



DIVISION OF SUBSISTENCE

Emily Doll
Principle Investigator
PO Box 110024
Juneau, AK 99811
907-465-4269
emily.doll@alaska.gov

Molly Brown
Researcher
333 Raspberry Road
Anchorage, AK 99518
907-267-2455
molly.brown@alaska.gov

Since 1978, the Division of Subsistence of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game has been charged with quantifying wild resource harvests by conducting studies across Alaska. In order for managers and policy makers to provide for customary and traditional uses, researchers must periodically collect and update harvest information from the public. This involves collecting basic data on wild resource harvest and use as well as documenting the context of harvest patterns. The Division has conducted systematic household surveys in over 270 rural communities in Alaska, the results of which appear in the online Community Subsistence Information System (CSIS).

Sockeye Salmon Harvest Locations and Traditional Ecological Knowledge

Understanding sockeye salmon harvest locations through traditional ecological knowledge for the Southeast Alaska communities of Hoonah, Klawock, Sitka, and Yakutat Alaska

Why Conduct This Research?

Sockeye salmon are among the most important subsistence resources for residents of Southeast Alaska. Past Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) Division of Subsistence research indicate subsistence salmon harvests in Southeast Alaska occur in numerous water bodies throughout the region, and communities usually rely on more than one salmon stream to meet their subsistence salmon needs. This research will analyze reported subsistence sockeye salmon harvest locations throughout Southeast Alaska and document how traditional ecological knowledge informs the distribution of subsistence sockeye salmon harvest among the available salmon systems near the communities of Hoonah, Klawock, Sitka and Yakutat, Alaska. The proposed research seeks to better understand the factors that shape the use of sockeye salmon harvest locations within the region and how subsistence harvesters distribute effort among the available systems.

To conduct this research, ADF&G researchers will work directly with local harvesters. This project will include mapping current sockeye salmon harvest areas and historical use areas, interviewing fishers about why they choose to harvest sockeye salmon in these areas, and researchers observing and participating in subsistence sockeye fishing. Researchers will collect visual data through photographs at each phase of this project and produce an interactive story map once all data are collected and analyzed.



How we use this data

The information gathered in this study will assist local, state, and federal policy makers in their management responsibilities for subsistence sockeye salmon by emphasizing important use areas for the subsistence harvest of sockeye salmon. The data will be available to local and regional advisory councils that make recommendations for regulatory changes and can assist the Alaska Board of Fisheries and the Federal Subsistence Board in the informed management of sockeye salmon in the region.

Project Objectives

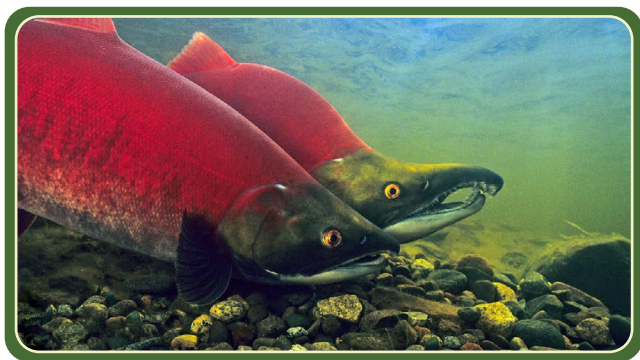
The overall goal of the project is to detail locations of subsistence sockeye salmon harvests in Southeast Alaska and document the traditional ecological knowledge, which informs selection of harvest locations and effort distribution. To fulfill this goal, the proposed research has three objectives:

- 1** Analyze reported subsistence sockeye salmon harvest locations in Southeast Alaska from 1985–2025 using ADF&G Division of Commercial Fisheries' subsistence-personal use fishing permit data to understand reported harvest locations over time.
- 2** Document traditional ecological knowledge related to the distribution of salmon harvests across available sockeye salmon systems, including changes over time in select Southeast Alaska communities
- 3** Record the geographic extent of search and harvest areas for sockeye salmon by residents of the study communities within the past 20 years.

Community Participation

Success of the project relies on collaboration with residents of Hoonah, Klawock, Sitka, and Yakutat. This project aims to benefit the communities and their harvesters by ensuring subsistence is prioritized. Throughout all stages of this project, research staff will communicate with residents about the project and why their participation in the study is important. Participants will be compensated for their time, and interested community members will be hired as local research assistants to work alongside ADF&G research staff whenever possible.

All data collected through this study will be confidential. Participation in the project is voluntary and anonymous.



At the conclusion of this project, we will present results of the study for review and comment at a community data review meeting. Comments and changes identified by community members will be incorporated into the final reports, which will be published on the ADF&G website and made available locally. A summary of research results will also be distributed to community residents and an interactive story map will be made available online on the ADF&G website.

Project Timeline

This is a multi-year study, beginning in July of 2026 and concluding in February of 2030.

2026

Aug. – Dec: Community consultation and fieldwork prep

2027

March – April: Community meetings (two communities)

July: Fieldwork (interviews, mapping, etc.)

Aug – Dec: Data analysis and review

2028

March – April: Community meetings (two communities)

July: Fieldwork (interviews, mapping, etc.)

Aug – Dec: Data analysis and review

2029

Jan – Feb: Data analysis and review

March – April: Community data review meetings

2030

Feb: Final report published

Funding for this project is provided through the Office of Subsistence Management Fisheries Research Monitoring Program.