

RECREATION BASELINE STUDIES

Kevin Waring & Associates

Study Objectives

- ▣ Document and map use and management status of recreational lands and waters
- ▣ Map recreational resources
 - NPS visits (minimal documentation)
 - Sportfishing (well documented)
 - big game hunting (well documented)
 - wilderness travel (minimal documentation)
- ▣ Estimate the economic importance of recreation
- ▣ Fairly extensive chapter
 - 43 tables
 - 49 figures

Bristol Bay Drainages Study Areas

□ Regional Study Area

- About the size of West Virginia (14.4 million acres)
- Reflects mobile life of important fish and wildlife resources
- Recognizes limited access
- Addresses public concern for parks:
 - Katmai National Park and Preserve
 - Lake Clark National Park and Preserve
 - Wood -Tikchik State Park
- Considered boundaries of:
 - ADNR Management plans (Bristol Bay and Nushagak/Mulchatna River)
 - Parks
 - ADF&G Game Management Units
- Boundaries differ slightly between land use, big game hunting, and sportfishing to accommodate the relevant management boundaries.

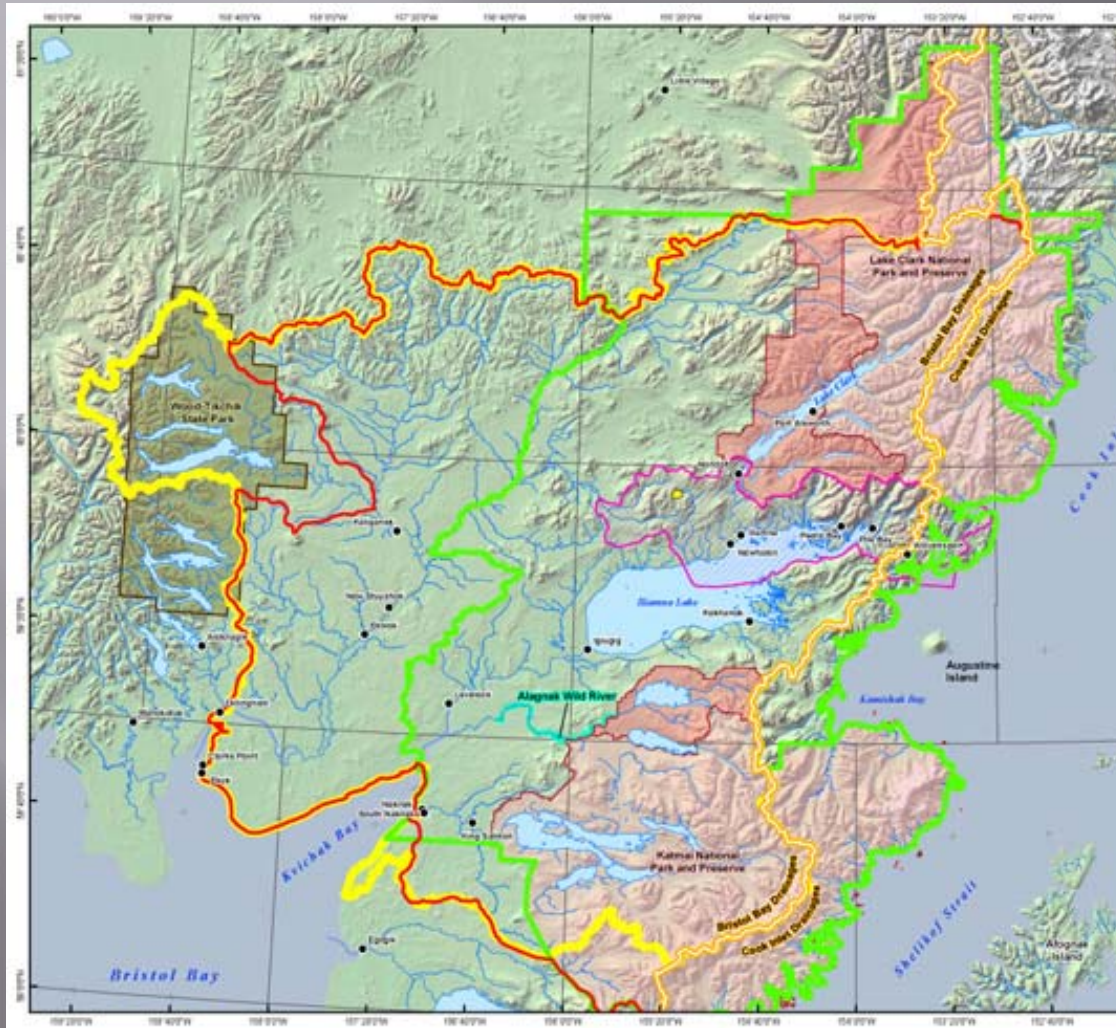
Bristol Bay Drainages Study Areas

- Central Study Area

Local drainages in the vicinity of the Pebble Deposit and Transportation Corridor

- Mine Study Area
- Transportation Study Area

Bristol Bay Study Area



Legend



Central Study Area



Land Use Study Area



Big Game study Area



Sport fish Study Area



National Park



National Preserve



State Park



Pebble Deposit

Characteristics

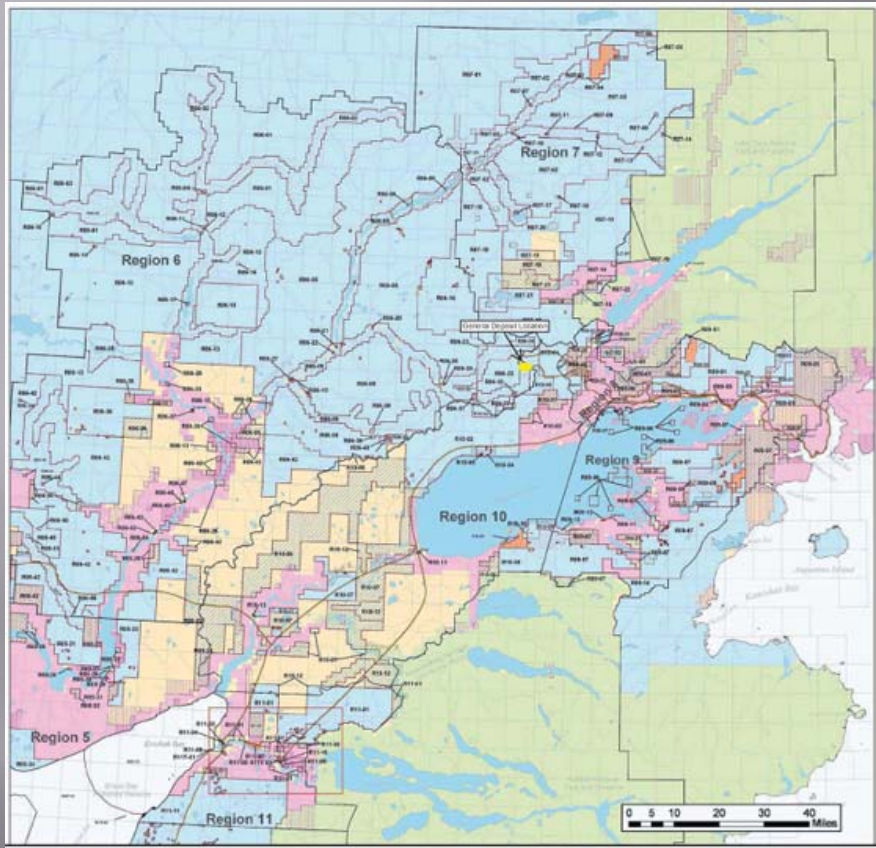
- ▣ Most of the area is wilderness or near wilderness
- ▣ Sparsely populated
- ▣ Subsistence and recreation are the principal uses of the regions resources
- ▣ 57% of the area managed primarily for recreation
 - World's most productive salmon habitat
 - World-class sportfishing
 - Brown bear and wildlife viewing
 - 2 largest lakes in Alaska (Iliamna and Naknek)
 - 2 national parks
 - Largest state park
- ▣ Recreational use limited by access

Seasonal Use

- ▣ Summer and Fall
 - Sportfishing
 - Big Game hunting

- Mid-year months
 - ▣ Wilderness travel
 - ▣ Wildlife viewing
 - ▣ Sightseeing
 - ▣ Hiking/camping
 - ▣ River sports

Recreational Land Use



Legend

State	Municipal
National Park Service	BLM
Native	

Most land is publicly owned and managed by the State of Alaska

- Bristol Bay Area Plan
 - Nushagak & Mulchatna Rivers Recreation Management Plan
 - Lower Talarik Creek SUA
 - National Park Service/BLM
- All recreation lands mapped by planning regions and management units in the Bristol Bay Area Plan
- Pebble Deposit in units managed for mineral development
 - Transportation corridor in units managed for general use, minerals and settlement.

National Parks and Preserves

- ▣ Lake Clark National Park and Preserve
 - 6th largest national park in the nation
 - Wilderness designation
 - One of the least visited units in national park system – 346th out of 359 parks, 0.2% of recreational visits in AK
 - 3 wild rivers – rafting
- ▣ Katmai National Park and Preserve
 - 5th largest national park in the nation
 - Wilderness designation
 - 5 active volcanoes and the valley of 10,000 smokes
 - Brown bear viewing
 - Greater visitation: 241st out of 359 parks, 2.8% of recreational visits in AK
- ▣ Alagnak Wild River
 - Most productive fly-in sport fishery in SW AK

Bristol Bay Study Area Recreation in Statewide Perspective

The Bristol Bay Study Area accounts for:

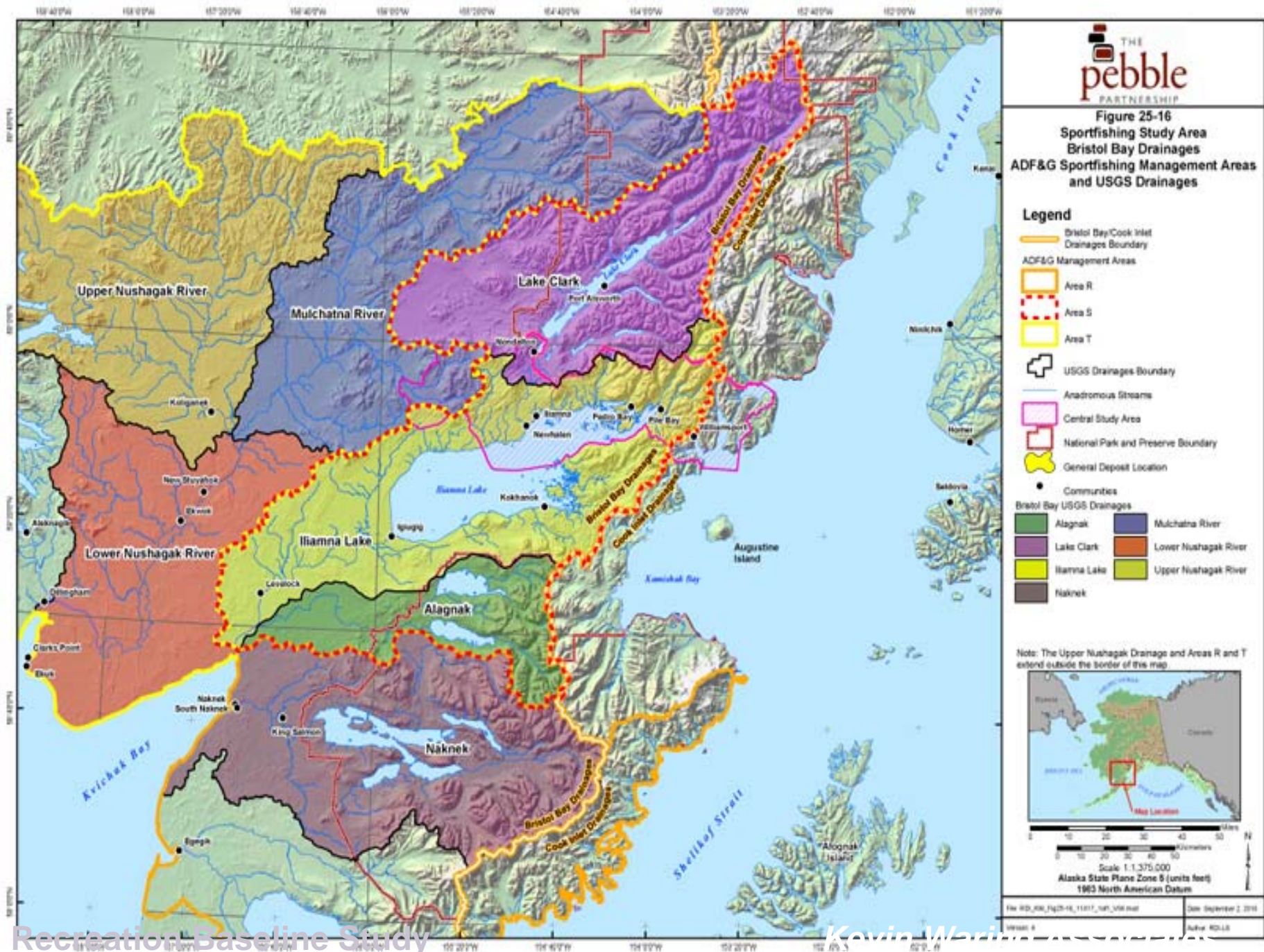
- 1 percent of statewide population
- 4 percent of statewide area
- 3 percent of national park visits
- 9 percent of freshwater sportfish catch
- 7 percent of brown bear harvest
- 4 percent of caribou and moose harvest

BLM Lands

- ▣ Manages unencumbered federal lands
- ▣ Bay Proposed Resource Management Plan
- ▣ Primarily multiple use
- ▣ No designated wild and scenic rivers.

Sportfishing

- ▣ In a typical year
 - Over 15,000 sport fishers
 - 35,000 fishing trips
 - 70,000 fishing days
 - 400,000 fish
 - Supports recreational-based economy
 - ▣ Air taxi
 - ▣ Guides
 - ▣ Lodges
 - ▣ Outfitters



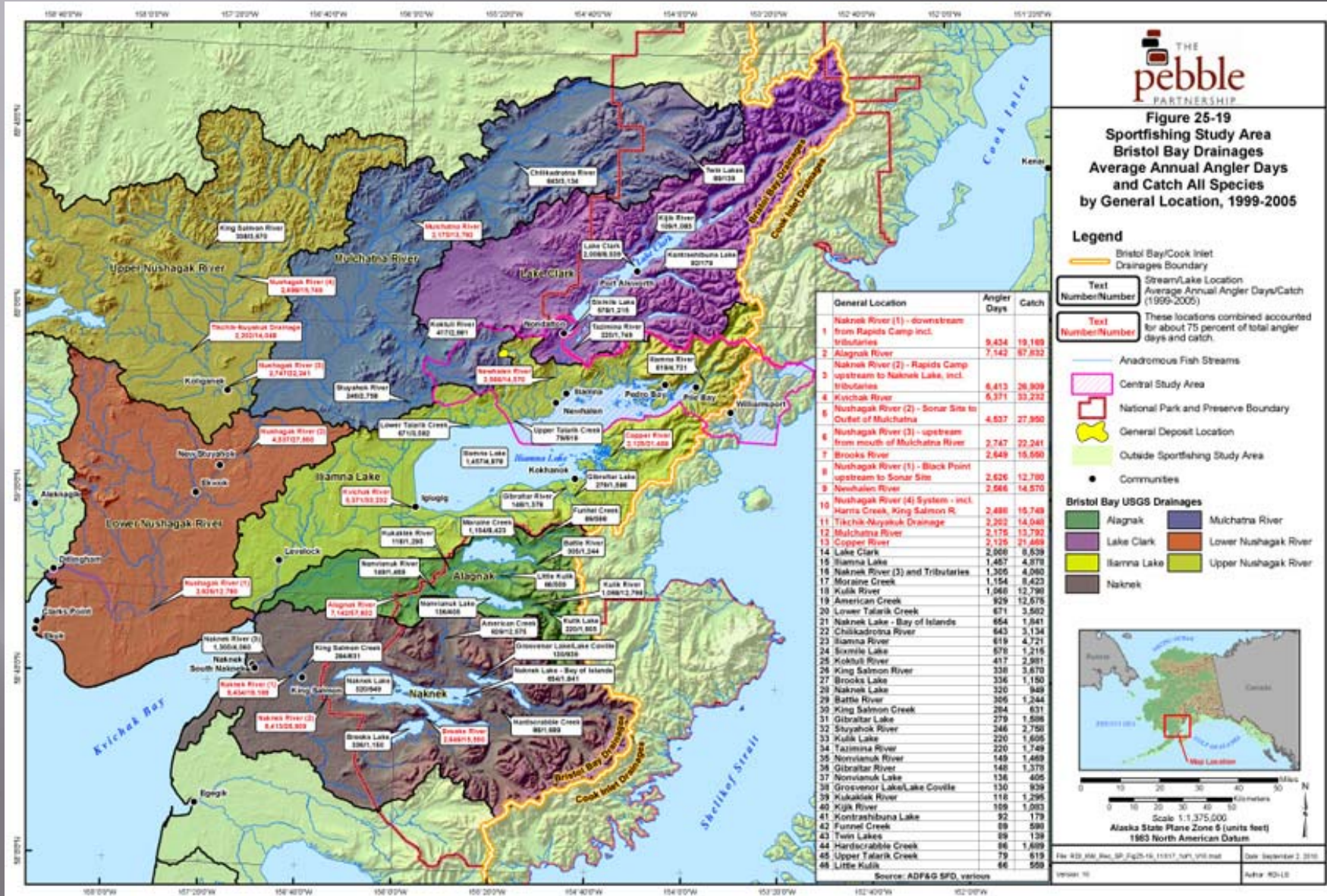
Characteristics of Sportfishing in Bristol Bay Study Area

Sportfishing is

- 88 percent by non-residents of Alaska
- mainly freshwater (90 percent)
- mainly catch-and-release (90 percent)
- skewed toward prized sportfish species (rainbows, grayling, kings)

Sportfishing Activity in the Bristol Bay Study Area

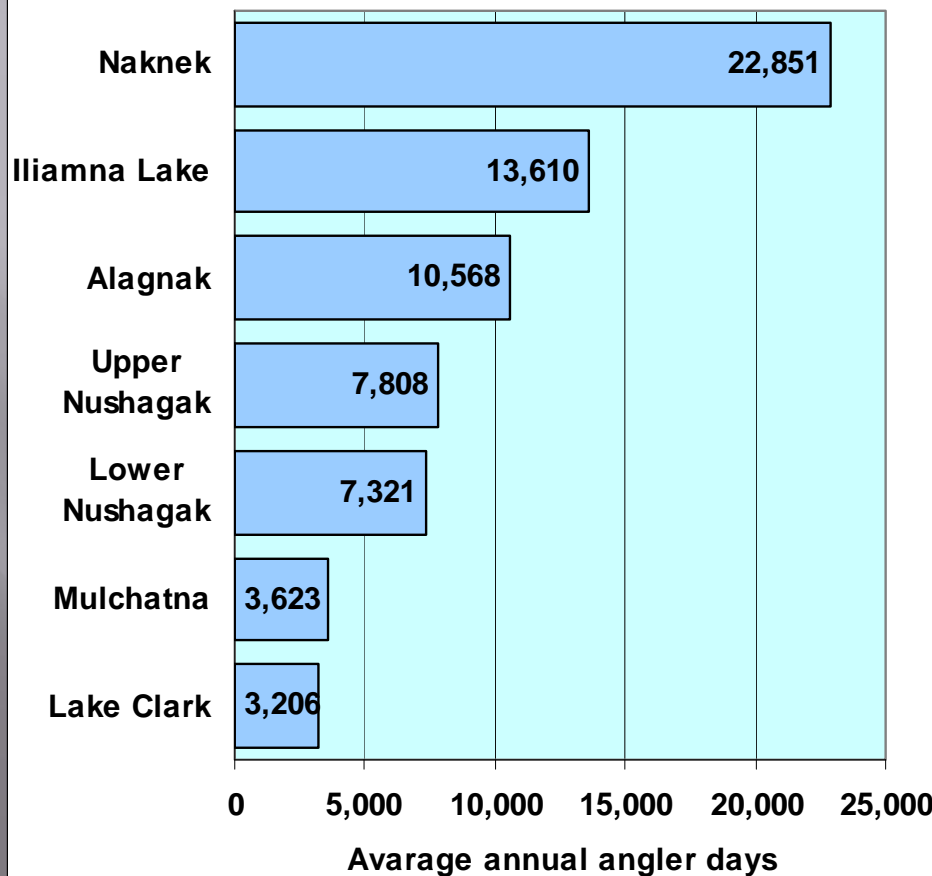
46 Stream and Lake Locations



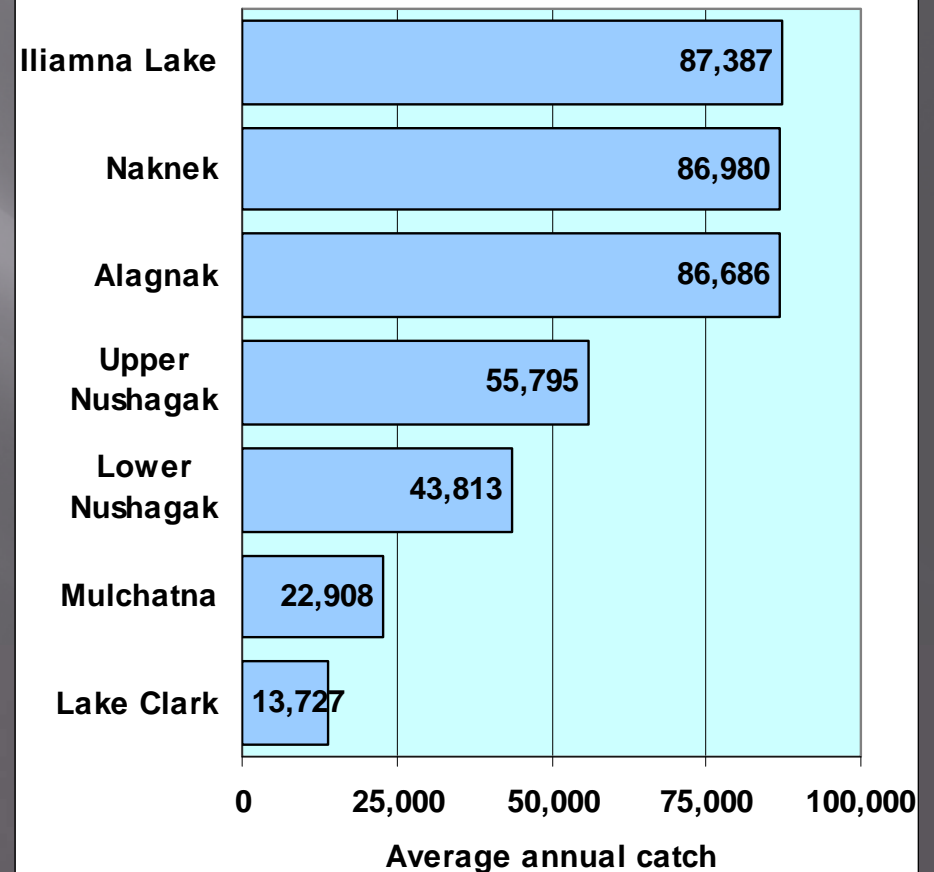
Note: EBD contains additional maps for catch of individual species.

Sportfishing Activity by Drainage, 1999-2005

**Average Annual Angler Days
1999-2005
Bristol Bay Drainages**



**Average Annual Catch
1999-2005
Bristol Bay Drainages**

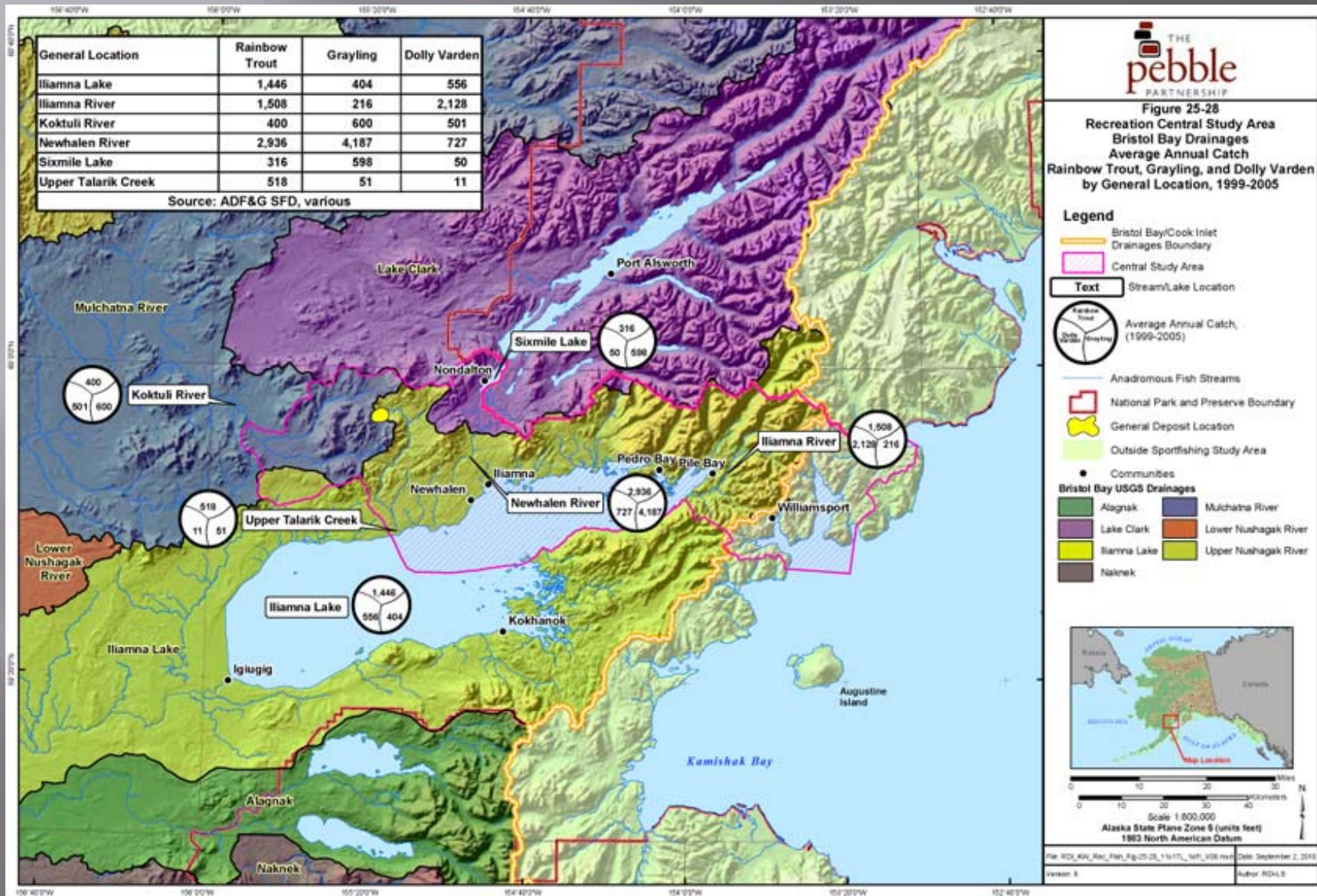


Average Annual Angler Days and Catch (46 locations) BB Regional Study Area, 1999-2005

Location	Angler Days		Catch	
	Number	Rank	Number	Rank
Naknek River (downstream from Rapids Camp, incl. tributaries)	9,434	1	19,169	7
Alagnak River	7,142	2	57,832	1
Naknek River (Rapids Camp upstream to Naknek Lake, incl. tributaries)	6,413	3	26,909	4
Kvichak River	5,371	4	33,232	2
Nushagak River (Sonar Site to Mulchatna)	4,537	5	27,950	3
Nushagak River (upstream from Mulchatna)	2,747	6	22,241	5
Brooks River	2,649	7	15,550	9
Nushagak River (Black Pt. to Sonar Site)	2,626	8	12,780	14
Newhalen River	2,566	9	14,570	10
Nushagak River (incl. Harris Creek, King Salmon R.)	2,498	10	15,749	8
... 33 locations omitted ...				
Lower Talarik Creek	671	20	3,582	22
Koktuli River	417	25	2,981	24
Upper Talarik Creek	79	45	619	41
Total	68,991		397,296	

Source: Alaska Department of Fish & Game, Sport Fish Division.

Average Annual Catch, Central Study Area Rainbow Trout, Grayling, Dolly Varden, 1999-2005



Fishing – Central Study Area

- ▣ 8.4 % of angler days in the Regional Study Area
- ▣ 7.4% of the catch in Regional Study Area
- ▣ ADF&G reported data for 6 sites in Central Study Area
 - Newhalen River (45% of angler days in Central Study Area)
 - Iliamna River
 - Sixmile Lake
 - Upper Talarik Creek
 - Iliamna Lake
 - Chinkelyes Creek
- ▣ Species
 - Sockeye
 - Rainbow trout
 - Grayling
 - Dolly Varden
 - Minimal Coho and king

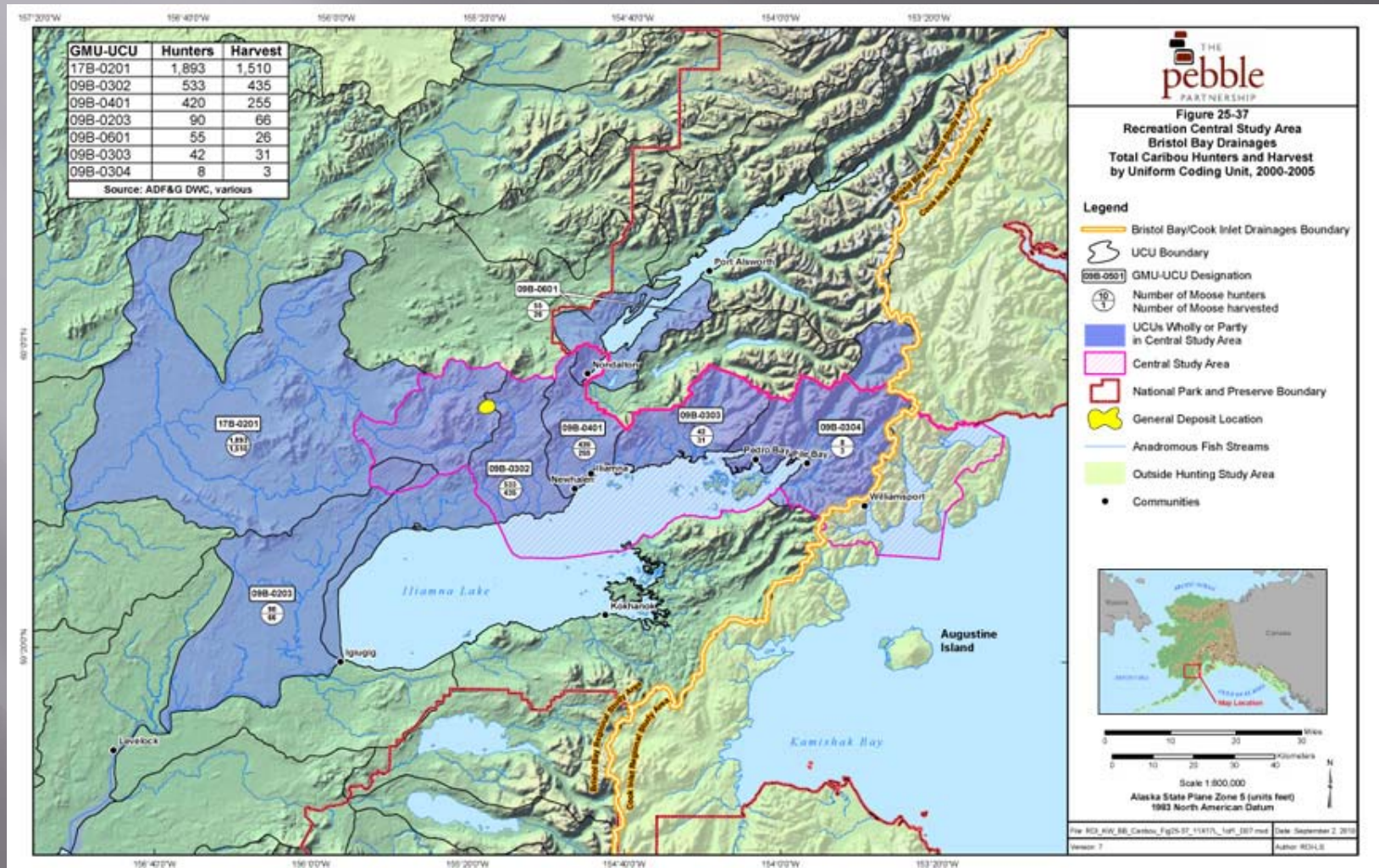
Big Game Hunting

- ▣ Caribou, Moose, Brown bear – main species of interest
- ▣ State lands generally open to hunting
- ▣ Lake Clark and Katmai National Parks closed
- ▣ National Preserves and Alagnak managed by ADF&G

Caribou Hunting

- ▣ Most hunted Big Game
- ▣ Mostly in Mulchatna drainage and part of the Kvichak drainage
- ▣ Light hunting in the preserves
- ▣ Hunting units partly or wholly in the Central Study Area accounted for 31 % of caribou
- ▣ Mostly Alaskans
- ▣ Alaskans had higher success rates

Caribou Hunters and Harvest (40 UCUs) Bristol Bay Study Area, 2000-2005

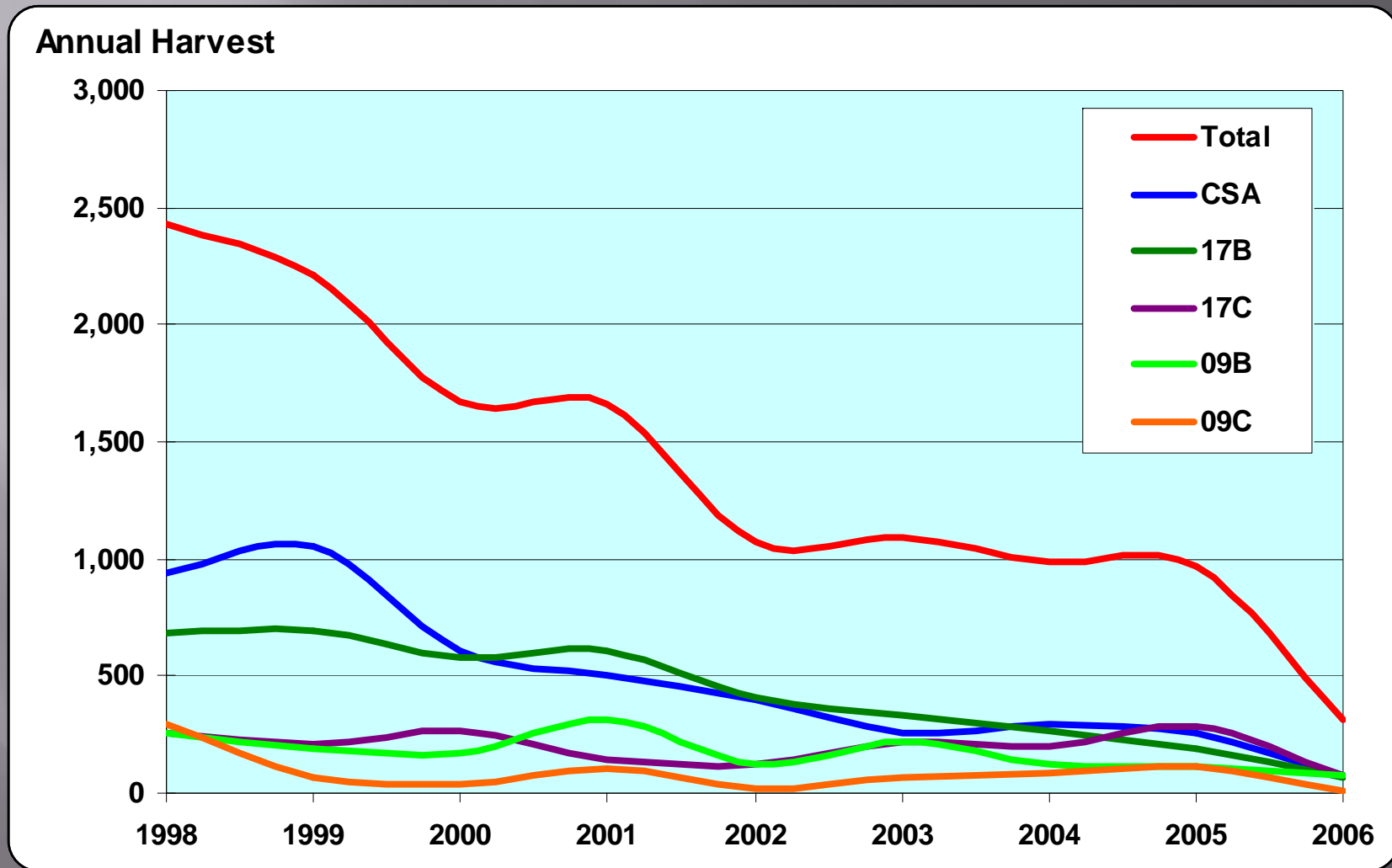


Note: Similar maps for moose and brown bear.

Major Trends in Caribou Hunt

- Ongoing decline in Mulchatna caribou herd population – down 87 percent since 1998
- Shift in range of Mulchatna herd away from Pebble vicinity
- Ongoing decline in caribou hunting and harvest (down 92 percent in 1998-2006) in Pebble vicinity

Caribou Harvest Trend BB Regional Study Area, 1998-2006

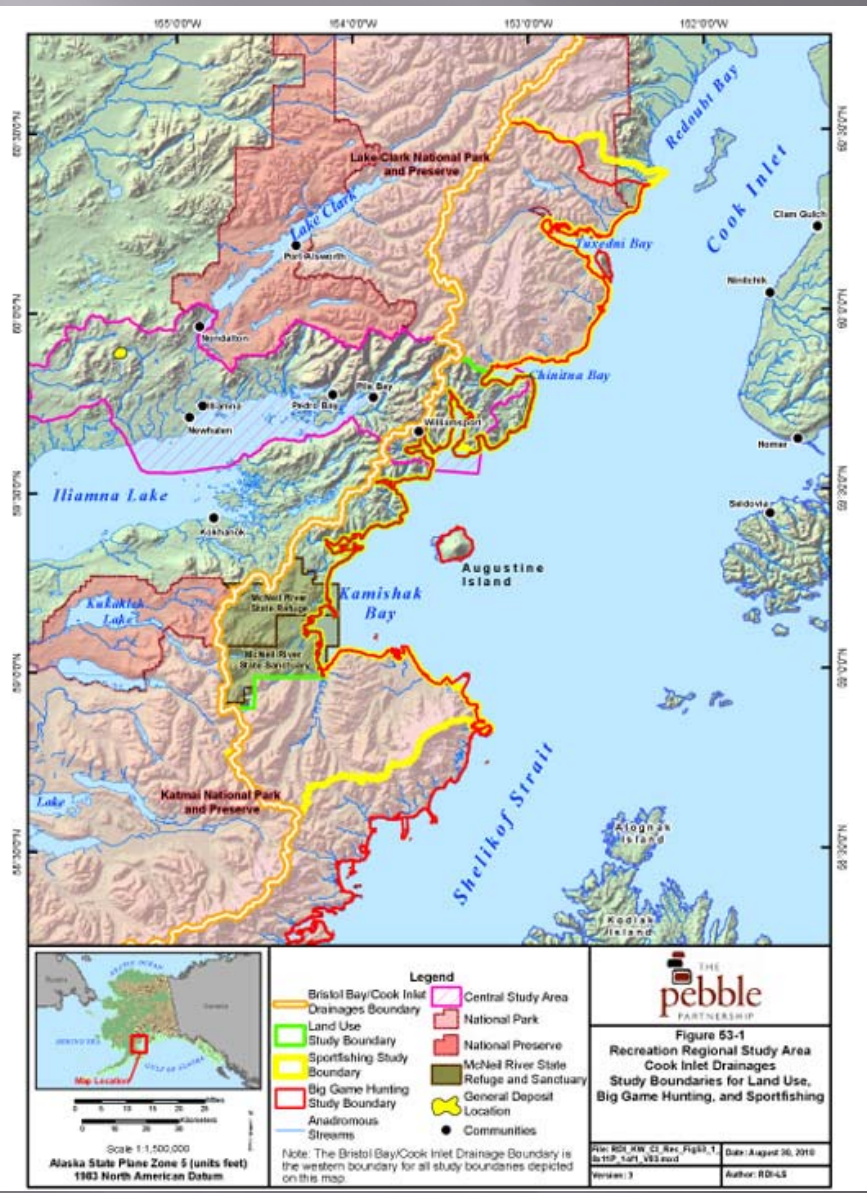


Recreational Lodges

- \$3,500 to \$8,000+ for 6-7 day trip
- Mostly non-local, generally non-Alaskan staff
- Low pay wages
- Supplies purchased from non-local source
- Mostly owned by non-residents of the region

Cook Inlet Regional Study Area

Central Study Area Iniskin and Iliamna bays



Cook Inlet Study Area Sport Fishing

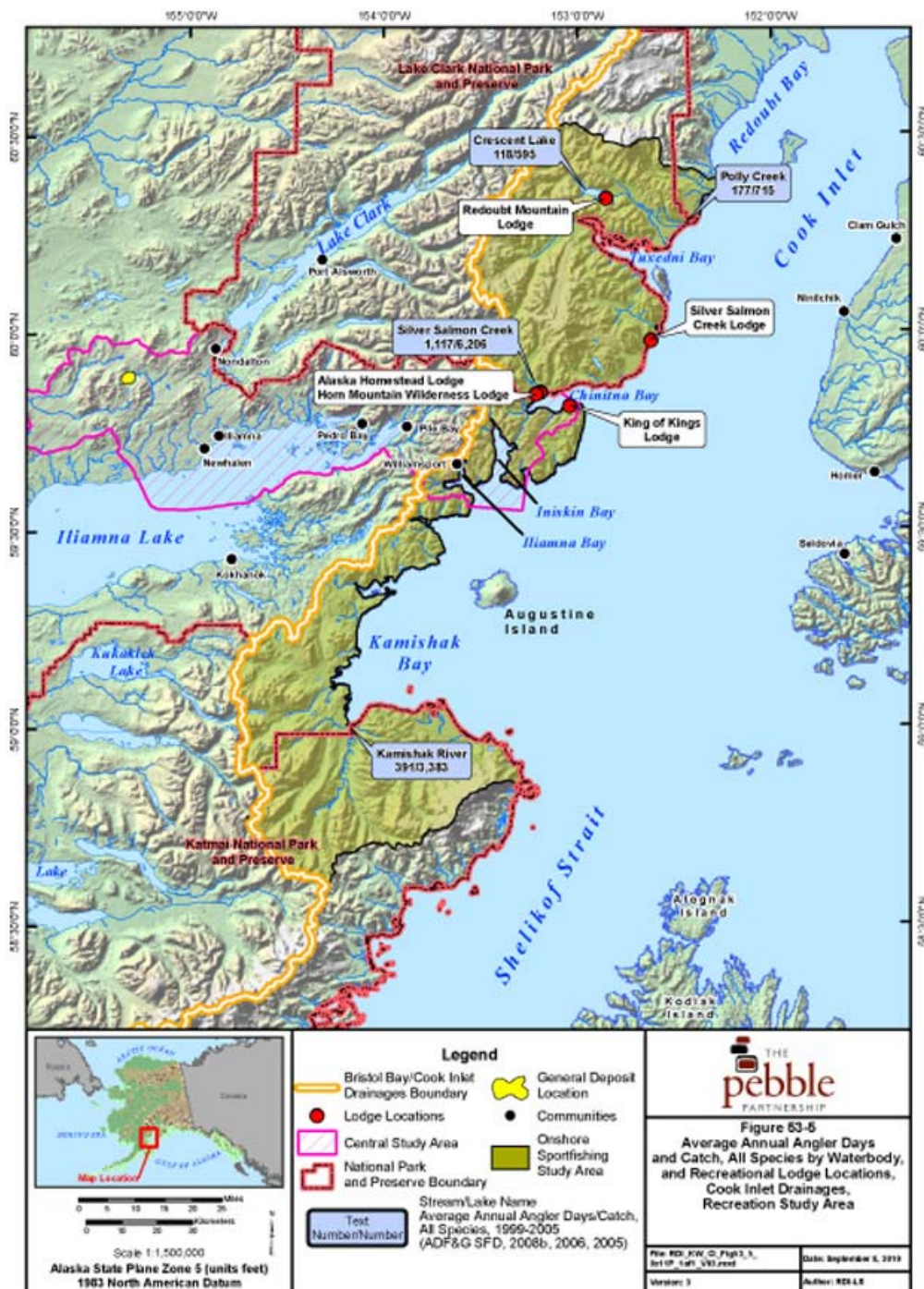
- ▣ Light freshwater sport fishing
 - Coho
 - Dolly Varden
 - Chum
 - Minimal for King Salmon and Rainbow Trout
- ▣ Marine Fishing
 - Pacific halibut
 - Razor clams

Cook Inlet Study Area

Sportfishing
(average annual catch & angler days, 1999-2005)

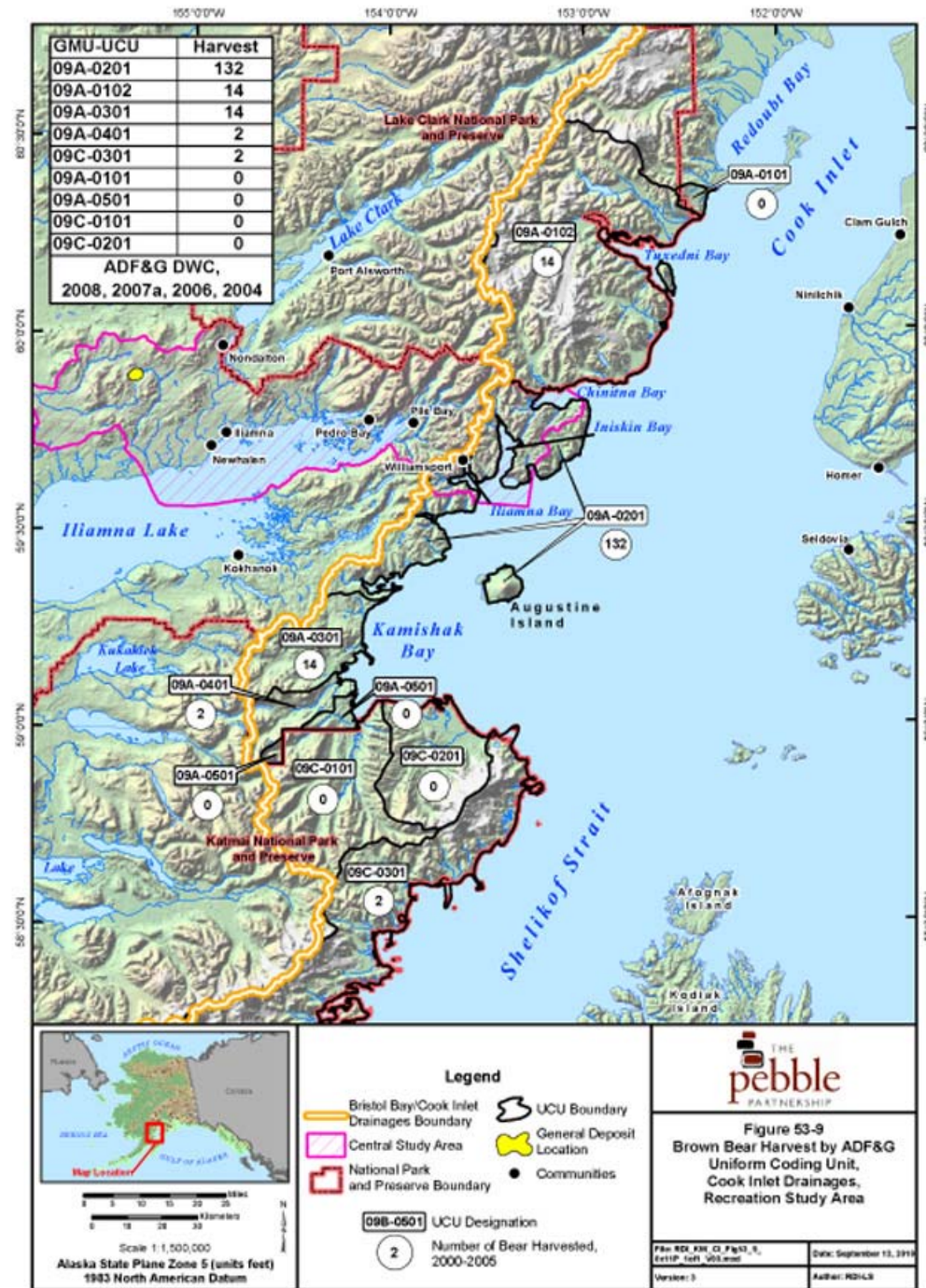
and

Recreation Lodges



Cook Inlet Study Area Big Game Hunting

- ▣ Brown Bear, Moose, Caribou
- ▣ 2000-2005 Harvest
 - Brown Bear – 164
 - Moose – 36
 - Caribou – 13
 - ▣ Extreme edge of Mulchatna Caribou Herd range



Cook Inlet Study Area

Brown Bear Harvest 2000-2005

Note: Similar maps for caribou and moose.