



Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Board of Fisheries

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ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES

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Bristol Bay Finfish 2018 Meeting

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ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES
Findings on Creation of the
General District Management Plan for Bristol Bay
2004 – 230 - FB

Introduction

In response to requests by members of the public at the Alaska Board of Fisheries' (board) December 2003 Bristol Bay finfish meeting, the board asked the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (department) to draft a proposal to create a "General District" in response to a large forecasted run to Bristol Bay. Board proposal C was generated and circulated for further public and advisory committee comment before final board action. The board took final action to create the General District Management Plan for Bristol Bay during its February 15-26, 2004 meeting. The board took testimony from the public and advisory committees at both the December 2003 and February 2004 meetings.

At the December 2003 meeting, the department notified the board that the forecasted catch of sockeye salmon for the summer 2004 season is 34.7 million. There is a potential substantial underharvest due to limited processing capacity. Proposal C gives the department guidelines for conducting a fishery in an additional area of Bristol Bay. Proposal C also expires at the end of the 2004 salmon season (officially, December 31, 2004) since it is designed to respond to one season's forecast only.

The General District Management Plan

The General District fishing area is described in Proposal C. The commissioner may open and close fishing periods by emergency order, on or about June 7 through June 25, to drift gillnet fishing based on inseason run information. A harvest cap of 10 percent of the preseason sockeye salmon forecast (3.47 million) is specified for the General District, and 150 fathoms of gillnet with mesh size no larger than 5 ½ inches will be allowed. A CFEC permit holder must be registered in one of the five districts of Bristol Bay to fish in the General District. The 48-hour waiting period to transfer between the regular districts remains in effect, however, the waiting period does not apply to moving between the General District and the district in which the permit holder is registered. Allocation in the General District will be calculated based on the proportion of drift gillnet registrations in the five regular districts of Bristol Bay. The proportion of catch taken from the General District equal to the proportion of drift registrations by district will be attributed to the drift gear group in each district and be counted in the allocation plan for that district upon closure of the General District.

This type of management has been used in the past; in 1970 and in 1980 in response to large forecasted runs to Bristol Bay. The concept behind Proposal C is to harvest fish (10 percent of the forecasted harvest) sooner to prevent overwhelming the capacity of the processors. By allowing harvesting at the beginning of the season there will likely be enough processor capacity before the peak of the run. Fish harvested early would be of higher quality and would add value to the total salmon industry. The board reviewed information to show that the expected Kvichak River harvest is 6 to 6 ½ million sockeye salmon out of the total run, therefore there was little concern of harming the designated Kvichak sockeye salmon stock of concern. The department stated that the chances of impacting any one stock are minimal. The board directed the department to close the General District inseason if any indications of conservation problems are present.

Much of the board's discussion on proposal C centered around the department's ability to close the General District inseason if there are indicators that the sockeye returns will fall significantly below expectations. The strong forecast for 2004 was based largely on a strong showing of "jacks" (1-ocean fish) in the 2003 return, which is a good indicator of favorable returns for the following year. The department stated that the test fishery at Port Moller was expected to operate for the 2004 season, and would be able to monitor the age classes of fish taken in the test fishery. Should there be significant differences in the proportions of age classes in the test fishery from what is expected, or other indicators that the 2004 return is significantly weaker than expected, the department has the emergency order authority to close the General District and move the fishery back into the traditional districts.

The minority of the board was concerned that benefits of the expanded area would not stay within the region, and that subcomponents of stocks may be selectively overharvested. The minority believes that the department could deal with the issue by allowing earlier openings in each district as needed. The concept of opening each district early was discussed. The minority also expressed concerns about tax implications for the boroughs as the result of a potential change in district registration among fishermen.

The majority of the board determined that the General District plan will allow for the orderly harvest of surplus fish and improved product quality, under a management plan that is capable of being implemented and poses minimal risk to existing fisheries and conservation. The General District plan will have only minor allocative impacts because catches will be applied to the allocation plans that already exist for the regular districts. Potential tax consequences to boroughs, while not known for certain, are likely to be positive.

Summary

The board finds that the 2004 Bristol Bay General District salmon management plan is based upon the best available information, and will give the department additional tools for managing an unusually high forecasted return of sockeye salmon to Bristol Bay in 2004. The board notes that this regulation will be in effect for one salmon season in order to provide additional opportunity for fishermen to harvest salmon, adding value to the industry overall.

Approved: May 17, 2004
Vote: 4-2-1


Ed Dersham, Chair

Members voted as follows:

Andrews: Yes
Bouse: No
Dersham: Yes
Jensen: (Absent)
Morris: Yes
A. Nelson: Yes
R. Nelson: No

97-174-FB
(Previously 97-09-FB)

RC 212

DEVELOPMENT OF A RAINBOW TROUT MANAGEMENT PLAN
FOR THE NAKNEK RIVER

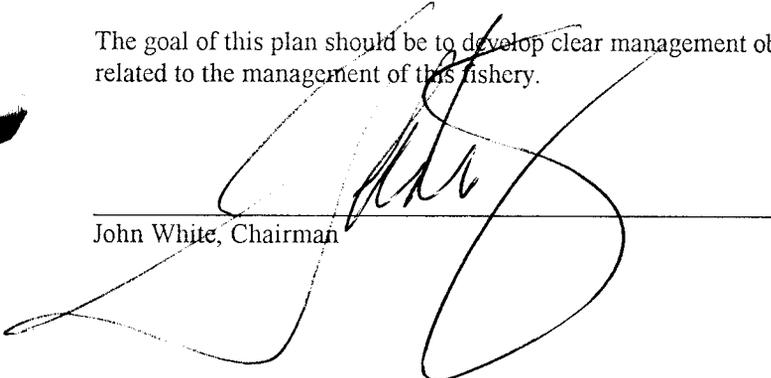
ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES
BRISTOL BAY MEETING
NOVEMBER 13, 1997

The Board of Fisheries tabled consideration of proposals 124, 125, and 127 concerning the recreational fishery for rainbow trout in the Naknek River until the 1998-99 regulatory cycle. These proposals speak to development of a management plan for this fishery and the Board wants to ensure a comprehensive approach to this issue. To this end, and in conjunction with the department, a joint workgroup is charged with the following assignment.

Develop a plan that addresses management objectives intended to ensure conservation of resources and a diversity of angling opportunities, consistent with the policies found in the Southwest Alaska Rainbow Trout Management Plan. It is the intent of the Board that this planning effort be comprehensive with respect to Naknek River rainbow trout stocks and fishery and may require:

- a review stock status of the rainbow trout resource and principles of management;
- a review of the present regulatory structure; and
- development of a regulatory package that provides for sustained yield.

The goal of this plan should be to develop clear management objectives that address biological and social concerns related to the management of this fishery.



John White, Chairman

(Previously Finding #91-5-FB) ~~DRAFT #2~~
ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES

NUSHAGAK CHINOOK SALMON MANAGEMENT PLAN

The Board of Fisheries created a management plan for Nushagak-Mulchatna River chinook salmon stocks at the request of the Nushagak Advisory Committee. At the Bristol Bay Area meeting, conducted during January 1992 at Dillingham, the board, in close coordination with the Nushagak Advisory Committee, conducted extensive deliberations prior developing the plan. Department staff from the commercial, sport, and subsistence divisions presented comprehensive reports on the chinook salmon stocks of Nushagak-Mulchatna Rivers and the subsistence, commercial, and sport fisheries that utilize these returns.

The board finds that a management plan is necessary for the following reasons:

1. Nushagak-Mulchatna chinook salmon stocks are an important component to the lifestyle and economy of Dillingham and surrounding communities and these runs support important and established local subsistence, directed commercial, and sports fisheries.

2. The Nushagak-Mulchatna chinook salmon returns are experiencing conservation problems and harvest opportunities are being restricted from the harvest levels experienced in earlier years.

3. Competition amongst the users of the Nushagak-Mulchatna chinook salmon resources are increasing and user conflicts are becoming apparent.

4. The board was presented the attached table showing the utilization of Nushagak-Mulchatna chinook salmon stocks since 1966.

Based on these factors, the board concluded that a management plan is needed to:

1. Ensure an adequate spawning escapement into the Nushagak-Mulchatna River systems.

2. Maintain a subsistence priority usage for the Nushagak-Mulchatna chinook salmon stocks.

3. Ensure that the Nushagak-Mulchatna chinook salmon stocks are managed in a conservative manner consistent with sustained yield principles.

4. Continue to harvest Nushagak-Mulchatna chinook salmon runs in the fisheries that have historically harvested them in Nushagak Bay and the Nushagak-Mulchatna drainage.

5. Provide management guidelines to the department in an effort to preclude allocation conflicts between the various users of the resource.

Elements of the management plan include:

1. A biological escapement requirement (BER) is established, by department staff, for the Nushagak-Mulchatna chinook salmon stocks of 65,000 fish. This number of spawners is believed to produce the maximum sustainable number of returning chinook salmon and was based on the best available information available to the department.

2. An inriver goal is est to manage the commercial fishery in such a manner to obtain an annual count of chinook salmon, past the department's Portage Creek sonar site, of 75,000 chinook salmon. The inriver goal was found to provide sufficient fish to provide a reasonable opportunity for subsistence harvest and to maintain a sport harvest of no greater than 5,000 fish.

3. The plan allows the sport harvest to increase to 6,000 fish when the inriver return exceeds 75,000 fish up to a level of 95,000 fish. The board found this restriction was necessary to ensure that the sport fishery allocation would not benefit over time due to management imprecision. However, the board recognized that once the spawning escapement exceeded 95,000 fish, the subsequent return per spawner is significantly decreased, and finds that it is not necessary to limit the take in the sport fishery under these conditions.

4. The board finds it is desirable to allow a targeted commercial fishery for chinook salmon when the inriver goal is projected to be met or exceeded. This meets the board's intent to maintain the historic nature of the Nushagak District fisheries

5. The board finds that when the projected inriver return is projected to be between 40,000 and 75,000 chinook salmon, it was not necessary to restrict the normal prosecution of the sockeye salmon commercial fishery. The board believed that this could be accomplished with plan provisions to limit gill net gear to less than 5 and 1/2 inches mesh and to not permit a directed chinook salmon fishery under the above conditions. The board finds that when the inriver run was projected to be less than 40,000 fish, it is necessary to limit the normal commercial sockeye salmon fishery and established provisions directing the department not to open the sockeye salmon season until at least 10% of the of the Wood river escapement goal is projected to be achieved.

6 As the board finds that the sport fishery represents a directed harvest, the plan restricts the sport fishery when the inriver return is projected to be less than the BER of 65,000 fish. When the inriver return is projected to be below 40,000 fish, the board finds that it is necessary to close the directed sport fishery; further the board does not believe that hook and release

sport fisheries are proper at this time.

7. The board recognized that the department does not have the necessary management tools to regulate the sport fishery to maintain the sport harvest limits within any one year. However, the board expects the department to make yearly adjustments to ensure the sport harvest, over time, does not permanently increase above the specified limits.

8. The board finds that it is not necessary to restrict the subsistence fishery unless the inriver return is projected to be less than 40,000 fish.

Adopted: January 9, 1992

Vote: (Yes/No/Abstain/Absent) (___/___/___/___)

Location: Dillingham

a:nushplan

Table 1. Chinook salmon commercial, subsistence, and sport harvest plus escapement for the Nushagak drainage, 1966 to 1991.

Year	Harvest							Total Run
	Commercial ^a	Subsistence ^b	Sport ^c			Total	Escapement	
			Nush	Mul	Total			
1966	58,184	3,700				61,884	40,000	101,884
1967	96,240	3,700				99,940	65,000	164,940
1968	78,201	6,600				84,801	70,000	154,801
1969	80,803	7,100				87,903	35,000	122,903
1970	87,547	6,300				93,847	50,000	143,847
1971	82,769	4,400				87,169	40,000	127,169
1972	46,045	4,000				50,045	25,000	75,045
1973	30,470	6,600				37,070	35,000	72,070
1974	32,053	7,900				39,953	70,000	109,953
1975	21,454	7,100				28,554	70,000	98,554
1976	60,684	6,900				67,584	100,000	167,584
1977	85,074	5,200	402	521	923	91,197	65,000	156,197
1978	118,548	6,600	151	291	442	125,590	130,000	255,590
1979	157,321	8,900	312	342	654	166,875	95,000	261,875
1980	64,958	11,800	611	146	757	77,515	141,000	218,515
1981	193,461	11,500	929	291	1,220	206,181	150,000	356,181
1982	195,287	12,100	1,436	367	1,803	209,190	147,000	356,190
1983	137,123	11,800	1,615	388	2,003	150,926	161,730	312,656
1984	61,378	9,800	1,534	786	2,320	73,498	80,940	154,438
1985	67,783	7,900	1,517	292	1,809	77,492	115,720	193,212
1986	65,783	12,600	1,780	3,534	5,314	83,697	43,434	127,131
1987	45,983	12,200	1,371	1,860	3,231	61,414	84,309	145,723
1988	16,648	10,079	2,383	403	2,786	29,513	56,905	86,418
1989	17,637	8,097	2,807	754	3,561	29,295	78,302	107,597
1990	14,092	11,932	1,594	1,409	3,003	29,027	63,955	92,982
All Years								
Average	76,621	8,192	1,317	813	2,130	86,944	80,532	167,476
Percent	88%	9%			2%			
1986 to 1990								
5 Year Avg	32,029	10,982	1,987	1,592	3,579	46,589	65,381	111,970
Percent	69%	24%			8%			
1991								
Percent	63%	33%			7%			

- ^a Commercial catches from 1988-1991 are preliminary.
- ^b Subsistence harvest estimate for 1991 is preliminary.
- ^c Sport harvest estimate for 1991 is preliminary.

Findings of the Alaska Board of Fisheries
Regarding the 48-Hour Waiting Period in
Bristol Bay Commercial Salmon Fisheries

A. In January 1986, the Alaska Board of Fisheries amended 5 AAC 06.370 to reimpose the 48-hour waiting period in Bristol Bay commercial salmon fisheries. The regulation as amended requires that fishermen must register with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game 48-hours before each transfer to a Bristol Bay district, and that fishermen cease fishing during that 48-hour period. Before adopting the amendment, the board received extensive public comment, both written and oral.

B. In March 1986, the board further amended 5 AAC 06.370, following the recommendations of the Alaska Department of Law. The amendments were technical in nature, and were designed to make the 48-hour waiting period more enforceable. Because the legal notice for the March meeting left open the possibility that the 48-hour waiting period could be repealed, there was public testimony and presentations by the Nushagak, Lower Bristol Bay, Naknek-Kvichak, and Lake Illiamna advisory committees reiterating support of the reinstating of the 48-hour transfer requirement with no fishing.

C. Between the January and March board meeting, a lawsuit was filed challenging the 48-hour waiting period. Meier v. State, 1JU-86-415 civil. It may, the board believes, be desirable to articulate the conservation and development purposes served by the 48-hour waiting period.

D. Based upon the information presented to the board before it amended 5 AAC 06.370 in January and again before it further amended 5 AAC 06.370 in March, the board finds:

1. There are two commercial salmon fisheries in Bristol Bay, the set net and the drift gillnet fisheries. Participants in these fisheries must register for whichever Bristol Bay district they fish, and must reregister before transferring to a new district. For at least 24 years before 1985, fishermen had to cease fishing for a period of 48-hours after reregistering and before transferring to the new district. For the 1985 season, the 48-hour period was repealed and a 24-hour notice adopted. Fishermen were allowed to continue fishing before transferring.

2. The 48-hour had an impact on fishing patterns, although it was not easy to enforce as written at that time. Before 1985, the set net fishery harvest annually had an average of 12 percent of the commercial salmon

harvest of Bristol Bay. When the 48-hour waiting period was repealed, the set net harvest dropped to 9 percent. Of concern was the 6 percent set net harvest in the Egegik District, and the drop to 3 percent in the Ugashik District which experienced an historic high return in 1985. Reallocation of salmon from the set net fishery to the drift gillnet fishery was becoming evident.

3. Because of the historic high return, the Ugashik District was fished during the peak harvest period by more than 600 drift gillnetters, when normally that District has been fished by approximately 200 drift gillnetters.

4. Reimposing and improving the enforceability of the 48-hour waiting period will assist in maintaining the historic harvest percentages between the set net and drift gillnet fisheries. The drift gillnet fishery in Bristol Bay is composed of mobile vessels with highly refined fishing skills and efficient gear. The set net fishery, although skilled, is less mobile because of limited set net sites and is hampered by fishing time because of tides.

5. Public testimony and ADF&G staff reports did indicate that among the drift gillnet fleet itself there seemed to be more success by one component than another. While this was a concern of some board members, it was not as important to the board as a whole, as was the reallocation stated above.

6. Reimposing and improving the enforceability of the 48-hour waiting period will assist in slowing down the movement of the more mobile component of the drift gillnet fishery which will spread out the harvest more evenly among all participants promoting a more orderly fishery and enhancing economic stability as a whole.

7. Additionally, reimposing and improving the enforceability of the 48-hour waiting period will have some conservation benefits in that it will prevent an unpredictable influx of fishing gear into a district experiencing a marginal run of salmon. Several Bristol Bay districts open during large portions of the season by emergency order issued by ADF&G rather than a schedule set out in regulations. One factor considered by the department before opening a district is the amount of effort and gear. Although normally a 100 percent exploitation rate is expected when a Bristol Bay district is open, in some more unusual situations (minimal stock run), the department could determine that one gear type could fish without jeopardizing escapement goals, but allowing both types could jeopardize conservation. 5 AAC 06.320(f) gives the

department authority to allow only one type to operate. Similarly, it set and drift gillnet present at a particular time could be allowed to fish without jeopardizing the escapement, the 48-hour waiting period will prevent a sudden influx of effort and gear which could raise the total amount of gear to a level to jeopardize a stock.



Ron Jolin, Chairman
Alaska Board of Fisheries

Date 4/9/86

ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES
FINDINGS OF FACT

Bristol Bay 32 Foot Vessel Length
5 AAC 06.341
#81-92-FB

After hearing a report on the Findings of the Governor's Bristol Bay Task Force, conducting a public hearing on 5 AAC 06.341 in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act, and discussing the subject, the Board of Fisheries on April 4, 1981 by unanimous action, adopted a regulation to continue the 32 foot vessel length for the Bristol Bay salmon fishery. The Board considered this action to be consistent with its responsibilities to conserve and develop the salmon resources of Bristol Bay, promote the orderly harvesting and marketing of quality fishery products and to maximize the public interest.

The action of the Board in 1979 to repeal the 32 foot length limit by 1982 had been based in part on the premise that larger vessels would permit the use of ice to improve quality. However, Bristol Bay processors who imposed 12 hour delivery requirements on fishermen in 1980 showed that more frequent deliveries by existing vessels can adequately improve quality. An increased vessel length that allows the use of ice, chilled brine or special insulation is not necessary to achieve the desired quality improvements at this time.

The Board also reviewed testimony indicating that until recent years the average costs of the Bristol Bay gillnet vessels were in the \$5,000 to \$20,000 range. In recent years 32 foot vessels costing as much as \$150,000 are being constructed to participate in the fishery. The use of these larger capacity, more expensive boats has, in some cases, resulted in over capitalization by fishermen and is believed to have contributed to lengthy price disputes and threats of violence prior to the 1980 price settlement as fishermen felt obligated to achieve continued high prices to meet boat payments.

Repeal of the 32 foot limit will interfere with production economies of scale associated with construction of standard size vessel. Unlimited size will therefore exacerbate the problem of overcapitalization in the Bay area.

During the public hearing, Representative Joe Chuckwuk testified that repealing the 32 foot limit in 1982 would work a hardship on the Bristol Bay fishermen who had already invested in newer, larger-capacity 32 foot boats. In addition the Board also received the results of a January 1981 mail survey of all setnet and drift gillnet limited entry card holder and interim use permittees in the Bristol Bay salmon fishery. Of the 2,668 ballots mailed out, 81% of the 2,003 ballots returned favored reestablishment of the 32 foot length.

The conduct of the Bristol Bay fishery has been based upon the 32 foot length vessel for more than 30 years. Continuation of the length restriction will promote stability and predictability in the fishery.

ADOPTED: Anchorage, Alaska
April 7, 1981

VOTE: 5-0

Nick Szabo, Chairman

ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES
RESOLUTION #80-80-FB

1981 BRISTOL BAY HERRING
MANAGEMENT DIRECTIVE

see also #79-49-FB,
#79-59-FB,
#79-60-FB,
#80-68-FB

The 1981 Bristol Bay herring and herring roe-on-kelp fishery will be managed within the following guidelines:

1. a minimum threshold level of biomass for conservaion of the stocks will be maintained;
2. differing harvest rates for older and younger age class herring will be used;
3. the commercial harvest will not start until the start of spawning, thus insuring the opportunity for the highest roe recovery; and
4. the harvest management should minimize wastage of the resource.

The Board of Fisheries therefore directs the staff of the Department to take the following actions given the specified circumstances:

1. when the total observed biomass of early season older age class herring exceeds 20,000 metric tons, the season will open and the harvest rate will be 10% of the observed biomass; the harvest rate may be allowed to increase to 20% if the observed biomass exceeds 40,000 metric tons and sufficient spawning has occurred;
2. when the total observed biomass of later season younger age class herring exceeds 20,000 metric tons, a harvest rate of no more than 10% will be allowed; and
3. the number of openings allowed in the herring roe-on-kelp fishery will be based on the fishing time in the herring fishery.

ADOPTED: Anchorage, Alaska
December 13, 1980

VOTE:

Nicholas G. Szabo
Chairman

Approved 3/30/80
#80-73-FB

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

Special Report to the Alaska Board of Fisheries

BRISTOL BAY SALMON MANAGEMENT
PLAN FOR 1980

Anchorage, Alaska
March, 1980

BRISTOL BAY SALMON MANAGEMENT
PLAN FOR 1980

The Department's forecast of returning sockeye salmon to Bristol Bay in 1980 totals 54.5 million fish (see Table 1 for detailed information). An inshore return of this magnitude has not been equalled since accurate total run estimates were first available in the mid-1950's, although the 1965 total return of 53.1 million fish closely equals the forecast for 1980.

After subtracting peak year cycle escapement requirements of 17.5 million, a harvestable surplus of 37.1 million sockeye remains. The projected catch of 37.1 million, if realized, would be the largest catch since commercial operations began in Bristol Bay in 1893, and would exceed the previous highest catch by over 12 million fish.

Over 75% (or 28 million fish) of the expected sockeye harvest would occur in the Naknek-Kvichak district, with significant harvests also forecast for Nushagak and Egegik districts. The district sockeye forecast, escapement goals and projected harvest is summarized and shown below for comparison purposes (in 1,000's):

District	Forecast		Escapement Goals	Projected Harvest	
	Number	Percent		Number	Percent
Naknek-Kvichak	49.922	79%	15.000	27.967	75%
Egegik	3.445	6%	.600	2.845	8%
Ugashik	1.488	3%	.500	.988	3%
Nushagak	6.156	11%	1.300	4.895	13%
Togiak	.531	1%	.100	.431	1%
Total Bay	54.542		17.500	37.126	

Significant harvest of other species are also anticipated for 1980. Pink salmon are expected to return in record numbers, particularly to the Nushagak district where the total forecast of 15.7 million fish will allow a harvest of 14.7 million fish after escapement requirements are met. Total pink returns in 1980 to all districts of Bristol Bay will allow a harvest many times in excess of the long-term average harvest of 1.8 million. King salmon returns are expected to allow a harvest in excess of 200,000, while chum salmon returns are expected to be strong, particularly in Nushagak and Togiak districts where over 1.0 million fish are expected to enter the harvest.

In total, Bristol Bay may have as many as 55 million fish of all species in excess of escapement requirements. This potentially large catch requires special management considerations to provide for an orderly and maximum harvest.

With the foregoing in mind, the following management options will be implemented by emergency order in Bristol Bay for the 1980 season to provide fishermen and processors the greatest opportunity to maximize the harvest:

I. Fishing Boundaries: Effective 9:00 a.m., June 9, seaward extensions of fishing boundaries will be established by emergency order in the Naknek-Kvichak, Egegik and Ugashik districts. Boundary extensions will generally follow the same design established in 1970. A General fishing district will be established seaward of the present Naknek-Kvichak, Egegik and Ugashik districts (Figure 1). The General fishing district boundary will commence at 58° 38' 36" N. Lat., 158° W. long., near Etolin Point and proceed in a southerly direction, conforming to the State's 3-mile jurisdictional limit, to Cape Menshikof. The extended

fishing area will be separated into three geographically distinct areas for purposes of reporting the catch. The General fishing district will remain in effect throughout the season, or until run strength dictates a pull-back to afford additional protection to sockeye stocks not showing forecast strength.

In addition, the strong sockeye run forecast into Nushagak district will hopefully be blunted by allowing a seaward boundary extension to the established "king salmon boundary line" (Figure 1). The Nushagak boundary extension will be announced by emergency order after the district's king salmon escapement requirements have been met; however, for the outer boundary extension in this district to be effective in cropping off early sockeye, the boundary should be operational no later than June 24-25.

Upriver, or inner fishing boundary relocations, will not be made unless extreme circumstances so dictate. As directed by the Board of Fisheries, the inner boundary on Kvichak River will be relocated if circumstances are such that it will be in the best interests of the resource and resource users.

With the fishing boundary extensions, the staff reached a decision to not deploy the marker can buoys normally in use. If district boundary restrictions or adjustments are needed in-season to protect sockeye stocks, the industry will be asked to cooperate by placing tenders to help mark boundaries, for it is unlikely that buoys can be deployed on such short notice.

II. Fishing Season: Effective 9:00 a.m., June 9, unrestricted fishing time will be announced by emergency order for the Naknek-Kvichak,

Egegik and Ugashik districts until further notice. Unrestricted fishing time will be announced for Nushagak district once king salmon escapement requirements have been met. We anticipate that by June 24-25, king salmon escapement requirements will be adequate and the Nushagak district can be opened until further notice.

III. Fishing Gear: Additional gill net gear allowed in 1970 was not effective in increasing the harvest. Therefore, the staff has no plans to increase the allowable gear. Depending on the South Unimak commercial harvest and Port Moller test boat catches of pink salmon, the effective date when smaller mesh pink gear can be used may be allowed earlier in the season, especially in Nushagak district where a large return has been forecast.

IV. District Re-registration: Effective 9:00 a.m., June 9, an emergency order announcement will waive all re-registration processes and allow unrestricted movement between all districts of Bristol Bay without the usual 48 hour waiting period. The Department will continue to require prior notice of intent to relocate fishing operations, but the 48 hour waiting period will not be in effect.

In conclusion, the Department fully realizes the risks involved in proposing this management plan. However, it is the opinion of the staff that the possibility of adversely affecting any run or species is minimal considering the technology and effort that is applied to the management of the Bristol Bay fishery. It is also the opinion of the staff that in this case the advantages of establishing a General district to permit earlier fishing on the Kvichak run outweigh the risks involved.

Early season offshore fishing may help reduce the size of the catches required during the peak of the run to meet the desired season

harvest, thereby reducing the possibility of "plugging" the processing facilities.

The major risk is over-fishing stocks other than those returning to the Kvichak River. Tagging studies indicate (1) Egegik fish might be expected to constitute a major proportion of fish which mill in the Middle Bluff-Cape Chichagof areas, whereas (2) Kvichak and Naknek fish become more dominant proportionately in the milling area near Low Point, between Middle Bluff and Johnson Hill, and (3) that Ugashik fish constitute the larger proportion of fish that mill in the area between the Egegik and Ugashik districts.

The fact that eight out of ten fish forecast to return to Bristol Bay's east side systems in 1980 are Kvichak River fish means a reduction will probably occur in the proportionate number of Egegik fish milling in the Middle Bluff-Cape Chichagof area. A similar reduction should occur in the proportionate number of Naknek fish milling in the Low Point area. The same is true for the Ugashik fish in the area between the Egegik and Ugashik districts. The risk of over-fishing the Ugashik run becomes less when one considers that, historically, this run has peaked several days later than the Kvichak run, and again, the concept of the General district is to enable fishing on the run early in the season. Furthermore, just because additional fishing areas and unrestricted fishing time are being established for the 1980 season, doesn't mean that these areas and season will necessarily remain open to fishing. On the contrary, if the personnel responsible for the management of this fishery deem it necessary to close these extended areas or seasons, they will be closed in-season by emergency order.

The Shumagin/South Unimak fishery will provide a check approximately two weeks before the fish reach the Bristol Bay fishing districts, and a final run magnitude verification will be provided approximately one week before the run arrives by the A.D.F. & G. test fishing boat operating off Port Moller. Operational funds permitting, the Department's Port Moller test fishing operation will continue fishing operations well into July with smaller mesh pink gear to provide run magnitude estimates for the expected large pink salmon return.

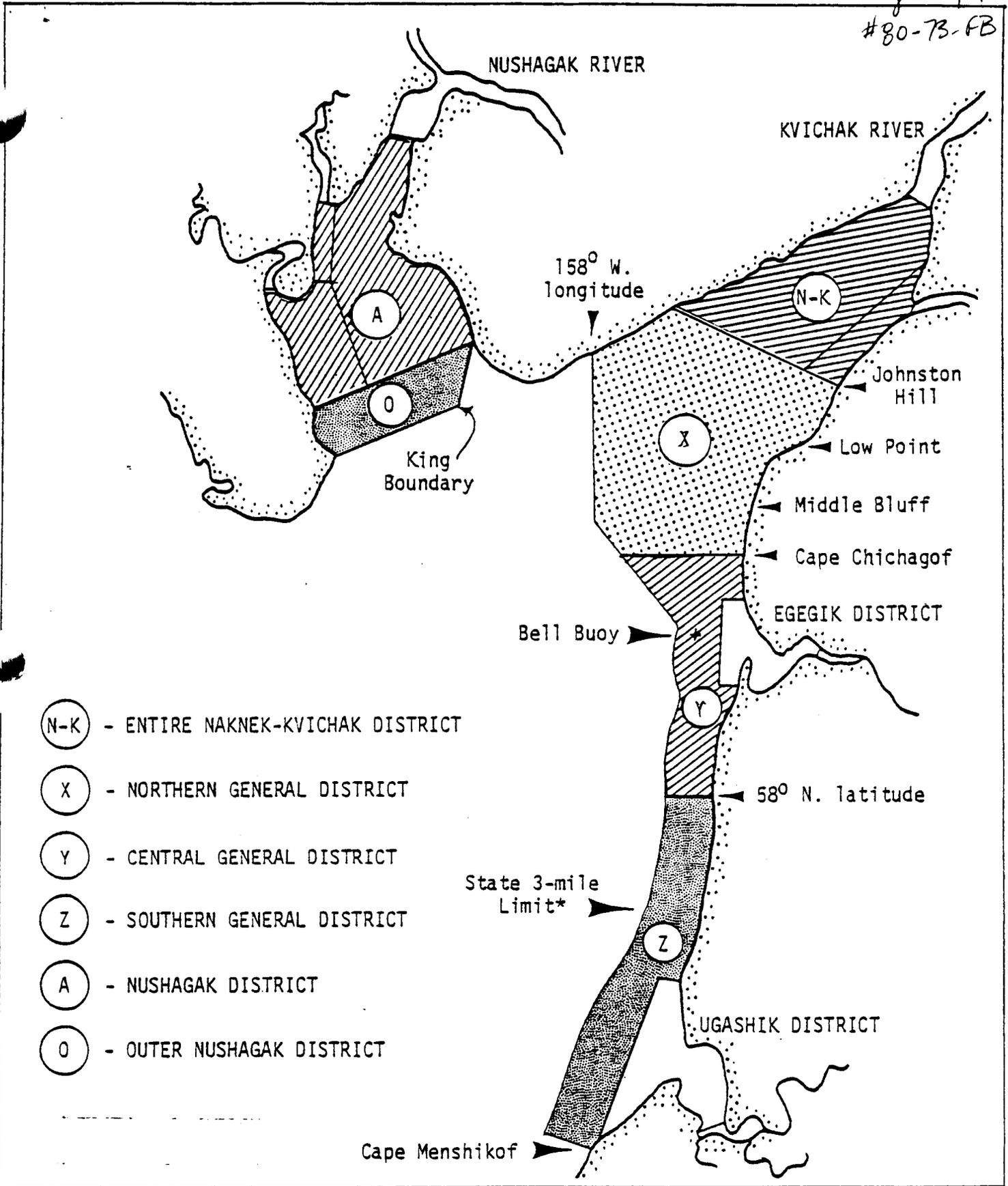


FIGURE 1. SALMON CATCH REPORTING ZONES, BRISTOL BAY, 1979.

*Western boundary of General District is limited by the State three-mile territorial zone.

ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES

BRISTOL BAY HERRING MANAGEMENT PLAN

See also #79-49-FB,
#80-80-FB,
#80-68-FB,
#79-59-FB

The Bristol Bay herring fishery is still rapidly developing. Harvest trends by gear type are not well established between seine and gillnet gear. Run timing, distribution, and magnitude cannot be predicated upon past data for this new fishery and most forms of in-season or pre-season regulation to achieve any predetermined catch allocation between the gear types are not feasible.

It is the Board's feeling that resource size, relative gear numbers, and the efficiency of the two gear types will insure that all users will have ample opportunity to satisfy their economic requirements. Nevertheless, it is desirable to try to insure that neither gear group is totally disadvantaged. The Board therefore directs the staff to take the following actions given the specified circumstances.

When the total reported harvest reaches 20,000 metric tons, the Department will determine the reported tonnage for gillnet and seine (purse and hand purse) gear. If the harvest for either gear type has not reached 6,000 metric tons, the fishery on the gear with the higher reported catch shall be closed for 24 hours.

It is the intent of the Board that no guaranteed minimum quota for any gear type is implied in this policy.

ADOPTED: Anchorage, Alaska
December 14, 1979

VOTE: 5/0 (Gordon Jensen, Herman Schroeder absent)