

Yukon River Summer Season 2016 Management Considerations

Presented by:

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Pre-season Planning Meeting – April 2016



Overview

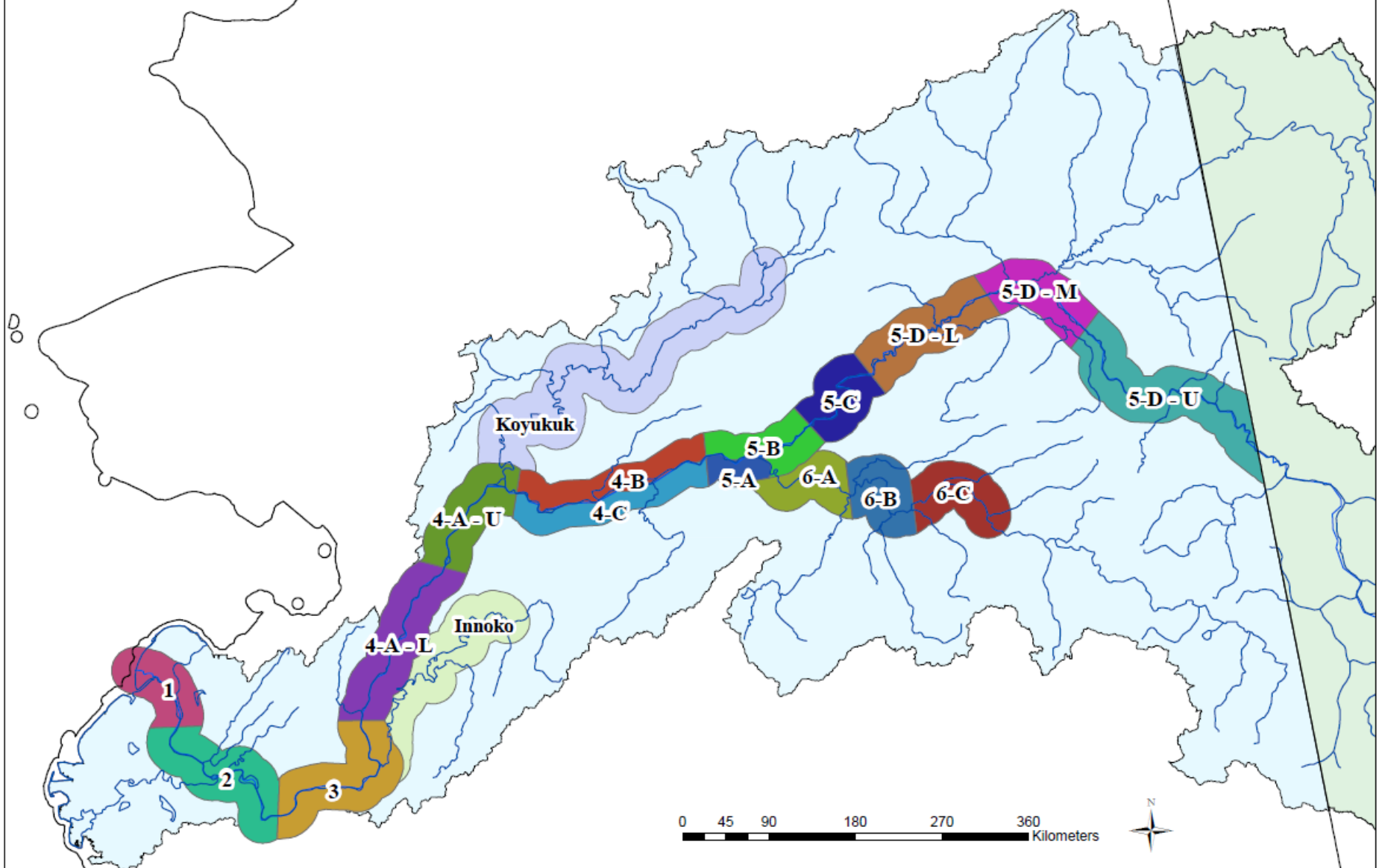
2015 Management Recap

2016 Outlook:

- **Summer chum outlook & Management considerations**
- **Chinook outlook & Management considerations**
- **Questions**

After lunch we'll present some management scenarios for your discussion and feedback

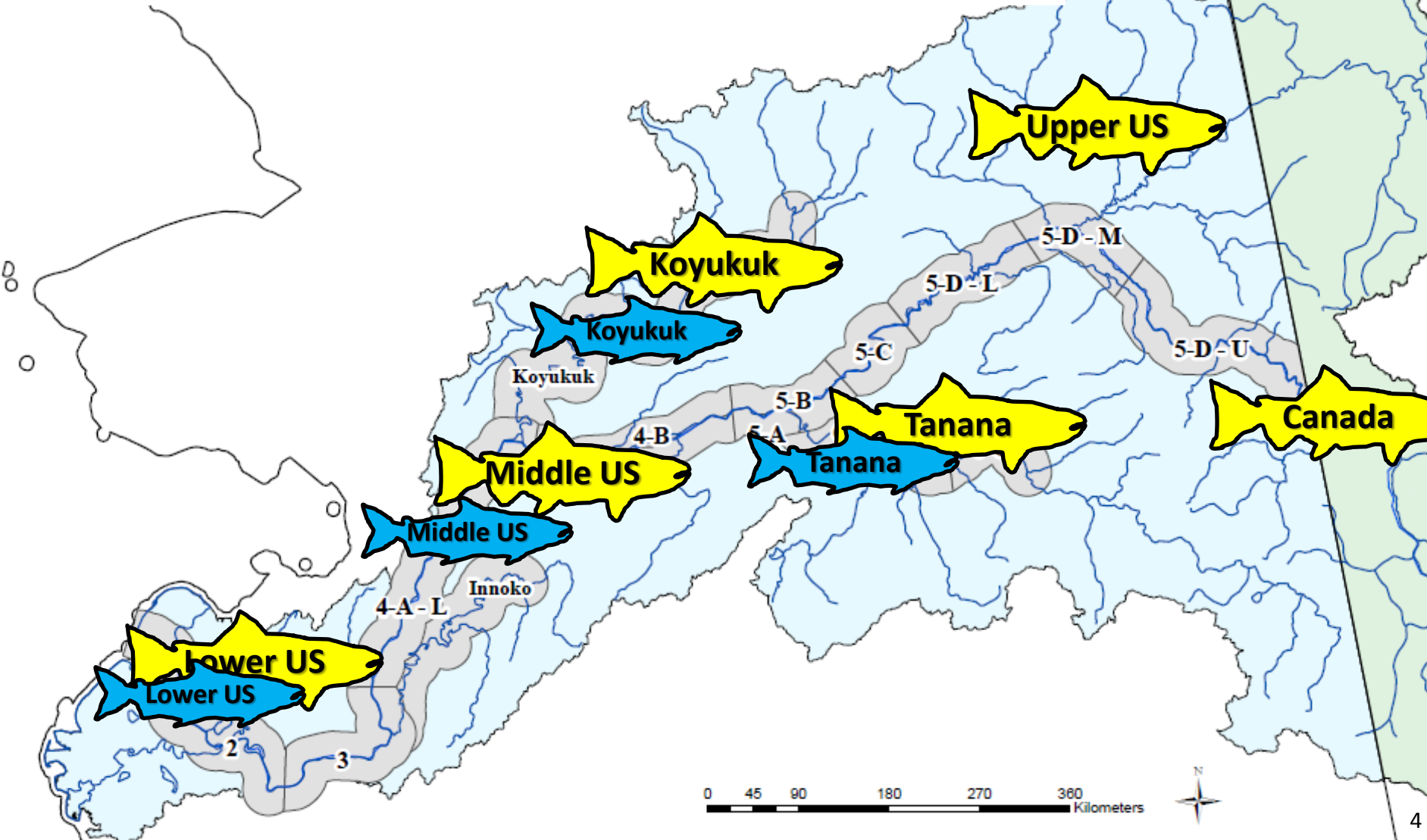
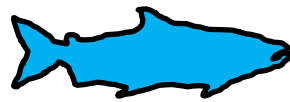
Yukon River Fisheries Management Areas



Chinook salmon stocks



Summer chum salmon stocks



2015 Management Recap

- Expected a below average Chinook salmon run with an overlapping abundant summer chum run
- Took a conservative approach to management in order to meet escapement goals for Chinook
- Goal was to provide a small amount of Chinook salmon harvest if the run size was strong enough



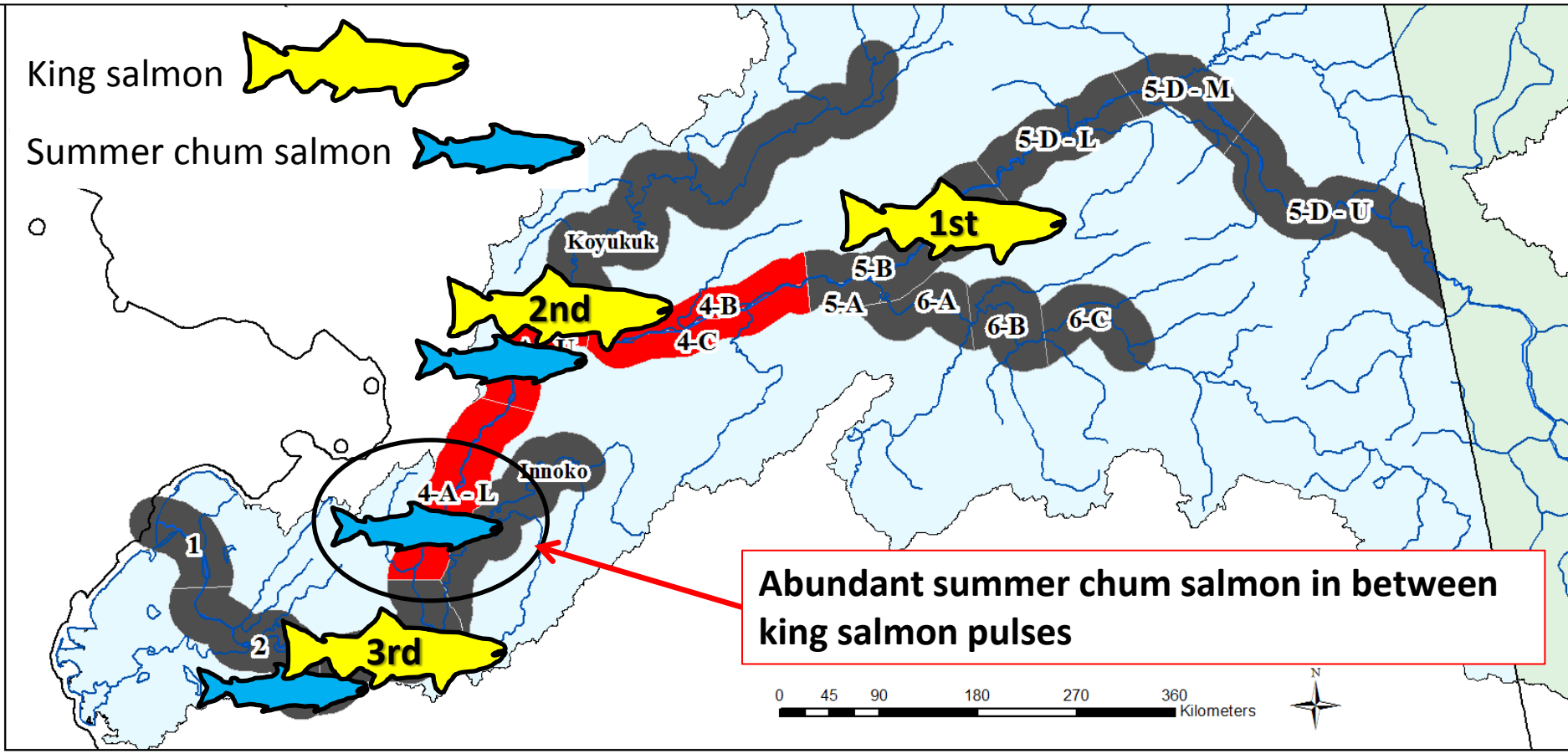
2015 Subsistence Fishery

- Before Chinook salmon arrived, 6-inch gillnets allowed
- Subdistrict 5-D fished on the early “trickle”
- First pulse closure
- Selective gear for summer chum
- “Surgical” openings to target summer chum
- More liberal 6-inch opportunity towards end of run



“Surgical” Openings

Short 6” or smaller gillnet openings in between Chinook pulses to target summer chum salmon



2015 Commercial Fishery

- Selective gear used for summer chum
- Concurrent commercial and subsistence fishing periods
- 6-inch gillnets once majority of Chinook migrated through
- 354,000 summer chum harvested in Y1, Y2, and Y6



Alaska Chinook (all stocks) Subsistence Harvest

Average 2005–2014	2014	2015
37,000	3,300	7,300

- Includes Chinook received from test fisheries
- Includes Chinook kept from commercial gillnet openings



2015 Management Recap

All escapement goals for Chinook and summer chum salmon were met or exceeded in 2015



The most effective tool in conservation is support from the fishermen

Thank you to the fishermen of the Yukon River!

2016 Outlook



2016 Summer Chum Salmon Outlook

- Run size expected: 1.3 – 1.8 million summer chum
- Escapement goals and subsistence needs likely met
- Potential surplus for commercial harvest of 450,000 to 950,000



2016 Commercial Fishing Considerations

Summer Chum

- Dependent on strength and timing of Chinook run
- No sale of Chinook salmon
- Selective gear types to start: dip nets, beach seines, fish wheels (live release)
- 6-inch or smaller mesh size gillnets will be considered if Chinook escapement goals will be met

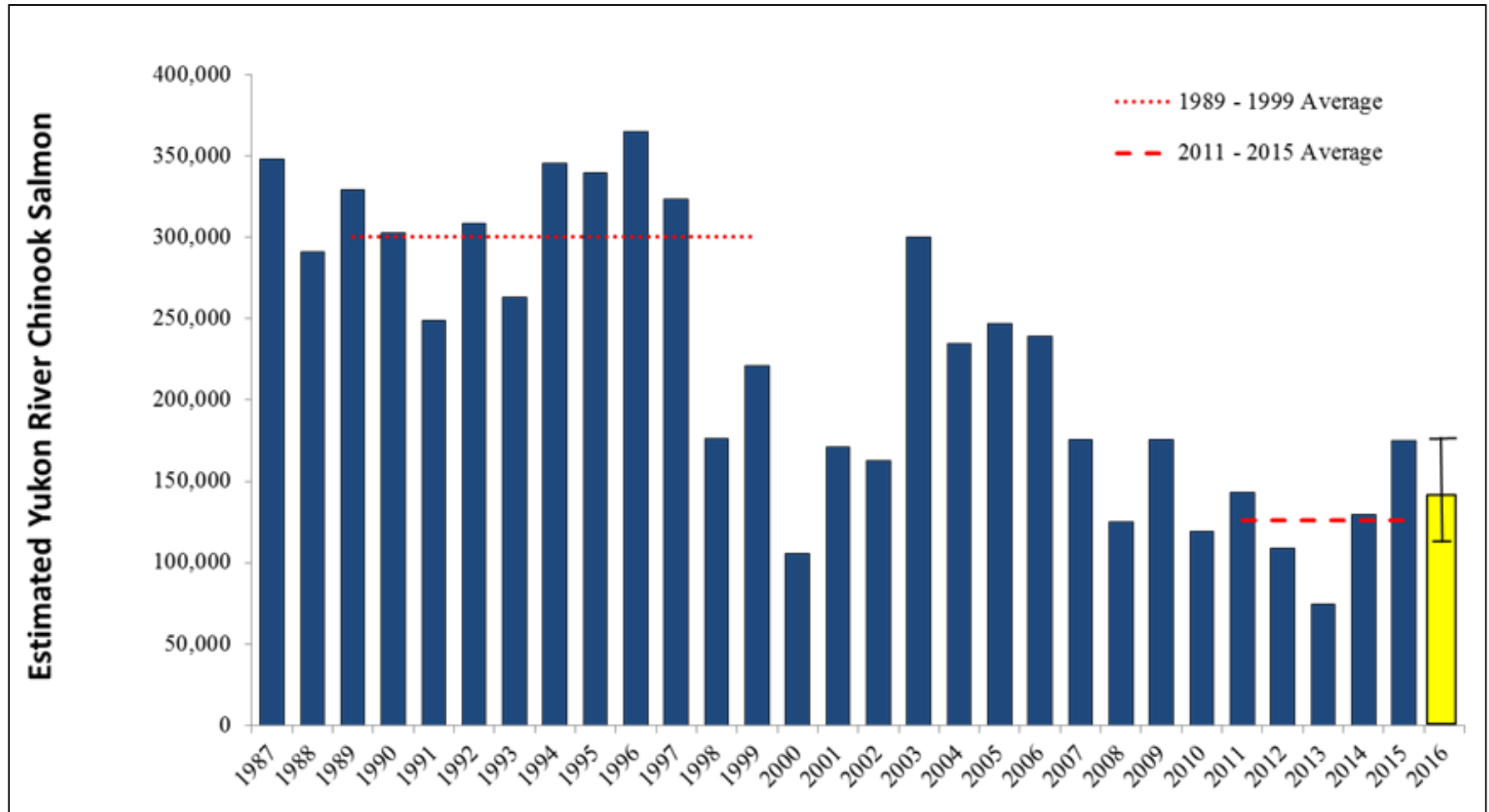


Pink Salmon

- Only District 1 with 4.75-inch or smaller gillnets if harvestable surplus is present

2016 Chinook Salmon Outlook

- 65,000 – 88,000 Canadian-origin Chinook
- Drainagewide: 130,000 – 175,000 Chinook



2016 Chinook Salmon Outlook

- May need a conservative management approach similar to last year
- Adequate to achieve escapement goals and harvest sharing objectives
- Potential for increased opportunity for subsistence harvest if the run strength supports it

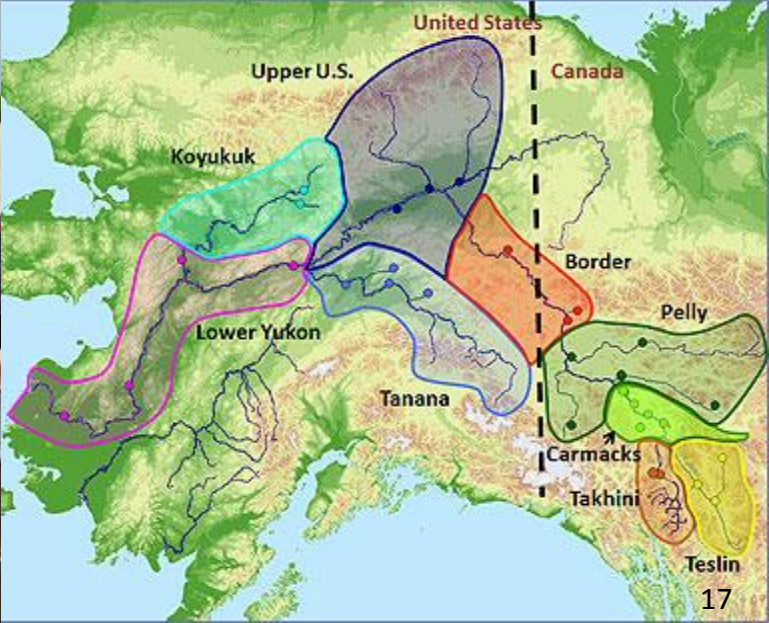
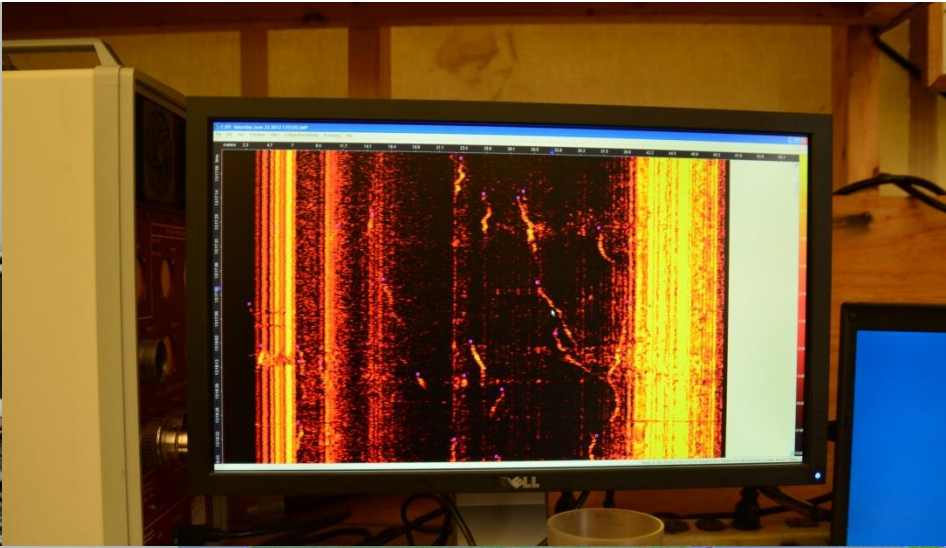


2016 Management Considerations

After first pulse closure:

- If **below lower end** of preseason forecast:
 - Selective gear opportunity
- If **above lower end** of preseason forecast:
 - Selective gear opportunity + surgical openings with 6" gillnets
- If **near/exceed upper end** of preseason forecast:
 - Reduced regulation subsistence fishing schedule with 6" gillnets, fish wheels
 - Consider opportunity with 7.5" gillnets

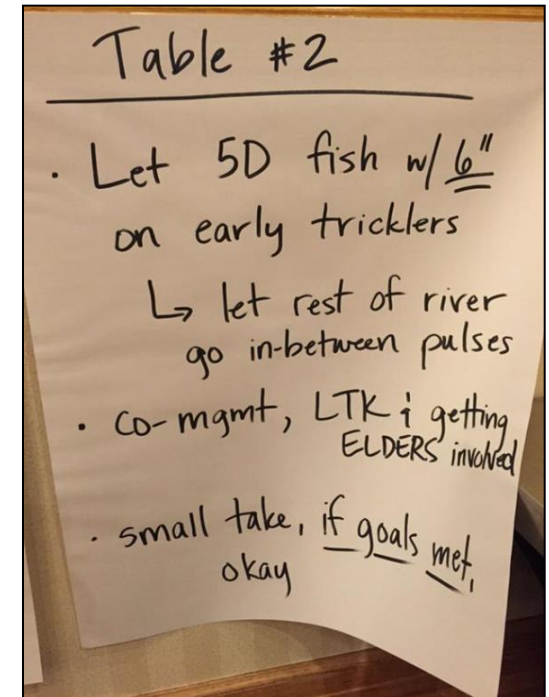
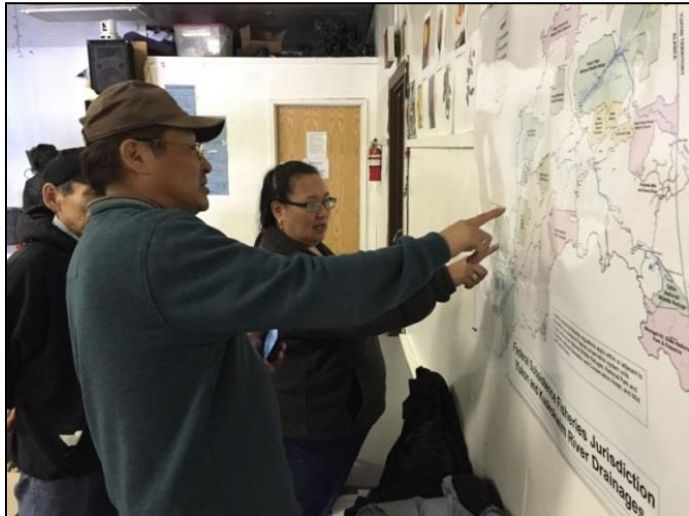
Inseason Management Determined by Assessment



Your Input Ensures Successful Management

Chinook Salmon Subsistence Harvest

2014	2015	2016
3,300	7,300	?



Engage with the ADF&G Management Team

- How is your fishing going?
- Ask us your questions!
- Share your concerns!
- Join the YRDFA teleconferences



Management Scenarios for Group Discussion

2016 Chinook Management- Scenario 1

If a **weaker run appears**, management actions would need to conserve Chinook salmon while targeting summer chum with:

Selective gear types and “Surgical” openings

Please discuss:

- 1) What worked about selective gear in your region?
- 2) What worked about “surgical” openings in your region?
- 3) What did not work in your region?

2016 Chinook Management -Scenario 2

If a **strong run appears**, management actions would need to balance meeting escapement needs with increased, but limited, Chinook harvest:

- Reduced regulatory subsistence schedule with 6" to start
- Possible transition to 7.5-inch gillnets when confident about run strength

Regulatory windows schedule

Area	Fishing Periods
Coastal District, Koyukuk and Innoko Rivers	7 days/week
District 1	Two 36-hour periods/week
District 2	Two 36-hour periods/week
District 3	Two 36-hour periods/week
District 4	Two 48-hour periods/week
Subdistricts 5A, 5B, 5C	Two 48-hour periods/week
Subdistrict 5D	7 days/week
Subdistrict 6	Two 42-hour periods/week
Old Minto Area	5 days/week

Reduced Regulatory Subsistence Schedule- Pros and Cons

- Set schedule people can plan around
- Naturally spreads harvest across run
- Length of openings accounts for different fishing efficiency for each district
- Presence of high numbers of kings or chums cannot be predicted- luck of the draw
- Openings not always ideal for weather, personal schedules
- Unreduced subsistence schedule likely to increase harvest too much

Gillnet mesh sizes- Effects on the Harvest

6" gillnet mesh:

- Better for targeting summer chum salmon
- Chinook can be retained but will likely be smaller males
- If many chum are present, numbers of Chinook caught will be low

7.5" gillnet mesh:

- More efficient mesh size for catching Chinook
- Harvest of Chinook spread across all ages, sexes, and stocks
- If folks are finished harvesting summer chum, they can harvest Chinook and get what they need in a shorter amount of time

2016 Chinook Management -Scenario 2

If a **strong run appears**, management actions would need to balance meeting escapement needs with increased, but limited, Chinook harvest:

- Reduced regulatory subsistence schedule with 6" to start
- Possible transition to 7.5-inch gillnets when confident about run strength

Please discuss:

- 1) **What are your thoughts on using 7.5" gillnets when confidence is high escapement goals will be met?**

