

Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association



2024 Annual Meeting

Captain Cook Hotel - Anchorage, Alaska

April 30 - May 1, 2024



**To Protect and Promote all wild fisheries and traditional
cultures within the Yukon River Drainage**

Directions to the meeting

This years YR DFA Annual Meeting will be held at **Captain Cook Hotel** in downtown Anchorage, Alaska.



Captain Cook Hotel Address:
939 W 5th Avenue

The meeting is downstairs in the
Adventure Room

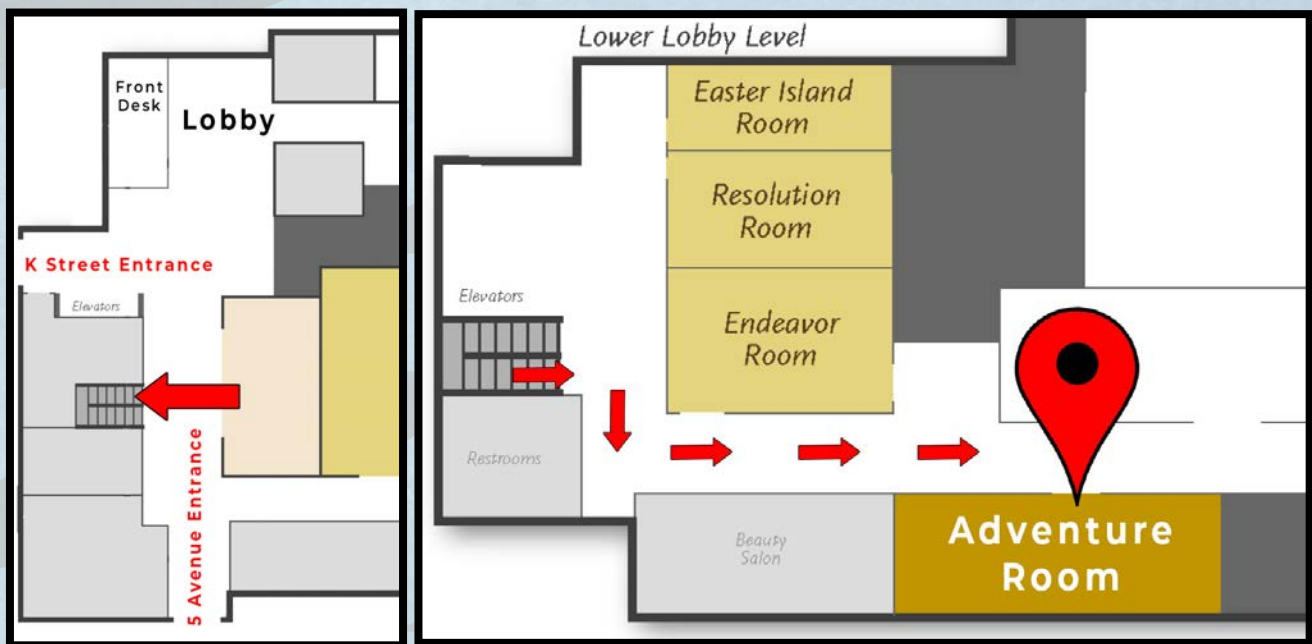


Table of Contents

Board Contacts	2
Strategic Plan	3
Agenda	6
Board Meeting Minutes	
Annual Board Meeting - October 2-3 2023	8
New Business	
g. Agreement of April 1, 2024 regarding Canadian-origin Yukon River Chinook Salmon for 2024 through 2030	18
Resolutions	
j. 2024-01 - Reduce Yukon River Chum and Chinook Salmon Discards in Area M Fishery	20
k. 2024-02 - Protecting Yukon River Chinook and Chum Salmon by reducing fishing time in the Bering Sea Pollock Fishery	22
l. 2024-03 - Reduce Salmon output of Private Nonprofit Corporation Hatchery (PNP) Production within Alaska	24
m. 2024-04 - 2022-2023 Extending Yukon River Fisheries Disaster Declaration Request	25
n. 2024-05 - Protecting the Yukon River: Concern about Oil & Gas Development in the Yukon Flats	27
o. 2024-06 - Ongoing Increased Impact in Lieu of Climate Change on Yukon River Salmon	29
Financial Report	31
Program Report	
2024 Staff Report	34
YRDFA Staff Contact Information	41



YRDFA Board Contact List

YRDFA Board Members

<u>District</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Community</u>
Coastal	Lester Wilde	Hooper Bay
Y1, Seat 1	Stanley Pete	Nunam Iqua
Y1, Seat 2	John Strongheart	Alakanuk
Y1, Seat 3	Paul Andrews	Emmonak
Y2, Seat 1	Bill Alstrom	St. Marys
Y2, Seat 2	Mike Peters	Marshall
Y2, Seat 3	Stanley Sheppard	Mountain Village
Y3, Seat 1	Alfred Demientieff Jr.	Holy Cross
Y4, Seat 1	Fred Huntington Sr.	Galena
Y4, Seat 2	Robert Walker	Anvik
Y5, Seat 1	Charlie Wright	Rampart
Y5, Seat 2	Brooke Woods	Fairbanks
Y6, Seat 1	Dorothy Shockley	Manley Hot Springs
Y6, Seat 2	Victor Lord	Nenana
Koyukuk River	Darrel Vent	Huslia
Flats, Seat 1	Jan Woodruff	Eagle
Canadian		

Alternate Board Members

<u>District</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Community</u>
Coastal Alt 1	Richard Tuluk	Chevak
Coastal Alt 2	Clifford Kaganak Sr.	Scammon Bay
Y1, Alt 1	Marvin J. Okitkun	Kotlik
Y1, Alt 2		
Y2, Alt 1	Rex Nick	Pilot Station
Y2, Alt 2	William Riley	St. Mary's
Y3, Alt 1	Basil Larson	Russian Mission
Y4, Alt 1	Tommy Krista	Nulato
Y4, Alt 2		
Y5, Alt 1		
Y6, Alt 1	Philip Titus	Minto
Y6, Alt 2	Kathleen Demientieff	Nenana
Koyukuk River	Darrell Vent	Huslia
Flats, Alt 1	Rochelle Adams	Beaver/Ft. Yukon
Canadian		



I. Mission

YRDFA's mission is to protect and promote all wild fisheries and traditional cultures within the Yukon River drainage.

II. Vision & Core Values

Vision

Our vision is for a healthy and sustainable ecosystem with wild salmon fisheries and other resources for all people living along the Yukon River. We seek a set of fisheries management policies and protocols that are the product of integrated work by all stakeholders and which promote sustainability.

Core Values

- Sustain wild salmon fisheries and other natural resources in the Yukon River watershed;
- Maximize fishing opportunity for people living along the Yukon River;
- Promote understanding, communication and cooperation between fisheries users;
- Fair play, equity and sharing;
- Empower people and build their capacity to participate in fisheries management decision-making;
- Assist the people and the natural resources they depend on;
- Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.

III. Current Issues and Problems

The three key issues facing the Yukon River region at present are a declining salmon run, the lack of a coordinated, conservation-based fisheries plan for the Yukon River, and threats to community welfare from declining subsistence and commercial catches.

Chinook salmon returns are currently low on the Yukon River. The resultant declines in subsistence and commercial harvest threaten community welfare as sources of food and income are reduced or eliminated. The current management system does not address management of subsistence fisheries, as well as the needs of rebuilding the stocks, in these times of shortage. There are strong divisions and conflict between people and organizations from different areas, user groups and gear types. There is no river-wide structure, which includes all impacted stakeholders, including the tribes, for resolving conflicts. A lack of information about salmon biology and the Yukon River Salmon Agreement, and the perpetuation of misinformation, leads to a lack of understanding of management decisions and the need for conservation.

Yukon River salmon face threats from other fisheries and development. Bycatch of salmon in the Bering Sea pollock fishery is not sufficiently limited to protect Yukon River stocks from this significant source of mortality. Existing and new mining, oil and gas, road development and pipeline projects pose threats to Yukon River salmon and their habitat. These threats are not adequately analyzed, and many Yukon River residents are not aware of these threats. Multiple issues face Yukon River salmon in the marine environment, including offshore aquaculture and management of federal fisheries. These actions pose significant threats to Yukon River salmon singularly and collectively.

In addition, climate change is impacting Yukon River salmon in the marine and in-river environment. Limited information is available about how climate change is affecting Yukon River salmon. Yukon River communities are not strongly engaged in efforts to develop national and international policies and actions to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases.

Yukon River villages face broad economic and social problems including alcohol and drug abuse, suicide, out-migration, domestic abuse and loss of culture and identity. Traditional knowledge is being lost as the holders of this knowledge pass away. Alternate economic opportunities for cash income are limited in Yukon River communities, causing hardship in years when commercial salmon fisheries are limited. Alternate food sources to

provide substitutes for salmon in time of shortage have not been fully developed. Few Yukon River residents are employed in fisheries management jobs.

IV. Strategic Goals & Targets

Goal 1: Reduce river-wide conflict and coordinate a river-wide approach to fishers' and tribes' involvement in sustainable fisheries management.

Objectives

1. Develop and begin to implement a river-wide fisheries management approach for the Yukon River focused on rebuilding and maintaining a healthy Yukon River salmon fishery that has buy-in from all stakeholders including tribes;
2. Continue in-season teleconferences and fishery meetings to provide venues for coordinated, grassroots approaches to fisheries management;
3. Assess and adjust YRDEFA structure and processes to ensure coordination with all key stakeholders.

Goal 2: Reduce threats to Yukon River salmon and their habitat throughout their lifecycle.

Objectives

1. Reduce marine mortality by getting management measures in place to limit Chinook and chum bycatch in the Bering Sea pollock fishery;
2. Advocate for protection of Yukon River salmon in existing and new mining, oil and gas, road development and pipeline projects;
3. Advocate for protection of Yukon River salmon in the marine environment, including advocating against offshore aquaculture, hatchery production and monitoring federal fisheries management;
4. Address the impacts of climate change on Yukon River salmon through research and monitoring, and advocate for policies which will reduce climate change impacts;
5. Reduce marine debris and contamination throughout the Yukon River watershed.

Goal 3: Preserve the subsistence way of life and traditional/subsistence cultures of the Yukon River.

Objectives

1. Collect, document and compile Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) in a format in which it can be utilized in management decisions;
2. Collect and facilitate collection of subsistence harvest data to ensure management has accurate subsistence information on which to make decisions and to document changing harvest patterns and uses;
3. Create opportunities for Elders and youth to share and utilize TEK;
4. Provide resources for communities to develop alternate fisheries and food sources in times of salmon shortages to ensure community survival;
5. Develop alternate economic opportunities for villages to provide cash income in times of salmon short ages when commercial fisheries are curtailed;
6. Provide resources for communities to utilize renewable energy sources at fish camps and promote their ongoing success;
7. Continue and increase local hire programs to provide jobs for local residents in fisheries management.

Goal 4: Educate and provide accurate information to all Yukon River residents about salmon biology, management on the Yukon River, the Yukon River Salmon Agreement and issues affecting Yukon River salmon and their habitat.

Objectives

1. Include education sessions at every meeting YRDFA hosts (pre-season planning, annual meeting, etc.);
2. Provide accurate and current outreach about the salmon fisheries via paper newsletter and/or electronic news distribution;
3. Provide information and training to all board members, youth and other key village leaders to actively participate in fisheries activities, processing, jobs and civic engagement;
4. Improve understanding between upper and lower river Alaskans and Canadians through educational exchanges; involve 5-6 new fishers each year in Alaska/Canada exchange and 3-5 people in intra-Alaska exchange; ensure participants bring lessons learned to their communities and the Yukon River Panel;
5. Increase use of social media, measure effectiveness and adjust methods as appropriate;
6. Develop new outreach strategies as needed to keep people involved and supportive of a coordinated approach to sustainable fisheries management along the Yukon River.

V. Internal Capacity Needs

To meet these strategic goals YRDFA needs to develop the following internal capacity needs:

Fundraising

1. Expand the diversity and reliability of funding sources;
2. Develop and follow a fundraising plan;
3. Maintain relationships and renew current sources of funding;
4. Seek new ways to fundraise;
5. Determine best use of staff time for fundraising activities and designate and train responsible staff for fundraising/grant writing;
6. Train current staff for organizational marketing;
7. Assess best use of board resources for fundraising and increase board participation in fundraising;
8. Hire experienced contractors or new staff with fundraising skills to conduct fundraising activities when appropriate.

Membership

1. Develop a program to engage current and new Yukon River residents in YRDFA;
2. Improve services for current members of YRDFA;
3. Develop new ideas for bringing new people into YRDFA's programs and membership such as youth, tribes, municipalities, stakeholder organizations and others off the river;
4. Develop programs for integrating youth in the organization;
5. Evaluate effectiveness of membership program and re-design it as appropriate;
6. Develop a way to engage Anchorage, Fairbanks and Juneau residents and/or people nationwide.

Evaluation

1. Develop evaluation process for YRDFA goals and projects;
2. Evaluate current projects utilizing process
3. Gather information throughout lifecycle of projects.



AGENDA

**Annual Meeting
Anchorage, Alaska
April 30 - May 1, 2024
Hotel Captain Cook - Adventure Room
convening at 8:30 a.m. daily**

ZOOM registration: Click on the link below to register for the meeting. Once you are registered you will receive an email link to the meeting. The same link will be used for both days of the meeting.

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAuc-yvrj4vEtYhTYWxhg8Sjyw1TK5TTMIE>

PUBLIC COMMENTS: Public comments are welcome for each agenda item and those concerns not included on the agenda. The board appreciated hearing your concerns and knowledge. The Co-Chairs will identify the opportunities to provide public comments throughout the meeting.

PLEASE NOTE: The meeting will begin promptly at 8:30 a.m. The agenda is subject to change. Contact staff for the current schedule. Evening sessions are at the call of the Co-Chairs.

AGENDA

Invocation

Call to order

Roll Call and Establish Quorum

Review and Adopt Agenda (Action Item)

Approval of Meeting Minutes (Action Item)

- a. October 2-3, 2023 Annual Meeting

Guest introductions

Old Business

- b. Yukon River Fishery Disaster Updates
ADF&G Deputy Commissioner, Karla Bush
ADF&G Program Coordinator, Darion Jones

New Business

- c. Yukon River Pre-season Fishery Report - ADF&G and USFWS

- i. Summer Season

ADF&G Yukon Area Summer Season Manager, Deena Jallen

- ii. Fall Season

ADF&G Yukon Area Fall Season Manager, Christy Gleason

- iii. U.S. Fish and Wildlife

USFWS Yukon River Subsistence Fishery Manager, Holly Carroll

USFWS Yukon River Assistant Manager and Tribal Liaison, Keith Herron

USFWS Yukon River Fishery Assessment Biologist, Shane Ransbury

USFWS Yukon River Assessment Biologist, Scott Walker

- iv. Yukon River Assessment Project Updates

Yukon River Chinook Salmon Telemetry Project

ADF&G Yukon Summer Season Assistant, Josh Clark

d. Paralytic Shellfish Poisoning (PSP)

Bruce Wright, Knik Tribe Chief Scientist

e. Thiamine Deficiency and Metabolic Stressors- USGS, ADF&G, NOAA, YR DFA

ADF&G, Salmon Ocean Ecology Program, Dr. Katie Howard

f. Yukon River Commercial Permit Buy Back Discussion

Ragnar Alstrom, YDFDA

DAY 2: May 1, 2024 8:30 a.m.

New Business Continued...

g. Yukon River Agreement - Canadian-origin Yukon River Chinook Salmon for 2024 through 2030

h. Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association Bylaw Revisions (Action Item)

i. Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association Personnel Policy Revision (Action Item)

Resolutions

j. 24-01 - Reduce Yukon River Chum Salmon Discards in the Alaska Peninsula Area M Fishery

k. 24-02 - Pollock Fishery Conservation of Yukon River salmon

l. 24-03 - Reduce Salmon output of Private Nonprofit Corporation Hatchery (PNP) Production within Alaska

m. 24-04 - 2023 Yukon River Fisheries Disaster Declaration Request

n. 24-05 - Protecting the Yukon River: Concern Oil & Gas Development in the Yukon Flats

o. 24-06 - Ongoing Increased Impact in Lieu of Climate Change on Yukon River Salmon

Report

p. Board Reports

q. Financial Report

r. Program Reports

Elections/Election of Officers

s. Board of Directors Elections

t. Alternate Elections

u. Election of Officers

Future Meeting Dates

April 22-23, 2025

Closing Comments

Executive Session

v. Executive Director Evaluation

Adjourn



Board Meeting Minutes

October 2-3, 2023

October 2, 2023

1. Invocation

- a. Moment of Silence for Alternate Board Member Dick Evans - Galena

2. Call to order

Lower River Co-Chair Bill Alstrom calls the meeting to order at 8:54 am.

Upper River Co-Chair Victor Lord does invocation. Moment of silence for Dick Evans and for a fisherman from Nenana who is missing in the river.

3. Roll Call and Establish Quorum

In attendance: Stanley Pete, Paul Andrews, Bill Alstrom, Stanley Sheppard, Alfred Demientieff, Victor Lord, Jan Woodruff, Richard Tuluk, Marvin Okitikun, John Strongheart, Rex Nick, William Riley, Robert Walker, Julie Hyslop, Phillip Titus, Kathleen Demientieff, Darrell Vent, Rochelle Adams.

Excused absence - Lester Wilde, Fred Huntington, Richard Burnham, Charlie Wright, Brooke Wright, Pollock Simon, Sr.

Unexcused absence- Allen Hansen, Mike Peters, Dorthy Shockley, Basil Larsen

Quorum established.

4. Review and Adopt Agenda

Stanley Sheppard moved to adopt agenda, seconded by Paul Andrews, no discussion. All in favor. None opposed. Agenda approved.

5. Approval of Meeting Minutes

- a. April 8, 2022 (Annual Meeting)

Jan Woodruff moved to approve minutes of April 8, 2022, seconded by Stanley Sheppard. Kathleen Demientieff asked for some time to read it. Time allocated to read minutes. All in favor. None opposed. Minutes of April 8, 2022 approved.

- b. December 21, 2022 (Special Board Meeting)

Alfred Demientieff moved to approve minutes of December 21, 2022, seconded by Stanley Sheppard. All in favor. None opposed. Minutes of December 21, 2022 approved.

6. Elections/Election of Officers

- a. Board of Directors Elections - open seats

Y1 Seat 2 - Stanley Pete nominates John Strongheart. Paul Andrews Seconds. John Strongheart accepts nominations. Bill Alstrom calls for a motion for John Strongheart to serve in District Y1, Seat 2. Alfred Demientieff makes a motion to nominate John Strongheart, Stanley Pete Seconds. Stan Sheppard calls the question. All in favor, none opposed. Motion passes.

Y2 Seat 2- Mike Peters would like to retain his seat on the board. Stanley Sheppard makes a motion to appoint Mike Peters to Y2 Seat 2, Jan Woodruff seconds. All in favor, none opposed. Motion passes.

Y4 Seat 2- Richard Burnham is retiring. District Y4 Alternate Robert Walker accepts to retain the seat for the remaining term. Kathleen Deminentieff moves to accept Robert Walker, Alfred Demientieff seconds. All in favor, none opposed. Motion passes.

Koyukuk River - Pollock Simon Sr. is stepping down, Koyukuk Alternate, Darrell Vent accepts to retain the seat. Kathleen Demientieff moves to accept Darrell Vent for Koyukuk seat, Jan Woodruff seconds. All in favor, none opposed. Motion passes.

Yukon Flats. -Jan Woodruff would like to retain her seat on the board. Robert Walker moved to accept Jan Woodruff as Yukon Flats seat, Alfred Demientieff seconded. All in favor, none opposed. Motion passes.

b. Alternate Elections

Alt Coastal Seat 2- Richard Tuluk nominated Clifford Kaganak. Richard Tuluk would reach out to Clifford Kaganak to get an acceptance.

Y2 Alt 2 - William Riley would like to retain his seat. Stanley Pete made a motion to retain William Riley as District Y2 Alternate Seat 2, Jan Woodruff seconded. All in favor, none opposed. Motion passes.

Y4 Alt 1- Motion made to table nomination for Y4 Alternate 1 and Alternate 2. Stanley Pete moved, seconded by Jan Woodruff. All in favor, none opposed. Motion passes.

Koyukuk Alt - No alternates nominated. Seat remains open.

Flats Alt - Rochelle Adams accepts to retain her seat. Jan Woodruff makes a Motion to retain Rochelle Adams as Flats Alternate seat. Alfred Demientieff seconds. All in favor, none opposed. Motion passes.

Coastal Alt 1 - Stan Sheppard makes a motion to accept Clifford Kanagak as Coastal Alternate. Jan Woodruff seconds. All in favor, none opposed. Motion passes.

c. Election of Officers

Downriver Co-chair - Stan Sheppard nominates William Alstrom Jan Seconds. All in favor, none opposed. Motion passes.

Upriver Co-chair - Jan Woodruff makes a motion to accept Victor Lord in as Upriver Chair. William Riley seconds. All in favor, none opposed. Motion passes.

Secretary- Jan Woodruff makes a motion to vote Stanislaus Sheppard as Secretary. Stanley Pete seconds. All in favor, none opposed. Stanley Sheppard is secretary.

Treasurer - Stanley Pete makes Motion to open nominations for treasurer. Jan Woodruff seconds. Alfred Demientieff nominates Jan Woodruff. Jan Woodruff accepts. Stan Pete makes motion to close nominations seconded by Stanley Sheppard Seconds. Motion passes.

Co-Chair Bill Alstrom suggested a break at 10:15 a.m. Meeting was called back to order at 10:53 am.

7. Reports

a. Board Reports

Alfred Demientieff: Fish was given to people from other places. We did not fish this year. Some people cut the fish given and put it in our smokehouse. It was a rough year. Everyone was happy for the fish they got.

Robert Walker: I don't really like to ask questions about how things are done in our way because I'm a tribal chief. Sometimes I get a knock on my door and there will be salmon. I was fortunate to get six salmon. We do have some people to take fish, not for themselves. We get a lot of fresh water fish, mostly for ceremonial food. For Fridays we have salmon. Russian Orthodox eat fish twice a week.

Richard Tuluk- Got reports from Hooper Bay that they were using 4" nets for fishing but they didn't get lucky. The families got their needs met by putting some fish away including Chevak. It's been hard. In Chevak, our stocks are a little different from Yukon. We try to follow all the regulations given to us. Most families got what they needed for the year put away.

Rochelle Adams - My family wasn't able to fish this year. Were gifted fish from a family from Homer. Was happy to share the fish with potluck and cultural camp in Nenana. My sister's kids had never cut fish before. Charlie Wright and Eva were showing us how to cut fish. Even though it was different and frozen, we were still happy. My uncles in Nenana were happy to see fish. I was really proud of that. The value of sharing, I was able to put up and jar some fish. I hadn't seen this on the Yukon at all. It was really weighing on my mind. There is a void in our life. The month of July, the month of King Salmon. If we aren't living in that month, we don't know what it is. There was not enough fish for us but we were gifted fish. Even though it's not the same, it's still



got value from sharing. I see a lot of disheartment, sorrow, and apathy. I hope more people can become involved. I don't think our needs were met at all. It's turning into a larger wound every year. It also makes me feel like we need to be in the spaces of mgmt, and have our voices heard. The more we can educate, the better. Bring young ppl in. Just appreciate being able to have some bites of fish this year.

Dorothy Shockley - It was a very discouraging and sad summer as far as fishing goes in our area. I did go to the Yukon in the first week of July with a 4" mesh. Unfortunately I was not able to put it in because we were just there for a few days. Tanana River was really high this year so there wasn't much fishing there either. My daughter was able to go to the Kenai River and she got 12 reds. Her daughters are 12 and 13. We cut them together. I was not on the YR DFA teleconference calls this year. I had a hard time. Didn't want to hear the managers, the so-called managers, the harvest managers, tell us we could not fish. It was very discouraging. Really thinking about our Native ways, our spiritual ways, our connection with the river and with the salmon. We have a great opportunity to really do something. We have this connection and we need to use it for our benefit. We have to stop trying to do things that are part of the western culture. We have to look at our history to move forward. State management, to me, is the reason for where we are today. The mismanagement. We need to look at that and figure out how to move forward. We need to reconnect with the river and the fish. We cannot continue doing what we are doing because it is not working. We have to stop thinking about the western way.

Paul Andrews - We're the 1st ones to see the salmon come in. We need to fight for all of us here. We are all together. Somebody is not doing their job right. They are in control. We are all from the river. NPFMC are the ones killing us off. Our salmon are gone. We are under regulation. Why can't we put regulations on them? I've heard a lot of your testimony coming in. I know a lot about hunting and fishing. I pass this onto my kids and grandkids. We need to fight. We are losing. I am speaking for everyone. The whole river.

Stanislaus Sheppard - Good morning board, staff. I was born and raised in Mountain Village. I live a subsistence lifestyle. Whenever there was commercial fishing, I was involved in that too. Not too much to report from our area. I've seen and heard, and lot of people calling me about dipnetting on the lower Yukon Districts 1 and 2. Some people were able to pay for the outrageous gas prices and get some with the dip nets. 8-10 people from the community had 4" nets set out, 60 feet. Reports of a few fish here and there. We are blessed in a way because through the Tribe, the lower Yukon test fishery, not only Emmonak and Pilot Station are participating in the test net for the fall season. They are fortunate enough to be catching salmon. They make an announcement after their tests are done, they would say how many fish they got, people would go down and get some fish. Sometimes they would get 80 fish in the test nets. I've been kinda really upset. We all know gravel is the spawning beds for all salmon. I've been trying to keep it open with 6" or less. Salmon don't spawn in weeds. Its whitefish, pike, lush. Someday I'd like to see restrictions lifted so we can go back to our traditional ways. My family used to say we need to harvest more for the animals to return. We thank Ellam Yua, the person who cares for the land, water, and sky.

Stanley Pete - Numan Iqua, "Yuung naterrluci", try to be human. In these last few years we've seen a loss of faith for people in our region. Regardless of what management says, we need to live. The regulatory process is not working. It does not benefit our people. How do people meet their needs when they can't reach their needs for well being? It's disheartening to see a collapse of something that once thrived. There's no more fish camps, family bonding time, no structure in the family, no one goes out to fish. The need to catch a moose - there's more pressure to catch a moose. More harvesting of non-salmon species. It turned a community of sharing into hoarders. I see it. It made our people envious of one another. The have and the have nots. A culture completely erased. The loss of salmon has far reaching effects. Years ago I tried to set a motion that we meet our cultural and spiritual needs. I was told we can't fulfill those needs. We are resilient people. We're learning more than ever to be influencers in the mgmt area. We can be more involved in the regulatory process. Assure the people at home that we're trying. It's been a hard summer, lots of wet weather. A lot of the villages had wet weather, the whole of July.

Dorothy Shockley asked that State and Federal managers leave the room.

[Deena and Shane Ranesbury left the room. Gabe and Serena created a separate room for state and federal staff online]

John Strongheart- As far as I know I tried hard for our communities. According to the ADF&G regulations, we can't go out and fish as much as we used to. Our kids aren't learning our tradition of eating dry fish. Most of the time we get sheefish. That's what's out there.

Jan Woodruff- I'm not a public speaker. Very grateful for folks that showed up today. When I walked in the room today, I hoped the next meeting had better attendance. The issues we talk about are really important. The fishing in our area was non-existent. We don't have a large population of whitefish in our area. The Tanana Chiefs Conference did distribute a bunch of reds from Bristol Bay. It was distributed to elders first then to everyone else. At least we have fish for the winter. We do not have a large population of moose. We are on the road system. Only a handful of residents caught a moose this year. 15,304 kings went through sonar. Fall chum 16,132 as of the end of Sept. This is not sustainable. Each time we talk about this issue, it's not sustainable to get a return. The By-catch, kings alone and chum would be enough for every family to have a few fish that they're used to. The issue isn't going away. We need to start working to do something about that. The other issue is the climate issue. The river being above temp is not good for the fish. The fish must be running later in the year. Thank everyone that is here. Please encourage everyone in your area to get involved. Strength in numbers. Get everyone involved.

William Riley- We had the privilege of dip netting this year. After fish and game let a run of summer chums go by which were abundant this year. We got a few fish. Thank God my granddaughters helped me. With management and trawlers taking over, we have no say in what is going on. With the millions and millions of cod that gets taken. We need our sustainable food. What will it be next year, we don't know? We just hope that the chums come back so we can go out fishing. Now we have out of state hunters coming out to the Yukon. Look at upriver, Holy Cross area; they lost a lot of moose due to guides bringing millions of hunters. What are we going to do next? We need to speak up. We already have major restrictions on our fish. Very limited to get fish. Not many restrictions on our moose hunting. How long will that last? We need to fight as one to get what we need.

Bill Alstrom - I'd like to reiterate what everyone is saying. I used to be a commercial fisherman. Not anymore. My grandchildren fish for me and my wife. In the many years I've lived on the Yukon, I've seen the fish disintegrate. We don't harvest the way we used to. I depend on my grandchildren, my son. My daughters help us put up fish. What I'm trying to say is, like so many board members mentioned, we're so regulated. We have restrictions, all sorts of restrictions. We are the most regulated fishing in the area. The Area M fisheries, they had meetings and we testified. We got all shot down, only one barely passed. That's the root of all our problems. We have to continue to fight. People on BOF - money talks. It was disheartening. We walked away from that meeting like we lost a battle. It was hard to tell your people that we didn't do it, we failed. We go out and fish. We depend on the fish, that's our livelihood. That's the way we grew up. Go out, put up fish, it sustains. Years have gone by and things started changing. They cut our hours down, they cut everything in between. We have to put up with all these regulations. We knew how much fish to take for our needs and for our families. It's really something to see our people get all these regulations and they're all against us, the people that survive on the river.

Robert Walker makes a motion to amend the agenda to vote in District Y4 Alternate Tommy Kriska. 2nd by Stanley Sheppard. All in favor, none opposed. Agenda amended.

Stanislaus Sheppard moved to accept Tommy Krista to serve as District Y4 Alternate. Jan Woodruff seconds. All in favor, none opposed. Motion passed.

Victor Lord - Just wanted to say fishing - I didn't fish much but got some Tanana fish. It was good to eat. I smoked them and ate them. Fish given to me by another fisherman. Return a fish that I once gave out to someone. I gave out to Bristol Bay, Yukon. It works in a big circle. I'm glad people remember me. We'd really like to get our fish back. Maybe a new approach. We're at battle. One thing I wanted to say, The state department of fish and game was asked to leave, that's good. Ever since that meeting we had with Proposal 140, we got shot down. The State of Alaska fish biologists, from what I can hear they weren't affecting our fish or this or that. they got almost 1M fish and we lost 1M fish. The commissioner wasn't on our side. Subsistence was not a priority. Back in the day, the state didn't recognize us for subsistence. When the first fish gets caught, everyone helps out and people kind of celebrate.



Those days were good times. Maybe we'll have them once again. I have Kathleen helping me out and getting more involved. It isn't over yet.

Fred Huntington- At the Board of Fisheries I testified against Area M. It did not go our direction. Lots of issues still of concern. I fished last fall until freeze up. There was no whitefish or very little. We used to catch 300-400 whitefish a day in one net. This year, no. There are very few whitefish left. It's not only salmon that the Bering Sea fisheries are getting, it's also whitefish. When we passed ANSCA, those guys who signed it gave away our aboriginal rights. I always protested it because those who signed it, claimed to be representing us. But they were pressured by the government and the wealth of the North Slope. When ANILCA it reinstated subsistence use on Federal lands. Before that bill was signed, there was nothing on the books about subsistence. Our livelihood was replaced by subsistence today. On federal public lands you have the right to hunt and fish with the federal government protecting your rights. There was a case in Marshall, the state trooper who did the citation, told Fred that the case was dropped. The case was pulled. Just want to say I appreciate everything. We are in an uphill battle to get any fish back for us to be fishing.

Marvin Okitkun- I grew up in a time when we had subsistence fishing. It was me, 5-10 year old child, and my parents in the 30s and my grandparents in the 50s. We would go out subsistence fishing, it would take one tide to get our subsistence needs for 5 families. We are not wiping out the whole population of fish/escapement. We fish [only] one tide. As I became an adult and I had children and drifting took over. My parents would go out with my kids when I was busy at home working. They would go out and fish, set a net and drift for 15 minutes. That was more than enough for 3-4 families as we share. That happened for my whole working life. We would go out and get our needs in 15 minutes.

Rex Nick- I'm trying to think about what everyone's been talking about. Just before king salmon and chum closed. Trying to make sense of what everyone is saying is not easy. I'm new to this board. We were here first, this is our land. We're here long, thousands of years ago. Everyone from Ak, from ancestors and today. Yupik, Cupik - we're all one people. During commercial seasons - used to hear people arguing. Look at us now, working together to save our fish. We're the most regulated people. I think we're getting punished for something the trawlers should get punished for. Moose hunting was shut down, look at Kuskokwim. Caribou hunting shut down there. Our fishing is pretty much closed but trawlers are still fishing. They should be shut down for at least several years then see what happens. Our people just take what we need to survive. If we can shut down trawlers Area M or wherever shut down for five years and see what happens. If and when the time comes, we're fighting for fish/moose, I'll tell ADF&G off. Area M slowing them down will not be enough, shutting them down is what is needed.

Kathleen Demientieff- [I agree with] what Rex was saying. So we try to go get our subsistence [fish]. [The] big thing [we are concerned about] is there are no whitefish. My brothers fished all through the summer and finally last week they got 3 whitefish. Now the state is mismanaging our area. We are not even on the Yukon but on the Tanana [River]. [Fishery managers say] we cannot fish until Oct 30, for our 24 hrs/7 days a week [fishing opportunity]. It's cold out there and snowing [at that time]. We need to figure out how to fight to shut down the trawlers. The people in our legislature are not good.

Phillip Titus- The fish are pretty smart, there's no regulation during the winter time. What will we do when there's no more fish?

Julie Roberts-Hyslop- I was thinking about the number of years that I have been involved within my tribe, within my region, within the state and even nationwide. I've been trying to make myself unavailable, but when it comes to food, this is something that is very very important. Concerns, all of the things that you have said, I heard each and every one of you. I appreciate each and every one of you for taking the time out of your life to make sure that our resources are going to continue into the future. I want to thank Stan Zurary for his efforts. I want to thank Richard Burnham. Also Pollock Simon Sr. for his many years of service. As a tribal leader, [I've] always been concerned about the State of Alaska and the way that they do not represent all of Alaska residents in a fair manner.

Basil Larsen - Food security is important. It's pretty bad. It wiped out the moose population. Russian Mission has been a hotspot for moose, and has been happening for years. Few years back there was a bad accident. We haven't been able to fish for the past few years. We've doubled harvesting to make up for the big void that's missing. Food security around here has gotten hard and unusual. Management for the last 20 years the numbers keep getting worse. We are not the problem.

Bill Alstrom -These reports are very good. One thing is lacking and that is climate change. We have a few members here who are aware of that.

b. Financial Report

See Report. Page 20 in meeting booklet

Alfred Demientieff makes a motion to approve the budget. Jan Woodruff seconds. All in favor, none opposed. Finance report approved.

c. Program Report

See Staff Report

Public Comment

Co-Chair Bill Alstrom calls a recess at 4:51pm. Resume at 9:00 a.m. tomorrow morning, October 3, 2023.

October 3, 2023

8. Public Comment

Frances Thompson - Robert, Victor, Bill Ragnar, Julie you guys have been on the board and fisheries meetings since they started. You guys were about 35-45 years old. We've become the oldest ones on this board fighting for conservation. I'd like to thank you guys for your dedicated service. Still continuing in the high seas in the trawling fishery and intercept fishery in Area M. This year was very bad for the fourth year. Something to consider besides conservation, look for compensation.

Bill Alstrom- For the last 4-5 years we haven't been out there fishing. Our kids aren't getting the experience of putting up fish. It's getting really hard for us to explain why we are not fishing.

Roll Call: Gabe Canfield does roll call 9:10am

present - Stanley Pete, Paul Andrews, Bill Alstrom, Stansiluas Sheppard, Alfred Demientieff, Fred Huntington Sr, Brooke Woods (online), Victor Lord, Jan Woodruff

Alternate- Richard Tuluk, William Riley, Basil Larsen (on phone), Robert Walker, Julie Roberts-Hyslop, Phillip Titus, Kathleen Demientieff, Rochelle Adams

Absent excused - Lester Wilde, Mike Peters, Richard Burnham, Charlie Wright, Dorothy Shockley, Pollock Simon,

Absent - Allen Hansen, Marvin Okitkun, Rex Nick

Public Introductions:

Zach Liller, Scott Walker (online), Fred West ADFG, Mtn Village guest, Deena Jallen ADFG, Josh Clark, Jayde Ferguson, Bonnie Borba, Christy Gleason, Tiffany Andrew, Max Agayar, Ragnar Alstrom, Liz Lee (gene conservation lab), Mory Clinton?? (UAF), Shane Ransbury (ADF&G fall season asst manager), ?? - film guy, Frances Thompson (St Marys)

Public Comment cont'd:

Frances Thompson, St. Mary's - when we were cutting fish when dipnetting I Was sitting on the beach at our camp and watching my wife and granddaughter. I watched my granddaughter asking if she can help. It was good to see. I hope it continues through the years. Something about climate change. I know it's affecting the salmon out in the high seas. Our battle is with the trawling industry. Keep focused on the trawling and intercept fishery. We can't be shifting blame but when we go to address the trawling



and intercept - they might say we said it was climate change. If you guys support it we need to see what it will do. This is going to be ongoing.

Sven Paukan- I have some council members with me. Thank you YR DFA and what they are doing now. Good to hear the other projects going on. Something on my mind. If the board is willing to move up the agenda. Bycatch is a big thing around here. YR DFA's efforts with the teleconference is a good idea. So I can listen in to these anchorage meetings. Kudos to Serena and her staff.

Victor Lord - Reasons why we wanted to report on climate and bycatch. The numbers are critical to what we are dealing with the survival of our fish.

Jan Woodruff - I touched on this yesterday. What I have to say is going to be unpopular. it's something I want the board to soul search and think about. There's a book about the cod industry and how they crashed the cod. It's called Cod. the numbers we've had the last few years, the biologist say these numbers going past the sonar, that's not sustainable for future wild stock. I'm putting this to the board, if you truly want to save the wild stock, you need to push for the threatened species list. I'm saying this because after the disastrous meeting last fall with concerned people from all over Alaska and you were essentially blown off. as long as it's a billion dollar industry, but if you push for a threatened species, they can't be ignored. Please think about that, it's time.

Brooke Wright- Good morning everyone. Thank you Mr Co-chair and Chair for letting me make comments. So sorry I was not able to attend yesterday. I had some family commitments. Thank everyone for their time, having good conversations and making decisions on behalf of our tribes and our children. I am not able to attend NPFMC this year. Please sign up for testimony. 3 minutes goes by so quickly but putting your comments on record. The things you are sharing here can also be shared at the Council. Like Jan said, there were over 200 public comments and testimony from Elders, experienced long standing fishermen, and there was no action. The dynamics that are against us makes it so challenging for us to have real meaningful action at the Council. If climate change is devastating our salmon then we really need to take control with what is happening with other fisheries. If we can't control climate change we can control harvest and bycatch. When you look at escapement number, every salmon counts. % of what makes it back to Alaska helps the biodiversity of our salmon, future harvest for our people. What I thought was critical with testimony. The regulations are not aligning with the weather. so many people did not get their moose. My family did not get a moose. It scares me to not have enough healthy proteins for my family. Being in the city, I am not able to live in my village. It is hard to not have salmon, moose. We do not have alternate resources from the land. We don't have much here in the interior. Our neighbors have marine mammals to depend on. Also, wanted to mention the 40 caribou hunt, which I feel is insane, when the state quota is met that hunt is shut down. I am happy the fed let s the village stay open. There was a gentleman from Alabama, a federal qualified friend said, how are you hunting? The state hunt is closed. Alabama man said once quota is met for residents, it doesn't matter for out of state folks. I did reach out to subsistence but have not received a call back. I am a solution based person, when there is an inequity for our people, I just want to stand up and do something.

Alfred Demientieff Holy Cross, Y3 - I came on behalf of my community. big concern about the king salmon. everybody at area M, bristol bay. they're getting the same salmon that's going to the Yukon. we're getting cut off. our elders got caught off. They want us to get salmon but we're cut off. There's fish coming to the yukon but we're cut off. there should be some way to get a piece of that for our elders. That's my concern. Thank you.

Darrell Vent - Huslia - We used to see a lot of Caribou in our area. Took about 4-5 days for the caribou to arrive. We used to see a lot of salmon. A lot, our nets were full. Now moose, These people do it for money. We don't do it for money. We live on it. We are going to be looking at moose and say, why is it so hard to get. They put the pipeline road in and then they opened up caribou hunting along the pipeline road. Then they opened up fishing out in the ocean. Then the salmon disappeared. We still have some sheep. We got a lot of native people here. We want to work together but we don't know how. We want to be advocates. I'm taking classes now to learn how to be an advocate. I've been to Bristol Bay, I went to Copper Center. We need to work together. They took our big salmon, now we need to figure out how to make them pay for it. We got all these groups - YR DFA<

Tribal commission, etc. But we are not all together. We have to get together in order to solve this problem. Our people really depend on us. We live on that land. We have to fight for it.

Fred Huntington - When you plant a seed you take care of that seed so it can grow. We've been battling this problem for a while. We've been going around in a circle all these years. I see some things we can do and have the power to do. Our grant writers have been funding this organization all these years. One thing I'm getting at is something we don't have available to us compared to Bering Sea Fisheries, the pollock fishery has hundreds of hundreds of lawyers. If we have an attorney available some of these issues may be brought up in a fashion that our grandkids may have something. The recovery of salmon right now is pretty dire.

Bill Alstrom - Make another comment. I'm a stickler for climate change. I mentioned yesterday. It's happening right now. We see it, we're living it. You see in your community and look around. it's happening under our feet.

Old Business

- a. 2020 and 2021 Fishery Disaster Updates
ADF&G Deputy Commissioner, Rachel Baker
SEE REPORT

9. New Business

- a. Yukon River Post Season Fishery Report - ADF&G and USFWS
 - i. Summer Season
ADF&G Yukon Area Summer Season Manager, Deena Jallen
USFWS, Scott Walter

SEE REPORT

- b. Fall Season
ADF&G Yukon Area Fall Season Manager, Christy Gleason
USFWS, Holly Carroll

SEE REPORT

- c. Yukon River Chinook and Coho Telemetry Project - ADF&G
ADF&G Yukon Summer Season Assistant, Josh Clark
ADF&G Yukon Fall Season Biologist, Bonnie Borba

SEE REPORT

Meeting started - 1:14pm

- d. Yukon River Chinook Salmon Ichthyophonous Project - ADF&G and USFWS
USFWS Fish Biologist, Scott Walter
ADF&G Research Coordinator, Zachary Liller
Zach give presentation

SEE REPORT

- d. Status of Yukon River Salmon Genetic Baselines - ADF&G
ADF&G Gene Conservation Lab, Elizabeth Lee

SEE REPORT

Break

2:53pm back to session

Jan moves to amend the agenda to allow Gale Vick to give her presentation, Stan Sheppard seconds. All in favor, none opposed. Agenda amended.

- e. Bristol Bay/Arctic/Yukon/Kuskokwim Coalition
Karen Gillis & Gale Vick



- f. Alaska Hatchery Overview Presentation
Gale Vick

SEE REPORT

- g. Marine Research Update - ADF&G and Salmon Ocean Ecology Program
ADF&G, Salmon Ocean Ecology Program, Sabrina Garcia

- h. Bycatch Update - NPFMC

SEE REPORT given by Gabe Canfield.

Stanley Sheppard moved to amend the agenda to go to resolutions, Jan Woodruff seconded. All in favor, none opposed. Agenda amended.

10. Resolutions

- a. 23-01 - Call to Reduce Yukon River Chum Salmon Discards in Area M Fishery
- b. 23-02 - Pollock Fishery Conservation of Yukon River salmon
- c. 23-03 - Reduce Salmon output of Private Nonprofit Corporation Hatchery (PNP) Production within Alaska
- d. 23-04 - Support Yukon River current Interim Management Goals of 42,500-55,000 for one full life cycle
- e. 23-05 - 2022-2023 Extending Yukon River Fisheries Disaster Declaration Request
- f. 23-06 - Protecting the Yukon River: Opposing Oil & Gas Development in the Yukon Flats

Robert Walker makes a motion to table resolutions to Spring Annual Meeting, seconded by Alfred Demientieff. All in favor, none opposed. Resolutions tabled.

11. Additional Reports

- a. Yukon River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission
Shannon Erhart
- b. Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee
Monica Krieger

Serena - They will not be presenting at this time.

- c. Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association
Ragnar Alstrom

Ragnar - respectfully request that you take up my report at your spring meeting. I am very proud of the projects we do. Most are complete except Bering Cisco and Lamprey.

- d. Bering Sea Fishermen's Association
Karen Gillis

Serena - Karen Gillis had to step away, she had other obligations.

12. Future Meeting Dates

April 30 and May 1, 2024. In Anchorage.

13. Closing Comments

Bill Alstrom- Thank everyone that participated. Also the staff that put this meeting together, they sure did a good job and the good food that was provided.

Victor Lord- Sure a nice place to have a meeting. I like the Dimond center but over here is a little closer to us. I like visiting with those guys, Ragnar, Gale, and Marit. Thank you very much.

Bill Alstrom- Also like to thank the Board of Fisheries Chairwoman for attending our meeting.

Robert Walker- Thank you staff, cooks, board members, new members, I've been around a long time and been

to a lot of meetings. Very productive. Ensure our Tribal people have everything they need. Also the State for coming and doing their reports too. See you April 30th.

Richard Tuluk - Thank you all the staff for making sure we got here safely and for giving me this experience.

Rochelle Adams- Masi cho. Thank you everyone, I know I'm like a baby on the board, but I really learn a lot and I really like sitting amongst you. I feel like you are all my uncles. I feel at home with all of you. Safe travels.

Darrell Vent - Good evening everyone. I'm happy I'm here and that I'm on the board here. I do have some words. I let you know what I think and what I feel. When I was young I grew up in a camp and I lived among the animals. That's your playground, your backyard. When you want to find an answer you think about it. You talk to your friends. I just hope to help in any way I can. I'm on a few boards, I sure enjoy this board. I haven't seen them in a long time.

Paul Andrews - Thank you everyone for getting me over here. I learned a lot from everyone. Thanks for letting me be on the board.

Stanislaus Sheppard - I enjoyed this meeting very much, it was very informational. Thank you to the staff, good place to stay close to the meeting place. I will try to do my best to be a secretary for YRDFA.

Stanley Pete- I am very grateful to be here. I honestly enjoy representing the people from my region. Being the light bearer and representing the people we represent.

John Strongheart - Very happy to be here, first time being here in Anchorage for a meeting. I am hoping to learn a lot more about it and get into it. If I have any questions, I will ask Stanley here. Thank you to the staff for getting me here too.

Basil Larsen - You probably heard me barking on the teleconference for the last few years. That's how I got my foot in the door through YRDFA, through the Inseason Salmon Survey program. Once you see the big picture, you realize we are not the problem and we want you guys to fix the problem. We are all on the same page. I am a little younger, born in the 80s, compared to you guys. I am missing 20 years but I am in it for longer. No one wants the fish back more than the people on the Yukon River. Even the managers. This meeting rolled real well. It had a bunch of information. We are struggling out here like everyone else. The water is so high that the whitefish haven't come out of the lakes yet. I set a 4" net there every fall and we never got any grayling. This year there was a little more summer chum than expected. There were no bear attacks on humans. There was more than one local that got attacked by a bear as they were walking into the meadow. They had to put the bear down. We see the change and we noticed the bears act differently when different food sources are available or unavailable. The moose population did take a hit. The seasonal food, we just increased the amount that we usually get to make up for no fish. Thanks.

Serena- I'd like to thank the board for being the best board I've ever worked for. You guys do a great job. I went to a lot of villages this summer and there were no boats and it was strange to not see fish. Thank you for representing people in your communities. Your voices need to be heard. I think we are getting louder, I think we should start hollering.

14. Executive Session

- a. Executive Director Evaluation

15. Adjourn





Agreement of April 1, 2024 regarding Canadian-origin Yukon River Chinook Salmon for 2024 through 2030

The following agreement between Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (hereafter referred to as “the Parties”) concerning Canadian-origin Yukon River Chinook salmon shall apply to the period from April 2024 through 2030.

Recognizing the persistent decline of Chinook salmon has resulted in an inability to meet conservation objectives and provide benefits to the fisheries of both countries, the Parties agree to:

1. Implement a suspension of directed Chinook commercial, sport, domestic, and personal use fisheries in the mainstem Yukon River and Canadian tributaries for one full life cycle (seven years). This suspension will remain in effect regardless of run abundance.
2. Implement over the duration of this seven-year period a Rebuilding Target of 71,000 Canadian-origin Chinook salmon (international border passage). After 2030, unless the Parties choose to continue to use this Rebuilding Target, adopt a biologically-based escapement goal or implement a different goal, the Parties shall use the Interim Management Escapement Goal of 42,500 – 55,000 Canadian-origin Chinook salmon.
3. Over this seven-year period directed subsistence fishing for Chinook salmon in the mainstem Yukon River and Canadian tributaries will be closed except when the bilateral inseason estimate of Canadian-origin international border passage, accounting for enroute mortality, is projected to exceed 71,000 based on Pilot Station sonar. In this circumstance, the Parties may consider providing limited subsistence fishing opportunity.
4. Recognizing the importance of Chinook salmon for ceremonial use and the transmission of cultural knowledge, the Parties may, at their discretion, provide limited harvest opportunity for these purposes.
5. Alaska shall continue to minimize incidental harvest of Chinook salmon in all other mainstem Yukon River fisheries over this seven-year period.
6. The Parties place a priority on stock assessment and on scientific research on the health of Yukon River Chinook salmon to better understand the causes of low run abundances and identify possible solutions. Such stock assessment and scientific research programs shall be discussed jointly by the Parties at Yukon River Panel and Joint Technical Committee meetings. Over this seven-year period, the take of Chinook for scientific research purposes shall be minimized and non-lethal sampling methods shall be used where possible.
7. The Parties place a priority on traditional and local ecological knowledge research on the health of Yukon River Chinook salmon to better understand the causes of low run abundances and to identify possible solutions. Such traditional and local ecological knowledge research shall be discussed jointly by the Parties at the Yukon River Panel and Traditional Knowledge Committee meetings.



8. In accordance with Pacific Salmon Treaty Chapter 8 provisions, during this seven-year period the Yukon River Panel shall develop a rebuilding plan for Yukon River mainstem Chinook salmon.
9. In accordance with Pacific Salmon Treaty Chapter 8, section 12, Alaska will maintain efforts to increase the in-river run of Yukon River origin Chinook salmon by reducing marine catches and bycatches of Yukon River origin salmon to the extent practicable.
10. In the absence of fisheries, the status of Chinook salmon has continued to be depressed and reflects the long-term cumulative effects of other factors, particularly habitat degradation resulting from resource and hydroelectric development, competition from hatchery production, cyclic natural phenomena, and large scale environmental variability affecting both marine and freshwater habitats. The Parties shall work collaboratively on habitat and stock restoration activities and support research to better understand the declines of Chinook salmon.
 - Alaska will pursue an increase in Yukon River Salmon Agreement base funds from the U.S. Congress and pursue other available funding opportunities to be directed toward Yukon River habitat and stock restoration activities.
 - Canada will seek to increase federal funding to be directed towards Yukon River habitat and stock restoration activities.

Doug Vincent-Lang
Commissioner
Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Steve Gotch
Senior Director, Pacific Region
Fisheries and Oceans Canada



Resolutions

Resolution j.

Resolution: 2024-01 - Reduce Yukon River Chum and Chinook Salmon Discards in Area M Fishery

WHEREAS: the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association (YRDFA) represents subsistence, commercial, personal and sport users of wild salmon and other fish within the Alaska portion of the Yukon River drainage and partners with all tribes of the Yukon River including Yup'ik, Cup'ik and Athabascan; and,

WHEREAS: Yukon River Chinook and Chum salmon stocks have declined to critically low levels, preventing any Chinook harvests and minimally small chum harvests in 2023 including subsistence and resulting in federal fishery disaster declarations within the state; and,

WHEREAS: The Alaska Department of Fish and Game has brought forward [passed?] a Yukon River Salmon Agreement at the International Governing Committee Yukon River Panel placing a 7 year moratorium on the Yukon River drainage on both sides of the border, limiting all fishing for 7 years or until an escapement goal of 71,000 Chinook Salmon has been reached.

WHEREAS: only one-third of the average annual Chinook Salmon run or 58,529 Chinook salmon passed the Pilot Station sonar in 2023, out of a total of an average run of 177,431 passing at the Pilot Station sonar; and,

WHEREAS: Chum salmon escapement fell short of the goal in 2023 with approximately 257,000 fall Chum salmon were estimated to be in-river in 2023, falling short of the escapement goal of 300,000 fish; and,

WHEREAS: the people of the Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim region of Western Alaska are part of the salmon nation where many communities, cultures, and people depend on salmon that come to spawn each year; which without salmon experience trauma and a loss of ways of life and cultural practices as well as traditional foods and customary diets; and,

WHEREAS: Customary and traditional uses by rural Alaska residents of wild, renewable resources are protected and prioritized before commercial use by Federal Law; and,

WHEREAS: Subsistence fishing constitutes the majority of all subsistence foods taken by Alaska Native people, but is less than one percent of all fish caught in Alaska; and,

WHEREAS: The peoples of the Yukon River are profoundly dependent upon Yukon River salmon for food, livelihood and cultural tradition, religion; and,

WHEREAS: Alaska Peninsula salmon fisheries are mixed stock fisheries harvesting salmon from multiple river systems, including the Yukon River; and,

WHEREAS: Yukon River chum and Chinook salmon life cycle runtimes include travel through the Area M Alaska fishing region of the Bering Sea; and,

WHEREAS: Alaska Peninsula salmon fisheries harvested 814,248 chum salmon as bycatch in 2022, some of which is Western Alaska-bound chum; and,

WHEREAS: the State of Alaska has reported 9 citations of captains and crew members in the Area M fishery for violations of dumping unwanted chum salmon overboard in June and July of 2023; and,

WHEREAS: Yukon River salmon are impacted by these chum salmon discards despite citations

WHEREAS: The Yukon River Salmon Agreement has implemented an in-river 7 Year moratorium agreed upon at the Yukon River Panel in 2024 to limit all forms of in-river fishing for 7 years or until escapement of King Salmon has reached 71,000 fish.

BE IT RESOLVED, that YRDFA supports reducing Yukon River chum salmon discards in the Area M fishery within all fishery types and methods in Area M to protect Western Alaska Salmon.

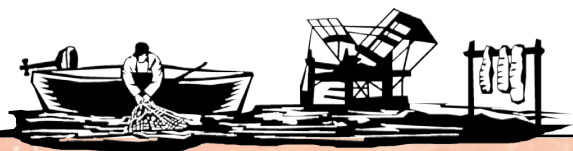
APPROVED unanimously this ____ [date] _____ by the Board members and delegates of YRDFA assembled at their 2024 Resolution Committee meeting held virtually.

COPIES of this resolution will be sent to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the Alaska Board of Fisheries, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and Alaska Governor's Office.

Attest:

Victor Lord, YRDFA Co-Chair

William Alstrom, YRDFA Co-Chair



Resolution k.

Resolution: 2024-02 - Protecting Yukon River Chinook and Chum Salmon by reducing fishing time in the Bering Sea Pollock Fishery

WHEREAS the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association (YRDFA) works on behalf of subsistence and commercial fishing families within the Alaskan and Canadian Yukon River drainage who depend on wild salmon for subsistence and commercial fisheries; and,

WHEREAS Chinook and chum salmon provide an essential source of food, income, and culture for the people of the Yukon River, with chum salmon increasingly important for subsistence and commercial fisheries as Chinook salmon decline; and,

WHEREAS: The people of the Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim region of Western Alaska are part of the salmon nation where many communities, cultures, and people depend on salmon that come to spawn each year; which without salmon experience trauma and a loss of ways of life and cultural practices as well as traditional foods and customary diets; and,

WHEREAS: only one-third of the average annual Chinook Salmon run or 58,529 Chinook salmon passed the Pilot Station sonar in 2023, out of a total average run of 177,431 passing at the Pilot Station sonar which enacted Amendment 110; and,

WHEREAS: the chum salmon escapement goal was not met in 2023 when approximately 257,000 fall Chum salmon were estimated to be in-river in 2023, falling short of the escapement goal of 300,000 fish allowable for subsistence harvests; and,

WHEREAS: Customary and traditional uses by rural Alaska residents of wild, renewable resources are protected and prioritized before commercial use by Federal Law; and,

WHEREAS: the Bering Sea pollock fishery set performance standards for Chinook Salmon, but has not established a performance standard for chum salmon; and,

WHEREAS: the Yukon River has been declared a fishery disaster for 2021 & 2022 and pending 2023; and,

WHEREAS: in these times of Chinook, summer and fall chum salmon declines, all sources of mortality must be reduced and all harvesters of salmon must bear equitably in conserving Western Alaska salmon; and,

WHEREAS: bycatch of Yukon River salmon in the Bering Sea Pollock fishery may be as much as or greater than the entire Yukon River subsistence catch; in 2021 bycatch in the Bering Sea Pollock Fishery for Chinook Salmon was a total of 13,783 and for Chum Salmon a total of 530,626. Although YRDFA recognizes that only half of these are going to Western Alaska and only a portion are Canadian origin Chinook salmon and that these are immature salmon that may not all survive and make it to the river; considering our current situation on the river, every salmon counts.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that YRDFA demands the North Pacific Fishery Management Council take extreme measures to protect Yukon River salmon species from extinction and the destruction of Yukon River fishing cultures and implores the Council to take action to reduce the overall bycatch and implement changes in the fishery to avoid Chinook and chum salmon bycatch.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that YRDFA requests that the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council provide continuously updated information about the current bycatch numbers of Chinook Salmon and chum salmon to the Yukon River Communities, Organizations, and to YRDFA.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that YRDFA requests that the North Pacific Fishery Management Council also take action to adopt chum salmon bycatch management measures which will adequately protect Western Alaska chum salmon runs.

APPROVED unanimously this ___[date]_____ by the Board members and delegates of YRDFA assembled at their 2024 Resolution Committee meeting held virtually.

COPIES of this resolution will be sent to the North Pacific Fishery Management Council, National Marine Fisheries Service, Alaska Department of Fish and Game Commissioner, Yukon River Panel, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of State, Bering Sea Fishermen’s Association, Association of Village Council Presidents, Tanana Chiefs Conference and other Western Alaska salmon groups.

Attest:

Thank you. Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association Co-Chairs:

YRDFA Co-Chair/Y-2, Seat 1
William Alstrom/Saint Mary’s

YRDFA Co-Chair/Y-6, Seat 2
Victor Lord/Nenana



Resolution I.

Resolution: 2024-03 - Reduce Salmon output of Private Nonprofit Corporation Hatchery (PNP) Production within Alaska

WHEREAS, the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association (YRDFA) represents subsistence, commercial, personal and sport users of wild salmon and other fish within the Alaska portion of the Yukon River drainage and partners with Alaskan Tribes over fishery issues, including Yup'ik, Cup'ik, Athabascan; and,

WHEREAS: The Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim region of Western Alaska is a part of the salmon nation and many communities, cultures, and people depend on salmon that come to spawn each year; which without salmon experience trauma and a loss of ways of life and cultural practices as well as traditional foods and customary diets; and,

WHEREAS; total hatchery releases in Alaska for 2022 was 1.9 billion salmon; and

WHEREAS; these salmon all intermingle in the North Pacific and compete with wild salmon populations for food; and

WHEREAS; Yukon River salmon are among several wild salmon stocks in the State of Alaska and the Pacific Northwest at critically low levels; and

WHEREAS: Yukon River Chinook and chum salmon stocks have declined to critically low levels, preventing any Chinook harvests and minimally small chum harvests in 2023 including subsistence and resulting in federal fishery disaster declarations within the state; and,

WHEREAS; reasons for long-term and immediate salmon stock declines are related to a complex web of factors including impact by other human activities as well as climate change; and

WHEREAS; the large number of hatchery fish in the ocean can limit the growth of wild stocks and hatchery stocks, particularly when ocean conditions are not productive for salmon including increased competition for more limited food resources; and

WHEREAS; it is imperative that resource stewards take increased precautions at times of uncertainty and decreased resilience of our critical wild stocks; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that YRDFA requests reducing the output of juvenile salmon releases on hatchery production within Alaska.

APPROVED unanimously this ___[date]_____ by the Board members and delegates of YRDFA assembled at their 2024 Resolution Committee meeting held virtually.

COPIES of this resolution will be sent to the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the Alaska Board of Fisheries, the North Pacific Fishery Management Council and Alaska Governor's Office.

Attest:

Victor Lord, YRDFA Co-Chair

William Alstrom, YRDFA Co-Chair

Resolution m.

Resolution: 2024-04 - 2022-2023 Extending Yukon River Fisheries Disaster Declaration Request

WHEREAS, the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association (YRDFA) represents subsistence, commercial, personal and sport users of wild salmon and other fish within the Alaska portion of the Yukon River drainage and partners with Alaskan Tribes over fishery issues, including Yup'ik, Cup'ik; Athabascan, and,

WHEREAS, people of the Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim region of Western Alaska are a part of the salmon nation and many communities, cultures, and people depend on salmon that come to spawn each year; which without salmon experience trauma and a loss of ways of life and cultural practices as well as traditional foods and customary diets; and,

WHEREAS, the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association requests the State of Alaska to declare a Fisheries Economic and Subsistence Disaster Declaration as authorized under Section 312(a) of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery and Conservation and Management Act; and,

WHEREAS, tribes and tribal entities have received little funding support from the State during fisheries disaster declarations despite a rural priority under ANCSA; and,

WHEREAS, the summer and fall chum salmon outlooks for 2022-23 were projected to provide for more escapement than previous years; and,

WHEREAS, subsistence and commercial closures went into effect along the Yukon River drainage; and,

WHEREAS, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game implemented conservation closures for all directed Chinook, fishers were required to release all incidentally-caught Chinook; and,

WHEREAS, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game implemented conservation closures after a short subsistence chum opening that did not meet subsistence needs; and,

WHEREAS, commercial summer chum fishing consisted of no commercial fishing for fall chum or coho; and,

WHEREAS, the loss to commercial fishermen coupled with the loss of employment to local salmon processing employees resulted in severe economic impact to a region with the highest rate of unemployment in the State; and,

WHEREAS, the people of the Yukon River rely on salmon for their livelihood, local economies, cultural traditions, and primary food source; and,

WHEREAS, the amounts needed for subsistence were not met and harvests are estimated to be below 1% of average which does not include the loss of cultural and traditional values ingrained in subsistence harvest; and,



BE IT RESOLVED, the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association urges the State of Alaska's Governor Dunleavy to request a fishing disaster extending the 2020 and 2021 declaration, to be declared for the Yukon River for the 2022 and 2023 fishing seasons.

APPROVED unanimously this ___[date]_____ by the Board members and delegates of YRDFA assembled at their 2024 Resolution Committee meeting held virtually.

COPIES of this resolution will be sent to Sen. Lisa Murkowski, Sen. Dan Sullivan, US Rep. Mary Peltola, Alaska State Legislators, Commissioner Doug Vincent Lang, Commissioner Julie Anderson, Governors' Chief of Staff Tyson Gallagher, NOAA Alaska Regional Office, Randy Fisher with Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission.

Attest:

YRDFA Co-Chair/Y-2, Seat 1
William Alstrom/Saint Mary's

YRDFA Co-Chair/Y-6, Seat 2
Victor Lord/Nenana

Resolution n.

Resolution: 2024-05 - Protecting the Yukon River: Concern about Oil & Gas Development in the Yukon Flats

WHEREAS: the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association (YRDFA) works on behalf of subsistence and commercial fishing families within the Alaskan and Canadian Yukon River drainage who depend on wild salmon for subsistence and commercial fisheries; and,

WHEREAS: People of the Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim region of Western Alaska are part of the salmon nation and many communities, cultures, and people depend on salmon that come to spawn each year; which without salmon experience trauma and a loss of ways of life and cultural practices as well as traditional foods and customary diets; and,

WHEREAS, Protection of the Yukon River Watershed is critical to every village along the Yukon River; and

WHEREAS, The Yukon Flats Wildlife Refuge is a vital component of the Yukon River Watershed making up a complex network of wetlands, lakes and streams bisected by the Yukon River, supporting the highest density of breeding ducks in Alaska, and encompasses one of the greatest waterfowl breeding areas in North America; and

WHEREAS: The Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim region of Western Alaska is a part of the salmon nation and many communities, cultures, and people depend on salmon that come to spawn each year; which without salmon experience trauma and a loss of ways of life and cultural practices as well as traditional foods and customary diets; and,

WHEREAS, The Yukon Flats is also critical habitat for moose, salmon, caribou, bears, wolves, wolverine, and other fur bearing animals; and

WHEREAS, The continued practice of the traditional way of life by the Interior Alaska Indigenous people, being the Koyukon and Gwich'in Athabascan people is essential to the preservation of their physical, mental and spiritual well-being; and

WHEREAS, Doyon, Limited, a for-profit Alaska Native corporation, has entered into a contract with Hilcorp Energy Company of Houston, Texas to explore for oil and gas in the Yukon Flats without consulting the region's sovereign tribal entities; and

WHEREAS, Hilcorp Energy Company is a privately owned energy company with a long history of environmental disasters and fines for environmental and worker safety violations; and

WHEREAS, The Yukon River salmon is a critical food source that sustains all of the villages up and down the river, and is central to Koyukon and Gwich'in cultures along the Yukon River and its tributaries; and

WHEREAS, the tribal governments of the Yukon Flats recognizes that the risk to our land, rivers, animals, food sources, culture and way of life is substantial and immediate; and

WHEREAS, oil exploration and any development activities will alter the pristine nature of the landscape, destroy or modify habitats, alter wildlife behavior and movements (including migratory patterns), introduce invasive species and affect the composition, structure, and functioning of soil, water, air, and other abiotic features; and



WHEREAS, The social and human health impacts from oil development will likely have a negative impact on the Indigenous people's health, including physiological, psychological, and personal safety; and

WHEREAS, The Indigenous inhabitants of the Yukon Flats are the caretakers of the land, protecting their traditional aboriginal lands for future generations.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association commits to the protection of their lands, communities and environment; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association requests that Doyon, Limited, cease all oil and gas exploration and development in the Yukon Flats.

COPIES of this resolution will be sent to Doyon Limited, Tanana Chiefs Conference, and HilCorp

APPROVED unanimously this ___[date]_____ by the Board members and delegates of YRDFA assembled at their 2024 Resolution Committee meeting held virtually.

Attest:

William Alstrom, St. Mary's
YRDFA Co-Chair District Y1, Seat 1

Victor Lord, Nenana
YRDFA Co-Chair District Y6, Seat 2

Resolution o.

Resolution: 2024-06 - Ongoing Increased Impact in Lieu of Climate Change on Yukon River Salmon

WHEREAS, the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association (YRDFA) represents subsistence, commercial, personal and sport users of wild salmon and other fish within the Alaska portion of the Yukon River drainage and partners with Alaskan Tribes over fishery issues, including Yup'ik, Cup'ik, Athabascan; and,

WHEREAS: The Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim region of Western Alaska is a part of the salmon nation and many communities, cultures, and people depend on salmon that come to spawn each year; which without salmon experience trauma and a loss of ways of life and cultural practices as well as traditional foods and customary diets; and,

WHEREAS; Yukon River salmon are among several wild salmon stocks in the State of Alaska and the Pacific Northwest at critically low levels; and

WHEREAS; The State of Alaska Fisheries Management acknowledges that climate change is one of the biggest causes of Western Alaska salmon population crashes; and

WHEREAS; reasons for long-term and immediate salmon stock declines are related to a complex web of factors including impact by human activities and climate change; and

WHEREAS; Climate change impacts salmon at all stages of life, from warmer spawning waters to ocean traverses as adults; and

WHEREAS; there are more compounded climate effects that impact Yukon River Salmon now than in previous generations; and

WHEREAS; 2023 saw the warmest Arctic summer on record, the lowest North American late-spring snowpack, and the 6th-lowest minimum sea ice extent measured; and

WHEREAS; Yukon River Chinook and chum salmon populations in particular have seen significant declines, in comparison to Bristol Bay sockeye populations which have seen increases; and

WHEREAS; Adult spawner Yukon River salmon of all species have seen significant body size decreases over time; and

WHEREAS; less juvenile salmon spawn from these smaller salmon sizes; and

WHEREAS; Alaska and the Yukon River drainage has seen altered environments and weather patterns out of the ordinary at a higher rate, impacting the river; and

WHEREAS; people of Yukon River communities are not the culprit of these significant environmental changes but are subject to the consequences of it; and



BE IT RESOLVED that YRDFA calls on agencies and corporations to increase awareness and action on climate change to reduce these impacts on Yukon River salmon

APPROVED unanimously this ____ [date] _____ by the Board members and delegates of YRDFA assembled at their 2024 Resolution Committee meeting held virtually.

COPIES of this resolution will be sent to Alaska Media Agencies including public radio, newspapers and online news sources, and other national and international Media agencies and news outlets, as well as Alaska House Representative Mary Peltola and Alaska State Senators Dan Sullivan and Lisa Murkowski.

Attest:

Victor Lord, YRDFA Co-Chair

William Alstrom, YRDFA Co-Chair

Finance Report

Yukon River Fisheries Association

2024 Board Meeting Financial Synopsis

Fiscal Year to Date July 1, 2023 - February 29, 2024

Finance updates by Jo Ryan, Finance Manager

I am continuing this brief summary format as Richell Carmichael, former Finance Manager reported. However, the report titles now reflect standard not for profit titles - Statement of Financial Position (formerly Balance Sheet) and Statement of Financial Activity (formerly Income Statement). In the future, I will be incorporating the operating budget into the Board reports. This year, the operating budget will be provided separately post Board meeting.

I would appreciate the Board's input if there is additional financial data detail such as comparisons to previous years, or a different format such as graphs. I can also provide interim informal reports via email in between official meetings.

This brief summary is of the Statement of Financial Position and Statement of Activities for the current fiscal year July 1, 2023 – Feb 29, 2024.

Statement of Financial Position

Cash - the checking account has been reconciled through March 31 with a balance of \$24,492. YR DFA cash flow is tight. A goal of a reserve account would help the organization.

Accounts Receivable - the balance is \$99,205, this was before draws were made. Getting draws online from the government grants allows YR DFA to get paid more quickly. \$49,452 of the receivables were collected quickly through draws leaving \$50,264 to collect and all but \$1,000 is current. The detail of the grants that are in receivables is provided in the report.

Accounts Payable - the balance is \$31,104 and is current.

Credit Card Payable - the balance is \$11,011.

Payroll liabilities - this shows a balance of \$25,260, the bulk of which is in accrued leave.

Unearned revenue - this balance is \$68,348. This is money YR DFA received prior to providing the work for the grant. As the revenue is earned, this account is reduced. This does not convert to cash only to expenses.

Statement of Activity

Revenue

The Feb 29 Statement of Activities (also known as an Income Statement) reflects a net revenue of \$26,147 (revenue less expenditures). The year to date fiscal year shows YR DFA received \$815,177 in grant revenue. The operating budget in development indicates YR DFA will receive approximately \$1.3M by the end of the fiscal year. YR DFA received a donation of \$10K from Alaska Airlines and an unrestricted grant of \$49K from New Venture Fund.

Expenditures

A couple of expenditures stick out of the normal course of operations. Equipment is a credit to due a bookkeeping reclassification to supplies that crossed fiscal years.

There was also a large amount in reconciliation discrepancies by the prior financial manager In September 2023. There was no backup but the memo indicated the reconciling of many grants from the years 2002-2022.

Additional Notes:

With a larger staff to provide worthwhile conservation programs comes larger expenses, several of which are not covered directly by grants making the indirect allowance received from grants and donations and other sources of income important.

YR DFA was able to negotiate an indirect rate of 19% that will be locked-in for three years. This was communicated to YR DFA and will be finalized soon.

Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association
Statement of Financial Position
As of February 29, 2024

	Total
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
Main Checking	28,491.61
Total Bank Accounts	\$ 28,491.61
Accounts Receivable	
AKSSF	1,327.07
Climate Drivers	365.93
Elders Warnings	24,769.67
Elders Warnings - Outreach	9,764.82
Engaging Fishers	8,136.96
Gravel to Gravel	11,330.73
Other Receivable	712.07
NOAA	24,880.32
R&E Receivable	2,931.66
R&M	5,137.88
State of Alaska	3,409.41
Survey	1,777.71
Teleconference	5,171.92
Total Accounts Receivable	\$ 99,716.15
Total Current Assets	\$ 128,207.76
TOTAL ASSETS	\$ 128,207.76
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
Accounts Payable	31,104.53
Total Accounts Payable	\$ 31,104.53
Credit Cards	
Credit Cards Payable	
Total Credit Cards Payable	\$ 11,011.10
Total Credit Cards	\$ 11,011.10
Other Current Liabilities	
Payroll Liabilities	4,779.36
Accrued Leave	20,481.48
Total Payroll Liabilities	\$ 25,260.84
Unearned Revenue	68,348.29
Total Unearned Revenue	\$ 68,348.29
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$ 93,609.13
Total Current Liabilities	\$ 135,724.76
Total Liabilities	\$ 135,724.76
Equity	
Opening Bal Equity	1,420.81
Retained Earnings	-35,184.51
Net Revenue	26,146.92
Total Equity	-\$ 7,616.78
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$ 128,107.98

Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association

Statement of Activity

July 2023 - February 2024

(unaudited, partially reconciled)

	Total
Revenue	
Contributions Income	15,000.00
Unrestricted	1,068.09
Donation Income	16,263.84
Total Unrestricted	\$ 17,331.93
Total Contributions Income	\$ 32,331.93
Grants	815,177.55
Membership Dues	125.00
Sales of Product Revenue	45.00
Total Revenue	\$ 847,679.48
Gross Profit	\$ 847,679.48
Expenditures	
Bank Service Charges	535.73
Finance Charge	53.07
Total Bank Service Charges	\$ 588.80
Conferences	200.00
Contractual	112,573.03
Dues and Subscriptions	3,888.02
Equipment	-1,299.99
Honorariums and Stipends	5,350.00
Insurance	7,151.78
Licenses and Permits	25.00
Other	12,797.35
Payroll Expenses	
Taxes	859.08
Total Payroll Expenses	\$ 859.08
Personnel	9,376.30
Co Paid Benefits	6,012.10
Payroll Taxes	29,176.84
Retirement	10,049.69
Salaries/Wages	345,331.54
Total Personnel	\$ 399,946.47
Professional Fees	
Accounting	478.00
Total Professional Fees	\$ 478.00
Reimbursements	18,900.00
Rent	520.00
Supplies	23,483.80
Information Technology	1,206.44
Office	1,840.26
Telephone	810.62
Total Office	\$ 2,650.88
Postage and Delivery	530.01
Printing and Reproduction	5,955.85
Program	1,824.16
Total Supplies	\$ 35,651.14
Travel	32,586.43
Air and Ground	84,200.74
Meals & Lodging	65,483.06
Total Travel	\$ 182,270.23
Total Expenditures	\$ 779,898.91
Net Operating Revenue	\$ 67,780.57
Other Expenditures	
Indirect Costs	955.30
Reconciliation Discrepancies	40,678.35
Total Other Expenditures	\$ 41,633.65
Net Other Revenue	-\$ 41,633.65
Net Revenue	\$ 26,146.92

Program Reports

YRDFFA 34th Annual Meeting Staff Report

Federal Funding

Yukon River Watershed Ecosystem Action Plan (USFWS & NOAA)

The people of the Yukon River rely heavily on the watershed's natural resources to feed their families and support their culture. Annual Chinook and Chum salmon harvest is essential for the livelihood of the 76 small, rural villages scattered around the ~330,000 square mile watershed. Since 1997, Chinook salmon runs and harvest have declined. In recent years, both Chinook and Chum salmon runs failed completely with devastating consequences to Yukon River watershed people, families, community and culture. Significant habitat alteration has occurred throughout portions of the Yukon river watershed in Alaska and Canada that could be impacting salmon recruitment, yet no comprehensive assessment of these alterations and their potential impact to wild salmon runs has been completed.

The Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association (YRDFFA) will consult directly with Yukon river watershed communities and incorporate Indigenous Traditional Knowledge to complete a comprehensive assessment and prioritization of habitat restoration needs documented in a watershed-wide eco-system action plan. The funding will be used to employ residents of the rural Yukon villages to carry out this effort to the greatest extent possible. This project will take place over an 18-month time period and will result in a watershed ecosystem action plan (WEAP) that can be used to understand and develop actions to address the ongoing crisis of salmon declines.

YRDFFA plans to accomplish this project in three phases. The first phase will involve consultation with local communities and on the ground data gathering of water quality data, stream assessments, and culvert surveys; phase two will involve collection of Indigenous Traditional Knowledge (ITK), including geospatial information; ; and phase three will involve drafting a watershed ecosystem action plan (WEAP) that prioritizes the largest impacts and threats to the watershed. The proposers anticipate that the WEAP will provide the basis for continuing watershed assessments and allow for focused efforts to pursue restoration funding for the highest priority projects that are likely to improve the health of the watershed. The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Habitat Restoration Program will provide technical support to create scopes of work and cost estimates for the highest priority restoration projects that are identified by the WEAP. The identification of specific, high priority projects with scoping and cost documents will allow project partners to work with landowners to pursue funding from both public and private sources to improve the health of the watershed.

This spring we are able to hire a seasonal full time field technician whose main focus this summer will be the completion of culvert surveys, stream assessments, and water quality data collection. Later the community based technicians will be conducting Traditional Ecological Knowledge interviews with Elders and experienced fishermen along the Yukon River. Mid April we held the 1st WEAP steering committee meeting. The GIS contractor was hired and is developing an app for our water quality monitoring data. The areas were chosen for this year's surveys, stream assessments and water quality data collection in which one was chosen on the road system Manley, Minto and Tanana area and the other on the Yukon near Nulato, Alaska. The date has been set for the field technicians to be trained in Fairbanks, Alaska starting June 4, 2024 training will consist of in field work with YRDFFA'S project partners.

End date: December 2024

- YRDFFA Strategic Plan Goals- #2, #3, #4

Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program (FRMP OSM):

In-Season Salmon Management Teleconferences:

The in-season salmon management teleconferences offer stakeholders the opportunity to get first-hand information during the fishing season, have their management questions addressed, and to share traditional ecological knowledge. In a rural and remote area as large as the Yukon River, the in-season salmon management call offers a relatively inexpensive and efficient manner to bring together agency professionals with resource stakeholders across a large geographic area in a meaningful approach to prevent and mitigate conflict.

The calls include Canadian agency and community counterparts. While outside the jurisdiction of the U.S. federal subsistence management program, the in-season salmon management teleconferences promote international cooperation between organizations and individuals facing common salmon management conservation and management challenges.

The multi-year fisheries disasters have taken a toll on everyone along the Yukon River. The 2023 teleconference season was faced with low participation along the Yukon River. We shifted our approach to include fishing reports from the Alaska Peninsula and the Northern Bering Sea. A riverwide survey will be conducted regarding the teleconferences and this will give us the opportunity to transform the calls to include what the Yukon River communities want to hear and discuss.

We were not able to secure funding for the 2024 Teleconference Season through FRMP; however, another funding source will be allocated to YRDFA to continue the upcoming season.

End date: 3/31/2024

- YRDFA Strategic Plan Goals - #1, #3, #4

In-Season Salmon Surveys:

The In-season Subsistence Salmon Survey Program, funded by the Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program (FRMP), was an important communication tool that helped managers try to ensure that both Yukon River escapement was met and, in a normal year, as many subsistence fishers were meeting their goals as possible. YRDFA hired a local person in 10 communities along the Yukon River stretching from Alakanuk to Eagle to survey fishers during the Chinook salmon season in their community. The observations fishers shared with YRDFA surveyors were summarized by the community to protect anonymity and then shared with Yukon River In-season Managers and the Yukon River community through the In-season Salmon Management Teleconferences. This project was funded by the FRMP through March of 2024. A final report has been completed and will be sent to all Tribal Councils in April/May. The FRMP decided not to fund any proposals for the 2024 season. They will review their situation in 2025 and consider the proposals submitted then.

YRDFA has been working with the Indigenous Sentinel Network (ISN) to develop a digitized version of the In-season Salmon Survey program. This will allow our surveyors to conduct the survey digitally with their phones and teach fishers how to submit observations on their own. We held a training in Anchorage with ISN in April and, with the remaining funds in the FRMP funded survey program, brought five of the surveyors and YRDFA staff to the event. During the training event, ISN explained the new app and we practiced a beta version on IPADs. We hope to have a live version available for demonstration at the Pre-season meeting in May.



Funding for Survey 2024 is limited. Serena secured a small amount of funding from NOAA to hire a very part-time manager and 4-5 surveyors to operate the survey in 2024 as a pilot with the digital app and hopefully we will secure more funding for 2025. We are looking at ways to expand the program to 8 surveyors in 2024 and for more funding for future years.

- End date: 3/31/2024
- YRDFA Strategic Plan Goals - #1, #3, #4

North Pacific Research Board (NPRB):

They Told us there'd come a time....Conserving Fish, Preserving Tradition. A catalog of Elders Warnings: This project, in which YRDFA partnered with young adults from the Tanana Chiefs Conference Emerging Leaders program to learn from Yukon River Elders about warnings or knowledge about salmon, ended in March of 2024. Through this project we documented local and traditional knowledge from Elders about their concerns related to salmon. Our team spent year one reviewing the previously documented recordings in the archives and year two interviewing fishers and Elders. Our team conducted 43 interviews with Elders and fishers and, if permission was given, are archived at the University of Alaska Fairbanks. In our final year, or Year 3 we created products that shared our results including brochures, posters, a report, short video clips and a 30 minute video. The videos were shared at various meetings and on social media. The posters were presented at three conferences in 2024 including the Alaska Marine Science Symposium, the Alaska Forum on the Environment, and the American Fisheries Society Alaska Chapter Annual Meeting. Our final report has been completed and mailed to all Alaskan Yukon River Tribal Councils. A few copies are available at this meeting.

- End Date 3/31/2024
- YRDFA Strategic Plan Goals - #1, #3, #4

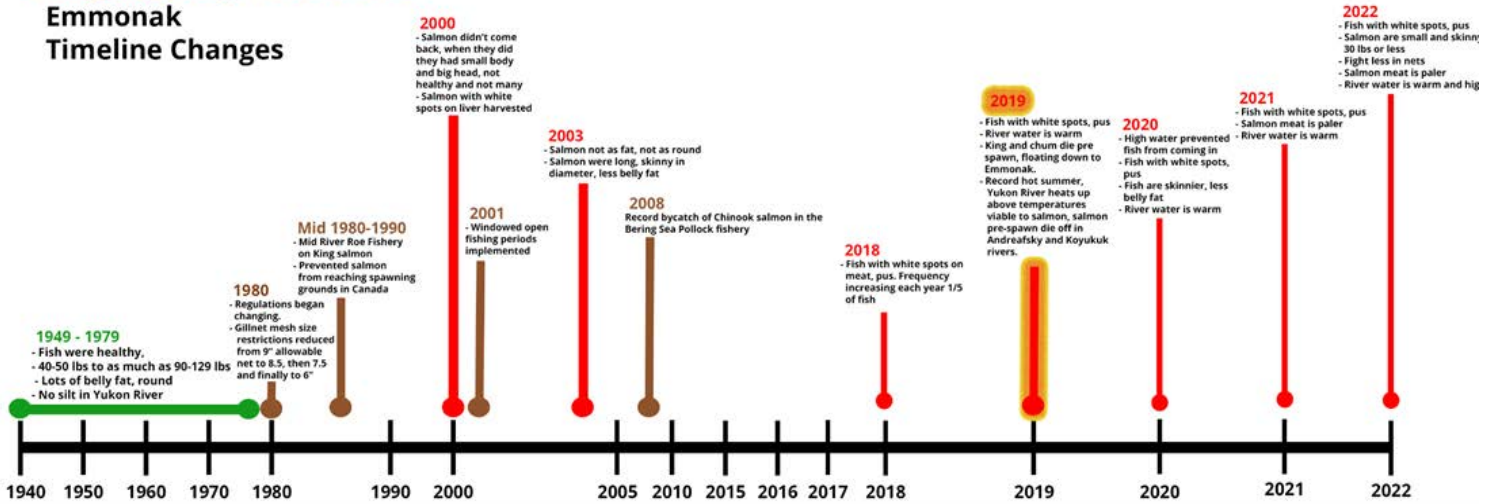
Engaging Fishers in Research on Chinook and Chum Salmon:

This project, funded by the North Pacific Research Board, began in January of 2023 runs through Feb 2026. It has a goal of contributing to an understanding of the drivers of decline and collapse in Yukon Chinook and chum salmon. Through this project we are partnering with four Yukon River communities - Alakanuk, Emmonak, St. Mary's, and Huslia - and another NPRB funded project, Exploring Linkages of a Changing Climate and Productivity of Chinook Salmon led by Drs. Katie Howard and Vanessa von Biela. Our first objective is Local and Traditional Knowledge interviews on historical Chinook salmon health in Alakanuk and Emmonak will inform their biological research on drivers of salmon decline by learning about the historic health of Chinook salmon as they leave the marine environment and enter the fresh-water environment. Our second objective is working with fishers in St. Marys and Huslia to monitor river water temperature, create a community response team to assess the damage if there is a salmon die-off and conduct annual salmon carcass surveys. Our third objective is to increase outreach and hold community meetings to share Yukon River salmon research.

Work on objective one of this project included the TEK interviews in both Emmonak and Alakanuk in 2023. The Emmonak interviews have been transcribed and summarized for the community. Each participant in Emmonak and the Tribal Councils received a summary of the interviews and a timeline showing their changing observations of salmon health over time. They provided their feedback and gave permission for the Project Investigator to share this information with our project partners. The Emmonak participants' feedback was very helpful to better understand what they shared with us and ensure that it was accurate. The Alakanuk interviews have been transcribed and the project investigator is working on summarizing these interviews so that the participants and Tribal Council can review them before we share these preliminary results with our project partners. We hope to also make a timeline showing their results visually.

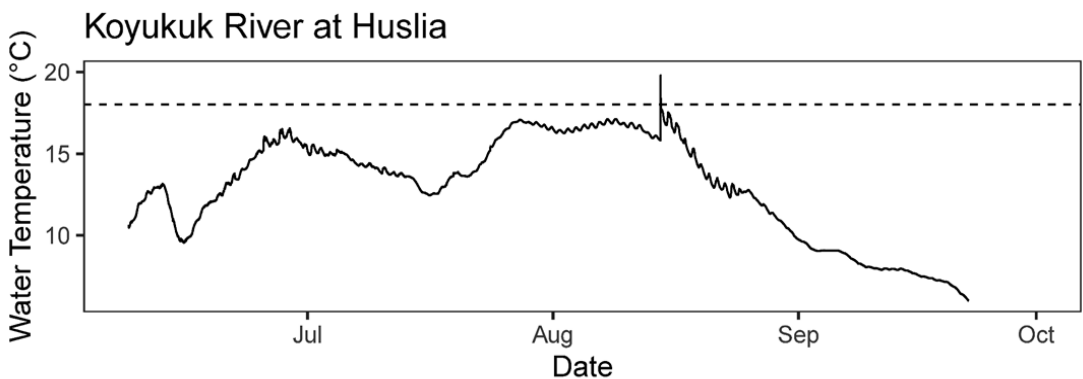
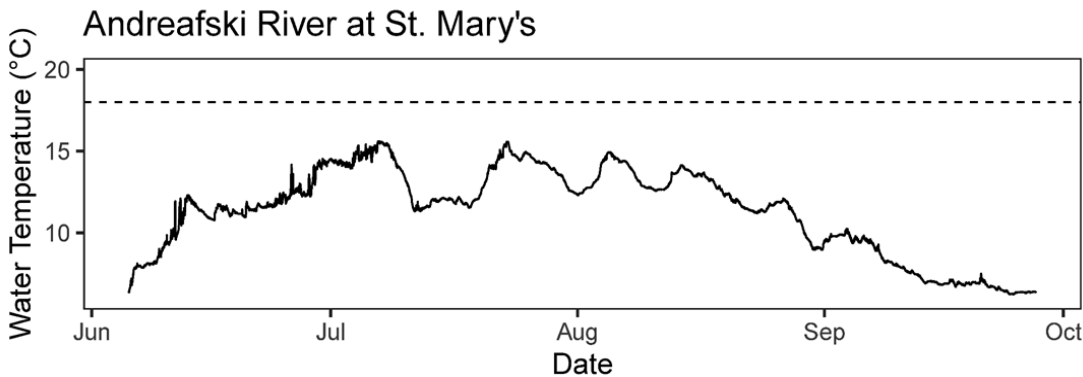
Engaging Fishers

Emmonak Timeline Changes



Objective 2 activities began in June with Serena Fitka's, Executive Director, first stop in St. Mary's where we hired David Beans to conduct water temperature monitoring and oversee the temperature logger on the Andreafski River. Serena then joined the YRDEA team Catherine and Michelle in Huslia to begin the water temperature monitoring portion of the project and to hold a community meeting. We hired Francis Nollner to monitor the temperature logger in the Koyukuk River.

As you can see in the results there was no significant heat event in both tributaries. The spike in Huslia occurred when the logger was removed and relocated to a more suitable location. The water dropped significantly and the casing became buried in the mud. We are currently planning our trips back to both communities to share our first year's results and to establish a local heat response team. This team would be trained and prepared to take samples of water, and any fish that may have died due to heat stress.



- End Date Feb 2026
- YRDEA Strategic Plan Goals - #1, #3, #4



Exploring Linkages Between a Changing Climate and Productivity of Yukon River Chinook Salmon in Partnership with ADF&G

We will be working with communities of St. Mary's and Huslia to identify individuals who have the local expertise and interest for participating in field sampling for this project. YRDFA will contract local stakeholders to collect samples alongside project biologists in the most effective and sensitive manner (no additional pre-spawn salmon mortality). Community leadership are supporting this project, as evidenced by the letters of support, and will be key to ensuring effective community involvement. YRDFA will also facilitate bridging the gap between salmon stakeholders and project investigators through a variety of opportunities to join community and tribal meetings. Since much of the data collected under this proposal will be novel and lacks a pre-decline baseline, YRDFA is also leading a companion project (also submitted to NPRB, "Engaging Yukon River Fishers in Research on Chinook Salmon Declines") that seeks to collect traditional ecological knowledge about historical changes to the health of Yukon River Chinook salmon from communities who observe these fish near river entry.

- End date June 2026
- YRDFA Strategic Plan Goals -#1, #4

State of Alaska

Yukon River Watershed Clearinghouse

The Yukon River Watershed Clearinghouse project, funded by the State of Alaska. The goal of this project is to establish a clearinghouse that allows for tracking of both social and ecological changes in ways that are culturally relevant and responsive to the needs of the people of the Yukon River watershed. Ultimately we will have a database storing Yukon specific information and help us identify hot spots that need attention to protect salmon.

The YRDFA staff met in December of 2023 to review our 2023 activities and update our work plan for 2024. At this meeting we changed our approach and decided to hire specific people for specific tasks rather than the approach we took in 2023 which was to create eight short term jobs with many tasks. Through feedback from our 2023 summer technicians we found that the workload in 2023 was difficult and overly technical for one person and thus we decided to allow the positions to specialize and redesigned the job descriptions.

A Traditional Ecological Knowledge technician will be hired this summer as full time year round employees who will be trained to conduct Traditional Ecological Knowledge interviews with Yukon River Elders and knowledgeable fishers. The technician will be trained in the style we developed through the Elders Warnings project with an investment by YRDFA in their capacity related to learning the methodology and ethics of conducting qualitative interviews, as well as transcribing and analyzing the information gathered. The focus of the TEK interviews will be on fish health and abundance changes, observed changes in the environment, and local concerns of the Yukon River freshwater environment. The goal of conducting these interviews will be to learn directly from local people about their potential concerns related to the health of the Yukon River fish and environment.

- End Date 2027
- YRDFA Strategic Plan Goals - #1, #2, #3, #4

Subsistence Assistants (ADF&G contracted)

The Subsistence Assistants program training took place on Wednesday August 30 and Thursday August 31 of this year put on by YRDFA and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. This program helps survey communities and community members who fish during the summer during post-season to get a comprehensive report of the fishing season on the Yukon River. The in-person surveying will begin in Emmonak on September 4 and will move upriver through communities throughout September and October. This year is the first year since 2019 that the surveying is taking place in person rather than over the phone. The Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association will be coordinating the partnership with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game to hire local community surveyors to connect with the community, find households to survey, support with transportation, and inform of any community events that may overlap. An end of season report will be crafted following the end of the surveying period.

Integrating Local and Traditional Ecological Knowledge (LTK) into Anadromous Waters Cataloging and Fish Inventories of select drainages of the Tanana and Yukon rivers 2021-2024: (AKSSF funded):

This project, funded by the Alaska Sustainable Salmon Fund (AKSSF), is a partnership between YRDFA and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Together, we are working with the communities of Tanana, Nenana, and Manley Hot Springs to identify important areas with anadromous fish and other fish for investigations to nominate areas for the Anadromous Waters Catalog and the Alaska Freshwater Fish Inventory. In year one, we conducted interviews and mapping activities with 20 knowledgeable fishers and hunters in the three communities. In year two, the ADFG team conducted their field work to document fish presence, rearing, and spawning. Nominations were made for water bodies supporting anadromous fishes such as least cisco, broad whitefish, humpback whitefish, and/or Chinook salmon. They caught 15 species and made 29 nominations to the Alaska Freshwater Fish Inventory on 30 water bodies including 13 new or extended water bodies added to the Anadromous Waters Catalog, 8 water bodies had new species or species life-phases added, and 33 miles of previously unlisted anadromous fish habitat (streams) were added.

During the summer of 2023, we extended this project so that ADFG could conduct a final field season to catch up from weather delays during the 2022 season. To assist the collection process, we contracted with a local fisher out of Tanana to sample 4 streams that the ADFG team was unable to successfully sample at in 2022. Additionally, the ADFG team was able to travel to Nenana in August to sample in some headwater sites in their area. This completed our fish sampling for this project. Our next activity will be holding community meetings in Nenana, Manley Hot Springs and Tanana to share with them our results and hear their feedback and questions. These meetings will be taking place in May and June and we are currently coordinating with the communities to set up meeting date and times. The final task will be for ADFG to submit their nominations and Anadromous Waters Catalog.

- End Date: June 2024
- YRDFA Strategic Plan Goals - #1, #3, #4,



Yukon River Second Annual Virtual Symposium (R:M US/Canada USFWS):

This project is funded by the Restoration and Management grant funded through the US Fish and Wildlife Service. The Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association held their second annual Yukon River Virtual symposium on March 14 and 15, 2024. We had turnout from all over Alaska and in many fields of work with over 30 participants and 20 presenters and speakers. Presenters were from both Canada and the United States, spoke on Restoration and Management funded projects and other unique projects related to the Yukon River. We had two Keynote presentations and a short film, and brought in both YRDFA projects and outside presenters to share on topics like Ichthyophonus, Canadian Restoration Hatcheries, Yukon River Salmon genetics, and more. Presentees came from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, US Fish and Wildlife Service, the Yukon River Panel, the Teslin Tlingit Council, the Indigenous Sentinels Network, the Yukon River Salmon Subcommittee, and more advocates of Yukon River fisheries. We hope to make the virtual symposium an annual event.

- End Date: May 2024
- YRDFA Strategic Plan Goals - #1, #3, #4

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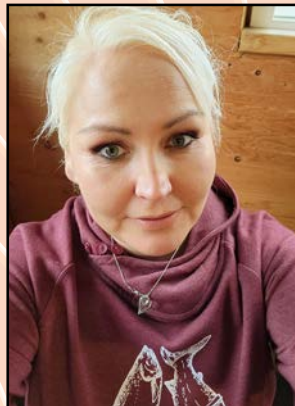
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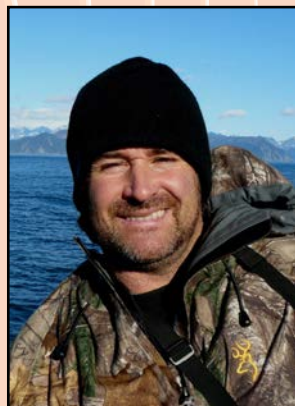
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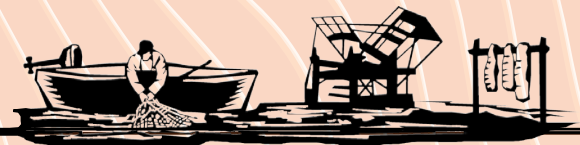
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