
North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission

2021 Virtual Annual Meeting
2021 May 10–May 20

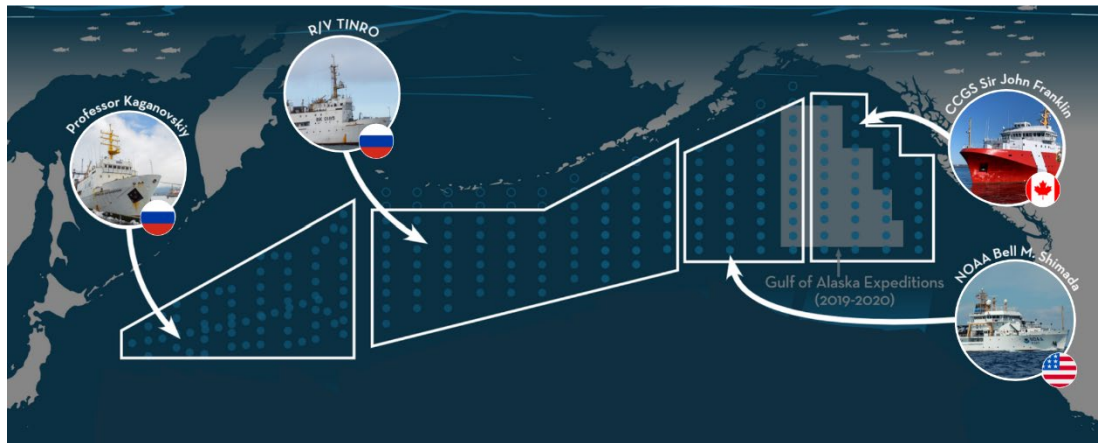
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THE INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF THE SALMON (IYS) CONTINUES TO BUILD TOWARDS A GROUND-BREAKING PAN-PACIFIC HIGH SEAS EXPEDITION

Vancouver, BC, Canada (May 28, 2021)—Continued support for the International Year of the Salmon (IYS) initiative by the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC) was unanimously agreed upon by all five member countries (Canada, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, and the United States) at the 29th NPAFC Annual Meeting. Despite challenges posed by the unprecedented COVID-19 pandemic, the IYS has had a very busy and productive year with considerable progress made in three major areas—the 2022 Pan-Pacific Winter High Seas Expedition, the Likely Suspects Framework, and Data Mobilization. In addition, the Commission has supported continued work on a UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development (UNDOS) proposal called BECI (Basin Events to assess and predict Coastal Impact). In partnership with the North Pacific Marine Science Organization (PICES), as well as other partner organizations such as the Pacific Salmon Foundation (PSF), this proposal would continue the work of the IYS in the development of an ocean intelligence system linking knowledge of Basin Events to assess and predict the Coastal Impacts of fisheries and communities. For this project, salmon will be the exemplar species.

There is increased excitement as the IYS nears the launch of its multi-vessel expedition in the winter of 2022, a collaborative international effort that will send multiple research vessels to survey the winter ecology of Pacific salmon across the entire North Pacific Ocean (NPO).

Planning for the 2022 IYS Pan-Pacific Winter High Seas Expedition by scientists from all five NPAFC member countries is progressing well. The IYS has received notional support for ship time contributions from Canada, Russia, and the United States, and has received partial financial support from the North Pacific Research Board (NPRB), the British Columbia Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund (BCSRIF), and the North Pacific Fisheries Commission (NPFC) to charter a fourth vessel. Approximately \$2.5M CAD is still required for a charter vessel to ensure comprehensive coverage of the central North Pacific. Additionally, Dr. Richard Beamish (DFO Emeritus Scientist) and Dr. Brian Riddell (PSF) have received financial contributions from government and industry to send a fifth vessel into the Northeast Pacific to test the catch efficiency of different gear types. The IYS has also received funding from BCSRIF to allow Canadian academic partners to staff postdoctoral fellows and graduate students to undertake research projects related to all areas of study for the Expedition. The IYS continues to seek funding from multiple sources and potential partners in order to ensure comprehensive coverage of the North Pacific Ocean during the 2022 Expedition.



A map of the four zones and expected research vessels for the 2022 IYS Pan-Pacific Winter High Seas Expedition (Infographic by Natascia Tamburello, ESSA Technologies)

From December 2020 to March 2021, the IYS held the Salmonscape Workshop Series (SWS) funded by the Pacific Salmon Commission’s Southern Endowment Fund as a part of the Likely Suspects Framework (LSF) Signature Project, which aims to identify bottlenecks of salmon mortality using a holistic approach across all life history stages. The SWS brought together a diverse collection of over 100 participants from across the Northern Hemisphere, including Indigenous and non-Indigenous knowledge holders, salmon decision-makers and data specialists to scope an approach to successfully implement case studies for the LSF process. A final report synthesizing the work of the SWS will be available in June 2021 as an NPAFC technical report.

The IYS continues to make significant advancements on the third IYS Signature Project, Data Mobilization. In partnership with the Tula Foundation and Hakai Institute, the current focus is on mobilizing data from the IYS High Seas Expeditions (2019, 2020, and 2022) using Global Ocean Observing Systems (GOOS) protocols, as well as a federated approach to standardize the data so they can be rapidly discovered and synthesized. An international NPAFC Data Standardization Study Group is bringing all of the member countries together as part of this initiative with a goal to make high seas data accessible to all in support of research and conservation.

Throughout the year, the IYS has maintained a robust presence as it continues to build and strengthen its partnerships throughout the Northern Hemisphere. In addition to the virtual events hosted to discuss the preliminary findings of the 2020 Gulf of Alaska Expedition, the IYS participated in a number of virtual conferences and workshops. The IYS worked with Dr. Richard Beamish and Dr. Brian Riddell to plan and host the *2021 Conference on the Winter Ecology of Pacific Salmon: Results from the 2019 and 2020 Gulf of Alaska Expeditions*, which took place in April 2021. This conference included presentations from scientists in Canada, Japan, Korea, the Russian Federation, and the United States who had participated in the International Gulf of Alaska Expeditions, as well as a panel of experts who discussed the upcoming 2022 Pan-Pacific Winter High Seas Expedition, which will build on the results from the previous International Gulf of Alaska Expeditions. The IYS is currently working on publishing a series of articles that highlight the most important findings and results from the conference.

As the IYS approaches its final year in 2022, it has been working with the Symposium Steering Committee, which includes members from the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organization (NASCO), to plan a Concluding IYS Symposium, which will take place in Vancouver, Canada from October 4–6, 2022. It will assess what was learned during the IYS and most importantly describe the future requirements for salmon research and management to support salmon in a rapidly changing world.

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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 beyond the 200-mile zones of coastal States. NPAFC member countries include Canada, Japan, the Republic of Korea, the Russian Federation, and the United States of America.
