

Are The Culverts Trapping Salmon In Odiak Pond?

Did you know that there are fish in Odiak Pond? The habitat at Odiak Pond is being impacted by oil and a lot of garbage, which may make it difficult for the salmon living in the pond. From November to April, the 7th grade class, working with the Copper River Watershed Project, has been going on field trips to Odiak pond to see how healthy the water is for the salmon. Last year, in 2010, the 7th grade class was the first to identify salmon in Odiak pond and with the help of the CRWP had the pond added to the State of Alaska's Anadromous Waterways catalog. This year, we found more salmon in Odiak pond. We are trying to protect the salmon in Odiak pond because salmon are so important to our lives here in Cordova.

The salmon get into Odiak Pond from the culvert below the Copper River Highway that connects Odiak slough and the pond. The adults come in around September when there is a really high tide or flooding waters. There are mainly silver salmon in the pond but there are also other fish such as sticklebacks. The silver salmon need to go through the culverts, which are often above the water level, so they have to use a lot of energy to get to them. We believe the culverts should be lowered so the fish can go through easily. If the culverts are lowered the silver salmon population can grow and the salmon won't be trapped in the pond.

I am hoping you have learned that an important species of salmon lives right here in Odiak pond. The community needs to work together to protect the salmon and get the fish flowing out into the ocean. We need silver salmon healthy so that they can continue to help Cordova's economy. The silver salmon are very popular in Cordova and even one small population like Odiak pond is worth saving!

