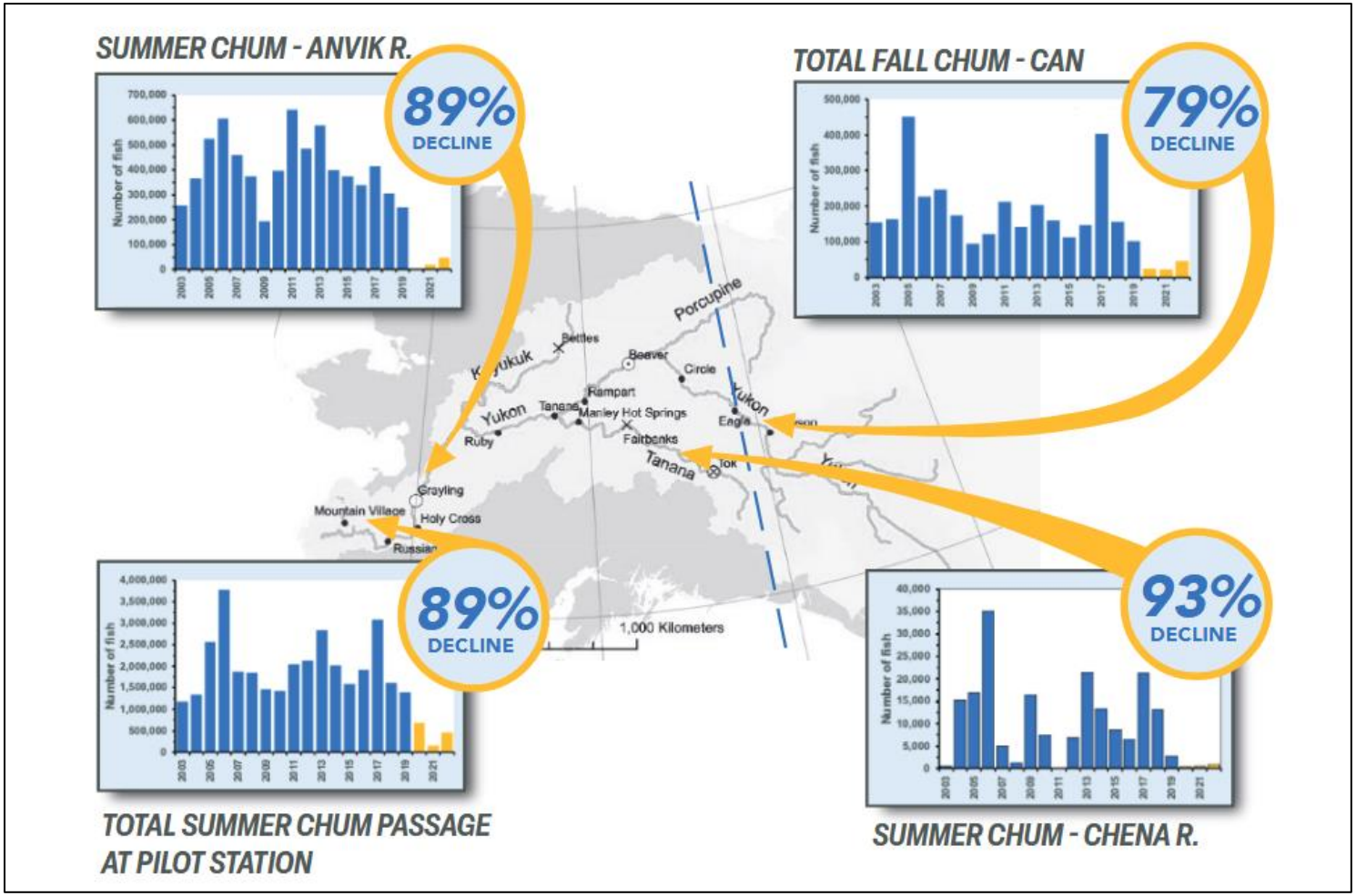
EVIDENCE OF SEVERE DECLINE OF THE YUKON RIVER CHUM SALMON POPULATIONS 2003-2022.

Percent figures in the bar graphs show the percent decline in annual run sizes from the period 2003-2019 compared to the period 2020-22. Chum salmon are critical to food security in the region in times of low Chinook runs, including the past three years**.** *Data Source: Yukon River Joint Technical Committee 2022.*



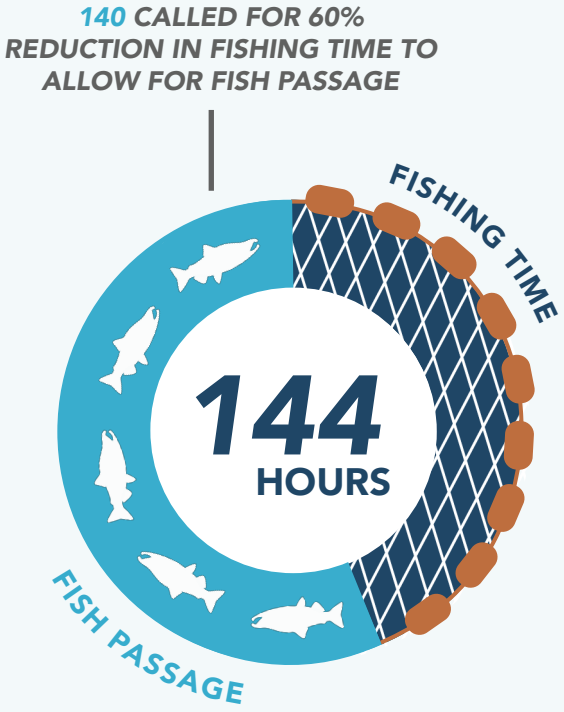
WHAT WE ASKED FOR VS. WHAT WE GOT

June Area M Fishing Time and Board of Fish Decision to Not Protect AYK Chum Salmon (February 20-27, 2023)

Nearly 100 subsistence communities in the AYK Region asked the Alaska Board of Fisheries to take action to reduce fishing time to increase passage of severely declined AYK region chum salmon through the Area M June commercial fishery. Additional fish passage is needed to allow sufficient returns to watersheds, meet escapement goals, and provide for subsistence fishing – the highest priorities under Alaska statute.

STATUS QUO

From 2019 to 2022, the Board of Fish provided the South Alaska Peninsula June fishery with a total of 352 hours of commercial fishing in Area M. This fishing time was divided among three different gear types. Limited closures of only 32 hours each do not provide adequate time for declined AYK region chum salmon to pass through this commercial fishery.



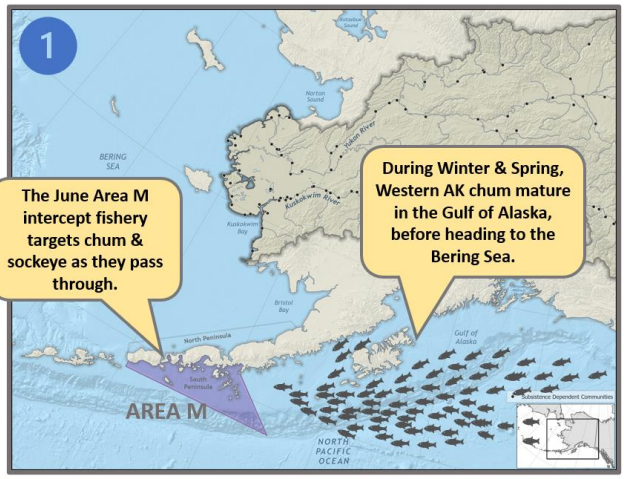
OUR ASK

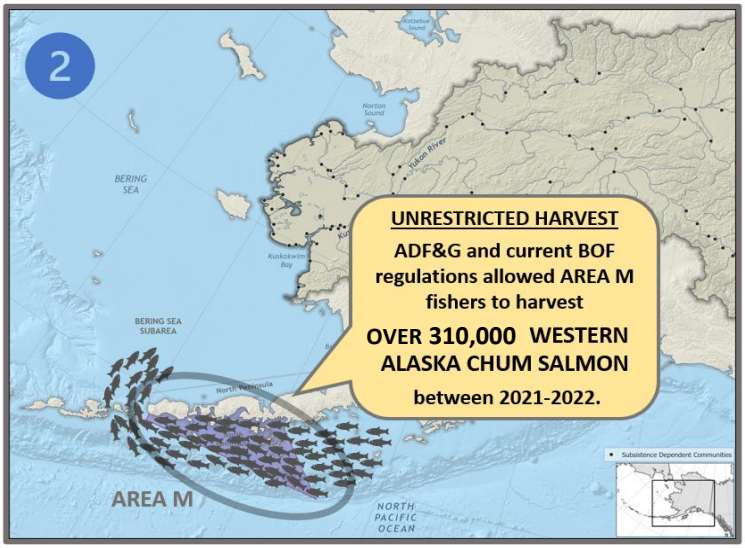
Proposal 140 called for an approximate 60% reduction in fishing time in 2023-25 seasons for Area M (South Alaska Peninsula June salmon) fishery compared to the regulations for 2019-22. Aim of this reduction was to provide for the passage of declined AYK region chum salmon through this commercial fishery in an effort to provide to meet escapement goals and provide for subsistence fishing opportunities.

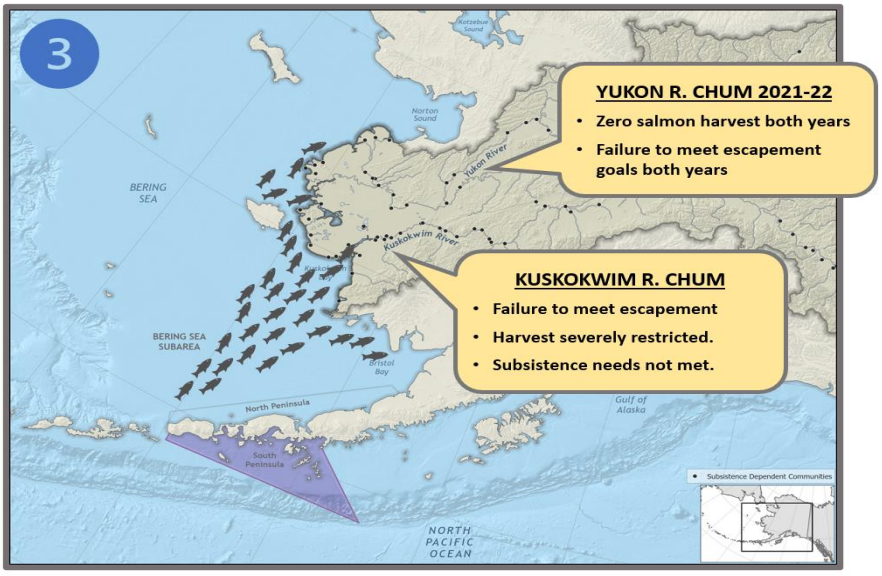
THE OUTCOME

Final action by the Alaska Board of Fish at their February 2023 meeting resulted in a small reduction in fishing time - only 12% - for the Area M fishery in 2023-25 compared to the 2019-22 regulations.

IMPACT OF AREA M CHUM INTERCEPTION ON WESTERN ALASKA SUBSISTENCE COMMUNITIES



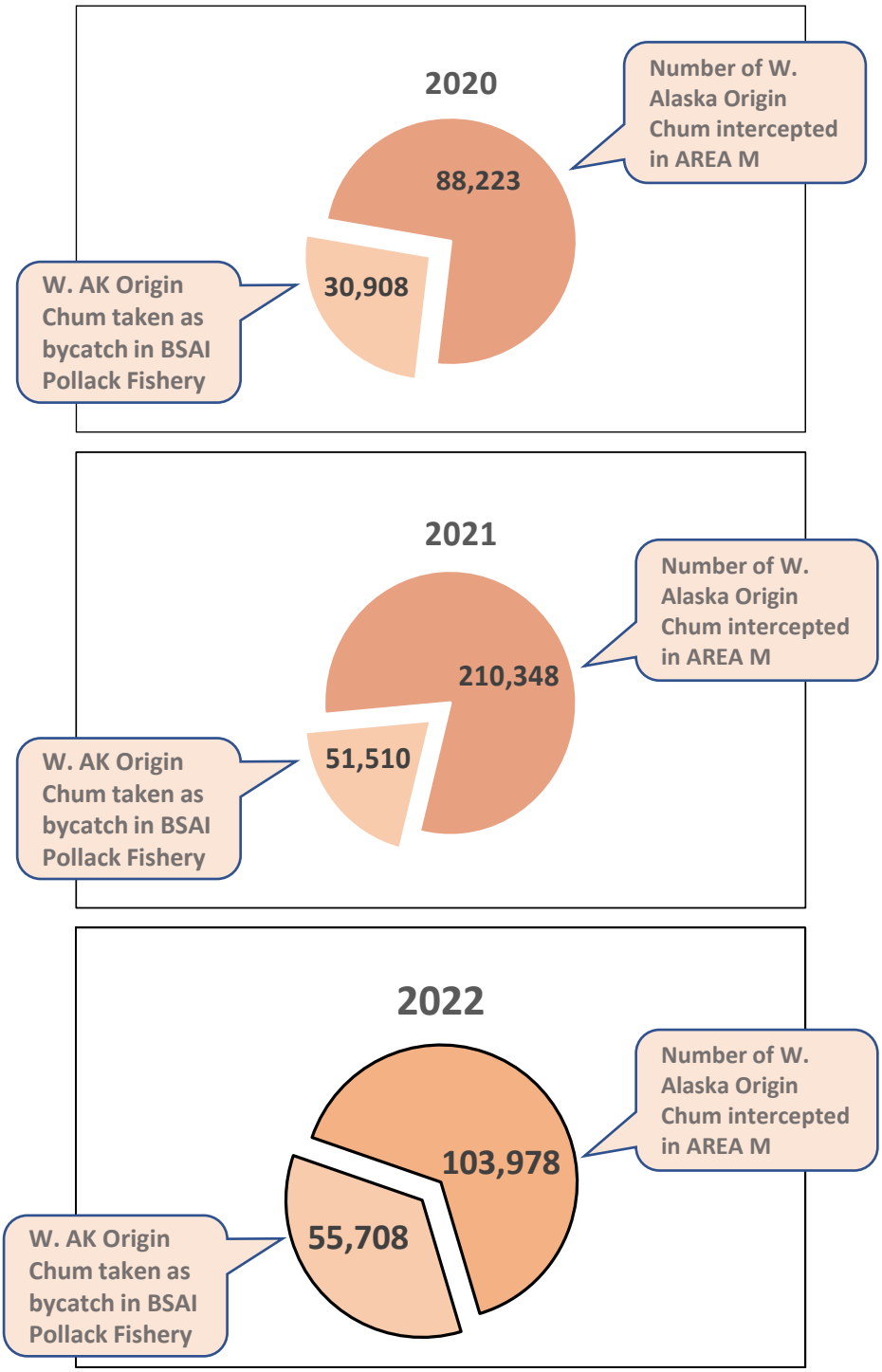




Source: *Dann, T. H., H. A. Hoyt, E. M. Lee, E. K. C. Fox, and M. B. Foster. 2023. Genetic stock composition of chum salmon harvested in commercial salmon fisheries of the South Alaska Peninsula, 2022. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Special Publication No. 23-07, Anchorage.*

HOW DOES AREA M CHUM INTERCEPTION OF WESTERN ALASKA CHUM SALMON COMPARE TO BYCATCHIN THE BERING SEA POLLACK FISHERY?

In the past three years, the state-managed Area M fishery has intercepted and sold from **two to four times as many Western Alaska chum** as were taken as bycatch in the Bering Sea Pollack Fishery.



Sources: Barry, P., C. Kondzela, J. Whittle, K. D'Amelio, K. Karpan, D. Nicolls, and W. Larson. 2023. Genetic stock composition analysis of chum salmon from the prohibited species catch of the 2022 Bering Sea walleye pollock trawl fishery. Report to the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council. Auke Bay Laboratories, Alaska Fisheries Science Center, National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, Juneau.
Dann, T. H., H. A. Hoyt, E. M. Lee, E. K. C. Fox, and M. B. Foster. 2023. Genetic stock composition of chum salmon harvested in commercial salmon fisheries of the South Alaska Peninsula, 2022. Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Special Publication No. 23-07, Anchorage.

CHUM SALMON CRASH THREATENS SUSTAINABILITY OF SALMON STOCKS

Impacts on Coastal Western Alaska subsistence communities from the recent chum salmon crash

YUKON RIVER
Drainage Wide

Summer chum escapement in 2021 was the lowest on record

84% DECLINE

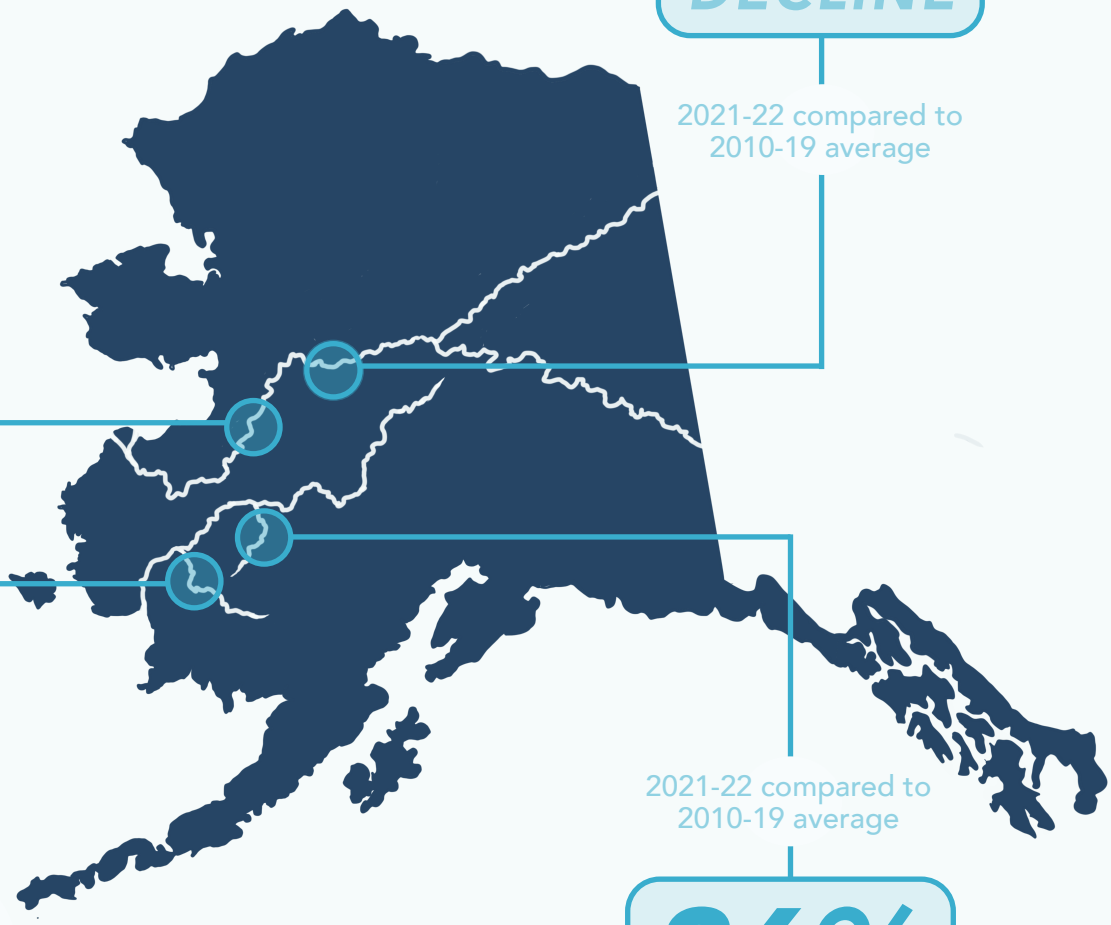
2021-22 compared to 2010-19 average

YUKON RIVER
Anvik River

Failed to meet escapement goals for multiple years since 2016

92% DECLINE

2021-22 compared to 2010-19 average



2021-22 compared to 2010-19 average

91% DECLINE

KUSKOKWIM RIVER
Kwethluk River

2022 escapement of chum salmon was the lowest ever observed

2021-22 compared to 2010-19 average

86% DECLINE

KUSKOKWIM RIVER
Salmon - Aniak River

2021 & 2022 escapements of chum salmon were the lowest ever observed

SOURCE: Alaska Dept. of Fish & Game Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim Database Management System.