



YUKON RIVER DRAINAGE FISHERIES ASSOCIATION

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Greetings from the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association!

Here is a summary of the #8 2024 Yukon River Salmon In-Season Management Teleconference held Tuesday, July 23, 2024. Call lasted 74 minutes. 55 callers participated.

Background: Yukon River salmon management teleconferences are held annually every Tuesday in June, July, and August for managers and fishers throughout the Yukon River drainage to discuss fishing conditions and management strategies in real time as the salmon run is occurring. Funded by a grant from the US Fish and Wildlife.

Media Representatives participating:

Nathaniel Herz, Northern Journal

Political Representatives participating:

Mike Wood, Alaska Board of Fisheries

Communities participating: 19

Management Reports:

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Bonnie Borba, Fall Season Research Biologist, Fairbanks, Alaska

I'll provide an Initial Fall Season Assessment. We begin the Fall Season by looking at the abundance of the Summer Chum salmon run. The summer run size this year was estimated to be around 778,000 fish. This is slightly less than last year and well below the average run size of 2 million Summer Chum salmon. Based on the relationship between Summer and Fall Chum salmon run sizes, the preseason run size projection for July 19th was estimated to be 377,000 Fall Chum salmon. While the average run size is over 950,000 fish. We will be looking at in season assessment to determine the run size and watching to see if the aged 4 fish are as weak as they were for the Summer Chum salmon. All three of the Lower River projects have switched to Fall Season and includes Lower Yukon Test Fish as of 7/16, Mountain Village as of 7/18 and the Mainstem Yukon River Sonar operating near Pilot Station as of 7/19. It is too early to tell much at this time, however all projects are currently tracking similar to last year and no significant pulses of Chum salmon have entered the river since Fall Season began. Pilot station is currently at about 21,000, which is below the median of 58,000 for the state. The preliminary age composition of 24 Chum salmon sampled from the drift gillnets in the Lower Yukon Test Fish project from July 16th through the 20th consisted of 37% age 4 and 63% age 5, which compares to the 2001 to 2023 historical average of 58% age 4 and 41% age 5. The percentage of female Chum salmon through July 20th was 33%, which is below the historical average of 47%. The average length of Chum salmon as of July 20th was 560mm, which is below the historical average of 581 millimeters. Genetic mix stocks analysis will be used to determine the mixture of Summer and Fall Chum salmon, the 2nd stratum of Chum salmon genetic samples from the Pilot Station Sonar Test Fishery from July 9th through the 18th, consisted of 99% Summer Chum salmon, of which 91% were Lower River stocks, 8% were bound for the Middle Yukon River and less than 1% were bound for the Tanana River. The Lower Summer stocks are above average, while the Middle River and Tanana River components are well below average for this time of year. The 3rd stratum of Chum salmon samples from July 8th through July 19th are on their way to the lab and the results are expected later this week. Look for them in the ADF&G Yukon

River Daily Update. Once the Fall Chum salmon enter the river, we will provide stock assessment for the main components of three main Fall Chum salmon stock groups. The Teedriinjik, Sheenjek and Draanjik is Group 1. The Canadian stock is Group 2 and the Tanana Fall stocks are group 3 that we keep an eye on. Escapement projects in the Upper Yukon portion of the drainage within Alaska will be assessed with sonars operated on the Teedriinjik by Fish and Wildlife Service and Sheenjek River starting up around August 8. Eagle Sonar's average transition date from Chinook to Fall Chum salmon monitoring is around August 19th. Last year, the transition occurred on August 23rd. We will be using these in-river assessment monitoring projects to determine if the escapement will be achieved for the drainage wide goal as well as the goals on the Teedriinjik and the Canadian components, which is the Fishing Branch River and the Yukon River Mainstem in Eagle.

Christy Gleason, Yukon Area Fall Season Manager, Emmonak, Alaska

I'm here at the Emmonak office at the mouth of the Yukon River. It's been a quiet week so far. Not very many Chum salmon have been coming in. We've had really hot, dry weather. They typically hold up when we have weather like this and they wait more for those Southwest West winds. As Bonnie mentioned, we are expecting the low Chum salmon run this year. Right now, the run is projected to be about 377,000 and that means we're within our drainage wide escapement goal of 300,000 to 600,000. However, we're looking at the age classes really closely. We age them in-season here in the Emmonak office. We may see weaker runs than we're projecting, if we have a low component of age 4. But early in the Fall Season, what we typically see is a spillover of the Summer Chum run, and that run is doing pretty well. We are continuing the selective gear openings for Summer Chum for the 1st 10 days of the Fall Season and then what happens is later on in July, we start to see more of the Fall Chum based on genetics. We'll be closed at that point to assess the run. So far, the schedule has been announced through District 4 and District 5. We'll probably see an announcement a little bit later next week or early the following week. We're going to continue to monitor the Fall Chum run like Bonnie mentioned, with the different sonar projects, statistics and age classes. If we see some improvements, we will make adjustments to the fishing schedule as needed.

Fred West, Summer Season Research Biologist, Bethel, Alaska

I'll give a brief assessment update. So as Christy and Bonnie were mentioning, the salmon runs on the Lower River transitioned to Fall Season. Chinook and Chum were moving their way up river, but as of now, we're monitoring what's going on at the border. If we assume late timing at the midpoint of around July 29th for Eagle. The cumulative average through Eagle is well, well below average and right now it's only larger than what we saw in 2022 on this date. It's coming in pretty small and we won't make the border passage goal of 31,000. For Summer Chum, we're done monitoring in the Lower River. We ended up with roughly around 758,000 fish, which is within the drainage wide escapement goal of 500,000 to 1.2 million, but it was down near the lower half of what we forecasted for this year and it might be because of lower than expected number of age 4s than we normally see, so that might have been part of it. The other assessment projects we're still continuing to operate is the Chinook Radio Telemetry Project is done, they're done tagging in the Lower River and they're working on tracking as they go Upriver using remote towers and also aerial surveys. All that information will be available Postseason for the number of fish that are expected to get into Canada. We will get all that information later in the season, and they're also being tracked as they head into Canada. More later in the season. For the Andreafski Weir, that project was dealing with high water, but the water has dropped and the weir is fish tight again as of July 21st, but they've only seen 2,024 Chinook salmon, which is well below average of over 3,500 normally at this time. They've seen 190 Summer Chum salmon, which is well below a median of 50,000 at this time. For the Anvik, they also were dealing with high water, but they are back to counting as of July 19th. They have seen a cumulative passage of 94,066 Summer Chum, which is well below the median of 428,000 at this time. Chena was also dealing with high water, but they're back to visual counts, they weren't able to see fish visually or by sonar for a while, but now they're back. They got the sonar back in and they're also back to visually counting as of yesterday. Their cumulative passes for Chinook salmon is 199, which is well below average of 3,700. Their Summer Chum of 183, which is well below average of just over 1,000 at this time. Similar for the Salcha River, they were visually counting after some high water events, and they are at 500 Chinook salmon, which is well below the historical average of 5,000 at this time. They've seen 331 Summer Chum, which is below

the cumulative median of just over 1,000 fish. The Eagle sonar, the current cumulative passage is 5,114 Chinook salmon, which is well below the cumulative average of 22,000 at this time normally, similar to what Bonnie was describing for Summer Chum age comp. We were at 30% age 4s was compared to a historical average of 51% and then for age 5s we are at 67% which compares with historical average of 46%. The size for age 4s is 542mm, which is smaller than like the normal 549mm. For age 5s it's 557mm compared to the average of 556mm. Over all the age classes were looking a little bit smaller and similar with the Chinook, were also a little bit smaller on average across all the different age classes.

Deena Jallen, Summer Season Manager of Yukon River, Emmonak, Alaska

I am back up in the Fairbanks office after spending the Summer Season down in Emmonak. There's not too much update for Summer Season, just always want to remind folks to call the toll-free hotline number if you've ever got questions about the fishing schedules in your area. That toll free number is 1-866-479-7387 but the only actions we've still got going into place for Summer Season are the two-week closures of 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets, which are still in place in Sub District 5D and those are going to be expiring the one in 5D Lower expires today at 8:00 PM, Tuesday. So after 8:00 PM, you can put your 4-inch and smaller mesh back in the water and you have to be 60 feet or less and operate as a setnet. In Sub Districts 5 Middle and Upper, you can use 4-inch mesh again on Friday, July 26 and then on 5D Upper on Sunday, July 28th. Other than that, Districts up through Sub District 5 ABC, you can use selective gear and you can retain Chum salmon, any Pink or Sockeye salmon that make it up that far and non-salmon species, but all Chinook salmon have to be released and that will be the case continuing on into Fall Season. So there's not much more I have to add for Summer Season Management. Just to folks that want to get ahold of me, they can contact the Fairbanks office and I definitely want to thank everyone for all the phone calls that we got in the Emmonak office during the Summer Season and all the good commentary and good conversations we've had on the YRDFA call so far this season.

US Fish and Wildlife Service

Holly Carroll, Yukon River Area Manager, Fairbanks, Alaska

I don't have a lot to add to those other great updates, but I wanted to let folks know that the Fish Wildlife Service team, we are going to be launching our Teedriinjik Sonar Crew next week during the YRDFA call. So we won't be on the call, but I wanted to remind folks, that following Wednesday on July 31st. We are holding a public hearing to review the Fall Management Strategies, it involves possibly closing the Mainstem River to protect the Fall Chum. Unless we start to see harvestable surpluses because those closures could be longer than 60 days in some areas for the Federal Management. We call those that length of closure a "Temporary Special Action." To do that, we need to have a public hearing, just so people can hear about it and weigh in on it and give feedback to me as the Manager. That public hearing is happening next Wednesday, July 31st, it is in the late afternoon, 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM. You should have received a news release about it to your tribe, your city government. We're going to mail it out again Monday. I will give you the phone number to call in for that public hearing. That phone number is 833-436-1163. The passcode is 9 digits, 571396562#. It will be a 2-hour public hearing just to get your feedback on the Fall Management Strategy. That management strategy is exactly like the one that Christy and Bonnie have been talking about. Obviously, we don't have a lot of new information about the Fall Chum run. This is some predictable examples of what we might need to do as Managers based on the run we're projecting to have and also based on what we did last year. None of these actions should be a real surprise to hear about, but definitely do call in and weigh in on that and that's next Wednesday, 4:00 to 6:00 PM.

Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Adam O'Dell, Fishery Biologist

Porcupine River Sonar assessment, which is just downstream of Old Crow. We're still counting Chinook salmon throughout the territory here, but at this site here we have about 200 fish estimated to date. There have been a series of issues that we've been trying to resolve and still persisting more technological issues with some of the equipment, but things have been leveling off somewhat in that sense. We're hoping that they'll just correct itself as the season progresses. The other sonar, I have an update on here is on the Big

Salmon River, this has been running for about a week now and they have seen 43 Chinook through to date. They're really quite early estimates, compared to last year, the Porcupine, it is higher than this date last year. As with all our estimates coming in this year, they are quite low compared to historic 10-year averages. The Klondike River sonar, which is operated by Tr'ondek Hwech'in near Dawson City, Yukon. This sonar has been running for a couple weeks now, and the current estimate is 79 Chinook salmon. This is similar to the count last year on this date. A little bit lower, and as with the other ones, quite a bit lower than the 10-year average. The Pelly River, this is the Selkirk First Nation collaboratively run project and to date they have about 350 Chinook salmon past the site. That's is relatively more than last year but a fraction of that 10-year average. Some of the other projects that are still in progress, Takhini River Sonar, this one should be going in the next week or two as well as the Nisutlin River Sonar. I know that they've had some issues with some of their equipment. That one should be running in the near future. There's Tatchun Creek Weir and video box that should be ready, probably in the next couple of weeks. That one's a little bit later in the season. As well as the fish ladder here in Whitehorse associated with the dam. It's there, it's going, the fish should be coming through probably in about a week to 10 days time. Aside from that, I think I've touched on this previously and perhaps Jacklyn in my absence. We do have a series of Radio Telemetry Towers that are deployed throughout the territory to detect tagged Chinook salmon. We have some that ourselves and some assistance from others have deployed, and I know that YFNSSA (Yukon First Nations Salmon Stewardship Alliance), part of the Council of Yukon First Nations, they have also deployed with the Yukon First Nation's Assistance, I believe 7 towers throughout the Yukon Territory. We have a number of towers to detect any Canadian returning Chinook salmon that are tagged. We will begin aerial surveys probably in the next week or so at the front end and continue those on through much of the next two months.

Jacklyn Kendall, Fishery Manager

Brief Canadian Management update and I did just want to say that the 2024 Educational Exchange participants were in the DFO Whitehorse office today. It was great to be able to see them and provide some information and I really hope that their journey goes great this year. So as Adam indicated, we are very much within the Chinook salmon season in Canada still. There are no changes to Canadian Management to report. As previously noted, with the very low Canadian-origin Chinook salmon outlook and in line with the agreement, we have closed the recreational fishery for 2024 and will continue to close through to 2030. The current long-term closures in both the commercial and domestic fisheries will be extended to 2030 as well. Although we are not in Chum season yet, I will speak briefly with the low Canadian-origin outlook there as well. Not anticipated to meet spawning objectives in Canada. The public angling fishery has been closed and the commercial and domestic long-term closures that were implemented in 2021 will continue.

Special Report:

Matthew Keyse, ADF&G, Area Management Biologist, South Alaska Peninsula

I'll just give a brief update, the June fishery ended with 423,000 Chum salmon harvested for the June fishery. That is below the historical 10-year average of 497,000 in the 5-year average of 591,000. 1,200 Chinook and a little over 1,000,000 Sockeye were also harvested during the June fishery. We are currently in the middle of our 5th scheduled opening for July. These July periods are 36 hours. One new thing that we have implemented this year is a non-retention of King salmon, 28 inches or greater by the purse sein fleet. We're hoping that will help in some of the conservation concerns around King salmon. So far, it has been a pretty slow July, I think only 48,000 Chum salmon have been harvested over those periods. I'm getting lots of reports of slow fishing and not seeing a lot of fish. I can confirm that as well based on some of the aerial surveys that I conducted in the last couple weeks, it's pretty slow. I think part of it might be due to cooler temperatures again this summer, though we've had a few more sunnier days than we did last summer, but salmonberries aren't quite out yet. I've been told that the salmon correspond to the salmonberries a little bit around here. We're still a little hopeful that things are going to start picking up. We also had additional Law Enforcement come through again during July, but there was no indications of any extra citations being issued. I think that covers it for now.

Organizational Reports:

Elizabeth McDonald, Council of Yukon First Nations, Whitehorse, Canada

We got out and deployed 2 more towers. One was deployed with Teslin Tlingit Council on the Teslin River right below Teslin Lake. The 2nd was deployed with Kwanlin Dun First Nation and Ta'an Kwach'an Council on the Takhini River near Whitehorse. We've got six of the seven, we still have one more to set up and that is right above the dam here in Whitehorse on the McClintock River. We're just waiting for a permit, but if the salmon get here before the permit. Do we have a back location? We'll get it out before we have to worry about missing tagged fish. Otherwise, most First Nations are in full swing with their field projects and are very hard to get in touch with just because everyone's out in the field doing work. A lot of the projects around Whitehorse are going in over the next couple of days as the Chinooks start to get here. I'm hearing of lots of closures in the First Nation fishery and restrictions, but with everybody else in the field, I haven't heard too much in the last few weeks.

Elizabeth McDonald, Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee, Vice-Chair

Most of the Salmon Committee is out with the Educational Exchange, which is happening this week and they're headed to Whitehorse today. Then up to Dawson, then Old Crow, I believe as part of their visit. The other thing that happened, I thought I'd share was, yesterday, we met with Yukon Government around the Victoria Gold slide and disaster. That was with EMR, which is like the Mining Branch, the Water Branch and their Fishery Environment Branch. They gave us an update and I thought I'd share some of it. Both of them YG (Yukon Government), the Victoria Gold Mining Company, and Na-Cho Nyäk Dun First Nation are all out in their meeting very regularly and have a bit of a plan in place for going forward. Right now, they're really concentrating on keeping the contaminated water contained, and trying to get on top of that. They're doing water sampling and looking at some fish health now. Sampling fish and seeing if they're showing contaminations or not. They're looking to expand that as water samples show cyanide moving through the system. I'll share, like a friend of mine and the mouth of the river was asking. My kids are down in the river. Should I be worried? Should they be out there playing? What I could share and like my kids, I would totally let them go play in the river in Dawson City. I wouldn't even think twice about it, so it should be safe for Alaskans to be out in the water. What YG was saying for people who live on the McQuesten, which is downstream, so it goes into the mine goes into Dublin Gulch, then into Haggard, Creek, and then the McQuesten, and then the Yukon river. I probably got something there wrong, but it's quite a few systems before it reaches the Yukon River and for people who live on McQuesten, they depend on the water for food, water, drinking as well as eating fish. They're saying there's minimal health risk for them there at this time. I'm a cautious person, so if I went to visit my friends at McQuesten, I might not let my kids play in the water there. But according to the water sampling that's been happening, it's safe. So I just wanted to share that update as well and let people know that there's a lot of attention being paid to this in the Yukon right now. You can't get in touch with anybody at Na-Cho Nyäk Dun First Nation because they're all out in the field dealing with this as well as YG. They are kind of being run off their feet I think with this. It's good to see them responding and moving. Of course, there are still lots of unanswered questions that we hope to get answers to in the short term. I think that's all the updates for Salmon Subcommittee.

Community level reports:

District Y6abc:

Tanana:

Stan Zuray (emailed in report from the Rapids) - Water is semi low and surface temps are 61 to 63 degrees. Only a few camps open so only a few people put in nets at the District 5B opening for 4" nets. Mostly humpback, whitefish and a few worn out Summer Chums being caught. Every fisher in Rapids has pulled their nets as they have built up enough dog food for now. People waiting for first quality Fall Chums to show for canning and dry fish for people food. Hopefully some more camps will open when this happens.

District 5abcd:

Fort Yukon:

Kara'lissa Tremblay - I have no reports on people fishing. We've just been busy looking for our lost community member out on the river. Prayers that he's found soon and just keep our community in your prayers, thank you.

District Y4a&c:

Huslia:

Charlene Vent - We haven't really had anybody fishing lately. Everybody is at culture camp and we have a lot of people out of town. I missed last week's teleconference, so only one family went out with their nets and the other families didn't go out that week. There's a lot of people out of town right now.

Anvik:

Sherry Kruger - I don't have much to report. There hasn't been anybody fishing last week. We've been having really warm temperatures in the 80s. A couple of people said they were out blueberry picking, but they weren't quite ripe yet. I don't really have much else to report. This will be my final call-in and that's about all I have.

District Y3:

Russian Mission:

Basil Larson - I'm on my 6th and final interview week, but I will be continuing the teleconferences. Right now, the water has been coming up pretty steady. There's a lot of drift in the water, a lot of kids swimming, a lot of hot weather and not a lot of fishing. There's no fish camps in operation, the big rain, one week or a couple of weeks of rain we had. Everybody just stopped fishing and started caring for their salmon processing, drying and smoking, trying to preserve what they already got because it is pretty hard to care for salmon once it starts raining. You need twice as much wood, twice as much effort and everything. There's been no fishing, people getting food for their table, but not for their fish camps. As for my final interview questions, everybody was kind of on the same page, there was no COVID problems. Everybody went into the year, basically the last couple of years with this low salmon return coming in barely any fishing opportunities. We came into this year with the same mindset. We were happy for the opportunity to get some salmon with dipnet. Last year, we had a big flood here and a lot of fish camps went belly up and not everybody was able to rebuild their camp last year. This year, with the fishing openings, a lot of people hustled to get an operating camp going. A lot of people moved their camp behind their house in town. So there was a lot of fishing activity going on for about two weeks with the different openings. Up until the rainy season started. Everybody was happy for the opportunity to fish. We all already see some of the traditional knowledge passed on, like back in the day. Kids, youngsters would start by heading and gutting and cutting the Summer Chum. Then once they got efficient enough with that, they'd go up with their mothers and grandmothers and start cutting the King salmon. That little traditional connection, it's kind of gone now. Everybody is just thankful to be teaching the art of cutting fish and using only Chums too. Compared to the historical numbers of salmon usually caught, everybody cuts their numbers in half like they said, where our mindset is conservative and we cut our traditional harvest numbers in half. I don't want to say they have their fill, but they've got a taste and they're more than happy for that. There's a little break in fishing at least for the fish camps. Now everybody's hoping for a strong Silver run and a lot of that goes to half-dried and then the jarred fish. Usually, we make them out of Silvers or Fall Chum because the weather is usually typically worse in the Fall. Then there's a lot of concern about the cyanide coming down the river from Canada. We're kind of caught in the middle here. We take the blunt of the blame, the subsistence users who take the blunt of the blame for the low salmon return numbers. We all know that we're not the problem, but we still bear that on our shoulders. Every year, we've got new rules and regulations to deal with. Back to the cyanide, everybody's kind of wondering if it's OK to let the kids, like I said, a lot of kids are swimming in the hot weather. Wondering about the effects did it have on the salmon this year? Is it going into their spawning grounds? Like I said, everybody heard about the cyanide spill, that brought back the ugly feeling

we went through a couple of years ago when 30,000 Kings went missing between the Pilot Station Sonar and the Eagle Sonar. We got the blame for that too, being subsistence users. Little things like that, hearing about the cyanide spill, instances like that pop into your mind and makes you wonder how long it's been going on. Thankful for a few salmon, everybody was thankful to cut. There's been people checking for berries around here. We don't have too much salmon berries. Not too much tundra around us, but we do have blueberries, raspberries and blackberries and currants. We're patiently waiting for the season change. Everybody out here relies on subsistence, and we subsist different times of the year, just different things. We're done with the Summer Salmon. Waiting on the berries and also waiting on Fall fish, hoping to get an opportunity. When I was doing these interviews, a lot of people stressed the fact that there's some converted houses, households into a smoker. Not everybody is able to keep up with the new rules and stuff. One person will have a camp and one household will have a boat and one household will have a net. So they all come together and sometimes one dipnet is trying to support 4 households. We do rely on subsistence year-round and we're kind of in-between right now waiting for the berries. My kids go out rod and reel for table food and for the dogs. There's a lot of humpies in the creeks where they go white fishing. A lot of whitefish, a lot of Humpies, a lot of local Chums. They still look pretty good, they're not too worn out, but their meat is getting light. We're noticing the genetic stock change from the first pulse and the last pulse of these Summer Chum and a lot of bear sign back in the creeks, which is a good sign.

District Y2:

St. Mary's:

Serena Fitka, YR DFA (emailed report) - The water temp in Saint Mary's is 63.2 at high noon today.

Mountain Village:

Nita Stevens - I contacted 5 households and out of 5 households nobody fished, 2 were on medical and 3 that didn't fish at all. There's some people that were saying there's lots of Humpies in the river and there's no drift in the river. People are starting to pick berries out here. People are waiting for Fall Chums to make strips with them.

Open Discussion / Questions:

Melissa Johnson, Arctic Yukon Kuskokwim Tribal Consortium - I was just wondering, from the previous report. Is that going to be included in the summary that is sent out because I had to step away just for a minute and I couldn't hear where the cyanide spillage and where that was occurring.

Elizabeth McDonald, YCFN & YSSC

So I'll start off saying, I don't work for the Yukon Government or the mine or the Na-Cho Nyäk Dun First Nation. Everything I share is what I've heard in the media or at the meeting that I attended at the Subcommittee yesterday with the Yukon Government, and I'm doing it from memory. I might get some of the finer details wrong. A month now tomorrow, Victoria Gold, which is the mining company, had a landslide from their heap leach facility. This is where you grind up the minerals. You put it on a line pad and you pour cyanide on top. The cyanide picks up the metals you want to mine. The gold, copper, whatever there might be. It pulls them out into the solution, you get the minerals and then you make your money. It's quite a large pile, it's a couple kilometers I believe, and it had a slide. The slide came out of that lined containment. The slide isn't just a mineral, think ground rock plus mineral water and the cyanide solution. That went over the berm and is now leaking into Dublin Gulch. It's the nearest community if you want to look on the map and give a sense of where it is Mayo on the Yukon. On the Canadian side, it does flow into the Yukon River through Dublin Gulch then Haggard Creek, South McQuesten, McQuesten and then Yukon River. It is leaking this cyanide and other chemicals into the water right now and the mining company, Yukon Government and Na-Cho Nyäk Dun First Nation are working to contain it and doing water sampling and fish health. Yukon Government is saying, and I think their words is there is minimal risk to fish or human health in the McQuesten river. So that's before you get to the Yukon River, as I said earlier, for people concerned about their kids and swimming in the water on the Alaskan side, I wouldn't think twice about it. I'd let my kids swim in the river at Dawson City, which is just upstream of the border, and they

would be safe, and I wouldn't worry about it. I'm also very concerned because it's never great to have all this stuff leach into the waterways and people are quite concerned by it. They are working to contain the water, they're working to treat the water that has escaped already. I suspect it will be a multi-year clean-up effort and also continuous water monitoring and fish health studies to see how far it's spread and what kind of impact that has had. Then there'll be compensations of types and possibly a fine or tickets, I guess for releasing these dangerous goods that are not supposed to be in the waterways, there's a bunch of things that can happen. They're could be driven investigations or convictions or stuff like that and waiting to see how that unfolds. Right now, most of the focus is just towards containing what happened, to date, they're not quite sure what caused the slide. There's some investigations in time being put into that as well, and that work will continue I think probably more once the immediate escapement of water is stopped. The most concern there is from the cyanide, but there are other metals as well because obviously they're mining them that are concerning as well. Hopefully that was helpful, but at the end of the day, the water down by you should be safe because it's been diluted so much. As I said, I swim in the water, I wouldn't drink out of it at Dawson, it's really turbid there and dirty, I just wouldn't drink it. It should be safe for swimming and kids are in it. The other thing I can say is that humans are way less sensitive to cyanide than fish. You would see fish dying long before it would have an effect on humans. There's no fish in the McQuesten, they haven't died, so there's a good indicator that water is not currently contaminated by cyanide. So hopefully that's some help and information that was useful.

George Donart, Lower River Fisherman - I really appreciate that report about the cyanide spill up in McQuesten. One of the things that I'm just wondering if there's any numbers that they gave you as far as the amount of number of parts per million in the water? Because a lot of times you hear it's say when it really is up to us to make a decision about whether it's safe or not. I don't want people to feel too concerned but I think it's really important to have numbers if we can get that information available right now.

Elizabeth McDonald, YCFN & YSSC

I think they're reported in the media, how many parts per million or whatever measurement they were using. I know they're trying to make that data more available right now, I think the only source is what was shared at the media conferences. I'm pretty sure there's couple of news articles, I'll see if I can find one and send it your way.

Call ended 2:14 PM