

Pacific Salmon and Hatcheries, Oregon Shrimping, and Florida's Sponges

. . . . **More than 1 million hatchery-bred adult salmon returned** to Alaska's Tutka Bay Lagoon Hatchery and adjacent fisheries last summer, setting new hatchery harvest records in Lower Cook Inlet, the Department of Fish and Game reports. The fish came from a release of 6.3 million young pink salmon in 1980—better than 15 percent survival. "Normally we expect a survival closer to 5 percent at Tutka," said Bob Roys, Director, Fisheries Rehabilitation, Enhancement, and Development. The total pink salmon harvest of 3.1 million in Lower Cook Inlet was the highest ever recorded

. . . . British Columbia's **Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon runs have greatly exceeded forecasts**, reports the International Pacific Salmon Fisheries Commission. The Commission had forecast a sockeye return of 6 million, but by 4 September 7.6 million sockeye had been noted in catch and escapement. Some late runs were still to be tallied. The Commission had predicted a Fraser River pink salmon run of 9 million fish, but by early September, 12 million pinks had been accounted for in catch and estimated escapement. The pinks were still coming and a revised total return was pegged at 14-15 million

. . . . Meanwhile, **Alaska's 1981 Bristol Bay salmon season set a series of new records**, with a 25.5 million sockeye catch, according to preliminary Fish and Game Department figures. That beat the old record of 24.7 million set in 1938. District catches were also high, with the 7.5 million-fish Nushagak District catch exceeding the 1905 record of 7.4 million, the Egegik catch of 4.5 million sockeye well over the 1965 record

of 3.2 million fish, and the Ugashik District catch of 2 million fish passing the 1922 record of 1.9 million. The total sockeye run was estimated at about 34.0 million fish. New records were also set for chinook salmon as the Nushagak District harvest exceeded all expectations with over 200,000 fish caught by 25 July, beating the previous record of 155,000 set in 1979. The bay-wide chinook harvest of over 245,000 fish was well above the 202,000-fish record reached in 1919 and 1979

. . . . **Alaska's hatcheries also released record numbers of fish this year**, according to the Department of Fish and Game's *Bulletin*. Nearly 133 million young salmon, trout, and sheefish were reared and released—almost 2.5 times as many as the previous record. Some leading producers were the Kitoi Bay Hatchery on Afognak Island (over 26 million pink salmon released), the Cannery Creek Hatchery in Prince William Sound (24 million pinks and chums released), and the Russell Creek Hatchery at Cold Bay (15 million pinks and chums let go). The totals are expected to climb even higher in the next few years, since the new hatcheries have yet to reach their full capacity

. . . . **Alaskan biologists are also optimistic about the 1983 sockeye outlook** for the Kvichak River, one of the major sockeye salmon streams in Bristol Bay, even though 1983 will be a low point in the 5-year cycle of sockeye returns. State scientists now expect the 1983 run will be well above average for a low year (~4.4 million fish since 1958). Sonar counts of migrating 1980 smolts indicate that, with a 10 percent survival rate, about 17 million fish should return as

adults in 1982 and 1983; about 21.5 million fish from this year's migration should return to the river as adults in 1983 and 1984

. . . . **With half of the 1981 shrimp season complete**, Oregon shrimp fishermen had landed 16.3 million pounds of shrimp, down just 3 percent from the 16.7 million pounds landed during the same period in 1980, according to the Department of Fish and Wildlife. Through the end of May, landings were up by 2.6 million pounds over last season, and June landings contributed only 3.1 million pounds compared with 6.2 million pounds landed during June 1980. Deliveries dropped from 843 to 424 and were made by 71 fewer vessels. Average catch per trip remained about the same

. . . . **Sponges, a valuable Florida fishery until the 1940's**, may stage a comeback, according to the Florida Marine Advisory Program *Newsletter*. An exploratory survey of waters off the Florida Keys in Monroe County found them plentiful enough to support relatively large dive-boat operations. Clarification of Florida law to assure legal harvesting by diving could, researchers report, allow the existing Tarpon Springs fleet of five or six boats to continue their traditional method of harvesting off the west Florida coast. Sponge blights in 1939 and 1946 plus heavy harvesting pressure and the introduction of synthetic sponges reduced the once burgeoning fishery. Further study of harvesting methods and fishing economics was also recommended

. . . . **The University of Alaska has announced establishment of a Fishery Industrial Technology Center** to be located in Kodiak. The Center is to assist Alaskans through training and research in "the most efficient and appropriate technologies for harvesting, processing, and conservation of fish resources," reports the University. Interim director is Donald H. Rosenberg, who remains also as director of the Sea Grant College and as head of the Office for Fisheries. Construction is not expected before 1984, although \$175,000 has been allocated for completion of preliminary plans in FY 1982