

ABSTRACT

Through a collaborative effort with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G), the Orutsararmiut Native Council (ONC) conducted weekly inseason surveys of Bethel Area subsistence salmon fishermen at selected fish camps and communities in the lower Kuskokwim River during the summer of 2008. The project ran for 6 weeks, from June 1 to July 15. Data collected from these surveys are used to qualitatively assess salmon run timing, relative abundance, fishermen's success in achieving their subsistence harvest goals, fishing activity and gear usage. Summaries of the surveys were relayed to fishery managers and reported at Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (Working Group) meetings on a weekly basis. Fishery managers and research staff use the inseason survey information as an early indication of salmon run strength and subsistence harvest trends, in conjunction with the Bethel test fishery (BTF) project which provides index of relative abundance and run timing data. The inseason survey also builds management capacity by providing a forum for local users to provide input into the evaluation of salmon abundance and corresponding management strategies. Inseason subsistence catch information has also been used in combination with other information to evaluate the various management actions.

Key words: Bethel, Chinook, *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*, sockeye, *O. nerka*, chum, *O. keta*, coho, *O. kisutch*, salmon, Kuskokwim River, Orutsararmiut Native Council, subsistence, Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group.