

Commercial fishing harvest triggers investigation

Alaska Department of Fish and Game's Fish and Wildlife Protection is investigating the possible harvest and illegal sale of approximately 82,000 pounds of chum and coho salmon roe and 30,000 pounds of chum and coho salmon from districts five and six of the Yukon area during 1987.

The majority of the fishermen under investigation are commercial fishermen who may have continued to fish during commercial closures. It is estimated that the sale of 82,000 pounds of roe requires a harvest of about 165,000 fish.

Fish and Wildlife Protection has reason to believe that illegal harvesting and sale may have been conducted annually since 1983. There was no legal commercial fishery on Yukon River fall chum stocks in 1987 because of Fish and Game's concern for run strength.

In addition, the possible removal of these fish from the population may deny legal fisherman the opportunity to share in the resource in future runs.