

Fishery Management Report No. 10-04

**Activities of the Kuskokwim River Salmon
Management Working Group, 2008**

**Annual Report for Study 06-307
USFWS Office of Subsistence Management
Fisheries Information Services Division**

by

Nicholas D. Bradley

and

Holly C. Carroll

March 2010

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Divisions of Sport Fish and Commercial Fisheries



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WORKING GROUP, 2008**

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Division of Sport Fish, Research and Technical Services
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March 2010

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ABSTRACT

The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (Working Group) was formed in 1988 by the Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF). Working Group meetings provide the forum for area fishermen, user representatives, community representatives, Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (RAC) representatives, Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) Advisory Committee members and State and Federal managers to come together and discuss issues relevant to management of Kuskokwim River salmon populations. The Working Group meets several times a year to review run assessment information and strives to reach a consensus on how to proceed with management of Kuskokwim River salmon fisheries. The Fisheries Information Services (FIS) Division of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) provides funding the Working Group under the Inseason Support for Cooperative Management of the Kuskokwim River Subsistence Fishery project (FIS 06-307). The first Working Group meeting was in June, with a total of 10 meetings held in 2008. Inseason meetings occurred during June, July and August. A summary and review session was held in September.

Key words: subsistence fishing, commercial fishing, recreational fishing, salmon fishery management, Bethel, Kuskokwim River, Chinook *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*, chum *O. keta*, sockeye *O. nerka*, and coho *O. kisutch* salmon.

INTRODUCTION

The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (Working Group) was formed in 1988 by the Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) in response to requests from stakeholders in the Kuskokwim Area that sought a more active role in the management of salmon fishery resources (Francisco et al. 1989). The Working Group has become the forum through which inseason management decisions are made regarding Kuskokwim River subsistence, commercial and sport salmon fisheries (Figure 1). Pre- and post-season Working Group activity provides the opportunity to participate in the regulatory processes that establish fishery management policies and regulations. In 2001, the Working Group modified their bylaws in order to more effectively address Federal Subsistence Management views by including seats for member representatives from the Kuskokwim River Coordinating Fisheries Committee of the Yukon–Kuskokwim Delta and Western Interior Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Councils (RAC). The Working Group further modified their bylaws in 2005 to include representation from communities at the headwaters of the drainage, which had not previously had a voice on the Working Group.

Participation in the Working Group process requires a great deal of time from its members and agency staff. The Working Group typically meets first in the spring each calendar year, conducts intensive and frequent meetings during the summer, and holds a wrap-up session in the fall or early winter. Funding provided by Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) is an essential part of enhancing the Working Group process. This funding allows Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) staff to more effectively prepare for meetings through better and more frequent distribution of updated fishery status information in a standardized format. The funding also provided travel for Working Group members to participate in meetings relevant to issues concerning Kuskokwim River fisheries, such as the postseason meeting in Anchorage and Kuskokwim Area interagency meetings. State general funds provide additional salary for ADF&G staff that coordinates the Working Group. The combined federal and state funds have further strengthened the Working Group process.

Working Group representative participation in meetings in Bethel and outside the Kuskokwim River drainage allows for an exchange of information between members and fishery assessment project leaders and research planners. Representatives were also able to testify at regulatory meetings in support of Working Group positions. The relationship among Working Group members, project leaders, research planners, and policy makers continues to be fostered, and

these interactions are critical to the Working Group process. This relationship ensures that stakeholders remain up-to-date on new information and maintain their direct involvement in the management of the fishery.

From July 2002 through October 2004, funding was available for support of the Working Group process through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) OSM project FIS 01-116. OSM funding was discontinued in 2005 and reestablished in 2006 under project FIS 06-307. The current OSM project provides funding through 2008 for Working Group member travel to meetings and conferences; meeting supplies and arrangements; and ADF&G staff time to coordinate the Working Group process and to summarize and distribute information for Working Group members.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Working Group process are:

1. Provide local fishermen and other users with an avenue for direct involvement in the management of the Kuskokwim River fishery.
2. Work towards the development of a comprehensive management plan for all Kuskokwim River salmon stocks.
3. Provide a forum for all parties with an interest in Kuskokwim River fisheries to work together to reach a consensus on management of the fisheries.
4. To strengthen the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group process.

The objective of project FIS 06-307 is to strengthen the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group process by providing funding to support the following activities:

1. Provide inseason run assessment information to all parties participating in cooperative management of the Kuskokwim River subsistence salmon fishery.
2. Provide a forum for RAC members, ADF&G, and other participants of the cooperative management process to discuss inseason run assessment information and fishery management decisions affecting subsistence fisheries.
3. Provide an opportunity for participation in the cooperative management process to forecast and plan (preseason) and to summarize (postseason) the fishing season.
4. Report the discussion and decisions made during the cooperative management process.

PROCESS

The Working Group process is governed by the bylaws of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group as amended July 29, 2006 (Appendix A1). The Bylaws describe the purpose, rules of conduct, representation, and selection of officers for the Working Group process. The Working Group is made up of 13 member organizations or constituencies (Appendix B1). These members represent: 2 elders (Upriver, Downriver), 4 subsistence fishermen (Lower River, Middle River, Upper River, and Headwaters), one processor representative, one commercial fisherman, one sport fisherman, one Member-at-Large seat, two RAC members (Yukon–Kuskokwim Delta, Western Interior), and ADF&G staff. One or more

alternates are assigned for each designated Working Group member in the event the primary representative is unable to attend a meeting.

Meetings are generally held in the conference room located in the ADF&G Bethel field office. Working Group members from villages surrounding Bethel (particularly upriver representatives) often attend meetings by teleconference. Efforts are made to conduct 2 meetings per year where all members are able to attend in person (funding from this project provides the travel money for these member to attend).

Working Group meetings are conducted according to *Robert's Rules of Order* (Robert III et al. 2000) following a standard agenda that provides for a full and complete discussion of area and related salmon fisheries. Working Group motions are passed by consensus and ADF&G has no voting status. Reports are heard and discussed regarding test fishery, escapement monitoring projects, and subsistence and commercial harvests. Based on these reports, ADF&G makes recommendations to the Working Group concerning management of Kuskokwim River salmon fisheries. The Working Group makes motions on ADF&G recommendations to facilitate discussion and work towards consensus on management decisions. Through this process, the Working Group has the ability to influence and affect management decisions, while the authority to implement management actions rests with ADF&G. The Working Group passes resolutions stating consensus positions, recommendations, and opinions from the Working Group to agencies, organizations, and the public. The Working Group also appoints representatives to attend meetings of the Federal Subsistence Board, BOF, ADF&G Advisory Committee meetings, RAC meetings, and other public meetings dealing with relevant fisheries issues.

In support of Working Group meetings, ADF&G:

1. Informs Working Group members about scheduled meetings and meeting agendas through phone, mail, email, and fax.
2. Assembles, copies, and distributes materials including meeting announcements, agendas, informational packets (Appendix C1), action statements, meeting summaries (Appendix D1), news releases, and newspaper articles.
3. Initiates Working Group meeting teleconferences.
4. Organizes and provides logistics for member travel.
5. Assists the Working Group by recommending potential members to fill vacancies.
6. Drafts an annual report of Working Group meetings and actions.
7. Distributes informational packets and summaries for each meeting.
8. Secures funding for the Working Group process.

2008 SEASON

The Working Group met 10 times in calendar year 2008 (Appendix E1); 5 Working Group meetings were held in June, 1 Working Group meeting was held in July, 3 Working Group meetings were held in August and one end-of-year Working Group meeting was held in late September. Agenda and information packets were assembled prior to each meeting and distributed to Working Group members and other interested parties (Appendix C1). Unless otherwise noted, meetings were held in the Bethel ADF&G conference room. Both detailed and

executive summaries of meeting are available from Kuskokwim Area Division of Commercial fisheries staff in Bethel and Anchorage.

The 2008 fishing season began on June 4 and ended on August 24. Water level was below average on the Kuskokwim River at Crooked Creek at the start of the season, but was well above average for a one week period in late June. The water level then fell below average during the coho salmon fishing season in July and remained low for the month of August. For the majority of the fishing season (June 1 to August 24) water temperatures were colder than average at the Bethel Test Fish Project (BTF) and the river was less turbid because of lower water levels.

Chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) abundance appeared to be average for the 2008 fishing season, which was verified by the BTF inseason index for Chinook salmon, and the Orutsararmut Native Council (ONC) inseason subsistence harvest reports. The 2008 BTF Chinook Salmon index was the fifth highest in 25 years of operation. Though inseason indicators of run strength suggested adequate abundance, some Chinook salmon escapement goals were not met. The number of salmon reaching the Tuluksak River weir was the second lowest since 1976, and Chinook salmon escapement to the Kwethluk, George, and Tuluksak rivers did not achieve the lower end of their respective escapement goal ranges. Salmon River weir Chinook salmon escapement was also lower than expected; however, data have only been collected at this site for 2 years. In contrast, the escapement goal was reached at the Kogrukluk River and Chinook salmon escapements at Tatlawiksuk and Takotna River weirs were average. Similar to the estimated Chinook salmon escapement observed at the weirs, aerial surveys indicated that some escapements fell below the goal or below the median and others were above the median goal range. Chinook salmon escapement timing was among the latest on record with some populations arriving almost 2 weeks later than average. This was inconsistent with inriver run timing near Bethel, which was only slightly later than average this year by 2 to 3 days.

Sockeye salmon (*O. nerka*) escapements were monitored at each of the 7 tributary weir projects; however, sockeye salmon are not a prominent species in many of these systems. Among these locations, Kogrukluk and Kwethluk Rivers receive the largest sockeye salmon escapements. Kogrukluk and Kwethluk River sockeye salmon passage in 2008 was above average, but below the record escapements observed in 2005 and 2006. Sockeye salmon escapement timing at the Kwethluk and Kogrukluk rivers was among the latest on record by one week. This was inconsistent with inriver run timing near Bethel, which was only three days later than average this year.

Chum salmon (*O. keta*) escapements were evaluated through enumeration at weirs on seven tributary streams and a tributary sonar project on the Aniak River. Chum salmon escapements in 2008 ranged from above average to below average at all monitored locations, and were overall well below the record escapements seen in recent years. Chum salmon escapements to the Kogrukluk and Aniak Rivers were within and near the upper end of their respective escapement goal ranges. Chum salmon escapement timing ranged from near average to among the latest on record with some populations arriving a week to 10 days later than average. Inriver run timing near Bethel was near average.

Coho salmon (*O. kisutch*) escapements were evaluated through enumeration at weirs on 7 tributary streams. Coho salmon escapements in 2008 were above average at nearly all monitored locations, with the exception of Tuluksak River where coho escapement was below average. Escapement at Kogrukluk River was within and near the upper end of the escapement goal range.

Overall, coho salmon escapements increased in 2008 compared to recent years of lower coho salmon abundance. Coho salmon escapement timing was approximately average this year. This was fairly consistent with inriver run timing near Bethel which was approximately a day earlier than average in 2008.

COMMERCIAL HARVEST

In 2008, there were 20 commercial openings in District W-1. Reports indicate a commercial harvest of 8,865 Chinook salmon; 15,601 sockeye salmon; 30,516 chum salmon and 142,862 coho salmon. A total of 374 (all 374 made at least one recorded landing) individual permit holders participated in the District W-1 commercial fishery. That level of effort (or number of permit holders participating for the 2008 fishing season) was 13% below the 10-year average. The Chinook and sockeye salmon total harvest numbers were 63% and 15% above the recent 10-year harvest averages respectively. The coho and chum salmon total harvest numbers were 22% and 27% below the recent 10-year harvest averages. The estimated value of the 2008 total commercial catch was \$538,310, with an average income of \$1,439 per permit holder. From 1998 to 2007 the 10-year average value for total commercial catch was \$489,573, with an average income of \$1,137 per permit holder. The average income for individual permit holders has increased slightly from the previous three years; however, it is less than half the average income in the 1990s.

Processor reports stated that the 2008 fishing season was good. Processor reported sockeye and Chinook salmon harvest numbers had decreased in 2008, but that chum and coho salmon harvest numbers had increased. It was a record season in W-4 and W-5, which was attributed to the chum and coho salmon runs. More coho salmon could have been harvested for the 2008 fishing season; however, processing capacity was limited as there was only one buyer.

Following the 2008 Working Group season, Holly Carroll was hired as the Working Group Coordinator, and Nick Bradley was hired as the Working Group Coordinator Assistant for ADF&G.

DISCUSSION

The Working Group process provided an opportunity for stakeholders in Kuskokwim Area fisheries to make recommendations regarding policies, regulations, and potential actions for salmon management. Meetings also allowed managers to listen to feedback from fishermen regarding subsistence harvest and other issues affecting the region.

An issue that came up repeatedly during Working Group meetings in the 2008 season was the level of Chinook salmon harvest among subsistence users. Though the Chinook salmon run was late, subsistence fishermen were not reporting difficulty in reaching their target harvest goals. This, coupled with the ADF&G inseason assessment, indicated that Chinook salmon run size was average; however, Chinook salmon escapements upriver were much lower than expected. This led to discussions hypothesizing that subsistence harvest was greater than usual. Some members agreed that this could be the case. During Working Group meetings, many fishermen reported that weather conditions were less than optimal for drying fish, resulting in spoilage. Some fishermen reportedly increased their harvest efforts to replace fish that spoiled. It was also suggested that some residents felt that the marked increases in store-bought food costs (created by inflated fuel/shipping costs) were causing people to rely more heavily on subsistence-caught

Chinook salmon. This was a topic of disagreement among the Working Group members, as the commentary from both Working Group members and the public were inconsistent on whether or not fishermen were harvesting more fish. This issue, though not resolved, underscores the importance of having reliable estimates of subsistence salmon harvest in the Kuskokwim region.

Overall, in 2008, the Working Group process ensured that management agencies kept the public informed of fishery issues, gave timely fishery run status information, and maintained an open dialogue with area fishermen. In addition to interactions with Working Group members, the process encouraged and supported participation of a number of tribal organizations and federal agencies including the Kuskokwim Native Association (KNA), the Orutsararmiut Native Council, the McGrath Native Village Council, the Association of Village Council Presidents, Bering Sea Fishermen's Association, Coastal Villages Region Fund, the USFWS Yukon–Kuskokwim Delta National Wildlife Refuge, and the USFWS OSM. Participation in this process by such a broad spectrum of area users and user representatives has fostered the development of an informed public, which can have a positive influence on the management of the Kuskokwim River salmon fishery.

CONCLUSIONS

Through the Working Group process, agency staff and local stakeholders reached consensus on fishery management actions taken during the 2008 season. Though not all escapement goals were met on spawning streams, Kuskokwim Area residents reported to have met their subsistence needs, and a harvestable surplus of salmon was utilized by commercial and sport fisheries.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Kuskokwim Area residents want and need to be informed of salmon resource issues and to be involved in the fishery management process. Locals depend on salmon for their sustenance, spiritual well being, and as a source of income to support their subsistence way of life. We recommend that the current Working Group process be maintained and the following actions be pursued:

1. While the inseason meetings can be conducted by teleconference, every effort should be made postseason to get Working Group members together in person to review management strategies and run forecasts for the upcoming season and to discuss relevant issues.
2. ADF&G staff and Working Group efforts to inform area fishermen of fishery status and management strategies through discussion, news releases, newspaper articles, and radio talk shows should be maintained.
3. The current method of distributing pre-meeting information packets to Working Group members and interested parties by fax or email should be maintained. When possible, the summary of the most recent meeting should be distributed with the information packet for the next meeting.
4. Funding should be pursued to pay for Working Group members' travel expenses when participating in regulatory and policy meetings such as the BOF. Working Group member involvement in this process is essential in developing understanding and agreement on regulatory fisheries issues in the Kuskokwim Area.

5. Travel expenses should be paid for Working Group member participation in other fishery related meetings associated with the Kuskokwim Area, such as the bi-annual interagency meetings in Anchorage, to allow them to contribute and stay informed of management and research planning programs and regulatory issues.
6. Effort should be made to select informed alternates for each Working Group seat. Currently the upriver elder representative does not have an alternate. Some seats that have ample representation are often unfilled at meetings. It is important to consider the possibility of scheduling conflicts for meetings and to gauge the interest and commitment of prospective members in order to ensure balanced representation from across the Kuskokwim River drainage for each meeting.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to thank the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group members, ADF&G Kuskokwim Area and Regional fishery staff, USFWS Yukon–Kuskokwim Delta Refuge staff and OSM staff, RAC members and those individuals and groups that have participated in this open and voluntary cooperative management process. Thanks also to staff at OSM, Fisheries Division, USFWS who reviewed this document.

ADF&G wishes to thank OSM for providing \$97,154 (\$32,385 annually) in funding to ADF&G for the Inseason Support for Cooperative Management of the Kuskokwim River Subsistence Fishery project (FIS 06-307) through the Fisheries Resource Monitoring program, under OSM Agreement Number 701812J620, ADF&G Cooperative Agreement Number 06-307.

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FIGURES



Figure 1.—Kuskokwim Management Area.

APPENDIX A

BYLAWS OF THE
KUSKOKWIM RIVER SALMON MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP

PURPOSE

To provide local fishermen and other users with an avenue for direct involvement in the management of their fishery. The goal is for all parties to work together to reach a consensus on management of the fishery. Final emergency order authority continues to rest with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

RULES OF CONDUCT

Meetings will be conducted by *Robert's Rules of Order*. The sequence of meetings is as follows:

- I. Call to order (by chair)
- II. Roll Call (by chair)
- III. Invocation
- IV. Approval of Minutes
- V. Approval of Agenda
- VI. People to be heard
- VII. Continuing Business

A. Reports

1. False Pass Fishery
2. Processor Report
3. Traditional Native Fishery Knowledge
4. Subsistence Reports
5. Test Fisheries
6. Commercial Catch
7. Escapement Projects
(sonar, towers, weirs)
8. Aerial Surveys

-continued-

- 9. Weather
 - B. Recommendation
 - C. Motion for Discussion and Action
-
- VIII. Old Business
 - IX. New Business
 - X. Meeting Action Announcement
 - XI. Date, Time, and Place of next meeting
 - XII. Adjournment
- (This sequence may be changed at the discretion of the Group)

Continuing Business reports may not exceed 3 minutes in length, excluding questions and answers.

Under the ‘People to be heard’ agenda item the public would be provided an opportunity to discuss only topics or items which are **not** already listed as specific agenda items. A member of the public may also ask the Group to place an issue on the agenda.

Unlike other institutions or committees, the Working Group operates on a consensus basis. A simple majority vote of the members is not sufficient to pass a motion. For the purposes of the Group all motions must pass by a consensus of the members present at the meeting. If 7 (seven) or less of the members are present, then consensus is defined as a situation wherein either all voting members vote "yea" or all voting members vote "yea" except for one "nay" vote. If 8 (eight) or more of the members are present, then consensus is defined as a situation wherein either all voting members vote "yea" or all voting members vote "yea" except for two "nay" votes. Note that the Alaska Department of Fish and Game does not have voting status on motions concerning the setting of commercial openings.

-continued-

ARTICLE I, OFFICE

The principal office of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (Working Group) shall be located in the City of Bethel, Alaska 99559.

The current address of the principal office is, P.O. Box 1467, Bethel, Alaska 99559. The physical address is 570 4th Avenue.

ARTICLE II, MEMBERS

Section 1. Members: The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group shall have 13 member organizations or constituencies. These members represent: Elders (Upriver, Downriver) (2), Subsistence Fishermen (Lower River, Middle River, Upriver, and Headwaters) (4), Processors (1), Commercial Fishermen (1), Sport Fishermen (1), Member at Large (1), Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Committees (Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, Western Interior) (2), and the Department of Fish and Game (1). Each member of the Working Group will designate a representative and an alternate in the event the representative is unable to attend a meeting. In the case where more than one person is nominated to represent a member organization or constituency, the Working Group will appoint one of the nominees to represent the member organization or constituency.

Section 2. Annual Meeting:

An annual meeting of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group may be held in Bethel during the month of March at the call of the Co-Chairs. The purpose of the meeting will be to conduct any unfinished administrative functions that the Working Group needs to complete for the following year.

Section 3. Special Meetings:

Special meetings of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group may be called by the Co-Chairs.

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Section 4. Notice of Meetings:

The Department of Fish and Game will be responsible for informing the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group members of the time, place and date of any meetings. Notification of meetings to the Working Group will be not less than 48 hours (when possible) or more than 30 days in advance.

Section 5. Quorum:

In order for a meeting of the Working Group to be held and for actions taken at a meeting to be legitimate, it is necessary for there to be a quorum at a meeting, that is at least 7 of the 13 member constituencies must be represented.

If a quorum of the full committee is not present, business may be conducted in executive session. The executive committee is composed of at least 5 representatives: one Co-Chair, any two representatives of the following member groups; Member at Large, Processors, Commercial Fisherman, and any two representatives of the following member groups; Lower, Middle, Upriver and Headwaters Subsistence, Federal RAC, Sport Fisher.

ARTICLE III. REPRESENTATIVES

Section 1. Working Group:

The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group shall be comprised of 13 representatives from the areas described in Article II, Section 1.

Section 2. General Powers:

The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group shall make recommendations to the Department of Fish and Game for the purposes of managing the salmon fisheries on the Kuskokwim River after subsistence and commercial catch, test fishery, weir, tower and sonar reports and other information are provided to the group.

Section 3. Voting Rights:

Each Working Group member shall be entitled to one vote. Alternates designated by the member in writing shall also be entitled to one vote in the absence of that member's representative. Members may abstain from voting on any motion.

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The Elder member shall designate any respected Elder to serve as their alternate.

Working Group members must hear all the Continuing Business reports to vote on a motion to set commercial openings

Section 4. Resignation:

Any member or representative may resign by submitting a letter of resignation to a Co-Chair of the Working Group. The resignation must give the Working Group at least 4 weeks notification so that a new member or representative may be appointed.

Section 5. Vacancies:

A vacancy on the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, forfeiture or otherwise, may be filled by the Working Group from nominations by member groups for the remainder of the term.

Section 6. Forfeit, participation or removal:

- A. FORFEIT. The Working Group will give written notification, by certified mail, to any member organization, their representative and alternate whose seat has not been represented for 2 consecutive meetings that their membership in the Working Group will be forfeited if the seat is not represented by the following meeting. Whereas, a member's failure to be represented at a meeting is excused by the Working Group, as appropriate, such failure shall not be considered an absence within this section.
- B. PARTICIPATION. No representative will be allowed to participate in a Working Group meeting who is deemed to be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
- C. REMOVAL. A representative may be removed from their seat on the Working Group for cause and must be provided the opportunity for a hearing before the Working Group. A representative may be removed for cause for any reason allowed, including but not limited to, conviction of a felony, gross misconduct, violation of their trust to the Working Group as a representative, or harassment of any kind to the other representatives of the Working Group.

ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS OF THE WORKING GROUP

Section 1. Officers:

The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group shall elect Co-Chairs for the

-continued-

purpose of conducting meetings. The Co-Chairs will be elected annually at the first meeting occurring after March 1st. The Working Group shall elect or appoint other officers as deemed necessary. An officer of the Working Group may not hold more than one position. The Co-Chairs must be official representatives of the Working Group.

Section 2. Terms of Office:

Each representative of the Working Group shall be elected or appointed every 2 years. A representative shall hold their position until their successor has been duly elected or appointed and has been qualified

Section 3. Co-Chair:

A Co-Chair of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group shall preside at all meetings of the Working Group.

Section 4. Other Committees:

The Co-Chairs shall have the authority to appoint representatives to serve on committees as deemed necessary. Any representative appointed to a committee may be removed in the best interest of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group.

ARTICLE V. DEFINITIONS

1. **Member.** The member organizations or constituencies of the Working Group as listed in Article II, Section 1.
2. **Alternate.** An individual designated to act in the place of a member or representative unable to attend a meeting.
3. **Representative.** Person designated by a Working Group member organization or constituency to represent that member organization or constituency at Working Group meetings.
4. **District W-1.** The Lower Kuskokwim River consists of the Kuskokwim River from a line between Apokak Slough and Popokamiut, upstream to a line between ADF&G regulatory markers located about eight miles above the Tuluksak River.

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5. **District W-2.** The middle Kuskokwim River consists of the Kuskokwim River from ADF&G regulatory markers located at the upstream entrance to the second slough on the west bank downstream from Kalskag to the regulatory markers at Chuathbaluk.
6. **Elder.** Any respected Elder that resides within the Kuskokwim Area.
7. **Headwaters Subsistence.** Representatives that are active subsistence users in the Kuskokwim River drainage from McGrath upstream to the headwaters of the Kuskokwim River.
8. **Upriver Subsistence.** Representatives that are active subsistence users in the Kuskokwim River drainage above Chuathbaluk.
9. **Middle River Subsistence.** Representatives that are active subsistence users in the Kuskokwim River drainage from Lower Kalskag to Chuathbaluk within District W-2.
10. **Lower River Subsistence.** Representatives that are active subsistence users in the Kuskokwim River drainage from Eek to Tuluksak within District W-1.
11. **Processor.** Representatives that own or operate commercial salmon buying and/or processing businesses within District W-1 and W-2.
12. **Member at Large.** Representatives that are Area residents selected by the Working Group for their knowledge of, appreciation for, and experience with Kuskokwim River fisheries.
13. **Federal Regional Advisory Council.** Representatives that are current members of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and Western Interior Advisory Councils and reside in the Kuskokwim Area.
14. **Commercial Fishermen.** Kuskokwim commercial fishing permit holder or crew member, supported by commercial fishing permit holders who fish primarily within Districts W-1 and W-2.
15. **Sport Fisher.** Representatives that actively participate in sports fishing within the Kuskokwim River drainage.

-continued-

- 16. Alaska Department of Fish and Game.** Representatives that are presently employed with ADF&G in Bethel. This position is an associate member and has no voting powers but has the authority to veto recommendations for commercial fishing periods from the Working Group. Final emergency order authority continues to rest with the ADF&G.

ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENT TO BYLAWS

These bylaws may be altered, amended or repealed and new bylaws may be adopted by consensus of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group representatives present at any regular or special meeting, if at least thirty (30) days written notice is given by certified mail, phone call, or intention to alter, amend or appeal or to adopt new bylaws at such meeting.

APPENDIX B

Appendix B1.-2008 Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group Representation.

SEAT	MEMBER	ALTERNATE
Downriver Elder	James Charles	Peter Miller
Headwaters Subsistence	Nick Petruska	Nick Alexia Sr.
Upriver Elder	Iyana Gusty	Vacant
Lower R. Subsistence	Mike Williams	Greg Roczicka
Middle R. Subsistence	Wayne Morgan	Calvin Simeon
Upriver Subsistence	Evelyn Thomas	Pete Mellick Sophie Gregory
Processor	Vince Goddard (IFP) Joe Hall (CVS)	Steve Sather Perry Hendricks Jim Sartelli
Member at Large	Henry Lupie	Ron Simon
YK Delta RAC	Bob Aloysius	Mary Gregory
Commercial Fisher	Charlie Brown	Sam Alexie
Western Interior RAC	Ray Collins	Carl Morgan
Sport Fishing	Lamont Albertson	Beverly Hoffman
Chair Members	Lamont Albertson Beverly Hoffman Greg Roczicka	

APPENDIX C

**Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group
IN-SEASON AGENDA FORM**

Teleconference Operator 1-800-235-0684

Date: September 25, 2008 Time: 1:00 p.m. Meeting Place: Bethel Fish and Game Office

CALL TO ORDER: _____

Chairperson _____ Time _____

ROLL CALL:

Upriver Elder:

Processor:

Downriver Elder:

Member at Large:

Commercial Fisher:

Sport Fisher:

Lower River Subsistence:

Western Interior RAC:

Middle River Subsistence:

Y-K Delta RAC:

Upper River Subsistence:

ADF&G:

Headwaters Subsistence:

INVOCATION: _____

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: _____

PEOPLE TO BE HEARD: _____

COMMENTS FROM WORKING GROUP MEMBERS: _____

CONTINUING BUSINESS:

1. Subsistence Reports: _____

a. Lower River: _____

b. ONC Inseason Subsistence _____

c. Middle River: _____

d. Upper River: _____

e. Headwaters: _____

2. Summary of 2008 Kuskokwim River salmon run assessment projects: _____

a. Chinook – Bethel Test Fish/ Weirs/ Aerial Survey _____

b. Sockeye – Bethel Test Fish/ Weirs _____

c. Chum – Bethel Test Fish/ Weirs/ Sonar _____

d. Coho – Bethel Test Fish/ Weirs _____

3. Commercial Catch Report: _____

4. Processor Report: _____

5. Sport Fish Report: _____

6. Area M Report: _____

7. Recommendation: _____

8. Motion for Discussion and Action: _____

9. Meeting Action Announcement: _____

OLD BUSINESS: _____

NEW BUSINESS: a) Bering Sea Salmon Bycatch _____ b) Upcoming Program Proposals _____

c) Upcoming meetings: AYK Escapement Goal Meeting (Oct 14-15), AFS AK Chapter (Oct. 28-30),

BASIS Meeting (Nov. 23-25, Seattle), State of the Salmon (Feb. 2-5, B.C., Canada) _____

TIME, DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING: _____

Time _____ Date _____ Place _____

ADJOURNMENT TIME _____

-continued-

Historical Summary, ONC Inseason Subsistence Catch Reports

Year	Week Ending	Number of Families			Chinook salmon ^b			Chum salmon ^b			Sockeye salmon ^b		
		Inter-viewed	Fishing	Not Fishing	Very Good	Normal	Poor	Very Good	Normal	Poor	Very Good	Normal	Poor
2008	Jun 08	27	5	22	1	3	0	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
	Jun 16	34	17	17	0	13	4	0	17	0	0	17	0
	Jun 22	32	27	5	15	12	0	0	20	7	22	5	0
	Jun 29	33	27	6	14	13	0	4	23	0	15	12	0
	Jul 08	35	15	20	3	12	0	0	15	0	7	8	0
	Jul 13	32	3	29	0	3	0	1	2	0	0	3	0
	2007	Jun 03	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Jun 12		39	28	11	0	8	20	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Jun 17		40	33	7	0	10	23	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Jun 24		44	40	4	0	14	26	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Jul 02		36	20	12	9	9	2	16	4	0	0	8	12
Jul 08		33	10	23	6	4	0	8	2	0	3	7	0
Jul 14		33	6	27	0	0	6	0	2	4	0	1	5
2006	Jun 03	22	0	22	0	0	0	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
	Jun 10	32	19	13	6	13	0	0	0	0	ND	ND	ND
	Jun 17	36	6	30	18	12	0	18	12	0	16	14	0
	Jun 25	48	43	5	34	9	0	39	4	0	8	24	11
	Jul 02	46	14	32	3	11	0	10	4	0	6	8	0
	Jul 09	38	8	30	0	8	0	2	6	0	3	5	0
	Jul 17	26	5	21	0	5	0	5	0	0	0	5	0
2005	Jun 06	34	12	22	0	12	0	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
	Jun 11	39	26	13	20	6	0	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
	Jun 18	48	42	6	36	6	0	14	28	0	31	11	0
	Jun 25	48	34	14	25	5	0	19	15	0	28	6	0
	Jul 02	32	2	30	3	0	0	2	1	0	3	0	0
	Jul 09	22	2	20	0	2	0	1	1	0	1	1	0
	2004	Jun 05	31	10	21	6	4	0	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Jun 12		41	37	4	27	8	2	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Jun 19		35	31	4	23	8	0	4	27	0	4	27	0
Jun 26		43	31	12	19	12	0	24	7	0	5	22	4
Jul 03		44	22	22	3	17	0	10	10	0	0	13	7
Jul 10		44	13	31	0	10	0	8	2	0	0	4	6
2003		Jun 07	18	9	9	7	2	0	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
	Jun 14	33	24	9	22	2	0	0	2	0	0	3	0
	Jun 21	48	32	14	30	2	1	1	0	0	7	18	3
	Jun 28	50	34	16	30	4	0	3	9	13	27	7	0
	Jul 05	45	21	24	16	5	0	8	13	0	16	5	0
	Jul 12	46	14	32	0	12	2	13	1	0	0	12	2
	2002	Jun 08	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND	ND
Jun 15		27	23	4	21	2	0	3	8	7	3	11	3
Jun 22		33	25	8	17	5	3	12	9	3	2	10	10
Jun 29		34	22	12	16	6	0	21	0	0	0	3	16
Jul 06		34	5	29	0	2	3	3	2	0	0	0	5
Jul 13		36	10	26	0	3	5	8	0	0	0	0	8

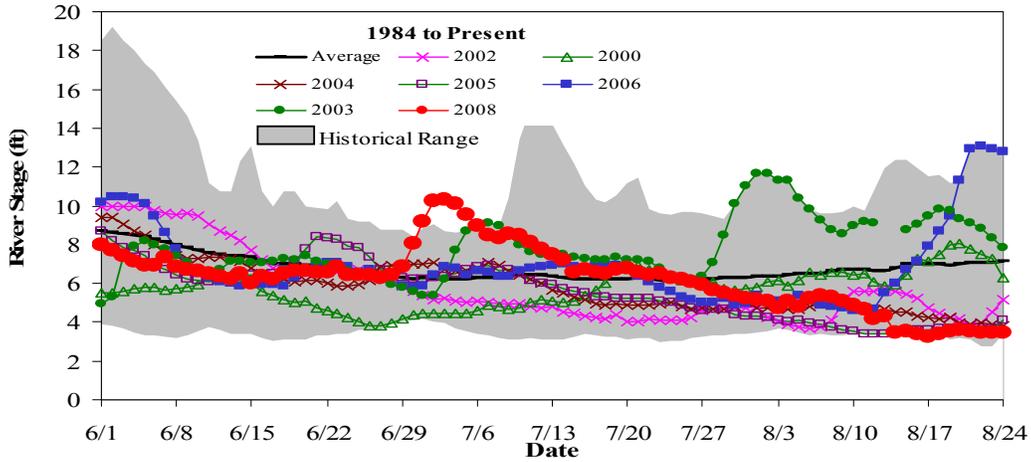
^a Only reports from the month of June and the first two weeks of July were used for comparison between years.

^b Responses from the question: "Compared with this time in a "Normal" year, how were catch rates for salmon this week"?

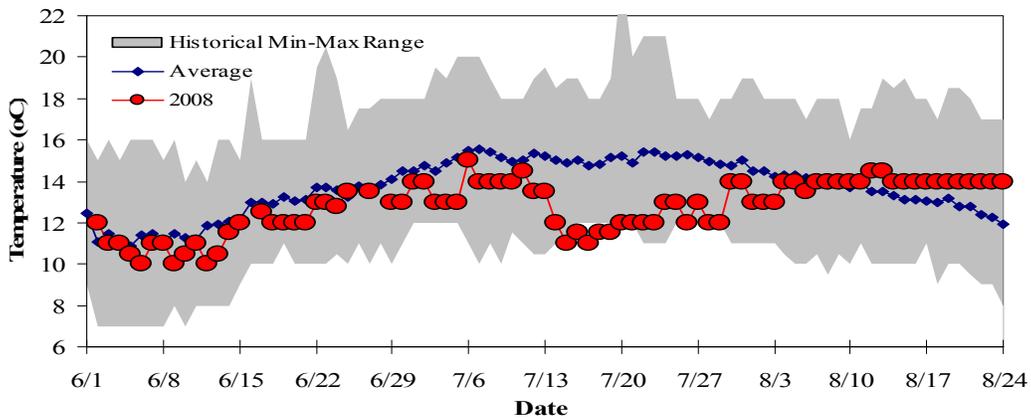
"ND" indicates that no data was collected.

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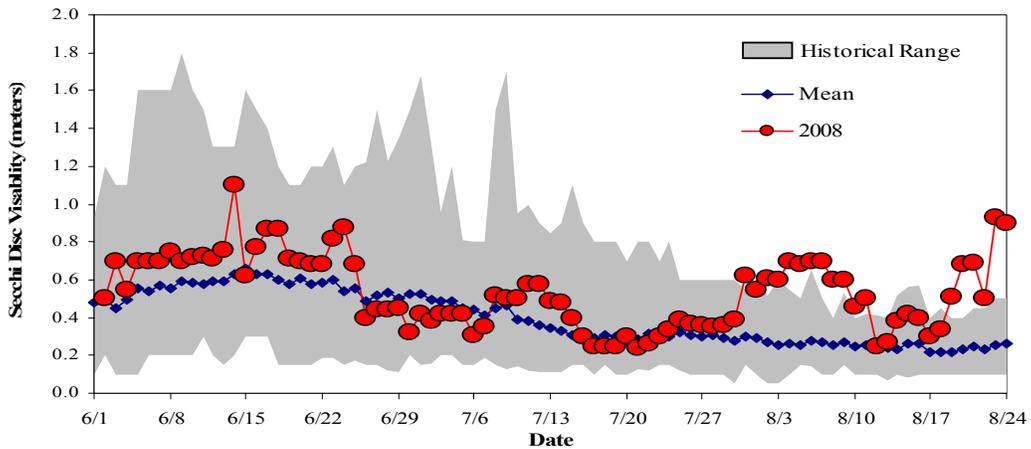
Historical water level, Kuskokwim River at Crooked Creek, USGS.



Historical water temperature, Kuskokwim River, BTF.

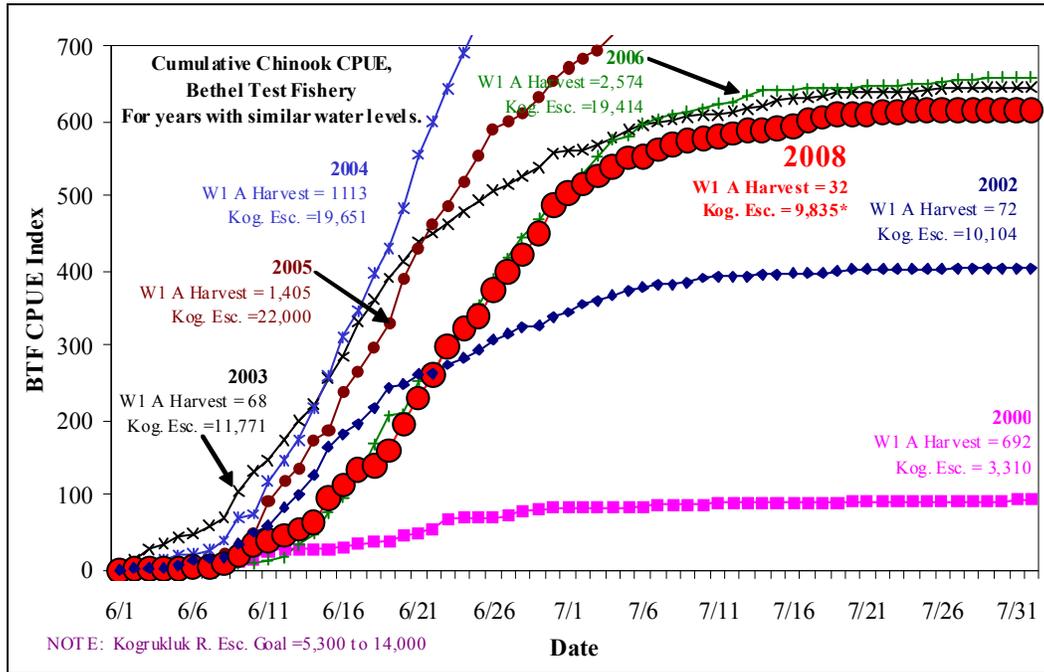


Historical water clarity, Kuskokwim River, BTF.



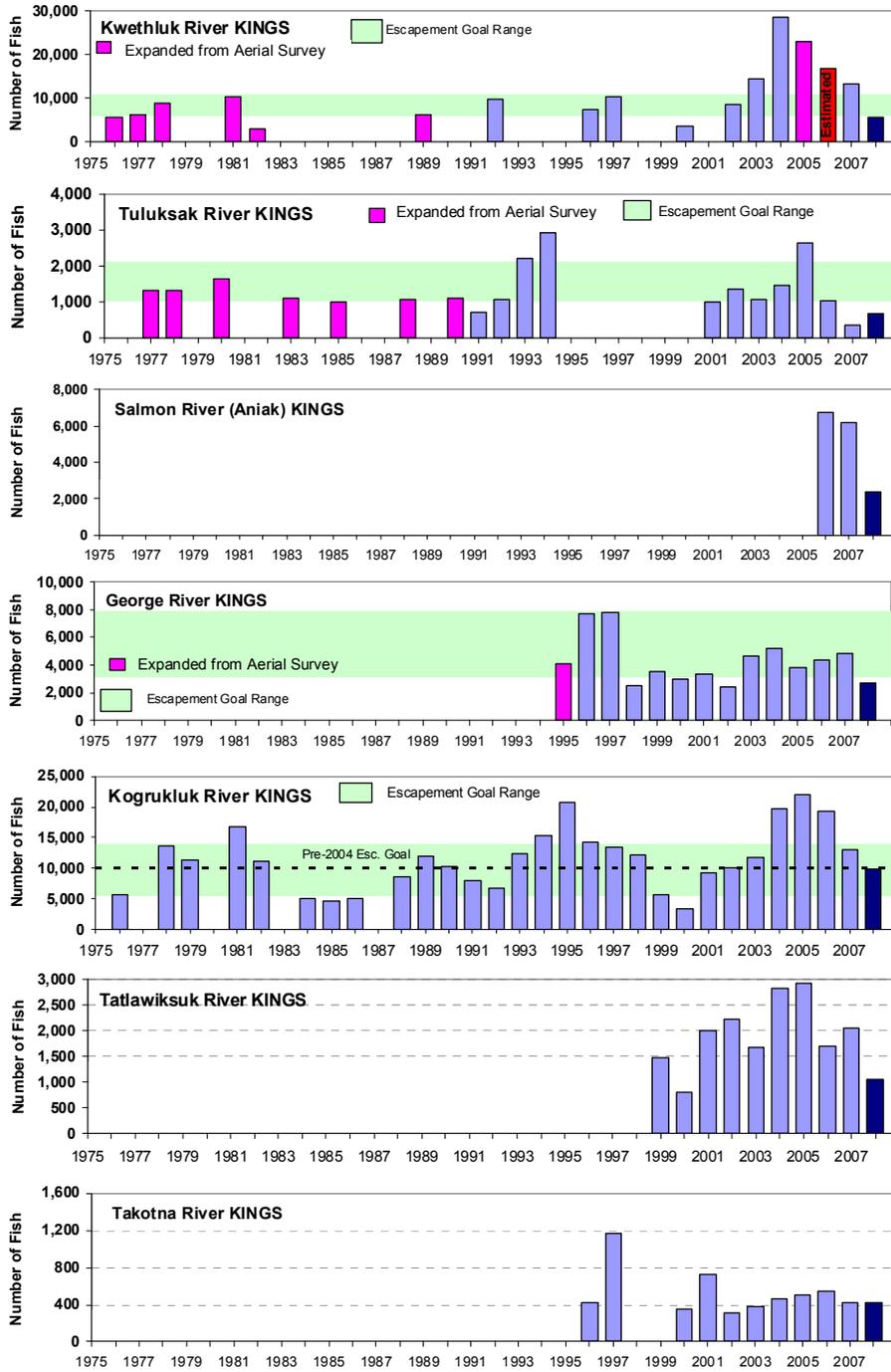
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Chinook Salmon, Bethel Test Fishery, through July 31, 2008



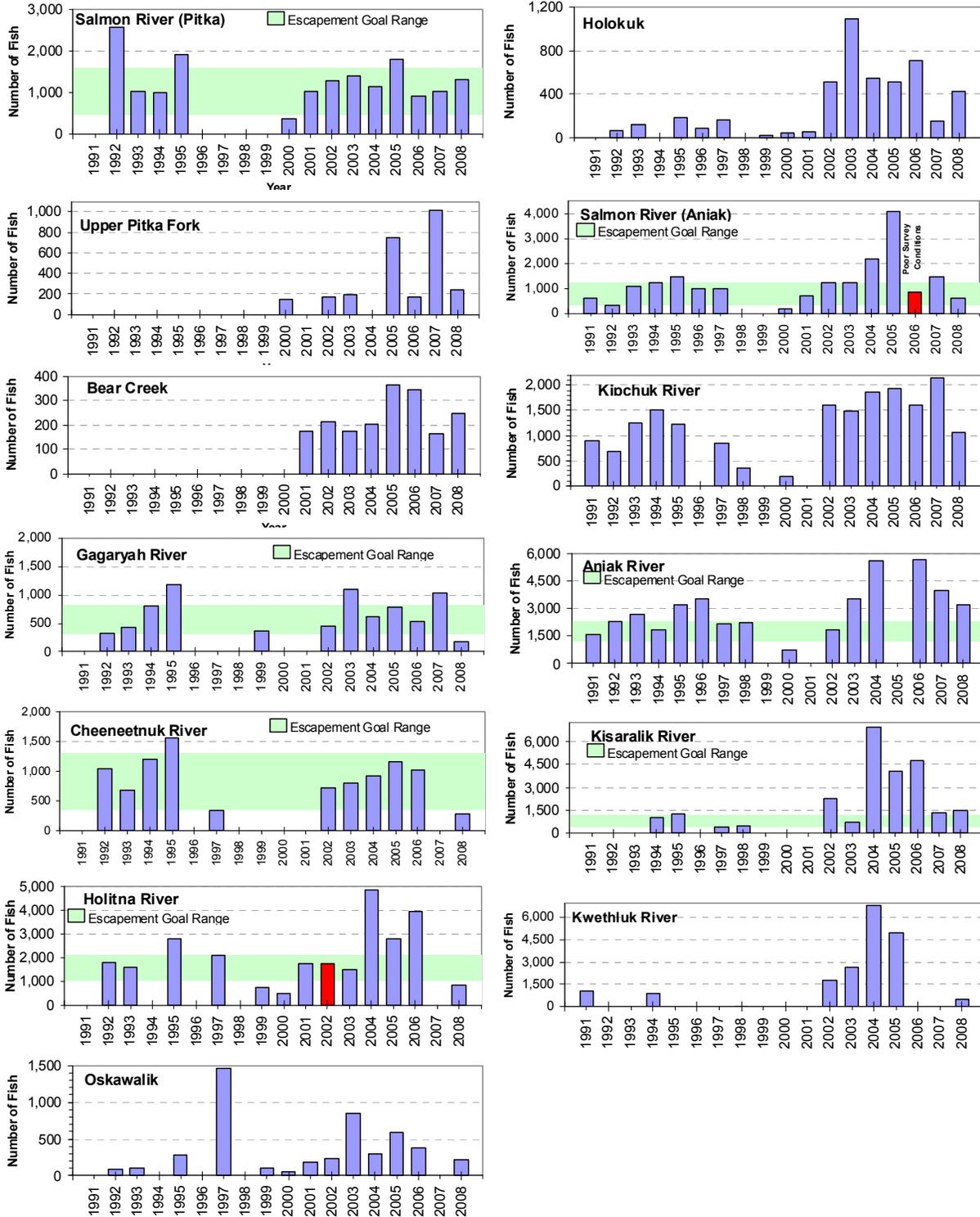
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Chinook Salmon, Kuskokwim River Weir Projects, 2008



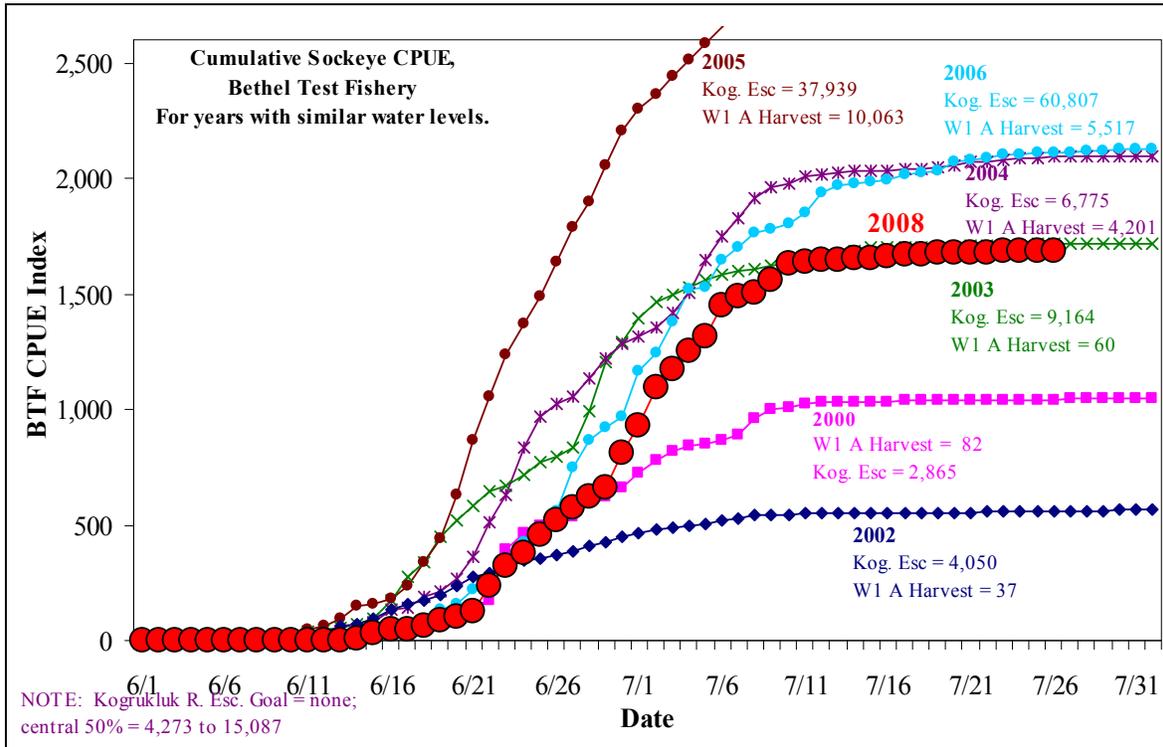
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Chinook Salmon, Kuskokwim River Aerial Surveys, 2008



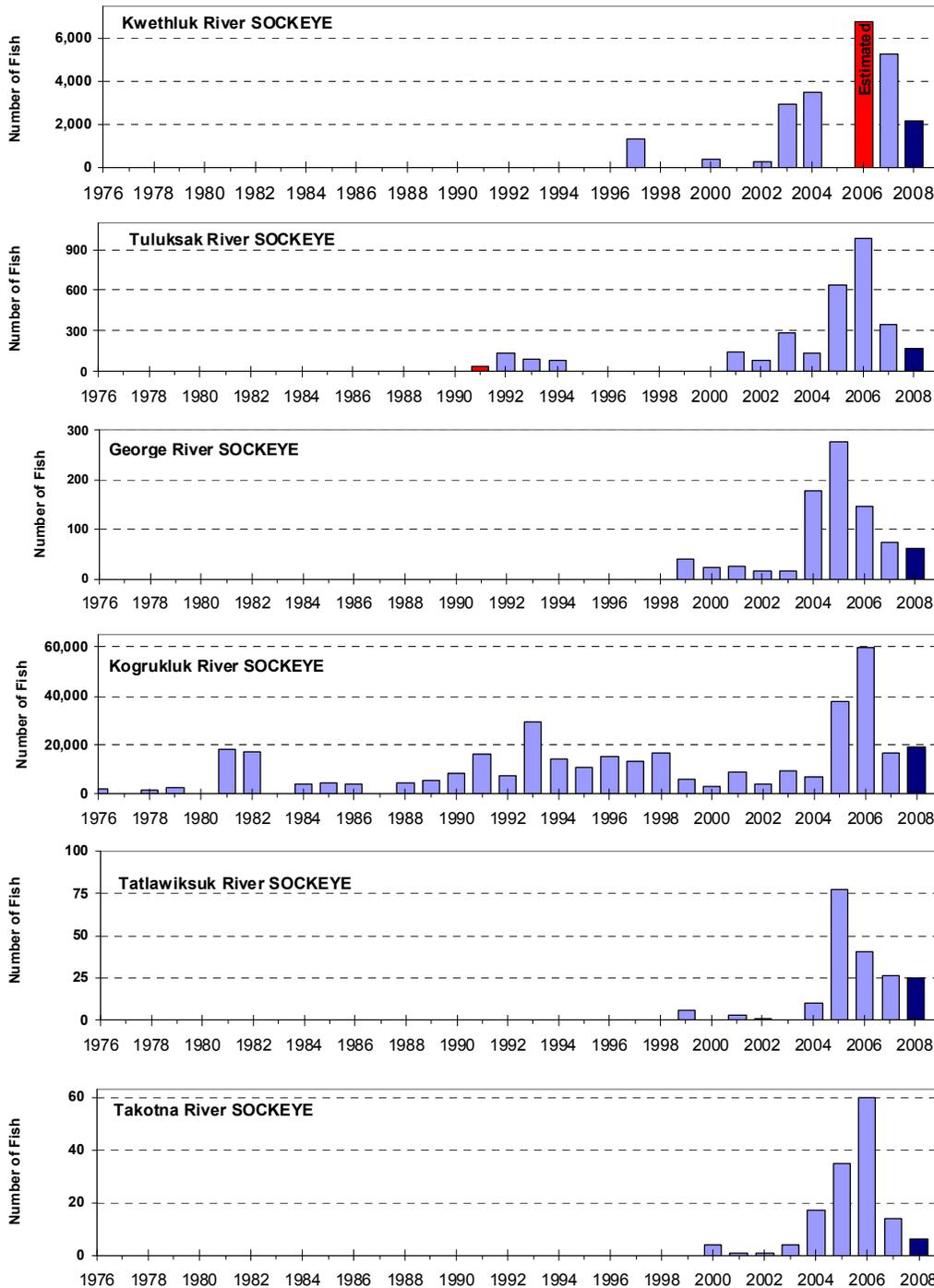
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Sockeye Salmon, Bethel Test Fishery, through July 31, 2008



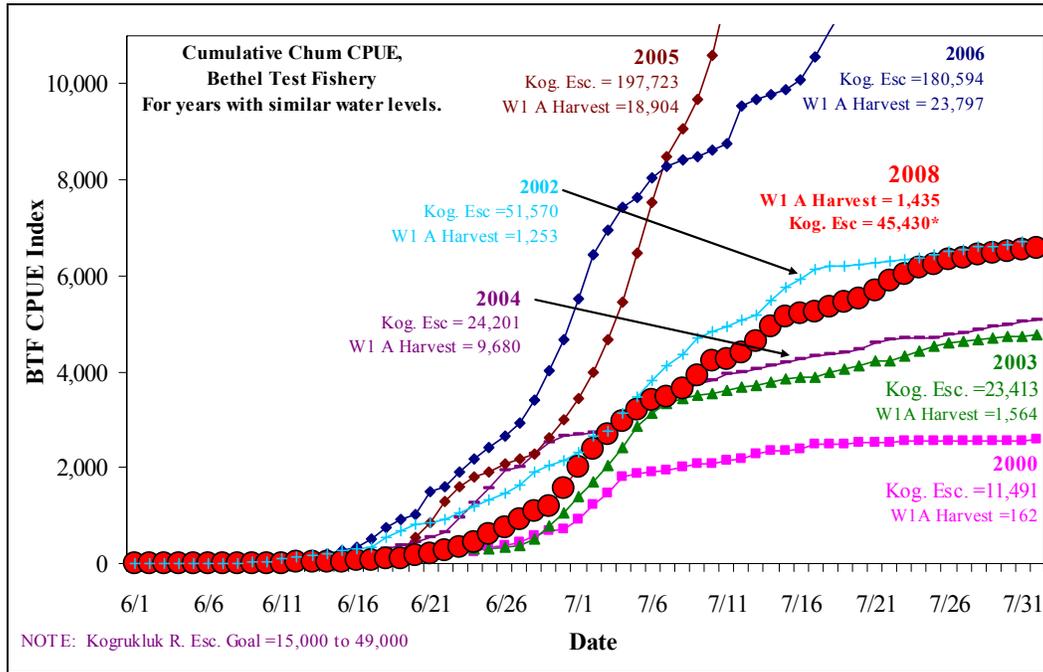
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Sockeye Salmon, Kuskokwim River Weir Projects, 2008

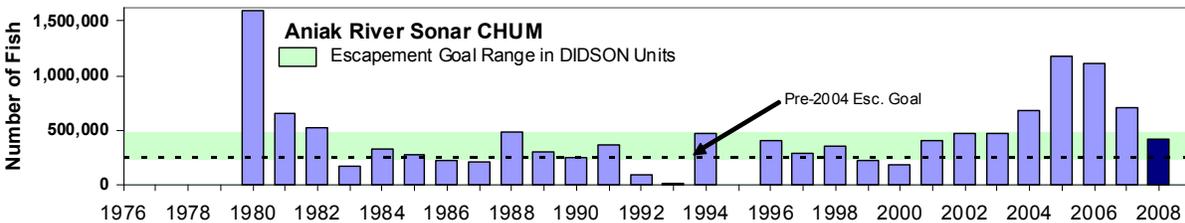
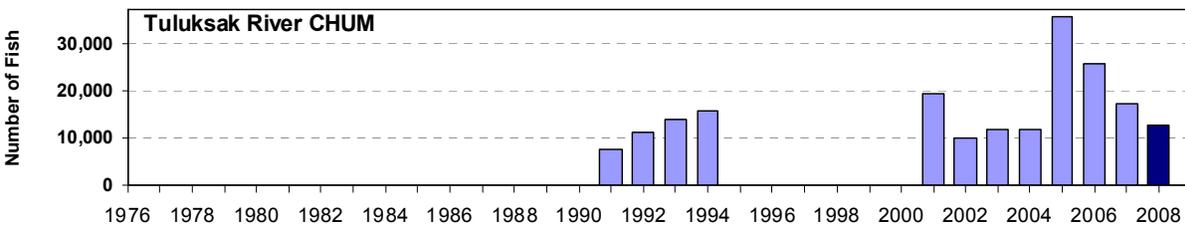
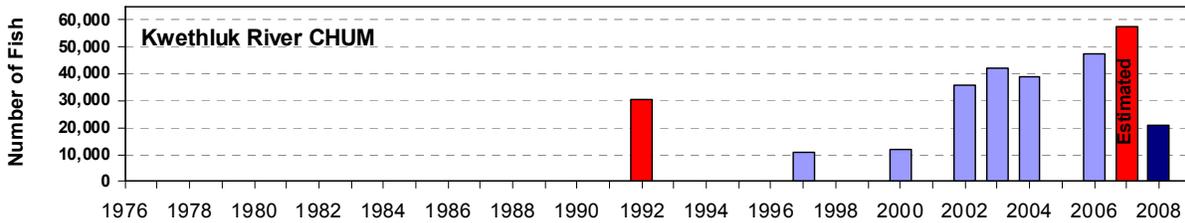


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Chum Salmon, Bethel Test Fishery, through July 31, 2008.

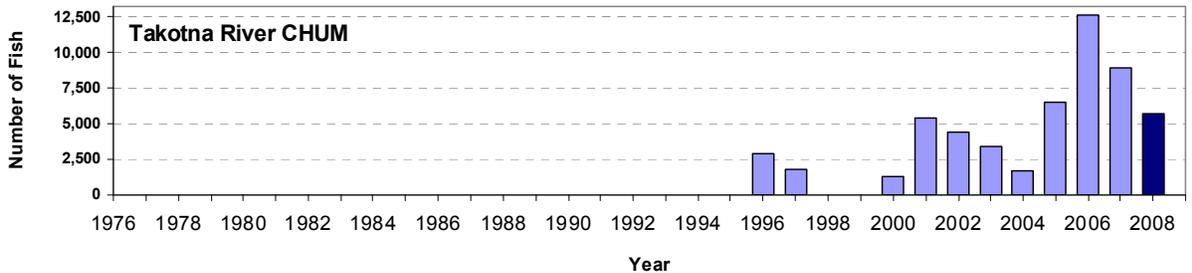
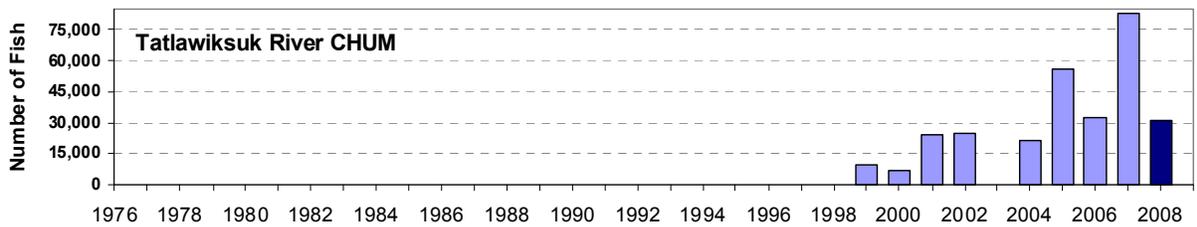
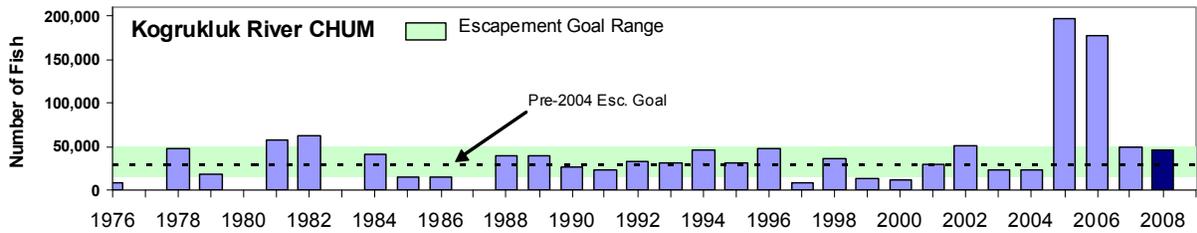
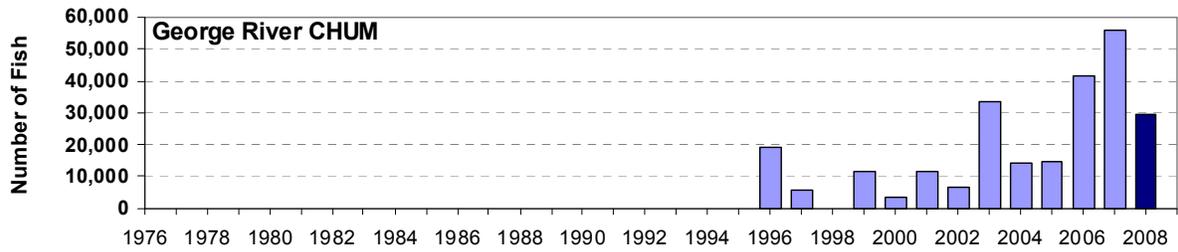
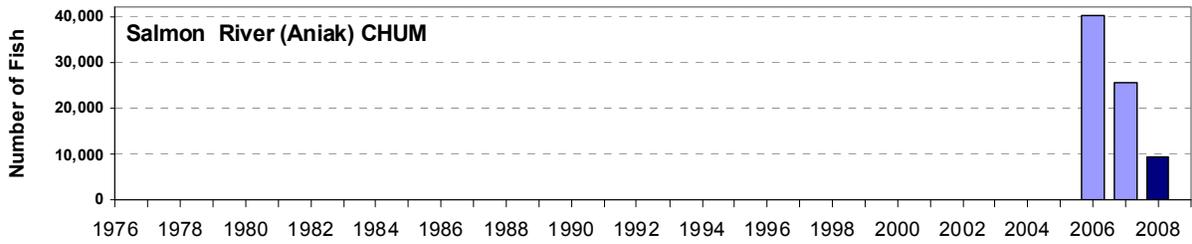


Chum Salmon, Kuskokwim River Weir/Sonar Projects, 2008



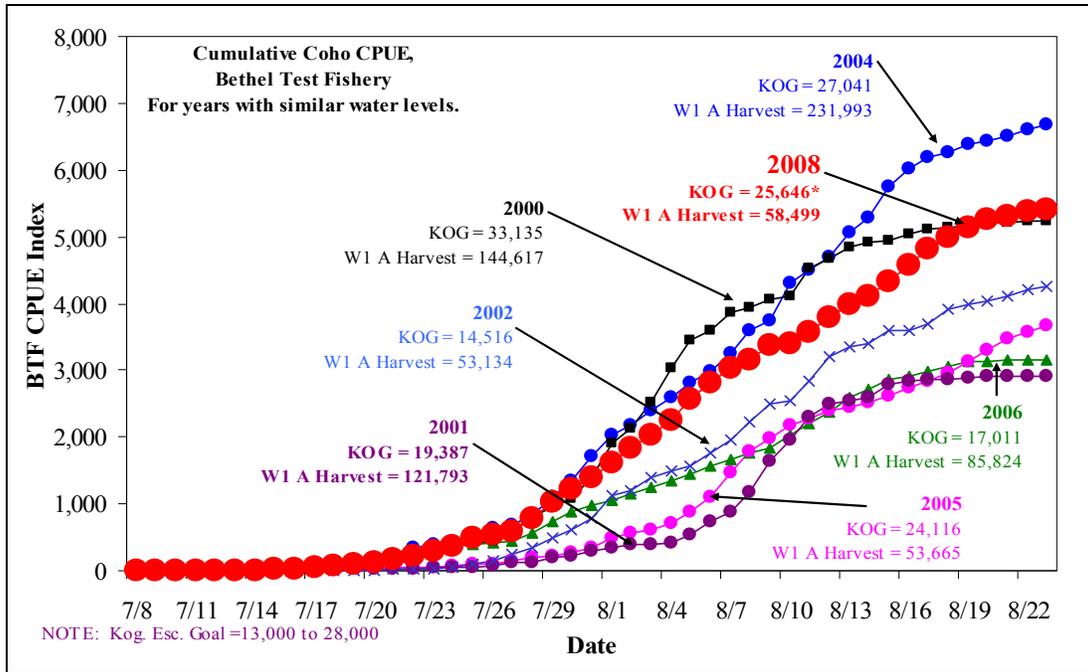
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Chum Salmon, Kuskokwim River Weir Projects, 2008, (cont).



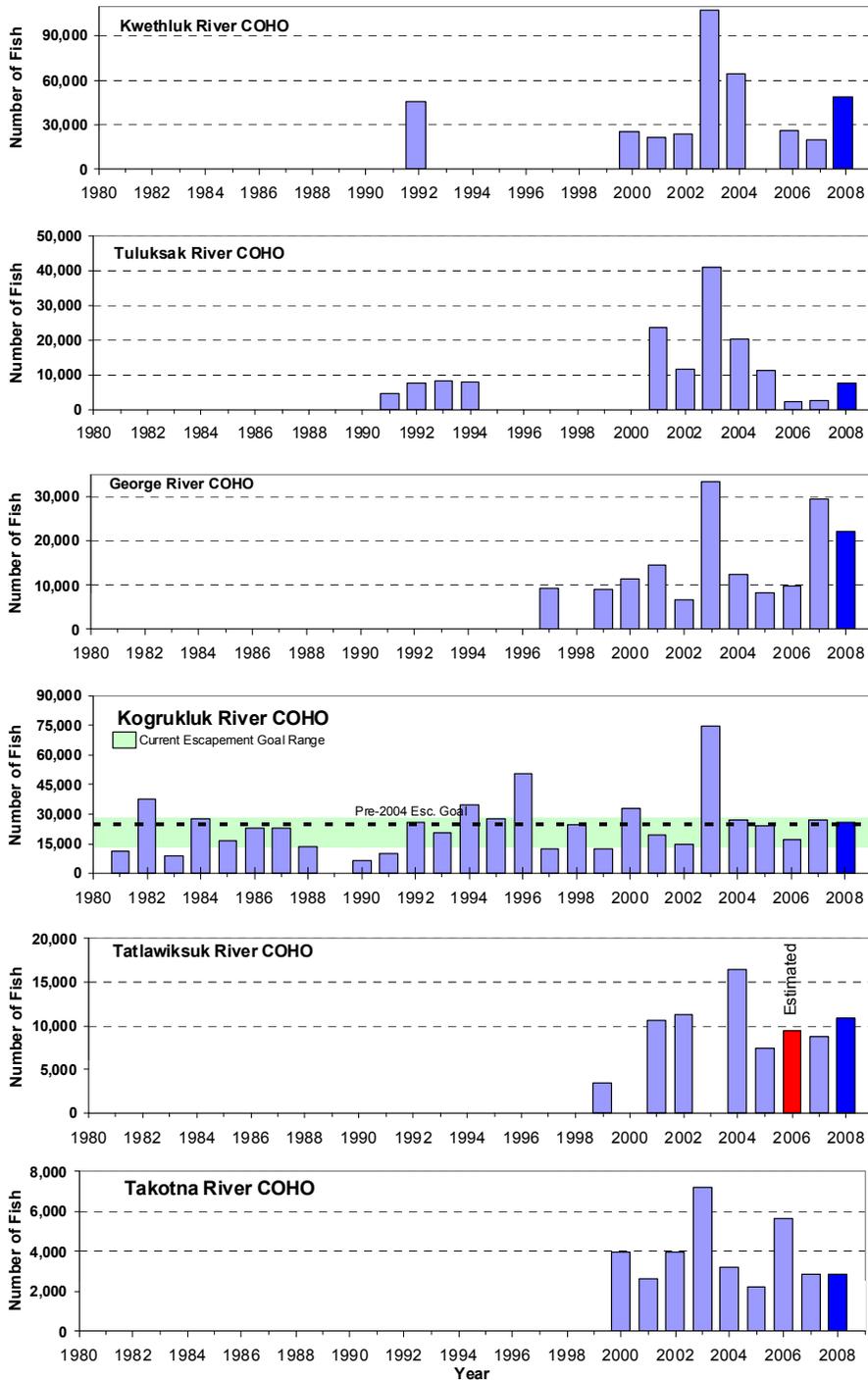
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Coho Salmon, Bethel Test Fishery, July 8 through August 24, 2008



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Coho Salmon, Kuskokwim River Weir Projects, 2008



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Kuskokwim River Commercial Catch Report

Summary of the District W1 (Kuskokwim River) Commercial Fishery, 2008.										
			Chinook Salmon		Sockeye Salmon		Chum Salmon		Coho Salmon	
Date	District	Permits	Catch	Cumulative	Catch	Cumulative	Catch	Cumulative	Catch	Cumulative
20-Jun	W1-B	171	6,415	6,415	8,653	8,653	12,903	12,903	0	0
24-Jun	W1-B	126	1,372	7,787	2,906	11,559	6,560	19,463	0	0
27-Jun	W1-B	135	990	8,777	3,842	15,401	7,804	27,267	0	0
2-Jul	W1	1	19	8,796	75	15,476	0	27,267	0	0
12-Jul	W1	1	1	8,797	2	15,478	160	27,427	0	0
19-Jul	W1	1	0	8,797	2	15,480	98	27,525	14	14
22-Jul	W1	1	0	8,797	3	15,483	120	27,645	94	108
25-Jul	W1	1	0	8,797	0	15,483	0	27,645	80	188
30-Jul	W1	1	0	8,797	2	15,485	113	27,758	117	305
2-Aug	W1	1	0	8,797	0	15,485	0	27,758	150	455
4-Aug	W1-A	66	9	8,806	13	15,498	487	28,245	6,149	6,604
6-Aug	W1-B	118	15	8,821	29	15,527	482	28,727	12,013	18,617
8-Aug	W1	224	18	8,839	23	15,550	940	29,667	28,877	47,494
11-Aug	W1-A	108	5	8,844	9	15,559	369	30,036	14,991	62,485
13-Aug	W1-B	167	6	8,850	17	15,576	143	30,179	19,667	82,152
15-Aug	W1-B	169	4	8,854	9	15,585	111	30,290	20,137	102,289
18-Aug	W1-A	112	4	8,858	0	15,585	47	30,337	11,513	113,802
20-Aug	W1-B	137	4	8,862	7	15,592	35	30,372	7,017	120,819
22-Aug	W1	192	1	8,863	8	15,600	84	30,456	11,237	132,056
25-Aug	W1	164	2	8,865	1	15,601	60	30,516	10,806	142,862

District 1 ex-vessel value and permits fished, 1995-2008.			
Year	District 1		
	Value of Catch	Permits Fished ^a	Average Income
1995	\$2,766,882	712	\$3,886
1996	\$2,117,245	620	\$3,415
1997	\$2,288,766	604	\$3,789
1998	\$983,633	615	\$1,599
1999	\$169,769	509	\$334
2000	\$514,930	532	\$968
2001	\$424,199	412	\$1,030
2002	\$126,361	318	\$397
2003	\$453,187	359	\$1,262
2004	\$942,566	390	\$2,417
2005	\$448,853	403	\$1,114
2006	\$451,389	373	\$1,210
2007	\$380,842	366	\$1,041
2008	\$538,310	374	\$1,439
Recent 10 Yr Avg (1998-2007)	\$489,573	428	\$1,137

^a Number of permits that made at least one delivery

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Area M Report

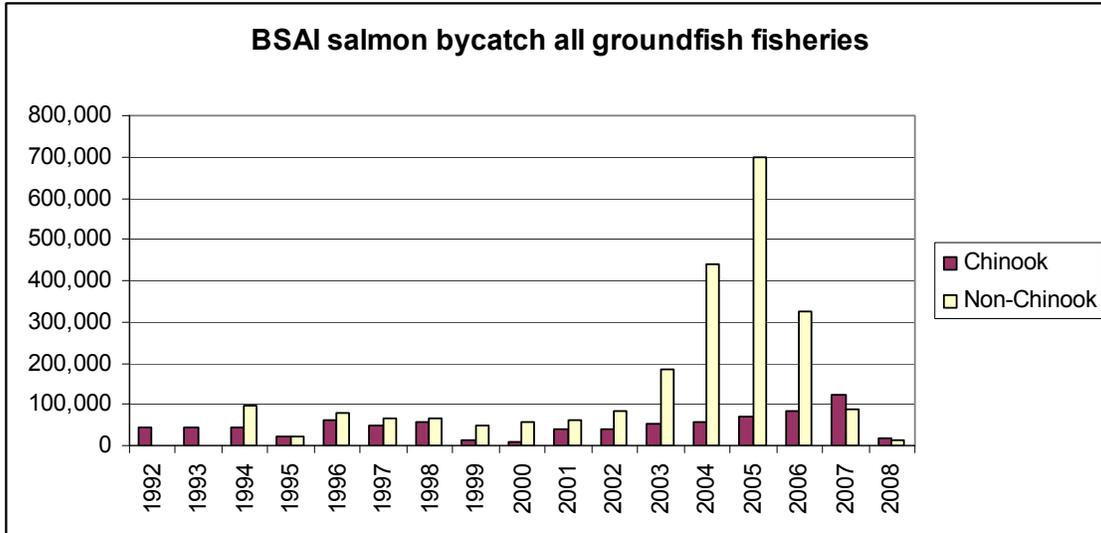
Total Alaska Peninsula Harvest Through 9/12/2008					
	<i>Chinook</i>	<i>Sockeye</i>	<i>Coho</i>	<i>Pink</i>	<i>Chum</i>
<i>South Peninsula</i>					
Total to date	4,549	2,183,466	213,856	12,763,920	813,196
<i>North Peninsula</i>					
Total to Date	1,789	2,007,038	128,685	15,518	175,147
2008 Total Harvest					
(Through September 12)	6,338	4,190,504	342,541	12,779,438	988,343
2007 Total Harvest	12,921	5,847,490	219,965	7,437,212	860,796
2006 Total Harvest	13,037	4,210,376	258,917	4,325,437	1,307,561
2005 Total Harvest	13,685	5,452,889	212,297	9,420,027	781,999
2004 Total Harvest	17,452	4,633,722	269,520	6,681,659	805,066

Area M Report: Additional Southeastern District commercial openings have occurred periodically from September 15-24, but harvest from these openings is not included in 2008 totals. This additional harvest is not expected to increase Chinook, sockeye, chum, and pink salmon season totals by significant amounts, but may have an affect on total coho salmon harvest in 2008.

Total 2008 Chinook salmon harvest through September 12 remains below total annual harvest in all years dating back to 2004. Total 2008 sockeye salmon harvest through September 12 is below total annual harvest in 2004, 2005, and 2007, and is similar to total annual harvest in 2006. Total 2008 chum salmon harvest through September 12 is above total annual harvest in 2004, 2005, and 2007, and below total annual harvest in 2006. Total 2008 pink salmon harvest through September 12 is well above total annual harvest in all years dating back to 2004. Total 2008 coho salmon harvest through September 12 is above total annual harvest in all years dating back to 2004.

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*Bering Sea-Aleutian Islands (BSAI) Groundfish Fisheries
Historical Salmon Bycatch*



APPENDIX D

Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group

P.O. Box 1467 • Bethel, AK 99559 • 907-543-2433 • 907-543-2021 fax

September 25th, 2008

The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group meeting was called to order at 1:00pm Thursday, September 26th, 2008, at the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) conference room in Bethel. The Working Group adjourned at 4:10p.m. Eight of thirteen representatives were present. A quorum was established.

AGENDA ITEMS:

- 1.) Continuing Business
- 2.) New Business
- 3.) Old Business

WORKING GROUP MOTIONS:

- 1.) Motion made and carried to withdraw Subsistence Reports from the Continuing Business section on the agenda, and to begin the agenda with Summary of 2008 Kuskokwim River Salmon Run Assessment Projects.

WORKING GROUP ACTION ITEMS:

No Working Group Action Items to report.

ADF&G RECOMMENDATION:

No ADF&G Recommendation to report.

PEOPLE TO BE HEARD:

Community member Peter Jacobs gave a discussion in regards to the public and agencies working together to ensure that salmon populations are abundant for years to come. Upriver Elder representative translated the discussion from Yupik to English. Mr. Jacobs stated that both scientific methods and traditional Yupik methods of understanding and managing salmon runs are both vital to the success of escapement goals. Mr. Jacobs added that little by little ADF&G and the public can work together for successful salmon management. Mr. Jacobs was particularly concerned (and rightfully so) about the Donalin Creek mine and the impact it would have on Salmon populations. ADF&G representative stated that it is unknown what effects the mine would have on the Salmon populations. It was added that it is a matter of risk vs. reward and that the probability of Salmon populations being negatively affected is unknown at this time. Additionally, ADF&G representative emphasized risk vs. reward and the fact that everything that can be done should be done to minimize the risk involved (and would that be enough?). Sport Fishing representative added that we must be watchful and do everything we can to protect the fish. Upriver Elder representative did an excellent job translating Yupik to English for the Working Group meeting. Everyone present at the meeting both in-person and telephonically would like to thank Mr. Jacobs for his intriguing and insightful discussion. The Working Group was honored to have Mr. Jacobs

-continued-

speak, and everyone agreed that traditional Yupik knowledge and department research methods should go hand-in-hand in monitoring and maintaining salmon populations.

After the agenda was approved the Co-Chair asked for comments from the Working Group.

- The Downriver Elder representative stated that community members should begin to send their subsistence fishing calendars into ADF&G.
- The Sport Fishing representative noted that ADF&G should consider informing the public about sending in their subsistence fishing calendars. The Sport Fishing representative added that this information could be voiced through local Bethel radio stations and newspapers. The Sport Fishing representative also asked if the public could enter their subsistence fishing calendar numbers online. ADF&G representative responded and stated that there is currently no access online for data entry. ADF&G representative added that all data entry is done by ADF&G department staff.
- The Sport Fishing representative asked how much fish was distributed through the Bethel Test Fishery to Elders in the community. The Lower River Subsistence Representative responded and stated that the Bethel Test Fishery provides salmon to the Senior Center and from there the salmon are distributed to Elders throughout the community. The Lower River Subsistence Representative estimated that 200 Coho, 60 Kings and 70 Sockeye were donated to the Senior Center by the Bethel Test Fishery.
- The Western Interior RAC asked if the subsistence fishing calendars differentiated between community members catching fish and community members using fish. ADF&G representative responded by stating subsistence fishing calendars reflected catching and not usage. ADF&G representative added that the post-season subsistence surveys reflect the fish usage.
- ADF&G representative informed the working group that the total catch for the Bethel Test Fishery was 420 Chinook, 584 Sockeye, 2954 Coho, 22 pink and 2472 Chum salmon. ADF&G added that all of the salmon caught this year were donated to the public.
- The Lower River Subsistence Representative stated that roughly 25% of all salmon caught through the Bethel Test Fishery were donated to the Senior Center.
- The working group members would like to thank Bev Hoffman for bringing salmon strips to the meeting.

AGENDA ITEMS: CONTINUING BUSINESS:

1.) SUBSISTENCE REPORTS: Motion made and carried to withdraw this section from the agenda.

2.) SUMMARY OF 2008 KUSKOKWIM RIVER SALMON RUN ASSESSMENT PROJECTS:

A. Chinook-Bethel Test Fish/ Weirs/ Aerial Survey

ADG&G representative informed the Working Group members about the 2008 fishing season's water levels at Crooked Creek. The 2008 fishing season started on 6-4-08 and ended on 8-24-08. The season began with water levels slightly below average at Crooked Creek and remained that way until around

6-20-08 when the water levels followed a more average trend. ADF&G representative added that water levels then dipped below average during the Coho fishing season in July. Water levels remained below average for the month of August. From June 1-Aug 24 the Bethel Test Fishery recorded water temperatures that were slightly below average for the majority of the salmon

-continued-

fishing season. In addition, water clarity was above average for the 2008 fishing season due to low water levels on the Kuskokwim River.

ADF&G representative reported that the Bethel Test Fishery In-Season Index for Chinook salmon presented a similar picture that was reflected in the ONC In-Season report: Chinook salmon abundance appeared to be average. ADF&G representative added that the Post-Season Chinook salmon index indicated the run to be roughly 2-3 days later than the average year. The 2008 BTF Chinook salmon index was the 5th highest in 25 years of the BTF operation. ADF&G representative stated that the BTF Chinook salmon index was consistent with the In-Season subsistence reports that Chinook salmon were abundant.

ADF&G representative noted that Chinook salmon were about 3 days late reaching the BTF fishing site and 1-2 weeks later than average reaching the weir sites. ADF&G representative added that some Chinook salmon weir escapement goals were reached and others were not for the 2008 Kuskokwim salmon fishing season. ADF&G representative stated that the KogrukluK escape goal of 5,300-14,000 Chinook Salmon was reached with 9,835 Chinook Salmon reaching the KogrukluK River. Multiple members of the Working Group were concerned as to why BTF Chinook numbers were higher than Chinook numbers at weir sites. ADF&G representative noted that Post-Season Subsistence surveys would greater reflect on the escapement numbers for Chinook Salmon and the 2008 Chinook Salmon run. ADF&G representative added that due to an increased cost of living it was possible that fishermen had caught and distributed greater numbers of Chinook Salmon for the Winter. ADF&G discussed the Chinook Salmon escapement numbers at both weir sites and through aerial surveys: escapements have dropped off steadily over the past 5 years from the peak of Chinook Salmon that was documented in 2004. The number of Chinook Salmon reaching the Kwethluk River weir was just short of the escapement goal. In addition, the escapement goal for Chinook Salmon at Tuluksak River weir was not reached and the number of Salmon reaching the weir was the second lowest since 1976. U.S. Fish & Wildlife is currently undergoing studies to determine why escapement goals for Chinook Salmon have dropped off on the Tuluksak River. Salmon River weir Chinook numbers were down; however, there were only 2 other years on record to compare to. George River weir Chinook Salmon escapement numbers were also down but still about average. The KogrukluK River weir escapement goal was reached. Tatlawiksuk and Takotna River weirs were about average for the numbers of Chinook Salmon passing through.

Although escapement numbers were down for Chinook Salmon passing through weir sites, an ADF&G representative stated that aerial surveys indicated a sufficient number of Chinook Salmon swimming up the tributaries. From upper Kuskokwim River to Lower Kuskokwim River the aerial surveys showed a mixed bag of some River tributaries reaching escapement goals and others not. Sport Fishing representative inquired about the department's thoughts as far as a conclusion and recommendations on the Chinook Salmon run. ADF&G representative stated that the season needed to be wrapped up and Post-Season subsistence salmon surveys, by-catch information and genetic samples needed to be completed before a big picture could be reached (possibly as early as January of 2009). Sport Fishing representative was concerned that the public may inquire as to why escapement goals were down. ADF&G representative stated that this is only the first year Chinook Salmon escapement goals were down and unless this trend followed on a multiple year basis, it wasn't to be considered a major concern. ADF&G

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representative stated that there will be an escapement goal committee meeting in Anchorage on the 14th and 15th of October 2008. ADF&G representative added that it is unlikely there will be any escapement goal changes during this 3-year cycle of Chinook Salmon. Downriver Elder representative pointed out that the salmon graphs would be more reader friendly in they were printed in color to distinguish details.

B. Sockeye-Bethel Test Fish/ Weirs

ADF&G representative reported that as an in-season tool the Bethel Test Fishery seemed to suggest a slightly later normal later run timing when compared to other years with similar water levels. ADF&G representative added that as the season progressed the BTF CPUE rapidly increased and indicated at least an average abundance for Sockeye salmon. In addition, the BTF Sockeye salmon data reflected the ONC studies. Post-season BTF data indicated the Sockeye run to be roughly 3 days later than average. Sport Fishing representative inquired about how the BTF CPUE is calculated. ADF&G representative responded by stating that the CPUE indicates number of fish caught per hour in a 50 fathom net.

Downriver Elder representative asked why the Sockeye escapement graphs were missing multiple years of information. ADF&G representative responding by stating that many of the weirs didn't begin recording Sockeye salmon population data until the 1990's. ADF&G has been recording Sockeye salmon escapement numbers the longest, since 1976. ADF&G representative stated that the overall synopsis is that Sockeye numbers were down when compared to the high numbers recorded in 2004-2006. ADF&G added that escapement goals for Sockeye salmon were reached at the weir sites and that the Sockeye population appears to be doing very well. ADF&G representative discussed that Sockeye Salmon generally like systems that have lakes; however, Sockeye Salmon in the Kuskokwim typically stay in the river tributaries and don't rear in lakes. It was added that for all species of salmon the run timing was a few days late for Salmon from the Ocean to the BTF fishing Site, but much later for the same Salmon from the BTF fishing site to the weir sites.

C. Chum-Bethel Test Fish/ Weirs

ADF&G representative stated that as an in-season tool the Bethel Test Fishery seemed to work really well for the department again this year. ADF&G representative said that the BTF project suggested that the Chum salmon were running slightly later than 4 of the 6 recorded years with comparable water levels. As the season progressed it became evident that the Chum salmon run would have better abundance than the 2000 season when escapement goals were met. ADF&G representative added that Chum salmon escapement goals for 2008 at Kogrukluuk were met.

ADF&G representative reported that escapement numbers for Chum salmon at weir sites were good. Although Chum salmon numbers were not as high as 2005 & 2007, ADF&G representative noted that Chum salmon met escapement goals and abundance was great, even though numbers were down from the previous three years.

Several questions were raised by working group members about a possible Chum salmon market. Sport Fishing representative stated that rather than processing the Chum salmon it might be a good idea to let the Chum salmon decay and spread their marine wealth in the ecosystem. ADF&G representative also touched on the subject, reporting that scientific data shows too many

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fish in spawning grounds leads to detrimental declines in their populations. ADF&G representative added that an overpopulation of salmon at spawning grounds is counterproductive and makes for more volatile runs between years. Western Interior RAC asked if too many fish in an ecosystem was detrimental due to aggressive competition between young fish. ADF&G representative noted this to be correct.

B. Coho-Bethel Test Fishery/ Weirs

ADF&G representative reported Coho salmon passage at the Bethel Test Fishery site was about normal, possibly 1 day earlier than usual. ADF&G representative added that both water temperatures and water levels were about normal and that there were no red flags to indicate a poor Coho salmon run.

ADF&G representative reported the following information regarding Coho salmon escapement goals: Kongrukluks escapement goal of 13,000-28,000 Chum salmon was met as nearly 22,000 Chum salmon passed the weir site. The Coho escapements were generally above average. Tuluksak escapement for Chum salmon was just above average. George River escapement was the third highest on record. Kogrukluks was towards the upper end of its escapement goal. Talawiksuk was about tied for second highest on record and Takotna was right about average. Their seemed to be plenty of Coho salmon at the spawning grounds.

3.) COMMERCIAL CATCH REPORT:

ADF&G representative stated the following information regarding the commercial catch report: The total commercial harvest for Chinook salmon was 8,865. The total commercial harvest for Sockeye salmon was 15,601. The total commercial harvests for Chum and Coho salmon were 30,516 and 142,862. The total number of individual permit holders participating in district 1 for the 2008 fishing season was 374 (all 374 made at least 1 recorded landing). That level of effort (or number of permit holders participating for the 2008 fishing season) was 13% below the ten year average. The Chinook and Sockeye salmon total harvest numbers were 63% and 15% above the recent 10-year harvest averages. The Coho and Chum salmon total harvest numbers were 22% and 27% below the recent 10-year harvest averages. The value of the 2008 total commercial catch was \$538,310, with an average income of \$1,439 for each individual permit holder. From 1998-2007 the ten-year average for total commercial catch value was \$489,573, with an average income of \$1,137 for each individual permit holder. The average income for individual permit holders increased slightly from the previous 3 years; however, is less than half of the average from the 1990's.

4.) PROCESSOR REPORT:

Processor representative stated that the 2008 fishing season was a good season. Processor representative added that for the 2009 fishing season Quinhagak will still maintain its operation and hopefully in June the new Platinum fishing plant will be in full operation. Processor representative stated that there will be tenders to assist with transporting the additional processed salmon. Processor representative reported Sockeye and Chinook salmon harvest numbers were down, with Chum and Coho salmon harvest numbers were up. It was a record season in W-4 and W-5, which was attributed to both the Chum and Coho runs. ADF&G representative stated that more Coho salmon could have been harvested for the 2008 fishing season; however, capacity was limited due to a single buyer.

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5.) SPORT FISH REPORT:

Sport Fish representative stated the water is low on most tributaries so there is not that much pressure on sport fish right now. It was added that the sport fish season is pretty much over throughout the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta right now. ADF&G representative noted that a news release from ADF&G division of sport fish was just put out. The department is holding a public meeting to explain and solicit comments on draft language that would create a sport fish guide services board. The news release has information pertaining to that meeting as well as a website with more information about it. ADF&G representative stated that the link to the website provides opportunities to folks that cannot attend the meeting in Fairbanks.

6.) AREA M REPORT:

Total salmon harvest numbers for the Alaska Peninsula through 9-12-08 include the following: Chinook salmon (6,338), Sockeye salmon (4,190,504), Coho salmon (342,541), Pink salmon (12,779,438), and Chum salmon (988,343). Total 2008 Chinook salmon harvest through 9-12-08 remains below total annual harvest in all years dating back to 2004. Total 2008 Sockeye salmon harvest through 9-12-08 is below total annual harvest in 2004, 2005 and 2007, and is similar to total annual harvest in 2006. Total 2008 Chum salmon harvest through 9-12-08 is above total annual harvest in 2004, 2005, and 2007, and below total annual harvest in 2006. Total 2008 pink salmon harvest through 9-12-08 is well above total annual harvest in all years dating back to 2004. Total 2008 Coho salmon harvest through 9-12-08 is above total annual harvest in all years dating back to 2004.

7.) RECOMMENDATION: No Recommendations.

8.) MOTION FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION: No motion for discussion and no actions.

9.) MEETING ACTION ANNOUNCEMENT: No meeting action announcement.

AGENDA ITEMS: OLD BUSINESS: No old business.

AGENDA ITEMS: NEW BUSINESS:

A. Bering Sea Salmon Bycatch:

ADF&G representative reported the following information: the 2008 by-catch appears to be well below what has been observed in the last several years (as documented in current graphs). This does not include B season harvest. All of B season is currently unavailable. Historic data has shown that B season usually sees fewer Chinook salmon harvested than A season. Both Chinook salmon and non-Chinook salmon by-catch numbers are below recent year averages. Overall, the assessment for the 2008 season is that by-catch on salmon is way down in the Bering Sea Alutian Island fishery. Sport Fish representative stated that the low by-catch numbers, in addition to higher fishing efforts, may indicate an even lower harvest rate than observed through current graphs and charts for the 2008 fishing season.

B. Upcoming Program Proposals:

ADF&G representative stated that the funding agency AYKSSI (Alaska Yukon Kuskokwim Sustainable Salmon Initiative) put out their final proposal for the organization, with the focus

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essentially being on shoring up listings in the anadromous streams catalog and looking for areas where there is potentially human impacts on streams. Additionally, the Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund put out their call for proposals. ADF&G representative added that it is a statewide initiative, and ADF&G may put in proposals for Chum and Sockeye reconstruction projects.

C. Upcoming Meetings:

AYK Escapement Goal Meeting (Oct 14-15), AFS AK Chapter (Oct 28-30), BASIS Meeting (Nov 23-25 in Seattle), and State of the Salmon (Feb 2-5 in B.C. Canada).

Motion made and carried to adjourn at 4:30pm

APPENDIX E

Appendix E1.–Executive Summary of Working Group and ADF&G actions, 2008.

Date	Comment
6-13-2008	The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group meeting was called to order at 10:08 a.m. and adjourned at 11:59 a.m. The meeting was held at the ADF&G Aerie conference room in Bethel. Ten of the thirteen Working Group representatives participated; a quorum was established. The Downriver Elder and Commercial Fishing Representatives reported that both chum and sockeye salmon were being caught in small numbers downriver. The Western Interior Representative reported that fuel costs may affect subsistence fishermen in the 2008 fishing season. ADF&G BTF project reported that water surface temperature was recorded as being slightly below average and water clarity was recorded as being slightly above average. There was no commercial catch to report. The processor reported that they are ready to buy in Bethel and optimistic for openings in June. ADF&G Area Sport Fish Manager stated that the Sheefish radio telemetry project is doing well, and the Sheefish are expected to achieve the goal mentioned in the Aniak RBT project. Area M report states that ADF&G has no recommendation at this time for commercial openings.
6-17-2008	The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group meeting was called to order at 10:07 a.m. and adjourned at 11:35 a.m. The meeting was held at the ADF&G conference room in Bethel. Eleven of the thirteen Working Group representatives participated; a quorum was established. The ADF&G Kuskokwim Area Management Biologist presented a report from a subsistence fisher who fished on Sunday making four drifts of 20-30 minutes in duration across from the Tuntutuliak fish camp. The catch was reported as 52 Chinook, 30 sockeye and 13 chum salmon. The Upriver Elder representative reported that there were no reports of fish upriver yet. The Downriver Elder representative

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Date	Comment
	<p>stated that subsistence fishermen were catching good downriver at the mouth of Eek last week. The Kuskokwim Subsistence Catch Monitoring project through ONC reported most families as catching normal amounts of Chinook, sockeye and chum salmon. The ADF&G Kuskokwim Area Management Biologist commented that the Marine Advisory Program through the University of Alaska, Fairbanks, is conducting a drift study within Kuskokwim Bay that will try to determine tidal and current patterns that also ties in with out migration patterns. ADF&G reported that George River weir crew is on site and the weir was operational on June 16. The Tatlawiksuk River weir was operational on June 15. The Takotna River weir is anticipated to be operational June 17. At the Salmon River weir on the Aniak river drainage, the crew is on site and working to become operational. The KogrukluK river weir crew deploys at the end of the week. There was no report for the Aniak River sonar or coho salmon mark-recapture project. No commercial catch report was given as there have been no commercial openings yet in 2008. ADF&G recommendations included having a commercial fishing period on Thursday, June 19, for 6 hours in Subdistrict 1B only.</p>
6-21-2008	<p>The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group meeting was called to order at 10:01 a.m. and adjourned at 11:35 a.m. The meeting was held at the ADF&G conference room in Bethel. Seven of the thirteen Working Group representatives participated; a quorum was established. ADF&G Area Management Biologist was concerned about the recommended commercial opening being too early in the season, because the fish were just coming in with ice break-up only a month ago. Upriver Elder representative reported that there were no signs of salmon upriver yet. It was reported that subsistence fishermen downriver were still catching good numbers of salmon. Sport fishing representative commented that it was too early for Sport Fish activity. The Lower River Representative reported that traveling back and forth to Bethel he observed that the fish racks were turning red and that was a good sign. The Kuskokwim Subsistence Catch Monitoring project through ONC reported Chinook, sockeye and chum salmon catches as normal. BTF project representative reported that surface water temperatures were below average and that water clarity was slightly above average. BTF also reported that the Chinook salmon index is tracking above the 2006 season when escapement goals were met. In addition, BTF project representative stated that sockeye and chum indexes are within normal range. ADF&G representative reported that Salmon River and KogrukluK River weirs are not yet operational. The Processor representative reported that one company is ready to buy in Bethel and air lift capacity should not be a problem. There is plenty of ice and a tender available. Area M report states that not much had changed since the last meeting.</p>

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Date	Comment
6-23-2008	<p>The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group meeting was called to order at 10:17 a.m. and adjourned at 12:23 p.m. The meeting was held at the ADF&G conference room in Bethel. Ten of the thirteen Working Group representatives participated; a quorum was established. The Lower River Subsistence Report stated that Chinook salmon needs were being met. The Lower Kuskokwim Subsistence Catch Monitoring Project through ONC reported the Chinook run to be very good, although later than normal. Both chum and sockeye salmon runs were reported as normal through the ONC project. ADF&G BTF project shows the CPUE for Chinook to be similar to the 2006 run and going well. The Commercial Catch report for the year's first opening showed that 177 permits were fished (well below historical averages but higher than recent years), 6,425 Chinook, 8,653 chum, and 12,910 sockeye were harvested. The Processor representative reported that they are prepared for the next commercial opening. Sport Fish representative brought up comments of possible unfair commercial openings between the above Bethel (1A) opportunities and the below Bethel (1B) opportunities. Area M report shows the 2008 Chinook salmon harvest to be lower than the previous 4 years to date at a total of 2,454. 2008 chum salmon harvest through June 21 has seen average numbers all within the South Peninsula. 2008 sockeye salmon as of June 21 has had a lower harvest then previous years with the exception of 2006.</p>
6-26-2008	<p>The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. and adjourned at 11:43 a.m. The meeting was held at the ADF&G conference room in Bethel. Nine of the thirteen Working Group representatives participated; a quorum was established. The Upriver Elder reported that fish had not yet arrived at Stony River. The Downriver Elder reported that fishing for Chinook salmon has slowed and fishermen are targeting chum and sockeye salmon. The Lower River Subsistence report through ONC states that the majority of subsistence fishermen use drift nets. The report also listed the Chinook run as "very good" or "normal," the sockeye run as "very good," and the chum run as "normal." ADF&G representative stated that the BTF has documented water levels as being slightly below average with very little variability. According to the BTF the water temperature is below average, with occasional cold spikes that occurred earlier in June. Water clarity has been above average. The BTF CPUE for Chinook salmon has been increasing with 2008's CPUE closely following 2006's trends. The BTF CPUE for sockeye salmon has been climbing along with other years with similar water</p>

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Date	Comment
	<p>levels despite being slightly later in the year. The BTF CPUE for chum salmon has increased at a greater rate than the slowest 2 years (2000 and 2003) and the total of season to date is shown to be later than other years (except 2000 & 2003). Takotna, Tatlawiksuk, Salmon and George River weirs are currently operational. Kogruklu River weir and Aniak River sonar are being set up. Little information has been presented on the operational weirs. The commercial catch report states that 171 permits participated in the June 20th opening. 125 permits participated in the June 24th opening. Chinook, chum and sockeye commercial catches were all lower in harvest than previous years. ADF&G Area Management Biologist representative reported that Chinook salmon in area M's harvests have been lower than any year within the past 4 years to date, total sockeye salmon catches have exceeded 2005 and 2006, and nearing 2007. AS for the chum salmon the harvest has been an average year in comparison, lying between 2005 and 2006. AD&G Area Research Biologist representative proposed funding for a run reconstruction for chum and sockeye salmon. The reconstruction would be used to find total abundance estimates. Possible requests for funding would be directed to businesses such as the Donlin mine and CVS. The reconstruction would include 3 years of field work and one year for analysis of the collected data.</p>
7-28-2008	<p>Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group meeting was called to order at 10:20 a.m. and adjourned at 12:08 p.m. The meeting was held at the ADF&G conference room in Bethel. Nine of the thirteen Working Group representatives participated; a quorum was established. A community member reported that coho salmon have been caught near Quinhagak, which is early for the area. The Commercial Fisher representative stated that coho salmon have been caught near Bethel, which is also earlier than previous years. The Lower River Subsistence representative updated that fishermen have finished subsistence fishing for Chinook and sockeye salmon in the Lower River area and that coho salmon have been caught in the Lower River area. Members of the Working Group committee stated that fishermen have targeted more salmon than previous years due to the increase in fuel and costs of living. The Member at Large commented that fishing for Chinook, sockeye and chum salmon has nearly ended, and that coho salmon were beginning to be targeted by subsistence fishermen. According to BTF, chum salmon numbers appear to be average, closing relating to 2002. Weir data has shown chum run timing to be average. BTF catches indicate a slightly later run time for sockeye salmon, but with slightly larger abundance than past years with similar water levels. ADF&G Area Research Biologist supported the possible correlation between the river's lower temperature and the lateness of the runs; theorizing that the cold water may have slowed the fish down. The BTF has shown the Chinook salmon run to be average. The BTF has also shown average catch numbers for coho early in the 2008 season. The commercial catch report states that 135 permit holders fished the 6-27-08 1-B opening. Coastal Villages Seafoods has stated that they will be</p>

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Date	Comment
	<p>the only active processor in Bethel for the rest of the summer. Area M report states that 2008 has the lowest Chinook salmon run out of the past 4 years, Pink salmon has shown to be the second highest harvest year since 2004. coho and chum salmon have been higher than most other years to date, while sockeye salmon has been the lowest of all other years except for 2006.</p>
8-5-2008	<p>Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group meeting was called to order at 10:10 a.m. and adjourned at 11:58 a.m. The meeting was held at the ADF&G conference room in Bethel. Nine of the thirteen Working Group representatives participated; a quorum was established. CVS stated that they have considered buying exclusively from tenders, and not operating from the Bethel docks for the 2009 salmon fishing season. The lower River Subsistence representative stated that fishermen have been satisfied with the coho salmon run so far this season. The BTF reports that water levels have dropped since late July from the mid range to the lower average at Crooked Creek. The surface temperatures recorded by BTF crews have increased from the record lows throughout July but the increase is just below average as of the beginning of August. The BTF CPUE for coho salmon has been higher than other years with comparable water levels, except for the highest year in 2004. ADF&G representative stated that the majority of weirs have had counts above average to date. The Kalskag fish wheel is operating well and has been reaching its radio tagging goals for the coho salmon season. The YK Delta RAC representative noted that there was a report of a Salmon Shark caught in one of the villages, and asked if the presence of the shark species would make a significant difference in the salmon run. ADF&G representatives responded that Salmon Sharks are native to the Bering Seas and are not a large factor in the salmon return. The commercial catch report regarding the latest two openers on August 2nd and 4th reported the following information: The number of participating fishermen in the August 4th commercial opening compared to past openings near the same date was nearly half of the 10-year average. Despite the lower number of participants the CPUE for the four major salmon species caught did not change when compared to past average CPUEs. ADF&G Area Research Biologist representative stated that BTF and weir projects show that the 2008 coho salmon season will at least have an average number of coho for the season. The Sport Fish representative stated that the majority of the sport fishing was occurring near the mouth of the Aniak River along with the village of Aniak and the fishermen were reportedly catching coho salmon and other non-salmon species. Area M report indicated that the Chinook salmon harvest on the Alaska Peninsula is at its lowest since 2004. Sockeye salmon have had a low harvest year also but is closer to its second lowest year in comparison to Chinook salmon's lower counts. Both chum and coho salmon have been higher then most other years out of the past 4 years.</p>

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Date	Comment
8-12-2008	<p>Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group meeting was called to order at 1:08 p.m. and adjourned at 11:58 p.m. The meeting was held at the ADF&G conference room in Bethel. Nine of the thirteen Working Group representatives participated; a quorum was established. The Upriver Elder stated that there were reports of a whale going up Crooked Creek. ADF&G representative noted that there was a report of a Beluga whale in the early '90s as far up as Crooked Creek. The Commercial Fisher representative reported that some of the subsistence fishermen have caught 5 to 10 coho salmon per drift near Eek. The Sport Fish representative stated that the majority of sport fishing was occurring near Aniak with the use of rod and reel to catch coho salmon. The BTF CPUE indicates that the 2008 coho salmon season has exceeded other years with comparable water levels except for 2000 and 2004. Also, BTF recorded that water levels had a slight drop below the historical average since the beginning of August. BTF also recorded water clarity as continuing to exceed the historical range since the beginning of August. ADF&G representative stated that coho salmon have been around average weight for the 2008 fishing season. The ADF&G weir projects have had coho salmon pass through nearly all of the weirs and are showing an average run size to date. The commercial catch report stated the following information: 228 permit holders participated in the 8-8-08 full district opening, and 108 permit holders participated in the 8-11-08 district 1-A opening. The August 8 opener had less than half of the historical averages dating back to the '80s but a similar CPUE at 21.08 with the historical averages. The August 11 opener in comparison to the historical average, had one-third less permit holders participating and an average CPUE between the 10 and 5 year CPUE averages. The Processor representative reported that the processing plants had around a 50/50 male-female coho salmon ratio. Area M report showed that Chinook and sockeye salmon harvests have been at their lowest since 2004 to date. ADF&G Area Management Biologist reviewed the ONC Inseason Monitoring report over the past year, with the majority of fishermen interviewed reporting Chinook and sockeye salmon as "normal" or "very good," and the chum salmon mainly rated as "normal." The subsistence fishermen' reports correlated with the BTF salmon catches for the same salmon species. Both BTF and the weir projects have shown the 2008 sockeye salmon run to be an average year in comparison to the past years. The chum salmon run for 2008 has lowered in numbers compared to the previous three years, but overall it has been an average run size indicated by BTF and weir projects. The 2008 Chinook salmon run indicated by BTF appeared to be an average sized run year, but the weir projects and the aerial surveys do not show a consistent run year. The majority of the weirs and some of the aerial surveys have shown to be below their escapement goals indicating a below average year, while other weirs and aerial</p>

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Date	Comment
	<p>surveys have indicated an average or above average year. The chair had expressed a concern over the lower than average escapements. ADF&G Area Research Biologist representative responded that the conflation in data is currently not a concern since it is isolated from other years, but is an area of interest for the causation of the difference in indications of the Chinook salmon run. Also brought up was the lateness of the 2008 Chinook salmon run, being over a week later than previous years.</p>
<p>8-26-2008</p>	<p>Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group meeting was called to order at 10:11 a.m. and adjourned at 11:54 a.m. The meeting was held at the ADF&G conference room in Bethel. Ten of the thirteen Working Group representatives participated; a quorum was established. The Lower River Subsistence Representative stated that the fishing season went well for the subsistence fishermen, and all of the salmon species were abundant. The BTF project once again noted that water levels were near the bottom of the historical range and that water clarity had record clarity during the third week of August. The CPUE of the BTF had shown an average coho salmon run compared to years with comparable water levels. Weir projects reported the following information: The majority of weir projects has shown an above average escapement and has reached their draft escapement, with the exception of the Kogrukluuk and Takotna River weirs, which show a below average coho salmon run year. The commercial catch report shows that nearly all of the sub-district commercial openers had an above average participation rate and a higher CPUE compared to past 5-year and 10-year averages for their respective dates. The verbal reports of the full district, W-1, openers indicated participation being half the 10-year averages, but near average CPUEs. The Processor representative reported the second highest purchase since the year 2004. With the high price demand CVS was able to pay fishermen a higher price. CVS will have a processing plant operating in the village of Platinum and an additional tender buying in the 2009 season. ADF&G Area Research Biologist representative noted that despite CVS having one of the highest purchasing years, the commercial harvest has been one of the lowest in the past 10 years. Area M report notations: Total 2008 Chinook salmon harvest through July 3 is below harvest in 2005-06 through similar time periods, Total sockeye salmon harvest through July 3 is above harvest in 2005-06 through similar time periods. Total chum salmon harvest through July 3 is below harvest in 2005-06 through similar time periods, Total pink salmon harvest through July 3 remains well below harvest in 2005-06 through similar time periods, and Total coho salmon harvest through July 3 is below harvest in 2005 and above harvest in 2006 through similar time periods, but it is still early in the coho season.</p>

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Date	Comment
9-26-08	<p>Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group meeting was called to order at 1:00p.m. and adjourned at 4:30p.m. The meeting was held at the ADF&G conference room in Bethel. Eleven of the thirteen Working Group representatives participated; a quorum was established. Community member Peter Jacobs gave an insightful discussion on both scientific and traditional Yupik methods of understanding and managing salmon runs. Risk vs. Reward was discussed in reference to constructing the Donlin Creek mine. It was noted that the BTF distributed approximately 200 coho, 60 Chinook, and 70 sockeye salmon to the Bethel Senior center. ADF&G Representative informed the Working Group members that the total catch from the BTF included 420 Chinook, 584 sockeye, 2954 coho, 22 Pink and 2472 chum salmon in the year 2008. The 2008 fishing season began on 6-4-08 and ended on 8-24-08. Water levels were below average for a majority of the fishing season. Water clarity was above average for the 2008 fishing season due to low water levels. Both ADF&G and ONC reported that the Chinook salmon season was average in abundance, and that the run was 2-3 days late reaching the BTF site and 1-2 weeks late reaching the weir sites. ADF&G representative reported that some Chinook salmon escapement goals were met and others were not for 2008. ADF&G representative reported that the sockeye salmon run was roughly 3 days late to the BTF site. In addition, ADF&G representative reported the sockeye salmon run to be of average abundance. ADF&G representative stated that the chum salmon were also late reaching both the BTF and weir sites, but that escapement goals were met and good at weir sites. ADF&G representative reported the coho salmon run to be above average. The commercial catch report lists the following salmon totals for 2008: Chinook at 8,865, sockeye at 15,601, chum at 30,516, and coho at 142,862. The Processor representative stated that the 2008 fishing season was a good season. The Processor representative added that for the 2009 fishing season Quinhagak will still maintain its operation and hopefully in June the new Platinum fishing plant will be in full operation. It was a record season in W-4 and W-5, which was attributed to both the chum and coho salmon runs. ADF&G representative stated that more coho salmon could have been harvested for the 2008 fishing season; however, capacity was limited due to a single buyer. Sport Fish representative stated that the water is low on most tributaries so there is not that much pressure on sport fish right now. Area M report includes the following totals for the Alaska Peninsula through 9-12-08: Chinook at 6,338, sockeye at 4,190,504, coho at 342,541, Pink at 12,779,438 and chum at 988,343.</p>