

Yukon Fisheries News

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE YUKON RIVER DRAINAGE FISHERIES ASSOCIATION

SPRING 2018

2018 Preseason Meeting

The 2018 YRDFA Yukon River Preseason Preparatory meeting was held in Anchorage, at the Sheraton Hotel, on May 2nd. Yukon River fishers and fishery managers tell us that this is one of the most important meetings they look forward to each year; as it is the largest and most focused gathering of river stakeholders, management staff, and fishery researchers. YRDFA hosted this year's meeting with generous support from the Yukon River Panel (YRP) through their Restoration and Enhancement Fund (R&E) under the authority of the Yukon River Salmon Agreement. The R&E Fund's focus is on the restoration, conservation, and enhancement of Canadian-origin salmon stocks. The Salmon Agreement between Canada and the US/Alaska was created, after many years of intense negotiation and challenges to protect Canadian-origin Chinook and fall chum salmon, which are vital to Yukon River

fishing communities. On average, ~42% of Chinook and 30% of fall chum, spawn in Canadian rivers and streams. When runs are weak, Alaskan fishers protect future salmon runs by taking less than they need & meeting escapement goals in Canada..

Attendance at the Preseason meeting was up this year, partially due to the many young fishers that YRDFA, the Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association (YDFDA) and the Yukon River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (YRITFC) sponsored to attend. A main focus of the meeting was the summer season management presentation on Chinook and summer chum salmon. This is a reflection of the long concern, conservation efforts, and importance of these two salmon species. Please go to yukonsalmon.org "News" Tab to see the full list and content of most presentations.

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Preseason Preparatory Meeting in the Howard Rock Ballroom at the Sheraton Hotel, Anchorage on May 2, 2018.

HOW DO I BECOME A YRDFA MEMBER?

*Call 1-877-999-8566
Ext. 5 for membership
information or go to
page 15, fill out the
form, and mail it in.*

**Yukon River
In-Season salmon
teleconferences
will begin on**

Tuesday, June 5th

**Call 1-800-315-6338,
code 98566# (YUKON)**

Protecting and
promoting all healthy
wild fisheries and
cultures along the
Yukon River drainage.



Yukon River Region Calendar

Yukon River In-season Salmon Management Teleconferences

Starting June 5-August 28, 2018
every Tuesday at 1pm Alaska time
and 2pm Canada time

Yukon River In-Season Subsistence Salmon Surveys

May 24 -August 1, 2018
Yukon River, AK

Denakkanaaga Elders & Youth Conference

June 12-14, 2018
Tanacross

Educational Exchange; Yukon River Panel

June 18-23, 2018
Emmonak/St. Mary's

Alaska Salmon Day

August 10, 2018
Statewide

Post Season Surveys - ADF&G

September 3-October 31, 2018
Yukon River, Ak

Yukon Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council Meeting

September 27-28, 2018
Bethel

Eastern Interior RAC Meeting

October 9-10, 2018
Tanana

Western Interior RAC Meeting

October 10-11, 2018
Galena

Alaska Federation of Natives

October 18-20, 2018
Anchorage



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Message from the Director



WAYNE JENKINS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Greetings to all! As the winter meeting season melts away, people along the Yukon River are looking with increasing anticipation to the fishing season. The YRDFA Board met in Anchorage, in February 2018, and dealt with the challenge of five lower river Directors weathered in and unable to make it in. Fortunately, through the use of teleconference, the Board was able to work through discussions, votes, and the creation of 7 resolutions addressing numerous Yukon River fishery issues and beyond. A big "Thank You!" to our nimble Board members and especially those lower river members that tackled a lot of work from far away. The Board also made some important organizational decisions in other areas by adding two advisory positions for young fishers and revising the Board nomination and election process. They also discussed and took positions on the five Alaska Board of Fish (BOF) Yukon River proposals. Information on the Resolutions and BOF proposals can be found in this newsletter.

Board and staff wish to thank fishery managers and researchers that shared important and timely presentations. The Yukon River is a complex and fascinating realm and its life-giving fishery make life on the river possible and meaningful. We appreciate those that have dedicated their lives to studying, trying to understand it's intricacies and helping to maintain it's resources.

YRDFA hosted a very well attended Yukon River Fishery Preseason Planning meeting in early May in Anchorage. Over a hundred Yukon River fishers, fishery managers, researchers, and other stakeholders participated in this important preparation for the fishing season to come. Swelling the ranks of attendees was a growing component of young fishers sponsored by YRDFA's Young Fishers outreach program and a strong youth contingent from Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association. All the ole-timers were grateful to have the 18 young representatives from the river and hope they will stay engaged in learning more about Yukon River fishery management, issues, etc. and sharing their views on these matters which play such a crucial role in their families and communities. All of the Powerpoint presentations shared at the meeting can be found on the YRDFA website as well as the 2018 Yukon River Early Season Outlook.

The Teleconferences are coming! The Teleconferences are coming! Yep, it almost that time of year for the annual Yukon River in-season Teleconference calls that bring together Yukon River fishers, from the mouth to the headwaters in Canada, fishery management staff, in-season surveyors, other stakeholders and the just plain fishery-curious. YRDFA has been hosting the calls every Tuesday at 1pm AK time and 2pm for folks in Yukon Territory, June through August, for 16 years. This opportunity for those on the river to share current river conditions, what they are experiencing as the runs advance, how well subsistence and commercial harvests are progressing, and any other concerns they have with the managers is valuable and timely. Concurrently, fishery managers have the chance to clarify management strategies, regulations, and rationale for the many specific fishing directives about fishing timing, harvest gear types, run strength

and progress up the river etc. This two-way dialogue has proven useful in years of good fishing and years when severe conservation measures have been necessary and, along the way, a foundation of working together has evolved through the understanding that this great river and its world-class runs of salmon will only be sustained by a shared approach to management and use.

Lastly, YRDFA is challenged each year to remain financially capable of continuing the Yukon River fishery focused programs that so many along the river, fishery managers, and other stakeholders have come to rely on. Many appreciate the Preseason meetings, annual Teleconferences, our bi-annual newsletter, In-The-Net, the Education and Travel Exchange with our Yukon River Canadian neighbors up-river and our new and growing Yukon River young fishers outreach program. Increasing numbers are using our Facebook page and visiting our website for timely postings and varied informational content. And nearly everyone knows they can call our office with fishery-related questions and we'll address the question or find the right person for you to contact. But, this is where we must rely on you. As the non-profit funding world continues to evolve we increasingly need to have those that rely on our efforts to assist with YRDFA funding needs. If you use or see our services as useful and meaningful please make a donation and become an annual member. A \$25 donation from everyone involved in Yukon River fisheries would go a long way to helping us maintain the programs you rely upon. Larger amounts are also acceptable. You can mail a check or call Richell at 907/272-3141 for making a credit card donation. *Thank you!*



Northern Bering Sea Juvenile Chinook Salmon Surveys

BY SABRINA GARCIA – MARINE RESEARCH ASSISTANT, ADF&G DIVISION OF COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

Since 2002, state and federal biologists have been traveling to the northern Bering Sea to study Yukon River Chinook salmon in the marine environment. *Where do Chinook salmon go once they leave the Yukon River in early summer? What do they eat during their first summer in the marine environment? How can the information we learn from juvenile Chinook salmon in the ocean help fishers and managers?* The answers to these questions are a few of the many things biologists from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) have learned from the northern Bering Sea juvenile Chinook salmon survey.

Starting in May of every year, Chinook salmon smolts leave the Yukon River and make their way out to the ocean where they will spend the next 1 to 5 years of their life. During their first summer in the ocean, these smolts will feed and grow into what we call juveniles. A juvenile Chinook salmon is typically two years old; it has spent one year of its life as an egg in the gravel and another year of its life rearing in the freshwaters of the Yukon River. In September, state and federal biologists sample the juvenile Chinook salmon that have survived their first summer in the ocean.

The same locations in the northern Bering Sea have been sampled for juvenile Chinook salmon since 2003. When the vessel arrives at the sampling station, the first thing we do is deploy an instrument called a CTD which takes measurements of temperature and salinity and collects water samples to look at nutrient and plankton concentrations (Figure 1). The next step is to deploy bongo nets which are pulled through the water and catch tiny ani-

mals called zooplankton (Figure 1). The information collected using the CTD and the bongo nets give us information about the habitat where we are sampling. Finally, we deploy the trawl net which fishes at the water's surface for 30 minutes.

Once the trawl is hauled back (Figure 2), the contents of the net are dumped onto a large table so that scientists can sort the catch by species (Figure 3). Even though the survey focuses on Chinook salmon, we also catch other species of interest like Pacific herring and Walleye pollock. We aim to collect as much information as possible from all the species we catch such as length, weight, and genetics. We also remove tissue samples, otoliths (ear bones), and stomachs for processing back on land. All the data collected on the survey come together to help biologists understand the marine ecology of Chinook salmon and other Bering Sea species.

What we have learned:

- Juvenile Chinook salmon typically eat capelin, Pacific sand lance, herring, and other fish.
- Their diet changes with changes in temperature.
- Bigger juvenile Chinook salmon have a better chance of surviving their first winter in the cold waters of the Bering Sea.
- We are able to estimate the total number of juvenile Chinook salmon in the northern Bering Sea.

Using the estimated number of juveniles we can predict how many adults will return to the Yukon River up to three years in the future. Predicting adult returns to the Yukon River so far in advance provides managers and stakeholders the opportunity to plan for upcoming runs. The data collected during these surveys are invaluable and provide a unique opportunity to study the iconic Yukon River Chinook salmon. 🐟



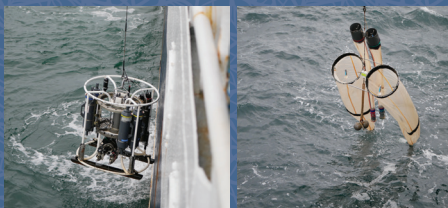


Figure 1. The CTD (left photo) measures temperature and salinity and takes water samples to look at nutrients. The Bongo nets (right photo) are dragged through the water and sample tiny animals called zooplankton. Photo courtesy of Catherine Pham (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).



Figure 2. Aerial view of the trawl net on the deck of the F/V Northwest Explorer after completing a 30-minute surface trawl. Photo courtesy of Catherine Pham (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).



Figure 3. NOAA and state biologists along with graduate students sorting through a trawl catch to identify all fish species present. Photo courtesy of Catherine Pham (U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service).

Salmon Monitoring Summary

ADF&G obtains information from a collection of assessment projects that provide critical salmon run timing, relative abundance, and stock composition information. Inseason run assessment methods include test fisheries, sonars, counting towers, weirs, and harvest monitoring. Age, sex, and length (ASL) and genetics data are collected in most projects. A more detailed description of the following projects can be found on our website, under the *News* tab.

Projects Overview – Lower to Upper River

Lower Yukon Test Fishery (LYTF): Operated by ADF&G w/ local YDFDA crewmembers*

- Provides an index of abundance (CPUE) and identify timing of distinct pulses of salmon as they enter the Yukon River. ASL data are collected for Chinook, Coho, and fall and summer chum salmon and genetic tissues are collected for Chinook salmon.

Mountain Village Test Fishery: ADF&G and BSFA*

- Provides a CPUE and run timing of fall chum and Coho salmon using drift gillnets. Used for inseason fishery management. Provides the best projection of fall chum salmon abundance expected to pass the sonar.

East Fork Andreafsky River Weir: USFWS*

- Counts Chinook and summer chum salmon passage into east fork of the Andreafsky River.

Pilot Station Sonar: ADF&G*

- Estimates salmon passage past the mainstem YR sonar operated near Pilot Station; however, other species, i.e., whitefish, are also counted. ASL and genetic tissues are collected for Chinook and chum salmon. Fish are caught in a set of drift gillnets of various mesh sizes; thus, selecting for fish of all age classes, samples likely re-

flect the stock composition of the drainage wide run.

Anvik River Sonar: ADF&G*

- Estimates summer chum salmon passage into the Anvik River, one of the largest concentrations in the drainage.

Gisasa River Weir: USFWS*

- Estimates Chinook and summer chum salmon passage into the Gisasa River, within the lower Koyukuk River drainage.

Henshaw Creek Weir: TCC*

- Estimates Chinook and summer chum salmon passage into Henshaw Creek, within the upper Koyukuk River drainage.

Chena River Tower: ADF&G*

- Estimates Chinook and summer chum salmon passage into the Chena River.

Salcha River Tower: ADF&G*

- Estimates Chinook and

summer chum salmon passage into the Salcha River.

Goodpaster River Tower: Pogo Mine, operated under BSFA*

- Estimates Chinook salmon passage in the upper Goodpaster River.

Delta River Foot Survey: ADF&G*

- Conducted October-November, to assess fall chum and Coho salmon escapement.

Delta Clearwater River Boat Survey: ADF&G*

- Conducted in October to assess Coho salmon escapement.

Chandalar River Sonar: USFWS*

- Estimates fall chum salmon passage into the Chandalar River, which is one of the largest producers of fall chum salmon.

continued on next page >>>

Salmon Monitoring Summary... continued

Porcupine River Sonars: DFO*

- Estimates fall chum salmon passage into the Porcupine River at the U.S./Canada border.

Fishing Branch Weir: DFO*

- In conjunction with a hydro acoustic sonar, the weir is used to estimate fall chum salmon spawning escapements.

The Eagle Sonar: Operated by ADF&G with DFO crew members

- Estimates Chinook and fall chum salmon passage into Canada. ASL and genetic tissues are collected for both Chinook and fall chum salmon. Chinook salmon are caught with drift gillnets of various mesh sizes.

Aerial Surveys

- Visual peak spawning counts of salmon within established index areas. Provides distribution information and documentation of furthest upriver range of salmon.

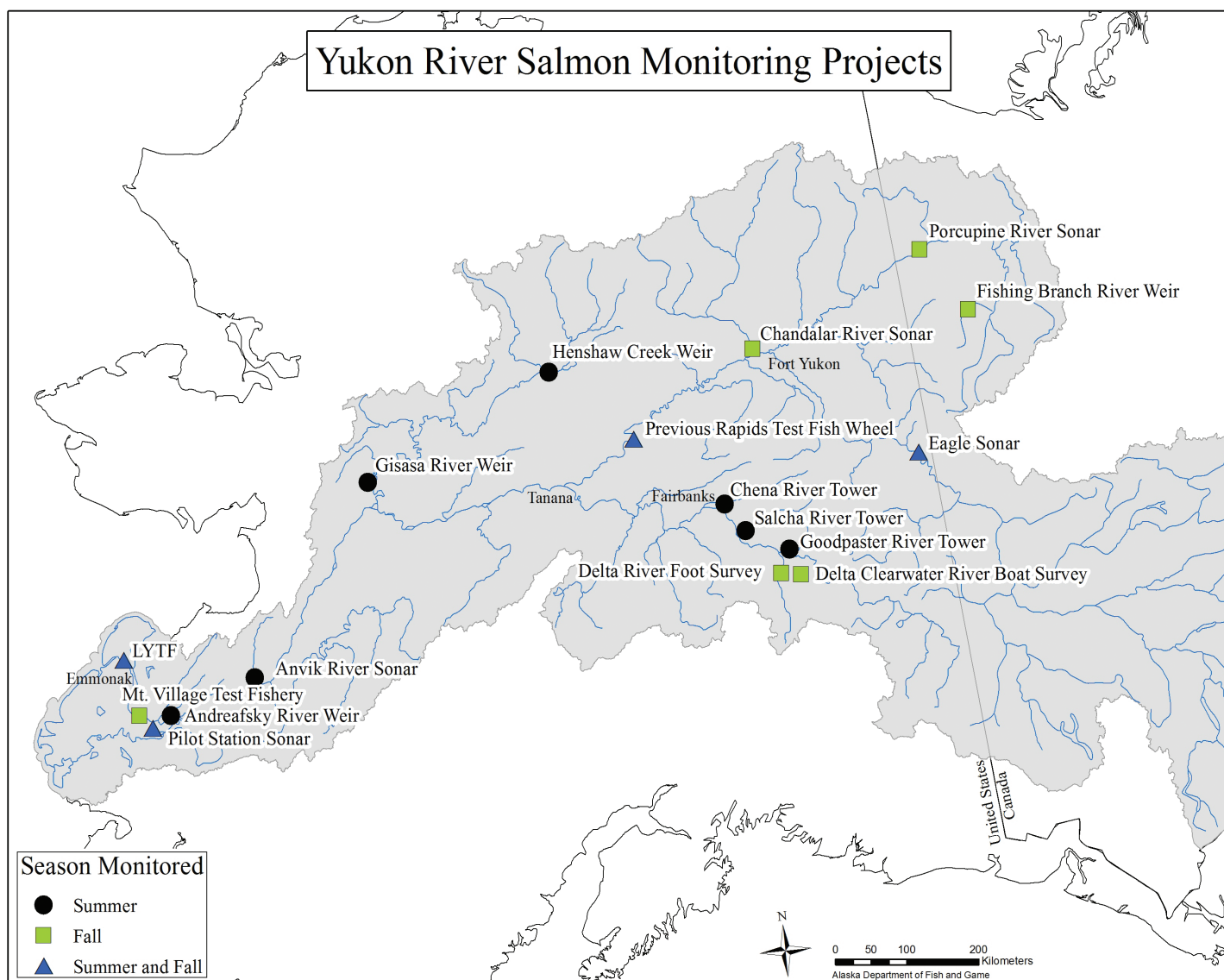
Harvest Sampling: Subsistence sampling by ADF&G and various contractors*

- Commercial ASL sampling to characterize harvests of Chinook, chum, and coho salmon. Commercial sampling by ADF&G based on a sampling plan for amounts by species. Subsistence ASL sampling to characterize Chinook salmon harvests.

Harvest Monitoring: ADF&G

- Monitors the harvest from commercial fishermen

with the fish ticket system, where fish caught and sold are detailed, along with all fish kept for personal use. These data are collected within 24 hours of each opening. Subsistence harvest is monitored via inseason teleconference, inseason community visits, and post season surveys and permits. 🌱



2018 Young Fishers Workshop

Eight Young Fishers from the following communities, participated in a day long workshop put on by YRDFA:

- Emmonak
- Alakanuk
- Mountain Village
- Grayling
- Nulato
- Tanana
- Beaver
- Minto

The day held great discussions, amazing presenters on L/TEK, Yukon Fishery Management, and the young fishers visited the Jack Hernandez Sport Fish hatchery in Anchorage (YRDFA is neither for or against hatcheries but our goal is to provide as much information regarding fisheries to the upcoming leaders). The participants were also given a booklet with the following information:

- Purpose of the program
- Background on the Yukon River Fishery
- Biology of Yukon River Salmon
- Weaving Local and Traditional Knowledge with Western Knowledge
- Management Today
- Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association
- Opportunities for participation in management of your fishery
- And more!

This booklet is growing and YRDFA staff plan to have a final copy for the Fall 2018 Young Fishers' Workshop.

Some of the key topics of discussion from the workshop were the following:

- Identifying new natural indicators of when salmon are coming.
- Noticing that kids don't get as excited about fishing anymore.

- Some people can't enjoy fishing because there's not enough time; too busy.
- Need money to fish but sometimes our jobs don't allow us to fish during the opening.

What would you like to pass onto the future generation?

- Respect: How to teach younger generations, how to encourage more connection to Elders?
- More passion/love for our traditions
- Spiritual connection; Greeting/farewell to animals when they come and go (sing/dance)

- Work Ethic
- Cultural Way of Life; way of living off the land
- Teach activities of tradition; dancing, tanning moosehide, etc.
- Respect/know how to handle/care for catch/harvest

This is a growing program and we are planning on having a larger 2-day workshop in the Fall of 2018 in a community on the river (Tentative dates are October 5-8 or 26-29, 2018 with Monday and Friday being the travel days). Email danielle@yukonsalmon.org if you're interested! 🐟



Young Fishers Workshop in Anchorage; From left to right: Celia Chikigak, Jessica West, Daisy Attie, Danielle Stickman, Arnold Demoski, Katlyn Zuray, Brandon Kameroff, Frank Pitka, Candace Charlie.

2018 Preseason Meeting... continued from front page

Feedback from attendees and presenters was very positive. With the recent increase in subsistence harvest of Chinook salmon, making almost all escapement goals, and strong runs of summer and fall chum, the tone of this year's meeting was upbeat and appreciative from all parties and hopeful that the Chinook run would continue to strengthen. Some research indicators show the continued need for caution and careful in-season monitoring remains the best approach for adapting management guidance and fisher's actions as the runs develop throughout the summer of 2018.

YRDFA Board and staff sends our appreciation to all participants and presenters in the 2018 Preseason meeting for making it one of the best. Thank you all for the hard work and sacrifice made over the recent years in efforts to help the Yukon River Chinook salmon run recover. Thank you to the Yukon River Panel's R&E fund for making this meeting possible. Good luck in your fishing endeavors! 🍷



Katlyn and Stan Zuray- Father/daughter YRDFA Board member/YRDFA Young Fisher team attending 2018 Pre-season Planning meeting in Anchorage

Yukon River Panel Management Process

The Yukon River Panel was established in 2002 when Canada and the U.S. signed the Yukon River Salmon Agreement (YRSA) in 2002. The Yukon River Panel is the 12 member international Panel that enables the conservation and coordinated management of Canadian-origin Yukon River salmon stocks. The Yukon River Panel typically meets twice a year to review information and make recommendations to the management entities:

- Spring (April 2018)
- Fall (December)

The meeting location alternates each calendar year between the U.S. (Alaska) and Canada (Yukon Territory). The public is invited and welcome to attend the Panel meetings. This is an opportunity to:

- Hear about the performance of the annual management of YRSA salmon stocks;

- Hear the Yukon River Panel's recommendations to the management agencies;
- Learn what is happening with Yukon River salmon stocks and their habitats;
- Hear the issues being dealt with by the Panel;
- Become aware of the Panel's salmon stock and habitat Restoration & Enhancement (R&E) Fund projects being considered;
- Meet the members of the Panel, Advisers, and the Joint Technical Committee; and
- Voice your views and concerns, during and after the Panel meeting.

The business of the Panel meetings includes:

Fall Meeting	Spring Meeting
Post-season review of U.S. and Canadian management of YRSA stocks	Pre-season run outlooks and escapement projections
Post-season review of run size and spawning escapements	Establishing the year's escapement goals for YRSA stocks
Restoration and Enhancement Fund proposal review	Management recommendations to the agencies
Research and educational presentations	Funding decisions on Restoration & Enhancement (R&E) Fund projects
	Research and educational presentations



YRP U.S. delegates accept a gift in honor of years of U.S./Canada cooperation and working together.

For full details of the April 2018 agenda please look on the web-site: yukonriverpanel.com 🍷

Communications Committee Member's Opinion Pieces

BY DON TOEWS

The Yukon River Salmon Agreement (2002) deals with the management of Canadian-origin Chinook and Fall Chum salmon; through joint management and cooperation it benefits fishers in both the U.S. and Canada.

Conservation refers to voluntary and required harvest management measures in years of low runs and returns when the needs of fishers in both the U.S. and Canada cannot be met.

Chinook Facts and Considerations:

- Around half of the Chinook salmon in the Yukon River are "Canadian-origin" – these Chinook are born and spent the first 2 years of life in rivers and streams in Canada. When they are adults, they return upriver to the spawning grounds in Canada..
- US fishers rely heavily on Canadian-origin Chinook to meet their needs: more than 50% of Chinook harvested by fishers in the U.S. are Canadian-origin (57% in 2018). This ranges from 40-50% in the lower river to 90-100% of the total U. S. harvest in the upper river.

U.S.

- U.S. fishers receive the majority of the harvest benefits from Canadian-origin Chinook and are entitled to harvest the majority of Canadian origin Chinook salmon that are produced in Canada (~75% of the Total Allowable Harvest (TAH)) while fishers in Canada are entitled to ~25% of the TAH.
- U.S. is required to manage harvest of Canadian origin Chinook and deliver sufficient Chinook to the Canada-U.S. border so the spawning escapement target established by the Yukon River Panel (currently 42,500-55,000 Chinook) is met, plus the Canadian harvest share (i.e. 25% of the TAH).

Canada

- Ensures sufficient Chinook reach the spawning grounds in Canada so that the spawning escapement objective, of 42,500-55,000, is met.

To reach the Chinook harvest benefits from the Agreement, fishers in both the U.S. and Canada must make sacrifices for the following reasons:

- Uncertainties with run predictions early in the season should encourage fishers in the lower river to delay/

reduce their Chinook harvest until run strength is supported by the Pilot Station sonar and border passage goals are supported by the Eagle sonar.

- Due to mixed runs of Canadian-origin and U.S.-origin Chinook, U.S. fishers must forgo some harvest to protect Canadian-origin Chinook in years of conservation.
- In years when harvest is too high, not enough Chinook salmon make it to their spawning grounds. This means that fewer fish will come back to the river one lifecycle later. Canadian fishers have voluntarily reduced harvests and not taken their harvest share in many years to improve spawning escapements. This has been especially significant in recent years since 2014 when higher border passage resulting from management and conservation efforts in the U.S. and sacrifices of U.S. fishers has led to significantly improved spawning escapements in Canada.
- Due to long term quality of escapement concerns (declines in size, age, and proportion of females), First Nation subsistence fishers in Canada are fishing with smaller mesh nets (6" or less) to selectively harvest smaller males and voluntarily release healthy larger females.
- Ensuring spawning, incubation, and rearing habitats for Chinook are protected and remain productive, communities in the Canadian Yukon River drainage incur significant costs and forego potential jobs and economic benefits from resource development (forestry, mining, agriculture, hydroelectric).



YRP Canadian delegates accept a gift in honor of years of Canada/U.S. cooperation and working together.

Chinook: What can you do to safeguard your children's future?

BY ANDREW BASSICH

1984-Eagle, Alaska on the Yukon River

The first Chinook salmon I ever caught was 64 lbs. It scared the heck out of me! Alive, thrashing, and looking like a shark with its morphed nose and razor teeth. I was alone, in a small 12 foot skiff, and I struggled to get the huge King salmon into the boat without capsizing.

Excited, with little fishing skills, and no mentors to teach me, my first thought was, "What a tremendous resource to have and how lucky and privileged I was to be able to have this for my food." I still have that same feeling every time I fish on the Yukon.

Fast forward 34 years. And what a different picture we have now.

Since 2000 the size and number of big salmon has been in a steady decline. The people of Teslin in the furthest upper Yukon region were the first to notice a decline in the larger 7-8-year-old Kings which were 40-70 pounds! Soon the same thing was noticed by people further down river. Alarms were set off, lots of discussion, and speculation, but little to no action occurred.

Why are the big older Kings so important?

- They carry up to 3-4 times the number of eggs, one large female King carries 17,000- 20,000 eggs which is equal to 4-5 smaller Kings which carry 4,000-6,000 eggs.
- They dig and deposit their eggs deeper into the gravel, making survival more successful.
- They generally produce larger fish to return to spawn

Let's work together and do what is right for the salmon, knowing that every effort does make a difference.

again.

- Big fish produce big fish; smaller fish produce smaller fish.
- Our managers manage for numbers of fish to meet escapement goals-not the number of females or how large the fish are, which is quality.
 - Quality of the escapement: Measure of Age, Sex, Length (ASL) of the salmon. Improving quality is key to rebuilding a healthy run in the future

For the past two years we have had moderate to good returns of King salmon, or so it would seem. For a few years, we all had to stop or severely reduce harvest to meet escapement goals and ensure there would be a King run that has surplus to harvest in the future. Even with the better runs we are still at only about half of the total number of King salmon we once saw come up the river. Historically, in the days of full commercial and subsistence harvest we had twice the number of Kings in the river. It is important to remember this and to work together on the Yukon as one group of fishermen to rebuild the runs and return to fully implemented commercial and subsistence harvests.

What can you do to help rebuild the run?

1. Fish responsibly.
2. Only harvest the minimum amount of Chinook needed for the winter.
3. Work together to try to stop those who take more salmon to strip and sell; this doesn't help the overall population of salmon when you overharvest.
4. Avoid catching larger female kings.
5. Try to meet your needs by fishing other species.

We have been very successful working together in the past to conserve King salmon. Every fisher and every King salmon counts. Let's work together and do what is right for the salmon, knowing that every effort does make a difference. Together, we can help protect and insure we have strong King salmon runs on the Yukon River for the future. Good luck to all the people of the river for the coming season! 🍷



From left to right: Lester Erhart, Jan Woodruff, Nick Andrew Sr, Allen Hansen, Mike Peters, Stan Zuray, Fred Huntington, Andrew Firmin, Bill Alstrom, Richard Burnham, Victor Lord, Phillip Titus, Pollock Simon, Michael James, Dorothy Shockley, Ray Woods, Charlie Wright

YRDFA Board of Directors 2018 Annual Meeting Results

The YRDFA Board of Directors held their annual meeting in Anchorage in February 2018. Much was accomplished, especially considering weather had prevented many of the lower river Board Members from leaving their villages on their scheduled flights. Luckily, Executive Director Wayne Jenkins was able to set up a teleconference by which the weathered-in lower river Board Members were able to call and participate in the meeting. YRDFA staff member Catherine Moncrieff remarked how continually impressed she is with the YRDFA Board members, and other fishers, who make such a strong effort to participate in Yukon River fisheries even when geography and weather work against them.

Accomplishments this year include discussing and voting on all five of the 2018 Board of Fisheries proposals and passing seven resolutions protecting salmon and the fishing lifestyle. Additionally, the YRDFA Board voted to change its bylaws to improve their voting process for electing Board Members and to include young fishers in a non-voting seat, as an introduction and capacity building effort. These accomplishments are detailed below.

Decisions on Board of Fisheries Proposals for 2018:

Proposal 230: Allow use of drift gillnets to harvest salmon for subsistence

purposes in Yukon River subdistricts 4-B and 4-C.

👍 *Support - passed with one abstain*

Proposal 231: Repeal prohibition on subsistence fishing in YR districts 1 and 2 during the first pulse of Chinook salmon when run strength indicates meeting escapement and subsistence goals.

👎 *Fail – 9 yes, 2 abstain, 1 no*

Proposal 232: Allow sale of Yukon River Chinook salmon caught incidentally during chum salmon commercial fishing.

👍 *Support - passed with unanimous support*

Proposal 233: Clarify District 1 boundary and areas closed to drift gillnets on the Yukon River coast.

👍 *Support - passed with unanimous support*

Proposal 237: District 6 commercial fishing closure date change.

👍 *Support - passed with unanimous support*

Resolutions from Annual Board of Directors 2018 Meeting:

The YRDFA Board passed seven resolutions at their 2018 meeting summarized as follows:

- 2018-01-Protect Salmon Escapement for one full life cycle
- 2018-02-Opposition to Ambler Road
- 2018-03-Pollock fishery conservation of Yukon River Chinook and chum salmon

- 2018-04-YRDFA to join Southeast Transboundary group for inclusion of Yukon River issues
- 2018-05-Opposition to 'frankenfish' - Requiring labeling of genetically altered or farmed salmon
- 2018-06-Support of Stand for Salmon Initiative
- 2018-07-Opposition to large scale hatcheries due to competition with wild salmon stocks

Changes to the YRDFA bylaws:

Election process change:

- After 8 years of discussion, the YRDFA board voted to improve their election and nomination process to make it more efficient, save money, and support continuity of effective experienced board members.

Young Fisher Board Members:

- Support and encourage young adult fishers, the YRDFA board voted to add two non-voting youth members to the board. These new young fishers will represent upriver and downriver.

Thank you to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for funding the YRDFA Board Meeting through the Yukon River Salmon Research and Management Fund.



–SPECIAL THANKS– **Phillip “Jeep” Titus**

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to Phillip “Jeep” Titus for his contributions over the past 28 years. He has been an important, influential, and contributing YRDFA board member. His presence, knowledge, and input will be greatly missed at our meetings. We wish him the best in his upcoming endeavors.

Words from the YRDFA Board Co-Chairs:

Victor Lord: “He is a very good representative from the upriver community & went across the state of Alaska & visited with downriver folks. He visited with all the lower Yukon River communities to learn from their cultures & build relationships. His actions encouraged me to open up & reach out to them too. He is a leader & motivator for building partnerships with our downriver brothers & sisters.”

Bill Alstrom: “I met him years ago. Jeep has been on the YRDFA board for as long as I can remember. He’s a good board member & great representative for YRDFA. When he says something; pretty powerful things come out of his mouth. I only think good things when I think about Jeep, he’s a good guy.” 🌱

2018 EDUCATION EXCHANGE:

Salmon Culture; Recognizing Unity and Sacrifice

YRDFA and Alaskan Yukon River fishing communities will be hosting seven individuals from the Canadian Yukon River for this year’s Education Exchange!

Purpose:

- To ensure that the Yukon River Panel provides direction for the delivery of the Exchange;
- To continue to build on the international cooperation between Alaska and Yukon; and
- To ensure that the participant selection themes, outputs and reporting are strategic and will address the goals of the Yukon River Panel.

Draft Itinerary:

Anchorage • Emmonak for 4 days • Saint Mary’s for 2 days • Pilot Station • Anchorage • Home

Agenda Items:

- Visit a local fish camp
- See the ADF&G and USFWS test fishery
- Boat the Lower Yukon River
- Visit the Pilot Station Sonar
- Observe fishing
- And more!

A detailed report of the exchange will be in the Fall 2018 newsletter. If you would like to meet with the group please let us know: danielle@yukonsalmon.org

A big thank you to our funding source; the Yukon River Panel and to our partners:

- Yukon Salmon Subcommittee (YSSC)
- Kwikpak/Yukon Delta Fisheries Association
- ADF&G
- USFWS
- Yukon River communities and individuals 🌱

In-Season Surveyors gather and train in Anchorage

The YRDFA In-Season Salmon Surveyors met at the top of the Sheraton on May 1st to be trained for the 6-week long summer king salmon survey program in their villages. These surveyors also represented their communities at the Yukon River Pre-Season Planning meeting the next day.

The annual surveyor training event is an opportunity for the surveyors from the Yukon River communities, stretching from Alakanuk to the border at Eagle, to meet in person and prepare for their work, interviewing active fishers during the fishing season. During this gathering, new surveyors benefit from the experience of more veteran surveyors and the veteran surveyors enjoy sharing their knowledge and refreshing their skills. This year our goals are to expand outreach and ensure the fisher list represents their community in balanced way – including all the fishing families and fishing areas. Sur-

veyors will also be reminding fishers to call in to the Tuesday Teleconferences at 1pm to listen, ask questions, and share information directly.

Participating in this weekly survey is a way to participate in management of YOUR fishery. The information fishers share with their surveyor helps managers know how fishers are doing and what challenges they may be having during the fishing season. This information allows managers to adjust their strategy to meet the needs of the fishery. The program begins in each community as the king salmon are arriving and runs for 6 weeks or until king salmon has ended.

Thank you to this year's surveyors! Look for them in your communities and let them know if you are fishing. Thank you to the USFWS Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program for funding this program. 🍷

Community	Surveyor
Alakanuk	Pamela Cook
Mountain Village	Eugene Landlord
Marshall	Norma Evan
Russian Mission	Basil Larsen
Anvik	Sherry Kruger
Ruby	Rachael Kangas
Huslia	Lisa Bifelt
Tanana	Kathleen Peters-Zuray
Fort Yukon	Andrew Firmin
Eagle	Jonathan DePue



2018 In-Season Subsistence Salmon Surveyors attending Pre-Season Planning meeting and Annual Surveyor training. From Left to Right: Pamela Cook, Andrew Firmin, Eugene Landlord, Jonathan DePue, Norma Evan, Sherry Kruger, Lisa Bifelt, Myra Thumma, Rachael Kangas.

Yukon River Subsistence Harvest Sampling Project

Summary

Subsistence fishers are trained by Spearfish Research on how to sample their harvest to provide a better understanding of the fishery and Chinook salmon run.

- Age of the fish is determined by their scales, size is measured by length, and stock composition is taken from fin clips.
- Training happens in May and June.
- The goal is to sample in villages from Hooper Bay to Tanana.
- Samples are given to ADF&G and used for management.
- Results allow managers to calculate the total Canadian-origin Chinook salmon run and produce more informed salmon forecasts.

What We Learn

- Age, size, female proportion of harvest, and differences along the Yukon River.

- An understanding of the stock composition of the run—what proportion of the harvest is bound for the lower, middle, or upper Yukon River.
- How different management actions (i.e. mesh size change) might influence the harvest.

We Need Your Help

Fisheries biologists will travel to your community and train fishers to collect this important information. Fishers will be paid \$10 for each fish they sample completely.

To learn more, contact:

Sean Larson, ADF&G Fisheries Biologist
(907) 267-2385
sean.larson@alaska.gov

To sign up to attend a training in your village, contact:

Cody Strathe, Spearfish Research Fisheries Biologist,
(907) 452-3828
cody@spearfishresearch.com 🐟

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

DISTR. / SEAT #	REPRESENTATIVE	COMMUNITY
Coastal	Lester Wilde	Hooper Bay
1	Aloysius Unok	Kotlik
Y-1	Allen Hansen	Alakanuk
Y-1	Michael James	Alakanuk
Y-1	Bill Alstrom	St. Marys
Y-2	Nick Andrew, Sr.	Marshall
Y-2	Mike Peters	Marshall
Y-2	Alfred Demientieff	Holy Cross
Y-3	Fred Huntington, Sr.	Galena
Y-4	Richard Burnham	Kaltag
Y-4	Charlie Wright	Tanana/Rampart
Y-5	Stan Zuray	Tanana
Y-5	Tim McManus	Nenana
Y-6	Victor Lord	Nenana
Y-6	Pollock Simon	Allakaket
Yukon Flats/5-D	Andrew Firman	Fort Yukon

ALTERNATES

DISTR. / SEAT #	REPRESENTATIVE	COMMUNITY
Coastal, Alt. 1	Aloysius Aguchak Sr.	Scammon Bay
Coastal, Alt. 2	Clifford Kaganak Sr.	Scammon Bay
Y-1, Alt. 1	Joe Afcan	Nunum Iqua
Y-1, Alt. 2	Camille Augline	Alakanuk
Y-2, Alt. 1	Stanislaus Afcan	St. Marys
Y-2, Alt. 2	Duane Thompson	Mountain Village
Y-3, Alt. 1	Basil Larson	Russian Mission
Y-4, Alt. 1	Dick Evans	Galena
Y-4, Alt. 2	Robert Walker	Anvik
Y-5, Alt. 1	Lester Erhart	Tanana
Y-6, Alt. 1	Vacant	
Y-6, Alt. 2	Dorothy Shockley	Manley Hot Springs
Koyukuk River	William Derendoff	Huslia
Flats, Alt. 1	Jan Woodruff	Eagle

Fishers needed to participate in salmon survey

The In-Season Salmon Survey will be taking place in the following Yukon River communities, beginning when the king salmon arrive.

If you are fishing this year, **please contact your local surveyor to share your knowledge and experiences.** This is a way for fishers to directly participate in and influence the management of your fishery.

COMMUNITY SURVEYOR

Alakanuk.....	Pamela Cook
Ruby.....	Rachael Kangas
Mountain Village ...	Eugene Landlord
Huslia.....	Lisa Bifelt
Marshall.....	Norma Evan
Tanana.....	Kathleen Peters-Zuray
Russian Mission.....	Basil Larsen
Fort Yukon.....	Andrew Firmin
Anvik.....	Sherry Kruger
Eagle.....	Jonathan DePue



CALLING ALL YUKON RIVER FISHERS!!!

Come one, come all!

Yukon River In-Season salmon teleconferences will begin on Tuesday, June 5! Your voice is needed to participate in your fishery. Managers need you! Other fishers need you! You may need other fishers and their observations in their part of the river.

All Yukon River fishers (and those interested in Yukon River fishing) are invited to call in to the Yukon River In-Season Salmon Teleconference on Tuesdays at 1pm in June, July, and August. These calls are an opportunity to:

- Share what you are seeing in your part of the river,
- Hear what is happening in other parts of the river,
- Hear what the managers have learned from the monitoring projects, and
- Hear what the managers have planned for upcoming management actions.
- You also have an opportunity to ask questions directly to the managers.

We need your voice!

Call 1-800-315-6338, code 98566# (YUKON)

CUT & MAIL

YES! I want to be a part of the United Voice on the Yukon River and support YRDFA!

I'd like to make a tax deductible gift.

☐ \$10 ☐ \$20 ☐ \$30 ☐ \$50 ☐ Surprise us!

Please, sign me up as a member:

☐ Individual, \$25: ☐ I am a **new** member.
☐ I am **renewing** my membership.

Total \$

Payment Method:

☐ Check # _____ enclosed (payable to Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association or YRDFA)

☐ Card (Circle one): VISA Mastercard Discover AMEX

Card #: _____ Exp. Date: _____ CVV: _____

Name on Card: _____

Signature: _____

Name: _____

Company/Organization/Fishing District: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Mail completed slip & donation to: YRDFA, PO Box 2898, Palmer, AK 99645 • Phone: 1-877-999-8566

Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association (YRDFA) is a 501(c)3 organization. Donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.



Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association
PO Box 2898 • Palmer, AK 99645

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