

Gap Analysis for the Kuskokwim Area Salmon Research Plan

Abstract: A gap analysis was conducted to assess the state of knowledge for salmon-related information for the Kuskokwim Area that the Kuskokwim Fisheries Resources Coalition (KFRC) deemed important in 2004. The KFRC first identified 52 important Information Needs at a planning session in Bethel, Alaska in 2004. A database of salmon-related projects was then compiled to help assess progress made towards each Information Need. Projects were included in this database if they operated in the Kuskokwim Area in the 1980s or later, regardless of whether they resulted in a final report or publication. Each project was then paired with one or more of the 52 Information Need(s) identified as important by the KFRC. Based on the number of projects, the species addressed, and the geographic area covered, an assessment was made of the relative state of knowledge for each Information Need. Most (32) of the 52 had few or no projects addressing them; for these Information Needs, the state of knowledge was considered *largely unknown*. Twenty Information Needs had a substantial amount of project effort devoted to them; for these Information Needs, the state of knowledge was considered *partially known*. There were no Information Needs for which the state of knowledge was considered *adequate*. The gap analysis also includes a summary discussion of the current situation for Information Needs within the Kuskokwim Area. Based on this summary and the list of corresponding projects, a short list of *major (remaining) information gaps* was developed. A final section, *what needs to be done*, was developed to identify specific actions to address these major information gaps. The discussion sections, project lists, and information status were all reviewed by KFRC members, individually or in small groups, beginning with a draft circulated in August of 2004. Additional experts in social science, genetics, and biology were consulted for individual sections. The gap analysis will help investigators and funding sources identify how new projects match up with previously identified Information Needs, and to determine whether these projects address areas that are partially known or largely unknown. The gap analysis will influence the priority assigned to different Information Needs in a final research plan developed by the KFRC. In the plan, the relative state of knowledge (from the gap analysis) will be combined with an importance rating (assigned separately) to place Information Needs into priority categories for future work. The gap analysis should be considered a living document, and should be updated in January of 2007. Results will change as new projects begin, existing projects are completed, and as Kuskokwim Area stakeholders use the gap analysis and identify improvements.

Citation: KFRC (Kuskokwim Fisheries Resources Coalition). 2006. Gap analysis for the Kuskokwim Area salmon research plan. M. Nemeth, editor. LGL Alaska Research Associates, Inc., Anchorage, Alaska.