



YUKON RIVER DRAINAGE FISHERIES ASSOCIATION

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Boards Support Section, ADFG
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, AK 99811-5526

Re: Yukon River Salmon Fishery Issues For Consideration

Chairman Carlson-Van-Dort and Members of the Board of Fisheries:

I am writing on behalf of the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association, a non-profit focused on conserving the subsistence and commercial fisheries, and traditional cultures, within the Yukon River system. Our mission is to serve as a voice for the fishing-dependent peoples of the Yukon, and to foster a meaningful dialogue between fishers and fishery managers of the region.

Today, that dialogue is focused on the salmon crisis in the Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim. A steady, multi-decade salmon decline on the AYK has been marked with periodic chum and Chinook stock crashes, culminating in a season of record loss in 2021. With zero commercial or subsistence harvest of Chinook or summer chum on the Yukon this year, and many stocks below needed escapement, we are looking for statewide collaboration to examine and address issues impacting the health of these iconic stocks. ***This is a critical matter of well-being in our region, impacting the health of our food systems, livelihoods, family structures, cultural traditions and more.*** While the AYK is not currently in cycle, we would like to call the board's attention to opportunities to discuss and address this crisis in the coming meetings.

Available in the Miscellaneous Section of the board workbook is a proposal submitted by Virgil Umphenour as a non-regulatory ACR. The ACR requests additional genetic scrutiny of chum, Chinook and pink salmon stocks harvested in the Area M salmon fishery. YR DFA strongly supports this request, and asks that the Board schedule a time to take up a meaningful discussion about this and other critical research needs addressing Yukon salmon declines. In particular, as you discuss committee meetings and agendas, please prioritize this issue for the Special Committee on Fisheries Management Research Needs.

Additionally, we ask that Yukon River issues be highlighted in the Committees on habitat and subsistence. Interaction with other fisheries is just one of the important areas to investigate in addressing this crisis, and we believe including it in these and other


discussions is an important step.

We intend to work with other stakeholders, managers and state leaders to support public dialogues, project development, funding resources and eventual management responses that will address the Yukon River salmon crisis. Given the critical state of the stock, we ask that the Board support this ongoing process by prioritizing these and other requests addressing Yukon salmon declines. While these requests are non-regulatory, they are a matter of great public and management interest, and the Board process is a critical opportunity to gather public input, and to hold a multi-sector dialogue about the distinct and cumulative challenges facing the Yukon.

In summary, we urge the board to prioritize critical review of the research needs and potential management strategies for addressing Yukon River salmon declines.

The people of the Yukon are eager to partner with all stakeholders and decision makers in solutions to the stock crises we are experiencing on the Yukon. Thank you for prioritizing the discussions that will help us all move toward those solutions, and thank you for considering our comments.

Sincerely,



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



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