

# PWSAC NEWS

Newsletter of the  
Prince William Sound Aquaculture  
Corporation



Volume VIII, Issue II

Fall 2008

## 2008 <> 1988 ... Déjà Vu

**PWSAC return successful, saves 1988 seine season**

*(Excerpts from the 1988 PWSAC News)*

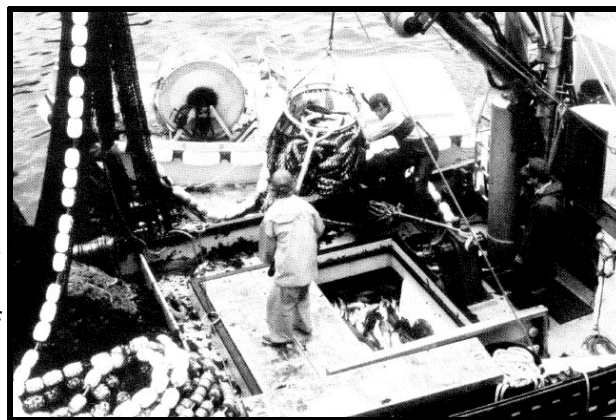
If success is measured by the attainment of goals, PWSAC succeeded in 1988. Seiners will remember this year as the season saved by PWSAC: 90 percent of the 7.7 million pink salmon they caught were produced by the aquaculture corporation. The worst failure since statehood of the Sound's wild pink run would have meant financial catastrophe for many seiners had it not been for the successful returns to PWSAC's Armin F. Koernig and Esther Island Hatcheries.

Area E gillnetters and setnetters were also well supplied by hatchery fish. Gillnetters snagged 1.2 million pinks, most of them in the Coghill District near the Esther Hatchery. In addition, of the 696,000 chum salmon caught by gillnetters and

setnetters, an estimated 75% were hatchery-produced. Unexpectedly high prices for pink and chums – an average of \$1.13 a pound compared to the budgeted 40 cents – allowed PWSAC to reach its sales fish revenue goal of \$4.3

million much earlier than anticipated. The last fish sale was August 10, the same day that the Department of Fish and Game opened areas adjacent to the AFK and Esther Hatcheries to seven-day-a-week fishing.

The 1988 season didn't always look so good. Back at the beginning of August seiners were seriously worried: it was clear that only a



1988 - A seiner brails salmon aboard during the Sawmill Bay opener

smattering of wild pinks had returned, an eventual total of about 16 percent of the predicted 5.5 million.

On August 3, PWSAC management organized a joint meeting with Fish and Game personnel to address fishermen's questions and concerns. Three hundred skippers and crewmen crowded the high school

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## North Up or Course Up?

By George Covell, PWSAC Chairman

Reflecting on the excitement of the 2008 season, I'm reminded of why it's sometimes useful to look out the aft window of the wheelhouse to see how well you're maintaining a course. A backwards glance reveals that the circumstances of the past season are not uncommon and are a gratifying reminder of just how well PWSAC fulfills its important role in fostering a sustainable fishery and, in so doing, a better life for so many.

The above summarized reprint from the 1988 newsletter, as well as an examination of the past 20 years of

hatchery contributions highlight the many years where the enhancement effort in PWS has achieved its important goals – that of sustaining the fishery and our respective communities.

We all understand that in many years there would not have been a meaningful fishery were it not for the efforts of PWSAC. That is not to ignore the occasional jog or two we've made to avoid straying from the course but, all in all, we can be proud of what we have accomplished and inspired by our purpose.

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### Meeting Notice

PWSAC Board of Directors  
March 9, 2009 @ 10:30am  
St. Joseph's Church, Cordova

## 2008 Hatchery Return Summary

*Preliminary estimates as of 10/20/2008*

Species	Location	Forecast Return	Predicted Marine Survival	Total Return	Common Property Fishery Harvest	PWSAC Harvest	Estimated Marine Survival
Chum Salmon	WNH	2,267,000	3.10%	2,804,000	2,180,000	624,000	3.83%
	Port Chalmers	787,000	1.94%	1,128,000	1,128,000	-0-	2.78%
	AFK	309,000	2.00%	435,000	435,000	-0-	2.82%
<b>Total</b>		<b>3,363,000</b>		<b>4,367,000</b>	<b>3,743,000</b>	<b>624,000</b>	
				<b>% of Total</b>	<b>86%</b>	<b>14%</b>	
Sockeye Salmon	MBH	929,000	11.42%	801,000	790,000	11,000	9.71%
	Marsha Bay	23,100	2.99%	~20,000	~20,000	-0-	2.59%
	Solf Lake / Herring Bay	5,100	2.00%	n/a	n/a	-0-	n/a
	GH / Copper River	268,000		n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Total</b>		<b>1,225,200</b>		<b>821,000</b>	<b>810,000</b>	<b>11,000</b>	
				<b>% of Total</b>	<b>99%</b>	<b>1%</b>	
Pink Salmon	AFK	8,000,000	4.47%	6,157,000	5,261,000	896,000	3.4%
	CCH	4,500,000	3.16%	10,771,000	9,538,000	1,233,000	7.6%
	WNH	3,700,000	4.79%	8,760,000	7,448,000	1,312,000	11.3%
<b>Total</b>		<b>16,200,000</b>		<b>25,688,000</b>	<b>22,247,000</b>	<b>3,441,000</b>	
				<b>% of Total</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>13%</b>	
Coho Salmon	WNH	128,000	8.00%	130,000	127,000	3,000	8.1%
	Cordova	8,000	8.00%	8,000	8,000	-0-	8.0%
	Whittier	8,000	8.00%	8,000	8,000	-0-	8.0%
	Chenega	4,000	8.00%	4,000	4,000	-0-	8.0%
<b>Total</b>		<b>148,000</b>		<b>150,000</b>	<b>147,000</b>	<b>3,000</b>	
				<b>% of Total</b>	<b>98%</b>	<b>2%</b>	
<b>Grand Total - All Species</b>				<b>31,026,000</b>	<b>26,947,000</b>	<b>4,079,000</b>	
				<b>% of Total</b>	<b>87%</b>	<b>13%</b>	



Visit the web site for the 2008 harvest curves at [www.pwsac.com](http://www.pwsac.com)

## Full Utilization

Strong markets fueled by high demand and a relatively weak US dollar provided an opportunity for PWSAC to achieve near full utilization of its broodstock during its hatchery chum and pink salmon egg-takes.

In 1997, the PWSAC fish sales team began its efforts in nurturing processor interest in product forms conducive to mature salmon. Eleven years later, their efforts came to fruition with the newly coined "fish sales during egg-take program."

Approximately 1.2 million pounds of chum salmon and 3.2 million pounds of pink salmon were sold and delivered to tenders staged at the hatchery docks in 2008. The only brood fish not included in the program were the few that died in the holding raceways and ponds.

The fish were processed into fish meal and H&G products for the global salmon market.

For the upcoming seasons, it is anticipated that revenues from this program will help to reduce PWSAC's cost recovery revenue goals.

## 2008 Egg-take Summary

Species	Hatchery	Egg Goal	Eggs Collected
Pink Salmon	Armin F. Koernig	162 million	162 million
	Cannery Creek	152 million	152 million
	Wally Noerenberg	148 million	148 million
Total			462 million
Sockeye Salmon	Gulkana	30-35 million	31 million
	Main Bay	10.6 million	10.6 million
	Total		
Chum Salmon	Wally Noerenberg	148 million	148 million
Coho Salmon	Wally Noerenberg	4 million	4 million

## Permit Holder Board Seats Election

The PWSAC Bylaws provide that every Area E salmon permit holder is eligible to be a candidate and vote on the Fishermen's Ballot for the PWSAC Board of Directors.

The PWSAC Board has 27 designated permit holder seats: 10 seine, 10 drift gillnet, 6 dual, and 1 set gillnet. A dual permit holder is a person who holds both a seine and drift gillnet permit. Those who hold both a drift gillnet and set gillnet may only occupy a seat designated for a drift gillnet.

The 2009 permit holder's election will fill 13 term-expiring seats: 4 seine, 5 drift gillnet, 3 dual, and 1 set gillnet. PWSAC needs interested people to serve on the Board who have the time to commit and the desire to help the Board achieve corporate goals.

The election process kicked off on October 16 as the nomination petitions were mailed to all Area E salmon permit holders registered with the Alaska Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission as of October 1, 2008.

The 2009 nominating petitions are available on the PWSAC web site at [www.pwsac.com](http://www.pwsac.com)



Expiring Seine Seat Terms:  
Mark Meadows, Tim Moore, and Steve Smith.

Expiring Drift Gillnet Seat Terms:  
Richard Casciano, George Covell, Jeff Jensen, Kim Menster, and Scott Seaton.

Expiring Dual Permit Seat Terms:  
Jack Babic and Mike Glasen.

Expiring Set Gillnet Seat Term:  
Lisa Ragland.

### 2009 Election Time Schedule

11/29/08	Nomination Petitions Deadline
1/8/09	Permit Holders Ballots Mailed
2/14/09	Ballot Deadline
2/26/09	Election Certified
4/8/09	Newly Elected Board Members Announced
10/09	New Directors begin their terms at the General Board meeting

## “Fish Heads”: Profiles of PWSAC People



PWSAC Couple Cindy and Rob Unger

WNH Fish Culturist Cindy Unger has taken her incubation responsibilities to a new level; she and Hatchery Manager Rob Unger will be entering a new

phase of rearing with the outmigration of their first child in December. Congratulations!!

Seeking new experiences and accepting new challenges are what this couple do and excel at.

Cindy has been involved in salmon enhancement, and raising small fry, since she migrated north from Pennsylvania in 2003,

lured by stories from her brother, Neil Wright, CCH Manager. With her interest piqued and seeking employment to utilize her Bachelor’s degree in Biology, she began as a Fisheries Technician at Main Bay

Hatchery, later moving into a Fish Culturist position.

Rob, working with fisheries in the Michigan/Great Lakes region, wanted to expand his fish experience and began his PWSAC career in 1996 as a Fisheries Technician at the WNH. His positive attitude and abilities carried him through a variety of positions with increasing responsibilities, culminating with the Hatchery Manager position at MBH in 2001.

In 2006, the couple strayed to Snettisham Hatchery near Juneau to gain insight into other hatchery operations and experience new challenges. While there, they

*[Continued on back page]*

## Board of Directors

Purse Seine	Drift Gillnet	Dual Permit	Set Gillnet	Appointed	
Dave Clemens	Steve Aberle	Jack Babic	Lisa Ragland	Tim Schmidt	Processor
Megan Corazza	John Bocci	E.J. Cheshier		Hap Symmonds	Processor
Robin Dexter	Mike Bowen	Mike Glasen		Tim Joyce	Personal Use
Rod Jensen	Richard Casciano	Vic Jones		Ed Zeine	Sport Fish
Mark Meadows	George Covell	Jim Kallander		Dan Lawn	City of Valdez
Thane Miller	Micah Ess			Jerry Protzman	City of Whittier
Tim Moore	Jeff Jensen			David Roemhildt	City of Cordova
Steve Smith	Kim Menster			Timothy Selanoff	Chenega Corp.
Bob Widmann	Scott Seaton			Ken Roberson	General
	Ron Thomson			Bill Smoker	General

## 10/6/2008 Board Election Results

Officers		Executive Committee	ExCom Alternates
Board Chairman	George Covell	Mike Glasen	Mike Bowen
Board Vice Chairman	Scott Seaton	Rod Jensen	Vic Jones
Secretary / Treasurer	Hap Symmonds	Tim Moore	John Bocci
		David Roemhildt	
		Steve Smith	

## 2008 <> 1988 ... Déjà Vu [continued from page 1]

auditorium to hear the bad news they already knew from Fish and Game, and the better news from PWSAC.

PWSAC President Bruce Suzumoto reported that the corporation was getting incredibly high prices for both pink and chum salmon at both hatcheries. Consequently, he said, PWSAC would need to harvest and sell only 1.3 million fish rather than the anticipated 3.2 million in order to reach its revenue goal.

By the end of the first week in August, with data in from the one-day opener, and prices still high, PWSAC became confident about meeting its goals. "We saw that we would make our broodstock and cost recovery goals at AFK and Esther, and we also knew that Cannery Creek was in trouble," said PWSAC production manager Rand Little. He added, "From there, we literally raced to the revenue goal."

The last PWSAC cost recovery fish was sold on August 10 and the seiners were finally let loose on the fish. They divided themselves between the San Juan Subdistrict immediately adjacent to the AFK Hatchery and the Esther Terminal Harvest Area directly in front of Esther Hatchery, and settled in for non-stop fishing until the last boat went home September 6.

Seiners took a total of 5.2 million pinks in the San Juan Subdistrict and 1.5 million pinks in front of the Esther Hatchery. Seiners caught fewer fish than in a normal year, but thanks to the high fish prices, most were able to make a good season. According to Fish and Game preliminary estimates based on an average of 85 cents a pound for pinks and 80 cents a pound for chums, seiners made a total of \$31.2 million.

"Under any other scenario, it would have been a disaster for seiners,"

said Fish and Game area management biologist James Brady. "Ten million hatchery fish and a good market turned it into a season that ranks with the best."

Also, said Brady, "People look at Prince William Sound and say: they've got this hatchery program that benefits all gear types."

Gillnetters took a total of 1.2 million pinks out of the Coghill District, and 565,000 chums from the Coghill and Eshamy Districts. In the

Sound and the Copper and Bering River Districts combined, gillnetters made a total of \$35.7 million.



### 2008 Fry/Smolt Releases

Species	Location	Fry/Smolt Released	Anticipated Return	Return Years
Chum Salmon	Lake Bay	76.5 million	2.3 million	2010,11,12,13
	Port Chalmers	40.8 million	1.0 million	2010,11,12,13
	Sawmill Bay	15.6 million	0.4 million	2010,11,12,13
<b>Total</b>		<b>132.9 million</b>	<b>3.7 million</b>	
Pink Salmon	Sawmill Bay	148 million	7.8 million	2009
	Unakwik Inlet	139 million	7.2 million	2009
	Lake Bay	136 million	7.0 million	2009
<b>Total</b>		<b>423 million</b>	<b>22.0 million</b>	
Sockeye Salmon	Main Bay	8.5 million	1.0 million	2010, 2011
	Solf Lake	115,000	3,000	2011, 2012
	Crosswind Lake	10.0 million	200,000	2011, 2012
	Paxson Lake	6.3 million	63,000	2011, 2012
	Summit Lake	6.0 million	15,000	2011, 2012
<b>Total</b>		<b>27.4 million</b>	<b>1.3 million</b>	
Coho Salmon	Lake Bay	1.8 million	150,000	2009
	Chenega	50,000	4,000	2009
	Cordova	100,000	8,000	2009
	Whittier	100,000	8,000	2009
<b>Total</b>		<b>2.0 million</b>	<b>170,000</b>	

## North Up or Course Up? [continued from page 1]

But looking ahead is always filled with uncertainty and often more complicated. The political and economic landscape is rapidly changing and it might be prudent to temper the boundless optimism that teases us in success – hopefully hindsight won't prove it to be another instance of "irrational exuberance". On one hand, a recessionary environment, stronger dollar and mandated increases in the minimum wage might squeeze our respective business models and suggest restraint. On the other, perhaps lower oil prices (at least in

the short term) and the ever increasing demands for protein will scatter the dark clouds. Who knows? But if we continue what we have done so well over the last twenty years, at least we'll be setting the stage for whatever opportunities come our way.

As we scan the horizon ahead, two perennial issues beyond the ordinary should begin to pique our interest and demand our attention; the marketplace identity of our products and, promotion of our role as good environmental stewards. We have

watched (sometimes with glee) as the farmed salmon sector of OUR industry has failed in this regard and now, some are trying to tar us with the same brush. If we fail by not effectively communicating the distinctions and qualities of our products or by allowing some other messenger to misrepresent our stellar record of ecological sustainability, than our ability to fulfill our stated mission will diminish and self-congratulatory reflections on the status quo will become a thing of the past.

## "Fish Heads": Profiles of PWSAC People [continued from page 4]

volitionally chose the new experience of matrimony; several of their PWSAC acquaintances joined them that day - GH Assistant Hatchery Manager Denny Patnode performing the marriage ceremony.

PWSAC was delighted when they

could no longer resist their homing instincts and expressed interest in returning to the Sound last year. Living and working remote can be a challenge; raising children at a remote location an even greater challenge.

Rob and Cindy are an amazing couple; we wish them the best they enter this new experience of parenthood and are confident of their success.



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### Mission

*To ethically and professionally optimize salmon production in Area "E" for the long term well-being of all user groups.*