

Yakutat, Alaska Proposal 247

Commercial Fishing and Seafood Processing Facts

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Yakutat is the #80 fishing port in the U.S. by Volume & #54 by Value of 2011 landings.

JOBS - FISHING

Permit holders, Crew and Vessels (2011) in Yakutat:

CFEC commercial fishing permit holders: 156¹
Total permits owned: 239¹
Permitholders who fished: 132¹
Commercial Crew (full year) license holders: 67²
Total Skippers who fished plus Crew in 2011: 199^{1,2}
Percentage of local population who fished: 30%^{1,2,4}
Vessels Home Ported: 121³

Each of these individual small and family businesses represents investment, employment, and income in the Yakutat community.

Income:

Estimated 2011 ex-vessel income by Yakutat-based fishermen: \$4,378,700¹
Earnings generated from commercial fishing circulated in the local economy through property and sales taxes; purchases of homes, rentals, hotels, electricity, entertainment, fuel, vehicles, food, repair and maintenance parts, transportation, travel, medical, and other services. **Virtually every business in Yakutat benefits from commercial fishing dollars.**

JOBS - PROCESSING

Seafood processing jobs in Yakutat: 88⁵
Total processing wages: \$1,430,033⁵
First wholesale value: \$16 million⁶

...AND MORE JOBS

In addition to direct harvester and processor workers, fisheries related jobs include fuel, accountants, consultants, air and water travel, hardware and marine repair and supply businesses, advocacy and marketing organizations, air cargo crew, freight agents, and scientists. **Government related jobs include** Alaska Department of Fish and Game • Fish and Wildlife Protection/Alaska Department of Public Safety • Docks and Harbors • Alaska State Troopers • United States Coast Guard • University of Alaska School of Fisheries • Alaska Sea Grant Marine Advisory program, and more.

TRANSPORTATION JOBS AND BENEFITS

In 2011, 6.1 million⁷ pounds of seafood were landed in Yakutat for an estimated value of \$18 million⁷, and most of this was shipped or flown out, providing many more jobs.

REVENUE to the State and Community through Fishery Taxes ...

FY 2011 Shared taxes – Yakutat and the State of Alaska each received \$411,095⁸ in fishery business and landing taxes through the municipal tax-sharing program from Yakutat fisheries landings and businesses.

Footnotes - Sources:

1. Commercial fishing permit activity, estimated harvest and earnings by permit holder are from AK Commercial Fishery Entry Commission (CFEC) at <http://www.cfec.state.ak.us/epbycen/2011/mnu.htm>.
2. Crew numbers are from Alaska Department of Fish and Game 2011 Crew license list, and is the number of individuals who list their address in a given city.
3. Vessel home port numbers are from "AK CFEC Yearly 2011 Vessel CSV file available online at <http://www.cfec.state.ak.us/plook/> and is a count of commercial fishing licensed vessels that list home port in a given community.
4. 2011 Population figures used to calculate percentage of resident skippers who fished plus crew are from DCCED AK Community Information Database online at http://www.dced.state.ak.us/dca/comddb/CF_COMDB.htm.
5. Processor Employment and Wages 2011 Data is from Alaska Department of Labor at <http://labor.alaska.gov/research/seafood/statewide/AKSFPBorca.pdf>.
6. Processor 1st wholesale value by Census Area 2011 is provided by Alaska Seafood Marketing Institute.
7. NOAA, NMFS Office of Science and Technology, see reports "Total Commercial Fishery Landings at Major U.S. Ports" ranked by value, by poundage <http://www.st.nmfs.noaa.gov/commercial-fisheries/commercial-landings/index>.
8. Revenue figures from 2011 AK Dept of Revenue Shared Taxes report, pp. 17-20: <http://www.tax.alaska.gov/programs/sourcebook/index.aspx>.

Just Google Sheinberg Associates Yakutat

<http://www.sheinbergassociates.com/resource/TsiuRiver/Executive%20Summary%20Tsiu%20River%20March%202009.pdf>

Important excerpts:

Page4 and 5...

State leases (lodges, airstrips, cabins) on this new CBY land were transferred from the State to the borough in about 2005. Recent activity in the area includes five-six sport fishing and hunting lodges (one lodge did not operate in 2008) that together have about a 100-bed capacity and hosted approximately 875 anglers (2007), up to six air carriers bringing in day-fishers, a commercially used airstrip and fish buying station supporting 10-12 set gillnetters fishing commercially and staying in personal cabins.

The fishable portion of the Tsiu River is quite small. It is, depending on weather and sea conditions, about 3-3.5 miles long, 20 to 60 feet wide (though it can be as wide as 150 feet depending on conditions) and 2 to 3 feet deep. Above the fishable part of the river is a "lake system" that is a braided swampy area approximately 5 to 7 miles wide with no clear channel to funnel fish in a concentrated way (so not good for fishing). Both commercial and sport fishers target the deeper (3-4 feet) holes in the Tsiu River where fish congregate.

There is almost 50 years of run data for the Tsiu as it has been commercially fished and managed by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) since the 1960s. Over that time period the coho run has averaged 56,000 fish. In 2008, the Tsiu River coho run was just under 75,000 fish and 49,300 were harvested commercially. In 2007 2,750 coho were harvested by sport fishers.

Both sport and commercial fishing at the Tsiu generate borough revenue, creates jobs, and brings money that circulates through Yakutat that would not otherwise be there.

In 2007, **tax revenue generated from sport fishing related activity in the Tsiu area was just over \$65,500, just under 4% of all CBY tax revenue. Sport fishing lodge leases also brought in \$36,000 in revenue** to the borough in 2007.

Commercially harvested Tsiu cohos generate both local 1% salmon tax revenue to the borough and also state raw fish tax revenue to the borough. Yakutat Seafoods LLC estimates that approximately 5-8% of Yakutat's 1% local fish tax can be attributed to Tsiu cohos. In FY 2008 the 1% Yakutat salmon sales and use tax generated just under \$33,700, thus **Tsiu cohos would account for approximately \$2,000-\$3,000 in local tax revenue.** Half of the State raw fish tax collected from Yakutat Seafoods is shared by the State with the CBY. In FY 2008 this was just over \$200,000. If the same ratio of value is true for State fish tax as the Yakutat **1% fish tax this would attribute \$10-\$16,000 to Tsiu cohos.** In addition, Yakutat Seafoods employs approximately 60 during the height of the season at its Yakutat processing plant (7 were reported to be local residents in 2008) as well as generating local sales at grocery and other stores. Also, one Yakutat-based air carrier generates significant revenue transporting fish for Yakutat Seafoods.

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4. Tax policy, permitting and enforcement should be equitable among types of landowners and users. **Sport fish lodges are paying property taxes whereas many commercial fishing cabin owners are not** (it appears that four are on the CBY property tax roll).



Image © 2013 DigitalGlobe
Image © 2013 TerraMetrics
Image IBCAO

Imagery Date: 6/22/2005 2005
60°04'47.02" N 143°02'47.68" W elev 15 ft

EMAILS BETWEEN THE FISHERIES MANAGER AND LODGE MANAGER

From: dan ernhart [<mailto:dan@ernhart.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, September 12, 2012 3:21 PM
To: Woods, Gordon F (DFG)
Subject: sep 13

Gordy,

Thanks again for the info. Could you please tell me what the blush percentage is? Is it true that that the cannery is paying .05 cents a pound for the blush fish?

Have a good day:)

Dan

-----Original Message-----

From: Woods, Gordon F (DFG) [<mailto:gordie.woods@alaska.gov>]
Sent: Wednesday, September 12, 2012 03:28 PM
To: 'dan ernhart'
Subject: RE: sep 13

Not true, Dan, 50 cents for number one, 40 cents for blush, 5 cents for red. As I understand it, the blush market is skin off, so the customer never sees the blush. Again, I'm not keeping track of percentages, all I'm interested in is total number of fish. So just offhand, I'd say 25% blush, less than 5% red.

From: dan ernhart [<mailto:dan@ernhart.com>]
Sent: Wednesday, November 02, 2011 6:14 AM
To: Woods, Gordon F (DFG)
Subject: nov 2, 2011

Gm☺ Just wondering what the yearend catch and escapement numbers were. Also, could you tell me what the blush percentages were? Especially on the first 4 or 5 openers?

Thanks, Dan Ernhart

From: Woods, Gordon F (DFG) <gordie.woods@alaska.gov>
To: dan ernhart <dan@ernhart.com>
Date: Wednesday, November 02, 2011 08:43 am
Subject: RE: nov 2, 2011

Good morning. 34,745 on the catch, 21,000 peak escapement, and she was counting big fish, you can tell coho from pinks from an airplane. And I can't tell you blush percentage anymore because the fish tickets have been archived in Juneau. When they get entered into the database, it doesn't care about grading, it just gives total numbers of fish. I do know from the start the processor refused to buy them, and the permits voluntarily went well below the markers to stay off them. Hope this helps. Gordie

Please note the dates of the emails and corresponding dates on the time line I kept for 2010. You will notice that the price for red fish was 0.00 the morning to Sep 10. Then on Sep 11 the report came in that the Sep 10 opener was the "cleanest" of the year so far. Sep 11 was the day I recorded seeing all the dead red fish as seen on the YouTube video. The last 6 openers of a 10 opener year, red fish were not being bought.

From: Woods, Gordon F (DFG) <gordie.woods@alaska.gov>
To: dan ernhart <dan@ernhart.com>
Date: Friday, September 10, 2010 07:43 am
Subject: RE: sep 9

Dan, the potential BEG is in the river, in fact mid-range. I fully understand those fish remain in the middle of the river and are not fully counted as escapement yet, but there are 20,000 of them. The extra time was to compensate for the shortened opening last Monday, they only got 10 hours out of a 24 hour opening. If it is not warranted next week, they won't get extra time.

The price for red fish right now is zero cents. That means as a fisherman, you will pay 45 cents to fly them out. As a buyer, if red fish make up a high percentage of the early catch, he will shut down buying, he can't afford to haul them. So we will take a peek see this morning and make a determination. I'll let you know what is going on.
Gordy

From: Woods, Gordon F (DFG) <gordie.woods@alaska.gov>
To: dan ernhart <dan@ernhart.com>
Date: Saturday, September 11, 2010 09:17 am
Subject: RE: sep 9

OK, Dan, I need you to hear me out on this. The buyer stopped buying at 7 pm last night. You were giving me grief about a third opening. But instead of two 24 hour openings for a total of 48 hours, they got three openings for a total 45 hours. I had talked to the DC-3 pilot and knew ahead of time they very well may shut down flying for a period of time with a mechanical, if they did, Yakutat Seafoods would stop buying. Nicole's survey indicated fish were moving up, not down, and

I talked to Greg at YS this morning, the quality of this opening was the highest of any opening so far this year.

At no point in time did I think fish were ready to move down yet, biologically, that goes against the grain, they want to go up, not down. Yes, no rain ever, and there could be a die off, you see that sometimes with pink salmon. But there is no biological reason those coho want to go back downstream, they don't want to do that. I guess the best way to put it is what I told Scott Kelley, my supervisor, when he asked how the Tsiu was going. I told him because of the situation, lots of people around me are panicking, but the run lasts 8-10 weeks, no individual 24 hour period is all that important, it is the end game that is important, and I won't panic. I'll very definitely stay focused, but no fishery ever got managed in panic mode. I'm not pointing a finger at you, the commercial industry is also quite capable of panicking, and they do. But everyone is thinking in terms of this 24 hour period, and I'm thinking in terms of the biological bell curve. Every single survey has indicated an in-run. 11,000, 15,000, 20,000, 22,000, the fish aren't backing out, they are coming in, and even in the present conditions some of them are making it up into the lake. The dialog is important, let's keep it going. Have a great day, and please take this in the spirit that is intended, I'm not getting on you, I just want everyone to think about it a little, maybe from a little different perspective than they are used to thinking about. Gordie

From: dan ernhart [mailto:dan@ernhart.com]
Sent: Saturday, September 11, 2010 6:40 PM
To: Woods, Gordon F (DFG)
Subject: sep 11

~~gordy, thanks for the note. im just trying to understand how it all works.~~

i was fishing right below the marker today and there were an unusual amount of dead red fish with net marks. that is probably why the cannery received such good fish on this opener. is there a percentage added on to the comm catch for bycatch? i guess its really not bycatch. a percentage added on for fish that are killed but not collected?

~~i was thinking about the 25% sport fish, derrick thing you told me. i think that a 5-year average for counting fish would be more accurate. like this year the comms will take more than normal and the sports will take less than normal because there are less folks out there. so the percentage will drop way down. i keep track of fish and i extrapolate the numbers as well and i usually come up with numbers significantly lower than even the 7500 that you suggest. i suppose the guide books that we all keep will be more reliable source of info. but just like what i saw today, not every fish is accounted for.~~ dan

From: Woods, Gordon F (DFG) <gordie.woods@alaska.gov>

To: dan ernhart <dan@ernhart.com>

Date: Sunday, September 12, 2010 09:17 am

Subject: RE: sep 11

I totally agree with you, Dan, the sport take does vary from year to year and is dependent on a lot of different things. Bad economy, fewer sport fishermen making bookings, you have to look at the whole picture. Yes, even a 10-year average would be more indicative. I wasn't trying to make a case, merely saying that the two times it was looked at both agreed with that 25%. Some years the commercial fishery is more efficient than other years. We aren't seeing the bad weather this year that usually puts a limit on their effectiveness. As a manager, I'm working harder this year than ever before simply because in normal years inclement weather will virtually guarantee that there will be sufficient escapement. Doesn't matter when the openings are, if the planes can't haul fish, they can't put nets in the water. They risk wanton waste charges if they fish and the buyer can't haul and the fish go bad on the beach. I have been aware all along that you are trying to understand how it works, you get full credit for that and I appreciate it. The years have gone by and you have no idea that I actually agree with you far more often than we disagree, I am not at all unsympathetic. I also think you know that I get paid to do a job, and I try to do it to the very best of my ability, if I do it well then all user groups benefit in the long run. Individual years blend together over time, it is the long run that is important, are we all going to be here 5, 10, 15, 20 years down the line? If you are still there 20 years from now nobody will be happier about it than me, I'll be the first guy to give you a high five!

Oh, bycatch, salmon can't be bycatch in a salmon fishery. I understand the Troopers were on the grounds recently and I will get their interpretation.

Red fish now are a no buy fish, but that doesn't mean you aren't subject to wanton waste if you indiscriminately kill them and throw them away. I'll see what I can find.

I wish it were howling, blowing, and raining up there right now, but if the sun's out, might as well enjoy it. Have a good one. Gordie

Dan Ernhart