
North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission

2021 Virtual Annual Meeting
2021 May 10–20

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NORTH PACIFIC ANADROMOUS FISH COMMISSION HOLDS THE 29TH VIRTUAL ANNUAL MEETING

Vancouver, BC, Canada (May 28, 2021)—The 29th Virtual Annual Meeting of the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) was held from May 10–20, 2021, in a videoconferencing format.

The NPAFC is an international organization that promotes the conservation of Pacific salmon and steelhead in the North Pacific and its adjacent seas. It serves as a venue for cooperation in and coordination of enforcement activities and scientific research. The vast majority of salmon catches in the North Pacific originate from NPAFC member countries, which are Canada, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, and the United States.

At the Commission's Annual Meeting, Plenary Session and the Commission's three standing committees—Enforcement, Scientific Research and Statistics, and Finance and Administration—were convened to discuss issues related to salmon and steelhead in the NPAFC Convention Area, which is the high seas of the North Pacific Ocean north of 33°N latitude beyond the 200-mile zones of coastal States.

NPAFC member countries discussed coordinated enforcement efforts at the 2020 enforcement meetings. These efforts covered significant portions of the NPAFC Convention Area with over 390 hours of aircraft patrols and 136 ship-days, to deter and interrupt illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing activity. These combined multilateral efforts identified multiple violations of Conservation and Management Measures established by regional fisheries management organizations in the North Pacific Ocean; however, none involved high-seas driftnet activity or illegal retention of salmon.

At the Commission's scientific meetings, leading salmon researchers from member countries reviewed commercial catch statistics compiled from information provided by each of the member countries. The total preliminary salmon catch in 2020 was 606.7 thousand metric tonnes (322.3 million fish).

Pink salmon constituted the majority of the total commercial catch (46% by weight) followed by chum (27%) and sockeye salmon (23%). Coho comprised 3% of the catch, while Chinook salmon, cherry salmon, and steelhead trout were each less than 1% of the catch by weight.

In 2021, salmon research surveys are planned to take place in the western and northern Bering Sea, the northwestern North Pacific, and the southern Sea of Okhotsk. Researchers will examine conditions such as migration timing, abundance, distribution, survival, marine ecology, run size forecasting, stock identification, and salmon growth and body condition at sea.

Throughout the year, the International Year of the Salmon (IYS) has maintained a robust presence as it continues to build and strengthen its partnerships throughout the Northern Hemisphere. In addition to the virtual events hosted to discuss the preliminary findings of the 2020 Gulf of Alaska Expedition, the IYS participated in a number of virtual conferences and workshops. The IYS worked with Dr. Richard Beamish and Dr. Brian Riddell to plan and host the *2021 Conference on the Winter Ecology of Pacific Salmon: Results from the 2019 and 2020 Gulf of Alaska Expeditions*, which took place in April 2021. This conference included presentations from scientists in Canada, Japan, Korea, the Russian Federation, and the

United States who had participated in the International Gulf of Alaska Expeditions, as well as a panel of experts who discussed the upcoming 2022 Pan-Pacific Winter High Seas Expedition, which will build on the results from the previous International Gulf of Alaska Expeditions. The IYS is currently working on publishing a series of articles that highlight the most important findings and results from the conference.

As the IYS approaches its final year in 2022, it has been working with the Symposium Steering Committee, which includes members from the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO), to plan a Concluding IYS Symposium, which will take place in Vancouver, Canada from October 4–6, 2022. It will assess what was learned during the IYS and most importantly describe the future requirements for salmon research and management to support salmon in a rapidly changing world.

At the meeting, outgoing officers including President Suam Kim (Korea), Vice-President Doug Mecum (USA), and three committee chairpersons, Brad Wattie (Canada), Masa-aki Fukuwaka (Japan), and Vladimir Belyaev (Russia) were thanked for their dedicated service to NPAFC.

NPAFC welcomed the incoming officers for two-year terms: President Doug Mecum (USA), Vice-President Vladimir Belyaev (Russia), and three committee chairpersons, Takumi Fukuda (Japan), Ju Kyoung Kim (Korea), and John Holmes (Canada). 2021 Virtual NPAFC Annual Meeting closed with an invitation from Japan to the Parties to attend the 2022 Annual Meeting in Hakodate, Japan.

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About NPAFC

The NPAFC is an international organization that promotes the conservation of salmon (chum, coho, pink, sockeye, Chinook, and cherry salmon) and steelhead trout in the North Pacific and its adjacent seas, and serves as a venue for cooperation in, and coordination of, scientific research and enforcement activities. The NPAFC Convention Area is located in international waters north of 33°N latitude in the North Pacific, Bering Sea and the Sea of Okhotsk beyond the 200-mile zones of coastal States. NPAFC member countries include Canada, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America.
