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

Here is a summary of the 13th, 2019 Yukon River Salmon In-Season Management Teleconference held Tuesday, August 27th, 2019. Call lasted 38 minutes. 27 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, Yukon News @ Whitehorse-Jackie Hong

**Political Representatives participating:** none

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

Alakanuk

Nunum Iqua

Pilot Station

Koyukuk

Galena

Rapids

Eagle

**Community fishery reports-Alaska:**

**St. Mary’s: Bill Alstrom -** Not too much to report, high water. No fish in the river.

**Marshall: Norma Evan -** I spoke with a few fishers this week and a couple finally got a few fall chum. Don't think anyone has been fishing much since last week of June in Marshall so a lot of escapement. All fish caught were reported to be healthy and bright. Some families are still berry picking, moose hunting and trying to get some bear meat. There has been more drift in the river this week. Read that in the arctic regions around the world, there has been massive glacial melt.

**Rapids: Stan Zuray-**

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| Water level has crested and almost all the drift has stopped. At a medium level now.Many fishermen could not run gear till now because of drift so much fall fishing has just begun or is being started.Numbers of fall chum per hour in nets and fishwheels has greatly increased and gear is being run for short periods to meet people’s needs.The beginning of the big pulse was incredibly good quality fish for those who could fish and quality is still high.Because of the lateness of the run and the drift putting off fishing some fishing for people food may be impacted as it is nearing time to get dog food cutting going.All is good and normal and happened before.  |

**Elizabeth-** Little bit of rain lately.272 fish across fish ladder, concerned because the average is around 1200

**Management Reports:**

Bonnie Borba; ADF&G Fall Season Research Biologist: 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 686,000 through August 26 which is near the historical median (688). The projection based on inseason assessment using late run timing for fall chum salmon is a range of 750,000-850,000 fish.

The LYTF assessment project has a fall chum salmon CPUE of 1,528 which is near the median of 1,492 as of August 27. Coho salmon CPUE is 121 which is well below the median of 362, as of August 27.

MVTF fall chum salmon CPUE of 2,392 is above the median of 1,756 as of August 26. Coho salmon CPUE is 270 which is below the median of 750 as of August 26.

The mainstem Yukon River sonar near Pilot Station has a cumulative passage from July 19 through August 26 of 738,000 chum salmon which is above the median of 650,000 fish. Cumulative passage of coho salmon is 56,202 which is well below the median of 111,000 as of August 26.

Genetic mixed stock analysis (MSA) of fall chum salmon that passed the sonar near Pilot Station from July 27 through August 8, contained 53% Canadian, 30% Border/US (Teedriinjik/Sheenjek/Draanjik) and 17% Tanana stocks. The next pulse that was sampled from August 10-20, contained approximately 11% summer chum and 89% fall chum salmon. The proportions of only fall chum salmon in this group were 24% Canada, 41% BorderUS and 35% Tanana stocks.

For escapement projects in the upper portion of the drainage. The Chandalar River sonar project has a cumulative passage of 4,776 fall chum salmon which is below the median passage of 22,199 as of August 26. This level of passage is not unexpected due to the late arrival of fall chum salmon.

The first pulse of fall chum salmon that peaked August 4 in lower river are expected to be near Fort Yukon September 2, and the Canadian border around September 12. Fall chum salmon from this group would be in the Tanana River near Manley around September 4 and Fairbanks September 9. The second pulse of primarily fall chum salmon that peaked in the lower river projects on August 15 are expected to be near 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 Fairbanks September 20. A third group of fall chum salmon peaked in the lower river on August 23 are expected to be near Anvik August 31, Nulato September 4, Galena September 6, Tanana/Huslia September 11, Rampart September 13, Fort Yukon September 21, and the Canadian border around October 1. Fall chum salmon from this group would be in the Tanana River near Manley around September 23 and Nenana September 25.

Note that high water, particularly below the Tanana River will affect the travel rates of the salmon.

The coho salmon outlook was for an average return of 217,000 fish. Currently inseason assessment based on late run timing suggests the overall run size will be around 174,000 fish, which is below average.

Jeff - (Get from Jeff) Commercial fishing in the lower river, wrapping up in one more week or so. Had opening in 5B and C at the bridge. No activity in Y 6 because of high water.

Jeff Estensen; Fall Season Manager: Season Winding down in the lower river, full swing in upper river. Sounds like folks are meeting their subsistence needs.

Porcupine River closed, tributaries remain open. Fishermen can still use 4” mesh or less for non salmon species

Commercial fishing in the lower river-stand by for announcements. 5BC had one period. Commercial fishing is open in Y6 but no activity as of now.

Fred Bue; USFWS fisheries Branch Chief: Fall chum doing well, coho not so well. Management that we are taking, trying to put commercial fishermen on the front end of the pulse which tends to be fall chum and slower coho at the end of the run. Season is winding down in the lower river.

Jesse Trerice; DFO - Sad that it is our last call. As it stands, Jesse, with DFO. Our management decisions are set by the Yukon River Agreement, domestic YR salmon plan, and by consultation with YSSC and Yukon First Nations governments. Chinook salmon run is starting to wind down here. Most recent estimate 47,800 Chinook. Porcupine sonar has counted 5,300 as of Aug 25th. Will be switching over to counting fall chum Pelly river sonar 6400 chinook. Big salmon sonar 3,820 Chinook as of 8/19. Fish ladder here in Whitehorse has counted 270 Chinook.

Fall chum management - we are anticipating First Nation fishery open. Public sport fishing open with retention permitted. Commercial fisheries open Sept 12. Using 6” to allow larger older chinook to pass. Commercial and domestic fishery open and closed at the same time. Domestic fisheries are different than first nations fisheries. A handful of domestic fishery licenses. Opportunity for people who live in remote areas. Fishing for subsistence for food. Haven’t had any fishing for chum or chinook for many years. Very limited fishery purely for food.

Crew heading to Eagle and a crew heading to Fishing Branch. Fishing Branch operational this weekend.

***Questions and discussion:***

Al VonFinster from Salmon Sub-committee in Whitehorse. Chinook - recognizing duration of projects are short. Pelly came in well this year. Big salmon down a bit in Yukon. Whitehore was down a lot. Jesse, has DFO put anyone out to look for prespawn?

Jesse- no but one biologist went to Lime Creek and made comments that she saw some prespawn Chinook there.

Fall chum - Kluane lake - should we see any difference in fall chum run this year or next year?

Oliver - DFO- change in water level at Kluane lake/River in 2015. This is the first occurrence of fish spawned in that year. Majority of that run, parent fish.

Jeff - signing off, thanks to everyone for participating. **It makes all the difference in the world.**

Jeep - thanks everyone

Norma - Thanks Wayne.

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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