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Prince William Sound Area Commercial Salmon Fisheries, 2011: a Report to the Alaska Board of Fisheries

by

Jeremy Botz

and

Thomas Sheridan

November 2011

Alaska Department of Fish and Game **Divisions of Sport Fish and Commercial Fisheries**

Symbols and Abbreviations

The following symbols and abbreviations, and others approved for the Système International d'Unités (SI), are used without definition in the following reports by the Divisions of Sport Fish and of Commercial Fisheries: Fishery Manuscripts, Fishery Data Series Reports, Fishery Management Reports, and Special Publications. All others, including deviations from definitions listed below, are noted in the text at first mention, as well as in the titles or footnotes of tables, and in figure or figure captions.

Weights and measures (metric)

centimeter	cm
deciliter	dL
gram	g
hectare	ha
kilogram	kg
kilometer	km
liter	L
meter	m
milliliter	mL
millimeter	mm

Weights and measures (English)

cubic feet per second	ft^3/s
foot	ft
gallon	gal
inch	in
mile	mi
nautical mile	nmi
ounce	oz
pound	lb
quart	qt
yard	yd

Time and temperature

day	d
degrees Celsius	°C
degrees Fahrenheit	°F
degrees kelvin	K
hour	h
minute	min
second	s

Physics and chemistry

all atomic symbols	
alternating current	AC
ampere	A
calorie	cal
direct current	DC
hertz	Hz
horsepower	hp
hydrogen ion activity (negative log of)	pH
parts per million	ppm
parts per thousand	ppt, ‰
volts	V
watts	W

General

Alaska Administrative Code	AAC
all commonly accepted abbreviations	e.g., Mr., Mrs., AM, PM, etc.
all commonly accepted professional titles	e.g., Dr., Ph.D., R.N., etc.
at	@
compass directions:	
east	E
north	N
south	S
west	W
copyright	©
corporate suffixes:	
Company	Co.
Corporation	Corp.
Incorporated	Inc.
Limited	Ltd.
District of Columbia	D.C.
et alii (and others)	et al.
et cetera (and so forth)	etc.
exempli gratia (for example)	e.g.
Federal Information Code	FIC
id est (that is)	i.e.
latitude or longitude	lat. or long.
monetary symbols (U.S.)	$, ¢
months (tables and figures): first three letters	Jan,...,Dec
registered trademark	®
trademark	™
United States (adjective)	U.S.
United States of America (noun)	USA
U.S.C.	United States Code
U.S. state	use two-letter abbreviations (e.g., AK, WA)

Mathematics, statistics

all standard mathematical signs, symbols and abbreviations	
alternate hypothesis	H_A
base of natural logarithm	*e*
catch per unit effort	CPUE
coefficient of variation	CV
common test statistics	(F, t, χ^2, etc.)
confidence interval	CI
correlation coefficient (multiple)	R
correlation coefficient (simple)	r
covariance	cov
degree (angular)	°
degrees of freedom	df
expected value	*E*
greater than	>
greater than or equal to	≥
harvest per unit effort	HPUE
less than	<
less than or equal to	≤
logarithm (natural)	ln
logarithm (base 10)	log
logarithm (specify base)	$\log_2$, etc.
minute (angular)	'
not significant	NS
null hypothesis	H_O
percent	%
probability	P
probability of a type I error (rejection of the null hypothesis when true)	α
probability of a type II error (acceptance of the null hypothesis when false)	β
second (angular)	"
standard deviation	SD
standard error	SE
variance	
population	Var
sample	var

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by
Jeremy Botz
and
Thomas Sheridan
Division of Commercial Fisheries, Cordova

Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Division of Sport Fish, Research and Technical Services
333 Raspberry Road, Anchorage, Alaska, 99518-1565

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Jeremy Botz and Thomas Sheridan
Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Commercial Fisheries,
P.O. Box 669 Cordova, AK 99574, USA

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF TABLES

Table **Page**

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure **Page**

ABSTRACT

The 2011 Prince William Sound Area commercial salmon harvest of 38.5 million fish is below the 10-year harvest average for this area. The harvest was made up of 32.8 million pink (*Oncorhynchus gorbuscha*), 3.5 million sockeye (*O. nerka*), 1.9 million chum (*O. keta*), 347,000 coho (*O. kisutch*), and 19,000 king salmon (*O. tshawytscha*). Approximately 18% (6.9 million fish) of the harvest was composed of hatchery cost recovery and broodstock fish. The majority, 81% (31.5 million fish), were harvested in the common property fishery. During the 2011 season, 513 drift gillnet permit holders, 29 set gillnet permit holders, and 183 purse seine permit holders reported deliveries.

Key words: Prince William Sound, salmon, harvest, drift gillnet, set gillnet, purse seine, common property fishery, hatchery, cost recovery.

INTRODUCTION

PRINCE WILLIAM SOUND SALMON FISHERIES

Management Area

The Prince William Sound (PWS) management area encompasses all coastal waters and inland drainages entering the north central Gulf of Alaska between Cape Suckling and Cape Fairfield. This area includes the Bering River, Copper River, and all of PWS with a total adjacent land area of approximately 38,000 square miles (Figure 1).

The salmon management area is divided into 11 districts that correspond to the local geography and distribution of the five species of salmon harvested by the commercial fishery. The management objective for all districts is achievement of escapement goals for the major salmon species while allowing for the orderly harvest of all fish surplus to spawning requirements and inriver goals. In addition, ADF&G follows regulatory plans to manage fisheries and assists private nonprofit (PNP) hatcheries in achieving cost recovery and broodstock objectives.

Six hatcheries contribute to the area's fisheries. Five are operated by the regional aquaculture association, Prince William Sound Aquaculture Corporation (PWSAC). Gulkana Hatchery in Paxson augments production of sockeye salmon *Oncorhynchus nerka* to the Copper River. Cannery Creek Hatchery (CCH), located on the north shore of the sound, and Armin F. Koernig (AFK) Hatchery in the southwestern sound produce pink salmon *O. gorbuscha*; Wally H. Noerenberg (WNH) Hatchery in the northwestern sound produces pink, chum *O. keta*; and coho *O. kisutch* salmon, and Main Bay Hatchery (MBH) in the western sound produces sockeye salmon. Valdez Fisheries Development Association (VFDA) operates Solomon Gulch Hatchery (SGH) in Port Valdez and produces pink and coho salmon.

Gear for the commercial salmon fishery includes purse seine, drift gillnet, and set gillnet. Drift gillnet permits are the most numerous and are allowed in the Bering River, Copper River, Coghill, Unakwik, and Eshamy Districts. Set gillnet gear is allowed only in the Eshamy District. Purse seine gear is allowed in the Eastern, Northern, Unakwik, Coghill, Northwestern, Southwestern, Montague, and Southeastern Districts.

As an avenue for the commercial fishing industry to formally provide management recommendations to ADF&G, representatives from area processing companies, gear groups, and aquaculture associations sit on an advisory body known as the PWS Salmon Harvest Task Force (SHTF).

Salmon Season Summary

The 2011 PWS commercial salmon harvest of 38.5 million fish is below the previous 10-year harvest average of 46.9 million (Tables 1–2; Figure 2). Harvest was comprised of 32.8 million pink, 3.5 million sockeye, 1.9 million chum, 347,000 coho, and 19,000 king salmon (*O. tshawytscha*) (Table 2). Approximately 18% (6.9 million fish) of the harvest was composed of hatchery cost recovery and broodstock fish. The majority, 81% (31.5 million fish), were harvested in the common property fishery. The educational permit, personal use, and donated fish categories accounted for <1% of the harvest. The preliminary estimated value of the combined 2011 commercial salmon harvest is $100 million, including hatchery sales (Table 3). During the 2011 season, 513 drift gillnet, 29 set gillnet, and 183 purse seine permit holders reported deliveries (Tables 3–5; Figure 3).

There are 8 proposals currently before the Alaska Board of Fisheries (board) that concern allocation in the general PWS area.

- #101–Seeks to revise the drift gillnet and purse seine allocation plan.
- #107–Seeks to give the drift gillnet group exclusive access to AFK chum salmon.
- #108–Seeks to reallocate chum salmon for the purse seine fleet in Port Chalmers.
- #109–Seeks to discontinue remote release of chum salmon at Port Chalmers and release them at Wally Noerenberg Hatchery.
- #111–Seeks to modify the cost-recovery salmon harvest in PWS.
- #112–Seeks to increase period of time used to calculate allocation in PWS.
- #114 and #115–Seek to reduce hatchery production of chum salmon in PWS.

There are 3 proposals currently before the board that concern drift gillnet in the general PWS area.

- #79–Seeks to ban use of deep gillnets in Montague District prior to Coghill, Eshamy, and Unakwik districts opening to deep gear.
- #80–Seeks to further define keg or buoy attachment.
- #81–Seeks to remove intent language and clarify anchoring and towing of drift gillnet gear.

There are 3 proposals currently before the board that concern fishing districts and closed water boundaries in the general PWS area.

- #89–Seeks to amend boundaries for the Northwest, Eshamy, and Coghill districts, and Esther Subdistrict.
- #93–Seeks to close designated areas to commercial fishing in PWS.
- #94–Seeks to correct geographic description of closed waters in PWS Area districts.

There is one proposal currently before the board that concerns the use of aircraft in the general PWS area.

- #113–Seeks to amend regulation of aircraft in PWS commercial fishery.

GILLNET FISHERIES

Coghill District

Coghill District is located in northwestern PWS and is approximately 45 miles in length. This district was created to manage harvests of pink, chum, and sockeye salmon returning to Port Wells and the Esther Island area. The majority of commercial fisheries in the Coghill District target wild sockeye salmon and hatchery salmon from the Wally Noerenberg Hatchery (WNH). The hatchery is located on Lake Bay at the southern end of Esther Island and was built by PWSAC in 1985. WNH annually produces chum (~3 million), pink (~9.5 million), and coho (~250,000) salmon.

The Coghill District is open for the harvest of chum, sockeye, pink, and coho salmon to drift gillnet permit holders and opens to purse seine permit holders beginning on July 21 and ending when the harvestable surplus is no longer pink salmon. The exception to this is described in the *Prince William Sound Management and Salmon Enhancement Allocation Plan* (5 AAC 24.370 (h)) as follows: Purse seine permit holders may operate in the Esther Subdistrict when the previous 5-year exvessel value of their harvest of common property enhanced stocks is 45% or less of the overall drift gillnet and purse seine harvests combined. During these seasons, the drift gillnet fleet will not have access to the Esther Subdistrict until July 21.

Preseason Outlook and Harvest Strategy

The 2011 preseason Coghill Lake sockeye salmon forecast was 170,000 fish. Allowing for the midpoint sustainable escapement goal (SEG) of 30,000 sockeye salmon would leave 140,000 fish for the commercial common property fishery (CPF) (Table 6). The enhanced chum salmon run to WNH was forecast to be 2.6 million fish (Table 6). PWSAC's projection for cost recovery and broodstock requirements was approximately 588,000 fish, leaving 2.0 million chum salmon for the CPF. PWSAC forecast a 9.5 million WNH pink salmon return (Table 6) and required 1.4 million cost recovery fish and 359,000 broodstock fish, leaving approximately 7.7 million fish for commercial harvest. An estimated 250,000 coho salmon were projected to return to WNH, and with 3,000 fish needed for broodstock, the remaining 247,000 fish would be available to the CPF (Table 6).

The 5-year rolling average allocation calculation used to guide 2011 fisheries management was 59% purse seine, 41% drift gillnet, and 4% set gillnet. As a result, the drift gillnet fleet had exclusive access to the Port Chalmers Subdistrict from June 1 to July 30 in 2011, and the set gillnet fleet was not limited to 36 hours per week after July 10, 2011.

PWSAC, in consultation with ADF&G, elected to initiate pink and chum salmon cost recovery harvest before allowing CPF openings in hatchery subdistricts and terminal areas. CPF openings in hatchery subdistricts and terminal areas during cost recovery were anticipated to occur every other day depending on run entry and cost recovery progress.

Season Summary

Early-season management of the Coghill District is largely based on Coghill Lake sockeye salmon escapement. The Coghill Lake weir was operated from June 7 to July 21. During that time, sockeye salmon escapement was 98,359 fish, more than double the upper SEG of 40,000 fish. The abundant escapement allowed for liberal management for much of the season.

The total drift gillnet Coghill District CPF was 198,000 sockeye, 1.1 million chum, 721,000 pink, and 79,000 coho salmon, with 357 permit holders reporting deliveries (Table 1). PWSAC reported a chum salmon hatchery harvest (cost recovery and broodstock) of 464,000 fish, and a pink salmon hatchery harvest (cost recovery and broodstock) of 2.3 million fish. In addition, PWSAC requires a broodstock of approximately 2,700 coho salmon.

The Coghill District drift gillnet fishery began on May 23 (Table 7). A general schedule of two openings, 36 to 80 hours in duration, per week was established. These coincided with openings in the Copper River and Eshamy districts. Beginning June 13, the western boundary used for the Coghill District was a line from Point Pigot to Point Pakenham, with the purpose of limiting harvest of wild chum salmon returning to the western side of Port Wells.

The WNH chum salmon run appeared strong in early June, but ended well below forecast. Chum salmon cost recovery at WNH began on June 4, and to accommodate timely cost recovery harvest, there was initially no commercial fishing within the Esther Subdistrict or WNH Terminal Harvest Area (THA) and Special Harvest Area (SHA). Initially, cost recovery fishing was heavily influenced by a strong return of age-5 chum salmon and by June 7, was 58% complete. CPF participation and harvest in general Coghill District waters remained steady and peaked during statistical week 24 with a harvest of 286,000 chum salmon (Table 7). On June 11, the Esther Subdistrict was opened to commercial fishing for 12 hours, with future fishing opportunities dependent on cost recovery progress. By June 13, PWSAC had completed 98% of its chum salmon cost recovery, but with indications of low age-4 chum salmon abundance, continued to recommend limited fishing time in the Esther Subdistrict. Beginning June 21, broodstock concerns at WNH prompted closure of Esther Subdistrict. The age-4 component of the run remained below anticipated levels for that date. Four fishing periods occurred in the Esther Subdistrict in June, for a total of 60 hours of drift gillnet fishing time.

Typically, the drift gillnet fleet targets WNH chum salmon in the early season and broadens its focus in late June to include MBH and Coghill Lake sockeye salmon. This season, a decrease in Coghill District participation could be attributed to the weak WNH age-4 chum salmon return and strong sockeye salmon runs to both MBH and Copper River District. Fishing time and area within general Coghill District waters (outside of hatchery subdistricts and terminal areas) remained liberal to allow the fleet to focus effort on Coghill Lake sockeye salmon. Beginning June 27, fishing time was increased in northern Port Wells and on July 2, Coghill River anadromous stream closures were suspended to provide more directed fishing opportunity on Coghill Lake sockeye salmon. Despite this additional fishing time and area between June 27 and July 21, fishing effort remained low, with a harvest of 32,000 wild sockeye salmon out of a district total harvest of 97,000 for this time period.

Fish passage at Coghill River weir was consistently greater than anticipated. Historically, Coghill Lake sockeye salmon have shown a steep run-timing curve that peaks on July 4; however, in 2011, there was an extended period of time, from June 26–July 19, when daily passage exceeded 3,000 fish. Preliminary contribution estimates indicate that 50,000 wild and 145,000 enhanced sockeye salmon were harvested in the Coghill District in 2011.

By regulation, on July 21, purse seine permit holders began fishing Coghill District. Harvests of sockeye and chum salmon diminished rapidly after statistical week 30, with pink salmon harvest increasing.

Coho salmon landings increased in mid-August and remained steady until mid-September when the fishery began to slow, with the last reported harvest from the period on September 21. On September 6, the harvest of pink salmon (1,300) fell below the harvest of coho salmon (3,100). Consequently, on September 8, Coghill District was closed to purse seine harvest for the remainder of the season. The peak harvest of coho salmon in Coghill District occurred during statistical week 36, with 29,000 fish landed (Table 7). The Coghill District closed to commercial fishing on October 9.

Preliminary contribution estimates show that wild sockeye, chum, and pink salmon harvest was 25.8%, 2.5%, and 7.9% of the respective district harvest totals for each species.

There are 6 proposals currently before the board that deal with issues specific to Coghill District.

- #88–Seeks to create a subdistrict in the Coghill District for commercial fishing.
- #91–Seeks to correct regulatory boundary descriptions in Coghill and Northwestern districts.
- #98–Seeks to make the Granite Bay Subdistrict a hatchery subdistrict.
- #104–Seeks to designate area in the Coghill District for drift gillnet and purse seine gear.
- #105–Seeks to remove the gillnet fleet from the Coghill District on established dates.
- #106–Seeks to redefine the Coghill District boundary and open the district on an alternating gear type basis.

Unakwik District

Preseason Outlook and Harvest Strategy

Unakwik District is located in northern PWS and is the smallest district in this management area. Both drift gillnet and purse seine gears are allowed during all fishing periods. This district was established for management of relatively small runs of sockeye salmon to Cowpen and Miners lakes. Escapement enumeration is by aerial survey; however, water clarity is marginal. A major pink salmon hatchery, CCH, lies near the southern boundary of the district.

Season Summary

The total 2011 Unakwik District harvest was 1,200 sockeye, 23 chum, and 1 pink salmon. The 2011 sockeye salmon harvest was below the previous 10-year average of 6,700. Peak sockeye salmon harvest occurred during statistical week 26 with a harvest of 800 fish. Participation in this fishery is directly related to fishing success elsewhere in PWS. Robust salmon returns to WNH, MBH, and the Copper River likely contributed to the low fishing effort in Unakwik District. The Unakwik District opened for the 2011 fishing season on June 13 and followed a schedule of two evenly-spaced periods per week, concurrent with other districts in PWS, until the district was closed for the season on July 22. There are currently no proposals before the board dealing explicitly with Unakwik District fisheries.

Eshamy District

The Eshamy District is located in western PWS and is 15 miles in length. Both drift and set gillnet gears are allowed to fish in this district during all periods, except as described in 5 AAC 24.370(f). This is the only district in PWS where set gillnet gear is allowed to operate.

This district was created to manage the gillnet harvest of sockeye salmon returning to Eshamy Lake. Main Bay Subdistrict of the Eshamy District was created when the MBH was built in 1981 by ADF&G. This subdistrict was established to allow permit holders to harvest enhanced sockeye salmon while minimizing the harvest of wild sockeye returning to Eshamy Lake. Eshamy Lake has a history of erratic runs, with the district remaining closed for 11 of the 22 years from 1961 to 1983 due to poor escapements. ADF&G has maintained a weir on the Eshamy River for over 50 years. From 1990 to present, the Main Bay Subdistrict has, at times, been the only area open in Eshamy District, due to weak wild sockeye salmon runs to Eshamy Lake.

Eshamy District is open to the 533 drift gillnet and 29 set gillnet permits in Area E. Set gillnet permit holders may operate up to 150 fathoms gear. Up to three set gillnets may be operated at one time by a permit holder, provided that a single set gillnet does not exceed 100 fathoms in aggregate length in the Eshamy general district and the MBH Subdistrict east of the THA. In the THA and Alternating Gear Zone (AGZ), no single set gillnet may exceed 50 fathoms. The seaward end of set gillnets must be marked with a red keg, buoy, or cluster of floats (5 AAC 39.280(b)). Set gillnet permit holders may hold an unlimited number of sites in the Eshamy District, with each site registered with the Alaska Department of Natural Resources. Each of these sites may be outfitted with buoys, anchors, and running lines that are in place throughout the season, with the exception of the AGZ in front of the MBH (5 AAC 24.367(d)(2)), where all nets, anchors, and associated equipment are required to be removed from the fishing grounds at the end of the fishing day for this gear type.

Set gillnets may not be operated within 100 fathoms of any part of another set gillnet, except in the THA of the MBH Subdistrict, where this distance is 50 fathoms, and in the AGZ, where set gillnets may be operated without regard to the proximity of other set gillnets.

Drift gillnets may not be operated in the Eshamy general district within 60 fathoms of a set gillnet, except in the zone outside of the offshore end of a set gillnet where the minimum distance is not specified. In the MBH Subdistrict, drift gillnets may not be operated within 25 fathoms of a set gillnet, except in the zone outside of the offshore end of the set gillnet where the minimum distance is not specified. The AGZ is only open to either set gillnet or drift gillnet gear at any one fishing period.

Fishing time in the Eshamy District is generally assigned equally to both gear types within a given fishing period with two exceptions.

- In the AGZ, which is located immediately offshore of the hatchery at the terminus of Main Bay, gear types are alternated between periods, with only one gear type having access to this area at a time.
- During years in which the set gillnet gear group catches 5% or more of the previous 5-year average exvessel value of the total common property fishery for enhanced salmon, then beginning on July 10, the set gillnet gear group will be limited to no more than 36 hours per week.

Preseason Outlook and Harvest Strategy

The 2011 preseason forecast of sockeye salmon returning to Eshamy Lake was 35,000 fish. Allowing for the midpoint biological escapement goal (BEG) of 20,500 would leave approximately 15,000 fish for the CPF (Table 6). PWSAC projected the total run of enhanced

sockeye salmon to MBH to be 935,000 fish. According to the *Prince William Sound Management and Salmon Enhancement Allocation Plan* (5AAC 24.370), the set gillnet gear group allocation is 4%, with a fishing time restriction imposed if they exceed 5% of the 5-year average value of PWSAC enhanced salmon stocks. The 2006–2010 5-year average value percentages for each gear type are 41% drift gillnet, 59% purse seine, and 4% set gillnet. Therefore, fishing time for the set gillnet group was not limited to 36 hours per week beginning July 10.

Season Summary

The total Eshamy District CPF was 1.2 million sockeye, 121,000 chum, 96,000 pink, and 7,000 coho salmon. The drift gillnet fleet (357 permit holders) accounted for 901,000 sockeye salmon and the set gillnet fleet (29 permit holders) harvested the remaining 311,000 (Table 1). PWSAC did not conduct cost recovery on MBH sockeye salmon and had a broodstock harvest of 8,900 fish.

Sockeye salmon began arriving at the MBH in late May and a schedule of two extended fishing periods per week was initiated beginning May 23 (Table 8). The entire Eshamy District was initially opened to commercial fishing to allow the fleet to focus on a strong run to MBH while run timing overlap with Eshamy River wild sockeye salmon was minimal. On Thursday, June 9, the southwestern boundary of the Eshamy District was modified to include waters within 1 nautical mile of the mainland shore along a line from the markers west of Granite Point (60° 24.94’ N., 147° 57.97’ W.) to Junction Island (60° 23.49’ N., 147° 59.52’ W.). This modified district boundary was intended to improve enforceability of the boundary line and to better match historical precedent in the fishery. On July 7, upon completion of the MBH broodstock harvest, the AGZ was opened to commercial fishing. In 2011, the set gillnet gear group fished the first period in the AGZ. While set gillnet participation remained steady for much of the season, drift gillnet participation fluctuated as permit holders moved among the Coghill, Montague, and Copper River districts.

The Eshamy River weir operated from July 10 to August 28. Passage of Eshamy River sockeye salmon was extremely slow throughout July with a cumulative total of only 194 fish passed on July 31 versus a minimum BEG of 3,063. Total escapement on August 28 was 23,129 sockeye salmon, exceeding the BEG midpoint and within the range. In addition, 2,879 pink, 35 chum, and 23 coho salmon were passed through Eshamy River weir.

The peak Eshamy District sockeye salmon harvest of 395,000 fish occurred during statistical week 26 (Table 8). As sockeye and chum salmon harvests decreased from July 4 to August 23, pink salmon harvest remained somewhat steady, with an average of 6,400 fish harvested per period (14 periods total). Fishing time and area remained liberal until July 14 when the fleet was moved north to Loomis Creek in an effort to limit Eshamy River sockeye salmon harvest. Additionally, in response to low escapement at Eshamy weir, the district was closed to commercial fishing during statistical week 33 (Table 8). Much needed rainfall to the area promoted fish passage beginning on August 3 and by mid-August, weir counts were within the BEG range. The fishery reopened in Eshamy Bay on August 15 to target Eshamy River wild sockeye and wild pink salmon surplus to escapement requirements. On August 19, over 6,000 fish were passed at the weir and, in an attempt to provide opportunity on surplus sockeye salmon, Eshamy Lagoon was opened to set and drift gillnet fishing for a 14-hour period on August 23. Harvested during this Eshamy Lagoon opening was 600 sockeye salmon.

Preliminary contribution estimates show that wild sockeye comprised 8% of the 1.2 million district harvest, wild chum comprised 13.2% of the 121,000 district harvest, and wild pink salmon comprised 74% of the 96,000 pink salmon harvested in Eshamy District.

There are 7 proposals currently before the board that deal with issues specifically related to Eshamy District.

- #77–Seeks to amend the regulation to allow use of two set gillnet permits in Eshamy District.
- #90–Seeks to correct regulatory boundary descriptions in Eshamy District.
- #96–Seeks to close commercial salmon fisheries in Main Bay, PWS to avoid the 4th of July.
- #97–Seeks to correct regulatory boundary descriptions in the AGZ.
- #100–Seeks to adopt closures for sockeye salmon in Eshamy Lagoon.
- #102 and #103–Seek to amend allocation plan for Eshamy District set gillnet group.

Port Chalmers Subdistrict (Montague District)

Preseason Outlook and Harvest Strategy

The Port Chalmers Subdistrict is located in the northern end of the Montague District. Since 1994, PWSAC has released chum salmon at this remote location. PWSAC forecast a run of 624,000 chum salmon to this subdistrict in 2011.

At the 2005 Alaska Board of Fisheries meeting, the *Prince William Sound Management and Allocation Plan (5AAC 24.370)* was amended to address imbalances in allocation and states when the drift gillnet gear group harvest value (of PWSAC enhanced sales) is 45% or less, then in the year following the current calculations, the drift gillnet gear group shall have exclusive access to the Port Chalmers Subdistrict to harvest enhanced salmon returns from June 1 through July 30, during fishing periods established by emergency order (EO).

Based on the allocation plan, the drift gillnet gear group had exclusive access to Port Chalmers from June 1 through July 30, 2011. Deep gillnets greater than 60 meshes in depth were permitted by EO in this subdistrict to maximize harvest efficiency of hatchery-produced chum salmon and minimize the possibility of these fish straying.

Season Summary

The total Port Chalmers Subdistrict harvest was 94,000 chum salmon, with 44 drift gillnet permit holders reporting deliveries. The 2011 chum salmon harvest was below the 5-year average of 667,000 fish. This low return may have been related to the difficulty PWSAC had in establishing net pens and transporting fish to Port Chalmers during the harsh winter of 2007. A total of 49,000 chum salmon (51.8%) were marked as having been released at Port Chalmers, and 42,000 (44%) were marked as WNH releases. The high contribution of WNH release marks is, in part, due to mixed marks in past releases. The remaining 7,000 (4%) were wild chum salmon. Port Chalmers Subdistrict was open 7 days per week, with short breaks to facilitate reporting. This schedule was maintained for the duration of the drift gillnet fishery in Port Chalmers Subdistrict. Harvest and effort peaked during statistical week 25 with 13,600 chum salmon harvested by 21 permit holders.

PURSE SEINE FISHERIES

Preseason Outlook and Harvest Strategy

The general purse seine districts include the Eastern, Northern, Unakwik, Coghill, Northwestern, Southwestern, Montague, and Southeastern Districts. The *PWS Management and Salmon Enhancement Allocation Plan* (5 AAC 24.370(e)) closes the Southwestern District prior to July 18. The plan also closes the Coghill District to purse seine gear prior to July 21, except under the *Wally Noerenberg Hatchery Management Plan* (5 AAC 24.368(f)), to prevent deterioration of fish quality of the harvestable surplus of chum salmon, or under the *PWS Management and Salmon Enhancement Allocation Plan* (5AAC 24.370(h)(1)) if the purse seine fleet caught 45% or less of the total commercial CPF exvessel value in the PWS area in the previous year. Beginning July 21, both purse seine and drift gillnet gear are allowed in Coghill District. Purse seine gear is allowed in Coghill District as long as the harvestable surplus is predominantly pink salmon. Fishing periods in all districts are established by EO.

The general purse seine districts are managed to achieve wild pink and chum salmon escapement goals soundwide and by district, and allow for the orderly harvest of surplus wild and hatchery stocks. Aerial survey pink and chum salmon escapement trends compared to average historical performance determine the duration and area of openings. Escapement of pink and chum salmon is monitored throughout the season by weekly aerial surveys of 208 index streams. Management to achieve hatchery broodstock and cost recovery goals is accomplished by opening and closing subdistricts near the hatcheries. Subdistrict openings are also utilized to target hatchery stocks when wild salmon escapement is below anticipated levels. The department may use the Salmon Harvest Task Force (SHTF) markers as a management tool for closing wild stock terminal areas when escapements are lower than expected; these markers may be employed as an intermediate step before areawide closures are used.

Inseason modifications to harvest projections, season opening dates, and strategies for weekly fishing periods occurred as fisheries developed. Hatchery annual management plans (AMP) were used to provide guidelines to the department in managing fisheries to achieve cost recovery and broodstock objectives.

The forecast CPF harvests by species are summarized in Table 6. The department forecasted wild fish runs and hatchery run projections were provided by PWSAC and VFDA. Run projections for species and districts without formal forecasts were based on average historical production. These projections provided the basis for early inseason management for all districts. Harvest projections for enhanced runs may change depending on the price per pound that VFDA and PWSAC receive for their cost recovery harvest.

On March 14, 2011, the PWSAC Board of Directors approved the annual corporate budget for Fiscal Year 2012. The overall pink salmon and chum salmon revenue goals were approximately $6.0 and $2.0 million, respectively.

The 2011 pink salmon forecast for PWS was 46.9 million fish. This estimate included 5.6 million wild stock, 15.5 million VFDA, and 25.8 million PWSAC pink salmon. The basis for the hatchery forecast was the release of approximately 647 million pink salmon fry in 2010. Approximately 4.5 million pink salmon (17%) of the projected 25.8 million pink salmon returning to PWSAC hatcheries were estimated for cost recovery and broodstock. The remaining 21.3 million PWSAC fish would be available for CPF. Approximately 4.8 million pink salmon

(31%) of the projected 15.5 million pink salmon returning to SGH were estimated for cost recovery and broodstock. The remaining 10.7 million VFDA fish would be available for the CPF. A total of 3.6 million wild pink salmon would be available for harvest after an escapement of 2.0 million fish (Table 6).

The 2011 chum salmon forecast total run in PWS was 3.5 million fish. The majority (90%) of the run was anticipated to be PWSAC hatchery production. PWSAC forecasted a run of 2.6 million chum salmon to WNH, of which 588,000 (22% of the WNH return) would be needed for cost recovery and broodstock. The remaining 2.0 million chum salmon would be available for the CPF. PWSAC also forecasted enhanced chum salmon runs of 624,000 to Port Chalmers and 280,000 to AFK. All Port Chalmers chum salmon were intended for harvest by the drift gillnet fleet and AFK chum salmon were intended for harvest by the purse seine fleet. Based on the department's wild chum salmon forecast of 400,000 fish, there was a potential CPF of 200,000 wild chum salmon (Table 6).

Both VFDA and PWSAC expected moderate returns of coho salmon in 2011. PWSAC's expected 2011 return of coho salmon was 269,000 fish (250,000 fish to WNH and 19,000 fish to remote release sites). Approximately 2,700 fish were projected for broodstock at WNH, leaving 266,000 fish for CPF harvest. The 2011 return of coho salmon to SGH was anticipated to be 95,000 fish. A total of 1,000 coho salmon would be needed for VFDA broodstock. Port Valdez would be closed to purse seine fishing north of a line from Entrance Point to Potato Point beginning on August 15. Port Valdez would open to purse seine fishing on September 6 (day after Labor Day) to target surplus VFDA-produced coho salmon.

There are 8 proposals currently before the board that are specific to purse seine fisheries in the PWS area.

- #78–Seeks to amend gear restrictions in PWS salmon purse seine fishery.
- #82–Seeks to revise purse seine mesh restrictions for commercial seining in PWS.
- #83–Seeks to allow a purse seine chafing and border strip for the PWS salmon purse seine fishery.
- #84–Seeks to amend gear restrictions for PWS salmon purse seine fishery.
- #85–Seeks to reduce gear limits for PWS salmon purse seine fishery.
- #86–Seeks to revise lead mesh size for commercial seining in PWS.
- #87–Seeks to revise lead mesh size for PWS salmon purse seine fishery.
- #92–Seeks to revise season description for the purse seine fishery in the Eastern, Northern, Northwestern, Southwestern, Montague, and Southeastern districts.

Chum Salmon Season Summary

The 2011 AFK enhanced chum salmon run of 60,000 fish was below PWSAC's preseason forecast of 280,000 fish. The 2011 total purse seine CPF harvest of 67,000 chum salmon in the Southwestern District was composed of approximately 92% hatchery and 8% wild fish. The PWS 2011 chum salmon CPF harvest (all gear) of 1.4 million fish was approximately 92% hatchery and 8% wild fish. Of the total PWS chum salmon harvest, the purse seine fleet accounted for

110,000 fish (Table 1). PWSAC met its 2011 chum salmon cost recovery and broodstock needs at WNH with a harvest of approximately 464,000 enhanced chum salmon.

Aerial surveys to assess wild chum salmon escapements in the Eastern and Northern districts began in mid-June. Surveys in all other purse seine districts started in early July. As in previous years, high pink salmon densities during aerial surveys made accurate chum salmon counting difficult. Aerial estimates of chum salmon escapement often differed from foot survey counts in situations where chum salmon mixed in with large numbers of pink salmon. Inseason wild chum salmon aerial survey escapement estimates were below cumulative anticipated levels in all but the Coghill and Northwestern districts.

Pink Salmon Season Summary

The 2011 CPF harvest of 26.4 million pink salmon, composed of approximately 82% hatchery and 18% wild fish, was the 12th largest PWS pink salmon harvest since 1971. Total pink salmon harvest for 2011 was 32.8 million fish, including 6.4 million (4.1 million for PWSAC and 2.3 million for VFDA) fish for hatchery cost recovery and broodstock. Enhanced pink salmon contributions by aquaculture associations to total harvest were 45% VFDA and 38% PWSAC. VFDA cost recovery and broodstock harvest represented approximately 20% of the total pink salmon return to Solomon Gulch Hatchery (SGH). PWSAC cost recovery and broodstock harvest was approximately 45% of the total pink salmon return to PWSAC hatcheries.

Inseason pink salmon aerial survey escapement estimates remained above minimum anticipated escapement thresholds in all districts for much of the season, which allowed for targeted fishing effort on wild pink salmon. The area-under-the-curve estimate of pink salmon escapement used for direct comparison with the SEG range is not yet available, but considering that inseason pink salmon escapement indices were above anticipated aerial survey counts, overall escapement was likely within the odd-year SEG range of 1.25–2.75 million pink salmon. The preliminary PWS wild stock pink salmon harvest of 6.3 million fish was the 16th largest wild stock harvest since 1960; average annual harvest over this same period was 5.4 million fish.

Eastern District

The VFDA 2011 SGH pink salmon forecast was 15.5 million fish, assuming a 6.72% marine survival from the 2010 fry release of 223.1 million fry. VFDA anticipated 346,000 pink salmon for broodstock and 4.4 million pink salmon for cost recovery, leaving 10.7 million pink salmon for CPF.

There were a total of 39 CPF fishing periods in 2011, with 179 purse seine permit holders reporting deliveries (Table 1). The Eastern District harvest of 13.1 million pink salmon was composed of 82% VFDA fish, 18% wild fish, and 0.5% PWSAC pink salmon. The preliminary PWS total harvest estimate of 13.3 million VFDA-enhanced pink salmon was 14% below the preseason forecast (15.5 million fish), and was composed of 11.0 million CPF harvest and 2.3 million cost recovery harvest. The VFDA cost recovery harvest contribution estimates indicate that 95% of the overall cost recovery harvest was SGH fish, and the remaining 5% were wild fish. Additionally, preliminary contribution estimates indicate that VFDA pink salmon were harvested in the CPF outside of the Eastern District, including 63,000 fish harvested in the Southwestern District, 32,000 fish harvested in the Northern District, and 7,000 fish harvested in the Coghill District. The 2011 Eastern District harvest by species was 13.1 million pink, 27,000 chum, 7,000 sockeye, 32,000 coho, and 29 king salmon (Table 1).

ADF&G first observed pink and chum salmon returning to streams in the Eastern District in late-June. Eastern District CPF periods were scheduled concurrently with Southeastern and Northern district openings in an effort to provide wild pink and chum salmon harvest opportunity during early run entry. VFDA cost recovery started on June 26 and was 30% complete by June 30. Cost recovery harvests were conducted throughout Port Valdez. VFDA requested, as a prerequisite to initiating CPF harvest, cost recovery beyond the typical 30% trigger due to lower than expected daily harvest rates. The CPF in Port Valdez and a portion of Valdez Arm opened on July 3 with 62% of cost recovery completed.

The 14-hour CPF on July 3 resulted in a harvest of 2.5 million pink salmon. Harvests remained strong with a daily average of 1.3 million pink salmon during the 7 fishing periods between July 3 and July 13. In July, the Eastern District was open every other day for the first 6 periods and then shifted to every day fishing on July 13 and July 14. Commercial fishing opportunity was decreased in Port Valdez from July 14–21 to aid hatchery broodstock collection. Wild pink salmon escapement indices supported expanded fishing area in the Eastern District beginning on July 17 and continued for much of the season. The Eastern District had a total harvest of 11.8 million pink salmon from July 1–21. The preliminary wild pink salmon harvest estimate in the Eastern District for July was approximately 1.5 million fish.

Favorable weather conditions in 2011 allowed for frequent and timely aerial surveys to monitor wild pink and chum salmon escapements in the Eastern District. Aerial surveys throughout the season indicated cumulative wild chum salmon escapement estimates were below anticipated counts in the Eastern District, leading to the closure of some areas in the district, and consideration when providing opportunity on surplus wild pink salmon. The last aerial survey of the Eastern District was flown on September 25.

Port Valdez was closed to the commercial CPF north of a line from Entrance Point to Potato Point beginning July 29. Port Valdez and a portion of Valdez Arm opened September 6 to target surplus VFDA coho salmon. The purse seine fleet harvested approximately 32,000 coho salmon in the Eastern District in 2011, the majority of which are assumed to be SGH-enhanced coho salmon. VFDA expressed concern that allowing the fleet into Port Valdez near the hatchery could jeopardize coho salmon broodstock collection. Accordingly, the department provided a closed area buffer around the hatchery to protect coho broodstock. A total of 37,000 coho salmon were harvested by VFDA through October 10, and it was expected that another 1,000 fish would be utilized for broodstock.

Of the 27,000 chum salmon harvested in the Eastern District, 90% were of hatchery origin and 10% were wild. The peak harvest of 4,000 chum salmon occurred on July 29 during a 14-hour period.

There is 1 proposal currently before the board that deals with issues specifically related to Eastern District.

- #95–Seeks to expand closed waters in Sheep Bay of the Eastern District.

Northern District

The 2011 PWSAC forecast for pink salmon returning to CCH was 7.1 million fish. The Northern District CPF harvest of 2.6 million pink salmon was composed of 67% CCH, 18% wild, 13% WNH, 1% SGH, and 0.8% AFK pink salmon. PWSAC harvested 883,000 pink salmon for cost recovery, raceway sales, and broodstock in the Northern District. Due to weak

enhanced returns and concerns for broodstock collection, the CCH THA, SHA, and portions of the Cannery Creek Subdistrict were closed to commercial fishing for much of the season. The broodstock harvest of approximately 283,000 fish was 20% below the broodstock goal of 357,000 fish, although pink salmon egg-take goals were met at CCH in 2011. Northern District wild pink and chum salmon aerial escapement indices were above cumulative anticipated levels for most of the season.

The less than anticipated hatchery pink salmon return resulted in fishing periods every other day outside of the CCH SHA and THA. Strong wild pink salmon escapement allowed for expanded fishing area in the Northern District, with some minor area restrictions as conditions warranted. This strategy allowed for adequate broodstock collection at CCH while providing opportunity to harvest surplus wild pink salmon and target hatchery fish passing through the Northern District on their way to CCH and WNH.

The 2011 Northern District CPF harvest was composed of 2.6 million pink, 3,000 chum, 3,000 sockeye, 2,000 coho, and 8 king salmon, with 136 purse seine permit holders reporting deliveries (Table 1). In 2011, the Northern District was open for thirty-three 14-hour CPF periods between August 4 and September 1, with a total of 509 landings. During that period, 100% of the 2.6 million CPF pink salmon harvest occurred with a maximum single-period harvest of 443,000 fish on August 6.

Coghill District

PWSAC's 2011 forecast for pink salmon returning to WNH was 9.5 million fish. PWSAC required an estimated 14% of that run with 283,000 fish for broodstock and 1.1 million fish for cost recovery, leaving 8.1 million fish for the CPF. Pink salmon run entry was late with early-season harvest rates less than anticipated. The management strategy in the Coghill District directed effort away from hatchery fish, initially, by expanding area as wild stock escapement in Port Wells and the Northwestern districts allowed through August. Because of slow cost recovery progress, CPF fishing in the Esther Subdistrict did not begin until August 12, and subsequent openings were provided every other day to allow for hatchery escapement until August 26. The Coghill District wild pink and chum salmon aerial escapement indices were above cumulative anticipated levels for most of the season.

Purse seine fishing was permitted for 27 periods between July 21 and September 7. The 2011 Coghill District purse seine CPF harvest was composed of 1.7 million pink, 200 chum, 800 sockeye, 17,000 coho, and 4 king salmon, with 73 purse seine permit holders reporting deliveries (Table 1). The 1.7 million pink salmon CPF harvest was composed of 8% wild stock, 78% WNH, 13% CCH, 1% AFK, and <1% SGH fish. Pink salmon cost recovery harvests at WNH began on July 26 and continued through August 12. PWSAC harvested approximately 2.3 million pink salmon for cost recovery at WNH, exceeding its pink salmon cost recovery goal of 1.1 million, in part, to make up for a cost recovery shortfall at CCH. The WNH cost recovery harvest contribution estimates are 99% WNH and 1% wild. The broodstock harvest of approximately 242,000 pink salmon was 14% below the broodstock goal of 283,000 fish, although pink salmon egg-take goals were met. Additional information, including the preseason outlook, harvest strategy, and results, is detailed in the Coghill District gillnet section of this report.

Northwestern District

A total of 23 Northwestern District CPF periods were scheduled from early August to late September as escapement indices and fishing effort allowed. The Northwestern District CPF periods were scheduled concurrently with Northern, Coghill, and Southwestern district openings in order to disperse effort and provide harvest opportunity on specific wild chum and pink salmon stocks. The 2011 Northwestern District harvest by species was 255,000 pink, 1,000 chum, 2,000 sockeye, and 400 coho salmon (Table 1). The Northwestern District CPF harvest of 255,000 pink salmon was composed of 8% wild, 78% WNH, 13% CCH, 1% AFK, and <1% SGH fish.

Northwestern District wild stock pink and chum salmon aerial survey escapement indices remained above the cumulative anticipated escapement for much of the season.

Southwestern District

The 2011 Southwestern District CPF harvest was composed of 6.7 million pink, 67,000 chum, 48,000 sockeye, and 27,000 coho salmon, with 121 purse seine permit holder reporting deliveries (Table 1). There were 43 CPF periods in the Southwestern District. Fishing to target remote-release chum salmon at the AFK Hatchery THA and SHA started on May 26, with a regular schedule of 60- and 84-hour periods in the THA and SHA until July 20. PWSAC did not harvest any AFK enhanced chum salmon for cost recovery. Of the 67,000 chum salmon harvested in the AFK THA and SHA, 73% were WNH, 17% were AFK, 2% were Port Chalmers-marked fish, and 8% were wild fish. However the marks are not informative because marks were released at multiple locations.

The preliminary AFK enhanced pink salmon return estimate of 3.2 million fish was 34% of PWSAC's preseason 9.2 million fish projection. The cost recovery harvest of 1.1 million pink salmon met the cost recovery goal of 1.0 million fish. The broodstock harvest of 211,000 fish was under the broodstock goal of 309,000 fish by 32%, although pink salmon egg-take goals were met at AFK in 2011. The AFK cost recovery harvest contribution estimates indicate that 97% of pink salmon originating from AFK, 1% was wild fish, and the remaining 2% consisted of pink salmon originating from SGH, CCH, and WNH. Run entry at AFK was slow, with a daily average of 39,000 pink salmon harvested for cost recovery from July 26 to August 3. The pink salmon CPF did not start until August 6 because of the slow pace of cost recovery. The total Southwestern District pink salmon CPF harvest of 6.7 million fish was composed of 28% WNH, 26% AFK, 24% CCH, 22% wild stock, and <1% SGH fish.

Pink salmon harvest management was based on aerial survey escapement data, test fishing in the Southwestern District, harvest rates, and AFK terminal area run entry. Southwestern District wild stock pink and chum salmon aerial survey escapement indices remained above the cumulative anticipated escapement for much of the season.

There are 2 proposals currently before the board that deal with issues specifically related to Southwestern District.

- #99–Seeks to change the south end marker in the Armin F. Koernig Hatchery Terminal Harvest Area.
- #110–Seeks to eliminate the mandatory closure prior to July 18 and amend fishing time and area provisions for the Southwestern District.

Montague District

The 2011 Montague District purse seine harvest was composed of 775,000 pink, 500 chum, 1,000 coho, 600 sockeye, and 1 king salmon, with 56 purse seine permit holders reporting deliveries (Table 1). Purse seine fishing was permitted for 21 CPF periods between August 8 and September 20. The Montague District wild stock pink and chum salmon cumulative aerial escapement indices were above anticipated levels for most of the season.

Southeastern District

The 2011 Southeastern District harvest was composed of 477,000 pink, 11,000 chum, 1,000 coho, 2,000 sockeye, and 26 king salmon, with 56 purse seine permit holders reporting deliveries (Table 1). There were 28 CPF periods in the Southeastern District. The Southeastern District wild pink and chum salmon cumulative aerial escapement indices were above anticipated levels for most of the season.

TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1.–Prince William Sound Management Area commercial salmon harvest by gear type and district, 2011.

District	Permits	King	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
Eastern	179	29	7,265	31,681	13,062,437	27,377	13,128,789
Northern	136	8	2,706	2,489	2,602,142	2,612	2,609,957
Coghill	73	4	843	16,565	1,690,707	166	1,708,285
Northwestern	-	0	1,556	400	255,328	1,026	258,310
Southwestern	121	44	48,358	26,948	6,670,411	67,304	6,813,065
Montague	56	1	639	1,388	775,473	545	778,046
Southeastern	56	26	1,974	1,263	476,606	11,235	491,104
Unakwik	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Purse Seine	183	112	63,341	80,734	25,533,104	110,265	25,787,556
Bering River	33	1	6	19,956	8	0	19,971
Copper River	485	18,407	2,023,762	120,312	24,475	11,677	2,198,633
Coghill	357	219	198,184	79,412	721,332	1,092,410	2,091,557
Eshamy	346	129	901,465	6,144	78,478	95,991	1,082,207
Montague	44	73	1,087	493	4,248	93,835	99,736
Unakwik	-	0	1,224	0	1	23	1,248
Drift Gillnet	513	18,829	3,125,728	226,317	828,542	1,293,936	5,493,352
Eshamy	29	37	310,661	602	17,453	25,316	354,069
Set Gillnet	29	37	310,661	602	17,453	25,316	354,069
Solomon Gulch	1	0	0	36,994	2,318,204	8,115	2,363,313
Cannery Creek	1	0	0	0	600,009	0	600,009
Wally Noerenberg	1	0	0	2,274	2,311,843	463,836	2,777,953
Main Bay	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Armin F. Koernig	1	0	0	0	1,141,169	0	1,141,169
Hatchery [a]		0	0	39,268	6,371,225	471,951	6,882,444
Educational Permit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Personal Use	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Donated Fish	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Misc total		-	-	-	-	-	-
Prince William Sound Total		18,978	3,499,730	346,921	32,750,324	1,901,468	38,517,421

[a] Hatchery sales for hatchery operating costs.

Table 2.–Total commercial salmon harvest by species from all gear types, Prince William Sound, 1980–2011.

	Harvest					
Year [a]	King	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Total
1980	8,643	208,724	337,123	14,161,023	482,214	15,197,727
1981	20,782	784,469	396,163	20,558,304	1,888,822	23,648,540
1982	47,871	2,362,328	623,877	20,403,423	1,336,878	24,774,377
1983	53,879	908,469	365,469	13,977,116	1,048,737	16,353,670
1984	39,774	1,303,515	609,484	22,119,309	1,229,185	25,301,267
1985	43,735	1,464,563	1,025,046	25,252,924	1,321,538	29,107,806
1986	42,128	1,288,712	426,240	11,410,302	1,700,906	14,868,288
1987	41,909	1,737,989	175,214	29,230,303	1,919,415	33,104,830
1988	31,797	767,674	477,816	11,820,121	1,843,317	14,940,725
1989	32,006	1,175,238	424,980	21,886,466	1,001,809	24,520,499
1990	22,163	911,607	524,274	44,165,077	967,384	46,590,505
1991	35,355	1,734,544	641,854	37,135,561	352,321	39,899,635
1992	41,306	1,771,612	619,460	8,637,116	334,376	11,403,870
1993	32,005	1,851,133	445,612	5,761,097	1,186,365	9,276,212
1994	48,558	1,514,329	1,058,154	36,886,301	1,058,213	40,565,555
1995	67,083	1,523,464	992,798	16,221,493	864,245	19,669,083
1996	56,457	3,000,602	459,253	26,042,942	2,103,559	31,662,813
1997	52,482	4,163,074	83,113	25,836,563	2,227,190	32,362,422
1998	70,910	1,715,778	194,621	28,685,115	1,271,911	31,938,335
1999	63,434	2,035,293	244,754	45,003,656	2,989,255	50,336,392
2000	32,411	1,430,838	714,286	38,885,528	5,163,760	46,226,823
2001	40,461	2,261,097	494,135	35,246,524	3,099,794	41,142,011
2002	39,706	2,262,134	650,331	18,950,931	6,373,491	28,276,593
2003	49,227	2,838,679	502,135	51,136,305	3,779,657	58,306,003
2004	39,142	1,892,525	619,884	23,531,483	2,001,918	28,084,952
2005	36,118	1,988,771	536,675	59,896,419	1,996,956	64,446,609
2006	31,634	2,524,496	761,044	21,673,378	2,181,482	27,172,034
2007	41,149	3,231,202	328,980	63,464,830	3,579,068	70,645,229
2008	12,454	1,301,067	550,629	42,353,653	5,075,195	49,292,998
2009	10,802	1,919,240	300,615	18,581,891	3,220,841	24,033,389
2010	10,996	2,045,135	334,789	71,309,596	4,323,156	78,023,672
10-Year Average	**31,169**	**2,226,435**	**507,922**	**40,614,501**	**3,563,156**	**46,942,349**
2011	18,978	3,499,730	346,921	32,750,324	1,901,468	38,517,421

[a] Includes commercial common property, hatchery sales, and test fisheries harvest, personal use, educational special use permit harvest, and donated fish, 1980–2010. Includes commercial common property and hatchery sales harvest in 2011.

Table 3.–Mean price and estimated exvessel value of the total commercial salmon harvest by gear type, Prince William Sound, 2011.

PURSE SEINE Species	Number	Pounds [a]	Average Weight	Price/lb [a]	Value[a]
King	112	2,022	18.05	$1.44	$2,905
Sockeye	63,341	381,603	6.02	$1.45	$554,932
Coho	80,734	562,331	6.97	$0.82	$459,035
Pink	25,533,104	79,148,771	3.10	$0.42	$33,495,125
Chum	110,265	798,250	7.24	$0.82	$655,503
	25,787,556	80,892,977			$35,167,500
DRIFT GILLNET Species	Number	Pounds	Average Weight	Price	Value
King	18,829	375,247	19.93	$5.37	$2,014,540
Sockeye	3,125,728	19,115,801	6.12	1.79	$34,131,844
Coho	226,317	1,657,572	7.32	$1.04	$1,728,704
Pink	828,542	2,584,658	3.12	0.36	$929,790
Chum	1,293,936	9,579,520	7.40	$0.88	$8,401,181
	5,493,352	33,312,798			$47,206,058
SET GILLNET Species	Number	Pounds	Average Weight	Price	Value
King	37	653	17.65	$2.81	$1,832
Sockeye	310,661	1,937,894	6.24	$1.46	$2,822,121
Coho	602	3,899	6.48	$0.77	$3,011
Pink	17,453	60,182	3.45	$0.31	$18,537
Chum	25,316	186,717	7.38	$0.87	$163,080
	354,069	2,189,345			$3,008,580
HATCHERY SALES [b] Species	Number	Pounds	Average Weight	Price	Value
King	0	0		$0.00	$0
Sockeye	0	0		$0.00	$0
Coho	39,268	268,994	6.85	$0.52	$140,346
Pink	6,371,225	17,675,753	2.77	$0.67	$11,837,609
Chum	471,951	3,504,010	8.05	$0.78	$2,743,512
	6,882,444	21,448,757			$14,721,467
OTHER GEAR Species	Number	Pounds	Average Weight	Price	Value
King	0	0	0	$0	$0
Sockeye	0	0	0	$0	$0
Coho	0	0	0	$0	$0
Pink	0	0	0	$0	$0
Chum	0	0	0	$0	$0
	0	0	0	$0	$0

Gear Type	Value of Catch	No. of Permits	Average Earnings
Purse Seine	$35,167,500	183	$192,172
Drift Gillnet	$47,206,058	513	$92,020
Set Gillnet	$3,008,580	29	$103,744
Subtotal- Value of CPF Catch	$85,382,139		
Hatchery	$14,721,467		
Other Gear	$0		
GRAND TOTAL	**$100,103,605**		

[a] Pounds of fish are based on fish ticket reporting and do not represent pounds reported in Commercial Operator Annual Reports. Mean price per pound is based on weighted average prices provided voluntarily by processors and hatchery operators. Mean price per pound is rounded for presentation in the table, but actual values were used to calculate value.

[b] Number and pounds from fish ticket data. Value reported by hatchery operators. VFDA and PWSAC coho sales are not finalized.

Table 4.–Average price paid to permit holders for salmon, Prince William Sound, 1988–2011.

	King Salmon			Sockeye Salmon			Coho Salmon			Pink Salmon			Chum Salmon		
	Gillnet			Gillnet			Gillnet			Gillnet			Gillnet		
Year	Copper and Bering	PWS	Purse seine	Copper and Bering	PWS	Purse Seine	Copper and Bering	PWS	Purse Seine	Copper and Bering	PWS	Purse Seine	Copper and Bering	PWS	Purse Seine
1988	$2.23	$2.43	$2.23	$3.20	$2.74	$2.68	$2.35	$1.19	$1.85	NA	$0.60	$0.79	NA	$0.92	$0.72
1989	$2.25	$0.00	$2.41	$2.30	$0.00	$2.68	$0.60	$0.00	$1.58	NA	$0.00	$0.48	NA	$0.00	$0.43
1990	$2.24	$1.45	$1.50	$2.13	$1.59	$1.50	$0.97	$0.69	$0.50	NA	$0.30	$0.30	NA	$0.70	$0.70
1991	$1.65	$1.00	$1.00	$1.28	$1.28	$1.00	$0.65	$0.44	$0.45	NA	$0.12	$0.12	NA	$0.40	$0.40
1992	$2.50	$1.55	$1.55	$2.50	$1.55	$1.55	$0.90	$0.90	$0.90	NA	$0.18	$0.18	NA	$0.55	$0.55
1993	$1.82	$0.97	$0.63	$1.32	$0.87	$0.83	$0.80	$0.66	$0.54	NA	$0.17	$0.16	NA	$0.71	$0.36
1994	$1.43	$0.84	$0.63	$1.27	$1.16	$0.89	$0.74	$0.67	$0.54	NA	$0.11	$0.16	NA	$0.32	$0.24
1995	$2.19	$0.79	$0.67	$1.67	$1.07	$0.86	$0.52	$0.37	$0.39	NA	$0.18	$0.18	NA	$0.39	$0.28
1996	$1.96	$0.68	$0.55	$1.38	$0.85	$0.73	$0.53	$0.24	$0.36	NA	$0.04	$0.07	NA	$0.14	$0.13
1997	$2.00	$1.00	$1.00	$0.88	$0.85	$0.85	$0.30	$0.25	$0.30	NA	$0.07	$0.12	NA	$0.25	$0.30
1998	$2.07	$1.25	$1.10	$1.49	$1.11	$1.01	$0.46	$0.41	$0.31	NA	$0.14	$0.12	NA	$0.21	$0.27
1999	$3.44	$0.50	$1.15	$1.84	$0.89	$0.98	$0.58	$0.23	$0.49	NA	$0.06	$0.10	NA	$0.15	$0.27
2000	$4.02	$4.04	$0.95	$1.72	$1.38	$0.90	$0.57	$0.56	$0.42	NA	$0.11	$0.15	NA	$0.26	$0.28
2001	$3.30	$1.94	$0.65	$1.35	$0.77	$0.74	$0.32	$0.20	$0.26	NA	$0.05	$0.13	NA	$0.38	$0.37
2002	$3.34	$1.26	$0.34	$1.29	$1.14	$0.57	$0.35	$0.09	$0.25	NA	$0.05	$0.09	NA	$0.15	$0.15
2003	$3.48	$0.00	$0.48	$1.16	$0.80	$0.71	$0.48	$0.48	$0.42	NA	$0.06	$0.07	NA	$0.17	$0.17
2004	$4.69	$1.38	$0.45	$1.81	$0.85	$0.55	$0.69	$0.28	$0.42	NA	$0.04	$0.10	NA	$0.23	$0.18
2005	$4.70	$0.00	$0.52	$1.79	$0.92	$0.54	$0.83	$0.69	$0.10	NA	$0.05	$0.08	NA	$0.28	$0.18
2006	$5.03	$1.20	$1.26	$1.83	$1.15	$1.05	$0.92	$0.67	$0.60	NA	$0.11	$0.16	NA	$0.37	$0.33
2007	$4.50	$2.70	$0.97	$1.81	$1.04	$0.82	$0.90	$0.30	$0.59	NA	$0.11	$0.17	NA	$0.33	$0.37
2008	$5.96	$1.04	$1.40	$3.12	$1.24	$1.17	$1.23	$1.24	$1.12	$0.27	$0.33	$0.34	$0.21	$0.55	$0.57
2009	$5.29	$2.06	$1.71	$2.09	$1.42	$1.32	$1.30	$1.13	$0.42	$0.22	$0.27	$0.24	$0.28	$0.52	$0.53
2010	$5.50	$2.13	$1.57	$2.58	$1.72	$1.79	$1.27	$0.58	$0.70	$0.29	$0.34	$0.35	$0.36	$0.80	$0.78
10-year Avg	**$4.58**	**$1.37**	**$0.93**	**$1.88**	**$1.11**	**$0.93**	**$0.83**	**$0.57**	**$0.49**	**$0.26**	**$0.14**	**$0.17**	**$0.28**	**$0.38**	**$0.36**
2011	$5.40	$2.08	$1.44	$1.84	$1.56	$1.45	$1.09	$0.80	$0.82	$0.10	$0.37	$0.42	$0.24	$0.88	$0.82

Note: These prices are based on weighted average prices provided voluntarily by processors and hatchery operators and do not represent prices reported in the Commercial Operators Annual Report. These prices are estimates and do not reflect postseason adjustments and bonuses. Caution should be used when estimating value from these prices.

Table 5.–Estimated exvessel value of the total commercial salmon harvest by gear type with previous 10-year average, Prince William Sound, 1998–2011.

PURSE SEINE	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	**Prior 10-yr Ave.**	2011
King	5,435	1,353	924	1,270	1,787	4,940	9,330	2,487	985	634	**2,915**	2,905
Sockeye	539,388	58,142	847,966	46,573	207,022	219,984	338,262	540,113	584,595	705,231	**408,728**	554,932
Coho	398,532	69,207	226,619	121,688	103,312	1,426,736	546,805	2,056,932	22,522	48,476	**502,083**	459,035
Pink	9,584,465	2,425,505	10,716,380	4,293,551	13,104,242	6,688,126	28,839,799	39,059,344	7,890,237	78,063,374	**20,066,502**	33,495,125
Chum	2,863,466	2,423,525	1,717,083.00	1,228,965	773,620	3,007,947	3,499,189	8,002,952	1,123,335	1,019,498	**2,565,958**	655,503
	$13,391,287	$4,977,731	$13,508,972	$5,692,047	$14,189,982	$11,347,734	$33,233,386	$49,661,828	$9,621,674	$79,837,212	**$23,546,185**	$35,167,500
DRIFT GILLNET												
King	2,791,619	2,691,215	3,810,019	4,050,947	3,575,253	3,145,401	3,886,795	1,511,402	956,053	1,025,380	**2,744,408**	2,014,540
Sockeye	14,158,076	14,964,894	13,791,971	13,436,808	15,849,204	19,375,916	26,169,047	11,533,354	17,386,798	18,486,735	**16,515,280**	34,131,844
Coho	790,544	2,027,738	1,762,604	3,561,659	2,374,703	3,972,107	1,391,204	3,937,198	3,197,336	3,523,008	**2,653,810**	1,728,704
Pink	144,896	23,889	27,904	12,134	84,308	54,070	82,356	1,195,812	363,373	3,446,356	**543,510**	929,790
Chum	3,371,206	2,206,854	821,818	976,553	1,965,383	845,703	2,542,327	10,853,908	9,227,837	11,973,968	**4,478,556**	8,401,181
	$21,256,342	$21,914,590	$20,214,316	$22,038,101	$23,848,851	$27,393,197	$34,071,729	$29,031,674	$31,131,396	$38,455,447	**$26,935,564**	$47,206,058
SET GILLNET												
King	787	765	0	189	0	143	1,267	533	1,302	756	**574**	1,832
Sockeye	844,123	1,701,077	1,070,058	454,709	608,528	822,232	1,318,799	1,238,739	1,451,897	3,103,081	**1,261,324**	2,822,121
Coho	1,686	388	1,611	1,635	4,737	1,869	873	1,414	241	250	**1,470**	3,011
Pink	22,048	10,848	6,324	7,439	23,542	8,325	5,416	20,966	3,419	20,573	**12,890**	18,537
Chum	20,045	27,638	6,742	17,261	6,880	29,925	53,380	231,785	197,332	450,989	**104,198**	163,080
	$888,689	$1,740,716	$1,084,735	$481,233	$643,687	$862,493	$1,379,735	$1,493,437	$1,654,191	$3,575,649	**$1,380,456**	$3,008,580
HATCHERY SALES												
King	0	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**2**	0
Sockeye	174,418	418,114	1,769,179	997,020	2,383,400	2,173,808	1,790,819	0	1,088,363	0	**1,079,512**	0
Coho	9,459	1	0	35,733	0	102,792	161,995	67,879	145,267	44,808	**56,793**	140,346
Pink	6,430,468	4,989,921	6,068,403	5,718,678	7,288,894	7,300,390	6,809,392	7,574,535	5,208,870	8,911,203	**6,630,075**	11,837,609
Chum	3,070,274	3,794,069	1,643,243	779,268	1,704,693	2,893,174	2,105,903	2,465,426	1,816,012	2,894,835	**2,316,690**	2,743,512
	$9,684,619	$9,202,119	$9,480,825	$7,530,699	$11,376,987	$12,470,164	$10,868,110	$10,107,840	$8,258,512	$11,850,846	**$10,083,072**	$14,721,467
OTHER GEAR												
King	0	200	26	493	81	0	0	0	0	0	**80**	0
Sockeye	509	1,324	195	614	289	0	0	0	0	0	**293**	0
Coho	468	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**47**	0
Pink	382	0	2812	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**319**	0
Chum	4,206	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	**421**	0
	$5,565	$1,529	$3,033	$1,107	$370	$0	$0	$0	$0	$0	**$1,160**	$0

-continued-

Table 5.–Page 2 of 2.

AVERAGE EARNINGS	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	**Prior 10-yr Ave.**	2011
Purse Seine	$88,101	$41,481	$127,443	$54,210	$137,767	$102,232	$299,400	$352,212	$62,478	$458,835	**$172,416**	$192,172
Drift Gillnet	$39,731	$41,039	$39,327	$42,219	$46,807	$55,452	$67,335	$57,262	$60,922	$74,095	**$52,419**	$92,020
Set Gillnet	$27,772	$62,168	$38,741	$17,823	$23,840	$33,173	$53,067	$59,737	$61,266	$123,298	**$50,089**	$103,744
NUMBER OF PERMITS FISHED												
Purse Seine	152	120	106	105	103	111	111	141	154	174	**128**	183
Drift Gillnet	535	534	514	522	508	494	506	507	511	519	**515**	513
Set Gillnet	32	28	28	27	27	26	26	25	27	29	**28**	29

Table 6.–Preseason harvest projections for the 2011 commercial salmon fishery by district and species (1,000s of fish), Prince William Sound Area.

		King		Sockeye		Coho		Pink		Chum	
District/Facility [a]	Forecast Type [b]	Point Estimate	Range	Point Estimate	Range	Point Estimate	Range	Point Estimate	Range	Point Estimate	Range
Copper River [c]	commercial harvest	9		1,020	451 - 1,588	293	39 - 548				
Bering River [d]	commercial harvest			39	0 - 82	51	0 - 120				
Coghill [e]	commercial harvest			140	110 - 170						
Eshamy [e]	commercial harvest			15	0 - 40						
Unakwik [f]	commercial harvest			7	2 - 11						
General PWS Districts	commercial harvest							3,550	900 - 6,200	200	190 - 210
Total Wild Stock		9		1,221	650 - 1,792	344	85 - 608	3,550	900 - 6,200	200	190 - 210
Solomon Gulch [g]	total return					189	72 - 360	15,504	7,752 - 23,256		
Armin F. Koernig [g]	total return							9,200	5,900 - 12,600	280	229 - 331
Wally Noerenberg [g,h]	total return					250	185 - 314	9,500	6,100 - 12,900	2,612	2,251 - 2,973
Cannery Creek [g]	total return							7,100	3,100 - 11,000		
Main Bay [g,i]	total return			935	785 - 1,085						
Gulkana [j]	total return			320	190 - 450						
Total Hatchery				1,255	1,054 - 1,457	439	305 - 622	41,304	31,377 - 51,225	2,892	2,527 - 3,257
Total Hatchery and Wild		**9**		**2,639**		**658**		**44,854**		**3,092**	

[a] Formal forecast procedures are used for estimating wild stock runs of pink and chum salmon in PWS. Hatchery contributions are based on known fry releases and average marine survival rates. Harvest estimates are made only for species that constitute a significant portion of the catch.

[b] The Alaska Department of Fish and Game provided forecasts of commercial harvest for all wild stocks and Gulkana Hatchery sockeye salmon. All forecasts provided by the nonprofit aquaculture associations were for total runs. The harvest projections do not include salmon harvest by hatcheries for cost recovery.

[c] Formalized sibling model forecast procedures are used for Copper River sockeye salmon runs. Copper River king and coho salmon harvest estimates are based on the mean annual harvest (5-year for king and 10-year for coho salmon).

[d] Bering River coho salmon harvest estimates are based on 10-year mean annual harvest.

[e] Formalized sibling model forecast procedures are used for Coghill and Eshamy District sockeye salmon runs. The Coghill District's wild pink and chum salmon harvest is included in the "General PWS Districts" projection.

[f] The Unakwik District sockeye salmon harvest estimate is based on the 10-year mean annual harvest.

[g] Harvest projections calculated by hatchery operator, not by ADF&G.

[h] Wally Noerenberg Hatchery chum salmon harvest estimate includes all onsite and remote release runs of chum salmon.

[i] Main Bay sockeye salmon harvest estimate includes all onsite and remote release runs of sockeye salmon.

[j] Wild fish runs are estimated by fishing district and enhanced runs are estimated by facility of origin. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game completed all wild stock forecasts and the Gulkana Hatchery forecast.

Table 7.–Drift gillnet and purse seine harvests in the Coghill District of Prince William Sound, 2011.

Stat Week (Dates)	Gear	Permits Fished	Sockeye Salmon	Coho Salmon	Pink Salmon	Chum Salmon
Week 22 (5/22-5/28)	drift gillnet	44	30	0	0	69,590
Week 23 (5/29-6/4)	drift gillnet	167	1,706	0	0	218,390
Week 24 (6/5-6/11)	drift gillnet	302	4,959	0	0	285,838
Week 25 (6/12-6/18)	drift gillnet	272	21,351	2	1	219,025
Week 26 (6/19-6/25)	drift gillnet	219	68,679	4	4	150,936
Week 27 (6/26-7/2)	drift gillnet	122	47,693	305	792	64,891
Week 28 (7/3-7/9)	drift gillnet	83	30,805	971	5,381	56,086
Week 29 (7/10-7/16)	drift gillnet	58	13,311	2,703	12,615	12,010
Week 30 (7/17-7/23)	purse seine	2	282	5	6,958	43
	drift gillnet	67	7,805	2,129	16,286	14,718
Week 31 (7/24-7/30)	purse seine	1	0	0	48	2
	drift gillnet	2	11	12	92	11
Week 32 (7/31-8/6)	purse seine	2	94	7	20,921	60
	drift gillnet	0	0	0	0	0
Week 33 (8/7-8/13)	purse seine	31	54	1	327,440	4
	drift gillnet	125	738	1,272	213,237	518
Week 34 (8/14-8/20)	purse seine	49	340	472	588,303	38
	drift gillnet	125	819	2,340	248,305	245
Week 35 (8/21-8/27)	purse seine	43	71	7,022	560,088	19
	drift gillnet	76	258	7,394	128,440	118
Week 36 (8/28-9/3)	purse seine	20	2	8,646	169,641	0
	drift gillnet	80	157	20,750	85,814	32
Week 37 (9/4-9/10)	purse seine	2	0	412	1,337	0
	drift gillnet	66	20	18,946	10,332	2
Week 38 (9/11-9/17)	drift gillnet	25	1	15,082	33	0
Week 39 (9/18-9/24)	drift gillnet	16	0	7,502	0	0
	drift gillnet	357	198,343	79,412	721,332	1,092,410
	purse seine	72	843	16,565	1,674,736	166
Totals	combined gear	429	**199,186**	**95,977**	**2,396,068**	**1,092,576**

Note: Inseason data is still preliminary. Changes may occur as data are edited and dated.

Table 8.–Drift and set gillnet harvests in the Eshamy District of Prince William Sound, 2011.

Stat Week (Dates)	Gear	Permits Fished	Hours of Fishing Time	Sockeye Salmon	Chum Salmon	Pink Salmon
	drift gillnet	1		0	19	0
Week 22 (5/22-5/28)	set gillnet	8	124	210	968	0
	drift gillnet	7		216	1,121	0
Week 23 (5/29-6/4)	set gillnet	13	144	2,075	2,293	0
	drift gillnet	45		4,735	9,484	0
Week 24 (6/5-6/11)	set gillnet	21	144	10,411	6,112	0
	drift gillnet	200		61,490	22,470	4
Week 25 (6/12-6/18)	set gillnet	26	144	31,699	5,040	0
	drift gillnet	294		225,605	28,041	52
Week 26 (6/19-6/25)	set gillnet	28	144	72,485	4,220	10
	drift gillnet	295		322,066	21,093	2,210
Week 27 (7/26-7/2)	set gillnet	28	140	89,502	3,740	816
	drift gillnet	178		144,785	8,532	9,412
Week 28 (7/3-7/9)	set gillnet	28	84	59,268	1,792	2,761
	drift gillnet	134		92,776	3,849	14,638
Week 29 (7/10-7/16)	set gillnet	27	72	27,952	799	3,577
	drift gillnet	81		30,878	1,064	14,875
Week 30 (7/17-7/23)	set gillnet	17	72	11,206	257	5,065
	drift gillnet	38		11,822	230	11,416
Week 31 (7/24-7/30)	set gillnet	8	72	4,092	71	1,394
	drift gillnet	8		2,028	23	2,267
Week 32 (7/31-8/6)	set gillnet	3	36	583	22	1,076
	drift gillnet	0				
Week 33 (8/7-8/13)	set gillnet	0	Closed			
	drift gillnet	26		3,201	45	17,160
Week 34 (8/14-8/20)	set gillnet	1	42	477	2	2,115
	drift gillnet	20		1,844	20	6,444
Week 35 (8/21-8/27)	set gillnet	2	40	701	0	639
	drift gillnet	1		27	0	0
Week 36 (8/28-9/3)	set gillnet	0	84	0	0	0
	drift gillnet	346		901,473	96,063	78,478
	set gillnet	29		310,661	25,316	17,453
Totals	combined gear	375	2,134	**1,212,134**	**121,379**	**95,931**

Note: Inseason data is still preliminary. Changes may occur as data are edited and dated.

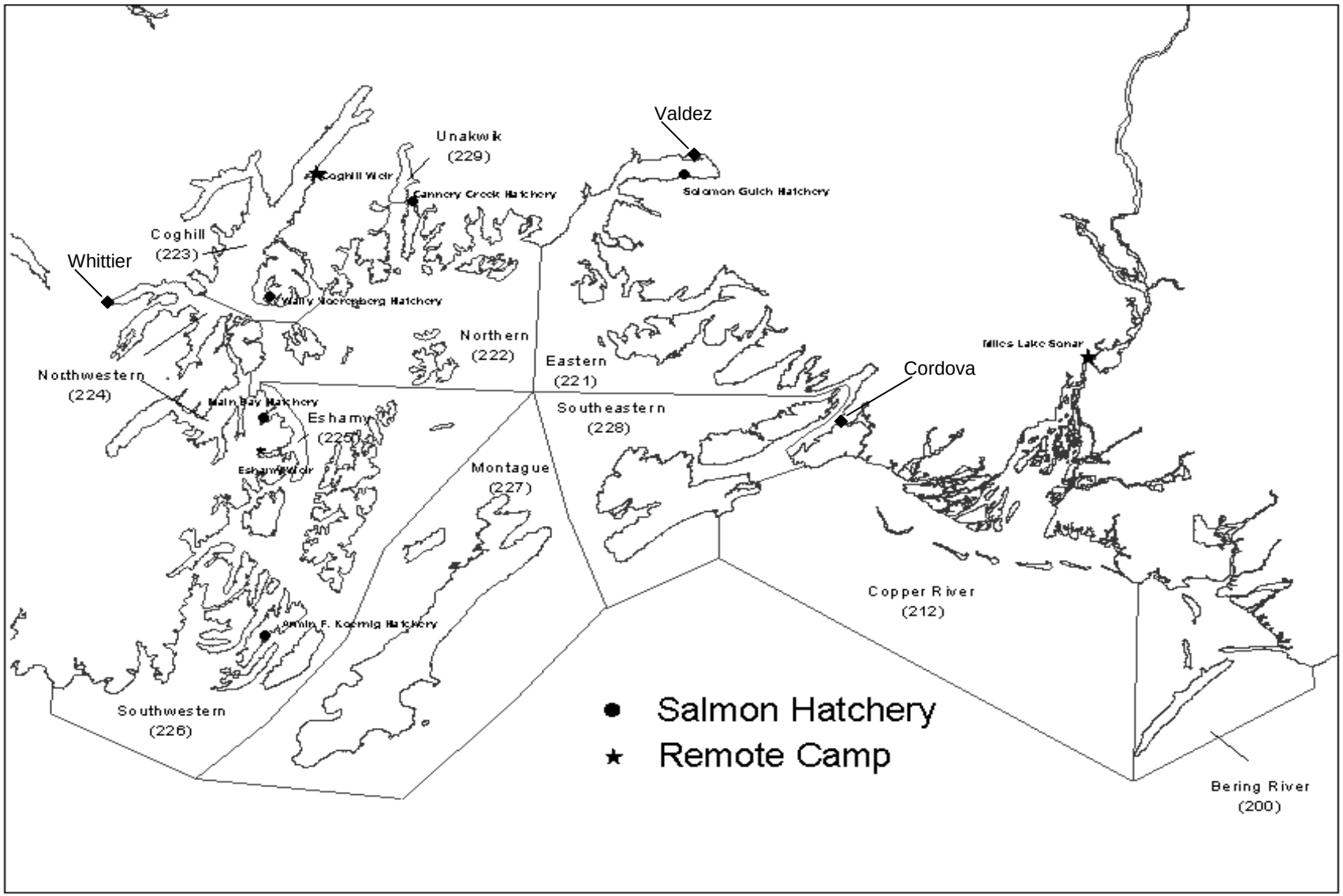

Figure 1.–Prince William Sound Management Area showing towns, commercial fishing districts, salmon hatcheries, weir locations, and Miles Lake sonar camp.

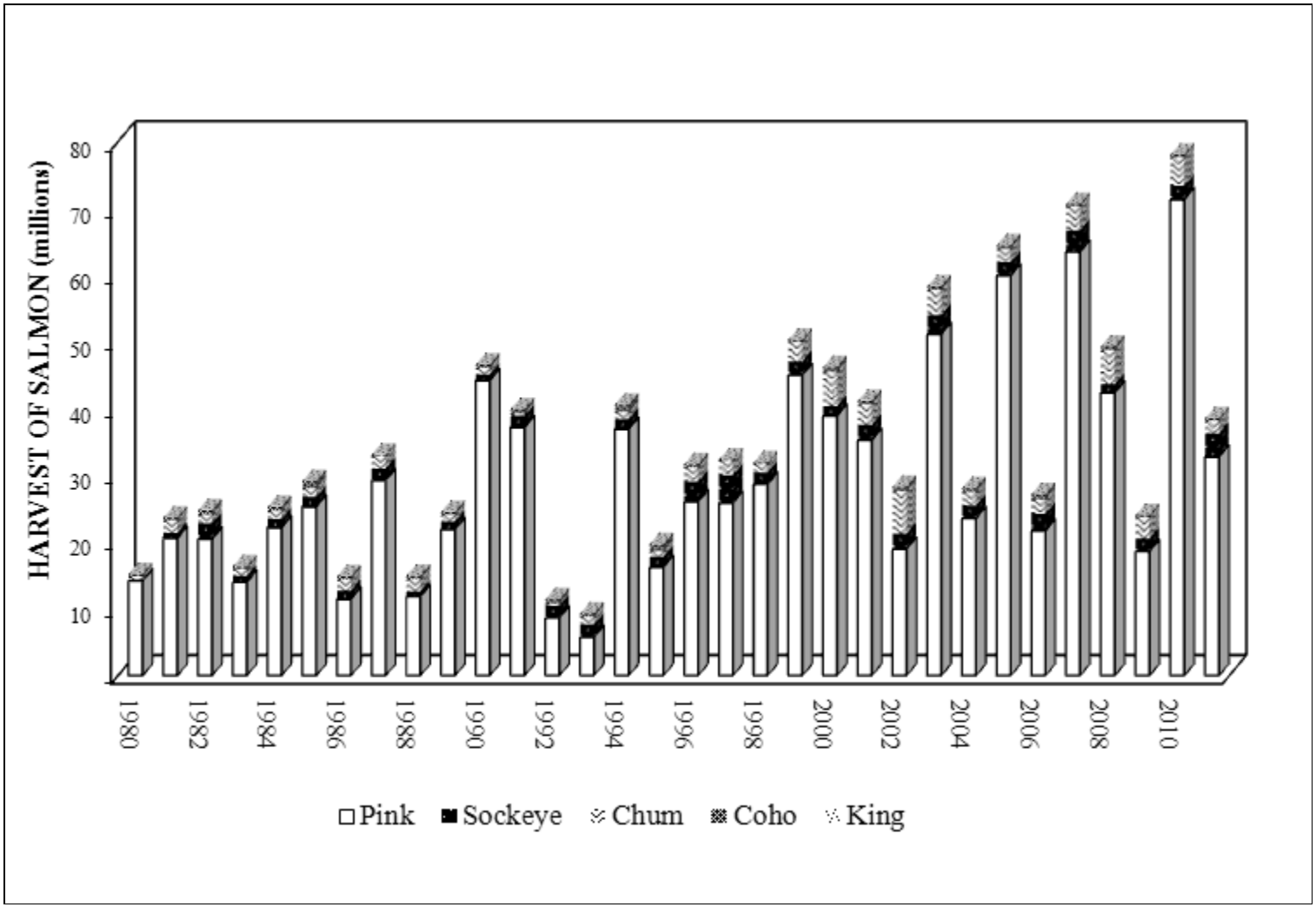

Figure 2.–Commercial salmon harvests in Prince William Sound, 1980–2011.

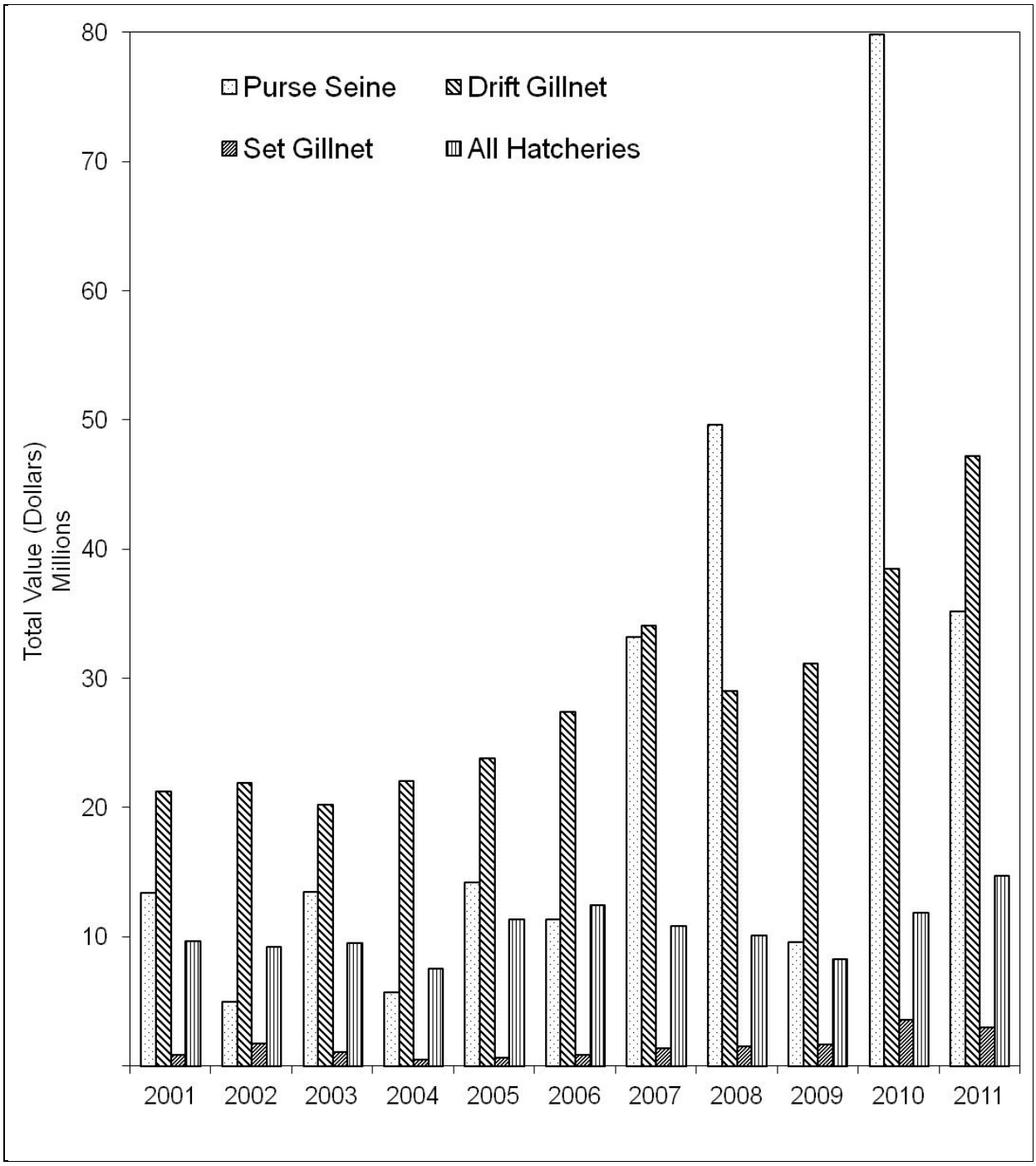

Figure 3.–Exvessel value of the commercial salmon harvest by gear type, 2001–2011.