

SPORT FISHING BUSINESS AND GUIDE LOGBOOK USE SUMMARY

Prepared by ADF&G Sport Fish Division

All sport fishing business and guides are required by regulation to complete logbooks. ADF&G administers a program to implement the logbook requirements. Freshwater logbook data has been collected by the department from sport fishing businesses and guides since 2005, and saltwater logbook data since 1998. The department summarizes and presents logbook data on guided effort and harvest in an annual comprehensive Fishery Data Series report. Logbook data applicable to specific fisheries and fishery issues is also summarized and presented in many sport fish annual management reports. These reports are publicly available on the department's web site. The purpose of this document is to summarize the uses of logbook data.

Freshwater and saltwater logbooks provide valuable information used by the department and other entities for a variety of purposes. Logbook data provides the only comprehensive accounting of businesses and guides operating in Alaska's fresh- and saltwater sport fisheries. For many sport fisheries, logbooks provide the only sport fishing effort and harvest information available; freshwater logbook data, in particular, is an important source of information for many smaller, more remote fisheries. For fisheries where other programs also provide estimates of fishing effort and harvest, logbooks provide the first available inseason and postseason data and the only fishery data available prior to the next season; this is important for many king salmon and groundfish fisheries. In all cases, logbooks provide more specific information on businesses, guides, anglers, time, area, and species kept and released compared to other sources of fishery information.

Fresh- and saltwater logbook data are used in the following activities:

	Freshwater	Saltwater
Fishery Monitoring	•	•
Board of Fisheries Process	•	•
Advisory Committees	•	•
Emergency Orders	•	•
External Communication	•	•
Statewide Harvest Survey Estimate Verification	•	•
2012 Fishery Disaster Declaration	•	•
Federal Subsistence Board Process	•	•
Land Use Planning and Permitting	•	
Operational Planning		•
Halibut Management		•
NOAA Saltwater Registry		•

Logbook data uses for each activity are described below.

Fishery Monitoring - Area and regional fishery managers review logbook submissions inseason and logbook summaries postseason to monitor and track trends in fishery effort and harvest generally, and more specifically in response to changes in regulations, abundance or species distribution, emergency orders and participation. General monitoring results are used to determine if new research projects and/or new regulatory changes are needed.

Board of Fisheries Process - The department and the Alaska Board of Fisheries (board) use fresh- and saltwater logbook data in the board process. Fishery managers use the catch, harvest and effort data in preparation for each board meeting. The data is used to assess proposal effects, describe fishery trends and characteristics, and develop department positions on proposals. It is referenced in formal staff comments, and presented in tables and figures. The board uses the information at their discretion when considering and acting on proposals.

Advisory Committees – The department uses fresh- and saltwater logbook data in preparation for and during Advisory Committee meetings, similar to board meetings. In addition, fishery managers develop data summaries of the catch, harvest and effort data for use by the advisory committees in developing proposals and in developing their comments and positions on proposals submitted to the board.

Emergency Orders - The department uses fresh- and saltwater logbook data in making pre- and inseason management decisions and issuing emergency orders. Logbook data is often used for this purpose, including the justification of emergency orders, with other information such as salmon escapement data. Examples of inseason fishery management decisions for which logbook data recently provided key information and rationale include:

External Communication – Fresh- and saltwater logbook information is used to address, respond to, and inform a variety of issues, concerns, assertions, and questions raised by members of the public. Examples include:

Statewide Harvest Survey Estimate Verification – The SWHS program used the data captured by the Guide Licensing and Logbook program on an annual basis.

- The SWHS references freshwater and saltwater logbook data annually to help clarify incomplete SWHS survey responses during data entry and cleaning phases. This includes verifying data such as:
 - Locations fished by survey respondents
 - Effort (days fished)
 - Presence of major species (all salmon species, dolly Varden/arctic char, pike, grayling)
 - Timing of effort/catch/harvest (early vs. late runs)

The logbook data increases the number of complete survey records in our annual SWHS database and allows the program to provide more accurate estimates of effort, catch and harvest.

- Logbook data, in combination with annual staff review of specific estimates and formal comparisons of SWHS estimates to onsite creel surveys done on a periodic basis, allows us to assess the relative accuracy of the SWHS data in a cost-effective manner. As a mandatory reporting system for guided

effort and harvest, the logbook program provides independent estimates of guided effort, catch and harvest. This provides staff with the ability to conduct informal comparisons to SWHS guided effort, catch, and harvest as SWHS estimates are developed.

2012 Fishery Disaster Declaration – Data from the SWHS (unguided fishing data) and fresh- and salt water logbook program (guided fishing data) was provided to Department of Commerce and Economic Development (DCED) for use in preparing an economic analysis related to the 2012 fishery disaster declaration. These data were used estimate the economic impacts sustained by sport fishing-related businesses in 2012 as a result of the declining Chinook salmon runs. The analysis was presented in a report titled: “Estimated Economic Impacts of the 2012 Chinook Salmon Sport Fishing Restrictions in the Cook Inlet Region; Cook Inlet Kenai Peninsula Freshwater, Cook Inlet Saltwater and Northern Cook Inlet Freshwater Recreational Fisheries,” prepared by DCED and ADF&G.

Federal Subsistence Board process - Both fresh- and salt water logbook data has been used to characterize guided effort and harvest in response to questions and representations by individuals participating in the Federal Subsistence Board process. In Southeast Alaska, logbook information on the harvest of steelhead, trout and sockeye has documented sport harvest for these species. This information has also been presented in department comments on Federal regulatory proposals.

Land use planning and permitting

- Karluk River Conservation Easement: Angler effort data from logbooks was used to inform discussions in negotiating public access provisions of the Karluk River Conservation Easement Agreement between Koniag Inc., Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, and the State of the Alaska.
- Gulkana River guide use permitting. Freshwater logbooks have been used to corroborate Bureau of Land Management guide use estimates associated with BLM permits on the Gulkana River. BLM has collected guide/concessionaire data since before logbooks were used. Logbooks have provided verification of the guiding effort documented on the Gulkana River.
- Used in providing analysis/comments on US Forest Service guide use and land management planning decisions. The USFS has prepared Environmental Impact Statements to allocate a portion of the overall visitor capacity to outfitter and guide use within the ranger districts of the Tongass National Forest. The department used logbook information to portray use patterns and assess the effects of proposed allocations and land use decisions.

Operational Planning – Logbook data is used by department biologists to plan fishery research and monitoring projects.

The Kodiak marine sport fishery dockside sampling program, for example, logbook statistics are the only source of information on specific timing of the sport fishery. Logbook data is used to identify the seasonal sampling schedule, including the employment period for the sampler. The logbook harvest by salmon statistical area is also used to determine where to concentrate (and subsequently cross-reference) sampling efforts.

Halibut Management - Reporting of guided marine fishery catch data in logbooks has been required since 1998. Halibut harvest and release information was collected from 1998-2001, and from 2006 to the present. The types and amounts of data collected have changed over the years, reflecting evolution in regulation of the guide industry as well as changes in information needs for management. The most significant change occurred in 2006, when the logbook was structured to collect angler license information and catch by individual angler for each trip. This increased the precision and utility of logbook information. Other improvements were made at this time in an effort to increase data accuracy and reduce the frequency of missing data. The use of logbook data for monitoring and management of the halibut fishery increased dramatically after 2006. The saltwater logbook is now the preferred data source for estimating charter harvest and discard mortality for management of the charter sector under annual catch limits. These data are used in multiple summaries and analyses provided to the International Pacific Halibut Commission (IPHC), North Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council), and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS).

NOAA Saltwater Registry - Alaska's exemption from the NOAA saltwater registry is due to the department's SWHS, port sampling, and saltwater vessel registration programs in the NMFS Alaska Region. However, NOAA Marine Recreational Information Program (MRIP) also recognizes that logbook harvest data used to manage some fisheries in Alaska (i.e., charter halibut, DSR in SEAK) are required to properly manage recreational fisheries in Alaska that are under their jurisdiction. The exemption documents lay this out by naming the fisheries for which average weight (port sampling) and harvest data (logbook and SWHS) are needed. Without the state exemption, guide businesses and anglers that participate in saltwater fisheries would likely be required under the Magnuson-Stevens Act to register with NMFS and pay a registration fee.

In summary, the logbook program and logbook data have become integral to sport fishery management in Alaska, and have grown in value with each additional year. Management of the halibut fishery now depends on logbook data collected by the state and the logbook program is critical to the state's exemption from the NOAA saltwater registry. Freshwater and saltwater logbook data is used in fishery management decision-making, including regulatory decisions made by the Alaska Board of Fisheries and inseason emergency orders issued by the department. But it also provides basic fishery data for use in other important activities including fishery monitoring; project and land use planning; permitting; external correspondence, and; a variety of other activities. In a number of cases, logbook data provides the only information existing on fishing effort and harvest, and in all cases, it provides some of the most specific data available. That information now provides an informed basis from which decisions can be made, and its value will continue to grow as the time series expands into the future.