

Draft Overview of Fall 2007 Yurok Tribal Commercial Fishery¹

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Summary of Harvest

Fall Season

As of November 19, the Yurok Tribe had harvested approximately 25,104 fall Chinook salmon of the 32,640 fall Chinook allocation. During the fall season, we additionally harvested approximately 2,295 spring chinook salmon (based upon coded wire tag recoveries). The fall Chinook harvest by area is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Fall Chinook salmon harvest by area on the Yurok Reservation, 2007.

Area	Estimated Fall Chinook Harvest	Estimated Fall Chinook Commercial Harvest	Estimated Spring Chinook Commercial Harvest
Estuary	23,338	21,076	2,295
Mid-Klamath (101 bridge – Surper Creek)	411	0	0
Up-Klam (Surper Creek – Weitchpec area)	1,355	0	0
Total	25,104	0	0

Commercial Fishery Harvest/Season Structure

A commercial fishery was held from July 29th – September 20th, 2007. The Tribe sold approximately 23,371 chinook salmon during the commercial fishery; approximately 21,076 of these fish were fall Chinook and the other 2,295 were spring Chinook salmon that entered the estuary during early August.

The 2007 Harvest Management Plan allocated 16,020 fall Chinook to the commercial fishery, with the realization that additional fish could be rolled over from the subsistence quota if it appeared that they were not going to be caught. On September 13th, following attainment of the initial commercial quota and several days of peak harvest for the season (Figure 1), the Council rolled an additional 5,000 fall Chinook into the commercial allocation.

¹ All numbers used in this report are preliminary/draft numbers not to be cited until QA/QC data base procedures have been completed.

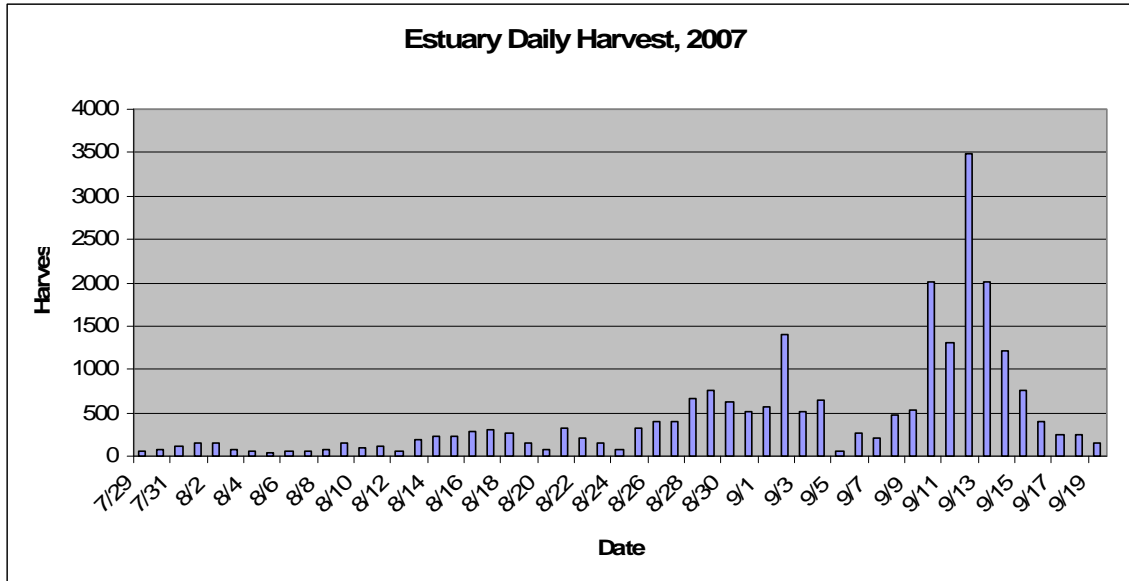


Figure 1. Daily harvest in the Yurok estuary fishery, 2007.

Economic Overview of Fishery

Revenue Received

Tribal members gross revenue for fresh sales during the 2007 fishery was approximately \$790,000. An additional 1,000 fish were permitted to be smoked and later sold, however we do not have an estimated value for these fish. On average, Tribal members received substantially more per pound than during recent Tribal fisheries; somewhat comparable to prices that were received during the late 1980's (prior to when farmed salmon flooded the market, resulting in lower salmon prices).

The relatively higher price paid for Yurok salmon during 2007 is likely the result of several factors:

- 1) During the past several years the reputation of Yurok salmon has improved; largely because of ice being readily available and improved fish handling procedures being followed by Tribal members.
- 2) There was fairly strong competition amongst buyers during most of the season. Initially, the two buyers at Requa seemed reluctant to increase the price/lb., until another buyer (Norm Carr whom was located on private property along 101) started paying substantially more. A buyer from Crescent City was also paying more than the buyers at Requa, which helped to keep the price up via competition.
 - a) It should be noted that buyers which contract with the Tribe to consistently be open to buy fish at Requa, even when harvest is minimal, are at a competitive disadvantage (they incur overhead that other buyers can avoid).
- 3) The market for fresh, non-farmed raised, salmon along the Pacific Coast was optimal during 2007 because of the depleted status of other West Coast stocks. While final numbers caught by the ocean troll fishery are still being compiled (will be finalized in February), it is obvious that

the troll fishery experienced extremely low catches relative to recent history (except 2006 when the commercial fishery disaster was declared). This is largely because Sacramento fall Chinook, which is the primary stock that typically drives ocean fisheries south of the Columbia River, was in relative low abundance during 2007.

Market Saturation during Time of Peak Harvest

It is worth noting that when the peak harvest occurred during the middle of September, that the market became somewhat saturated with Yurok salmon; primarily resulting in only one buyer purchasing fish at a slightly reduced (about \$.40/lb) price. The off-Requa site buyers ceased buying fish for several days, as did the other buyer (Starvin Marvin) that contracted to be at Requa. This highlights an advantage from having a contractual commitment from a large processor that has access to frozen fish markets (such as American Canadian Fisheries). Another potential resolution to such a circumstance would be to curtail commercial fishing for a period of time, until the demand for salmon returned to the market – however, this would minimize commercial fishing opportunity for Tribal members.

Demographics of the Commercial Fishery

The distribution of revenue between the Tribal Districts from the commercial fishery is illustrated in Figure 2.

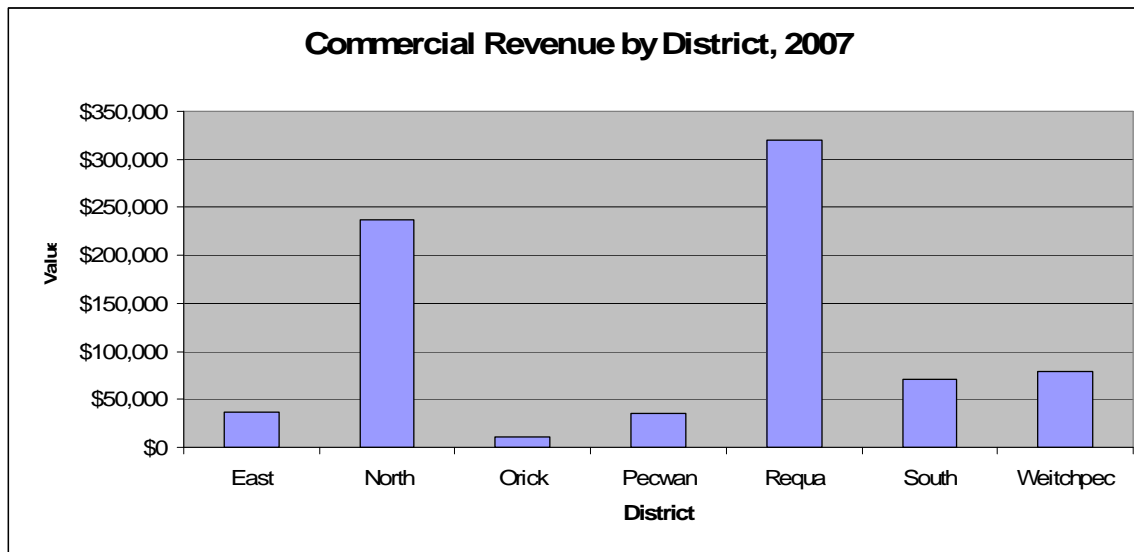


Figure 2. Revenue by District during the Yurok fall 2007 commercial fishery.

Figure 3 illustrates the number of Fishers which sold a quantity of fish within a particular range. For example, 121 Fishers sold less than 20 fish, 62 Fishers sold between 20 and 40 fish, and nine Fishers sold more than 400 fish.

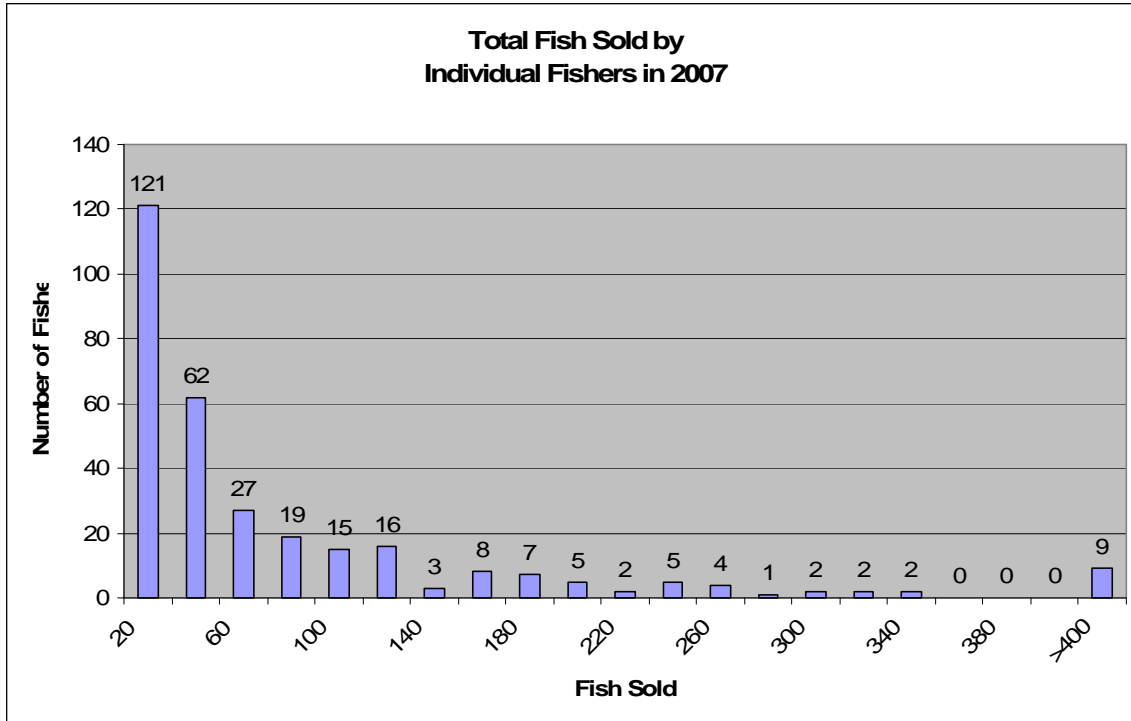


Figure 3. Number of Fishers that sold fish within represented ranges.

Figure 4 illustrates the number of fishers which earned income within specific ranges during the commercial fishery. For example, 101 Fishers earned less than \$500, 55 Fishers earned between \$500 and \$1,000, and 13 Fishers earned more than \$10,000. It is likely that some Fishers income actually represents what a crew earned, rather than an individual, because one individual may have sold the fish from several people’s efforts.

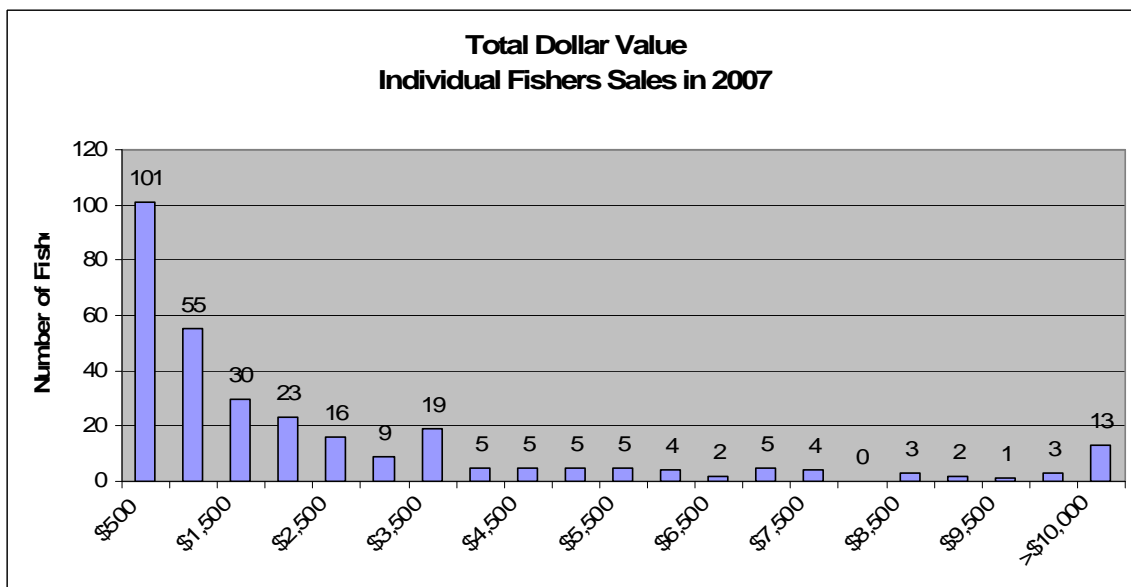


Figure 4. Number of Fishers that received income within specific ranges, 2007.

Problems/Issues Associated with the Commercial Fishery

Although revenue received during the 2007 commercial fishery was substantially above other recent commercial fisheries, there were several issues/problems associated with the fishery that should be addressed prior to implementation of future commercial fisheries. Table 2 list various issues/problems associated with the 2007 fishery, the associated ramifications of these problems, and potential solutions for the problems. The list is not prioritized, nor are the potential solutions associated with each issue.