

Kodiak/Aleutians Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

c/o Office of Subsistence Management

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In Reply Refer To:

OSM.25052

JANUARY 23 2026

Doug Vincent-Lang, Commissioner
Alaska Department of Fish and Game – Commissioner’s Office
333 Raspberry Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99518-1599

Dear Commissioner Vincent-Lang:

I am writing on behalf of the Kodiak/Aleutians Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council) to request information from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) regarding observations of an apparent increase in the number of jack Sockeye Salmon returning to the Buskin River in Kodiak over the past several years. The Council would like to know whether this apparent trend shows up in ADF&G weir counts or other monitoring data, and whether jack Sockeye Salmon are currently distinguished from adults in Buskin River escapement assessments.

The Council represents subsistence harvesters of fish and wildlife resources on Federal public lands and waters in the Kodiak/Aleutians region. It was established by Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) and is chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act. Council meetings provide a public forum for concerns and recommendations regarding matters related to subsistence uses of fish and wildlife.

At its September 17–18, 2025 meeting, the Council discussed observations of increased jack Sockeye Salmon returns to the Buskin River and expressed interest in understanding how these fish are accounted for in existing monitoring efforts. During our discussions the Council did not have information about the extent of existing ADF&G data on jack Sockeye Salmon. If jack Sockeye Salmon are not currently tracked separately, the Council asks that ADF&G consider conducting more detailed assessments of Buskin River Sockeye Salmon escapement that distinguishes jacks from adult fish. Similar assessments are made for other systems, such as the Frazer River on the southwest side of Kodiak Island and have proven valuable for monitoring and management purposes.

The Council believes a clearer understanding of the proportion of jack Sockeye Salmon within the escapement would be beneficial because jacks are generally smaller, predominantly male, and can have implications for long-term run productivity for subsistence, commercial, and sport harvests. We recognize that conducting additional assessments requires resources to support

those efforts, and the Council encourages ADF&G to consider whether it is feasible to track jack Sockeye Salmon escapement within the ongoing Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program project at the Buskin weir

The Council appreciates the ongoing work the ADF&G has conducted at Buskin, and the excellent information ADF&G staff have provided at Council meetings. The Council welcomes any information or analysis the ADF&G can provide regarding jack Sockeye Salmon abundance in the Buskin River system. If you have any questions or would like to follow up, please contact me through our Subsistence Council Coordinator Leigh Honig at (907) 891-9053 or leigh_honig@ios.doi.gov.

Sincerely,



Rebecca Skinner
Chair

cc: Federal Subsistence Board
Interagency Staff Committee
Kodiak/Aleutians Subsistence Regional Advisory Council
Benjamin Mulligan, Deputy Commissioner, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Aaron Poetter, Federal Subsistence Liaison, Alaska Department of Fish and Game
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