

Pikmiktalik River Salmon Escapement Enumeration and Sampling Project, 2006. Annual Report for Study 06-101

**ABSTRACT:** Much of the salmon subsistence harvest for the communities of Stebbins and St. Michael occurs on the Pikmiktalik River or in the marine waters immediately adjacent to it. The Pikmiktalik River is part of the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge, and is the site of one of few Federal subsistence fisheries in the Norton Sound area. Local residents strongly feel that availability of in- and post-season escapement information would improve management of these fishery resources. Kawerak, Inc., in cooperation with the Stebbins and St Michael IRAs, conducted a salmon escapement enumeration and sampling project on the Pikmiktalik River from 2003 to 2006. The information collected provided baseline data regarding salmon abundance, run-timing and biological (age, sex, and length) data to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Total estimated escapements in 2006 were 99 Chinook *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*; 12,683 chum *O. keta*; 45,879 pink salmon *O. gorbuscha* and 8,503 coho salmon (*O. kisutch*). Additionally, a total of 885 Dolly Varden (*Salvelinus malma*) and 701 whitefish (*Coregonus* sp.) were counted. The ratio of chum females to males was almost 1:1. Age, sex and length data collected from chum salmon indicated that most abundant age class in 2006 was 4-year-old fish, which made up 62.6% of chum captured. Males were generally longer than females, and older salmon were generally longer than younger ones for both chum and coho salmon. Of the coho sampled in 2006, the ratio of females to males was 1:2 and the most abundant age class was age 2.1 coho salmon, which comprised 85.6% of the return.

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