

## Subsistence Fisheries Harvest Assessment and Traditional Ecological Knowledge, Lower Alaska Peninsula and Aleutian Islands.

The people of the Aleutian Islands and lower Alaska Peninsula communities depend on fisheries resources as a significant portion of their overall subsistence harvest. But poor salmon returns starting in the mid-1990s have focused the attention of managers onto the fisheries in southwest Alaska. Here, annual subsistence harvests of salmon are not well documented; in communities where a subsistence permit is required, harvest estimates leave out significant amounts of salmon harvested for home use. In 2002 and 2003, local residents conducted household surveys to improve the accuracy of harvest estimates. The results show that permitted households harvested more salmon than the Alaska Department of Fish and Game had previously recorded based on returned permits. The effect of having a local person conduct a face-to-face survey increased the rate of participation in the subsistence permit process. The effects of changes in commercial fishing regulations also affected the way certain area communities obtain salmon for home use. Also, traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) and qualitative data gathered through interviews with local people help explain the current marine ecology and fisheries conditions by making observations about historical trends, environmental inter-relationships, and traditional means of harvesting fish for subsistence.

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