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# North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission

2020 E-mail Annual Meeting  
2020 May 19–June 11

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **NORTH PACIFIC ANADROMOUS FISH COMMISSION HOLDS THE 28<sup>TH</sup> E-MAIL ANNUAL MEETING**

*Vancouver, BC, Canada (June 11, 2020)*—The 28<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) was held from May 19–June 11, 2020, virtually, by e-mail communication.

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 Sessions 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 2019 enforcement meetings. These efforts covered significant portions of the NPAFC Convention Area with over 430 hours of aircraft patrols and more than 260 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 2019 was 968.7 thousand metric tonnes (~563.3 million fish).

Pink salmon constituted the majority of the total commercial catch (54% by weight) followed by chum (24%) and sockeye salmon (19%). Coho comprised 2% of the catch, while Chinook salmon, cherry salmon, and steelhead trout were each less than 1% of the catch by weight.

In 2020, salmon research surveys are planned to take place in the Bering Sea, southern Chukchi 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.

On April 7, 2020, the International Gulf of Alaska Expedition 2020—with contributions from the Pacific Salmon Foundation (PSF), the British Columbia Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund (BC SRIF) and donors from the fishing industry, foundations, and private individuals—was successfully completed with 12 scientists from Canada, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America aboard the chartered Canadian Fishing Vessel *Pacific Legacy*. This expedition is a continuation of the international scientific effort to identify mechanisms and environmental factors that could determine the annual abundance and condition of Pacific salmonids in the Gulf of Alaska.

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The Commission discussed activities and plans for the International Year of the Salmon (IYS), which has research, outreach projects and events continuing through 2022. Thus far, the IYS has been successful in achieving its overarching goal to *build resilience of salmon and people in a changing world*. The High Seas Expeditions have been especially rewarding in strengthening international collaboration and increasing outreach and communications capacity. Moving forward from the focal year (2019), it will be essential that the IYS strengthens and maintains these partnerships for years to come, and continues to increase its scope for raising awareness about the state of Pacific salmon, the work that is being done to protect them, and to promote sustainable populations.

The 2020 NPAFC Annual Meeting closed with an invitation from Japan to the Parties to attend the 2021 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.

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