

CASH REWARDS FOR HIGH SEAS SALMON TAG RETURNS



The current collection of high-seas salmon tag recovery data is the result of more than 50 years of international cooperative research under the auspices of the INPFC (International North Pacific Fisheries Commission; our predecessor organization) and NPAFC. Collecting tag recovery data identifies salmon stock-specific distribution and migration behaviour, with the goal of linking population dynamics with ecosystem structure and function. In recent years, recoveries of data storage tags have provided unique opportunities to examine individual salmon behavioural responses to their ocean habitat.



Sierra, daughter of Cheryl Ross of PBS, draws the winners at the 2nd Plenary of the 2011 Annual Meeting. NPAFC Secretariat photo

The Working Group on Salmon Tagging (WGST) was established in 2007 to coordinate high-seas tagging activities by NPAFC-member countries and to manage the INPFC-NPAFC salmon tag and recovery databases. To encourage the public to report high-seas tag recoveries, the WGST has conducted a series of drawings for cash rewards. At the 2011 Annual Meeting, a drawing was held for members of the public who returned high-seas tags in 2010 and 2011. The 69 entries included 59 salmon tag recoveries reported from Japan, eight from Russia, and two from the U.S.A.. The first prize (C\$500) went to the Saru Fishery Cooperative Association, of Okkope, Japan. Their tag was recovered from a fish tagged in June 2008 as an immature chum salmon in the central Bering Sea and recovered in October 2010 in a trap net on the Okhotsk Sea coast of



Winner of the first prize, members of the Saru Fishery Cooperative gather by their boat. Saru Fishery Cooperative Photo

Hokkaido. The second prize (C\$300) winner was Mr. Igor Udalov of Petropavlovsk-Kamchatskiy, Russia. His tag was recovered from a maturing pink salmon tagged in the central Bering Sea in June 2009 and recovered 23 days later in the Karaginskiy Gulf of eastern Kamchatka. Mr. Udalov reported that he was fishing a trap net and noticed high catches of pink salmon in the area. During a one-week period he reported recoveries of four high-seas tagged salmon. Mr. Bill Dunlap from Yankeetown, Florida, USA, was the third prize (C\$200) winner. Mr. Dunlap recovered his tag from a maturing sockeye salmon tagged in the central Bering Sea in June 2010 and recovered in a gillnet in Port Moller, Bristol Bay, Alaska, after 25 days at sea.

The next tag reward drawing is planned for the 2014 Annual Meeting. Any member of the public who returns a NPAFC high-seas tag will be entered in the next drawing. For complete details, please see www.npafc.org/new/science_fishtag.html.

Hiko Urawa SSC and WGST Chairperson



Shigehiko (Hiko) Urawa is currently the Deputy Director of the Salmon Resources Division, Hokkaido National Fisheries Research Institute, of the Fisheries Research Agency (FRA) in Sapporo, Japan. The primary purpose of Hiko's research is the genetic conservation of salmon stocks in Japan. His field surveys include investigation of the stock identification of Pacific salmon in the ocean. Using genetic and otolith-marking techniques, his research has significantly contributed to identifying the distribution and migration route of Japan-origin chum salmon throughout their ocean life. Hiko has been involved for many years in NPAFC-related science. In 2011 he was selected as the Chairperson of the Working Group on Salmon Tagging and became the Chairperson of the Science Sub-Committee (SSC). Hiko was the NPAFC Deputy Director from 2006 to 2010. Here, he demonstrates one species ecologically related to salmon (walleye pollock).