department of Fish and
Game, March 2010**

RC 11

Background on presentation

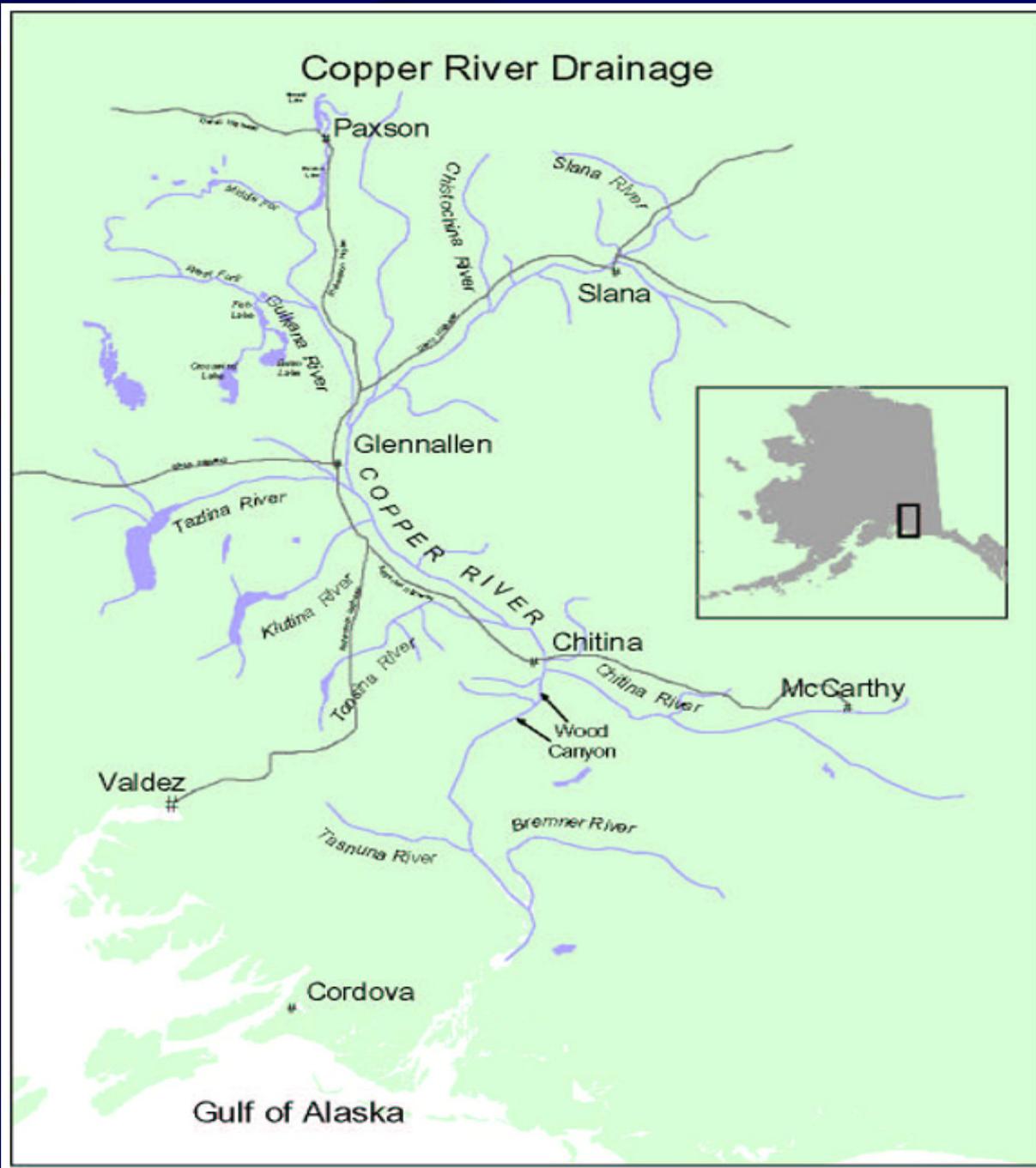
- Based on C&T worksheet, RC 9.
- Worksheet is update of 2003 report.
- Worksheet from 2003 modeled on reports from 1996 and 1999, but contains new information.
- 2003 worksheet, without changes, provided in 2005 and 2008.

New information since 1999: added in the 2003 report

- Results of 2000 Division of Subsistence study of characteristics of the Copper River subsistence fisheries.
 - Assisted by CRNA, Chitina TC, CheeshNa' TC, Chitina Dipnetters' Association.
 - 510 face-to-face surveys with participants in the 2000 fishery.
 - In-depth interviews with 6 long-term dipnetters.

New information since 2003: added in the 2010 report (RC 9)

- Superior Court decision, 12/2009.
- Definition of “subsistence way of life” (Proposal 200).
- Updated permit data.
- Added comparative data for other subsistence and personal use salmon fisheries.





Some procedural background

- Statutory **definition of a stock**: "means a species, subspecies, geographic groups, or other category of fish manageable as a unit."
- BOF has considerable latitude in defining stocks and the definition is not based solely on biology or genetics.
- The BOF identifies stocks with customary and traditional uses.
- It examines information about use patterns as established by groups of people, including uses in the past and uses in the present.
- It is necessary to discuss how people harvest and use the stock to describe the use pattern of the stock.

Procedural background, continued

- The BOF is making no determination about who may participate in subsistence fisheries.
- The BOF is identifying C&T uses, not “subsistence users.”
- The kinds of information the BOF uses to identify C&T uses and evaluate the 8 criteria have not changed substantially since 1984.
- The criteria are relative; the BOF compares use patterns of fisheries to decide which meet the C&T criteria.

Upper Copper River subsistence salmon fisheries: Key milestones

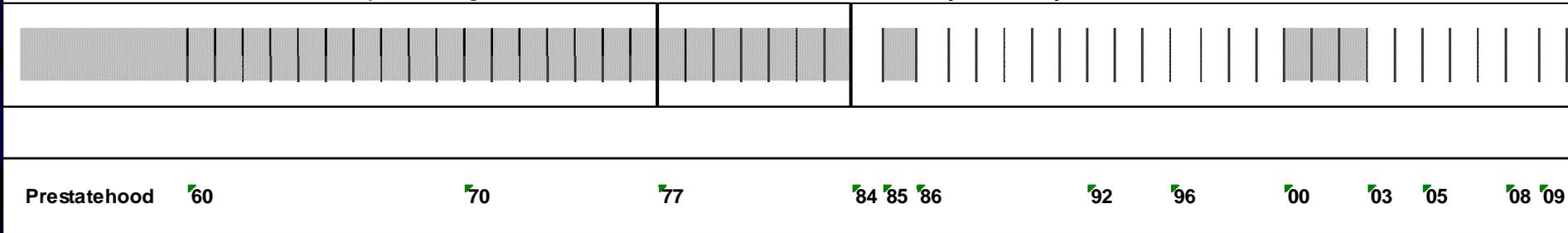
- 1910: Introduction of fish wheels.
- 1960: Entire drainage open to subsistence fishing; permit required.
- 1964: Tributaries closed to subsistence fishing.
- 1977: Glennallen and Chitina subdistricts created.
- 1979: Fish wheels prohibited from Chitina Subdistrict.
- 1984: Negative C&T finding for Chitina Subdistrict; creation of personal use fishery.
- 1999: Positive C&T finding for Chitina Subdistrict; subsistence regulations adopted again.
- 2003: Negative C&T finding for Chitina Subdistrict; personal use regulations reestablished.
- 2005 and 2008: BOF determined no significant new information to warrant C&T review.
- 2009 Court orders review of Chitina salmon stocks' C&T.

Figure 3. Regulatory Classification of Chitina Subdistrict Salmon Fishery: Pre-statehood to 2009

= classified as a subsistence fishery
 = classified as a personal use fishery

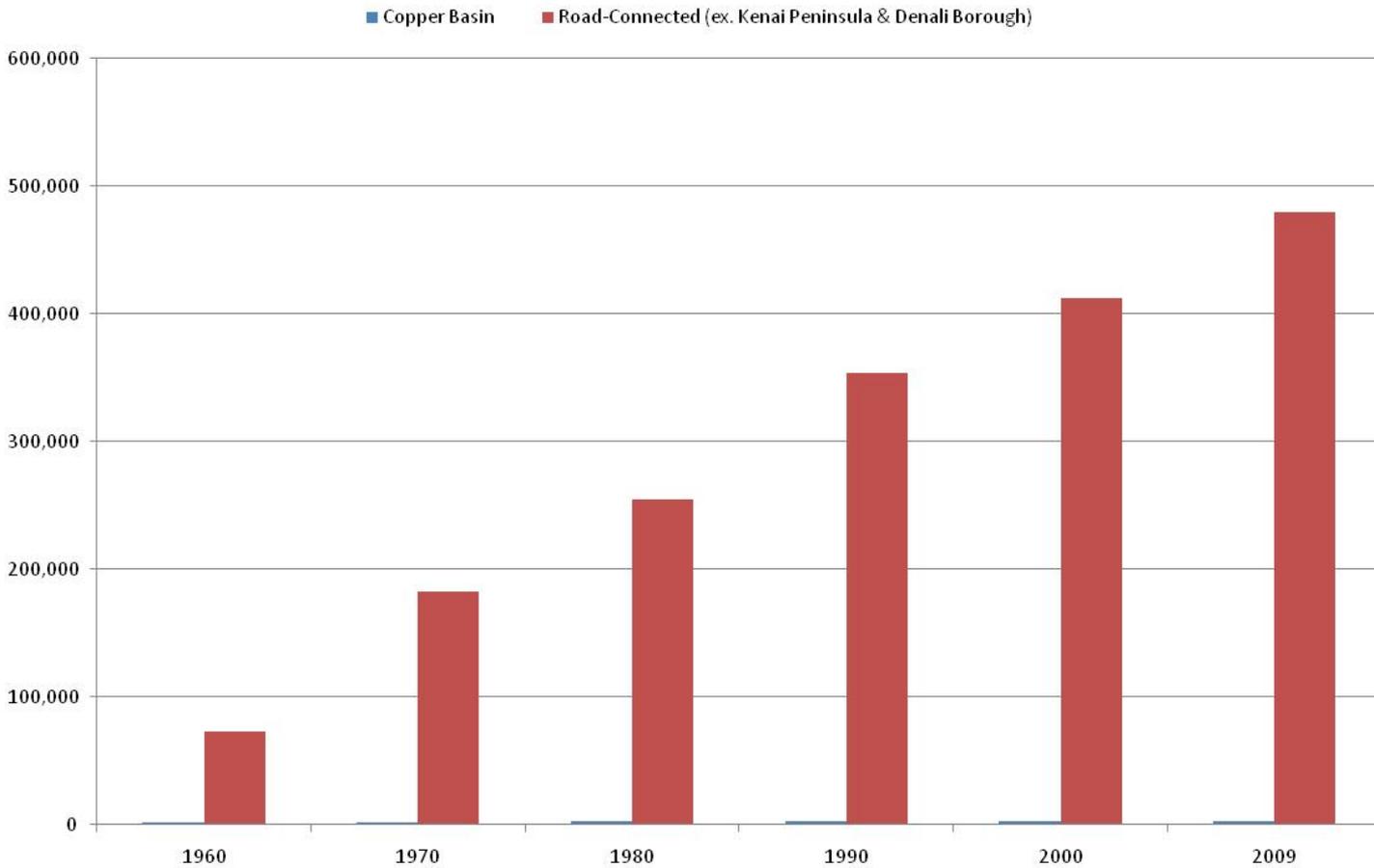
Glennallen & Chitina Subdistricts not separate in regulation until 1977 →

First board application of 8 criteria to
 ▲ identify customary and traditional uses.



Demographic trends

Figure 4. Population of the Copper Basin and Adjacent Road-connected Areas, 1960 to 2009

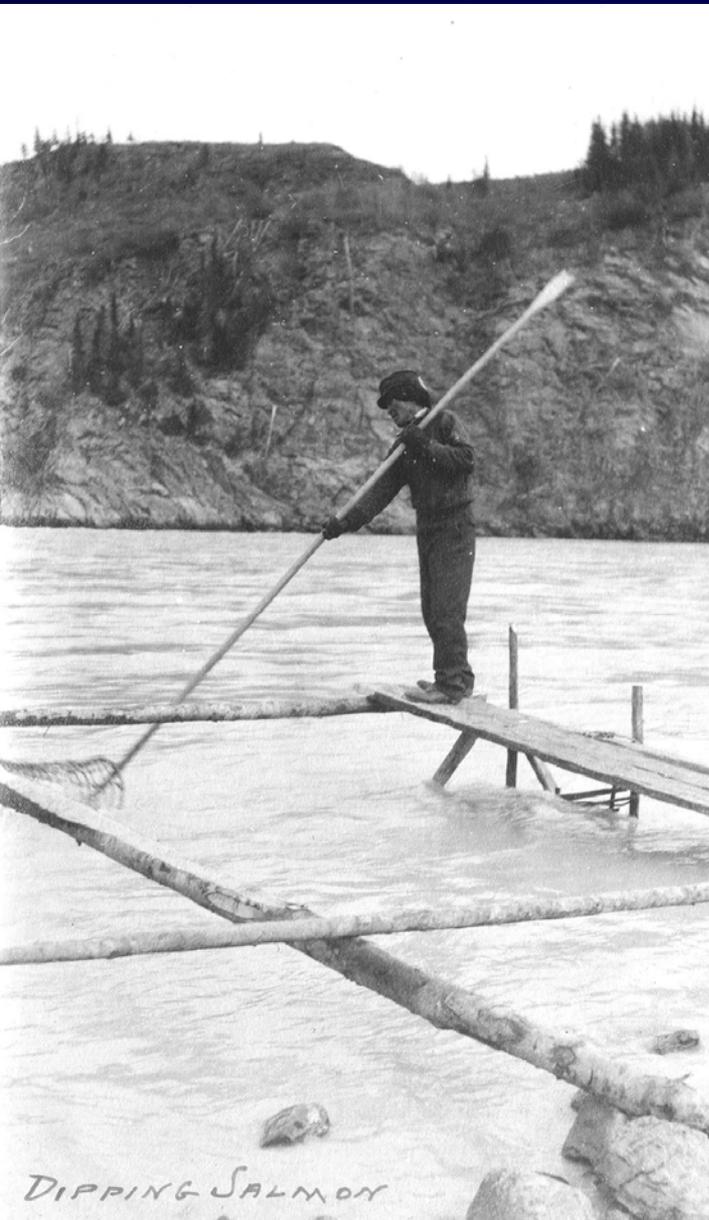


Criterion 1

- “A long-term, consistent pattern of noncommercial taking, use, and reliance on the fish stock or game population that has been established over a reasonable period of time of not less than one generation, excluding interruption by circumstances beyond the user’s control, such as unavailability of the fish or game caused by migratory patterns.”

**Ahtna Athabascans
established subsistence
salmon fisheries
throughout the Copper
Basin, and continue
traditional uses.**





The Ahtna fished for salmon along the Copper River, including at Chitina, with dip nets operated from wood platforms.

Fishing areas were controlled by particular leaders, families, and clans.

They also used weirs, traps, and spears, especially in tributaries and clear waters.

By about 1910, the Ahtna began using more efficient fish wheels.

They virtually abandoned using dip nets for subsistence salmon fishing.



Dipnetting by nonlocal residents began in 1940s and 1950s.

Rapid growth beginning in the late 1960s with access improvements.

By 1970s, Ahtna fishers displaced to locations upriver of Chitina Subdistrict.



Some attested Ahtna villages, fishing stations, and places, lower Copper River.
Sources Kari 1986; Reckord 1983; Kari and Buck 1983.

Fivemile fish camps.

Nahwt'en Na' -
"Situations recur creek" or Fivemile Creek.

- "Dakah De'nin's" - Fox Creek Village; or Hwt'aat Na' -
"Enclosed mouth or beneath [mountain's] mouth."

Tak'a's Naghil'aaden - "Spring water flows down" or Tenas Creek.

Usdi Na - "Ahead creek" or O'Brien Creek.

Tsedi Na' - Chitina River.

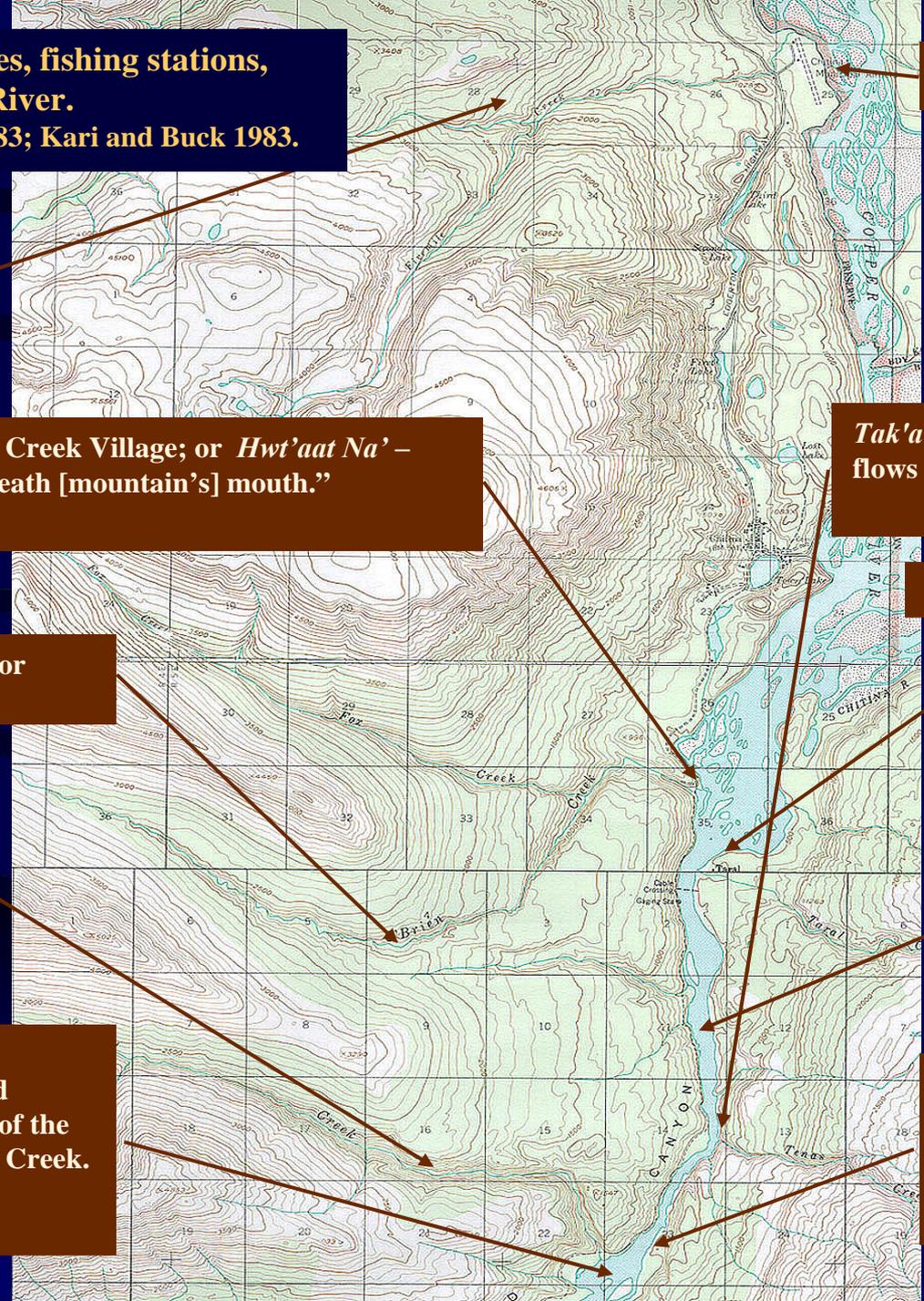
Taral Taghaelden -
"Dike place."

K'a's Ben - "Cold creek" or Haley Creek.

Deyighil'aaden - "Where it flows inside" or Wood Canyon.

Ts'akae Nanalyaesdeb -
"Where women are carried across." On the west bank of the Copper River above Haley Creek.

Tats'abaelghi aaden -
"Where spruce stands in water" or Canyon Creek Village.



**Fivemile and Chitina
Airport**

1958

1967
1968
1974

1967
1968
1974

**Location of some fishwheels in the Chitina
area, 1958, 1967, 1968, and 1974.**

Source ADF&G Commercial Fisheries Division

Town of Chitina

1967
1968

Salmon Point

1958

1974

1967

**Mouth of Fox and
O'Brien creeks**

1958

1958

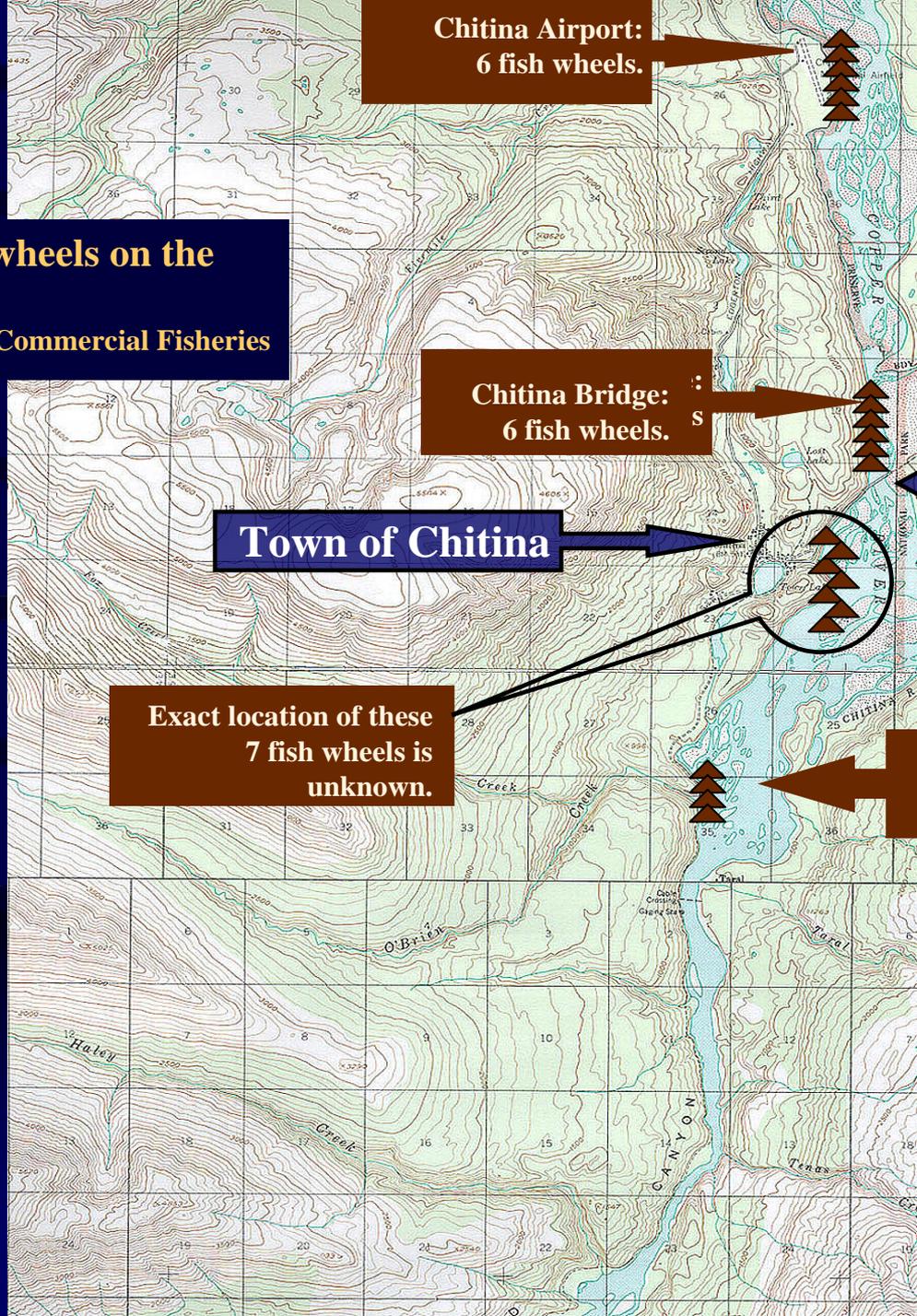
1974

1967

1968

1978 location of fish wheels on the lower Copper River.

Source ADF&G Division of Commercial Fisheries

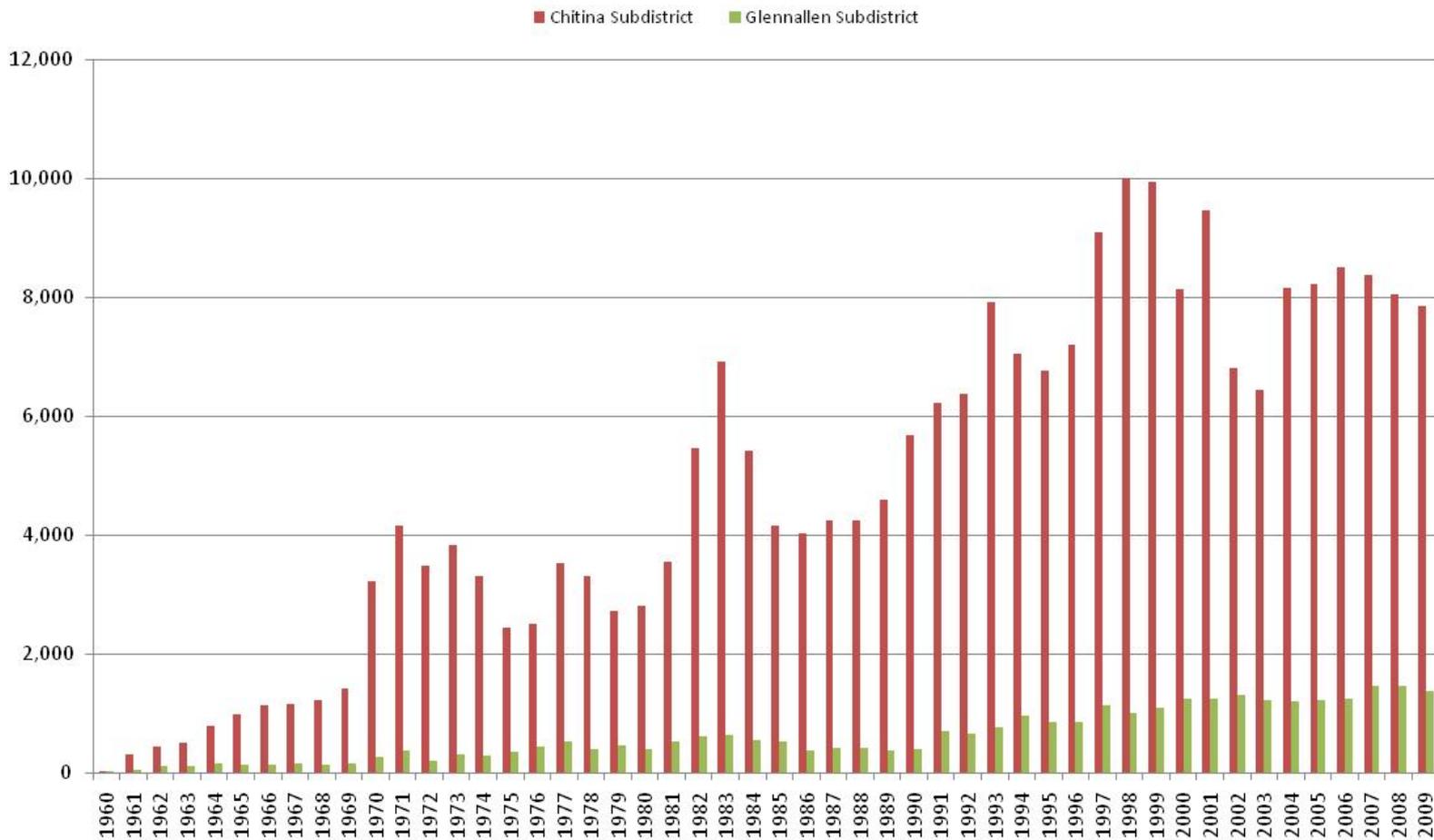


Chitina-McCarthy Bridge

**O'Brien Creek:
4 fish wheels.**

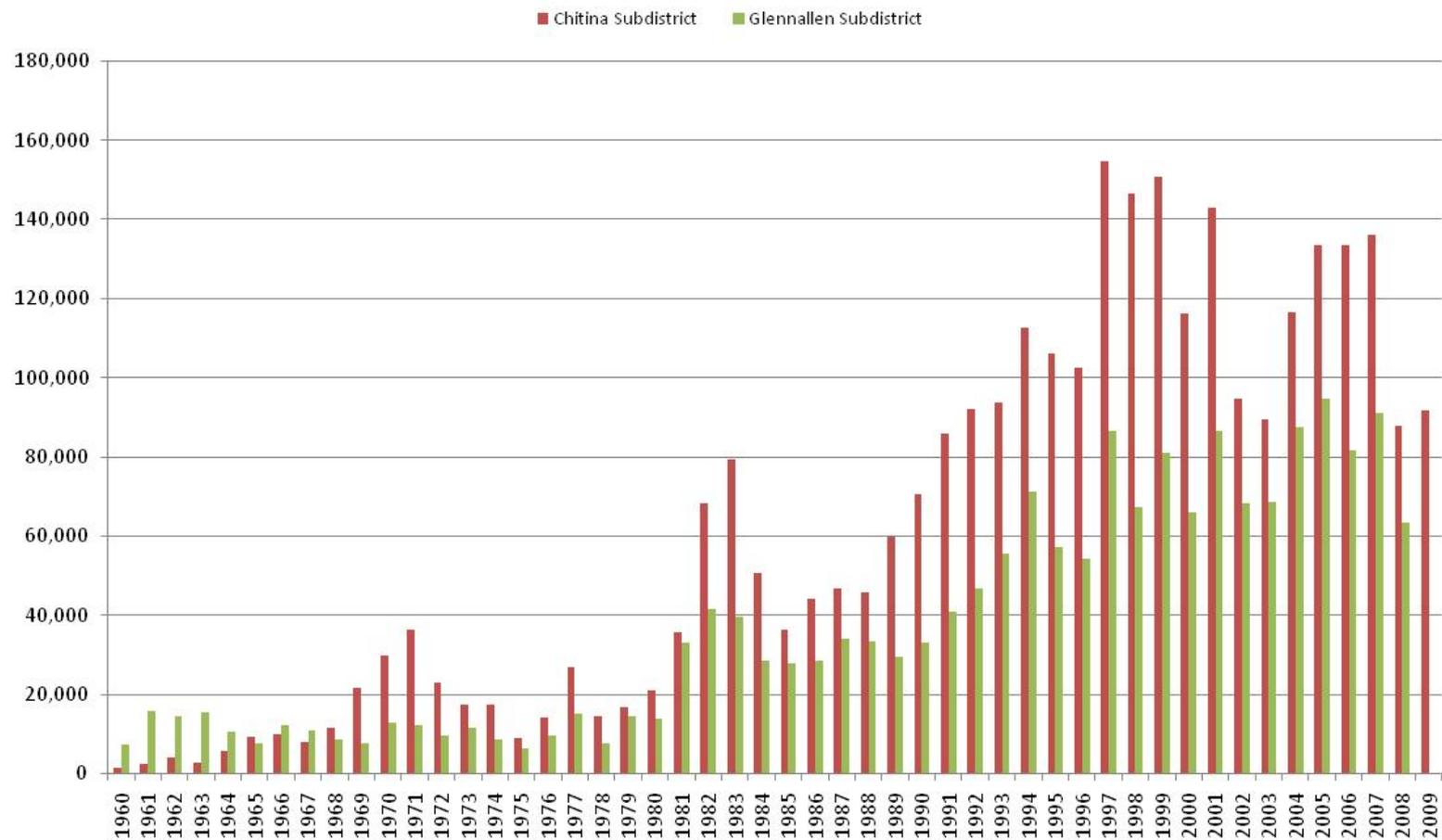
Trends: Upper Copper River District permits

Figure 17. Number of Permits Issued, Chitina and Glennallen Subdistricts, 1960 to 2009



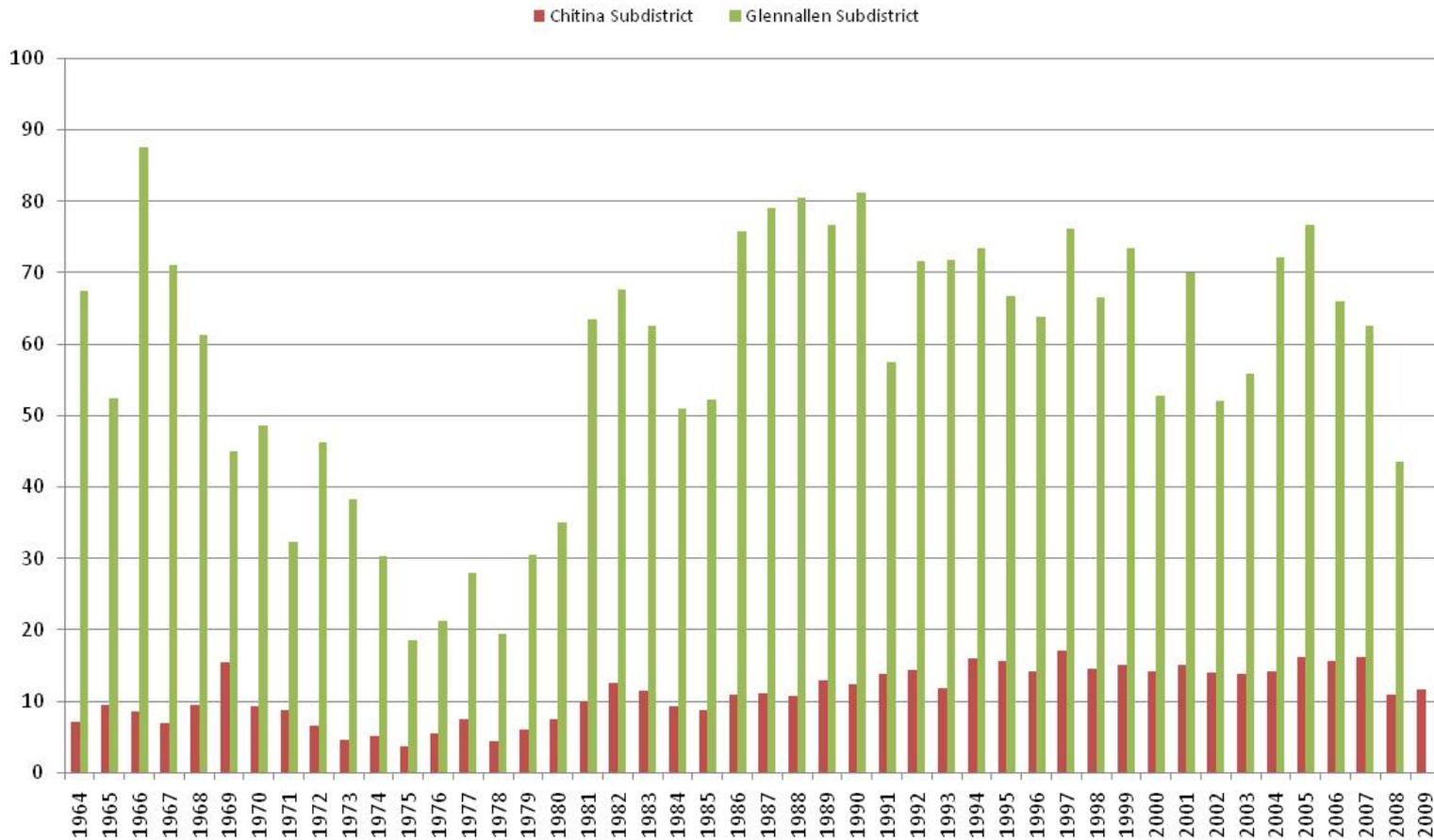
Trends: Upper Copper River District harvests

Figure 18. Estimated Harvests of Salmon, Chitina and Glennallen Subdistricts, 1960 to 2009



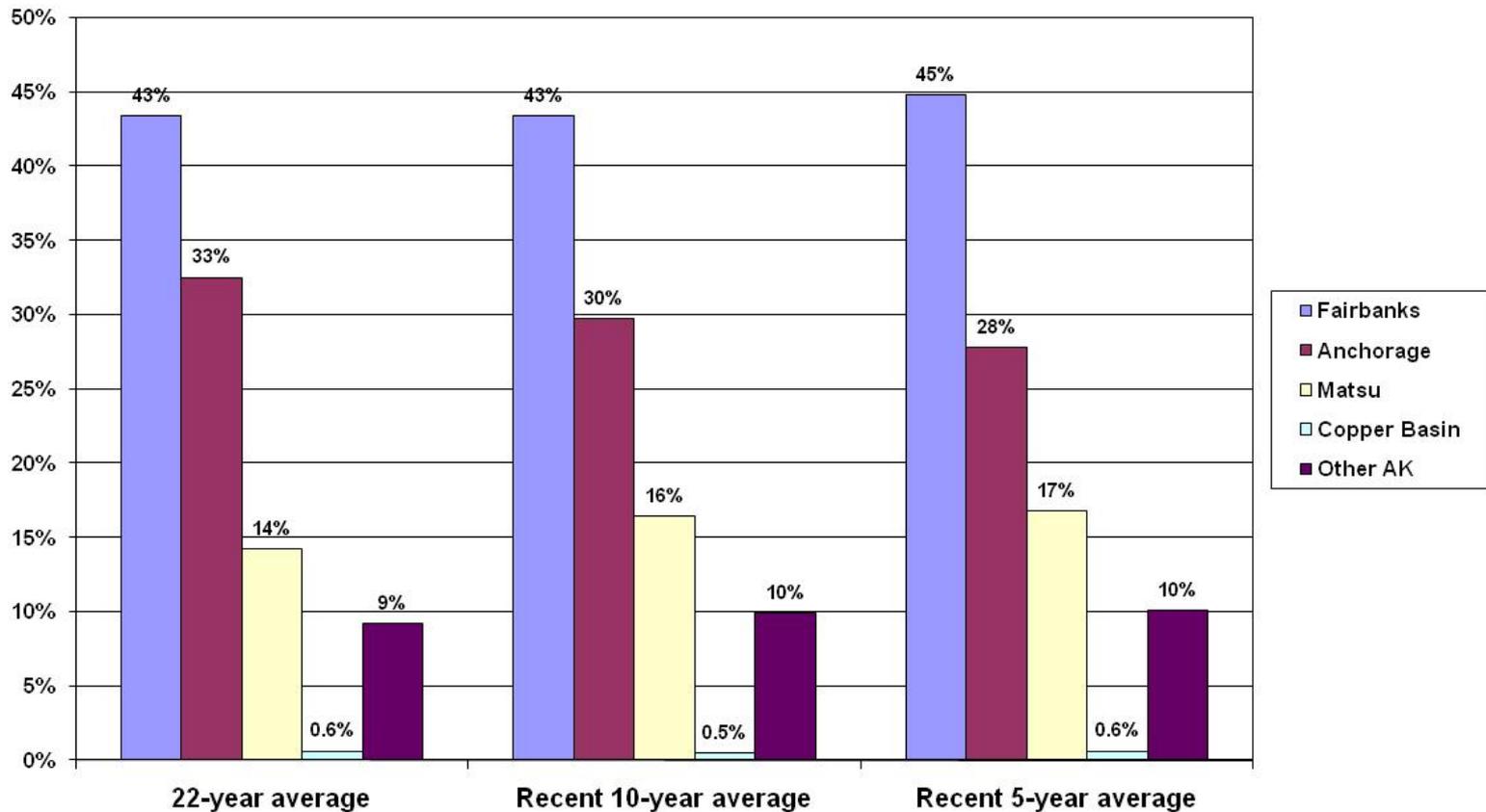
Trends: Average harvest per permit

Figure 19. Average Number of Salmon Harvested per Permit, Chitina and Glennallen Subdistricts, 1964 to 2009



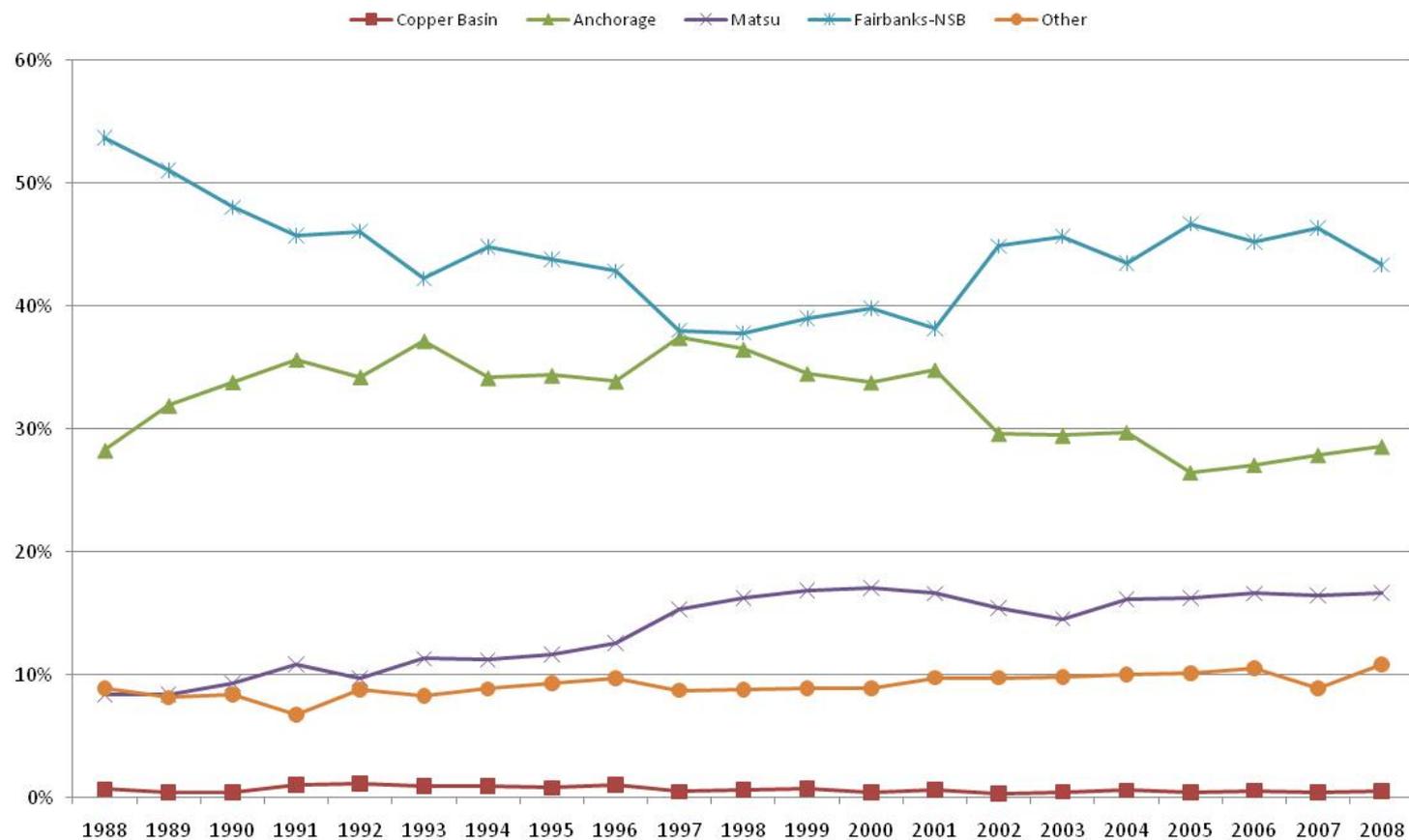
Residency of Chitina Subdistrict dip net permit holders

Figure 22. Percentage of Permit Holders by Area of Residence, Chitina Subdistrict State Dip Net Fishery, 1988 - 2009



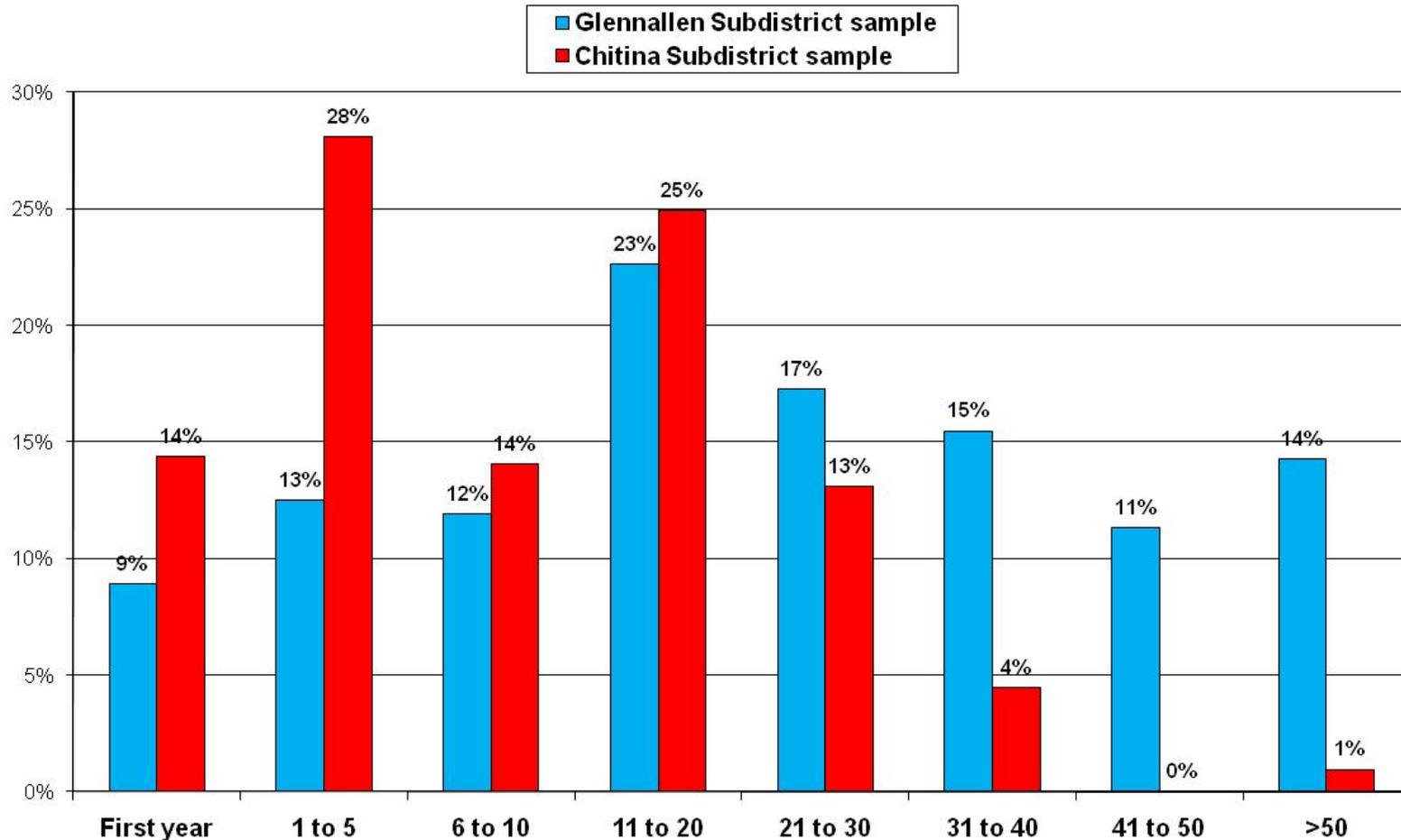
Residency of Chitina Subdistrict dip net permit holders, continued

Figure 23. Area of Residence of Permit Holders, Chitina Subdistrict State Dip Net Fishery, 1988 to 2009



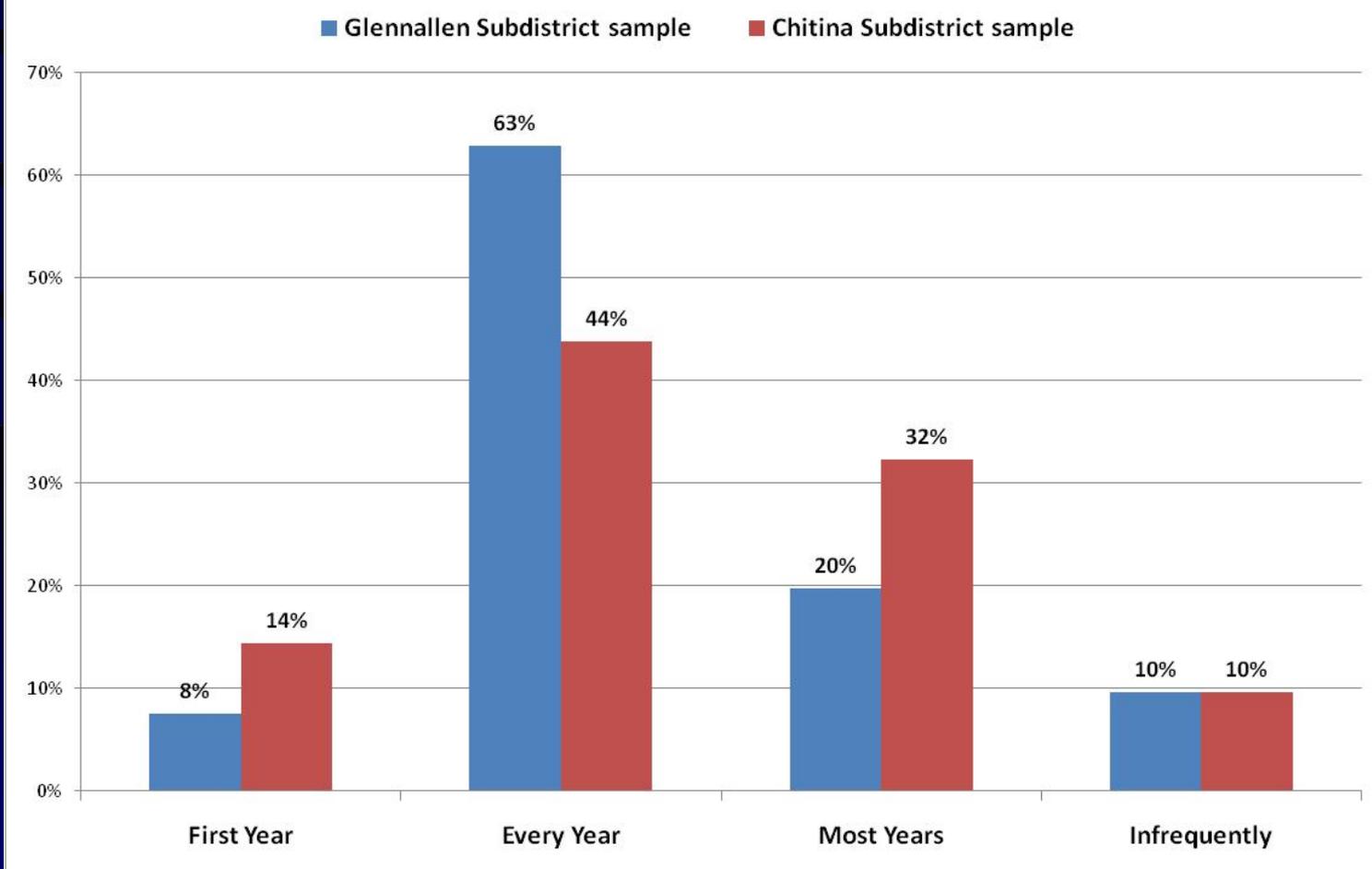
Criterion 1: Long term consistent pattern of use

Figure 34 . Number of Years Since First Participation in the Fishery, Copper River Subsistence Fishery Participants, 2000



Criterion 1: Long term consistent pattern of use, continued

Figure 35. How Often Do You Fish in the Copper River?: Asked of Subsistence Fishery Participants, 2000

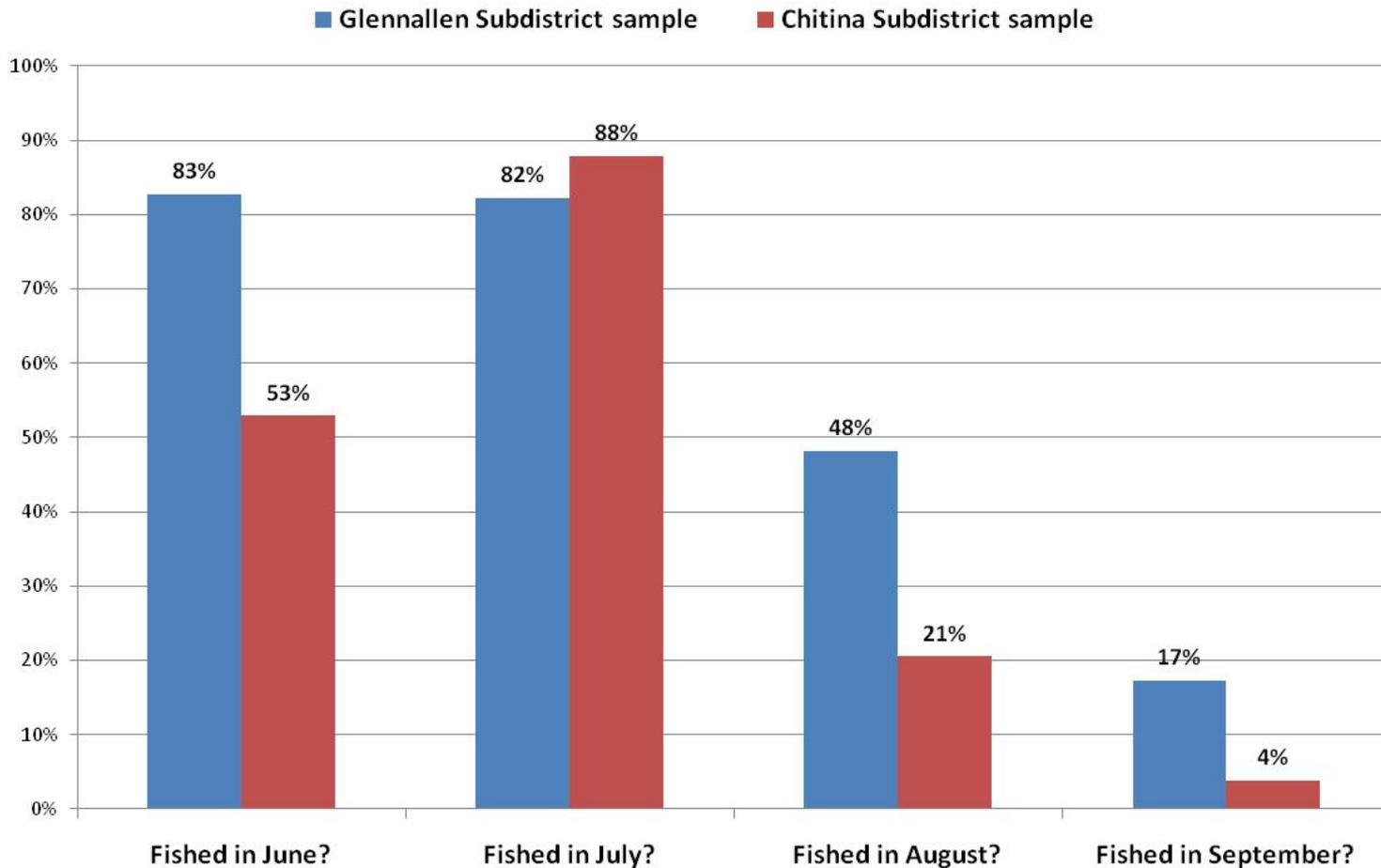


Criterion 2

- “A pattern of taking or use recurring in specific seasons of each year.”

Criterion 2: Specific seasons

Figure 36. Months Fished in the Copper River: Asked of Subsistence Fishery Participants, 2000



Criterion 3

- “A pattern of taking or use consisting of methods and means of harvest that are characterized by efficiency and economy of effort and cost.”

Distance traveled to fish

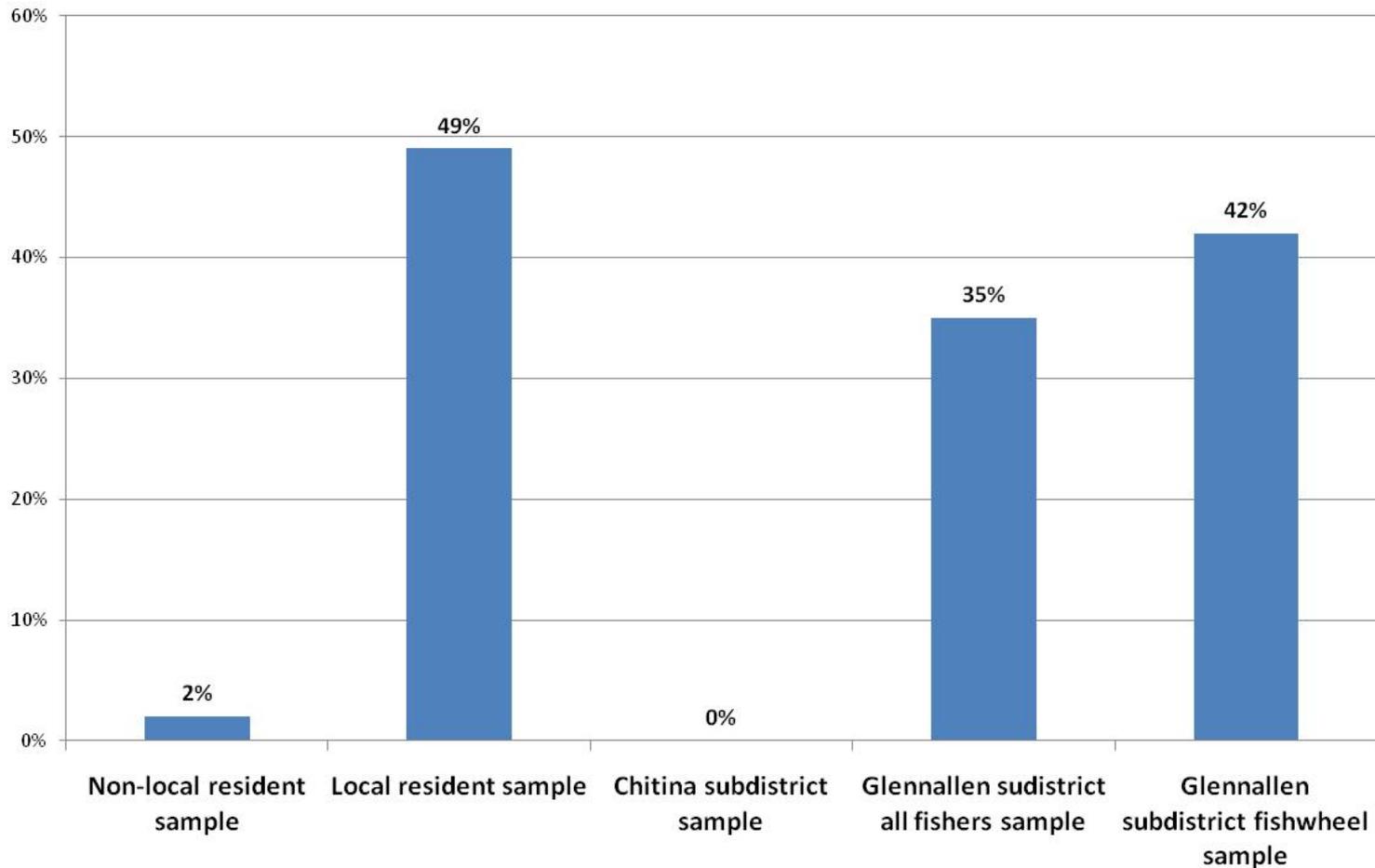
- See Table 13 (RC 9).
- Round trip, Fairbanks to Chitina = 628 miles.
- Round trip, Anchorage to Chitina = 508 miles.
- Round trip, Palmer to Chitina = 424 miles.
- Round trip, Glennallen to Chitina = 130 miles.
- Average round trip for permit holder, 1999–2008 = 550 miles.

Criterion 4

- “The area in which the noncommercial, long-term, and consistent pattern of taking, use, and reliance upon the fish stock or game populations has been established.”

Criterion 4: Area fished

Figure 43. Answered "Yes" to Question: "Does your fishing site belong to your family?" Surveyed Copper River Subsistence Fishers, 2000

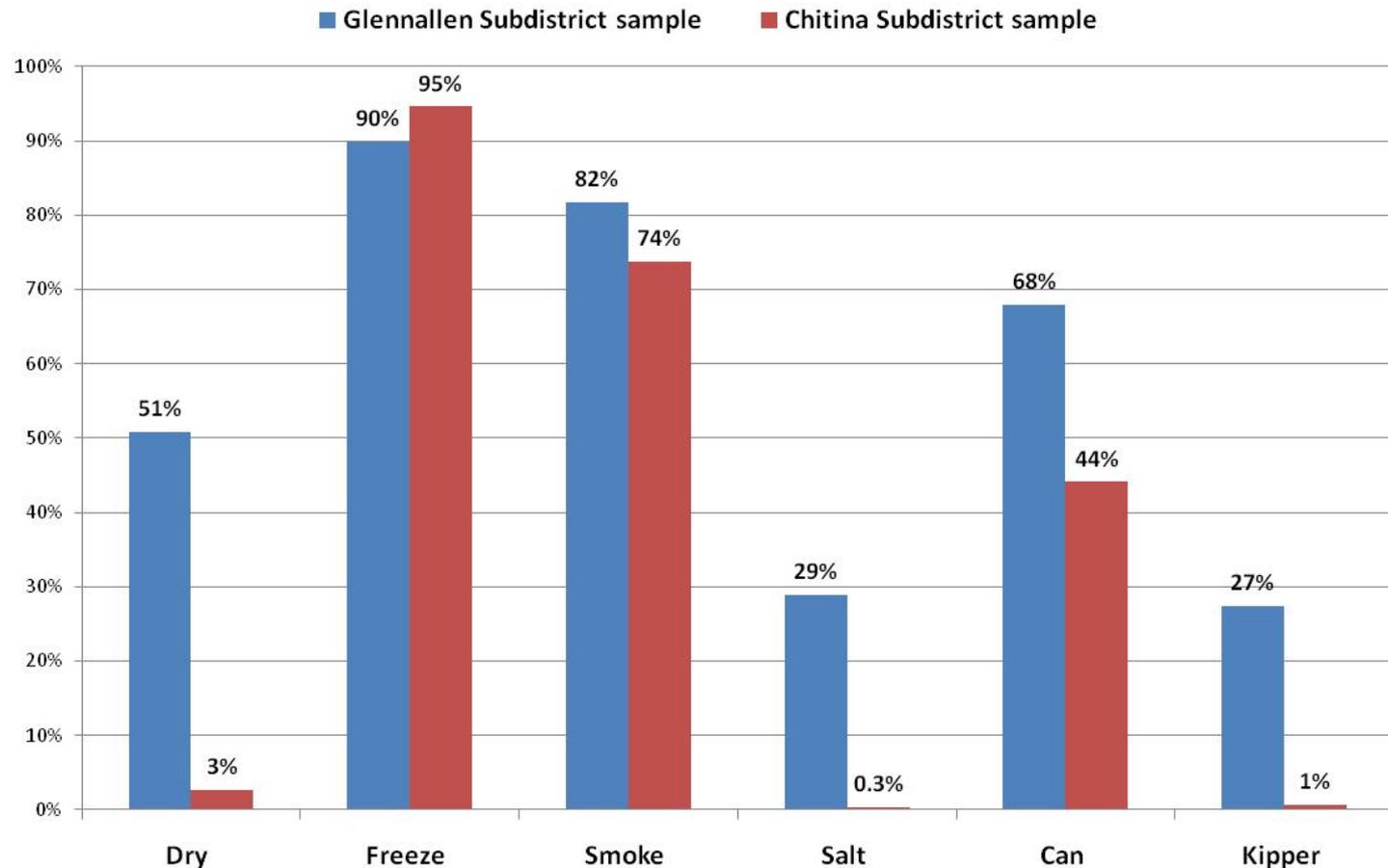


Criterion 5

- “A means of handling, preparing, preserving, and storing fish or game that has been traditionally used by past generations, but not excluding recent technological advances where appropriate.”

Criterion 5: Traditional methods of preparing and preserving

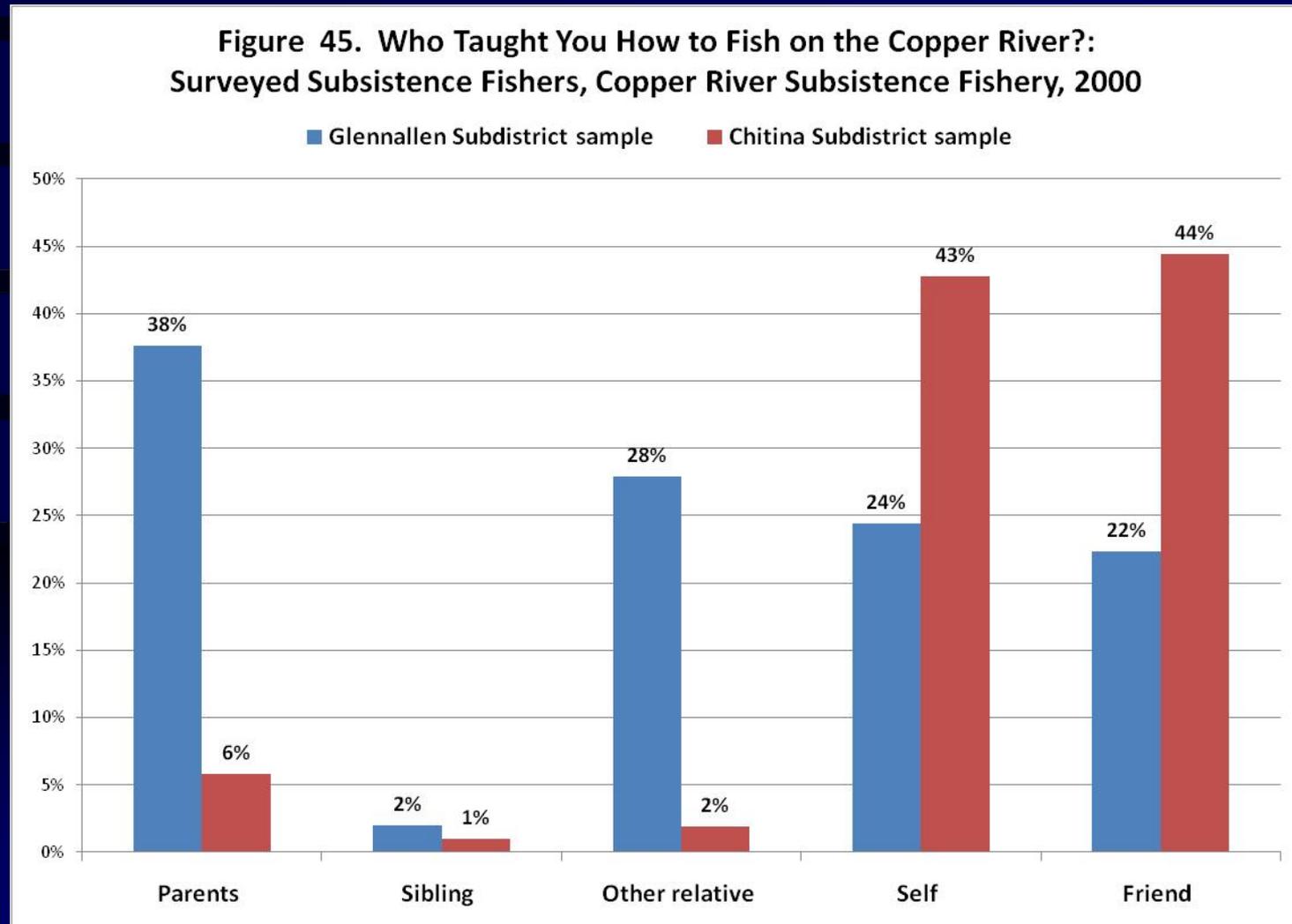
Figure 44. How Do You Prepare Your Salmon? Surveyed Subsistence Fishers, Copper River Subsistence Fishery, 2000



Criterion 6

- “A pattern of taking or use that includes the handing down of knowledge of fishing or hunting skills, values, and lore from generation to generation.”

Criterion 6: Handing down knowledge across generations

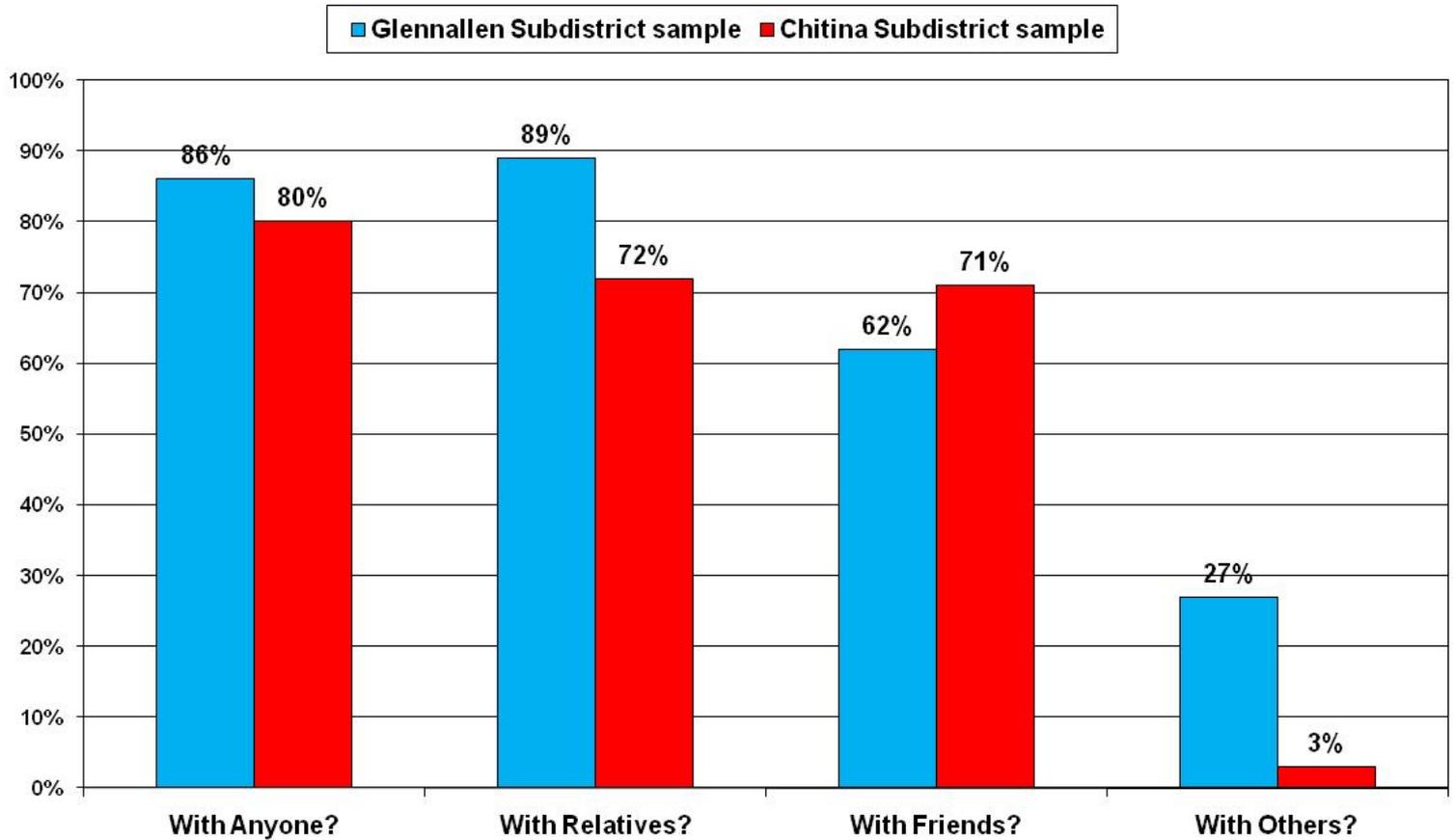


Criterion 7

- “A pattern of taking, use, and reliance where the harvest effort or products of that harvest are distributed or shared, including customary trade, barter, and gift-giving.”

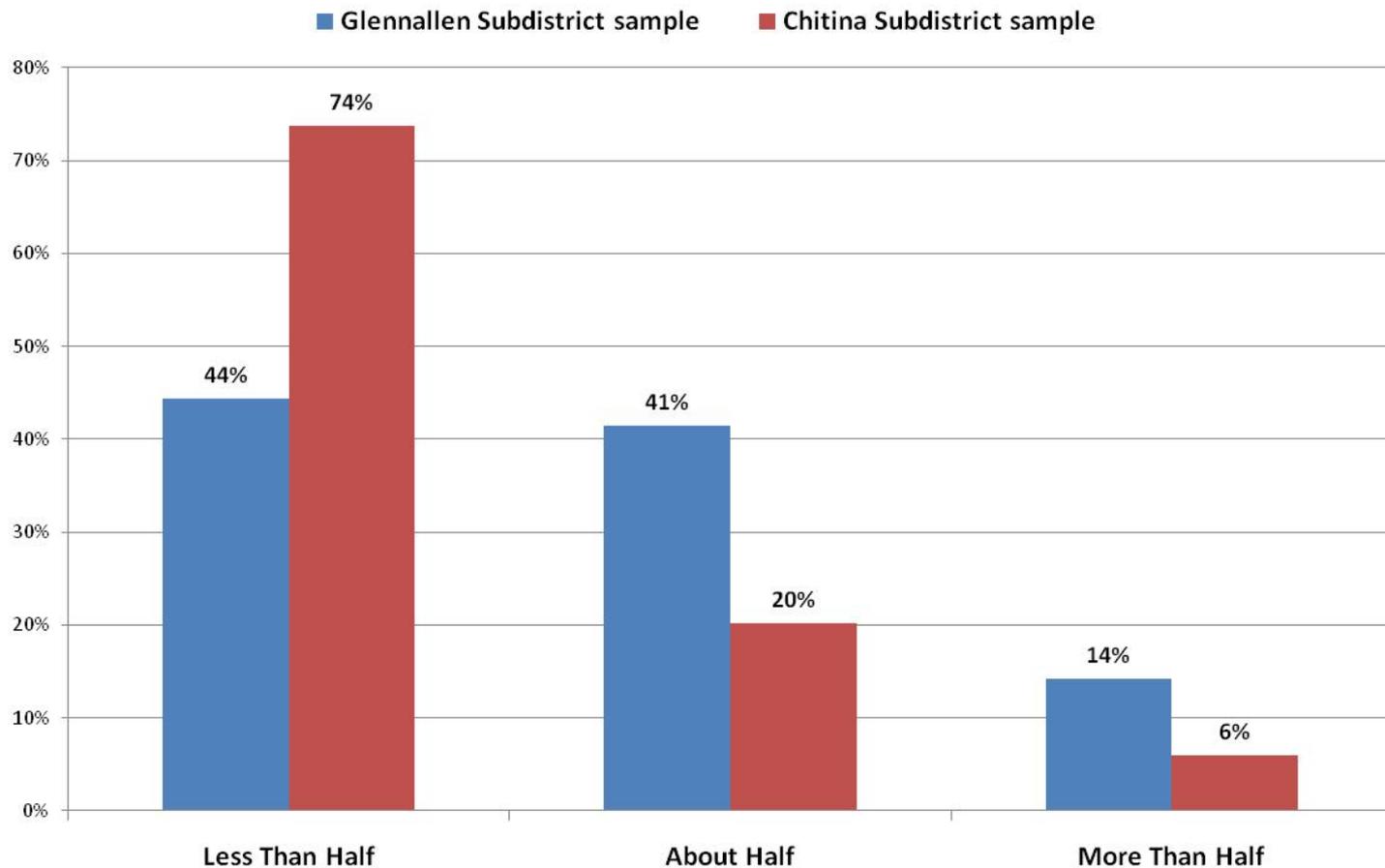
Criterion 7: Sharing

Sharing of Subsistence Harvest: Percentage Saying "Yes"[combined data from figures 45, 46, 47, & 48]



Criterion 7: Sharing, continued

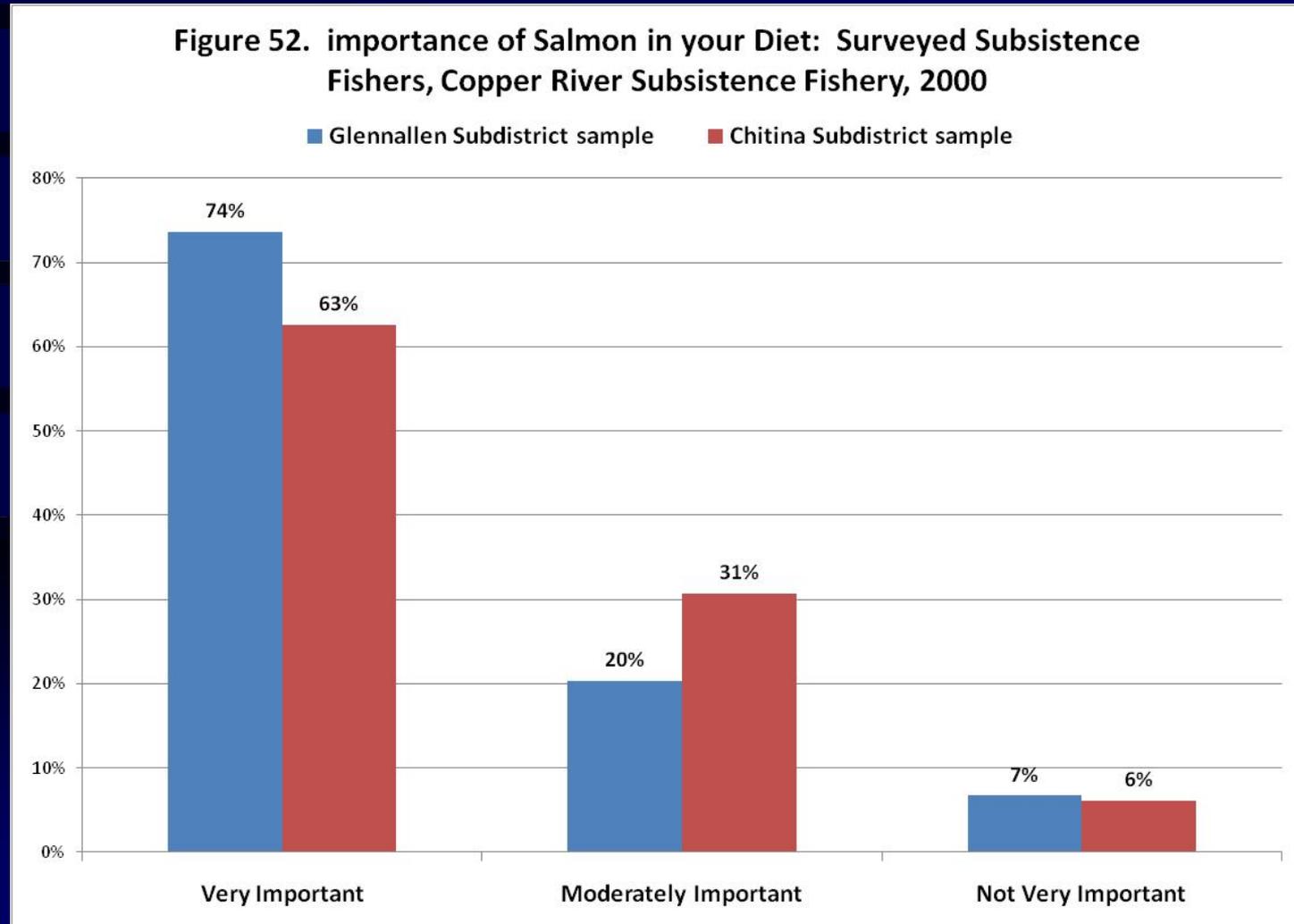
Figure 51. How Much of Your Catch Do you Share?: Surveyed Subsistence Fishers, Copper River Subsistence Fishery, 2000



Criterion 8

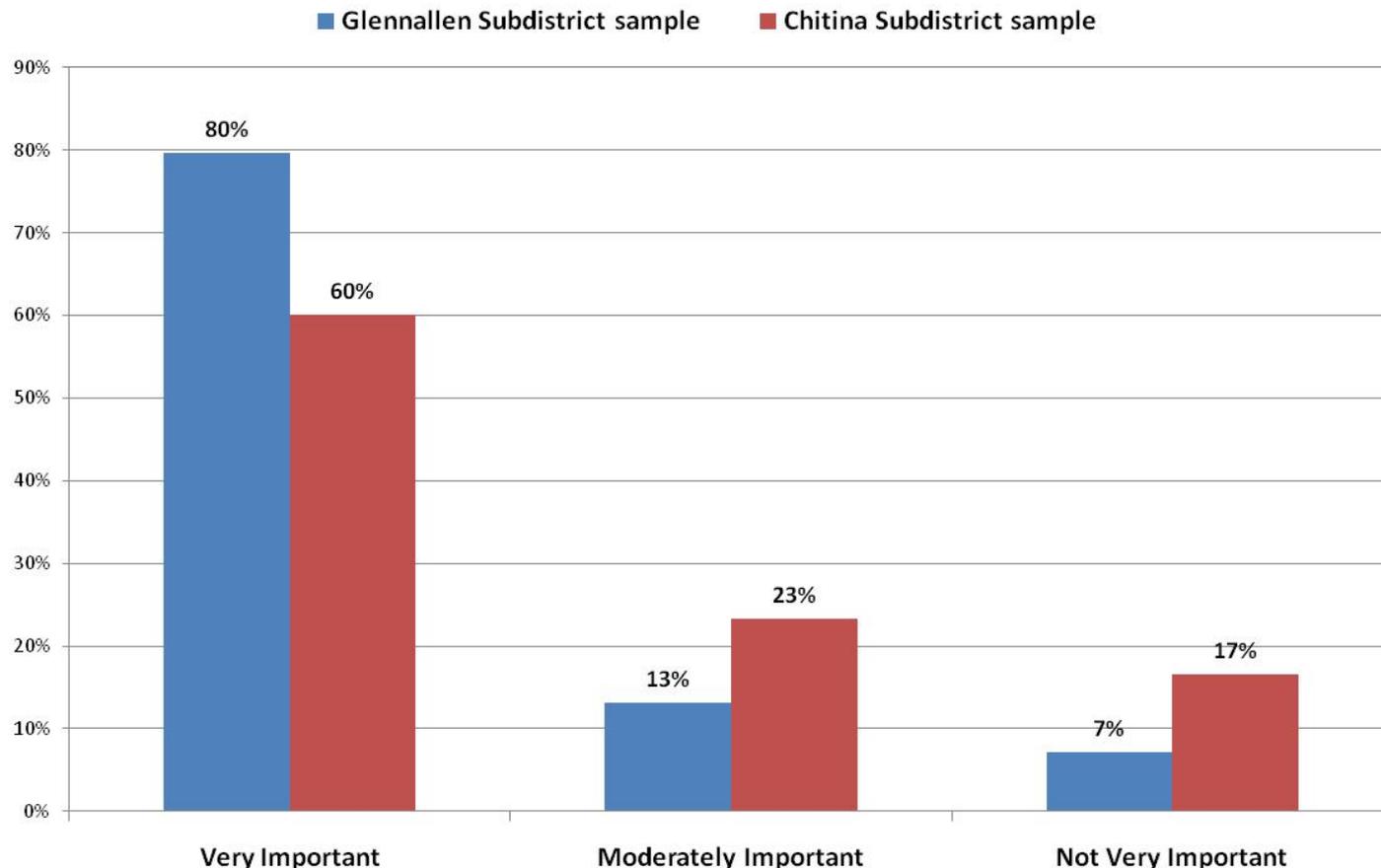
- “A pattern that includes taking, use, and reliance for subsistence purposes upon a wide diversity of the fish and game resources and that provides substantial economic, cultural, social, and nutritional elements of the subsistence way of life.”

Criterion 8: Reliance on a wide variety of fish and game



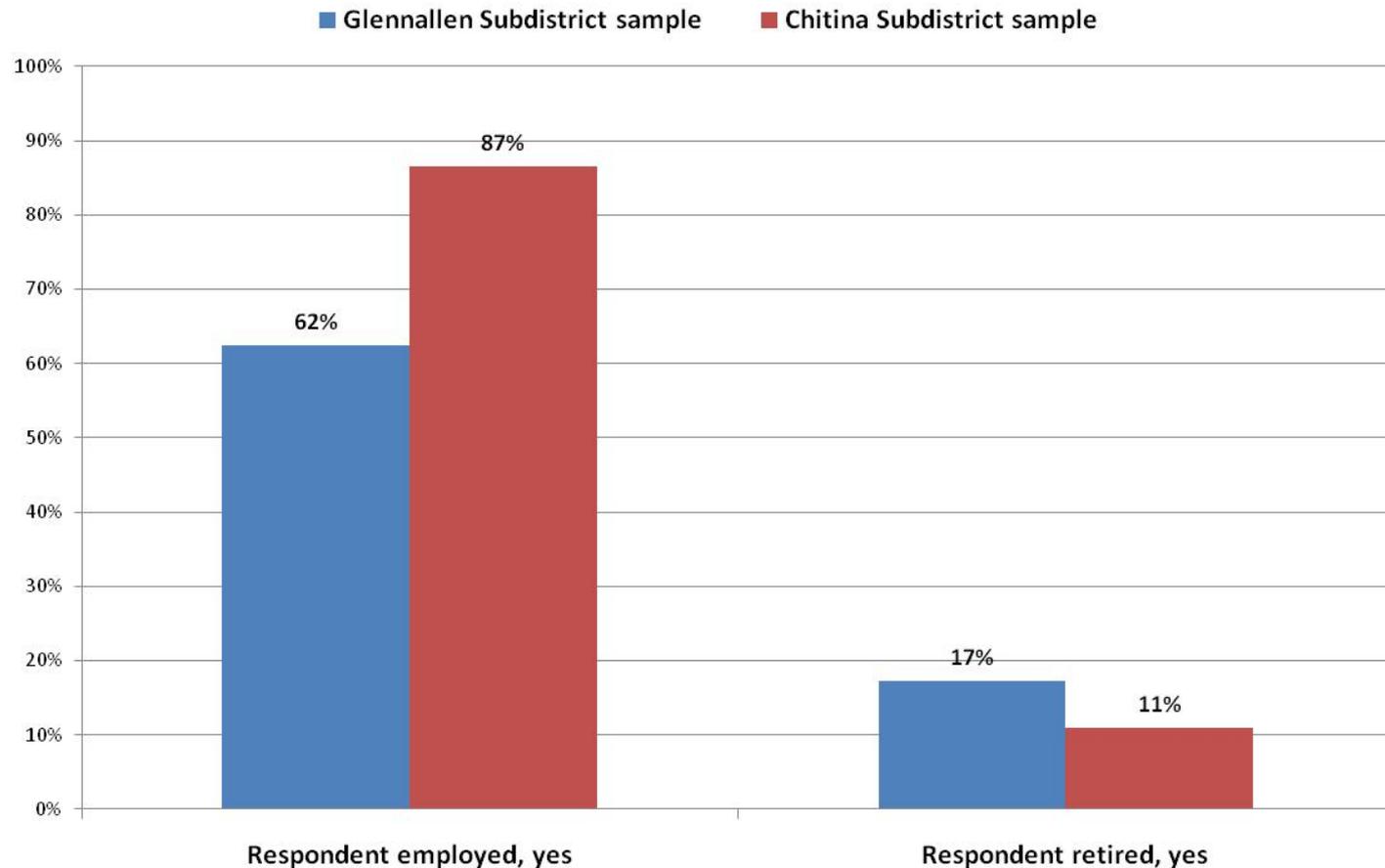
Criterion 8: Reliance on a wide variety of fish and game, continued

Figure 53. Importance of Wild Foods in your Diet: Surveyed Subsistence Fishers, Copper River Subsistence Fishery, 2000

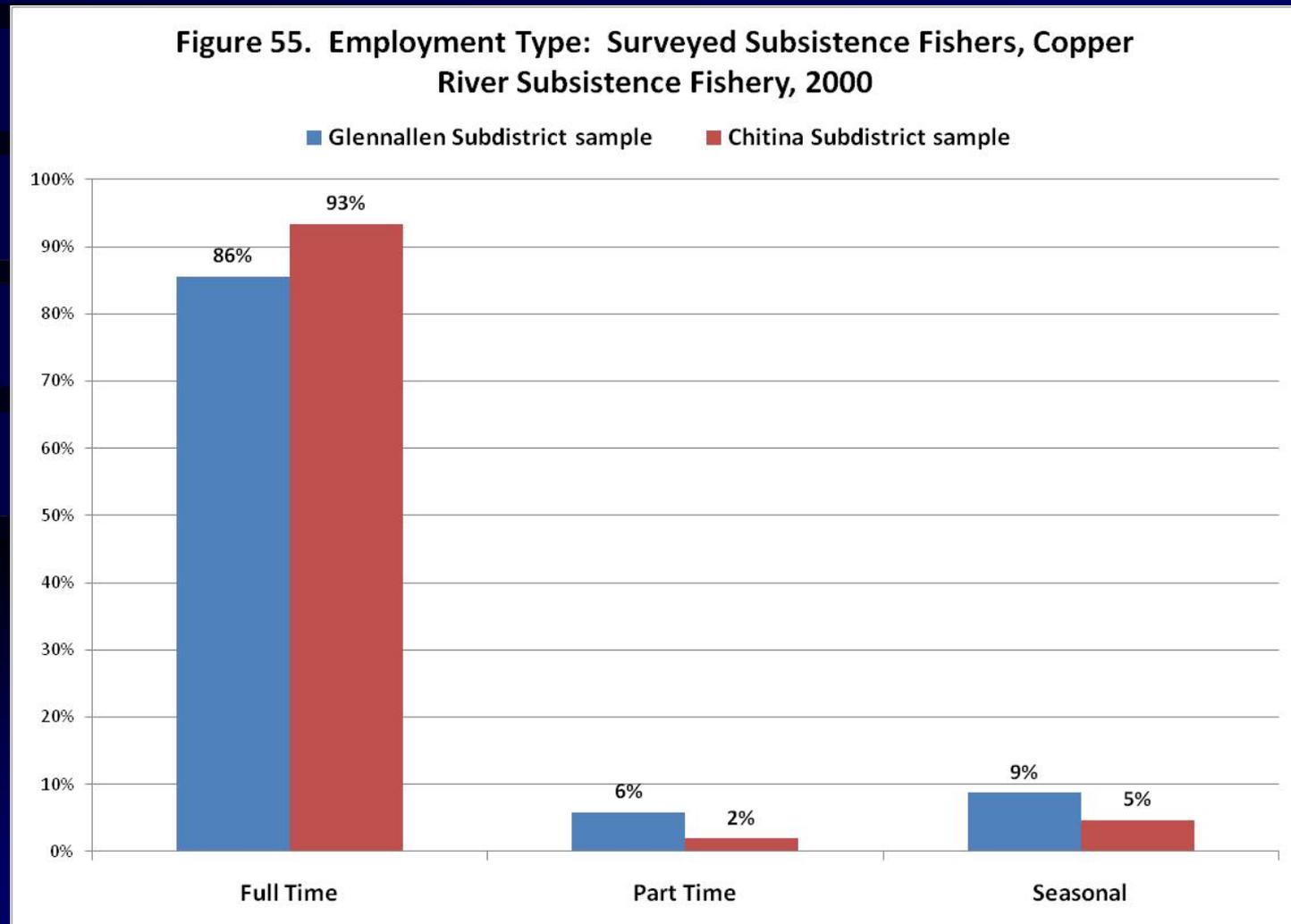


Criterion 8: Reliance on a wide variety of fish and game, continued

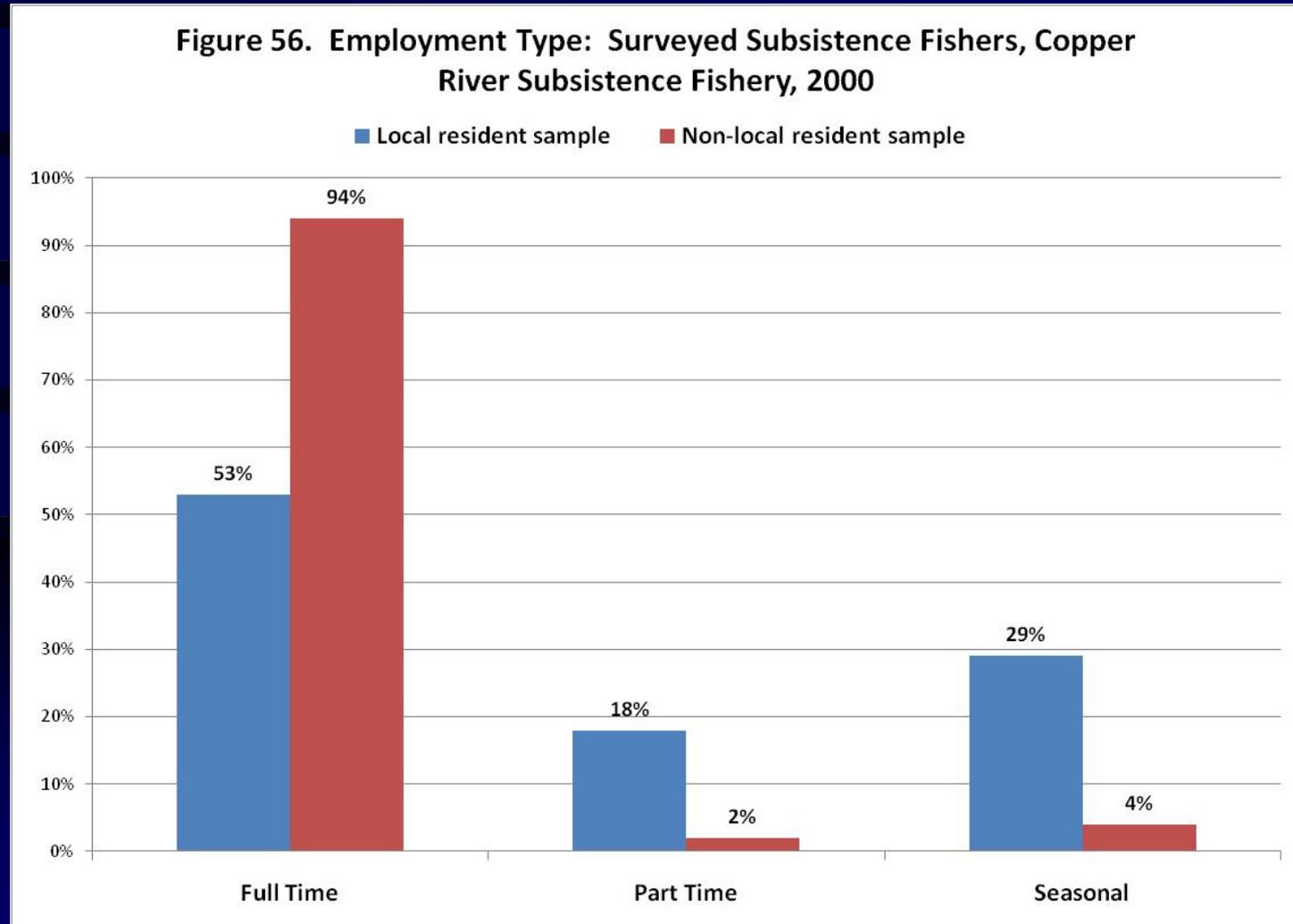
Figure 54. Employment Characteristics: Surveyed Subsistence Fishers, Copper River Subsistence Fishery, 2000



Criterion 8: Reliance on a wide variety of fish and game, continued

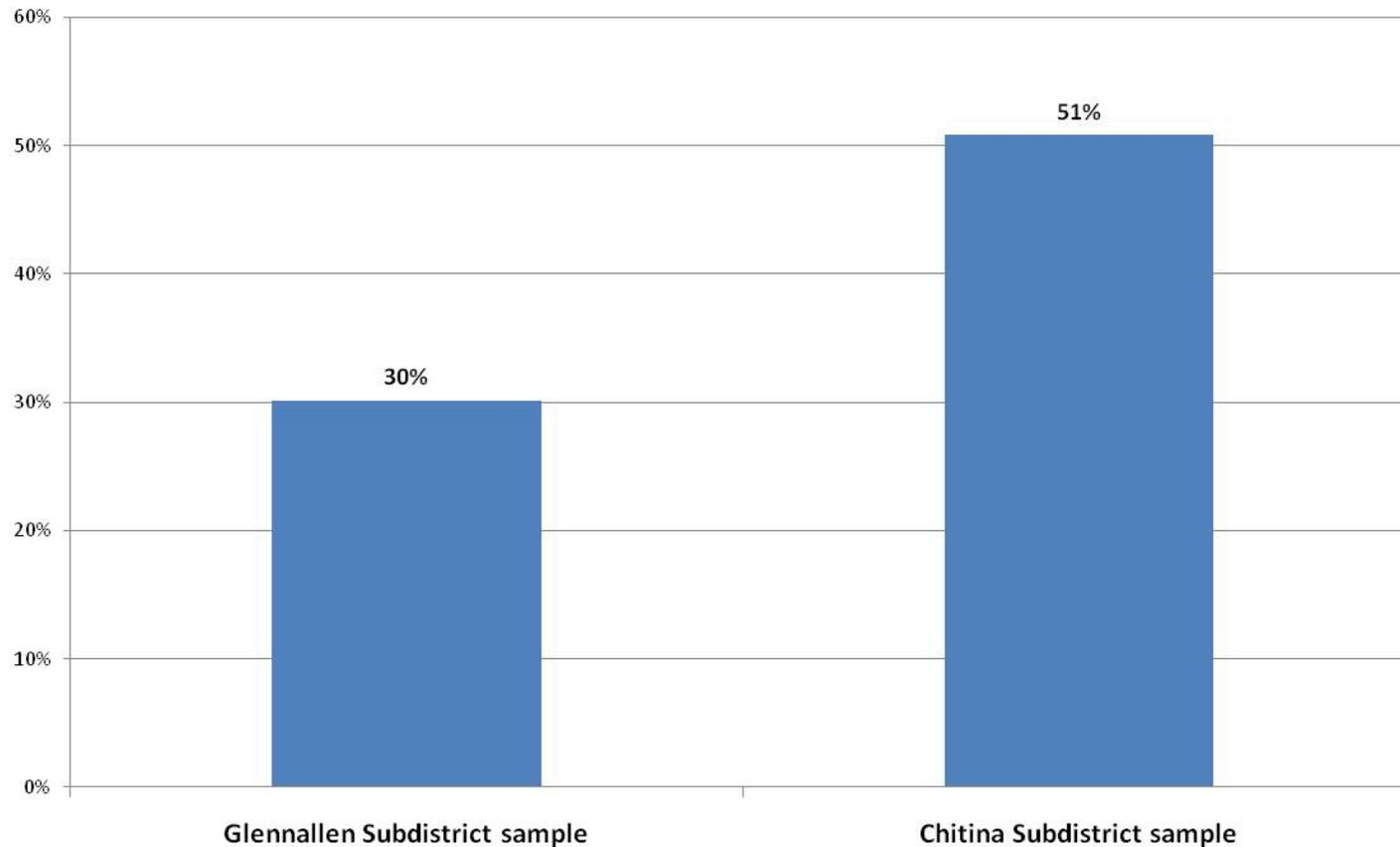


Criterion 8: Reliance on a wide variety of fish and game, continued



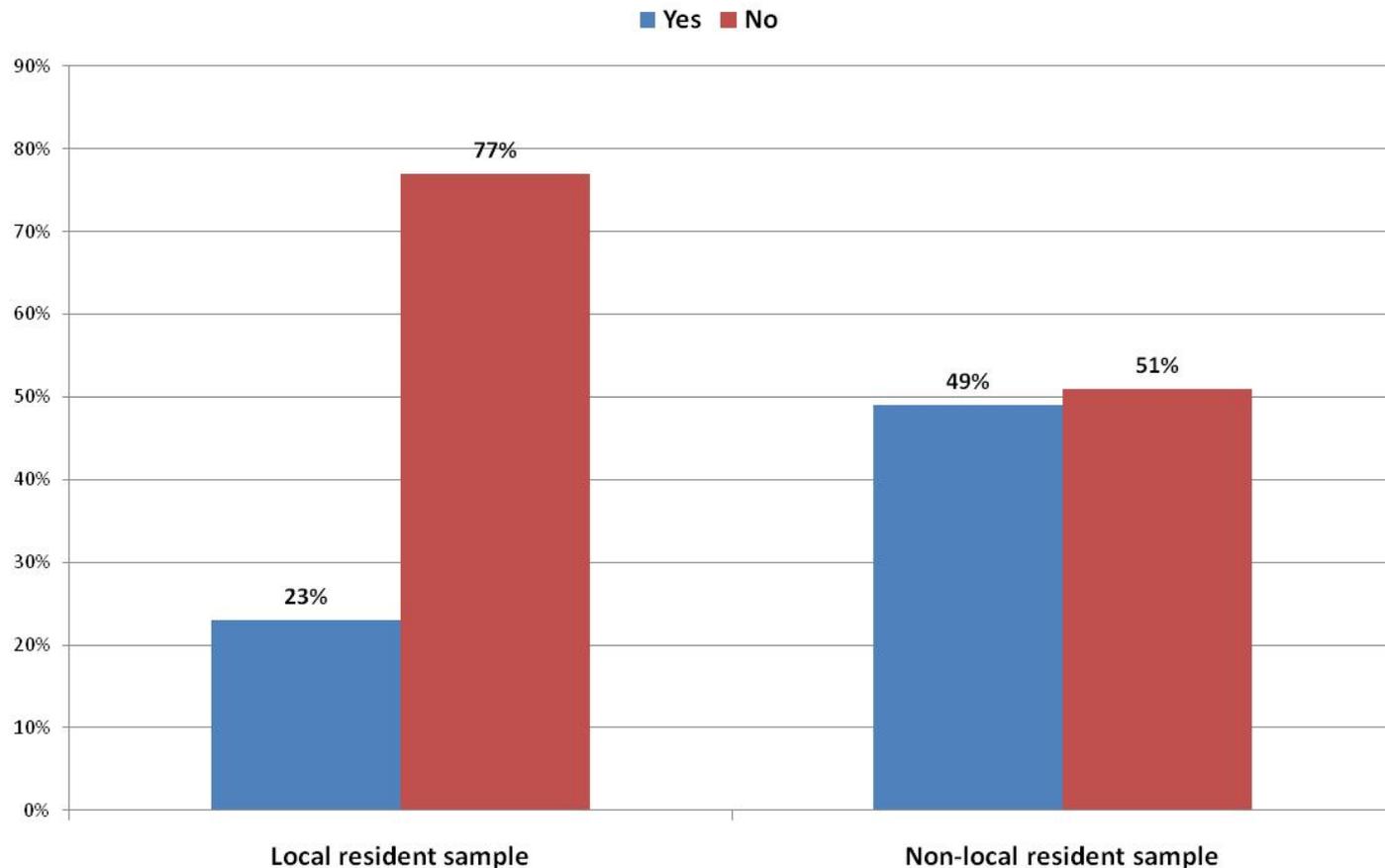
Criterion 8: Reliance on a wide variety of fish and game, continued

Figure 58. Did You Take Off from Work to Fish? Percentage Responding "Yes": Surveyed Subsistence Fishers, Copper River Subsistence Fishery, 2000



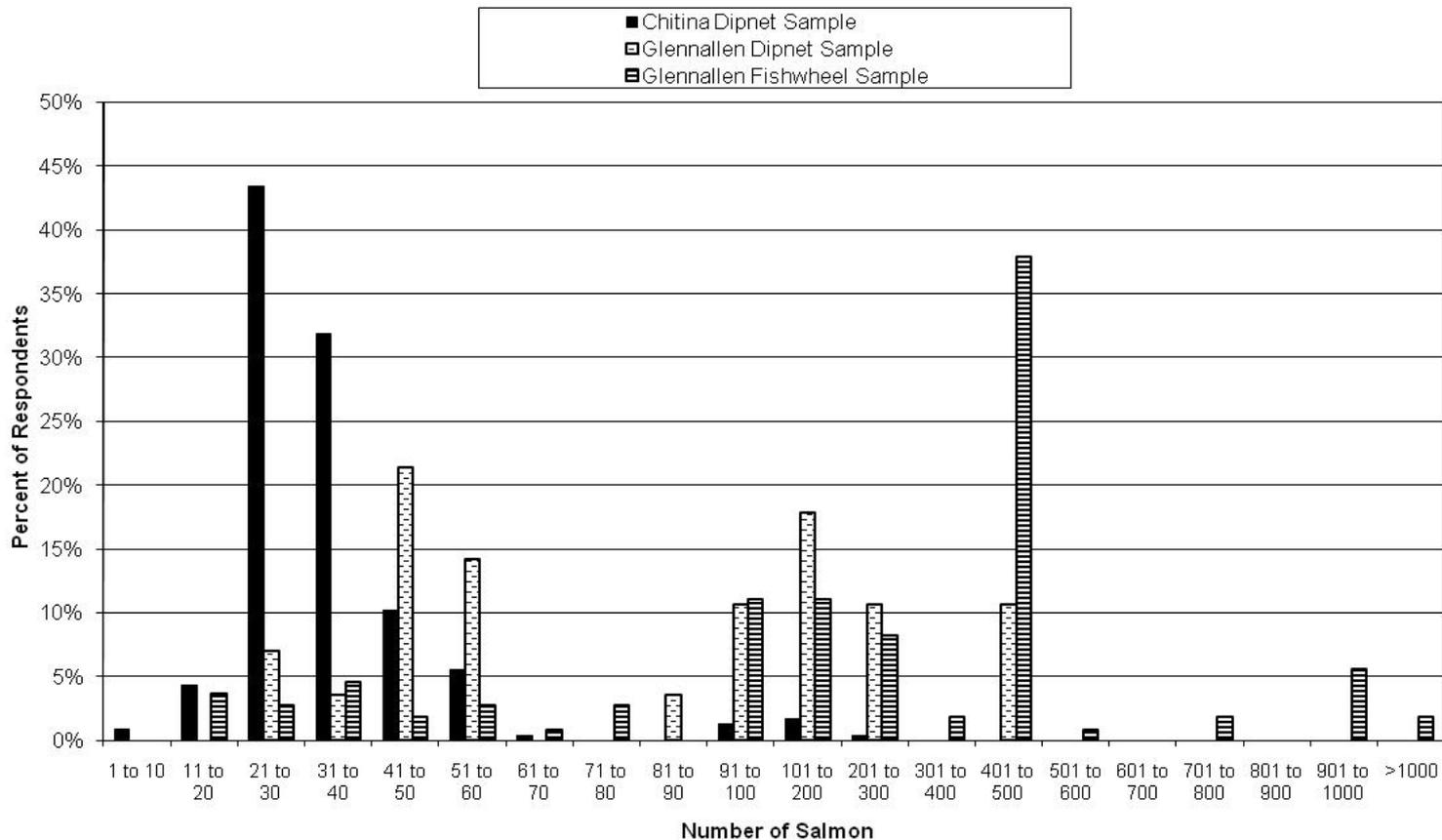
Criterion 8: Reliance on a wide variety of fish and game, continued

Figure 57. Did you take time off of work to fish? Surveyed subsistence fishers, Copper River subsistence fishery, 2000



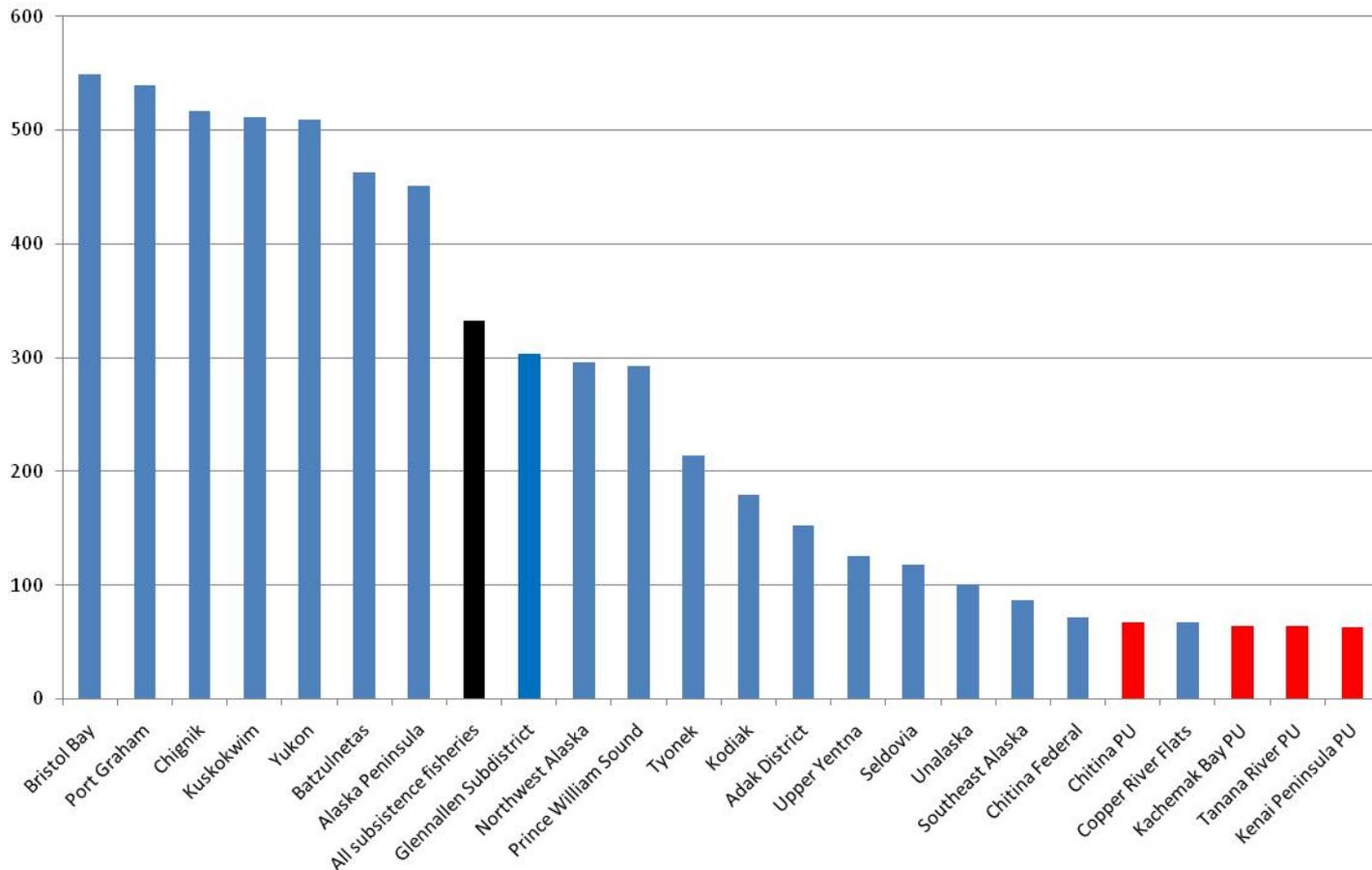
Criterion 8: Reliance on a wide variety of fish and game, continued

Figure 59. Answers to the Question: How Many Salmon Would You Like to Be Able to Harvest? By Subdistrict and Gear Type



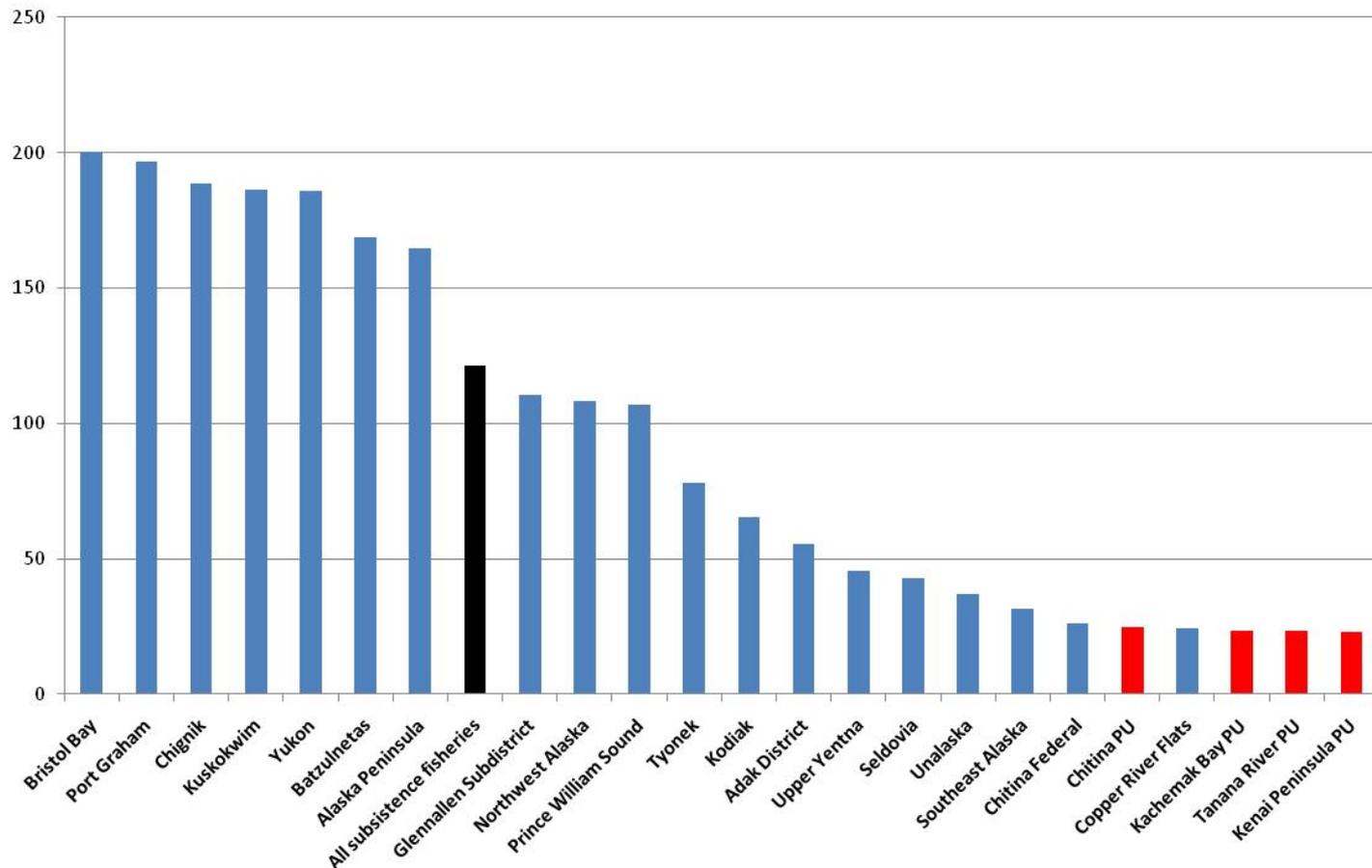
Criterion 8: Reliance on a wide variety of fish and game, continued

Figure 60. Average Harvest of Salmon, Pounds Dressed Weight per Permit, Alaska Subsistence and Personal Use Fisheries 1998 - 2007



Criterion 8: Reliance on a wide variety of fish and game, continued

Figure 61. Average pounds, dressed weight, harvested per capita per permit, Alaska subsistence and personal use salmon fisheries



Criterion 8: Reliance on a wide variety of fish and game, continued

Figure 62. Percentage of U.S. average per capita consumption of meat, fish, and poultry provided by salmon harvests in Alaska subsistence and personal use fisheries (1998 - 2007)

