

ABSTRACT

Fall Season Cooperative Salmon Drift Gillnet Test Fishing in the Lower Yukon River, 2007

The Lower Yukon River drift gillnet test fishery project estimates run timing and relative abundance of fall chum salmon *Oncorhynchus keta*, and coho salmon *O. kisutch* entering the Yukon River drainage. Drift test nets were operated from 16 July through 28 August, 2007, on the Lower Yukon River near the village of Emmonak, Alaska. Catch per unit effort (CPUE), and age, sex, and length (ASL) composition were derived from drift gillnet catches from the Big Eddy test fishery operated in Kwikluak Pass (South Mouth) and the Middle Mouth test fishery operated in Kwikpak Pass, upstream of the distributaries of Kawanak Pass (Middle Mouth) and Apoon Pass (North Mouth). The test fishery recorded a cumulative CPUE of 996.27 for fall chum salmon with the midpoint occurring on 13 August. Fall chum salmon were predominantly age-0.3 fish, comprising 74.6% of the unweighted age sample. The cumulative CPUE for coho salmon was 404.52 with the midpoint occurring on 13 August. Age-2.1 coho salmon were the most abundant, making up 82.5% of the unweighted age sample. The Pilot Station sonar project recorded the passage of 684,011 fall chum salmon with the midpoint occurring on 10 August, and 173,289 coho salmon with the midpoint observed on 14 August. The Lower Yukon River drift gillnet test fishery project provided critical information that was used to make inseason management decisions regarding escapement, and commercial and subsistence fishing for fall chum and coho salmon in the Lower Yukon River.

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