

Abundance and run timing of adult salmon in Tanada Creek in the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve

Abstract: Tanada Creek supports the northern most sockeye salmon run of significant size in the Copper River. Tanada Creek sockeye contribute to fisheries throughout the Copper River drainage, including the Batzulnetas subsistence fishery located at the Tanada Creek confluence with the Copper River. The magnitude of spawning escapement has been sporadically assessed with variable success. This project to assess spawning escapement of sockeye salmon into Tanada Creek was initiated in 2001. A floating resistance board weir and video escapement tower were tested for feasibility. The weir was operational June 5 – August 22; however, flood conditions precluded counting during much of the migration July 25 – August 4. A total of 1,649 sockeye were counted through the weir, which is one of the lowest escapements recorded. The floating resistance board weir did not appear to be damaged from the flood, although it is not known whether sockeye passed undetected over the top of the submerged pickets during the flood. Subsequent aerial surveys of escapement in Tanada Lake are consistent with the thesis that escapement was relatively low into this system. However, assessments of run strength and escapement elsewhere in the Copper River indicate relatively higher abundance. The floating resistance board weir appeared to be an appropriate design for the variable water conditions. The video equipment was installed late in the season, and the components functioned well and recorded clear images of the creek. Due to the late installation, no data were collected to compare to weir counts.

Citation: Veach, E. R., and S. Scotton. 2001. Abundance and run timing of adult salmon in Tanada Creek in the Wrangell-St. Elias National Park and Preserve. U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Subsistence Management, Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program, 2001 Annual Report (Study No. 00-013). Wrangell - St. Elias National Park and Preserve, Copper Center, Alaska.