



News Release



PRELIMINARY FINDINGS FOR THE 2020 GULF OF ALASKA EXPEDITION ANNOUNCED

June 2nd, 2020 – A virtual press conference which announced preliminary findings from the 2020 Gulf of Alaska Expedition was held today by the International Year of the Salmon (IYS) and the Pacific Salmon Foundation (PSF). Chief organizers of the expedition Dr. Richard Beamish and Dr. Brian Riddell were able to present their preliminary findings from the 2020 Cruise Report, a working document being finalized by the expedition’s team of 12 scientists from Canada, Russia and the United States.

Canadian charter vessel *Pacific Legacy* spent a month in the Gulf of Alaska from March 11 – April 7 studying the winter ecology of Pacific salmonids – this research builds off the work from the first international expedition in the Gulf of Alaska in Winter 2019. Unfortunately, laboratory analyses of extensive sample collections have been delayed as many laboratories remain closed due to Covid-19 restrictions.

It is believed that the ‘readiness’ of juvenile salmon to survive winters in the Gulf of Alaska may be determined during the first months at sea. The 2020 Gulf of Alaska study is a continuation of the international scientific effort to identify mechanisms and environmental factors that could determine the annual abundance and condition of Pacific salmonids in the Gulf of Alaska. This research effort seeks to establish greater international research capacity for understanding the consequences of future environmental conditions and is being used to study the impacts of extreme climate events and ocean conditions.

The second expedition is privately organized by Dr. Richard Beamish and Dr. Brian Riddell. The Pacific Salmon Foundation in conjunction with its Salish Sea Marine Survival Program, and the British Columbia Salmon Innovation and Restoration Fund (BC SRIF) are contributors to the 2020 expedition. BC SRIF is contributing \$3 million over 3 years for the 2021 Pan Pacific High Seas Expedition being planned by the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC). The British Columbia Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund is funded jointly by the federal and provincial government. The fund will provide an investment of up to \$143 million over five years to support BC’s fish and seafood sector, and to ensure the sustainability of wild Pacific salmon and other B.C. fish stocks.

About International Year of the Salmon

International Year of the Salmon (IYS) is a 5-year initiative to establish the resilience of salmon and people in a changing world. It is a hemispheric partnership being led by the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) in the North Pacific, the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO) in the North Atlantic, as well as by NGOs, private sector, government and academic organizations.

About Pacific Salmon Foundation

The Pacific Salmon Foundation (PSF) is a federally incorporated non-profit charitable organization dedicated to the conservation and restoration of wild Pacific salmon and their natural habitats in British Columbia and the Yukon. Operating independently from government, The Foundation facilitates dialogue and undertakes positive initiatives in support of Pacific salmon amongst all levels of government including First Nations; as well as industry, communities, individual volunteers and all fishing interests.

A **recording of the virtual press conference** will be available on the **2020 Gulf of Alaska Expedition webpage** here:

<https://yearofthesalmon.org/gulf-of-alaska-expedition2020/>

Please find the link to our **2020 Gulf of Alaska Expedition Flickr** page here:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/145318619@N06/albums/72157713890289512>

Please contact our communication coordinator **Camille Jasinski** (cjasinski@npafc.org phone number **778-893-4377**) or IYS Director **Mark Saunders** (msaunders@yearofthesalmon.org phone no. **778-928-3474**) for further inquiry.



Photo credit: Svetlana Esenkulova