

ALASKA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

DOMESTIC FISHERIES REPORT

1987/88 Winter Troll Fishery

The 1987/88 winter troll season began October 1, 1987 and will continue through April 14, 1988. Fishing during the winter season is limited to those areas inside the surf line. Chinook salmon harvested during this period will count toward the 1988 chinook catch ceiling, with catches of Alaska hatchery chinook contributing to the hatchery add-on.

To date, the board has not placed a limit on the chinook catch during the winter troll fishery. The winter fishery has been considered a high priority fishery by the board because of its historical importance to the rural fishing communities throughout southeast Alaska. However, in previous years, the board has indicated that consideration of some limitations might be necessary if the winter catch should reach or exceed approximately 40,000 chinook. This level was exceeded for the first time during the 1987/88 season, with 45,000 chinook already being taken through December 31, 1987. Since the board will not consider this issue until the mid-April board meeting, the 1987/88 winter season will continue as planned through the regulation closure on midnight April 14.

A total 1987/88 winter catch of about 70,000 chinook is projected through April 14. This is based on the assumption that the proportionate catch during the second half of the season will be similar to the 1986/87 season when 35 percent of the winter catch occurred between January 1 and April 14. This would represent an increase of about 42,000, or 150 percent over the 1986/87 winter catch of 28,000 chinook. The increased catch appears to be due to several factors, including increased chinook abundance, increased effort as reflected in landings, and a relatively mild winter which contributed to the increased effort.

The preliminary 1987 Troll Salmon Season Summary is attached.

1987/88 TANNER CRAB SUMMARY

<u>AREA</u>	<u>OPEN</u>	<u>CLOSE</u>	<u>G.H.L.*</u>	<u>HARVEST*</u> <u>TO DATE</u>
Southeast	Jan 15	2/16	.75-1.25	1.31
Prince William Sound	Jan 05	1/27	.2-.50	.47
Lower Cook Inlet	Jan 15	3/31	1.4-2.45	1.54
Kodiak	Jan 15	3/10	5.80	3.89

Chignik	Jan 15	3/10	.20	.18
South Peninsula	Jan 15	1/26	3.40	3.30
Eastern Aleutians	Jan 15	Open	.20	.23
Western Aleutians	Nov 1, 87	Open	.10	.12
Bering Sea				
C. bairdi	Jan 15		5.60	1.10
C. opilio	Jan 15	3/29	110.70	71.92
Western Subdistrict		To reopen 5/1	42.10**	.92
Eastern Subdistrict		3/29	68.60**	71.00

* Millions of pounds

** Based on 4" crab

NOTE: All catch figures are considered preliminary and subject to change.
TOTAL STATEWIDE TANNER HARVEST IS APPROXIMATELY 84.06 MILLION POUNDS.

1987 Troll Salmon Season Summary

In 1987 Southeast Alaska fisheries were managed under the following Pacific Salmon Commission established provisions:

- (1) an all-gear base catch ceiling of 263,000 chinook salmon;
- (2) an Alaska hatchery add-on to be calculated in season on the basis of coded wire tag sampling;
- (3) a 7 1/2 percent management range, calculated in numbers of fish, for cumulative deviations from the base catch ceiling beginning in 1987.

Preliminary 1987 post-season data indicates the following performance:

- (1) the total all-gear catch is 279,000 chinook salmon; the all-gear base catch (excluding hatchery add-on of 16,000) is 263,700 chinook salmon;
- (2) the 1987 Alaska hatchery add-on, calculated on the basis of coded wire tag recoveries, is 16,000 chinook salmon. This yielded a total 1987 catch ceiling of 279,000 chinook salmon. (The add-on was calculated as the estimated total Alaska hatchery harvest of 23,300 chinook reduced by 5,000 for pre-treaty hatchery harvest and 2,300 for potential estimation error risk adjustment.);
- (3) the deviation of the preliminary 1987 southeast Alaska chinook salmon catch from the catch ceiling is + 700 chinook salmon or 0.3 percent.

The 1987 southeast Alaska all-gear catch of approximately 279,700 chinook salmon consisted of a commercial catch of 257,700 (92.1 percent) and a recreational harvest of 22,000 (7.9 percent). Alaska hatcheries contributed an estimated 23,300 chinook, or 8.3 percent of the total harvest.

The 1987 commercial catch included 15,400 chinook harvested incidentally in net fisheries where chinook represented about 0.1 percent of the all-species catch of 12.4 million fish. The 1987 incidental net harvest was below the guideline harvest level of 20,000 chinook (excluding Alaska hatchery harvest) established by the Board of Fisheries, and below the 1986 catch of 22,000. This was primarily the result of purse seine fishery restriction implemented for pink salmon conservation. Chinook nonretention in the purse seine fishery during July fishing periods, and, as a result of the 28-inch size limit implemented in 1986, was monitored through a log book program and port sampling.

The troll fishery harvest of 242,300 chinook occurred as follows: 28,400 - winter fishery (Oct. 1 - April 14); 4,400 - June experimental hatchery fisheries; 209,500 - general summer season (June 20 - July 12). Chinook catch rates during the 1987 summer season were 9,000 chinook per fleet day, an increase of 50 percent

over the 1986 rate of 6,000 per fleet day. The 1987 23-day summer troll chinook season was the shortest on record. Chinook nonretention during the remainder of the general summer troll season, July 13 - Aug. 2 and Aug. 13 - Sept. 20, was monitored by onboard observers. The troll catch of other species during the summer season included: 1,040,000 cohos, 410,000 pinks, 8,800 chums, and 7,200 sockeye.

Preliminary data indicates 1987 chinook escapements to southeast Alaska and transboundary index systems were generally similar to 1986. The most notable difference was the Stikine River where the 1987 escapement more than doubled the 1986 level and was the third largest on record. The estimated total escapement of 50,700 chinook to all systems in 1987 was 10 percent or 4,600 chinook above the 1986 escapement of 46,100. Compared to the 1975-80 base period average escapement represented an increase of 92 percent, or 24,300 chinook.

Escapements increased in four of the eleven index systems and decreased in seven systems. However, 1987 escapements varied by less than 10 percent from 1986 levels in six of the eleven systems. Escapements to southern and central systems continued to show the greatest improvements relative to the base period, with northern systems generally showing less improvement.