Greetings from the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association!

Here is a summary of the 3rd Yukon River Salmon In-Season Management Teleconference held on Tuesday, June 16, 2015.

**Background:** Yukon River salmon management teleconferences are held annually on every Tuesday in June, July, and August for fishing communities and fisheries managers throughout the Yukon River drainage to discuss fishing conditions and management strategies as the salmon run is occurring. Funded by the Office of Subsistence Management and the Yukon River Panel.

**Communities participating this week:** Alakanuk, Kotlik, St. Mary’s, Pilot Station, Marshall, Russian Mission, Anvik, Grayling, Koyukuk, Huslia, Tanana, Rapids, Fort Yukon, Beaver, Old Crow, Mayo.

**Subsistence Reports:** (reports may be from one individual or a few depending on who participated in the call this week and reflect the participant on the call at the time)

Kotlik expressed there is drift coming in on high tides and that it is impossible to meet their needs with dipnets that are being used but not pulling in anything. Fishermen are moving up to Point Romanoff where there are no restrictions on using nets. People need salmon and the main concern is dip netting is a very inefficient way to subsist for salmon. A couple of extended families together could need about 250 chums and it can take a week to meet subsistence needs this way.

Alakanuk – It is already middle of June and we are supposed to be smoking fish by now. The dip-net is very inefficient for subsistence use and only catching very little at a time. Would like to target the first run with nets and would have helped us fill our fish racks at least half way. Most fish racks still empty.

…wants to request an emergency opening with gillnets. We are getting little amounts of fish. Most fish racks are empty and 80-90% of the people have no dogs in the community…my concern was if we could get an emergency gillnet subsistence fishery open to help unless there is another resource. Disaster assistance was once $1,000 and this would not go that far today anymore. Most people living off public assistance and food stamps do not last very long, plus we are spending a lot on gas to get fish.

Saint Mary’s – people are starting to slowly go out and catch chum for subsistence but not a big effort for commercial. People do need to make some money for gas to go after their subsistence needs. People should have their fish racks filled by now. There are few fish on the racks, which is very unusual this time of year. People are barely catching fish and it is surprising to see a commercial opener going on. “Our state people need to hear that we are seeing the demise of the subsistence life and culture out here real quick. This is the scariest year I have seen out here for subsistence. Majority of fish racks empty. For June 16 this is unusual. I don’t see anyone retaining king salmon and if people see them they are releasing them right away. I am concerned for the summer chum fishery for subsistence and maybe we need a new management approach.”

Pilot Station has seen very little subsistence activity. People were out last week and caught sheefish. Yesterday had the first commercial dip-net opener and very few out and one person caught 13 summer chums from around 12 noon to 10 pm. Water is dropping a couple inches or more. The weather is blue sky and breezy weather, which is excellent for drying salmon. There is a short window to take advantage of the weather. “Like else down river we can all agree with them that dip netting is an inefficient way to harvest salmon”.

Marshall – people are making progress towards meeting subsistence needs with chum. The quality of fish are healthy. Young people will be leaving town to go firefighting. Thank you for remembering Leroy Peters. He was the tribal chief of Holy Cross.

Russian Mission – catching nothing but whitefish. People dip-netting but coming up empty. Fish racks only filled with whitefish and no salmon. People asked for a 6 inch fishery so we can harvest the chum while the weather is good for drying.

Anvik – There are no chums yet on the Anvik River. No gear in the water either. Beach seines might be useful in the lower river.

Grayling – people have small mesh nets out and people caught a chum salmon and sheefish.

Koyukuk – water been dropping, no debris on the water and think there should be some fish on the river. Any chance for an opening around here?

Koyukuk - no report but if they do let us open for 6 inch mesh I don’t want people seining because 40-60 people come down the river. Just need a set net period of 24 hour to get some summer chums.

Huslia – water is high and it is rising. We had some nets in the eddy’s and catching nothing but moss. Caught one chum last week but catching whitefish, pike and sheefish.

Huslia – last week the sheefish just started hitting

Tanana – no fishing going on. Question Shirley raised about keeping kings accidentally caught in 4 inch mesh gear.

Rampart Rapids – Water height well below average for date. Water temp was slightly low but now above average for date due to sunny days. Only 1 whitefish net at Rapids is getting cisco and humpbacks mostly. River is quiet and almost all camps empty in area. Rapids video test-wheel running for 3 days now and now has a cumulative CPUE of 10 King.

Fort Yukon – not much fishing. Some setnets out for sheefish and whitefish.

Mayo – a few folks out fishing with small mesh for whitefish but I did not hear how they did. The water temps are fairly normal and water levels are dropping. They were high but came down the past week or so. We wanted to thank the folks on the lower river for making the effort to conserve the kings. It is much appreciated up here.

Old Crow – a few community members with small mesh catching whitefish fairly well. Water levels high since break up, getting a lot of rain so water coming back up.

Jody from YSSC is on the line.

**Public comments, questions, and answers:**

Marshall requested about 10 more harvest calendars-some did not get them.

Alakanuk said they are crying to get their fish and they need fish.

Management responded that when the chum come the fishing will be better and they believe that will be soon. “In Nunum they have caught 100/day in dip-nets. Hang tight- a few more days.”

A comment and question was asked related to ensuring there are enough juvenile salmon in the Bering Sea and what is the mortality rate of the juvenile salmon going through the turbines at the Whitehorse dam? Management responded that they would try to get information to share about this on next week’s call.

A question was asked about the Dalton Hwy on news and if spills from tanker or the flooding up there have any impact on Yukon River salmon and management responded that as far as we know, no impact.

A Yukon Advisory Group (U.S. section of the Yukon River Panel) teleconference was requested to discuss the concerns people are having that were expressed on this call. Management said they would set up a call.

**Salmon Fisheries Research and Management:**

For Alaskan research and management information, please visit:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishingCommercialByArea.interior>

To learn about the summer chum radio-tagging project, follow this link:

[http://www.akssf.org/Default.aspx?id=3368](http://www.akssf.org/Default.aspx?id=3368" \t "_blank)

OR call toll-free 1-866-479-7387 for recorded fishing schedules and assessment information

For Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Canada updates, please visit:

http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/yukon/fmcountingfac.htm

For further information, please contact the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association at 907-272-3131 or look for us on the web at www.yukonsalmon.org.

Please join us on the next teleconference, Tuesday at 1 p.m. Alaska time (2 p.m. Yukon time). As a reminder, the toll free number is 1-800-315-6338 and the code is YUKON# (98566#).