



Inseason analysis of chum salmon (*Oncorhynchus keta*) bycatch from the shoreside sector of the Bering Sea
Aleutian Islands walleye pollock (*Gadus chalcogrammus*) trawl fishery

Results from Statistical Week 43-44

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Summary

This is the eighteenth, and final, inseason analysis of the 2025 chum salmon *Oncorhynchus keta* bycatch from the shoreside sector of the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI) walleye pollock *Gadus chalcogrammus* trawl fishery. In statistical week 43-44 there were 1,158 chum salmon caught by the shoreside sector. Of that total catch, 232 were sampled, 232 were selected for genotyping, and 206 (17.8% of the total catch) were successfully genotyped to determine the genetic stock composition of the bycatch. E GOA/PNW comprised the largest proportion of the chum salmon bycatch (77.4%), 897 chum salmon. Western Alaska (Coastal Western Alaska and Upper/Middle Yukon combined) comprised 6% of the bycatch (70 fish). Since statistical week 24 a total of 73,291 chum salmon have been caught by the shoreside sector. Of those chum salmon, an estimated 4714 were of Western Alaska (Coastal Western Alaska and Upper/Middle Yukon River) origin.

Chum salmon bycatch from statistical week 43-44 from the shoreside sector of the BSAI walleye pollock trawl fishery and the cumulative catch over all statistical weeks analyzed from the B season. For individual week estimates see Appendix I.

Region	Stat Week 43-44 (PSC = 1,158; n = 218)					B season
	Est. num.	Est. CI	Mean	2.5%	97.5%	Est. num.
SE Asia	27	7-57	0.024	0.006	0.050	6237
NE Asia	146	96-205	0.126	0.083	0.177	14328
W Alaska	69	33-114	0.059	0.029	0.098	3815
Up/Mid Yukon	1	0-17	0.001	0.000	0.015	899
SW Alaska	18	1-50	0.016	0.001	0.043	1004
E GOA/PNW	897	826-961	0.774	0.714	0.830	47008

Introduction

Chum salmon (*Oncorhynchus keta*) incidental catch occurs within the Federally Managed midwater trawl fishery for walleye pollock (*Gadus chalcogrammus*) in the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands (BSAI). Salmon are managed as a prohibited species catch (referred to as bycatch) and are highly regulated. The fishery is composed of three distinct processing sectors, each with different operational constraints. Within the shoreside sector, smaller vessels which lack the ability to process hauls at-sea often fish closer to the Alaska Peninsula. Differences in the stock specific distribution of chum salmon within the Bering Sea result in the shoreside sector often catching the largest proportion and number of Western Alaska (Coastal Western Alaska and Upper/Middle Yukon River genetic groups combined) chum salmon bycatch relative to the catcher processor and mothership sectors (Kondzela et al. 2017). Currently, annual estimates of genetic stock composition are produced by the genetics program of NOAA's Alaska Fishery Science Center (AFSC) and presented to the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council (NPFMC) at their April Council meeting (~3 months after the end of the B season). Within the fishery, all chum salmon bycatch is enumerated by the North Pacific Observer Program and 1 in 30 are sampled for length, weight, sex, and a tissue sample and a scale are sent to the AFSC genetics program for analysis. In 2024, a project was initiated by Bristol Bay Science Research Institute (BBSRI) to sample the bycatch from the shoreside sector of the fleet in order to obtain weekly estimates of genetic stock composition. This report outlines the results the analysis of the chum salmon bycatch from statistical week 43-44 (deliveries between 19 Oct - 30 Oct).

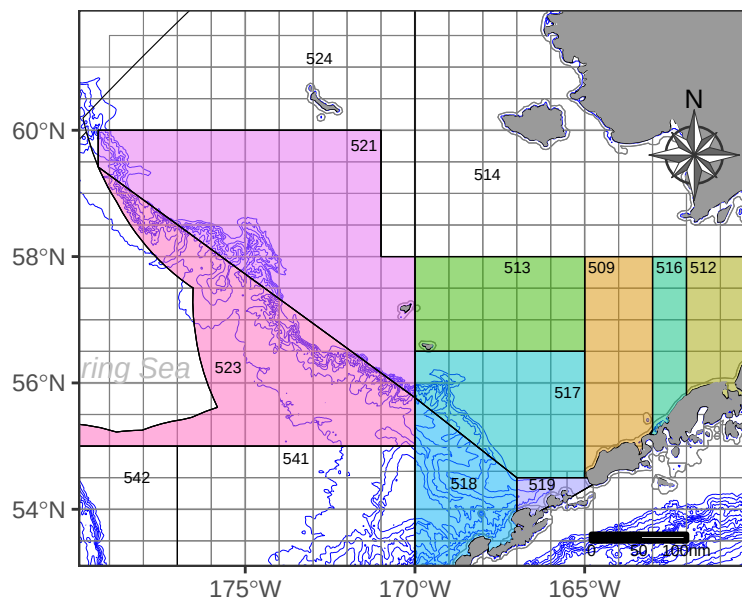


Figure 1: Map of National Marine Fisheries Service management areas within the Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands. Colored areas indicate management areas where chum salmon bycatch has historically occurred.

Methods

Bycatch Sampling

Port samplers, employed by BBSRI, sampled pollock hauls delivered to processing plants in Dutch Harbor. The target sampling rate for statistical week 43-44 was fixed at 1 in 5 chum salmon sampled (Table 1). After NMFS observers had processed the offload, BBSRI technicians took a length measurement, scale sample for

age estimation, and a fin clip for genetic analyses. Fin clips were stapled onto a Whatman card labelled with haul-level information from the delivery. Scale samples were mounted on gum cards and stored for post-season analysis. Sampling and genotyping data were sent to the AFSC genetics program for analysis.

Genotyping

All tissue samples collected were sent to the BBSRI staffed genetics laboratory in Dutch Harbor for processing. Genomic DNA was extracted from dried fin clips with Macherey-Nagel (Allentown, PA) NucleoSpin Tissue kits. Extracted DNA was amplified for 96 single nucleotide polymorphism markers (SNPs) with a Fluidigm (San Francisco, CA) BioMark X9 system with 96.96 Dynamic Array integrated fluidic circuit (IFC). Each of the 9,216 parallel reactions consisted of 50–500 $\eta g/\mu l$ DNA, 1X Fast GT Sample Loading Reagent (Fluidigm), 1X TaqMan GTXpress Master Mix (Applied Biosystems), 10X Custom ABI TaqMan SNP Genotyping Assay (Applied Biosystems), 1X Assay Loading Reagent (Fluidigm), and 2.5X ROX Reference Dye (Invitrogen). The temperature profile for amplification was thermal mixing at 60°C for 10 min and 70°C for 30 min followed by “Hot-Start” denaturation at 95°C for 2 min and 40 cycles of amplification (denaturation at 95°C for 2 s and annealing at 60°C for 20 s). After amplification, genotypes were scored with BioMark Genotyping Analysis software.

Genetic Stock Identification

Mixtures were created by grouping sampled fish into temporal groups (statistical week) from non-debriefed observer data provided by the Alaska Regional Office and linked to genetic samples by BBSRI. Individual samples with fewer than 80% of their multilocus genotype scored were dropped from analyses. Additionally, if individuals are identified to have matching multilocus genotypes (>95% similarity) the individuals with fewer scored loci was dropped. Genetic stock identification was performed with the conditional genetic stock identification model in the R package *rubias* (Moran and Anderson 2019) following the methods used in NOAA’s annual bycatch reports. Briefly, baseline populations were grouped into seven regions adapted from (2010): Southeast Asia (SE Asia), Northeast Asia (NE Asia), Coastal Western Alaska (W Alaska), Upper/Middle Yukon (Up/Mid Yukon), Southwest Alaska (SW Alaska), and the Eastern GOA/Pacific Northwest (E GOA/PNW). For all estimates, the Dirichlet prior parameters for the stock proportions were defined by region to be $1/(GC_g)$, where C_g is the number of baseline populations in region g , and G is the number of regions. To ensure convergence to the posterior distribution, seven separate MCMC chains of 100,000 iterations (burn-in of 50,000) of the non-bootstrapped model were run, with each chain starting at disparate values of stock proportions; configured such that for each chain 95% of the mixture came from a single designated reporting group (with probability equally distributed among the populations within that reporting group) and the remaining 5% equally distributed among remaining reporting groups. The convergence of chains for each reporting group estimate was assessed with the Gelman-Rubin statistic (Gelman and Rubin 1992) estimated with the `gelman.diag` function in the `coda` library (Plummer et al. 2006) within R. Once chain convergence was confirmed, inference was conducted with the conditional genetic stock identification model with bootstrapping over reporting groups (MCMC chains of 100,000 iterations, burn-in of 50,000, 100 bootstrap iterations).

The stock composition estimates were summarized by the mean, standard deviation, median, 95% credible interval (2.5th and 97.5th percentile of the MCMC iterates in the posterior output), and $P = 0$, which is the probability that a stock composition estimate is effectively zero (Munro et al. 2012). The $P = 0$ statistic is the frequency of the last half of the MCMC iterates of each chain for which the individual regional contribution to the mixture was less than a threshold of $0.5E^{-6}$. This statistic may be more useful than the credible interval for assessing the presence or absence of minor stocks. The estimated number of fish for each genetic group, and associated uncertainty, is estimated as the mean stock proportion and 95% credible intervals multiplied by the total bycatch in a given statistical week.

Results

Chum Salmon Bycatch

In statistical week 43-44 of the BSAI pollock trawl fishery there were 1,158 chum salmon caught by the shoreside sector.

Sampling & Genotyping

In statistical week 43-44, BBSRI technicians sampled hauls delivered to Dutch Harbor. A total of 232 chum salmon were sampled for an overall sampling rate of 0.2 or $\sim 1/5$. All chum salmon sampled were processed for genotyping with 206 (88.8%) successfully genotyped. Of those genotyped samples, 18 pair of samples were likely duplicates and one sample of each pair was removed before analyzing the mixture.

Table 1: Chum salmon bycatch sampling and genotyping information for statistical week 43-44 for the shoreside processing plants. Sampling is grouped by processing plant and target sampling rate. Chum genotyped is the number of chum that were amplified for the marker panel. Chum analyzed are those chum that were genotyped for at least 80% of the genetic markers after potential duplicate samples were removed.

Plant	Target Sample Rate	Total Chum	Chum Sampled	Sample Rate	Chum Genotyped	Chum Analyzed	Genotype Rate
P1	0.2	136	27	0.199	27	27	0.199
P5	0.2	1022	205	0.201	205	179	0.175
Total		1158	232	0.200	232	206	0.178

Stock Specific Catches

In statistical week 43-44, 6 of the six genetic groups were present in the bycatch. The E GOA/PNW reporting group comprised the largest proportion of the chum salmon bycatch (77.4%), 897 of the total bycatch of 1,158 chum salmon. The second largest contributing regional group to the bycatch was NE Asia with 12.6% or 146 fish. Western Alaska (Coastal Western Alaska and Upper/Middle Yukon combined) comprised 6% of the bycatch (70 fish). Asia (NE Asia and SE Asia combined) comprised 15% of the bycatch (173 fish).

Table 2: Chum salmon bycatch from statistical week 43-44 of the shoreside sector BSAI trawl fishery (PSC = 1,158; n = 218)

Region	Est. num.	Est. CI	Mean	2.5%	97.5%	P=0	SF
SE Asia	27	7-57	0.024	0.006	0.050	0.00	1.00
NE Asia	146	96-205	0.126	0.083	0.177	0.00	1.00
W Alaska	69	33-114	0.059	0.029	0.098	0.00	1.00
Up/Mid Yukon	1	0-17	0.001	0.000	0.015	0.65	1.00
SW Alaska	18	1-50	0.016	0.001	0.043	0.01	1.00
E GOA/PNW	897	826-961	0.774	0.714	0.830	0.00	1.00

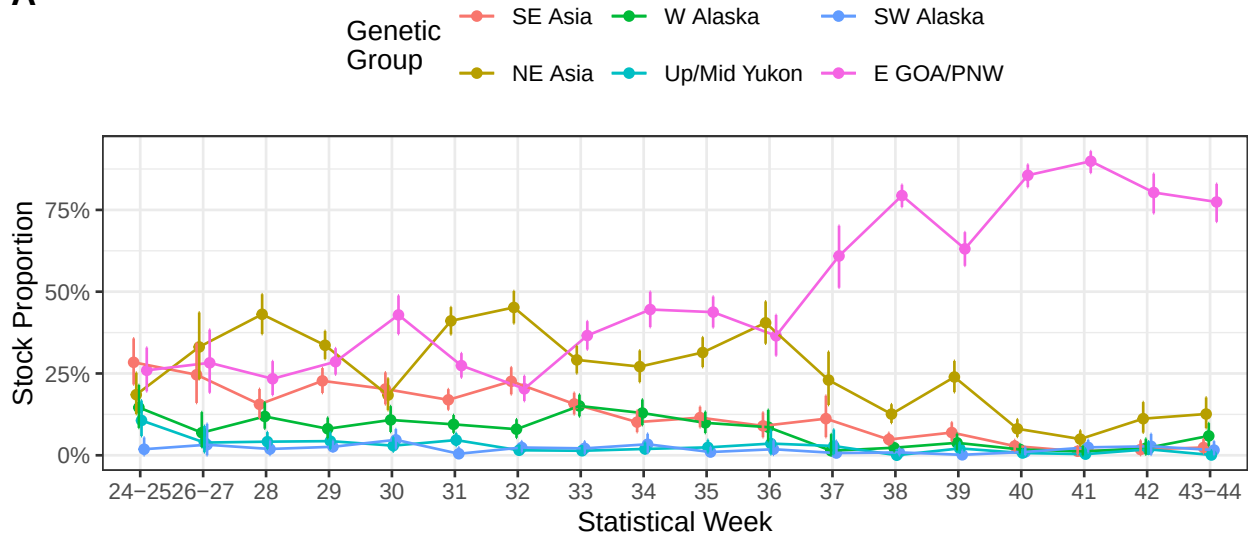
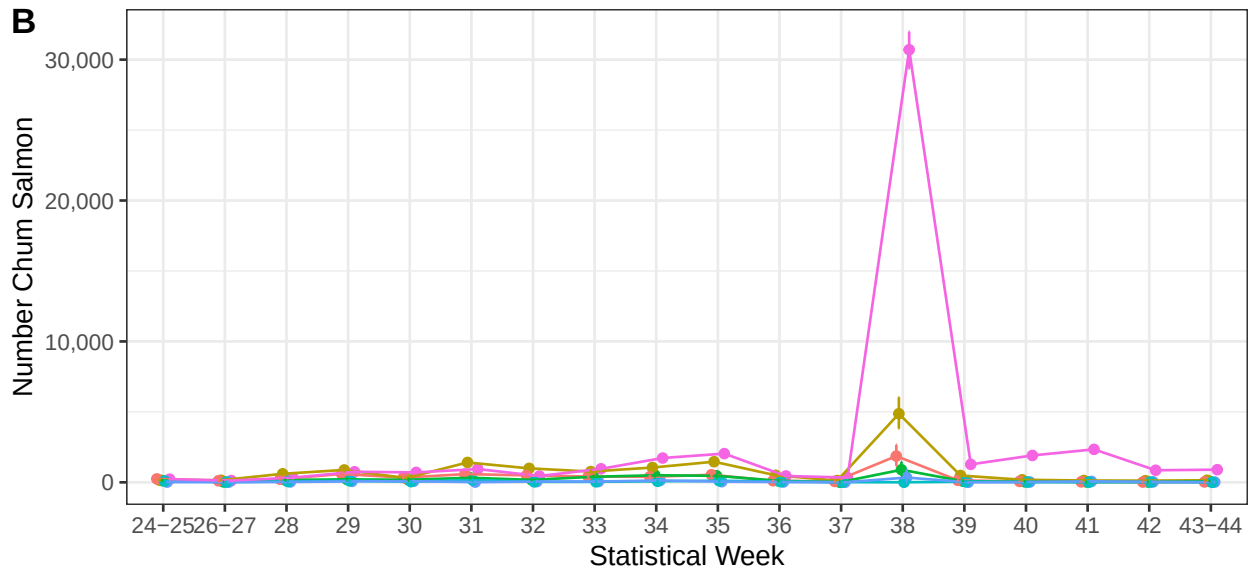
A**B**

Figure 2: Chum salmon bycatch proportion (A) and total number of fish (B) for the B season of the shoreside sector pollock trawl fishery. Error bars represent 95% credible intervals.

Of the 73,291 chum salmon caught by the shoreside sector since statistical week 24, the largest contributing genetic group to the bycatch has been the E GOA/PNW, with a point estimate of 47,008 chum salmon. Since the start of the B season, the Coastal Western Alaska (W Alaska) group has comprised an average of 7.5% of the bycatch, with the shoreside sector having caught a total of 3,815 chum salmon from this genetic group. The Southwest Alaska (SW Alaska) regional group made up an average of 1.9% of the bycatch over the 21 weeks, with a total of 1,004 chum salmon harvested to date. The Upper/Middle Yukon (Up/Mid Yukon) group accounted for an average of 2.7% of the chum salmon bycatch, with 899 fish harvested since statistical week 24-25.

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Appendix I - 2025 GSI Results

Prior week stock composition estimates of chum salmon bycatch from the 2025 shoreside sector's Bering Sea and Aleutian Islands, B-season pollock trawl fishery.

Stat Week 24-25 (PSC = 855; n = 169)

Region	Est. num.	Est. CI	Mean	2.5%	97.5%	P=0	SF
SE Asia	243	185-305	0.284	0.216	0.357	0.00	1.00
NE Asia	158	108-216	0.185	0.126	0.252	0.00	1.00
W Alaska	125	72-184	0.146	0.084	0.215	0.00	1.00
Up/Mid Yukon	91	50-143	0.106	0.059	0.167	0.00	1.00
SW Alaska	16	0-47	0.018	0.000	0.054	0.06	1.00
E GOA/PNW	222	167-281	0.260	0.195	0.329	0.00	1.00

Stat Week 26-27 (PSC = 451; n = 87)

Region	Est. num.	Est. CI	Mean	2.5%	97.5%	P=0	SF
SE Asia	111	72-154	0.246	0.160	0.342	0.00	1.00
NE Asia	149	105-197	0.331	0.233	0.437	0.00	1.00
W Alaska	31	11-60	0.069	0.025	0.132	0.00	1.00
Up/Mid Yukon	18	4-40	0.039	0.009	0.090	0.00	1.00
SW Alaska	15	0-43	0.032	0.000	0.096	0.08	1.00
E GOA/PNW	127	86-173	0.283	0.191	0.384	0.00	1.00

Stat Week 28 (PSC = 1,404; n = 277)

Region	Est. num.	Est. CI	Mean	2.5%	97.5%	P=0	SF
SE Asia	219	160-285	0.156	0.114	0.203	0.00	1.00
NE Asia	605	520-691	0.431	0.370	0.492	0.00	1.00
W Alaska	167	114-227	0.119	0.081	0.162	0.00	1.00
Up/Mid Yukon	58	27-99	0.042	0.019	0.071	0.00	1.00
SW Alaska	27	2-63	0.019	0.001	0.045	0.01	1.00
E GOA/PNW	328	258-404	0.234	0.184	0.288	0.00	1.00

Stat Week 29 (PSC = 2,618; n = 505)

Region	Est. num.	Est. CI	Mean	2.5%	97.5%	P=0	SF
SE Asia	596	498-698	0.227	0.190	0.267	0.00	1.00
NE Asia	880	770-995	0.336	0.294	0.380	0.00	1.00
W Alaska	212	137-301	0.081	0.052	0.115	0.00	1.00
Up/Mid Yukon	113	52-183	0.043	0.020	0.070	0.00	1.00
SW Alaska	68	31-116	0.026	0.012	0.044	0.00	1.00
E GOA/PNW	749	646-857	0.286	0.247	0.327	0.00	1.00

Stat Week 30 (PSC = 1,644; n = 280)

Region	Est. num.	Est. CI	Mean	2.5%	97.5%	P=0	SF
SE Asia	333	256-417	0.203	0.156	0.253	0.00	1.00
NE Asia	302	227-387	0.184	0.138	0.235	0.00	1.00
W Alaska	178	117-247	0.108	0.071	0.150	0.00	1.00
Up/Mid Yukon	48	18-91	0.029	0.011	0.055	0.00	1.00
SW Alaska	78	32-132	0.047	0.020	0.080	0.00	1.00
E GOA/PNW	705	609-803	0.429	0.370	0.488	0.00	1.00

Stat Week 31 (PSC = 3,434; n = 607)

Region	Est. num.	Est. CI	Mean	2.5%	97.5%	P=0	SF
SE Asia	582	478-694	0.169	0.139	0.202	0.00	1.00
NE Asia	1,411	1,268-1,555	0.411	0.369	0.453	0.00	1.00
W Alaska	324	236-423	0.094	0.069	0.123	0.00	1.00
Up/Mid Yukon	160	97-233	0.046	0.028	0.068	0.00	1.00
SW Alaska	16	0-84	0.005	0.000	0.024	0.35	1.01
E GOA/PNW	941	816-1,072	0.274	0.238	0.312	0.00	1.00

Stat Week 32 (PSC = 2,194; n = 427)

Region	Est. num.	Est. CI	Mean	2.5%	97.5%	P=0	SF
SE Asia	496	409-590	0.226	0.186	0.269	0.00	1.00
NE Asia	991	884-1,101	0.452	0.403	0.502	0.00	1.00
W Alaska	175	117-241	0.080	0.053	0.110	0.00	1.00
Up/Mid Yukon	34	10-69	0.015	0.005	0.031	0.00	1.00
SW Alaska	52	21-94	0.024	0.009	0.043	0.00	1.00
E GOA/PNW	446	364-532	0.203	0.166	0.243	0.00	1.00

Stat Week 33 (PSC = 2,622; n = 515)

Region	Est. num.	Est. CI	Mean	2.5%	97.5%	P=0	SF
SE Asia	411	328-501	0.157	0.125	0.191	0.00	1.00
NE Asia	764	656-877	0.292	0.250	0.335	0.00	1.00
W Alaska	395	311-486	0.151	0.119	0.185	0.00	1.00
Up/Mid Yukon	36	15-69	0.014	0.006	0.026	0.00	1.00
SW Alaska	55	12-112	0.021	0.005	0.043	0.00	1.00
E GOA/PNW	959	847-1,075	0.366	0.323	0.410	0.00	1.00

Stat Week 34 (PSC = 3,873; n = 354)

Region	Est. num.	Est. CI	Mean	2.5%	97.5%	P=0	SF
SE Asia	392	274-529	0.101	0.071	0.137	0.00	1.00
NE Asia	1,050	866-1,241	0.271	0.224	0.320	0.00	1.00
W Alaska	500	357-660	0.129	0.092	0.170	0.00	1.00
Up/Mid Yukon	75	20-151	0.019	0.005	0.039	0.00	1.00
SW Alaska	130	28-255	0.034	0.007	0.066	0.00	1.00
E GOA/PNW	1,725	1,518-1,936	0.446	0.392	0.500	0.00	1.00

Stat Week 35 (PSC = 4,657; n = 436)

Region	Est. num.	Est. CI	Mean	2.5%	97.5%	P=0	SF
SE Asia	536	398-691	0.115	0.085	0.148	0.00	1.00
NE Asia	1,463	1,255-1,680	0.314	0.269	0.361	0.00	1.00
W Alaska	462	317-619	0.099	0.068	0.133	0.00	1.00
Up/Mid Yukon	113	41-219	0.024	0.009	0.047	0.00	1.00
SW Alaska	46	0-120	0.010	0.000	0.026	0.04	1.00
E GOA/PNW	2,038	1,819-2,260	0.438	0.391	0.485	0.00	1.00

Stat Week 36 (PSC = 1,232; n = 239)

Region	Est. num.	Est. CI	Mean	2.5%	97.5%	P=0	SF
SE Asia	111	68-161	0.090	0.055	0.131	0.00	1.00
NE Asia	499	420-579	0.405	0.341	0.470	0.00	1.00
W Alaska	106	53-171	0.086	0.043	0.139	0.00	1.00
Up/Mid Yukon	44	4-96	0.036	0.003	0.078	0.01	1.00
SW Alaska	23	2-56	0.018	0.001	0.046	0.00	1.00
E GOA/PNW	450	375-528	0.365	0.305	0.429	0.00	1.00

Stat Week 37 (PSC = 553; n = 105)

Region	Est. num.	Est. CI	Mean	2.5%	97.5%	P=0	SF
SE Asia	62	31-101	0.112	0.055	0.182	0.00	1.00
NE Asia	127	85-175	0.230	0.154	0.317	0.00	1.00
W Alaska	8	0-36	0.014	0.000	0.065	0.40	1.00
Up/Mid Yukon	16	2-44	0.028	0.004	0.079	0.00	1.00
SW Alaska	4	0-24	0.007	0.000	0.044	0.46	1.00
E GOA/PNW	337	283-388	0.609	0.512	0.702	0.00	1.00

Stat Week 38 (PSC = 38,674; n = 694)

Region	Est. num.	Est. CI	Mean	2.5%	97.5%	P=0	SF
SE Asia	1,864	1,175-2,663	0.048	0.030	0.069	0.00	1.00
NE Asia	4,870	3,817-6,030	0.126	0.099	0.156	0.00	1.00
W Alaska	893	460-1,456	0.023	0.012	0.038	0.00	1.00
Up/Mid Yukon	5	0-133	0.000	0.000	0.003	0.74	1.00
SW Alaska	338	0-876	0.009	0.000	0.023	0.04	1.00
E GOA/PNW	30,703	29,351-31,981	0.794	0.759	0.827	0.00	1.00

Stat Week 39 (PSC = 2,022; n = 344)

Region	Est. num.	Est. CI	Mean	2.5%	97.5%	P=0	SF
SE Asia	140	87-204	0.069	0.043	0.101	0.00	1.00
NE Asia	484	390-583	0.239	0.193	0.289	0.00	1.00
W Alaska	77	32-133	0.038	0.016	0.066	0.00	1.00
Up/Mid Yukon	42	16-81	0.021	0.008	0.040	0.00	1.00
SW Alaska	3	0-28	0.001	0.000	0.014	0.56	1.00
E GOA/PNW	1,276	1,171-1,379	0.631	0.579	0.682	0.00	1.00

Stat Week 40 (PSC = 2,229; n = 431)

Region	Est. num.	Est. CI	Mean	2.5%	97.5%	P=0	SF
SE Asia	63	31-104	0.028	0.014	0.047	0.00	1.00
NE Asia	181	125-245	0.081	0.056	0.110	0.00	1.00
W Alaska	40	14-75	0.018	0.006	0.034	0.00	1.00
Up/Mid Yukon	16	1-42	0.007	0.001	0.019	0.00	1.00
SW Alaska	23	2-56	0.010	0.001	0.025	0.01	1.00
E GOA/PNW	1,908	1,827-1,981	0.856	0.820	0.889	0.00	1.00

Stat Week 41 (PSC = 2,604; n = 356)

Region	Est. num.	Est. CI	Mean	2.5%	97.5%	P=0	SF
SE Asia	32	7-71	0.012	0.003	0.027	0.00	1.00
NE Asia	129	75-198	0.050	0.029	0.076	0.00	1.00
W Alaska	30	0-76	0.012	0.000	0.029	0.08	1.00
Up/Mid Yukon	9	0-53	0.003	0.000	0.020	0.49	1.00
SW Alaska	63	23-123	0.024	0.009	0.047	0.00	1.00
E GOA/PNW	2,340	2,247-2,420	0.899	0.863	0.930	0.00	1.00

Stat Week 42 (PSC = 1,067; n = 192)

Region	Est. num.	Est. CI	Mean	2.5%	97.5%	P=0	SF
SE Asia	19	1-48	0.018	0.001	0.045	0.02	1.00
NE Asia	119	74-174	0.112	0.069	0.163	0.00	1.00
W Alaska	23	2-54	0.022	0.002	0.051	0.01	1.00
Up/Mid Yukon	20	5-45	0.018	0.004	0.042	0.00	1.00
SW Alaska	29	2-70	0.027	0.002	0.065	0.00	1.00
E GOA/PNW	857	789-918	0.803	0.740	0.861	0.00	1.00