

Fishery Management Report No. 18-29

Fishery Management Report for Sport Fisheries in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Management Area, 2017

by

John Chythlook

December 2018

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Divisions of Sport Fish and Commercial Fisheries



Symbols and Abbreviations

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Weights and measures (metric)		General		Mathematics, statistics	
centimeter	cm	Alaska Administrative Code	AAC	<i>all standard mathematical signs, symbols and abbreviations</i>	
deciliter	dL	all commonly accepted abbreviations	e.g., Mr., Mrs., AM, PM, etc.	alternate hypothesis	H _A
gram	g	all commonly accepted professional titles	e.g., Dr., Ph.D., R.N., etc.	base of natural logarithm	<i>e</i>
hectare	ha	at	@	catch per unit effort	CPUE
kilogram	kg	compass directions:		coefficient of variation	CV
kilometer	km	east	E	common test statistics	(F, t, χ^2 , etc.)
liter	L	north	N	confidence interval	CI
meter	m	south	S	correlation coefficient	
milliliter	mL	west	W	(multiple)	R
millimeter	mm	copyright	©	correlation coefficient (simple)	r
		corporate suffixes:		covariance	cov
Weights and measures (English)		Company	Co.	degree (angular)	°
cubic feet per second	ft ³ /s	Corporation	Corp.	degrees of freedom	df
foot	ft	Incorporated	Inc.	expected value	<i>E</i>
gallon	gal	Limited	Ltd.	greater than	>
inch	in	District of Columbia	D.C.	greater than or equal to	≥
mile	mi	et alii (and others)	et al.	harvest per unit effort	HPUE
nautical mile	nmi	et cetera (and so forth)	etc.	less than	<
ounce	oz	exempli gratia	e.g.	less than or equal to	≤
pound	lb	(for example)		logarithm (natural)	ln
quart	qt	Federal Information Code	FIC	logarithm (base 10)	log
yard	yd	id est (that is)	i.e.	logarithm (specify base)	log ₂ , etc.
		latitude or longitude	lat or long	minute (angular)	'
Time and temperature		monetary symbols (U.S.)	\$, ¢	not significant	NS
day	d	months (tables and figures): first three letters	Jan, ..., Dec	null hypothesis	H ₀
degrees Celsius	°C	registered trademark	®	percent	%
degrees Fahrenheit	°F	trademark	™	probability	P
degrees kelvin	K	United States (adjective)	U.S.	probability of a type I error (rejection of the null hypothesis when true)	α
hour	h	United States of America (noun)	USA	probability of a type II error (acceptance of the null hypothesis when false)	β
minute	min	U.S.C.	United States Code	second (angular)	"
second	s	U.S. state	use two-letter abbreviations (e.g., AK, WA)	standard deviation	SD
Physics and chemistry				standard error	SE
all atomic symbols				variance	
alternating current	AC			population sample	Var
ampere	A			sample	var
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				

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**FISHERY MANAGEMENT REPORT FOR SPORT FISHERIES IN THE
KUSKOKWIM-GOODNEWS MANAGEMENT AREA, 2017**

by
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The Fishery Management Reports series was established in 1989 by the Division of Sport Fish for the publication of an overview of management activities and goals in a specific geographic area, and became a joint divisional series in 2004 with the Division of Commercial Fisheries. Fishery Management Reports are intended for fishery and other technical professionals, as well as lay persons. Fishery Management Reports are available through the Alaska State Library and on the Internet: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/publications/>. This publication has undergone regional peer review.

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ABSTRACT

This report presents sport fisheries season and management summaries for 2017 with preliminary information for 2018 in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Management Area. The Kuskokwim-Goodnews Management Area (KGMA) consists of all waters of the Kuskokwim River drainage, Kuskokwim Bay, and waters extending from the Naskonat Peninsula in the north to the south side of Cape Newenham in the south. Sport and subsistence fisheries target all 5 Pacific salmon species, as well as rainbow trout *Oncorhynchus mykiss*, Dolly Varden *Salvelinus malma*, sheefish *Stenodus leucichthys*, Arctic grayling *Thymallus arcticus* and northern pike *Esox lucius*. In 2017, angler-days totaled 20,715 with the largest proportion coming from the Kanektok River drainage (0.40 or 8,314). Coho salmon were the predominant sport species harvested in 2017 with 4,497 fish taken, followed by sockeye salmon (1,467). The estimated 2017 Chinook (king) salmon harvest in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Management Area was 167, all of which were in the Kuskokwim Bay drainages (Goodnews and Kanektok Rivers) as the Kuskokwim River drainage was closed to sport fishing for king salmon pre-season. Summaries of major sport, commercial, and subsistence fisheries within the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Management Area are detailed in this report, including descriptions of recent performances, Alaska Board of Fisheries regulatory actions, social and biological issues, and descriptions of ongoing research and management activities.

Key words: Southwest Alaska, Bethel, Kuskokwim River, Aniak, McGrath, Kuskokwim Bay, Kanektok River, Holitna River, sport fisheries, subsistence, king salmon, Chinook salmon, coho salmon, pink salmon, Arctic grayling, Dolly Varden, sheefish, northern pike

INTRODUCTION

This area management report provides information regarding the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Management Area (KGMA) and is one in a series of reports annually updating fisheries management information within Region III. The report is provided for the Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF), Fish and Game Advisory Committees (ACs), the general public, and other interested parties. It presents fisheries assessment information and the management strategies that are developed from that information. In addition, this report includes a description of the fisheries regulatory process; geographic, administrative, and regulatory boundaries; funding sources; and other information concerning Division of Sport Fish management programs within the area.

The goals of the Division of Sport Fish of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) are to protect and improve the state's recreational fisheries resources by managing for sustainable yield of wild stocks of sport fish, providing diverse recreational fishing opportunities, and providing information to assist the BOF in optimizing social and economic benefits from recreational fisheries. In order to implement these goals, the division has in place a fisheries management process.

A regional review is conducted annually during which the status of important area fisheries is considered and research needs are identified. Fisheries stock assessment projects are developed, scheduled, and implemented to meet information needs identified by fisheries managers. Projects are planned within a formal operational planning process. Biological information gathered from these research projects is combined with effort information and input from user groups to assess the need for and development of fisheries management plans, and to propose regulatory strategies.

Division of Sport Fish (SF) management and research activities are funded by ADF&G and Federal Aid in Fisheries Restoration funds. ADF&G funds are derived from the sale of state fishing licenses. Federal aid funds are derived from federal taxes on fishing tackle and equipment established by the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act (also referred to the Dingell-Johnson Act or D-J Act). The D-J funds are provided to the states at a match of up to

3-to-1 with the ADF&G funds. Additional funding specified for providing, protecting, and managing access to fish and game is provided through a tax on boat gas and equipment established by the Wallop-Breaux (W-B) Act. Other peripheral funding sources may include contracts with various government agencies and the private sector.

This area management report provides information regarding the KGMA and its fisheries for 2017, with preliminary information from the 2018 season. This report is organized into 2 primary sections: a management area overview including a description of the KGMA and a summary of effort, harvest, and catch for the area; and a section on significant area fisheries, including specific harvest and catch by species and drainage.

The BOF divides the state into 18 regulatory areas to organize the sport fishing regulatory system by drainage and fishery. These areas (different from regional management areas) are described in Title 5 of the Alaska Administrative Code Chapters 47-74. The Division of Sport Fish of ADF&G divides the state into 3 administrative Regions with boundaries roughly corresponding to groups of the BOF regulatory areas. Region I covers Southeast Alaska (the Southeast Alaska regulatory area). Region II covers portions of Southcentral and Southwest Alaska (including the Prince William Sound, Kenai Peninsula, Kenai River drainage, Cook Inlet-Resurrection Bay Saltwater, Anchorage Bowl drainages, Knik Arm drainages, Susitna River drainage, West Cook Inlet, Kodiak, Bristol Bay, and the Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Islands regulatory areas). Region III includes Upper Copper River and Upper Susitna River areas and the Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim Region (including the North Slope, Northwestern, Yukon River, Tanana River, and Kuskokwim-Goodnews regulatory areas).

Region III is the largest geographic region, encompassing the majority of the landmass of the state of Alaska (Figure 1). The region contains over 442,500 mi² (1,146,000 km²) of land, some of the state's largest river systems (Yukon, Kuskokwim, Colville, Noatak, and Upper Copper and Upper Susitna river drainages), thousands of lakes and streams, and thousands of miles of coastline. Regional coastline boundaries extend from Cape Newenham in the southwest and around all of western, northwestern, and northern Alaska to the Canadian border on the Arctic Ocean. Region III as a whole is very sparsely populated, with the most densely populated center located in the Tanana River Valley. Fairbanks is the largest community (population about 32,000) and greater Fairbanks North Star Borough has a population of about 99,000.

For administrative purposes, the Division of Sport Fish has divided Region III into 5 fisheries management areas (Figure 1):

- Northwestern/North Slope Management Area (Norton Sound, Seward Peninsula, Kotzebue Sound, and North Slope drainages);
- Yukon Management Area (the Yukon River drainage except for the Tanana River drainage);
- Upper Copper/Upper Susitna Management Area (the Copper River drainage upstream of Canyon Creek and Haley Creek, and the Susitna River drainage above the Oshetna River);
- Tanana River Management Area (the entire Tanana River drainage); and
- Kuskokwim-Goodnews Management Area (the entire Kuskokwim River drainage and Kuskokwim Bay drainages).

Area management biologists for the 5 areas are located in Nome/Fairbanks, Fairbanks, Glennallen, Fairbanks/Delta Junction, and Bethel/Fairbanks, respectively.

ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES

The BOF is a 7-member board that sets fishery regulations and harvest levels, allocates fishery resources, and approves or mandates fishery conservation plans for the State of Alaska. BOF members are appointed by the governor for 3-year terms and must be confirmed by the legislature.

Under the current operating schedule, the BOF considers fishery issues for regulatory areas or groups of regulatory areas on a 3-year cycle. Proposals to create new or modify existing regulations and management plans are submitted by ADF&G and the public (any individual can submit a proposal to the BOF) for evaluation by the BOF. During its deliberations the BOF receives input and testimony through oral and written reports from ADF&G staff, members of the general public, representatives of local ACs, and special-interest groups such as fishermen's associations and clubs. The public provides input concerning regulation changes and allocation by submitting written proposals and testifying directly to the BOF, by participating in local AC meetings, or by becoming members of local ACs.

ADVISORY COMMITTEES

Local ACs have been established throughout the state to assist the boards of Fisheries and Game in assessing fisheries and wildlife issues and proposed regulation changes. AC meetings allow opportunity for direct public interaction with ADF&G staff attending the meetings that answer questions and provide clarification concerning proposed regulatory changes regarding resource issues of local and statewide concerns. The Boards Support Section within ADF&G's Division of Administrative Services provides administrative and logistical support for the BOF and ACs. During 2017, ADF&G had direct support responsibilities for 82 ACs in the state.

Within the KGMA, there are 6 ACs: Lower Kuskokwim, Central Bering Sea, Central Kuskokwim, Stony-Holitna, Bethel, and McGrath. In addition, Lower Yukon and Togiak ACs often comment on proposals concerning fisheries in the KGMA.

RECENT BOARD OF FISHERIES ACTIONS

The BOF meets annually but deliberates on each individual regulatory area on a 3-year cycle, most recently for the KGMA in January 2016 in Fairbanks. At this meeting, several proposals were considered that would have restricted sport fishing in the Kanektok River drainage, but these proposals were not adopted (see Chythlook 2015) for a description of the fishery proposals). The *Kuskokwim Salmon Management Plan Plan* (5 AAC 07.365) was revisited, with changes adopted specific to the very large subsistence fishery and relatively small commercial fishery and clarification on when actions will be taken in the sport fishery.

At the 2016 Artic-Yukon-Kuskokwim (AYK) Board of Fish Meeting the board considered proposals including Tier II designation for Chinook (king) salmon on the Kuskokwim River. There was also a proposal generated by the Kuskokwim Subsistence Salmon Panel, to allow for a household permit system for the subsistence salmon fishery in the Kuskokwim region. The Kuskokwim Subsistence Salmon Panel was formed in 2015 as a temporary board-supported panel consisting of concerned members of the public and chaired by a Board member elected by other Board members. Neither of these passed, but an alternate board-generated proposal was

considered and passed that included provisions to delay the directed Chinook salmon subsistence fishery until June 12.

The next Board of Fish Meeting is scheduled for January 2019.

ADF&G EMERGENCY ORDER AUTHORITY

ADF&G has emergency order (EO) authority (5 AAC 75.003) to modify time, area, and bag/possession limit regulations. EOs are implemented to deal with conservation issues for resident species. EOs are also implemented as a tool for inseason management of salmon fisheries. Inseason management is usually in accordance with a fisheries management plan approved by the BOF. EOs issued under this authority for the KGMA during 2015 and 2016 are summarized in Appendix A.

FEDERAL SUBSISTENCE

The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) established a priority subsistence use of fish and game for federally qualified rural residents on lands and waters for which the federal government asserts jurisdiction. The State of Alaska has also established a priority for subsistence use of fish and game by Alaskan residents (AS 16.05.258) on all lands and waters but cannot discriminate between rural and urban residents (Alaska State Constitution Article VIII, sections 3 and 15). Because of this difference, the federal government asserted authority to ensure a priority subsistence use of fish and game for rural residents on federal lands and certain adjacent waters. On October 1, 1999, the federal government asserted regulatory authority for assuring the rural priority for subsistence fisheries on federal public lands, which includes nonnavigable waters on public lands. Following the *State of Alaska v. Katie John* decision by the Ninth Circuit Court in 1995, the federal government expanded the definition of public land to include waters for which the federal agencies assert federal reserved water rights. Under current practice, the federal land management agencies adopt regulations to provide for priority subsistence use by qualified rural residents in nonnavigable waters within federal public lands (including Bureau of Land Management [BLM] lands) and in navigable waters adjacent to or within federal conservation system units (this designation generally does not include BLM lands). The state retains all other fish and wildlife management authorities, including management on federal land.

Development of regulations for subsistence fisheries under the federal subsistence program occurs within the established Federal Subsistence Board (FSB) process. The public provides input concerning regulation changes by testifying in Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (RAC) meetings or by becoming council members. Ten RACs have been established throughout Alaska to assist the FSB in determining local subsistence issues and providing recommendations on proposed fishing and hunting regulations on the fish and game populations under consideration. Each RAC meets twice a year, and subsistence users and other members of the public can comment on subsistence issues at these meetings.

Within the KGMA, the subsistence fisheries for which the federal government asserts management responsibility include those in the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge (YDNWR) and the Togiak National Wildlife Refuge (TNWR). The KGMA fisheries fall mainly under the purview of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta RAC and peripherally, the Western Interior and Bristol Bay RACs. The Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta RAC's most recent meeting was held in September 2018 in Bethel.

REGION III DIVISION OF SPORT FISH RESEARCH AND MANAGEMENT STAFFING

The Region III Division of Sport Fish staff biologists are organized into a research group and a management group. The management group consists of a management supervisor, an area biologist for each of the 5 management areas, 1 or more assistant area management biologists, and 2 stocked waters biologists. Area biologists evaluate fisheries and propose and implement management strategies through plans and regulation in order to meet divisional goals. A critical part of these positions consists of interaction with the BOF, ACs, and the general public. Stocked waters biologists plan and implement the regional stocking program for recreational fisheries. The regional management supervisor also supervises the regional fishing and boating access program.

The research group consists of a research supervisor, a salmon research supervisor, a resident species supervisor, research biologists, and various field technicians. Research biologists plan and implement fisheries research projects in order to provide information needed by the management group to meet divisional goals. The duties of the management and research biologists augment one another.

STATEWIDE HARVEST SURVEY

Sport fishing effort and harvest of sport fish species in Alaska have been estimated and reported annually since 1977 using a mail survey (<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey/>). The Statewide Harvest Survey (SWHS) is designed to provide estimates of effort, harvest, and catch on a site-by-site basis. It is not designed to provide estimates of effort directed toward a single species. Species-specific catch-per-unit effort (CPUE) information can seldom be derived from the report. Questionnaires are mailed to a stratified random sample of households containing at least 1 individual with a valid fishing license (resident or nonresident). Information gathered from the survey includes participation (number of anglers and days fished), number of fish caught, and number harvested by species and site. These surveys estimate the number of angler-days of fishing effort expended by sport anglers fishing Alaskan waters, as well as the sport harvest. Beginning in 1990, the survey was modified to include estimation of catch (release plus harvest) on a site-by-site basis. Survey results for each year are available the following year; hence, the results for 2017 were available fall 2018. Additionally, creel surveys have been used to verify the mail survey for fisheries of interest, or for fisheries that require more detailed information or inseason management.

The utility of SWHS estimates depends on the number of responses received for a given site (Mills and Howe 1992; Clark 2009). In general, estimates from smaller fisheries with low participation are less precise than those of larger fisheries with high participation. Therefore, the following guidelines were implemented for evaluating survey data:

1. Estimates based on fewer than 12 responses should not be used other than to document that sport fishing occurred;
2. Estimates based on 12 to 29 responses can be useful in indicating relative orders of magnitude and for assessing long-term trends; and
3. Estimates based on 30 or more responses are generally representative of levels of fishing effort, catch, and harvest.

For purposes of reporting and organizing statistics in the SWHS, the KGMA is designated as survey area V.

SPORT FISH GUIDE LICENSING AND LOGBOOK PROGRAM

Since 1998, the Division of Sport Fish has operated a program to register and/or license both sport fishing guides and sport fishing guide businesses, and to collect information on sport fishing participation, effort, and harvest by saltwater and freshwater-guided clients (Sigurdsson and Powers 2009). In 1998, the BOF adopted statewide sport fishing guide regulations (5 AAC 75.075) that required all sport fishing guides and businesses to register annually with ADF&G. At this time, the BOF also adopted statewide regulations that required logbooks for saltwater charter vessels. The logbooks collected information on charter activity (location, effort, and harvest) that was necessary for the BOF, for allocation and management decisions specific to Chinook salmon *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*, rockfish *Sebastes* spp., and lingcod *Ophiodon elongatus*, and for the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC) for allocation of Pacific halibut *Hippoglossus stenolepis*.

In 2004, the Alaska Legislature adopted House Bill 452, which established licensing requirements for sport fishing guide business owners and sport fishing guides on a statewide basis (effective 2005). This legislation also required logbook reporting for all freshwater guiding businesses, in addition to the existing saltwater reporting requirements. Although the licensing requirement sunsetted in 2015, the logbook requirement remained in regulation. The logbook data provides location of fishing effort, level of participation, and number of species kept and released by clients. This information is used for the regulation, development, and management of fisheries and has been published annually since 2009 (data since 2006) in a Fishery Data Series report (Sigurdsson and Powers 2009–2014, Powers and Sigurdsson 2016, Sigurdsson 2014).

SECTION I: MANAGEMENT AREA OVERVIEW

MANAGEMENT AREA DESCRIPTION

The KGMA includes all waters of the Kuskokwim River drainage and all drainages in Kuskokwim Bay (Figure 2). Additionally, the KGMA includes all drainages that flow into the Bering Sea north of Cape Newenham and south of the westernmost point of the Naskonat Peninsula (approximately Hooper Bay) to the north. Nunivak, St. Matthew, and adjacent islands are also included within the area.

For sport fish management purposes, the KGMA is partitioned into 2 sections: the Kuskokwim River and Kuskokwim Bay (Figure 2).

The KGMA includes substantial parts of 2 National Wildlife Refuges: the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Refuge and the Togiak Refuge. Nearly half of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Refuge is within the KGMA, as are several thousand acres of the Togiak Refuge in the headwaters of Kuskokwim Bay streams.

FISHERY RESOURCES

Sport fisheries began to develop in the KGMA during the early 1980s (Lafferty 2001; Chythlook 2006–2017). It was during this time period that sport fisheries in this area were first recorded in the SWHS. Largely, sport fisheries of the KGMA were small and isolated, so relatively little effort was expended and this was reflected with low catch and harvest values (Tables 1–4).

Angling effort in the KGMA is third in ranking of the angling effort in the AYK region¹. The Upper Copper/Upper Susitna and Tanana Management areas support more fishing effort and are largely road accessible. The amount of fishing effort in the area is directly related to the remoteness of the area and the difficulty and expense involved in getting there.

Angling effort in the Kuskokwim River and Kuskokwim Bay reached a high of 27,913 angler-days in 1998 and has fluctuated between 17,000 and 26,000 in recent years, suggesting a fairly stable amount of fishing effort in this area. Effort was about 21,000 angler-days in 2017 (Table 4). This static effort may be related to sustained high fuel and transportation costs to and within the region. There are 3 sport fisheries that dominate the area: the Kanektok, Aniak, and Goodnews rivers (Tables 3 and 4; Figure 2). These 3 streams provide salmon fisheries for all 5 species of Pacific salmon, as well as rainbow trout *O. mykiss*, in a remote Alaska setting. Other rivers in the Kuskokwim River area that receive small to moderate fishing pressure are the Kisaralik, Kwethluk, and Holitna rivers (Table 4; Figure 2). Most other rivers in the area do not receive enough fishing effort to be reported consistently in the SWHS. In the upper portion of the Kuskokwim River, the Holitna River drainage is spoken of as a “breadbasket” for its production of salmon, but it does not see much effort expended in angler-days despite its large size. The majority of the Kuskokwim River upstream of the Holitna River drainage sees very little effort (Table 4).

Subsistence fisheries for salmon have a long history on the Kuskokwim River with harvests documented throughout the river dating as far back as 1922 (Burkey et al. 2000). The subsistence fishery for Chinook salmon is the most important, regularly reaching harvests of over 80,000 for the entire Kuskokwim River drainage based on recent 10- and 15-year averages (Simon et al. 2007; Hamazaki 2011; Carroll and Hamazaki 2012, Hamazaki and Liller 2015). Recent poor returns of Chinook salmon have resulted in restrictions and subsequent reduced harvests in the subsistence fishery, to as little as an estimated 11,000 in 2014.

Commercial fisheries in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews drainages are relatively small and center on the Lower Kuskokwim River (District 1) and in Kuskokwim Bay at the Kanektok and Goodnews rivers (districts 4 and 5, respectively). They are important to the local economies, but the fisheries directed toward chum salmon *O. keta* fisheries have been irregular in prosecution since the late 1990s due to factors including poor markets, limited processing capacity, and conservation of Chinook salmon (J. Linderman, Commercial Fisheries Biologist, ADF&G, Anchorage, personal communication). There have been no commercial salmon fisheries other than some very small catcher/seller operations in the region from 2016–2018 due to a lack of a processor/buyer (A. Tiernan, Commercial Fisheries Biologist, ADF&G, Anchorage, personal communication).

Sport fisheries in the KGMA are small by comparison to other sport fisheries in the state with better access. The majority of effort occurs in the Kuskokwim Bay area, focusing mainly on the Kanektok River. Fishing effort on the Kanektok River averages about 7,000 angler-days annually based on a 10-year average (Table 3). Rainbow trout are the species most desired by anglers on the Kanektok River. Fishing for other resident species, such as Arctic grayling *Thymallus arcticus* and Dolly Varden *Salvelinus malma* occurs there also, as well as for salmon, especially Chinook and coho *O. kisutch* salmon. Important rainbow trout sport fisheries also

¹ Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Intranet]. 2000–2016. Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish. Available from: https://intra.sf.adfg.state.ak.us/swhs_est/

occur in the Lower Kuskokwim River tributaries: the Kisaralik, Kasigluk, Kwethluk, and Aniak rivers. Fishing for the 5 Pacific salmon species occurs throughout much of the Kuskokwim River and Kuskokwim Bay drainages. The rivers that drain into the Central and Upper Kuskokwim River, such as the Holitna River, attract a moderate number of sport anglers annually (Table 4).

ESTABLISHED MANAGEMENT PLANS AND POLICIES

Regulations governing fisheries in the KGMA are found in 5 AAC 71.010 through 5 AAC 71.995, 5 AAC 75.001 through 5 AAC 75.995 (sport fishing), 5 AAC 77.001 through 5 AAC 77.035, 5 AAC 77.200 through 5 AAC 77.240 (personal use), 5 AAC 01.250 through 5 AAC 01.295 (subsistence fishing), and 5 AAC 07.001 through 5 AAC 07.650 (commercial fishing and management plans).

Fisheries-specific management objectives for the management area have been identified in management plans for Arctic grayling and lake trout. In addition, a series of general divisional criteria have been prepared to guide establishment of fishery objectives. These include the following:

1. **Management and protection of existing fish resources.** Divisional activities should strive to manage and protect Alaska's wild fish stock resources for future generations;
2. **Public use and benefits of existing fish resources.** Alaska's fishery resources should be made available for public use and benefit on a sustained yield basis;
3. **Rehabilitation of depressed stocks and damaged habitat.** Divisional activities should strive to restore and maintain fish stocks and habitat damaged by man's activities; and
4. **Enhancement of natural production or creation of new opportunities.** The division should pursue creation of new sport fishing opportunities through rehabilitation of natural stocks or creation of new fisheries where these opportunities do not negatively affect other fisheries.

Currently, there are 3 management plans specific to sport fisheries in the KGMA: the *Southwest Rainbow Trout Plan*, the *Wild Arctic Grayling Management Plan* (5 AAC 71.055), and the *Wild Lake Trout Management Plan* (5 AAC 71.040). The objectives are to distribute the opportunity to harvest a small proportion of the sustainable surplus over the fishing season without unnecessary disruptions to the sport fishery.

In the past, management plans have been designed to provide managers guidance over inseason management, frequently addressing salmon management. Salmon management in the KGMA is governed by subsistence regulations and several management plans directed at controlling commercial fisheries harvests. Consequently, managers from Division of Commercial Fisheries take a lead role in management of salmon in this area of the state. Most subsistence and commercial fishing regulations are interconnected to provide opportunity to harvest salmon surpluses in the Kuskokwim River drainage.

Salmon Management Plans

Subsistence fishing seasons and periods are the guiding regulations in the harvest of salmon in the Kuskokwim River (5 AAC 01.260). There are 2 salmon management plans that guide subsistence, commercial, and sport fishing management in the KGMA, including streams in Kuskokwim Bay:

1. *Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan* (5 AAC 07.365); and
2. *District 4 (Quinhagak) Salmon Management Plan* (5 AAC 07.367).

The *Policy for the Management of Sustainable Salmon Fisheries* (SSFP, 5 AAC 39.222) provides guidance for the salmon management plans of the Kuskokwim River and Kuskokwim Bay. In 2001, comprehensive rebuilding measures were instituted for Chinook and chum salmon in the *Kuskokwim River Salmon Rebuilding Management Plan* (5 AAC 07.365) by placing windows of salmon passage in migratory routes in freshwater and marine environments. Many of the existing and a few new restrictions in the Aniak River sport fishery were included within the *Kuskokwim River Salmon Rebuilding Management Plan*, including continuation of the Chinook salmon season from May 1 to July 25, with a bag limit of 2 Chinook salmon 20 inches or greater and an annual limit of 2 Chinook salmon 20 inches or greater. On the Aniak River, a combined bag and possession limit of 3 other salmon species (pink *O. gorbuscha*, sockeye *O. nerka*, and coho salmon) per day remains in effect. Inclusion of chum salmon in the aggregate bag limit was reinstated in the Aniak River by BOF action in 2007. A correction of the *Kuskokwim River Salmon Rebuilding Management Plan* at the 2010 AYK BOF meeting reflected continuation of the same action. In 2013, changes in the *Kuskokwim River Salmon Rebuilding Management Plan* resulted in the inclusion of a drainagewide escapement goal range for the Kuskokwim River, as well as reduced goals for many of the rivers that have salmon escapement goal projects. In 2016, the subsistence salmon fishery was shortened by Board of Fish action (in consultation with a Kuskokwim-based subcommittee) to open only after June 12.

Resident Fish Management Plans

In the 1990s, sport fishing bag limits for resident fish species were generous and were used as a surrogate for subsistence uses in the Kuskokwim River drainage. Management of resident fish species in the KGMA is under subsistence and sport fishing regulations. Subsistence regulations of the Kuskokwim Area are an exception to resident species management throughout the State of Alaska. This area, the Lower Yukon and portions of the Norton Sound Area, are some of the few areas of the state where a resident of Alaska can harvest unlimited quantities of resident fish (except rainbow trout) during the open water season with hook-and-line under subsistence regulations.

The *Policy for the Management of Sustainable Wild Trout Fisheries* (5 AAC 75.222; 5 AAC 75.210) directs ADF&G to manage wild trout populations in Alaska for long-term sustained yield through a conservative harvest regime. The policy establishes a conservation plan for wild trout populations and defines the management approaches under which ADF&G shall manage wild trout populations in the KGMA. The policy establishes that wild trout stocks and habitats should be maintained at levels that assure optimum sustained yield.

The *Wild Arctic Grayling Management Plan* (5 AAC 71.055) directs ADF&G to manage wild Arctic grayling populations in the KGMA for long-term sustained yield through a conservative harvest regime. The plan establishes and defines 3 management approaches under which ADF&G shall manage wild Arctic grayling populations in the KGMA: 1) the regional management approach; 2) the conservative management approach; and 3) the special management approach. The plan also outlines guidelines and considerations for ADF&G, the public, and/or BOF to change or address the management approach for a water body or fish stock.

The *Wild Lake Trout Management Plan* (5 AAC 69.140; 5 AAC 70.040) directs ADF&G to manage wild lake trout populations in the KGMA by employing a conservative harvest regime and by maintaining harvest below the maximum sustained yield level. ADF&G may take 1 or more management actions if there is a conservation or biological concern for the sustainability of the fishery or a stock harvested in that fishery. These actions include reduction of bag and possession limit(s), reduction of fishing time, allowing no retention, and modification of methods and means of harvest. The plan also specifies allowable measures to reduce harvest if the harvest level exceeds sustainable yield for a 2-year period. Finally, the plan establishes a process for designating special management waters and means for limiting harvest in these areas to meet the management objectives.

MAJOR ISSUES

1. Development of new sport fisheries in rural Alaska. Sport fisheries in remote areas has resulted in friction between local residents and nonlocal anglers. In many instances, local people have historically enjoyed nearly exclusive use of fishery resources. Sport fishing guides and other anglers seeking less crowded fishing opportunities in wilderness settings continue to “discover” less well known but potentially high-quality fisheries. As popular fishing destinations in Bristol Bay and Southcentral Alaska become increasingly crowded, anglers and guides are likely to continue to travel farther to participate in Alaska’s fisheries. In addition to the social friction caused by this change in use patterns of remote areas and to some extent because of this friction, ADF&G will increasingly be expected to provide information on the status of stocks for which there is minimal information. This is likely to be the biggest challenge in the management of sport fisheries in the KGMA.
2. Rod-and-reel subsistence. In 2000, the BOF included rod-and-reel gear as a legal subsistence fishing method for harvest during the open-water season in the Association of Village Council Presidents’ area of the Lower Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers. In 2001, in response to a petition to the BOF from Nikolai Native Village and the Western Interior RAC, rod-and-reel subsistence fishing was extended upstream by emergency regulation to include the remainder of the Kuskokwim River drainage. Prior to these actions being taken, rod and reel for subsistence fishing was permitted only through the ice under state regulations. The primary concern with this potential change is how to manage for sustainable fish populations with legalization of rod-and-reel gear for subsistence fishing. It is likely that rural resident use patterns have incorporated rod and reel in past subsistence harvests, and legalization of this gear will not greatly affect local use patterns. Because all Alaskans qualify for subsistence, resident anglers could choose to fish with rod and reel under subsistence regulations instead of sport fish regulations. Resident sport fishing effort has not yet declined as a result of this regulation change, based on the SWHS. The greatest concerns relate to changes in urban resident behavior in regard to license sales, participation in rural fisheries, harvests of fish populations, and ability to measure these harvests in the absence of harvest surveys or permits.
3. Federal fishery regulation for subsistence in Alaska’s navigable waters. In October 1999, federal fishery managers assumed responsibility for ensuring a rural subsistence priority on navigable waters adjacent to or within the boundaries of federal conservation units. There is widespread concern that one result of this action will be reduced opportunity for sport fishing throughout the state. Because of the large amount of federal public land and the high

proportion of subsistence users within the KGMA, this loss of opportunity is a concern for sport fishermen in the area. Recent proposals to the FSB to exclude recreational anglers from popular fisheries have required substantial efforts by ADF&G staff to maintain current opportunities.

4. Jurisdictional issues involving navigable water bodies. Jurisdiction over navigable water bodies that run through federal conservation units is in dispute between state and federal managers. For example, land managers of the TNWR are investigating implementation of several options put forward in the Togiak Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and Public Use Management Plan (PUMP) that restrict access to individuals seeking to gain access to sport fisheries in waters in which jurisdiction is contested, namely on the Goodnews, Kanektok, and Togiak rivers (Togiak PUMP). In a similar issue, land status surrounding the Arolik River continues to be in dispute between the federal and state governments. BLM determined that portions of the Arolik River were nonnavigable and under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act (ANCSA) conveyed shoreline to Qanirtuuq Inc. as part of its entitlement under ANCSA. However, the State of Alaska received the title to inland navigable water bodies as provided in the Statehood Act of 1958 and the U.S. Submerged Lands Act of 1953. Therefore, the State of Alaska asserts that the shoreline was not in federal ownership and was not BLM's to convey.

ACCESS PROGRAMS

The Wallop-Breaux Amendment to the Sport Fish Restoration Act (Dingell-Johnson or D-J) mandates that at least 15% of federal funds collected from taxes on boat gas and sport fishing equipment be used by states for development and maintenance of motorized boating access facilities. A broad range of access facilities can be approved for funding if constructed to achieve a state fishery management objective. These facilities can include boat ramps and lifts, docking and marina facilities, breakwaters, fish cleaning stations, restrooms, and parking areas.

To date, relatively few access projects have been proposed for the rural KGMA. An upgrade of the boat launching site in the community of McGrath has been considered, as well as the possibility of access projects involving boating facilities in Bethel or Aniak. None of these project possibilities have advanced beyond initial discussion at this time. Presently, there are no major access issues for sport fishing in the KGMA, largely because of the remote character of the entire region.

INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

Information regarding regulations, publications, fishing reports, news releases, and EOs for the KGMA can be found at the *Fishing* and *Sport* links at the ADF&G website (<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishingSport.main>). From the *Interior Area* and *Kuskokwim-Goodnews* link on this website, anglers interested in fishing in the KGMA can read the area descriptions and other fishing information. The TNWR and YDNWR are the 2 federal land units within the area, and a portion of the major rivers in the area are within these lands. The federal refuges have their own corresponding reports and news releases at their websites: <http://togiak.fws.gov> and http://www.fws.gov/refuge/yukon_delta/.

There are 3 regional information and education (I&E) staff located in the Fairbanks office. An Information Officer II and a seasonal Fisheries Biologist I respond to questions from the public at the office and via phone and e-mail. In addition, I&E staff distribute and update fishery

brochures and fishing regulations; maintain the regional web page; and coordinate the Fairbanks Outdoor Show booth, Kids' Fish and Game Fun Day, and the Becoming an Outdoors-Woman program. An Education Associate II coordinates the sport fishing component of the Alaska Conservation Camp and works with schools in various communities throughout the region to provide a curriculum in sport fishing and aquatic education.

SPORT FISHING EFFORT, HARVEST, AND CATCH

Effort, harvest, and catch statistics for KGMA sport fisheries have been estimated from responses to the SWHS since 1977 and reported under the headings of the *Kuskokwim River/Kuskokwim Bay drainages* (Area V) (<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey/>). Estimates of angling effort in the KGMA averaged over 21,000 angler-days during the last 5-year period (2012–2016) and over 21,000 in the last 10-year period (2007–2016) periods (Table 4).

The majority of the sport fishing effort occurs in 3 areas: Kuskokwim Bay tributaries (including the Kanektok, Goodnews, and Arolik rivers), the Aniak River, and the Lower Kuskokwim River tributaries near Bethel (Kwethluk and Kisaralik rivers, Tables 3 and 4). Some sport fishing effort takes place in the Holitna River, but considering the size of this drainage, effort remains exceptionally low.

Fishing effort in the KGMA has remained stable overall in recent years. The data show a relatively stable fishery, though slightly decreased likely due to lack of opportunity to catch Chinook salmon in the sport fishery because of conservation concerns (Tables 3 and 4).

Coho salmon is the primary sport fish species that is harvested in the KGMA (Table 1). Dolly Varden/Arctic char surpasses coho salmon in numbers of fish caught in the Kuskokwim River, but the vast majority of Dolly Varden/Arctic char are released.

SECTION II: FISHERIES

This section provides a summary of significant sport fisheries by species in the KGMA in 2017. Discussion of each fishery will address: 1) historical perspective; 2) recent fishery performance (stock status); 3) fishery objectives and management; 4) current issues; 5) recent actions by the BOF; and 6) ongoing and recommended management and research activities. Recent fishery performance will focus on data from 2017.

SALMON FISHERIES

Chinook Salmon

Background and Historical Perspective

Chinook salmon are present in most streams throughout the KGMA but are predominantly caught and harvested in tributaries of Kuskokwim Bay and tributaries of the Lower Kuskokwim River. The largest sport fisheries for Chinook salmon are located in the Kanektok and Aniak rivers. These 2 sport fisheries range between 7,000 and 8,000 and 1,600–2,300 angler-days of effort, respectively, for all fish species, according to the 5- and 10-year averages (Tables 3 and 4). Very few Chinook salmon are caught and harvested in the sport fisheries in the Upper Kuskokwim River tributaries, including the Holitna River.

The Kuskokwim River and tributaries contain large runs of Chinook salmon, but many streams are broad and turbid, thus directing sport fishing effort to clearwater tributaries. These salmon fisheries attract a very small number of anglers to Western Alaska each year.

Sport harvest and catch of Chinook salmon are estimated through the SWHS and are summarized in previous fishery management reports (FMRs; Lafferty 2001, 2003; Chythlook 2006, 2009, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2015, 2017). Additional KGMA commercial and subsistence harvest information through 2014 can be found in Lipka et al. (2016). Division of Sport Fish has monitored both the Kanektok and Aniak river sport fisheries with additional inseason harvest surveys and stock assessment projects in the past (Minard 1987; Minard and Brookover 1988; Dunaway and Bingham 1992; Dunaway and Fleischman 1995; Dunaway 1997; Lafferty and Bingham 2002). Additionally, the USFWS TNWR has archived age and size data from Chinook salmon spawning in the Kanektok River (Lisac and MacDonald 1995; MacDonald 1996; M. Lisac, Fisheries Biologist, USFWS, Dillingham, personal communication).

Sport harvests of Chinook salmon are minor in comparison to the commercial and subsistence harvests of the area (Tables 5–7). However, there is angler desire to participate in the Chinook salmon fisheries of the Kuskokwim-Goodnews area. The average angler trip length in Western Alaska is at least 6 days (Lafferty and Bingham 2002). In the Kuskokwim Bay sport fisheries the 10-year average is near 12,000 angler-days per season (Table 3), which is about half the KGMA total annual effort (Table 4).

Historically, approximately 15% of Chinook salmon caught in the KGMA sport fishery were harvested annually from 1996–2016 (Tables 7). Catch and harvest numbers in the Kuskokwim River and Kuskokwim Bay tributaries have been low in the last few years due to harvest restrictions, up to and including complete closures of the fisheries in 2014 and 2015, and closure in the Kuskokwim River drainages (excluding Kuskokwim Bay) in 2016–2018. Catches in the Kuskokwim Bay area peaked at 10,500 Chinook salmon in 2005; and from 2008 through 2017, catches ranged from 1,200 to 9,000 Chinook salmon (Table 10), with the low range reflecting the heavily restricted year of 2014. In 2017, catches in Kuskokwim Bay were near 5,000. Most anglers participate in the KGMA Chinook salmon fisheries via float trips in tributary headwaters, a significant distance from estuarine waters. Furthermore, most of the popular sport fisheries have significant river segments under unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure requirements to protect rainbow trout. Accepting that delayed hooking mortality is minor at 10% or less (Bendock and Alexandersdottir 1992), overall fishing mortality (harvest + delayed mortality) may account for a minimal number of fish removed from the populations. The estimated harvest of Chinook salmon in the Kuskokwim River drainage sport fisheries has remained low (<1,000 in recent years and estimated at zero in the years 2012 through 2017; Table 8). This is due in part to recent restrictions and care taken by anglers to not retain sport-caught Chinook salmon in the Kuskokwim River because of perceptions regarding the sport fishery.

Recent Fishery Performance

In 2017, the Chinook salmon run was expected to be below average, and it was anticipated that several of the escapement goals would not be met. Preseason actions included sport fish closure for Chinook salmon in the Kuskokwim River drainage, excluding the Kuskokwim Bay drainages. This EO (3-KS-V-02-16) was issued March 30, prior to the Chinook salmon season, in cooperation with conservation measures taken by the Division of Commercial Fisheries and USFWS.

In 2016–2018 in expectation of low Chinook salmon numbers, commercial fishing would have been curtailed through the Chinook salmon season, had there been a buyer/processor available, and the sport fishery for Chinook salmon remained closed the entire season (Appendix A).

Chinook salmon sport fisheries were characterized as below average from 2010 through 2012 and have been virtually non-existent in much of the KGMA area during the years 2013–2018 due to restrictions and low escapements. Chinook salmon fishing has been allowed in the Kuskokwim Bay drainages in 2016–2018.

In 2017, Chinook salmon escapements at the Kogruklu River weir and the George River weir exceeded their SEG ranges and escapement at the Kwethluk River weir was with the SEG. Seven tributaries have aerial survey SEGs, and of these five were within their SEG ranges, and two tributaries were either below the SEG or stream conditions prevented an accurate survey (Table 9). The drainagewide goal for Chinook salmon (65,000–120,000) was achieved at about 149,000 (Nicholas Smith, 2017, Commercial Fisheries Biologist, ADF&G, Anchorage, 2017, personal communication).

Beginning June 12, 2017, the USFWS issued a Special Action (SA) that closed all Chinook salmon fishing to non-federally qualified users within the boundaries of the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge. This SA was rescinded effective July 6.

In 2018, the combination of Federal Special Actions and Emergency Orders by the State resulted in the subsistence fishery for Chinook salmon being restricted for extended periods of time. There was no commercial fishery for any salmon due to lack of a buyer. The sport fishery for Chinook salmon remained closed all season in the Kuskokwim River. The Kuskokwim River drainagewide SEG was likely achieved for Chinook salmon in 2018.

Kuskokwim Bay Tributaries

In 2017, there were no commercial salmon fishing periods in Kuskokwim Bay tributaries due to lack of processor. The sport fishery remained open with background bag and possession limits for Chinook salmon. The Kanektok River weir did not operate due to lack of funding, and aerial surveys efforts to assess escapements were hampered by poor weather. In the Goodnews River, the Chinook salmon biological escapement goal (BEG) was exceeded at 6,576 fish (BEG range 1,500–2,900 fish; A. Tiernan, 2017, Commercial Fisheries Biologist, ADFG, Anchorage personal communication).

In 2018, there were also no commercial salmon fishing periods due to lack of processor. The sport fishery remained open to 3 Chinook salmon over 20", only two of which may be 28" or longer. Aerial surveys at the Kanektok River were not conducted due to inclement weather, and the Middle Fork Goodnews River weir did not operate due to sustained high water levels throughout the season (A. Tiernan, 2017, Commercial Fisheries Biologist, ADFG, Anchorage personal communication).

Fishery Objectives and Management

ADF&G has assessed Chinook salmon escapements and harvest through several programs in the Kuskokwim River area. Commercial harvest monitoring is conducted through fish tickets, and surveys are utilized to estimate harvests from the subsistence and sport fisheries. Salmon escapement is monitored through aerial surveys, test fishing, and weirs in the Kuskokwim River and tributaries. The primary Chinook salmon escapement programs in the Kuskokwim River drainage are weirs located on the Tulusak, Kwethluk, Kogruklu, George, Tatlawiksuk, and

Salmon (Aniak River) rivers. A recently added weir on the Pitka Fork of the Kuskokwim River near the headwaters may contribute to a better understanding of Kuskokwim River drainage escapements. (Schaberg et al. 2012).

Most Kuskokwim River Chinook salmon escapement goals are based on aerial survey information. Often, these aerial surveys are sporadic because of aircraft availability or weather conditions, and this method of evaluating escapement has been unsatisfactory in understanding Kuskokwim River drainage Chinook salmon production. Therefore, ADF&G has invested in weir operations in locations where feasible. Generally, location of these weirs is not based on the proportion of the total run using a tributary but on suitability of the site for weir operation and maintenance. Many of the larger tributaries and the larger stocks of Chinook salmon, such as the Aniak and Holitna rivers (Schaberg et al. 2012), are not completely assessed, but are assessed with sporadic aerial surveys of Chinook salmon and weirs on the Kogrukluuk and Salmon rivers, which serve as indices for these drainages. Test fishing in the Lower Kuskokwim River near Bethel provides relative abundance and run timing at Bethel, but not a measure of escapement.

Current Issues and Fishery Outlook

Kuskokwim River and Tributaries

Some of the lowest recorded escapements of Chinook salmon in the Kuskokwim River have occurred during the past 6 years (Table 9). This has resulted in closures to sport fisheries, restriction to subsistence fisheries, and delay of chum salmon-directed commercial fisheries to avoid incidental catch of Chinook salmon. Though the 2017 and 2018 (preliminary) Chinook salmon runs were stronger than in recent years, the estimated escapement was still predicted to be lower than average. These low counts mean that restrictions to the subsistence fishery will probably occur in 2018, and with them closures of the sport fishery. The commercial fishery was not prosecuted from 2016–2018 due to lack of market and is unlikely to be prosecuted in 2019 for the same reasons.

Recent Board of Fisheries Actions

At the January 2016 BOF meeting a board-generated proposal to restrict the subsistence Chinook salmon fishery until after June 12 was passed. The lone Kuskokwim Area sport fish proposal was from the village of Quinhagak to restrict certain sport fish gear types. That proposal did not pass. The next BOF meeting will occur in January 2019.

Current or Recommended Research and Management Activities

In recent years, weirs have been used to enumerate Chinook salmon escapements on the Kwethluk, Tuluksak, George, Kogrukluuk, Tatlawiksuk, and Takotna rivers (Whitmore et al. 2008; Brazil et al. 2011). In addition, from 2001 to 2004 a mark-recapture study was conducted on the Holitna River to estimate abundance of Chinook salmon in that system (Wuttig and Evenson 2002; Chythlook and Evenson 2003; Stroka and Brase 2004; Stroka and Reed 2005). In 2002, a mainstem mark-recapture project was implemented by Division of Commercial Fisheries to assess Chinook, chum, and coho salmon abundance upstream of Kalskag. Division of Sport Fish conducted a Chinook salmon radiotelemetry project on the mainstem Kuskokwim from 2002 through 2006 (Stuby 2007). Division of Commercial Fisheries continued this project in 2007. Aerial surveys conducted by Division of Commercial Fisheries remain an important component of Chinook salmon assessment in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews area (Table 10).

In the Kuskokwim Bay drainage of Kanektok due to lack of funding the weir has been discontinued as of the 2016 season. Escapement estimates have then been made solely from aerial survey counts if the weather cooperates. The Goodnews River weir has also been under consideration for closure at certain times due to lack of funding.

Coho Salmon

Background and Historic Perspective

Coho salmon are present in the majority of area streams and are caught and harvested in tributaries of Kuskokwim Bay and the Kuskokwim River. There has historically been a large commercial harvest of coho salmon in the Kuskokwim River and Kuskokwim Bay; however, there has been no commercial fishery beginning in 2016 due to a lack of a commercial buyer. In the last 20 years, the commercial harvest has ranged from 32,000 in 1999 to nearly 1.1 million coho salmon in 1996 (Tables 11–13). The recent commercial harvest up to 2015 has averaged approximately 91,000 coho salmon in the Kuskokwim River for the 5-year average and 108,000 for the 10-year average (Table 11; A. Tiernan, Commercial Fisheries Biologist, ADF&G, Anchorage, 2017, personal communication). The Kuskokwim River itself is characterized by broad channels and turbid water, thereby limiting sport fishing largely to clearwater tributaries of the Kuskokwim River and Kuskokwim Bay. The largest coho salmon sport fisheries are located in the Kanektok, Goodnews, and Aniak rivers (Tables 13 and 14).

Sport harvests and catch of coho salmon are estimated through the SWHS. Commercial and subsistence harvests are managed by Division of Commercial Fisheries located in Bethel (Bavilla et. al 2010; Brazil et al. 2011; Burkey et al. 1997–2001; Ward et al. 2003; Whitmore et al. 2005). The Kanektok River has the most complete information on commercial, subsistence, and sport harvest of coho salmon in the area (Table 11). Division of Sport Fish has monitored both the Kanektok and Aniak rivers with additional inseason harvest surveys and stock assessment projects in the past (Dunaway 1997; Dunaway and Bingham 1992; Dunaway and Fleischman 1995; Lafferty and Bingham 2002; Minard 1987; Minard and Brookover 1988). Data from the Division of Sport Fish Guide Logbook program, collected since 2006, provides additional information to the catch-and-harvest estimates from the SWHS (Sigurdsson and Powers 2009-2013). Additionally, USFWS staff from the TNWR archived age and size data from coho salmon spawning in the Kanektok Rivers (Lisac and MacDonald 1995; MacDonald 1996).

Prior to 1987, bag limits for coho salmon were very liberal, allowing 15 fish per day, 30 fish in possession. The liberal bag and possession limits were adopted to accommodate subsistence fishers who were using rod and reel for subsistence purposes but were required to purchase a sport fishing license. In 1987, the BOF recognized the significance of the harvest potential of the Kanektok River sport fishery and reduced bag and possession limits to 5 fish. These limits have remained the standard for most of the area, with the exception of regulations in the Aniak River. Repeatedly, harvest surveys conducted on the Kanektok River indicated that sport anglers rarely (7–15%) took a full bag limit of coho salmon and most of the anglers (61–66%) elected to take no fish, even though 95% of them had caught and released a fish (Dunaway and Bingham 1992; Dunaway and Fleischman 1995).

Recent Fishery Performance

Sport harvests of coho salmon are very small in comparison to the commercial harvests in the area (Tables 10–12). However, angler desire to participate in coho salmon fisheries is high. In

the KGMA, for the recent 5-year average (2012–2016), approximately 5,000 coho salmon were harvested, while approximately 40,000 coho salmon were caught and released (Tables 1 and 2). Delayed mortality has been a concern in some coho salmon fisheries within the state; however, these coho salmon fisheries studies were situated in estuarine waters. Most of the anglers participating in the KGMA fisheries were on float trips in tributary headwaters, and furthermore, these headwaters have special management regulations to protect rainbow trout, with only unbaited, single-hook, artificial lures permitted. Accepting that delayed hooking mortality is minor (15% or less; Stuby 2002), the overall mortality of coho salmon caused by the area sport fisheries is considered sustainable given escapement levels.

In 2017, sport fish catches for coho salmon were above average throughout Kuskokwim Bay and near average for the Kuskokwim River (Tables 13 and 14). This result is probably a reflection of a continued desire to catch coho salmon since the Chinook salmon sport fishery has been largely restricted or closed. Sport harvest for the entire management area at the end of the 2017 season was near average (Table 1).

In 2017 and 2018, high water conditions made assessment of coho salmon escapement difficult throughout the Kuskokwim River drainage and Kuskokwim Bay.

Fishery Objectives and Management

ADF&G has focused on assessing salmon escapements and harvests through several programs in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews area. Harvest monitoring is conducted through commercial fish tickets and surveys designed to estimate harvests from subsistence and sport fisheries. Salmon escapement is monitored through aerial surveys, test fishing, and weirs in the Kuskokwim River drainage. The primary coho salmon escapement programs in the Kuskokwim River drainage are aerial surveys and the Kogruklu River weir. An escapement goal for coho salmon was established for the Kwethluk River in 2010 with a lower-bound sustainable escapement goal of $\geq 19,000$ fish; however, counts thus far remain incomplete due to persistent high-water events or operational periods that do not encompass the entire coho salmon run. The Bethel test fishery in the lower mainstem Kuskokwim River only provides relative abundance and run timing at Bethel.

Current Issues and Fishery Outlook

High water conditions throughout the area hampered assessment efforts for coho in 2017. Coho salmon passage at the Kwethluk River weir met the SEG for that system. Counts at the Kogruklu River weir were incomplete due to high water.

Recent Board of Fisheries Actions

Several proposals were presented at the January 2013 BOF meeting regarding closing the coho sport fishery or closing sport fishing in general. These proposals were specific to the Eek, Kwethluk, Kanektok, and Arolik Rivers (Chythlook 2014). None of these proposals were adopted.

Current or Recommended Research and Management Activities

A study using radiotelemetry and mark-recapture methods, based on the existing Kuskokwim River weir projects, operated in 2008 and 2009. This project used the combined expertise that divisions of Sport Fish and Commercial Fisheries have gained through recent Chinook and sockeye salmon projects (Stuby 2007; Sara Gilk Commercial Fisheries Biologist, ADF&G,

Anchorage, personal communication; Pawluk et al. 2006; Schaberg et al. 2012). Studies that evaluate mortality related to non-retention (Stuby 2002) in KGMA sport fisheries may be useful in interpreting total fishing mortality. Such studies may answer questions brought about by the general public regarding mortality related to non-retention.

Chum Salmon

Background and Historic Perspective

Kuskokwim-Goodnews area chum salmon stocks are primarily harvested for subsistence and commercial uses. There has been a long history of subsistence use of chum salmon in the Kuskokwim River communities. Chum salmon were documented as being used for subsistence as early as 1922 (Burkey et al. 2000). In the past, the subsistence fishery has had few restrictions and most of the harvest has been taken using gillnets, either drift or setnet.

Directed commercial fishing for chum salmon in the Kuskokwim River began in 1971. This fishery continued and expanded, with a record harvest of 1.4 million in 1988 (Burkey et al. 2000). Commercial harvests declined to less than 100,000 in the late-1990s and more recently have ranged broadly from 1,000 to 118,000 (Table 15). Commercial harvests of Kuskokwim River chum salmon have generally declined from harvests that occurred in the 1980s, first due in part to low returns in the late 1990s, then largely due to low market demand during the mid-2000s, and most recently due to gear restrictions and delayed openings in effort to conserve Chinook salmon. The harvest of chum salmon has been very high in recent years during sockeye salmon-directed commercial fisheries in Kuskokwim Bay.

Recent Fishery Performance

In 2017, Commercial Fisheries Division characterized the chum salmon run timing as late, and all escapement projects showed an above average run. The Yukon Delta NWR and Federal Subsistence Board closed the Chinook and chum salmon fisheries to non-Federally qualified users from June 12th through July 6 within refuge boundaries. State subsistence management from June 12 onward included early season mesh restrictions and rolling openings for subsistence salmon fishing aimed at conserving Chinook salmon. The sport fishery for chum salmon remained unrestricted, as there is little harvest of chum salmon in that fishery. On average, sport harvests of chum salmon represent less than 1 percent of total KGMA chum salmon harvests (Table 15–17). According to the 10-year average, approximately 300 chum salmon were harvested and 11,000 to 20,000 chum salmon released annually from 2007 to 2016 (Tables 1 and 2). It is assumed that very little hooking mortality occurs because many of the anglers are on float trips in tributary headwaters and these headwaters have special management regulations to protect rainbow trout (i.e., unbaited, single-hook, artificial lures). Accepting that delayed hooking mortality is minor, at most 10%, the overall mortality of chum salmon is approximately 2,000 fish/yr. from sport fishing of the KGMA.

In 2018, efforts by both state and federal entities reduced the amount of subsistence salmon fishing time to conserve Chinook salmon, which may have influenced harvest numbers of chum salmon.

Fishery Objectives and Management

ADF&G has focused on assessing salmon escapements and harvests through several programs in the KGMA. Harvest monitoring is conducted through commercial fish tickets and surveys

designed to estimate harvests from the subsistence and sport fisheries. Salmon escapement is monitored through aerial surveys, test fishing, and weirs in the Kuskokwim River drainage.

Restrictions to the subsistence and commercial fisheries aimed at curbing Chinook salmon harvests in 2011–2017 likely increased chum salmon escapement, but probably had little influence on the chum salmon run overall.

Current Issues and Fishery Outlook

Recent trends in chum salmon production have provided surpluses for commercial and sport fisheries in the past 6 years. The 2017 Kuskokwim River chum was late, but eventually characterized as above average for escapement. The escapement at the Kogrukluk River weir exceeded the established SEG. There was no commercial fishery for any salmon during 2016–2018, and likely not in 2019 as there is currently no large-scale commercial buyer available.

Recent Board of Fisheries Actions

There were no proposals regarding sport fishing and the chum salmon fishery in particular during the 2016 AYK Board of Fish meeting.

Current or Recommended Research and Management Activities

Mark-recapture studies of chum salmon in the Kuskokwim River have been attempted in recent years but have not been successful. An understanding of Kuskokwim River chum salmon total run size would be very beneficial to the management of this species. Division of Commercial Fisheries has archived chum salmon samples from throughout the Kuskokwim River drainage for future genetics analysis.

Sockeye Salmon

Background and Historic Perspective

Sockeye salmon are present in the Kuskokwim River drainage but more plentiful in Kuskokwim Bay tributaries. The sockeye salmon stocks of the Kanektok and Goodnews rivers are the largest in the KGMA. Sockeye salmon stocks of the Kuskokwim River are relatively small and located sporadically throughout the drainage, with the largest occurring in the Holitna River drainage and at Telaquana Lake in the Stony River drainage (Templin et al. 2011). Most anglers venturing to Western Alaska are interested in Chinook salmon and rainbow trout opportunities; however, sockeye and coho salmon opportunities have become increasingly important to recreational anglers. Anglers seeking sockeye salmon fishing opportunities in the Kanektok and Goodnews rivers focus their efforts during the month of July prior to the Chinook salmon spawning season closure of July 25. Sport harvests and effort are estimated through the SWHS, while commercial and subsistence harvests are managed by Division of Commercial Fisheries located in Bethel and are reported in their FMRs (Ward et al. 2003; Whitmore et al. 2005, 2008; Bavilla et al. 2010; Brazil et al. 2011).

As with the other Pacific salmon, sport harvests of sockeye salmon represent less than 1 percent of the total KGMA sockeye salmon harvests (Table 18). Commercial fisheries of Kuskokwim Bay target sockeye salmon in July. Harvests in 2015 were above average at about 30,000 fish for the Quinhagak District and near average at about 26,000 fish for the Goodnews Bay District (A. Tiernan, Commercial Fisheries Biologist, ADF&G, Anchorage, personal communication). There were no commercial harvests in 2016–2018, and likely to be none in 2019 due to lack of commercial buyers.

Recent Fishery Performance

With strong returns recently, sport anglers in the Kuskokwim Bay streams have responded by catching more sockeye salmon, with a record catch of over 14,000 in 2006 (Table 19). In 2017, catch was above average at about 9,000 fish. Recreational sockeye salmon catches in the Kanektok and Goodnews rivers have averaged over 3,000 and over 2,000 fish/yr. for 2012–2016 (Table 19). Harvest in Kuskokwim Bay rivers has not increased as much as catch, with most anglers practicing non-retention. In general, less than 1 sockeye salmon is harvested per 10 caught for the Goodnews and Kanektok rivers (Table 19). A small sport fishery for sockeye salmon exists on Lower Kuskokwim River tributaries such as the Aniak, Kisaralik, and Kwethluk rivers. The 2017 sport fish catch of sockeye salmon in Lower Kuskokwim River tributaries was small at just over 100 and no harvest was reported (Table 20). Historically catches within the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Management Area have averaged near 7,000 fish, with 2006 being a standout year with over 16,000 salmon caught (Table 2).

Fishery Objectives and Management

Sockeye salmon management of Kuskokwim Bay is outlined under the *District 4 Salmon Management Plan* (5 AAC 07.367); sockeye salmon management in Goodnews Bay, District 5 follows a similar regulation pattern, although there is no formal management plan (Ward et al. 2003; Whitmore et al. 2005). Escapement-based management has been challenging in Kuskokwim Bay. In the past, escapements have been evaluated by aerial surveys; however, multiple salmon species and frequent poor survey conditions have made documenting salmon escapements difficult. Finding a reliable method of assessing salmon escapements has not been an easy task in the Kanektok River. Counting towers and sonar projects have been attempted but water conditions, staff availability, and budgetary constraints have limited the success of these projects. A resistance-board weir has been successful; unfortunately, the weir site is 42 miles upstream from the mouth and commercial fishery. In addition, this weir has not been funded from 2016–2018. The Goodnews River weir is located on the Middle Fork, 15 miles upstream of the mouth and where the commercial fishery occurs, and it represents an index of sockeye salmon escapement into the entire drainage. Aerial surveys are still used to estimate sockeye salmon escapement in other tributaries of the Goodnews River drainage. Additional sockeye salmon assessment has been conducted to evaluate the contribution of escapement in the mainstem of the Goodnews River in relation to index counts from the weir (Menard 1998; Estensen 2003). The Goodnews River weir has an escapement goal range of 18,000 to 40,000 for sockeye salmon. The Kanektok River aerial survey sustainable escapement goal for sockeye salmon is 14,000 to 34,000 fish. Aerial surveys have historically been used to count sockeye salmon escapement in the Kanektok and Goodnews rivers, but surveys have not been successful every year, and this has made escapement-based management difficult. However, commercial fisheries management has followed a simple fishing schedule based on fishery performance in relation to the historic mean harvest and CPUE of the commercial fishery, and this method has worked to provide sustained yields.

Current Issues and Fishery Outlook

During 2016–2018, lack of commercial buyer resulted in zero harvests in the commercial fishery, and subsequently greater escapements in Kuskokwim Bay. In 2017, aerial surveys were not conducted at either the Kanektok River or the Goodnews river due to sustained poor weather

(A. Tiernan, fisheries biologist, ADF&G Commercial Fisheries Division, personal communication).

In the Kuskokwim River in 2017, sockeye salmon escapement was characterized as well above average overall, and the Kogruklu River escapement was near the top of the SEG range at 16,328 (A. Tiernan, fisheries biologist, ADF&G Commercial Fisheries Division, personal communication).

In 2018, the sockeye salmon escapement was estimated to be well above average in the Kuskokwim River, and the Kogruklu River weir exceeded the upper end of the escapement goal at nearly 19,000 fish. This was again likely a result of efforts to conserve Chinook salmon. The sockeye salmon aerial survey SEG was exceeded at Kanektok with 326,200 fish (SEG range 14,000 to 34,000). The Goodnews River weir did not operate during the 2018 season due to high water, and aerial surveys were not conducted due to sustained poor weather during the survey period (A. Tiernan, fisheries biologist, ADF&G Commercial Fisheries Division, personal communication).

Recent Board of Fisheries Actions

At the 2016 AYK Board of Fisheries meeting, there was a proposal for the Kanektok River that aimed to restrict sport fish gear types. This proposal did not pass.

Current or Recommended Research and Management Activities

Division of Commercial Fisheries has undertaken sockeye salmon radiotelemetry projects and sampling for genetics (Templin et. al. 2011). Approximately half of the sockeye salmon in the Kuskokwim River have origins in the Holitna River drainage, followed by the Aniak River and, distantly, by other smaller drainages. Other current projects include a recently completed mark-recapture study, a genetic mark-recapture study, and a weir at Telaquana Lake operated with volunteers and in cooperation with the National Park Service (Elison et al. 2012).

RESIDENT SPECIES FISHERIES

Rainbow Trout

Background and Historic Perspective

Combining salmon and rainbow trout fishing is probably one of the major attractions for anglers traveling to the KGMA. Area rainbow trout stocks are extremely important to the people of the state and to recreational and tourism-based services that contribute to the state's economy.

Rainbow trout of the KGMA are found only in the Lower Kuskokwim River drainages and tributaries of Kuskokwim Bay. These stocks of rainbow trout are at the northern range of their geographic distribution. Many of these rainbow trout stocks are small, grow slowly, mature at older ages, and are found in low densities. As with any population on the edge of its distribution, these stocks are more sensitive to changes in climate and food availability. The *Southwest Alaska Rainbow Trout Management Plan* (SWAKRTMP; ADF&G 1990) recognizes these factors and provides a policy for conservative management and maintenance of rainbow trout stocks in the Lower Kuskokwim River and Kuskokwim Bay.

Sport fishing effort, catch, and harvest are estimated by the SWHS. In the past, subsistence harvest surveys have focused on salmon, but in 2000, the Division of Subsistence began to estimate resident fish harvests, including rainbow trout on a community basis. The value of

these data to management is limited because estimates are based on communities of harvest rather than drainage. Division of Commercial Fisheries manages all subsistence fisheries in the region.

Recent Fishery Performance

Total areawide rainbow trout sport harvests have rarely exceeded the 1,500 fish taken in 1988 (Lafferty 2003; Chythlook 2006), and the recent 5-year average is about 100 rainbow trout (Table 21) in the Kuskokwim River drainages, and about 50 in the Kuskokwim Bay drainages (Table 22).

In 2017, Kuskokwim Bay catches were above average. Rainbow trout catches were reported to be above the most recent 5-year average at Kuskokwim River locations, but lower than the most recent 10-year average. The 2017 catch for the Lower Kuskokwim River drainages was about 12,100 rainbow trout (Table 22). Although catch rates were different between Kuskokwim Bay and Kuskokwim River drainages, nearly all sport-caught rainbow trout caught in the entire Kuskokwim-Goodnews area were released (Tables 22 and 23).

Fishery Objectives and Management

During the mid-1980s, bag limits were adopted in the KGMA to eliminate excessive harvests. Bag limits at that time were very liberal, providing opportunity for local people to meet their subsistence needs. In conjunction with adoption of the SWAKRTMP, the Aniak River drainage (Figure 2) was designated a special management area above its confluence with the Doestock River with unbaited, single-hook, artificial-lure restrictions, and no retention allowed.

During 1997, upper sections of the Kisaralik and Kwethluk rivers and the entire length of the Kasigluk River were recognized as special rainbow trout waters under the guidelines of the SWAKRTMP, resulting in regulations allowing only unbaited, single-hook, artificial lures. Portions of this plan were subsequently adopted into the statewide rainbow trout management plan (5 AAC 75.220).

Current Issues and Fishery Outlook

The rainbow trout stocks of the KGMA provide high catch rates in all size classes, which are strong indicators of healthy fish populations. Local anglers and the sport fishing guide industry continue to provide positive comments on rainbow trout stocks. Some guides and individuals have raised concerns about rainbow trout stocks on the Aniak and Kanektok rivers, generally involving a lower number of large rainbow trout and fewer rainbow trout in general. The outlook for rainbow trout stocks in the KGMA is generally good. Rainbow trout greater than 25 inches are occasionally caught. In the short term, impacts of rod-and-reel subsistence fishing appear to be minor, but resident fish populations rebuild slowly, particularly on the edge of their distribution range.

In March 2003, the BOF adopted the *Statewide Management Standards for Wild Trout* (5 AAC 75.220, 2003), which consolidated regulations for rainbow trout stocks not under special management. Within the KGMA, the Kasigluk, Arolik, Kisaralik, and Kwethluk rivers are not under special management regulations in the SWAKRTMP and fall under the statewide standard bag limit of 2 fish with only 1 fish 20 inches or greater in length and an annual limit of 2 fish that are 20 inches or greater in length. There are currently no major biological concerns for rainbow trout fisheries in the Kuskokwim River drainage and Kuskokwim Bay. With close attention to

sport and subsistence harvests to ensure the health of local stocks, area stocks should continue to provide good angling opportunities.

Recent Board of Fisheries Actions

One proposal was presented at the January 2016 BOF meeting regarding sport fishing gear type (line weight) on the Kanektok and Arolik Rivers. This proposal was not adopted.

Current or Recommended Research and Management Activities

Several onsite creel surveys in the Kanektok and Aniak rivers have been conducted to verify catch, harvest, and angler effort (Adams 1996; Alt 1986; Dunaway 1997; Dunaway and Bingham 1992; Dunaway and Fleischman 1995; Lafferty and Bingham 2002; Minard 1987, 1990; Minard and Brookover 1988). These surveys emphasized sport fisheries that included rainbow trout fisheries.

Another tagging study of Kisaralik River rainbow trout in 1997 by the USFWS estimated the rainbow trout population to be in excess of 16,000 rainbow trout in a 79-km study section (Harper et al. 2005). Rainbow trout density estimates range from 200 rainbow trout/km in the Kisaralik River to 650 rainbow trout/km in the Kanektok River. Although these mark-recapture experiments were flawed because of potential emigration and immigration of tagged fish, the density estimates are a rough approximation of density and provide confidence that existing catches estimated by SWHS are sustainable. Area rainbow trout stocks continue to be conservatively managed.

A rainbow trout radiotelemetry project began in the Aniak River drainage in fall 2008 (Schwanke and Thalhauser 2011). This project followed radiotagged fish the next 2 seasons in an attempt to gain insight into spawning areas and migratory habits. One of the major conclusions of this project was that rainbow trout that are caught in the winter subsistence fishery through the ice near the village of Aniak are probably a separate population of fish than those caught by sport and subsistence users upriver during the open-water season.

Similar work on the Kanektok River was initiated in 2009. Somewhat predictably, preliminary data from this project suggest that rainbow trout on the Kanektok River move downriver and into the mainstem during the winter and spread upriver and into tributaries during the spring/summer (Schwanke 2015).

In addition, work on the Kisaralik River was conducted in 2011. This cooperative project (including Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge, Kenai Fisheries Resource Office, and ADF&G Division of Sport Fish staff) involved a mark-recapture study on the Kisaralik River drainage. This project updated the 1997 Kisaralik River study done by the USFWS to assess changes in the 10+ years since that study was completed. The estimate generated by this study suggests a slightly lower population than the 1997 study, about 5,000 rainbow trout larger than 350 mm compared to about 7,000 (Schwanke 2011).

A project to enumerate rainbow trout in the Lower Kisaralik River that were not covered in the 2011 study has been proposed and may be scheduled for 2019.

Dolly Varden/Arctic Char

Background and Historical Perspective

Dolly Varden/Arctic char (DV/AC) are found throughout the KGMA. Distribution of both Dolly Varden and Arctic char *S. alpinus* overlap in this area of Alaska, and it can be difficult to differentiate between the species. Populations of Dolly Varden are both anadromous and freshwater resident. Arctic char are primarily lake residents in this part of Alaska. The distributions and external characteristics of these species make identification a challenge. For management purposes, these closely related species are treated as a composite.

Anglers focusing on DV/AC target mainly clear-water tributaries and lakes of the area. Within the KGMA, the largest catches of DV/AC occur in tributaries of Kuskokwim Bay and the Aniak River. Many DV/AC are caught incidentally while anglers are fishing for salmon and rainbow trout. Regulations that protect rainbow trout also protect other resident fish species, such as DV/AC. Local residents seek DV/AC when salmon are not available as a fresh source of fish. Stock sizes of DV/AC in the KGMA remain unknown, and the DV/AC of the Kuskokwim River tributaries remain largely unstudied. Life history and run timing of stocks in the Kanektok and Goodnews rivers have been studied and are suspected to be similar to stocks in the Lower Kuskokwim tributaries such as the Kwethluk and Kisaralik rivers (Menard 1998).

Recent Fishery Performance

In 2017, catches were characterized as below average at most Kuskokwim River locations, likely due in part to fluctuating water conditions and visibility. This is reflected in catch reported by the SWHS, about 6,300 fish in the Kuskokwim River (Table 23). Nearly all sport-caught DV/AC in the KGMA were released.

Fishery Objectives and Management

Sport fishing effort, catch, and harvest are estimated by the SWHS; estimates from the annual report are reviewed to ensure that sport harvests remain within sustainable yields. Current regulations and harvests appear to be within sustainable levels for DV/AC of the Kuskokwim River drainage. Declining sport harvests of DV/AC from the early 1980s to the 1990s (Lafferty 2001) can probably be attributed to additional protection from the SWAKRTMP, resulting in conservative methods and means (no bait, single-hook regulations) and changing attitudes of anglers regarding the harvest of DV/AC (Table 23).

Current Issues and Fishery Outlook

The DV/AC stocks of the KGMA are believed to be well protected in area sport fisheries with current regulations. The outlook for DV/AC and other resident fish species in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews area is currently good. ADF&G has invested substantial effort in regulation development to protect resident fish species.

There are currently no major biological concerns for DV/AC fisheries in the KGMA. Area stocks should continue to provide good angling opportunities for the 2019 season.

Recent Board of Fisheries Actions

One proposal was presented at the January 2016 BOF meeting regarding sport fishing gear type (line weight) on the Kanektok and Arolik Rivers. This proposal was not adopted.

Current or Recommended Research and Management Activities

No major activities are planned or recommended for DV/AC in the near future. However, in conjunction with other studies, incidentally caught DV/AC should be measured and fin clips collected for baseline genetic samples. Other agencies (USFWS) are developing a baseline genetic database to which any samples taken can be added.

Arctic Grayling

Background and Historical Perspective

Arctic grayling are probably the most widely distributed and abundant resident fish in the KGMA. Arctic grayling are found throughout many lakes, streams, and clearwater tributaries of the area. Nonresident anglers access most of the area via fly-in float trips on many of these tributaries. Anglers typically catch Arctic grayling while targeting salmon and rainbow trout. Current sport fishing regulations for rainbow trout provide additional protection to other fish species, with gear and hook restrictions in local tributaries. Recent sport fish harvests in Kuskokwim River and Kuskokwim Bay drainages range from 500 to about 2,000 fish (Table 1). Recent sport catches range between 11,000 and 36,000 Arctic grayling (Table 2). The Kisaralik River supports the largest Arctic grayling catch by the sport fishery in the Kuskokwim River drainage, averaging over 6,100 fish/yr during 2012–2016 (Table 24) with the Aniak, Kwethluk, and other Lower Kuskokwim tributaries contributing to catch and harvests to a lesser extent.

Recent Fishery Performance

In 2017, Arctic grayling catches in Kuskokwim River drainages were reported to be below average at most locations (Tables 2 and 24), likely due to high water conditions. Nearly all sport-caught Arctic grayling caught in the entire KGMA were released. High water conditions persisted throughout the season. Due to rain causing high and turbid water, catches were reported to be well below average in most locations.

Fishery Objectives and Management

Sport fishing effort, catch, and harvest are estimated by the SWHS; estimates from the annual report are reviewed to ensure that sport harvests do not exceed sustained yield. The focus of sport fishing regulation development is to enhance opportunity and provide sustainable harvests. Current regulations appear to be maintaining harvests within sustainable levels for Arctic grayling in the KGMA. Declining harvest rates of Arctic grayling from the early 1980s to the 1990s (Lafferty 2003) can be attributed to more restrictive regulations and changing attitudes of anglers regarding the harvest of Arctic grayling (Tables 1 and 2, 24), as well as development of more stringent regulations regarding non-retention of rainbow trout, especially in the Aniak River and Lower Kuskokwim rivers. These systems now require unbaited, single-hook, artificial lures, which reduces the catch (and harvest) of Arctic grayling, as well as providing added protection for rainbow trout.

Management strategies for Arctic grayling stocks in the KGMA are found in the *Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area Wild Arctic Grayling Management Plan* (5 AAC 71.055). The goal of management is to maintain naturally reproducing populations of Arctic grayling, with characteristics that are sustainable and are desirable to the public.

Current Issues and Fishery Outlook

Arctic grayling stocks of the KGMA are well protected with current sport fishing regulations. There are currently no major biological concerns for Arctic grayling fisheries in the area. Area stocks should continue to provide good angling opportunities.

Recent Board of Fisheries Actions

There have been no BOF actions specifically targeted toward Arctic grayling for the past 3 cycles.

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TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1.–Kuskokwim-Goodnews Management Area (including Kuskokwim Bay drainages) sport fishing harvest by species, 1997–2017.

Year	King Salmon	Coho Salmon	Sockeye Salmon	Pink Salmon	Chum Salmon	Rainbow Trout	Lake Trout	Dolly Varden /Arctic char	Arctic Grayling	Northern Pike	Whitefish	Burbot	Sheefish
1997	3,345	5,430	1,181	75	384	1,336	404	3,337	1,292	408	614	0	589
1998	3,401	4,023	1,627	122	596	523	131	1,581	3,469	1,430	1,220	136	119
1999	1,440	3,974	1,154	0	520	510	128	2,038	1,290	548	9	228	268
2000	1,181	3,294	822	10	359	106	152	1,612	361	531	214	588	250
2001	1,384	4,474	422	11	176	17	63	1,698	807	474	20	50	124
2002	1,397	4,265	267	143	598	76	134	2,026	1,464	443	54	15	81
2003	734	5,297	289	46	67	204	244	2,710	1,259	783	89	87	45
2004	1,197	7,096	512	416	117	457	497	2,539	1,953	1,543	975	111	182
2005	1,092	5,591	792	66	608	141	233	2,135	1,287	3,749	209	75	1,079
2006	1,277	3,793	864	187	158	107	83	1,937	637	406	58	0	173
2007	2,543	3,802	876	0	439	232	42	1,492	827	346	342	0	435
2008	1,037	6,344	1,109	32	262	219	22	2,038	713	165	96	0	191
2009	1,399	4,724	394	337	351	197	29	2,176	1,307	981	664	0	161
2010	906	3,527	459	80	235	106	11	1,565	530	909	54	92	67
2011	1,733	3,713	662	0	354	13	24	1,231	713	247	70	0	114
2012	632	4,972	639	136	406	137	39	2,301	1,096	837	1,216	1,857	60
2013	132	5,946	471	39	351	377	14	2,032	1,002	321	1,482	597	74
2014	0	4,280	755	91	191	69	18	2,309	409	1,445	424	259	93
2015	0	4,877	171	0	185	20	50	1,247	475	332	0	0	107
2016	103	5,889	1,210	419	596	179	0	1,038	197	732	0	0	8
2017	167	4,497	1,467	34	230	18	52	858	242	17	0	0	8
Average 2007–2016	849	4,807	675	113	337	155	25	1,743	727	632	435	281	131
Average 2012–2016	173	5,193	649	137	346	156	24	1,785	636	733	624	543	68

Source: Alaska Sport Fishing Survey database [Internet]. 2003–2017. Anchorage, AK: Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Division of Sport Fish (cited October 20, 2018). Available from: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/sf/sportfishingsurvey/>

Table 2.–Kuskokwim-Goodnews Management Area sport fishing catch by species, 1997–2017.

Year	King Salmon	Coho Salmon	Sockeye Salmon	Pink Salmon	Chum Salmon	Rainbow Trout	Lake Trout	Dolly		Northern Pike	Whitefish	Burbot	Sheefish
								Varden/Arctic char	Arctic Grayling				
1997	32,990	29,726	5,744	2,766	15,498	61,566	1,167	89,299	34,586	4,432	732	180	2,091
1998	20,980	35,162	8,186	13,826	20,023	30,450	951	65,720	38,856	5,704	2,087	307	1,708
1999	12,859	40,902	7,360	1,209	27,261	26,254	1,089	54,597	23,975	5,643	109	228	1,381
2000	8,786	37,624	7,365	528	20,876	17,671	1,076	34,927	19,215	3,857	994	588	1,048
2001	18,480	42,689	5,102	1,031	12,430	14,494	243	36,550	22,813	4,081	814	50	742
2002	9,116	33,454	5,086	708	20,019	28,170	1,629	48,913	34,740	3,915	284	20	446
2003	9,242	68,545	7,527	1,128	15,513	16,902	3,435	50,250	26,782	2,645	433	97	768
2004	10,719	63,233	3,422	18,212	13,161	22,979	6,941	76,194	31,680	10,613	1,331	111	938
2005	13,143	40,420	7,854	2,454	15,457	17,128	1,951	49,353	11,599	10,425	334	75	3,933
2006	13,414	30,962	16,599	10,778	35,174	36,755	515	61,570	16,493	4,917	894	0	524
2007	21,013	28,406	6,544	1,128	19,563	29,150	655	42,337	20,907	4,606	769	0	452
2008	10,313	45,382	9,824	19,854	19,292	54,877	807	83,835	35,486	2,779	380	0	1,046
2009	6,879	23,143	3,595	1,650	14,398	49,534	654	57,625	35,693	4,354	957	0	768
2010	6,812	25,413	7,646	10,320	16,327	35,470	1,215	55,241	27,870	4,359	688	216	280
2011	13,448	36,033	8,301	1,105	17,247	37,049	485	64,818	29,418	4,129	555	6	1,593
2012	6,885	36,540	4,802	10,950	17,247	26,511	971	79,406	30,625	2,292	1,270	2,076	388
2013	5,357	43,413	5,734	1,299	17,001	40,530	450	90,132	42,005	2,954	1,560	607	358
2014	1,600	29,712	7,768	8,604	13,477	36,466	280	83,114	15,971	1,445	485	291	111
2015	4,335	58,373	7,441	2,747	17,796	35,390	250	66,036	21,952	2,529	537	0	226
2016	5,121	50,573	6,790	12,391	10,714	38,878	174	62,076	11,501	2,662	522	0	469
2017	5,074	60,953	10,306	4,443	11,511	44,408	168	77,075	15,029	953	219	0	154
Average 2007–2016	8,173	37,699	6,845	7,005	16,764	38,386	594	68,462	27,143	3,211	772	320	569
Average 2012–2016	4,654	43,722	6,507	7,198	16,163	35,555	425	76,153	24,411	2,376	875	595	310

Table 3.—Sport fishing effort (angler-days) in the Kuskokwim Bay drainages, 1997–2017.

Year	Kuskokwim Bay			Total
	Kanektok	Goodnews	Other	
1996	8,305	2,322	625	11,252
1997	9,706	5,011	1,807	17,999
1998	8,114	4,007	1,158	13,626
1999	8,194	8,353	705	17,560
2000	7,231	4,038	121	11,403
2001	9,063	2,826	201	12,206
2002	5,885	3,215	271	10,136
2003	7,655	3,622	133	11,659
2004	6,364	2,499	410	10,729
2005	5,789	2,612	32	8,854
2006	7,861	2,833	342	11,682
2007	5,071	3,375	960	9,406
2008	8,024	3,738	969	12,731
2009	3,267	2,212	1,031	6,510
2010	5,307	2,258	1,122	8,867
2011	7,235	3,064	1,431	11,730
2012	7,790	5,658	1,165	14,613
2013	8,792	4,517	0	13,309
2014	6,456	5,651	711	12,818
2015	9,346	4,961	216	14,523
2016	8,707	4,263	1,505	14,475
2017	8,314	1,750	1,205	11,269
Average 2007– 2016	7,000	3,970	911	11,880
Average 2012– 2016	8,218	5,010	719	13,948

Table 4.–Sport fishing effort (angler-days) in select Kuskokwim River tributaries, 1997–2017.

Year	Kuskokwim River					KGMA
	Aniak	Kisaralik	Kwethluk	Other	Holitna	Area Total
1997	4,778	1,578	642	1,445	1,678	27,318
1998	5,548	1,021	1,498	1,306	771	27,913
1999	3,235	1,316	402	1,992	1,236	26,563
2000	2,141	2,084	1,131	472	791	20,030
2001	2,121	1,304	1,069	258	1,853	20,673
2002	2,688	2,410	920	1,620	1,296	20,645
2003	2,998	1,439	2,646	3,548	1,748	24,369
2004	4,186	2,071	2,021	340	993	25,406
2005	2,497	714	2,022	525	1,452	19,447
2006	3,096	ND	1,922	1,867	9,034	22,389
2007	3,363	ND	1,067	4,414	9,217	21,206
2008	4,559	2,576	1,092	1,958	10,185	25,862
2009	2,611	2,235	1,387	1,203	7,346	17,791
2010	2,909	2,056	1,453	975	575	19,455
2011	1,715	2,417	369	92	2,673	22,141
2012	2,315	1,420	1,152	1,539	386	23,477
2013	2,189	1,871	1,117	1,341	166	21,642
2014	882	3,187	645	3,049	202	20,010
2015	1,528	662	609	1,275	964	20,917
2016	1,380	1,709	1,803	1,765	227	21,387
2017	652	978	1,468	797	43	20,715
Average 2007–2016	2,345	2,015	1,069	1,761	732	21,389
Average 2012–2016	1,659	1,770	1,065	1,794	389	21,487

Note: Cells without a number indicate years without enough Statewide Harvest Survey respondents, so estimates for that year may be in the “Other” category.

Table 5.—Harvest of king salmon in the commercial, subsistence, test, and sport fisheries of the Kuskokwim River, 1997–2017.

Year	Harvest				Total
	Commercial ^a	Subsistence ^b	Test Fishery	Sport ^c	
1997	10,441	79,382	332	1,627	91,782
1998	17,359	81,219	210	1,384	100,172
1999	4,705	72,775	98	351	77,929
2000	444	70,833	874	105	72,256
2001	90	78,009	86	290	78,475
2002	72	80,983	288	319	81,662
2003	158	67,228	409	401	68,196
2004	2,305	97,110	691	857	100,963
2005	4,784	85,097	608	572	91,061
2006	2,777	90,094	352	444	93,677
2007	179	96,139	503	1,683	98,504
2008	8,865	98,099	420	739	108,123
2009	6,664	78,225	470	917	86,276
2010	2,731	66,053	292	354	69,430
2011	748	62,368	337	757	64,210
2012	14	22,527	321	0	22,862
2013	1	47,113	201	0	47,315
2014	0	11,234	638	0	11,872
2015	2	16,124	472	0	16,598
2016	0	30,677	683	0	31,360
2017	0	16,380	374	0	16,754
Average					
2007–2016	1,920	52,857	434	445	55,648
Average					
2012–2016	3	25,538	463	0	25,987

^a Districts 1 and 2.

^b Estimated subsistence harvest expanded from villages surveyed. 2010 and 2013 estimates are preliminary. Methodology changed starting in 2008.

^c Statewide Harvest Survey (1991–2017).

Table 6.—Harvest of king salmon in the commercial, subsistence, and sport fisheries in the Goodnews River, 1997–2017.

Year	Harvest			Total
	Commercial ^a	Subsistence ^b	Sport	
1997	2,039	441	86	2,566
1998	3,675	735	431	4,841
1999	1,888	759	223	2,870
2000	4,442	564	243	5,249
2001	1,519	863	147	2,529
2002	979	723	224	1,926
2003	1,412	807	10	2,229
2004	2,565	863	100	3,528
2005	2,035	869	0	2,904
2006	2,892	713	79	3,684
2007	3,126	647	177	3,950
2008	1,281	1,012	78	2,371
2009	1,509	585	31	2,125
2010	1,752	480	0	2,232
2011	2,092	784	51	2,977
2012	1,531	389	41	1,961
2013	495	413	102	1,010
2014	205	431	0	636
2015	705	220	0	925
2016	0	654	68	722
2017	0	457	57	514
Average				
2007–2016	1,270	566	52	2,021
Average				
2012–2016	587	421	42	1,133

^a Goodnews District commercial harvest (A. Tiernan, Commercial Fisheries biologist, ADF&G, Anchorage, personal communication)

^b Subsistence harvest by the community of Goodnews (Colton Lipka, Commercial Fisheries biologist, ADF&G, Anchorage, personal communication)

Table 7.—Harvest of king salmon in the commercial, subsistence, and sport fisheries in the Kanektok River, 1997–2017.

Year	Harvest			Total
	Commercial ^a	Subsistence ^b	Sport	
1997	35,510	3,186	1,632	40,328
1998	23,158	3,774	1,475	28,407
1999	18,426	2,815	854	22,095
2000	21,229	3,053	833	25,115
2001	12,775	3,177	947	16,899
2002	11,480	2,649	779	14,908
2003	14,444	2,563	323	17,330
2004	25,465	4,563	228	30,526
2005	24,195	3,505	520	28,220
2006	19,184	5,163	754	25,101
2007	19,573	4,686	633	24,892
2008	13,812	3,923	220	17,735
2009	13,920	2,976	400	17,296
2010	14,230	2,692	552	17,474
2011	15,387	2,177	891	18,455
2012	6,675	2,396	591	9,662
2013	2,054	3,143	30	5,227
2014	2,265	3,723	0	5,988
2015	7,547	3,082	0	10,629
2016	0	4,822	17	4,839
2017	0	5,217	110	5,327
Average 2007–2016	9,546	3,362	346	13,242
Average 2012–2016	3,708	3,433	128	7,269

^a Kanektok District commercial harvest (A. Tiernan, Commercial Fisheries biologist, ADF&G, Anchorage, personal communication)

^b Subsistence harvest by the community of Quinhagak (C. Lipka, Commercial Fisheries biologist, ADF&G, Anchorage, personal communication)

Table 8.–Sport fishing harvest and catch of king salmon in the Aniak, Kisaralik, Kwethluk, and other Kuskokwim rivers, 1997–2017.

Year	Aniak River		Kisaralik River		Kwethluk River		Holitna River		Kuskokwim River Total	
	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch
1997	801	13,069	49	679	49	108	166	786	1,480	17,974
1998	1,058	5,896	6	74	75	467	54	335	1,388	7,905
1999	134	2,776	0	12	0	0	25	240	351	4,691
2000	10	431	10	343	20	172	22	22	105	1,173
2001	12	713	0	62	43	77	73	823	290	4,657
2002	135	1,759	46	531	30	195	53	210	319	3,225
2003	12	874	75	552	103	861	48	272	391	5,020
2004	335	1,103	58	1,774	150	778	136	619	857	5,427
2005	189	594	40	907	65	385	180	470	572	2,652
2006	29	1,201	86	359	183	493	16	173	444	3,480
2007	162	5,380	446	1,096	93	733	86	171	1,683	11,224
2008	26	3,614	148	1,583	149	845	122	992	739	7,382
2009	10	796	51	287	42	499	0	676	917	3,586
2010	0	1,902	0	717	136	584	39	130	354	3,564
2011	51	1,069	17	864	0	0	318	1,641	579	4,249
2012	0	135	0	97	0	86	0	0	0	415
2013	0	328	0	0	0	211	0	0	0	662
2014	0	241	0	111	0	18	0	0	0	370
2015	0	66	0	20	0	0	0	129	0	300
2016	0	35	0	141	0	477	0	0	0	1,174
2017	0	0	0	18	0	147	0	0	0	165
Average										
2007–2016	25	1,357	66	492	42	345	57	368	445	3,293
Average										
2012–2016	0	161	0	74	0	158	0	26	0	584

Table 9.–Peak aerial survey index counts of king salmon in tributaries of the Lower Kuskokwim River, 1997–2018.

Year	Eek River	Kwethluk River	Kisaralik River	Tuluksak River	Aniak River	Kipchuk River ^a	Salmon River ^c
1997	-	-	439	173	2,187	855	980
1998	-	27	457	-	2,239	353	-
1999	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2000	-	-	-	-	714	182	152
2001	-	-	-	-	-	-	598
2002	-	1,795	2,285	-	1,856	1,615	1,236
2003	1,236	2,628	654	94	3,514	1,493	1,242
2004	4,653	6,801	6,913	1,196	5,569	1,868	2,177
2005	-	5,002	4,081	672	-	1,944	4,097
2006	-	-	4,734	-	5,639	1,618	-
2007	-	-	692	173	3,984	2,147	1,458
2008	-	487	1,074	-	3,222	1,061	589
2009	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2010	-	-	235	-	-	-	-
2011	249	-	534	-	-	116	79
2012	-	-	610	-	-	193	49
2013	240	-	597	83	754	261	154
2014	206	-	622	-	3,201	1,220	497
2015	-	-	709	-	-	917	810
2016	-	-	622	-	718	898	-
2017	-	-	-	-	1,781	889	423
2018	-	-	584	-	1,534	1,123	441
SEG							
Aerial survey index goal		580–1,800	400–1,200		1,200–2,300		600

Note: Estimates are from peak aerial surveys conducted between July 20 and July 31 under fair, good, or excellent conditions.

Blank cells indicate years in which surveys were not flown.

^a Tributaries of Aniak River.

^b Lower Kuskokwim drainages not surveyed in 2009 due to poor weather conditions.

Table 10.–Sport fishing harvest and catch of king salmon in the Kanektok, Goodnews, Arolik, and other Kuskokwim Bay rivers, 1997–2017.

Year	Kanektok River		Goodnews River		Arolik/Other Rivers		Kuskokwim Bay Total	
	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch
1997	1,632	13,374	86	1,578	0	0	718	14,952
1998	1,475	9,528	431	3,171	107	376	2,017	13,075
1999	854	4,205	223	3,823	12	140	1,089	8,168
2000	833	6,086	243	1,527	0	0	1,076	7,613
2001	947	10,842	147	2,769	0	212	1,094	13,823
2002	779	3,815	224	1,594	75	482	1,078	5,891
2003	323	3,480	10	695	0	36	333	4,222
2004	228	2,758	100	1,754	12	1,074	340	5,586
2005	520	10,116	0	375	0	0	520	10,491
2006	754	7,292	79	2,243	0	399	833	9,934
2007	633	6,331	177	1,461	50	1,997	860	9,789
2008	78	2,490	78	367	0	69	298	2,931
2009	400	2,522	31	561	51	210	482	3,293
2010	552	2,619	0	547	0	82	552	3,248
2011	891	6,911	51	1,000	34	1,288	976	9,199
2012	591	4,322	41	1,674	0	444	632	6,440
2013	30	3,215	102	1,480	0	0	132	4,695
2014	0	633	0	597	0	0	0	1,230
2015	0	3,236	0	193	0	665	0	4,094
2016	17	3,002	68	698	18	247	103	3,947
2017	110	3,078	37	1,750	0	81	147	4,909
Average 2007–2016	333	3,529	55	858	15	500	404	4,887
Average 2012–2016	128	2,882	42	928	4	271	173	4,081

Table 11.—Harvest of coho salmon in the commercial, subsistence, and sport fisheries in the Kuskokwim River, 1997–2017.

Year	Harvest			Total
	Commercial	Subsistence ^{a,b}	Sport ^c	
1997	130,803	29,817	2,408	163,028
1998	210,841	24,623	2,419	235,723
1999	23,593	27,409	1,998	53,000
2000	261,379	45,911	1,689	308,979
2001	192,998	31,089	1,204	225,291
2002	83,463	42,617	2,030	128,110
2003	284,064	33,291	3,459	320,814
2004	435,407	48,898	4,996	489,301
2005	142,319	33,351	3,539	176,261
2006	185,598	41,272	1,474	228,344
2007	141,049	35,212	2,504	176,261
2008	142,862	46,461	3,893	193,216
2009	104,546	29,559	3,526	137,631
2010	58,031	32,094	1,549	91,854
2011	74,108	32,172	1,693	107,973
2012	86,389	28,294	1,752	116,435
2013	114,069	26,409	1,239	141,717
2014	117,557	49,736	1,326	168,619
2015	65,034	33,939	1,412	100,385
2016	0	36,787	1,686	38,473
2017	0	37,788	976	38,764
Average				
2007–2016	90,365	35,066	2,076	128,459
Average				
2012–2016	76,610	35,033	1,483	112,299

^a Estimated subsistence harvest expanded from villages surveyed.

^b 2017 may be preliminary numbers (C. Lipka, Commercial Fisheries biologist, ADF&G, Anchorage, personal communication).

^c Statewide Harvest Survey (1991–2017).

Table 12.—Harvest of coho salmon in the commercial, subsistence, and sport fisheries in the Kanektok River, 1997–2017.

Year	Harvest			Total
	Commercial	Subsistence ^a	Sport ^b	
1997	32,862	1,105	1,220	35,187
1998	80,183	1,537	751	82,471
1999	6,184	1,781	1,091	9,056
2000	30,529	1,042	799	32,370
2001	18,531	1,719	2,448	22,698
2002	26,695	1,133	1,784	29,612
2003	49,833	1,868	1,076	52,777
2004	82,398	1,435	1,362	85,195
2005	51,708	1,558	1,006	54,344
2006	26,831	1,315	1,742	29,888
2007	34,710	1,550	1,087	36,260
2008	94,257	2,217	1,541	44,597
2009	48,115	1,703	876	50,773
2010	13,690	1,547	1,280	16,517
2011	30,457	1,369	981	32,799
2012	31,214	1,380	2,533	35,127
2013	58,079	1,631	2,509	62,219
2014	52,317	1,956	2,240	56,513
2015	76,285	2,238	1,356	79,879
2016	0	2,014	3,234	5,248
2017	0	1,734	1,842	3,576
Average 2007– 2016	43,912	1,761	1,839	47,328
Average 2012– 2016	43,579	1,844	2,374	47,797

^a Estimated subsistence harvest expanded from villages surveyed.

^b Statewide Harvest Survey (1991–2017).

Table 13.—Harvest of coho salmon in the commercial, subsistence, and sport fisheries in the Goodnews River, 1997–2017.

Year	Harvest			Total
	Commercial ^a	Subsistence ^b	Sport ^c	
1997	2,983	403	855	4,241
1998	21,246	390	574	22,210
1999	2,474	568	789	3,831
2000	15,531	480	795	16,806
2001	9,275	666	822	10,763
2002	3,041	294	429	3,764
2003	12,730	1,372	42	14,102
2004	23,690	1,808	622	26,120
2005	11,735	857	1,046	13,638
2006	12,436	721	553	13,157
2007	13,689	599	211	14,499
2008	22,547	1,075	220	23,842
2009	8,406	349	284	9,039
2010	4,900	516	597	6,013
2011	15,358	416	733	16,507
2012	25,515	506	624	26,645
2013	21,581	382	2,152	24,115
2014	52,158	295	998	53,451
2015	7,030	611	1,916	9,557
2016	0	558	900	1,458
2017	0	396	1,656	2,052
Average				
2007–2016	17,118	531	864	18,513
Average				
2012–2016	21,257	470	1,315	23,045

^a Goodnews Bay (District 5) commercial harvest.

^b Subsistence harvests by the communities of Goodnews Bay and Platinum.

^c Statewide Harvest Survey 1991-2017.

Table 14.—Sport fishing harvest and catch of coho salmon in Kuskokwim Bay drainages, 1997–2017.

Year	Kanektok River		Goodnews River		Arolik/Other Rivers		Kuskokwim Bay Total	
	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch
1997	1,220	14,366	855	2,915	223	279	2,298	17,689
1998	751	15,017	574	7,852	74	737	1,399	23,606
1999	1,091	13,677	789	12,185	23	781	1,903	26,738
2000	799	13,043	795	9,045	0	0	1,594	22,088
2001	2,448	21,941	822	8,431	0	783	3,270	31,204
2002	1,784	10,922	429	6,889	22	1,353	2,235	19,164
2003	1,076	19,257	681	15,845	58	231	1,815	35,333
2004	1,362	23,845	622	10,985	65	3,656	2,049	38,486
2005	1,006	13,279	1,046	11,541	0	2,397	2,052	27,217
2006	1,742	12,282	553	7,091	0	243	2,295	19,640
2007	1,087	12,768	211	3,528	0	625	1,298	16,921
2008	1,541	18,086	220	5,425	552	949	2,313	24,460
2009	876	6,896	284	2,805	38	2,252	1,198	11,953
2010	1,280	7,192	597	10,164	101	1,090	1,978	18,446
2011	981	11,506	733	11,253	306	1,299	2,020	24,058
2012	2,533	16,998	624	9,234	63	2,918	3,220	29,150
2013	2,509	17,062	2,152	16,597	46	1,559	4,661	33,569
2014	1,956	10,022	998	10,340	10	510	2,964	20,872
2015	1,356	26,235	1,916	20,662	193	4,839	3,645	51,736
2016	3,234	30,689	900	9,738	69	1,435	4,203	41,862
2017	1,842	33,921	1,656	20,761	23	1,501	3,521	56,183
Average 2007–2016	1,735	15,745	864	9,975	138	1,748	2,732	27,303
Average 2012–2016	2,318	20,201	1,318	13,314	76	2,252	3,703	35,438

Table 15.—Harvest of chum salmon in the commercial, subsistence, test, and sport fisheries in the Kuskokwim River, 1997–2017.

Year	Harvest				Total
	Commercial ^a	Subsistence ^{b,c}	Test Fishery	Sport	
1996	207,877	100,900	2,864	496	312,137
1997	17,026	37,366	790	148	55,330
1998	207,809	61,652	1,140	291	270,892
1999	23,006	44,242	562	180	67,990
2000	11,570	59,369	1,038	26	72,003
2001	1,272	56,005	1,743	112	59,132
2002	1,900	86,406	2,666	53	91,025
2003	2,764	41,217	1,713	53	45,747
2004	20,429	64,899	1,810	84	86,943
2005	69,139	58,020	4,459	500	132,118
2006	44,070	89,500	3,547	13	137,130
2007	10,763	73,561	3,237	403	87,964
2008	30,798	68,678	2,954	121	102,269
2009	78,205	43,621	2,204	285	124,315
2010	93,148	46,143	2,872	85	142,248
2011	118,316	49,717	2,289	83	170,405
2012	65,171	79,513	2,730	106	147,520
2013	114,069	53,627	2,615	31	170,342
2014	19,048	68,398	3,394	36	90,876
2015	16,051	42,612	1,487	102	60,252
2016	0	44,858	683	103	45,644
2017	0	52,589	3,471	29	56,089
Average					
2007–2016	54,529	57,073	2,447	136	114,183
Average					
2012–2016	42,868	57,802	2,812	76	102,927

^a Districts 1 and 2 only; no chum harvests reported in District 3.

^b Estimated subsistence harvest expanded from villages surveyed.

^c 2017 estimates are preliminary (C. Lipka, Commercial Fisheries biologist, ADF&G, Anchorage, personal communication).

Table 16.—Sport fishing harvest and catch of chum salmon in the Kanektok, Goodnews, Arolik, and other Kuskokwim Bay rivers, 1997–2017.

Year	Kanektok River		Goodnews River		Arolik/Other Rivers		Kuskokwim Bay Total	
	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch
1997	212	11,041	24	1,111	0	560	236	12,712
1998	213	11,560	50	2,955	0	192	263	14,707
1999	293	14,241	47	7,561	0	16	340	21,818
2000	231	10,200	12	4,243	0	24	243	14,467
2001	43	6,457	21	2,188	0	136	64	8,781
2002	446	10,779	99	4,059	0	695	545	15,533
2003	14	7,138	0	3,195	0	3,195	14	13,528
2004	33	4,715	0	1,757	0	2,309	33	8,781
2005	108	9,241	0	1,481	0	0	108	10,722
2006	145	21,528	0	5,566	0	0	145	27,094
2007	15	7,971	0	3,026	0	1,362	15	12,359
2008	48	9,232	26	922	67	1,113	141	11,267
2009	44	3,802	22	3,193	0	542	66	7,537
2010	150	10,298	0	1,334	0	430	150	12,062
2011	271	9,541	0	2,762	0	859	271	13,162
2012	127	11,397	51	2,730	7	686	300	15,467
2013	320	10,330	0	2,067	0	0	320	12,397
2014	110	7,935	45	2,892	0	112	155	13,085
2015	83	14,771	0	1,570	0	0	83	16,341
2016	466	6,943	27	2,138	0	162	493	9,243
2017	201	7,186	0	2,264	0	176	201	9,526
Average								
2007–2016	176	9,222	17	2,329	7	527	199	12,066
Average								
2012–2016	246	10,275	25	2,410	0	192	270	12,855

Table 17.—Sport fishing harvest and catch of chum salmon in the Aniak, Kisaralik, Kwethluk, and Holitna rivers, 1997–2017.

Year	Aniak River		Kisaralik River		Kwethluk River		Holitna River		Kuskokwim River Total	
	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch
1997	86	2,387	0	9	0	53	33	116	86	3,212
1998	101	2,664	0	163	8	296	0	25	322	5,355
1999	139	4,055	0	456	41	176	0	135	180	5,459
2000	0	3,914	13	2,091	0	85	0	0	116	6,409
2001	0	1,899	0	106	71	425	73	222	112	3,656
2002	0	2,096	0	745	34	455	53	331	53	4,486
2003	0	2,347	28	450	0	50	48	209	39	5,073
2004	0	1,602	0	606	70	308	136	426	84	4,380
2005	0	788	0	247	0	414	180	1,638	500	4,633
2006	0	2,135	0	80	0	918	0	802	13	8,188
2007	0	3,191	0	140	0	21	0	0	40	7,204
2008	45	2,427	31	2,446	0	961	45	408	121	7,312
2009	156	1,487	22	778	0	1,218	0	538	285	6,861
2010	0	1,360	24	2,069	61	524	0	37	85	4,265
2011	15	1,178	0	681	0	804	0	928	83	4,085
2012	0	5,268	0	584	18	144	0	123	93	6,361
2013	31	3,220	0	762	0	268	0	17	31	4,382
2014	18	1,060	0	1,105	0	181	0	0	36	2,382
2015	0	307	0	98	0	224	0	311	102	1,179
2016	58	558	0	240	0	314	17	86	103	1,476
2017	0	116	0	161	0	709	0	0	29	1,512
Average										
2007–2016	32	2,006	8	892	8	466	6	245	136	4,551
Average										
2012–2016	21	2,083	0	558	4	226	3	107	76	3,156

Table 18.—Harvest of sockeye salmon in the commercial, subsistence, test, and sport fisheries in the Kuskokwim River, 1997–2017.

Year	Harvest				Total
	Commercial	Subsistence ^a	Test Fishery ^b	Sport ^c	
1997	21,989	38,745	ND	423	61,157
1998	60,906	36,052	ND	178	97,136
1999	16,976	47,360	503	54	64,390
2000	4,130	48,766	413	46	53,355
2001	84	53,245	510	231	54,070
2002	84	32,272	228	26	32,610
2003	282	32,237	646	289	32,808
2004	8,532	40,405	742	512	50,191
2005	27,645	41,517	1,062	792	71,016
2006	12,618	43,143	519	187	56,467
2007	703	47,272	488	382	48,845
2008	15,601	58,732	584	273	75,190
2009	25,673	34,943	515	631	61,762
2010	22,428	38,130	495	419	61,472
2011	13,497	43,251	380	98	57,226
2012	2,857	47,231	861	196	51,145
2013	768	39,382	462	85	40,697
2014	2,714	48,372	867	270	52,223
2014	2,714	48,372	867	270	52,223
2015	130	36,781	1,045	14	37,970
2016	0	51,580	2,444	175	53,770
2017	0	48,462	1,354	40	49,856
Average 2007–2016	9,375	43,788	582	263	54,059
Average 2012–2016	1,294	44,669	794	148	46,997

^a Estimated subsistence harvest expanded from villages surveyed.

^b Not all test fishery sockeye harvests are available.

^c Statewide Harvest Survey (1992–2017).

Table 19.—Sport fishing harvest and catch of sockeye salmon in the Kanektok, Goodnews, Arolik, and other Kuskokwim Bay rivers, 1997–2017.

Year	Kanektok River		Goodnews River		Arolik/Other Rivers		Kuskokwim Bay Total	
	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch
1997	607	2,836	61	1,705	10	148	668	4,710
1998	830	3,987	502	3,402	60	113	1,281	7,543
1999	496	4,537	561	1,999	0	0	1,057	6,536
2000	694	5,700	82	997	0	0	787	6,708
2001	83	1,415	108	1,128	0	68	191	2,901
2002	73	1,423	149	3,080	3	161	225	4,830
2003	107	5,082	42	1,128	0	60	149	6,644
2004	112	1,330	0	891	0	226	112	2,552
2005	156	5,692	0	683	0	0	156	6,418
2006	523	11,450	98	2,798	12	276	633	14,524
2007	385	3,481	84	903	0	0	469	4,384
2008	654	6,776	104	1,186	78	485	836	6,331
2009	75	768	111	1,205	46	623	232	2,596
2010	404	4,872	15	1,134	0	438	419	6,555
2011	429	5,193	135	1,126	0	250	564	6,667
2012	146	2,262	286	1,752	11	100	443	4,343
2013	159	2,616	227	1,835	0	0	386	4,451
2014	220	3,795	265	2,206	0	198	485	6,001
2015	107	4,451	32	2,029	16	331	14	6,811
2016	451	2,776	584	2,754	0	384	1,035	5,914
2017	1,027	5,842	400	3,100	0	335	1,427	9,277
Average								
2007–2016	303	3,699	184	1,613	15	281	488	5,405
2012–2016	217	3,180	279	2,115	5	203	473	5,504

Table 20.—Sport fishing harvest and catch of sockeye salmon in the Aniak, Kisaralik, Kwethluk, and Holitna rivers, 1997–2017.

Year	Aniak River		Kisaralik River		Kwethluk River		Holitna River		Kuskokwim River Total	
	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch
1997	391	567	10	10	0	0	21	64	513	1,114
1998	130	254	0	0	16	35	0	84	346	643
1999	21	407	0	4	0	0	0	0	97	824
2000	23	251	0	117	0	0	0	42	35	657
2001	24	210	34	156	0	37	48	927	220	2201
2002	26	54	0	16	0	67	16	0	42	256
2003	0	390	74	74	42	42	0	105	140	883
2004	119	185	22	45	65	218	124	259	400	870
2005	0	606	22	22	0	112	345	467	636	1436
2006	16	1,042	67	160	0	0	136	431	231	2075
2007	0	118	0	179	0	25	0	81	407	2160
2008	102	450	171	410	0	188	0	42	273	3,493
2009	0	203	10	82	12	130	20	91	162	999
2010	0	577	0	312	0	0	0	71	40	1,091
2011	0	171	14	759	0	0	26	319	98	1,634
2012	11	219	0	0	121	154	22	22	196	459
2013	0	616	64	290	21	150	0	0	85	1,283
2014	234	427	18	1,004	0	18	0	0	270	1,569
2015	0	303	0	71	0	175	0	67	14	630
2016	43	112	30	60	15	383	0	0	175	876
2017	0	80	0	264	0	619	0	0	0	129
Average 2007–2016	39	320	31	317	17	122	7	69	172	1,419
Average 2012–2016	58	335	22	28	31	176	4	18	148	963

Table 21.—Sport fishing harvest and catch of rainbow trout in the Aniak, Kisaralik, and Kwethluk Rivers 1997–2017.

Year	Aniak River		Kisaralik River		Kwethluk River		Kuskokwim River Total	
	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch
1997	53	12,368	218	7,067	227	334	604	22,532
1998	349	4,989	0	1,289	69	980	418	10,514
1999	175	4,659	0	1,877	117	269	292	6,964
2000	24	3,568	47	3,076	24	1,054	95	9,072
2001	0	819	0	1,010	17	896	17	3,605
2002	0	2,942	29	5,520	0	3,398	44	13,677
2003	0	2,422	21	1,241	ND	ND	160	4,689
2004	0	1,908	99	3,134	117	1,027	309	6,731
2005	0	1,077	78	3,378	ND	ND	141	5,542
2006	0	4,772	0	4,339	0	5,990	40	16,104
2007	0	7,243	21	1,457	31	3,277	76	12,523
2008	0	13,081	136	9,237	26	6,688	162	32,657
2009	0	10,767	0	10,006	26	6,615	59	28,943
2010	0	5,452	0	9,490	55	4,037	55	29,897
2011	0	8,519	0	4,162	0	362	0	16,170
2012	0	2,775	34	2,777	103	2,329	137	8,045
2013	0	5,056	0	8,503	0	6,953	187	20,843
2014	0	3,436	50	4,773	19	1,077	69	9,286
2015	0	3,497	0	1,102	0	1,004	0	5,617
2016	0	1,412	0	1,739	60	4,393	71	8,731
2017	0	3,436	0	4,624	0	4,034	0	12,089
Average 2007–2016	0	6,124	24	5,325	51	3,674	88	17,271
Average 2012–2016	0	3,235	17	3,779	74	3,151	105	10,504

Table 22.—Sport fishing harvest and catch of rainbow trout in the Kanektok, Goodnews, Arolik, and other Kuskokwim Bay rivers, 1997–2017.

Year	Kanektok River		Goodnews River		Arolik/Other Rivers		Kuskokwim Bay Total	
	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch
1997	231	27,518	433	9,703	44	1,813	732	39,034
1998	0	13,567	97	5,738	0	631	105	19,936
1999	73	11,151	133	5,926	0	2,070	218	19,290
2000	0	6,019	0	2,446	0	24	11	8,599
2001	0	7,984	0	2,312	0	0	0	10,889
2002	0	8,846	32	2,827	0	2,160	32	14,493
2003	0	8,455	44	2,913	0	453	44	12,033
2004	68	8,525	68	2,540	12	2,503	148	16,248
2005	0	7,070	0	2,125	0	1,645	0	11,586
2006	0	11,793	67	3,446	0	5,244	67	20,651
2007	11	11,538	105	2,451	40	2,638	156	16,627
2008	0	16,375	21	2,203	10	1,696	57	22,220
2009	0	12,670	108	1,556	30	6,209	138	20,591
2010	17	10,263	34	1,370	0	3,543	51	15,573
2011	13	17,642	0	3,036	0	2,888	13	20,879
2012	0	12,219	0	2,494	0	3,753	0	18,466
2013	149	15,632	41	2,592	0	325	190	19,687
2014	0	19,024	0	6,710	0	1,446	0	27,180
2015	0	23,141	0	1,514	0	5,118	20	29,773
2016	32	18,554	0	3,625	16	7,968	48	30,147
2017	0	23,822	0	4,539	18	3,958	18	32,319
2007–2016 Average	22	15,706	31	2,755	10	3,558	67	22,114
2012–2016 Average	36	17,714	8	3,387	3	3,722	52	25,051

Table 23.—Sport fishing harvest and catch of Dolly Varden/Arctic char in the Aniak, Kisaralik, Kwethluk, and Holitna rivers, 1997–2017.

Year	Aniak River		Kisaralik River		Kwethluk River		Holitna		Kuskokwim River Total	
	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch
1997	295	11,945	414	4,717	243	243	64	968	2,554	23,549
1998	319	20,765	92	599	14	188	25	305	753	24,110
1999	114	5,909	181	3,875	0	44	112	589	452	10,664
2000	40	4,134	367	3,664	47	95	0	0	525	9,591
2001	87	1,222	320	2,454	33	142	66	1,644	693	7,548
2002	212	6,288	345	4,494	53	2,223	17	558	768	15,954
2003	168	3,924	432	2,693	77	1,196	549	3,256	1,698	13,990
2004	288	6,496	114	4,343	230	2,376	220	3,071	1,101	31,029
2005	296	4,633	246	2,300	106	237	203	313	1,176	9,479
2006	150	7,064	14	3,655	76	365	122	1,218	865	16,360
2007	291	7,193	147	1,311	0	1,586	138	1,581	865	12,791
2008	948	16,771	113	6,627	36	1,874	163	4,065	1,539	37,286
2009	510	9,696	232	4,949	129	5,418	238	966	1,466	23,851
2010	400	8,875	125	6,542	133	2,174	109	699	865	18,925
2011	72	8,404	128	4,479	19	1,393	108	3,612	448	17,750
2012	146	14,088	312	7,688	17	1,399	0	863	729	24,800
2013	332	13,222	239	10,802	17	3,890	0	0	642	29,642
2014	240	3,383	481	6,260	69	774	17	69	928	10,951
2015	76	5,455	39	1,263	0	2,787	69	807	204	10,352
2016	0	1,412	85	1,697	114	4,098	48	321	506	11,536
2017	0	2,330	136	2,685	51	930	0	0	245	6,338
Average										
2007–2016	302	8,850	197	5,162	53	2,419	89	1,298	819	19,769
Average										
2012–2016	159	7,512	231	5,542	43	2,590	27	412	602	17,238

Table 24.—Sport fishing harvest and catch of Arctic grayling in the Aniak, Kisaralik, Kwethluk, and Holitna rivers, 1997–2017.

Year	Aniak River		Kisaralik River		Kwethluk River		Holitna		Kuskokwim River Total	
	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch	Harvest	Catch
1997	162	15,194	303	3,753	257	500	101	1,803	1,292	34,586
1998	715	11,930	58	984	8	1,408	124	8,303	3,554	38,856
1999	437	8,659	63	3,641	0	226	74	958	1,290	23,975
2000	42	5,950	29	3,605	38	995	38	381	361	19,215
2001	77	3,300	64	3,287	77	3,058	106	3,321	807	22,813
2002	172	11,518	507	8,184	226	3,000	84	814	1,464	34,740
2003	58	6,787	280	3,188	23	515	259	5,492	1,259	26,782
2004	0	3,844	45	4,669	23	697	342	6,725	1,953	31,680
2005	108	2,149	346	2,822	83	337	403	1,218	1,287	11,599
2006	58	2,357	83	1,845	97	2,701	43	704	637	16,493
2007	38	4,242	38	1,255	0	3,440	152	2,793	631	20,907
2008	253	5,794	121	9,911	42	2,828	13	1,352	713	35,486
2009	416	8,055	90	5,269	114	4,144	50	618	1,307	35,693
2010	26	5,502	0	8,814	114	3,355	58	849	516	19,524
2011	7	1,753	0	3,117	20	214	159	11,711	704	19,037
2012	14	5,492	122	3,921	28	1,733	0	931	860	15,264
2013	146	3,121	321	18,146	223	6,518	0	0	756	28,386
2014	83	2,801	199	3,890	23	642	21	124	384	8,126
2015	0	4,340	0	2,459	0	622	291	1,761	475	9,532
2016	0	801	18	2,182	16	2,203	63	471	187	6,023
2017	29	1,090	0	2,282	0	1,838	0	0	242	5,923
Average 2007–2016	98	4,190	91	5,896	58	2,570	81	2,061	653	19,798
Average 2012–2016	9	3,311	132	6,120	58	2,344	75	657	532	13,466

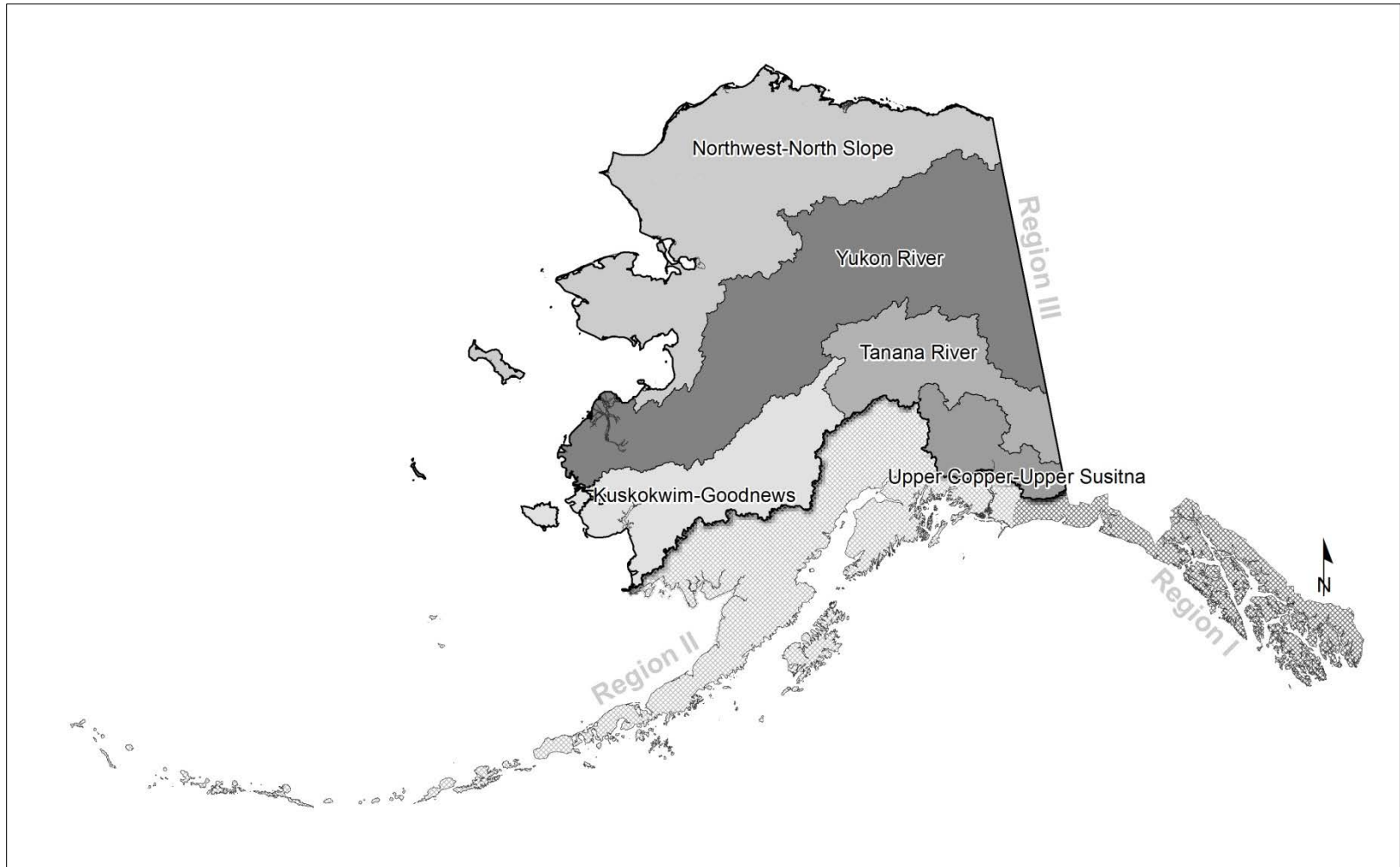


Figure 1.—Map of the sport fish regions in Alaska and the 5 Region III management areas.

Kuskokwim-Goodnews Drainages

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Figure 2.—Kuskokwim-Goodnews Management Area.

**APPENDIX A: EMERGENCY ORDERS ISSUED FOR KGMA
SPORT FISHERIES FOR 2013 THROUGH 2018**

Appendix A1.–Emergency orders issued for KGMA sport fisheries for 2013 through 2018.

Year	E. O. Number	Explanation
2013	3-KS-02-13	This emergency order closes all waters to sport fishing for king salmon in Kuskokuak Slough between the upstream and downstream mouth of the slough including all waters of the old Kuskokuak slough; the Kisaralik, Kasigluk, and Kwethluk River drainages to their confluence with Kuskokuak Slough; the Tuluksak River drainage including its confluence with the Kuskokwim River and downstream approximately 1-mile to ADF&G regulatory markers; and the Aniak River drainage, effective 12:01 a.m. Saturday, June 1, 2013.
2013	3-KS-03-13	This emergency order reduces the sport fishing bag and possession limit for king salmon to 1 fish in all tributaries of Kuskokwim Bay effective 12:01 a.m. Monday, May 27, 2013.
2013	3-KS-05-13	This emergency order closes the mainstem Kuskokwim River to king salmon fishing from the mouth of the river to a line between ADF&G regulatory markers located at the downstream edge of Chuathbaluk, effective 12:01 a.m. Saturday, June 29, 2013. All king salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. In addition, this emergency order also requires only unbaited, single-hook artificial lures be used in the mainstem Kuskokwim River downstream of the line between ADF&G regulatory markers located at the downstream edge of Chuathbaluk. These restrictions will remain in effect through 11:59 p.m. Thursday, July 25, 2013.
2013	3-KS-07-13	This emergency order supersedes Emergency Order No. 3-KS-03-13. This emergency order prohibits the retention of king salmon in all tributaries of Kuskokwim Bay effective 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, July 10, 2013.
2014	3-KS-01-14	This emergency order closes all waters of the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area to sport fishing for king salmon, effective 12:01 a.m. Thursday, May 1, 2014. In addition, anglers may use only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area. All king salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. These restrictions will remain in effect through 11:59 p.m. Friday, July 25, 2014.
2015	3-KS-01-15	This emergency order closes all waters of the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area to sport fishing for king salmon, effective 12:01 a.m. Wednesday, April 1. In addition, anglers may use only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area. All king salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. These restrictions will remain in effect through 11:59 p.m. Saturday, July 25, 2015.

-continued-

Year	E. O. Number	Explanation
2015	3-CS-01-15	This emergency order closes the Kuskokwim River drainage to sport fishing for chum salmon, effective 12:01 a.m. Monday, July 6, 2015. All chum salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. In addition, only unbaited, single-hook, artificial lures may be used in the entire Kuskokwim River drainage. These restrictions will remain in effect through 11:59 p.m. Monday, August 31, 2015.
2016	3-KS-01-16	This emergency order closes the Kuskokwim River drainage (excluding Kuskokwim Bay) to sport fishing for king salmon, effective 12:01 a.m. Sunday, May 1, 2016. In addition, anglers may use only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area. All king salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. These restrictions will remain in effect through 11:59 p.m. Monday, July 25, 2016.
2016	3-KS-02-16	This emergency order reduces the sport fishing bag and possession limit for king salmon to one fish in all tributaries of Kuskokwim Bay effective 12:01 a.m. Sunday, May 1, 2016.
2017	3-KS-V-02-17	This emergency order closes the Kuskokwim River drainage (excluding Kuskokwim Bay) to sport fishing for king salmon, effective 12:01 a.m. Monday, May 1, 2017. In addition, anglers may use only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area. All king salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. These restrictions will remain in effect through 11:59 p.m. Tuesday, July 25, 2017.
2018	3-KS-V-01-18	This emergency order closes the Kuskokwim River drainage (excluding Kuskokwim Bay) to sport fishing for king salmon, effective 12:01 a.m. Tuesday, May 1, 2018. In addition, anglers may use only one unbaited, single-hook, artificial lure in the Kuskokwim-Goodnews Area. All king salmon caught while fishing for other species may not be removed from the water and must be released immediately. These restrictions will remain in effect through 11:59 p.m. Wednesday, July 25, 2018.