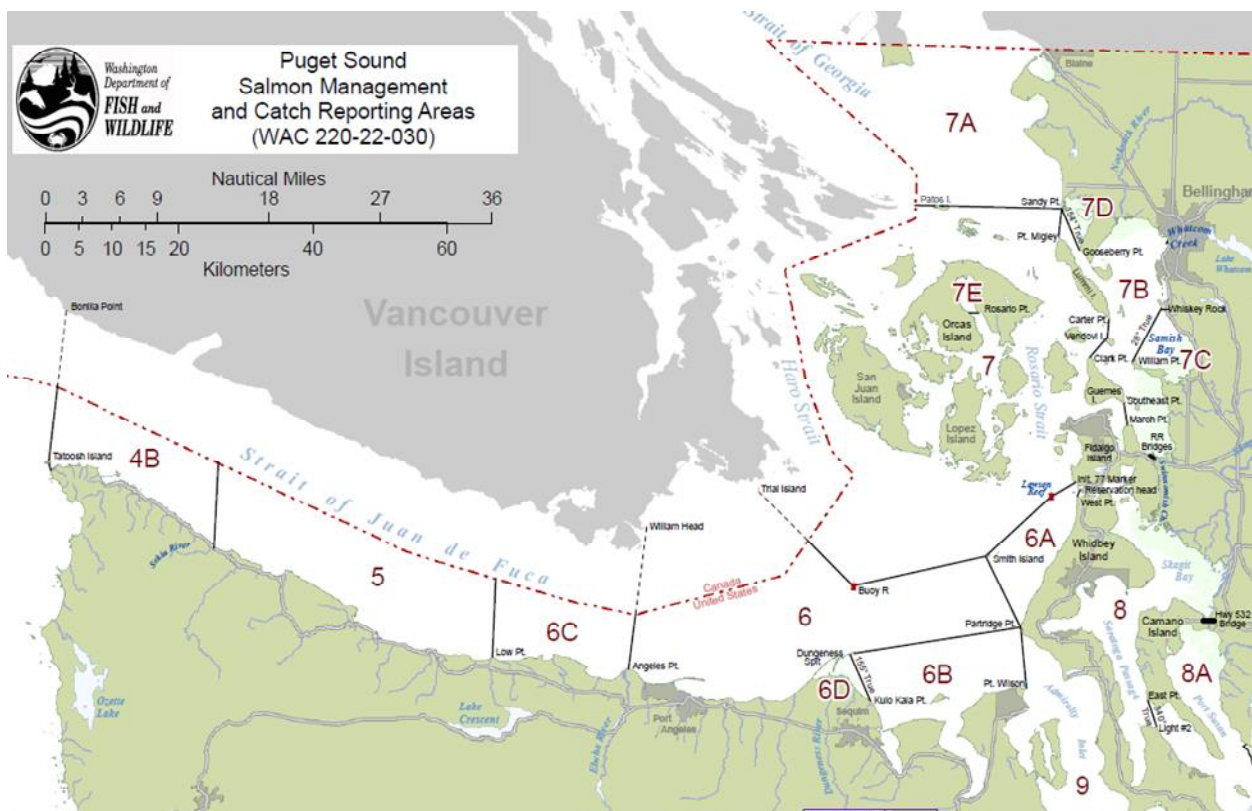


III. PRELIMINARY REVIEW OF THE 2018 WASHINGTON CHUM SALMON FISHERIES OF INTEREST TO THE PACIFIC SALMON COMMISSION

This summary report provides a preliminary review of the 2018 U.S. Chum salmon (*Oncorhynchus keta*) fisheries conducted by Puget Sound salmon co-managers (Puget Sound Treaty fishing tribes and the State of Washington) in the Strait of Juan de Fuca (Salmon Management and Catch Reporting Areas 4B, 5 and 6C), the San Juan Islands and the Point Roberts area (Areas 7 and 7A) (Figure 39), conducted in compliance with provisions of Chapter 6 of Annex IV of the Pacific Salmon Treaty (PST 2008). The harvest and abundance information provided are based on preliminary data reported through November 20, 2018. These preliminary data are subject to correction and revision as additional information becomes available.

Figure 39. Puget Sound Salmon Management and Catch Reporting Areas with Chum salmon fisheries of interest to the Pacific Salmon Commission.



MIXED STOCK FISHERIES

Areas 4B, 5 and 6C

As in previous years, the Chum salmon fishery in Areas 4B, 5 and 6C was restricted to Tribal fishers using gillnets. The fall Chum-directed salmon fishery opened the week of October 14, with a schedule of six days per week and continued through November 10. A total of 4,519 Chum salmon were harvested during this period (Table 18). During the fall Chum fisheries in

Areas 4B, 5, and 6C, there was a reported by-catch of 656 Coho, 23 Chinook, and zero Steelhead.

Table 18. Preliminary 2018 Chum salmon harvest report for Washington Salmon Catch Reporting Areas 4B, 5, and 6C.

Areas 4B, 5, 6C	
Tribal Gill Net Only	
Time Periods	GN
Through 9/22	224
9/23-9/29	9
9/30-10/6	0
10/7-10/13	161
10/14-10/20	289
10/21-10/27	33
10/28-11/3	1,550
11/4-11/10	2,253
11/11-11/17	0
Total	4,519

Areas 7 and 7A

Chum salmon fisheries in Areas 7 and 7A are regulated to comply with a base harvest ceiling of 130,000 Chum salmon, unless Canada estimates chum stocks migrating through Johnstone Strait (“Inside Southern Chum salmon”) are below the critical threshold of 1.0 million (PST 2008). Chapter 6 of Annex IV specifies that U.S. commercial fisheries for Chum salmon in Areas 7 and 7A will not occur prior to October 10. Paragraph 10 (a) specifies run sizes below 1.0 million as critical (estimated by Canada). For Inside Southern Chum run sizes below the critical threshold, Paragraph 10 (b) states the U.S. catch of Chum salmon in Areas 7 and 7A will be limited to those taken incidentally to other species and in other minor fisheries, and shall not exceed 20,000.

On October 8, 2018 Canada notified the U.S. that the Inside Southern Chum aggregate was estimated to be below the critical threshold of 1.0 million and the U.S. was expected to limit chum harvest to incidental and minor fisheries not exceeding 20,000. Following this notification, the U.S. cancelled Area 7 and 7A commercial chum fisheries that were scheduled to open on October 10. Additionally, beginning October 10, the U.S. required chum release from reef net fisheries targeting coho and scheduled the reef net fishery to close on October 13. On October 10, 2018 Canada notified the U.S. that the Inside Southern Chum aggregate abundance was now estimated to exceed the 1.0 million critical threshold that allowed the U.S. to target the 130,000 chum ceiling in Area 7 and 7A fisheries. Following notification from Canada that the U.S. fishery could now open, the Tribal fishery first opened October 12; the non-Tribal purse seine and gillnet fisheries first opened October 13; and the non-Tribal reef net fishery resumed chum retention on October 11.

Paragraph 10 (d) states that Canada will provide an in-season estimate of Fraser River Chum salmon run size no later than October 22. If that estimate is below 900,000, then the U.S. will limit its fishery to not exceed a catch of 20,000 additional Chum salmon from the day following notification. On October 19, 2018, Canada notified the U.S. that the Fraser River chum run size was estimated to be below the 900,000 fish threshold. Therefore, the U.S. was expected to limit chum harvest to not exceed 20,000 from the day following this notification. The U.S. closed Area 7 and 7A commercial chum fisheries on October 20. The Tribal fishery opened on October 12 and ran continuously through October 20. Non-Tribal purse seine and gillnet fisheries were open daily October 13, 14, 16. Non-Tribal reef net fisheries resumed retention of chum on October 11 and was open daily through October 20.

Non-Tribal reef net fisheries targeting Coho salmon were conducted from the end of Fraser Panel control in Area 7 (September 17) until October 9 with chum salmon and unmarked coho retention prohibited prior to October 1. Chum salmon by-catch in this fishery was 1,661. Following the initial prohibition of chum salmon retention on October 10, reef net effort was minimal with most reef net gears being removed from the water during this chum closure. An additional 307 chum were caught by reef nets after October 10.

The total 2018 Chum salmon catch by all gears in Areas 6, 7, and 7A (reported through November 20) was 66,445 (Table 19). Catch distribution, between Areas 7 and 7A, was 69% and 31% respectively. It should be noted that these catch reports may be incomplete as of the date of this report. Multiple notices regarding Inside Southern Chum abundance estimates delayed the start of chum directed fisheries and reduced purse seine and gill net effort during the first days of the fishery, which historically are the most productive. During the fall Chum salmon-directed fisheries in Areas 6, 7, and 7A, there was a reported by-catch of 2,496 Coho, 23 Chinook, and zero Steelhead (Table 19).

Table 19. Preliminary 2018 Chum salmon harvest report for Washington Salmon Catch Reporting Areas 6, 7 and 7A.

	Area 6	Area 7				Area 7A			Areas 6,7,7A
Time Periods	GN	PS	GN	RN	Area Total	PS	GN	Area Total	Total
Through 9/22	1	5	2		7	17	1	18	26
9/23-9/29									0
9/30-10/6				1,522	1,522			0	1,522
10/7-10/13		3,823	143	139	4,105	756	1,903	2,659	6,764
10/14-10/20		38,440	1,791	307	40,538	6,013	11,574	17,587	58,125
10/21-10/27	8				0			0	8
10/28-11/3					0			0	0
11/4-11/10					0			0	0
11/11-11/17									0
Total	9	42,268	1,936	1,968	46,172	6,786	13,478	20,264	66,445
Gear Type Abbreviations: GN=Gill Net; PS=Purse Seine; RN=Reef Net									
10/10- 10/20	Coho: 2,496		Chinook: 23		Steelhead: 0				
By-catch									

PUGET SOUND TERMINAL AREA FISHERIES AND RUN STRENGTH

Pre-season forecasts for Chum salmon returns to Puget Sound predicted a fall Chum run size totaling approximately 1,214,900 fish, with 497,400 Chum predicted to return to Hood Canal and 543,600 predicted to return to South Puget Sound. As of the date of this report, in-season estimates indicate that Chum returns to Puget Sound are generally at or above forecast with some exceptions. In-season run size estimates from the 2018 fall Chum fisheries in Hood Canal and South Puget Sound indicate that South Sound is near forecast and Hood Canal is slightly above. Some Puget Sound Chum fisheries are still underway and additional in-season estimates of abundance may occur. As of the date of this report, spawning escapement surveys are in progress for most Puget Sound stocks and therefore escapement estimates are not yet available. Early indications from these surveys do, however, suggest that nearly all stocks will meet escapement goals; although, some central Puget Sound fall Chum stocks appear to be below escapement (as forecasted) again this year.

REFERENCES

Pacific Salmon Treaty (PST) Act of 1985. 2008 Agreement. U.S.-Canada. Public Law 99-5, 16 U.S.C. 3631.