**Orutsararmiut Traditional Native Council (OTNC) Inseason Harvest Monitoring Weekly Report**

*June 20, 2018*

**Summary of Interview Activities**

OTNC conducted surveys with58 fish camps from Friday, June 15 through Monday, June 18. There appeared to be less people at fish camps when compared to the prior week. For this reason, we did some follow-up calls with long-standing fish camp users on Monday, June 18 to determine why they weren’t at fish camp over the weekend and/or if our fisheries crew missed them. Reasons for not being at fish camp during the last opener included illness, boat issues, relocation, waiting until restrictions are over and inability to harvest enough fish to fill drying racks and smokehouses. Six fish camp families verbally expressed they were happy with the most recent fishing opener and an opportunity to fish while many more expressed their happiness in smiles. The most commonly reported issue this past opener was fishing snags, which was was mainly attributed to high water levels. Four fish camps commented on the abundance of fish in the Kuskokwim River, in which one fisher attributed his/her success to fishing on the main channel and advised others against fishing by the beaches when water levels are high. Contrary to this, two fish camp users claimed there were very few fish in the Kuskokwim River. Three fish camps commented on weather and hope for better weather in the future to prevent fish spoilage.

**Chinook Salmon Age-Sex-Length Sampling Program**

Thus far, 28 people have received sampling kits and been recruited to be an ASL sampler. We received ASL samples from five fish camp users over the past weekend.

**Fish Distribution**

Thus far, OTNC and KRITFC have distributed 96 Chinook salmon and two Chum salmon to Bethel elders, disabled and widows caught from the ADFG Bethel Test Fishery.

**Relative Change in Harvest Goals**

Of 65 fish camps asked, “How have your harvest goals for Chinook salmon, chum salmon and sockeye salmon changed when compared to last year,” 59 fish camps responded.

**Table 1.** Relative Change in Annual Harvest Goals

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Salmon Species** | **Increased** | **Same** | **Decreased** |
| Chinook salmon | 46%  (n=27) | 39%  (n=23) | 15%  (n=9) |
| Chum salmon | 32%  (n=19) | 49% (n=29) | 19%  (n=11) |
| Sockeye salmon | 51%  (n=30) | 8%  (n=5) | 41%  n=(24) |

**Fish Camp Harvest Summary**

*June 16, 2018 Opener*

We collected data from 33 unique fishing trips in the Bethel area fish camps. Most fishing trips (n=28) occurred from Napaskiak to Akiachak. Two fishing trips occurred from the Johnson River to just above Napaskiak with two additional fishing trips occurring below the Johnson River.

*Please note any differences in the fish camp data included in the harvest estimate document produced by Ben Staton from the June 16 opener is due to additional fish camp interviews conducted after peer review of the harvest estimates.*

**Table 2.** Gear type, mesh size range, and soak time reported from June 16 fishing opener.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Total Drift Nets** | **Total Set Nets** | **Mesh Size Range** | **Average Soak Time (hours)** |
| 29 | 4 | 4.5”-6” | 5.1 hours |

**Table 3.** Average number of salmon harvested by surveyed fish camps from June 16 fishing opener.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Average Chinook Salmon Harvest** | **Average Chum Salmon Harvest** | **Average Sockeye Salmon Harvest** | **Average other harvest** |
| 10.1 | 3.8 | 1 | <1 |