
North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission



International Gulf of Alaska Expedition 2019
Vancouver, Canada
2019 February 15

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NPAFC ANNOUNCES THE INTERNATIONAL GULF OF ALASKA EXPEDITION 2019 DEPARTS VANCOUVER, BC FOR A MONTH OF SALMON RESEARCH ON THE HIGH SEAS

Vancouver, Canada (February 16, 2019)—The North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) announced that the International Gulf of Alaska Expedition 2019 is underway with 21 scientific personnel from five Pacific Rim countries, Japan, Korea, Russia, the United States and Canada departing this afternoon aboard the chartered 62m Russian Research Vessel “Professor Kaganovskiy”.

Prior to leaving, the scientific crew received a send-off from Dr. Dick Beamish, the scientist who conceived and planned the expedition and dignitaries including the Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard, and the Honourable Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture from the Province of British Columbia.

The expedition is the first in decades to study salmon in the high seas and it is anticipated that a number of discoveries will be made that will allow us to be effective stewards of Pacific salmon in a future of changing ecosystems. The ship will visit 72 stations in the Gulf of Alaska and return to Vancouver on March 18. The end-of-winter trawl survey will for the first time, provide a comprehensive understanding of the abundance, condition, country of origin and location of stocks from salmon producing countries. This information is needed to understand how climate and the changing ocean environment affect salmon production.

The \$1.3M project has been jointly funded by a combination of government, industry, NGO and private contributions.

The Expedition is a Signature Project of the International Year of the Salmon (IYS). The IYS is a five initiative of the NPAFC and its North Atlantic partner, the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO) as well as NGO’s including the Pacific Salmon Foundation with a goal to establish a new hemispheric-scale partnership of government, Indigenous Peoples, academia, NGOs, and industry to effectively connect the hundreds of organizations that have capacity and desire to address the scientific and social challenges facing salmon and people in an increasingly uncertain environment. This year, 2019 is the focal year of the IYS.

Quotes

“Wild Pacific salmon are extremely important to British Columbia and our coastal communities. It is a priority for our Government to protect and restore them. Canada is proud to work with international partners in this ground-breaking science research expedition to better understand the health of Pacific salmon populations and to create solutions for supporting their recovery.”

The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard

“The International Gulf of Alaska Expedition is the first ever comprehensive winter survey of Pacific Salmon in the Gulf of Alaska. This is a privately organized survey that is funded by governments, agencies, and private donors. There are 21 researchers from the five Pacific salmon producing countries who have volunteered to share the data they collect with all of their colleagues. The organizer of the expedition, Dick Beamish thinks that the discoveries that will be made, will lead to an understanding of how to be responsible stewards of Pacific salmon in a future of changing ocean ecosystems. Everyone who was approached for help was strongly supportive of the expedition.”

Dr. Dick Beamish, Expedition Organizer

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Stay Connected to the Expedition

- Expedition website: <https://yearofthesalmon.org/gulf-of-alaska-expedition/>
- IYS Website: yearofthesalmon.org
- The IYS on [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), and [Instagram](#)

About NPAFC

The NPAFC is an international organization that promotes the conservation of salmon (chum, coho, pink, sockeye, Chinook, and cherry salmon) and steelhead trout in the North Pacific and its adjacent seas, and serves as a venue for cooperation in and coordination of scientific research and enforcement activities. The NPAFC Convention Area is located in international waters north of 33°N latitude in the North Pacific, Bering Sea and the Sea of Okhotsk. NPAFC member countries include Canada, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America.