**Greetings from the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association!**

Here is a summary of the 12th, 2019 Yukon River Salmon In-Season Management Teleconference held Tuesday, August 20th, 2019. Call lasted 60 minutes. 32 callers participated at 30 minutes into the call.

**Background:** Yukon River salmon management teleconferences are held annually every Tuesday in June, July, and August for managers and fishers throughout the Yukon River drainage to discuss fishing conditions and management strategies in real time as the salmon run is occurring. YRDFA Yukon River Teleconferences are funded by the US Dept. of the Interior, Office of Subsistence Management.

**Media participating:** KZPA radio-Hans @ Fort Yukon

**Political Representatives participating:** none

**Communities & organizations participating this week: 7**

Alakanuk

Nunum Iqua

Pilot Station

Koyukuk

Galena

Rapids

Eagle

**Community fishery reports-Alaska:**

**Alakanuk:** Pamela - lately, I’ve talked to a few fishermen who have been going out. A lot of them said that fishermen are quitting early due to low number of fish they have been getting. The ones who are getting more are going up north towards Kotlik. Most of the fishermen are hunting moose or preparing for moose hunting. Ww have been having low tides. Heard they did really good north mouth. It seems they are all passing on the north end of river and people are wondering if there is a test fishery on the north mouth.

**Nunam Iqua-** Stanley Pete - River Conditions are normal. Majority of people are done doing their subsistence fishing. 1 -2 households finishing up with subsistence fishing for fall chum and cohos. Subsistence fishing winding down.

**Pilot Station:** Martin Kelly, water level high. Couple of days of really good weather after a few days of rain. Subsistence is mostly done here.

**Koyukuk:** Ben Jones - Nothing to report. Water has been stable for the last 3 days, high pressure and no debris on the Yukon River. No fishing activity.

**Galena:** Howard - I went out last night to drift to see the condition of fish. Water temp dropped to 53 degrees. Lot of stumps and stuff in the river. South side - summer chum in good shape. Kept most of them. Didn't get many fall chum. Another fisher got about 30 in his drift net but they are all black and in bad shape. I caught 25 fish last night and only 4 were females.

**Rapids:** Stan Zuray-

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| - Water has come up and with it some larger drift which has been hitting fishwheels.  - First small pulse of fall chum with over 50% red flesh fish have came and went and some people making food dry fish to put up but weather was a hindrance. Very little fish in the river since that pulse but just yesterday first signs of another pulse of fall chum hitting and we have somewhat good weather.  - Most fishermen have left the Rapids area for the fall season as usual. Fishing in Tanana village will go into October however.  - Larger sheefish just started running this last week as happens each year at this time. | | |

**Eagle:** Ruby: Don't have a report, pretty much done with surveys but just wanted to check in. King run was successful. Everyone got enough kings for themselves and to share. Temps dropping. Froze last two nights. Waiting on fall chum. Excited to get into fall fishing mode.

**YRITFC:** Stephanie - Just letting folks know that I am listening in. National news coverage on Koyukuk River fish die off. Also, in Emmonak 1.5 weeks ago. Pastilioak river. Looking for spawning fish up there. Found some that died before spawning may be due to hot weather.

W- do fish sink or float when they die?

S - they do both. As they decompose, gas builds up in their body cavity and then they float. Sometimes they float immediately also.

**Community fishery reports-Canada:**

**Kwanlin Dun -** Brandy - don't have a fisheries report. Very minimal fishing going on. Two nets out right now and no fish. Concerns about escapement numbers. My fisheries biologist will give update and summary of concerns. We are tagging fish and so far we have got 8 fish in one month. Concerned about this. This is before going to fish ladder.

Nick DeGrath- looking at escapements through fish ladder. One of the worst runs through ladder that we have ever seen. 45 females and 170 fish. Average is 1,000 over that period.

Dennis Zimmerman - YR Panel member, just listening in.

Elizabeth- worst count on record was between 2-300. Average 1,200. Right now count around 112 and we are at approximate ½ way mark.

**Management Reports Agenda:**

YRDFA 8/20/19 Assessment by Borba as the ADF&G Fall Season Research Biologist

The projection based on inseason assessment for fall chum salmon is a range of 750,000-850,000 fish. Adjusting for the higher than normal amount of summer chum salmon that entered during the fall season, the fall chum salmon run is estimated to be 534,000 through August 19 which is near the historical median.

The LYTF assessment project has a fall chum salmon CPUE of 771 which is below the median of 1,230 as of August 20. Coho salmon CPUE is 42 which is well below the median of 261, as of August 20. The mid-point of the coho salmon run at LYTF on average is August 18.

The preliminary chum salmon age composition from the LYTF 6-inch drift gillnets consists of 73% age-4, which is above the average of 63% and 27% age-5, which is below average of 36% through August 10. Females represent 48% of the fish sampled, which is below the average of 57%, as of August 18.

MVTF fall chum salmon CPUE of 1,964 is above the median of 1,579 as of August 20. Coho salmon CPUE is 156 which is below the median of 452 as of August 20.

The mainstem Yukon River sonar near Pilot Station has a cumulative passage from July 19 through August 19 of 629,000 chum salmon which is above the median of 495,000 fish. Cumulative passage of coho salmon is 26,700 which is below the median of 61,800 as of August 19. The mid-point of the coho salmon run at this project on average is August 22.

Genetic mixed stock analysis (MSA) on chum salmon from July 27 through August 9 that passed the sonar near Pilot Station, contained approximately 36% summer chum and 64% fall chum salmon. The fall chum salmon stocks in the entire sample consisted of 19% Border/US (Chandalar/Sheenjek/Black), 34% Canadian and 11% Tanana Fall stocks. The proportions of only fall stocks in this group were 53% Canada, 30% BorderUS and 17% Tanana.

Genetic mixed stock analysis on chum salmon for the pulse just passing the mainstem sonar will be sent in tomorrow. Watch for the results in the Yukon River daily update later this week.

For escapement project in the upper portion of the drainage. The Chandalar River sonar project began operations on August 8 and has a cumulative passage of 2,182 fall chum salmon which is below the median passage of 10,319 as of August 19. This level of passage is not unexpected due to the late arrival of fall chum salmon.

The border sonars near Eagle and near Old Crow will be transitioning soon from chinook to chum salmon enumeration.

A few fall chum salmon have already made it to the US/Canada Border. The fall chum salmon that entered the Yukon River on August 1 are expected to be near Tanana/Huslia August 20, Rampart August 22, Fort Yukon August 30, and the Canadian border around September 9. Fall chum salmon from this group would be in the Tanana River near Manley around September 1 and near Fairbanks September 5. The second pulse of primarily fall chum salmon that peaked in the lower river projects on August 15 are expected to be near Anvik August 23, Galena August 29, Tanana/Huslia September 3, Rampart September 5, Fort Yukon September 13, and the Canadian border around September 23. Fall chum salmon from this group would be in the Tanana River near Manley around September 15 and near Fairbanks September 20. Highwater downstream of the Tanana River may slow the salmon migration.

Coho salmon run size is anticipated to be average (at 217,000 fish). Currently the coho salmon run has been extremely weak however there is an indication they may be later than normal in timing. Coho salmon have picked up recently in passage in the lower river projects.

***Questions and discussion:***

Stephanie- update on her travels to Koyukuk to investigate die off. Some monitoring projects were pulled due to funding and that will not allow us to understand full extent of die off. Expect that it is in the 1,000s or 10,000s. Have not heard anything about Chinook die off. Thinks these species were not in the river during the extreme heat periods. Interested in hearing about Yukon Territory and whether anyone has heard or seen die offs up there. Appreciate everyone’s contributions.

Victor - River is extremely high here in Nenana. We are teetering on a flood. 6-8 inches to coming over bank. Receded a little last night but now coming up again. River is TOO high to even try to run the wheel or net. Lot of wood going down river. Curious how fall run looks for Tanana River. Must be good fall chum run coming if you are having commercial openings.

Bonnie - first group did not have many Tanana stock fish. Group that just went by should have good proportion of Tanana fish.

Wayne - Asking Victor - Seeing the kind of high water that you are seeing now, how out of the ordinary is that?

Victor - a little out of the ordinary but usually comes with the rain. Back in 1967 a flood started Aug 14.

Bill Alstrom - Finally got good weather here. Yukon River is really high. Wondering the amount of Chinook that passed Pilot Station Sonar and Eagle Sonar and looking for explanation?

Martin - asking about ADFG (?) folks coming to Pilot and tests that they were doing. (I think this may have been USGS when we were there for Education Exchange.) Mid part of July, the date that the water temps spiked up to 70. Today water temps are at 60 degrees.

Deena Jallen - ADFG - One of the people involved is Vanessa Von Beeler. Worked with Sean Larsen. looking at heat stress proteins in fish. 21 degrees celcius was a temp that leaves a marker…..

Call ended at:1:54 pm

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| **Toll free fishing schedule hotline: 866/479-7387**  **Fishing Schedule hotline in Fairbanks: 907/459-7387**  **Contact info for ADFG YR Fall Season Manager; call 907/949-1320**  **Contact info for ADFG YR Summer Season Manager; call 907/267-2324** | | |

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