

TONGASS SALMON FACTSHEET



These facts are meant to further inform conversations about the Tongass National Forest, which produces more wild salmon than all other national forests combined. This is the summary page of a much larger technical report to be published soon.

Economics*

- Salmon support 1 in 10 jobs in Southeast Alaska.
- On average, 48 million wild salmon are caught from the Tongass National Forest each year.
- The combined economic impact of commercial, sport and subsistence salmon fishing, as well as hatchery operations, in Southeast Alaska, was estimated at \$986 million for 2007.

Cultural Values

- Wild salmon have fed the people of Southeast Alaska for more than 9,000 years.
- Ninety-six percent of Alaskans surveyed say salmon are essential to the Alaskan way of life.

Household Use of Salmon

- Nearly 90% of rural households in Southeast Alaska use salmon.
- The estimated subsistence and personal use harvest averaged 66,146 salmon per year between 1996 and 2008.
- On average, a resident of Southeast Alaska's rural communities uses 75 pounds, or 13 salmon a year: 1 chum, 3.5 coho, 1.5 Chinook, 2 pinks and 5 sockeye.

Commercial Fishing*

- The Tongass NF produces on average 28% of Alaska's annual commercial salmon catch from less than 5% of the land.
- 79% of the commercial salmon annually harvested from Southeast Alaska are from the streams and lakes of the Tongass National Forest.
- In 2007, commercial fishing supported an estimated 4,682 jobs in Southeast Alaska, including 2,998 commercial fishing jobs and 846 seafood processing jobs.
- More than 96% of pink salmon harvested in Southeast Alaska are wild.

*Note: most of the economic and commercial values above do not include Southeast Alaska's record breaking commercial salmon harvests in 2010 and 2011.

Southeast Alaska

- Tongass National Forest (16.8 million acres)
- Glacier Bay National Park (3.3 million acres)



Sport Fishing

- 2 out of every 3 fish in Southeast Alaska sport harvest are salmon.
- On average, 120,000 sport anglers catch close to 1 million salmon (58% coho) in Southeast Alaska each year.

Salmon in the Forest

- The Forest Service has recorded 15,764 miles of anadromous streams and 4,100 lakes and ponds which support salmon, for a total of 17,690 miles of salmon habitat in the Tongass National Forest.
- Salmon-derived nitrogen has been found in trees more than 500 yards away from salmon streams, particularly in areas where bears feed on salmon.
- More than 50 species of animals feed on salmon when they return to spawn in freshwater.

Watershed Health

- About 6% of the streamside area on Tongass salmon streams has been affected by timber harvest and/or road building.
- Most Tongass watersheds are in near natural conditions, but some critical floodplain areas are degraded in important fish-producing watersheds.
- A 2011 forest-wide assessment identified about 70 watersheds (out of > 900 total) that need work to restore aquatic habitat.
- Statewide, 89% of Alaskans say that even in tough economic times, it is important to maintain funding for salmon conservation.