



Yukon Fisheries News

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

Summer 2026

In this edition:

YRDFA & Nalaquq
partner for drone
training

2026 YRDFA Preseason
Meeting

2026 Yukon River
Science Symposium

Upcoming Meetings

Yukon River In-season Salmon Management Teleconference

Every Tuesday at 1 PM Alaska Time
June 2 - August 25, 2026

Moosehide Gathering

July 30 - August 2, 2026
Moosehide Village, YT Canada

Western Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (WIRAC)

October 6-7, 2026
Fairbanks, AK

Eastern Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (EIRAC)

October 13-15, 2026
Fort Yukon, AK

Alaska Federation of Natives Annual Convention

October 22-24, 2026
Dena'ina Convention Center | Anchorage, AK

Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (YKDRAC)

October 27-29, 2026
Bethel, AK

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Cover Photo: Serena Alstrom, Yukon River Middle Mouth near Emmonak, Alaska.

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THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE YUKON RIVER DRAINAGE FISHERIES ASSOCIATION



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News from the Executive Director, Serena Alstrom

For four decades, we have stood before the Alaska Board of Fisheries and the North Pacific Fishery Management Council raising the same concerns and witnessing the same recurring failures within our fisheries management system. During our recent preseason meeting, many participants echoed this frustration. Year after year, we gather to discuss declining salmon runs, weakened fishing opportunities, and the hardships faced by our communities, yet meaningful action continues to be delayed. The question

before us is no longer simply what is wrong with the system, but rather: how do we move beyond frustration and become active participants in building real solutions?

The people of the Yukon River have never been silent. Generations of fishermen, Elders, Tribal leaders, and community members have warned management agencies about declining salmon populations, changing river conditions, and the long-term impacts of management decisions that failed to prioritize sustainability. Historical records, testimonies, and local knowledge clearly demonstrate that our communities recognized these warning signs long before the crisis reached its current state. Yet despite decades of advocacy, the institutional response has too often been to request additional studies, further reviews, and more years of data collection.

Today, we continue to face the same cycle. Previous research is dismissed as outdated, while agencies call for new studies before meaningful management changes can occur. This endless process of delay shifts responsibility away from decision-makers and postpones the urgent action that our fisheries and communities desperately need. Research is important, but research alone cannot restore salmon runs if it is not paired with accountability, decisive management, and a willingness to act on the knowledge already available.

Managers and regulatory bodies must recognize that they are not separate from this crisis; they are part of the resource system itself. The decisions made today will determine whether our fisheries are rehabilitated for future generations or further devastated through inaction. True stewardship requires more than monitoring decline — it requires leadership, collaboration, and the courage to make difficult decisions before it is too late.

If we are serious about moving forward, we must begin shifting from a reactive approach to an action-oriented strategy built on accountability, cooperation, and measurable progress. First, Yukon River communities must continue strengthening regional unity. Too often, concerns are voiced individually and then lost within larger management processes. By organizing collectively, communities can present stronger recommendations, develop shared priorities, and demand coordinated responses from state and federal agencies.

Second, traditional and local knowledge must be treated as equal in value to Western scientific research. Our fishermen and Elders possess generations of firsthand observations about salmon behavior, spawning patterns, water conditions, and ecosystem changes. Incorporating this knowledge into management decisions should not be symbolic; it should directly influence policy development, conservation measures, and restoration planning.



Third, we must push for clear timelines and accountability within the management process. Agencies should not be allowed to indefinitely postpone action while waiting for another round of studies. If additional research is necessary, it should occur alongside immediate conservation and recovery measures rather than replace them. Communities should advocate for measurable benchmarks, annual progress reports, and greater transparency regarding how management decisions are being made.

We must also invest in the next generation of fisheries leaders. Young people from the Yukon River region should be encouraged and supported to enter fisheries science, policy, law, and management positions. Lasting change will require representation from people who understand our communities, our culture, and the importance of salmon to our way of life. Building future leadership ensures that Yukon River voices remain present at decision-making tables for decades to come.

Partnerships are equally important. Tribes, fishing organizations, researchers, educators, and conservation groups must work together rather than independently. Collaboration can strengthen advocacy efforts, increase access to funding opportunities, expand restoration projects, and improve public awareness about the crisis facing Yukon River salmon.

Finally, we must continue showing up — not only at meetings, but in every space where fisheries decisions are being discussed. Public testimony, written proposals, community forums, educational exchanges, and direct engagement with policymakers all help keep attention focused on the urgency of this issue. Meaningful change rarely happens quickly, but sustained pressure and organized action can influence policy over time.

The Yukon River salmon crisis is not only an environmental issue; it is a cultural, economic, and human crisis affecting entire communities that have depended on these fish for thousands of years. The future of our fisheries depends on whether we are willing — collectively — to move from discussion to action, from delay to responsibility, and from management of decline to true restoration and recovery.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Serena Alstrom". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and a stylized "A".

Serena Alstrom

YRDFA Executive Director

Yukon River Salmon Fisheries Outlook

Authors: Deena Jallen, Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) Summer Season Area Manager; Matt Olson, ADF&G Fisheries Biologist

Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) research and management staff have worked closely with US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) staff to develop this year’s management strategy. Feedback has been sought from community members, partner organizations, agency staff and leadership. Fishery outlooks and management strategies have been discussed in depth at the Yukon River Panel spring meeting, Yukon River Drainage Fishermen’s Association public preseason meeting, the Federal Special Action Hearing, as well as other preseason meetings. The drainagewide Chinook salmon outlook is for a run of 64,300 fish with a range of 52,000 to 79,000 fish (Figure 1), and the Canada-origin Chinook salmon outlook is for a run of 22,000 to 33,000 fish. The number of fish expected at the US-Canada border is predicted to be between 11,000 to 31,000 fish; this is based on recent trends in fish making it upriver. These run sizes are well below average and it is likely that escapement goals will not be met in any river system in Alaska or Canada this year. Fishing for Chinook salmon will be closed to help conserve fish for escapement during these low runs.

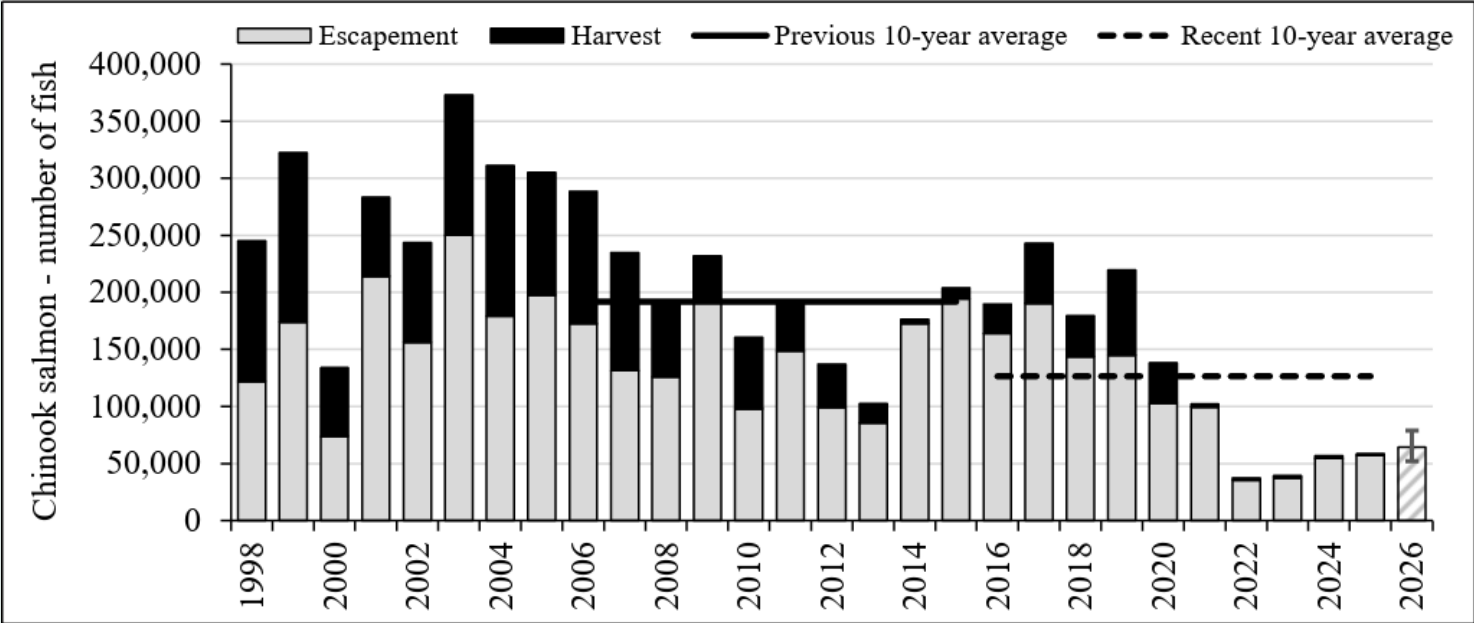


Figure 1. Chinook salmon total run. The dashed line is the recent 10-year average run size of ~126,500 Chinook salmon and the solid line is the previous 10-year average of ~191,850 fish. The 2026 striped bar represents the approximate midpoint of the drainagewide outlook range (64,300 fish). At run sizes below 150,000 fish, escapement goals tend not to be met.

The drainagewide summer chum salmon outlook is for a run size of 345,600 fish, with a range of 160,000 to 580,000 fish (Figure 2). Last year, the summer chum salmon run was below the drainagewide escapement goal with a total run near 400,000 fish. Summer chum salmon mostly come back as 4- and 5-year old fish with the 2026 parent years from 2021 and 2022. These runs were the lowest and third lowest on record, respectively. Fishing for summer chum salmon will likely remain closed all season.

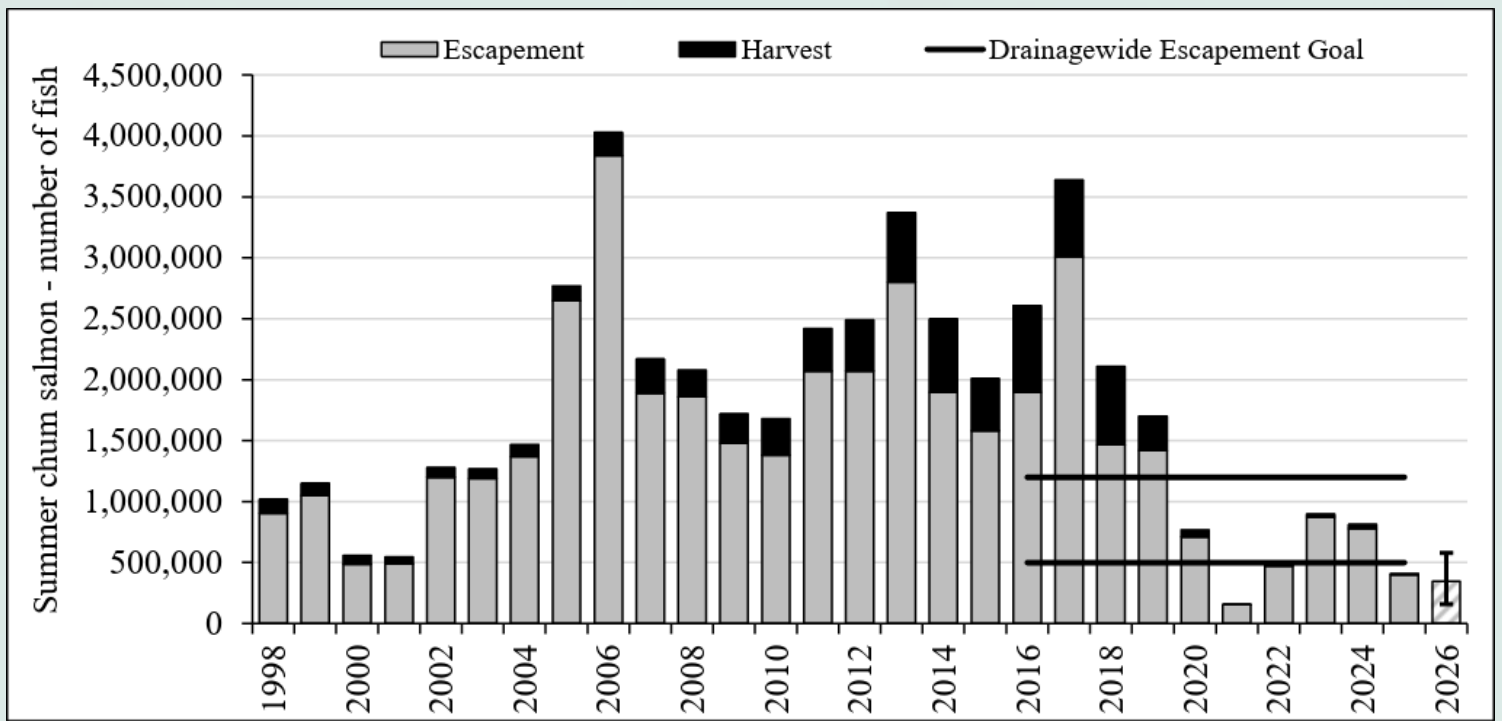


Figure 2. Summer chum salmon total run with drainagewide escapement goal range shown in the solid black lines. The 2026 striped bar represents the approximate midpoint of the outlook range (345,600 fish).

The drainagewide fall chum salmon outlook is for a run size of 311,000 fish, with a range of 209,000 to 415,000 fish (Figure 3).

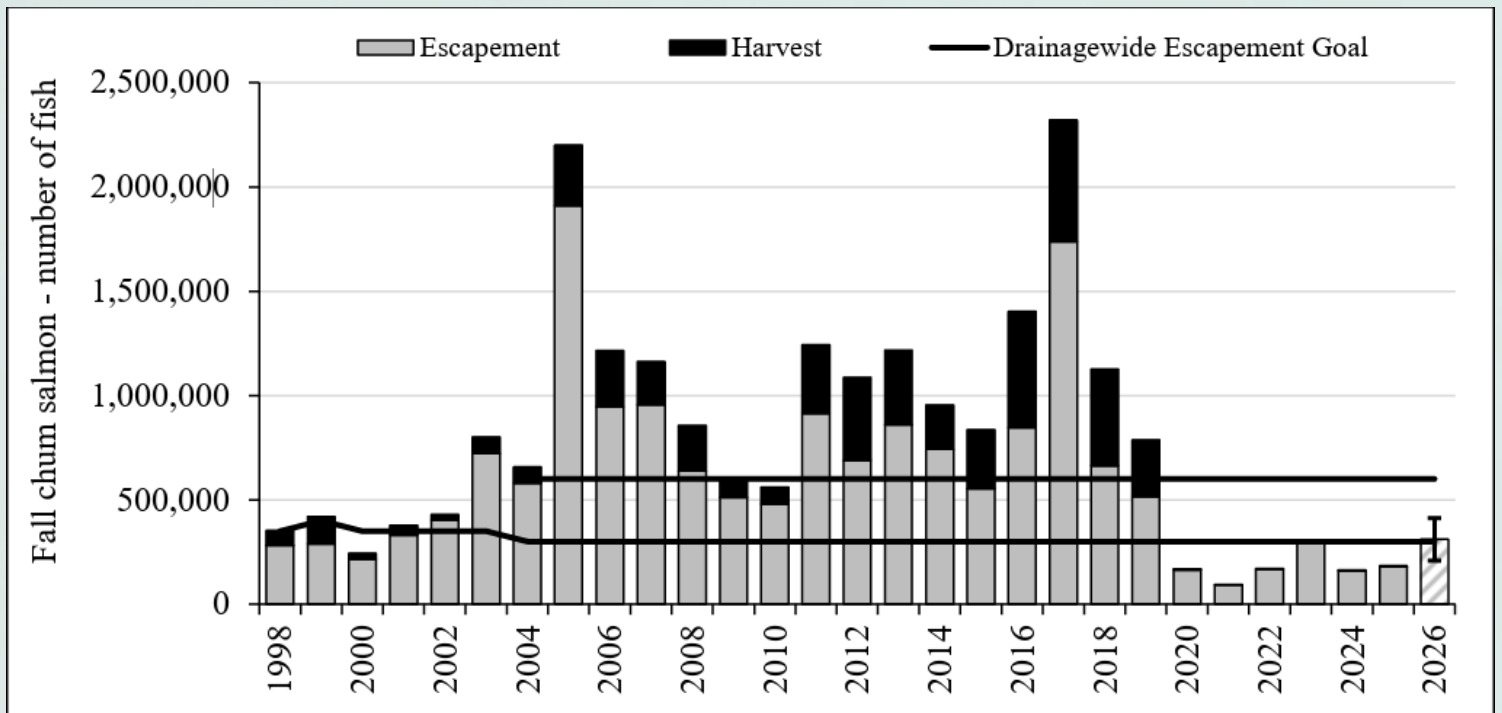


Figure 3. Fall chum salmon total run with drainagewide escapement goal ranges shown in the solid black lines. The 2026 striped bar represents the approximate midpoint of the outlook range (311,000 fish).

Management Strategies based on the preseason outlooks and inseason assessment:

- Starting on June 1 in District 1 and the Coastal District, subsistence salmon fishing will close. Closures in upriver districts will coincide with Chinook salmon travel time.
- Fishing for nonsalmon species with 4-inch or smaller mesh set gillnets will be allowed during salmon fishing closures; however, nets are limited to 60-feet in length. Fishermen should set their 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets in nonsalmon harvest locations and avoid incidental harvest of salmon.
- To further conserve Chinook salmon, all gillnets, including 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets, must be removed from the water from the first quarter point to the third quarter point of the Chinook salmon run. Closures to nonsalmon gillnets are meant to reduce incidental catch of salmon, and the timing of this closure in each area will be based on Chinook salmon run timing. Nonsalmon fishing opportunities will be provided in fall to offset this loss of fishing time in the summer season.
- Other nonsalmon gear types, including hook and line, longline, jigging gear, hand line, beach seine, fyke net, or spear may be used to fish for nonsalmon species all year, even during gillnet closures. Chinook and chum salmon must be released alive if incidentally caught.
- Pink and sockeye salmon may be retained from selective gear types. This is an even year, and the pink salmon run is expected to be higher than in odd years. All Chinook and chum salmon must be immediately released alive from selective gear types.
- The sport fishery for Chinook salmon is closed throughout the Tanana River drainage and the U.S. portion of the Yukon River drainage (Sport Fishery Emergency Orders published February 18, 2026).
- During the fall season, it is likely both U.S. and Canadian-origin fall chum salmon runs will be below the escapement objectives. Coho salmon runs are also projected to be below average. Subsistence users can expect drainagewide salmon closures to protect fall chum and coho salmon.
- To reduce incidental harvest of fall chum salmon in gillnets, 4-inch or smaller mesh gillnets must be removed from the water 4 days each week. They will be allowed for nonsalmon fishing only from noon Thursday to noon Sunday.
- To increase harvest opportunities for large whitefish, designated nonsalmon lakes and rivers will be announced and opened for 6-inch or smaller mesh gillnets at the transition to fall season in each district.
 - If run sizes are poor, subsistence salmon fishing restrictions may remain in effect until early October in the lower river. This date will be transitioned upriver based on salmon migration timing. In the upper river restrictions may remain in effect until late October, and in some key spawning tributaries through December.

The management team recognizes the severe hardship of another season of closures for Chinook and chum salmon. The Board of Fisheries listed Chinook and fall chum salmon as Stocks of Management concern during the winter meetings; closures will help salmon get to their spawning ground and recover for the future. We encourage fishermen to harvest more abundant nonsalmon species when available.

Yukon Area Educational and Ceremonial, Funerary or Memorial Permits

In recognition of the persistent decline of Canadian-origin Chinook salmon, Alaska and Canada entered into a 7-year agreement from 2024 through 2030 which focuses on efforts to conserve and rebuild Chinook salmon runs. A component of the agreement also recognizes the importance of Chinook salmon for ceremonial use and the transmission of cultural knowledge. In Alaska, new regulations were adopted allowing a small amount of harvest in times of salmon conservation, following a process to provide the preservation of culture in communities, balanced with the need to ensure salmon return to their spawning grounds. 5 AAC 93.212. Yukon Management Area educational fishing permit for customary and traditional harvest of salmon was finalized in June 2025. It includes regulations for the long-standing practice of issuing fishing permits for funerals and memorials and creates a permit for educational gatherings. This is in recognition of the importance of allowing a small number of salmon to be harvested for preserving traditions, while protecting low salmon runs when they are below escapement goals.

Ceremonial, Funerary, and Memorial Permits

People interested in a permit are encouraged to contact fishery managers (Deena Jallen, Matt Olson, Holly Carroll) before the desired fishing time to discuss harvest plans and to share information needed to issue the permit. The permit includes the name of the fishermen responsible for the allowed gear, name of the deceased person or people being honored, fishing dates and times, and a table for recording harvest. Typically, a funerary permit harvest limit is 5 Chinook, 10 summer chum, 10 fall chum, or 10 coho salmon per event or community. The permit must be in the possession of the fishermen during fishing activities. All harvests must be reported after fishing is completed. Salmon harvested under a ceremonial, funerary, and memorial permit are intended to be shared at an event in honor of the deceased.

Educational Permits

An interested person, household, village or tribal council, community, or similar organization must contact ADF&G at least 15 days in advance. Information needed includes description of the planned educational activities, requestors name, contact information, harvest location, fishermen names, and estimated number of participants. Harvest limits for educational permits are 10 Chinook, 50 summer chum, 25 fall chum, and/or 25 coho salmon. The combined annual harvest limit for educational permits is 300 Chinook salmon, 1,000 summer chum, 500 fall chum, and/or 500 coho salmon. Fish must be shared with the participants or community. After completion of the educational event, information about the completed activities, number of attendees, number and use of the salmon harvested must be reported. These permits are issued in coordination with Federal managers. Once issued, state and federal enforcement staff will be notified so they are aware of the planned fishing activities. For more information, please contact the ADF&G offices in Fairbanks or Emmonak.

Contact Information, Updates, and Outreach

Announcements and daily test fishery counts will be posted on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/YukonRiverFishingADFG/

Toll-free Fishing Schedule and Fish Counts hotline: 1-866-479-7387

Inseason counts from some projects are also available on the ADF&G website:

<https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareayukon.salmon#fishcounts>

The ADF&G Emmonak office will be open in the first week of June (likely June 3) with hours of operation from Mon to Fri 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (closed Sat. and Sun.). **ADF&G Emmonak office:** 1-907-949-1320.

ADF&G: Summer Season Area Manager, Deena Jallen; Fall Season Area Manager, Matt Olson.

ADF&G Fairbanks office: 1-907-459-7274.

USFWS: Yukon River Subsistence manager, Holly Carroll, 1-907-351-3029.

If you see an odd disease or parasite in your fish, please contact the Fish Pathology lab. Pictures are helpful. Please contact Jayde Ferguson (jayde.ferguson@alaska.gov) or call: 907-267-2394.

Information about common fish diseases can be found in this publication:

https://www.adfg.alaska.gov/static/species/disease/pdfs/fish_disease_book.pdf

For commercial fishery permit questions please see the Commercial Fisheries Entry Commission website here: www.cfec.state.ak.us/.

Ichthyophonus in Yukon River King Salmon: Histology Results Summary

Authors: Keith Herron, Scott T. Walter, and Shane Ransbury U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and Zachary Liller and Jayde Ferguson Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G)

Background

Subsistence fishers were the first to notice signs of disease caused by Ichthyophonus parasite infection in Yukon River Chinook (king) salmon, reporting white spots within muscle or organs, mushy fillets, and unusual smell. First reported in the 1980s and heavily studied in the early 2000s, an outbreak in 2020 raised serious concern because king runs dropped to record low returns and Ichthyophonus can kill kings. Conservation Collaborations

Beginning in 2021 with a few samples and expanding drainage-wide in 2022, ADF&G and USFWS partnered with Tribal Governments, local fishers, academic institutions, and other organizations to study the impacts of Ichthyophonus on Yukon River kings. This work brought together Indigenous Knowledge, local observations, and western science. Sampling efforts were established at key locations from the lower to upper river with local and Tribal fishers contributing to fish capture and fieldwork. All sampled fish were given to communities for subsistence use. The collaborative effort provided the platform to explore salmon health, emphasizing community involvement and future conservation.

Information Collection

From 2022 to 2024, king salmon hearts were collected to understand the presence or absence of Ichthyophonus parasites and to count the number of parasites within infected heart tissue across the upriver migration path. In total, 1,378 kings were captured and sampled using a combination of ADF&G sonar test fisheries (Pilot Station and Eagle) and fish wheels operated in partnership between USFWS and local fishers at Rapids and Fort Yukon. Researchers used histology, a microscope lab-based technique, to examine heart tissue and study the relationship between Ichthyophonus and mortality risk.

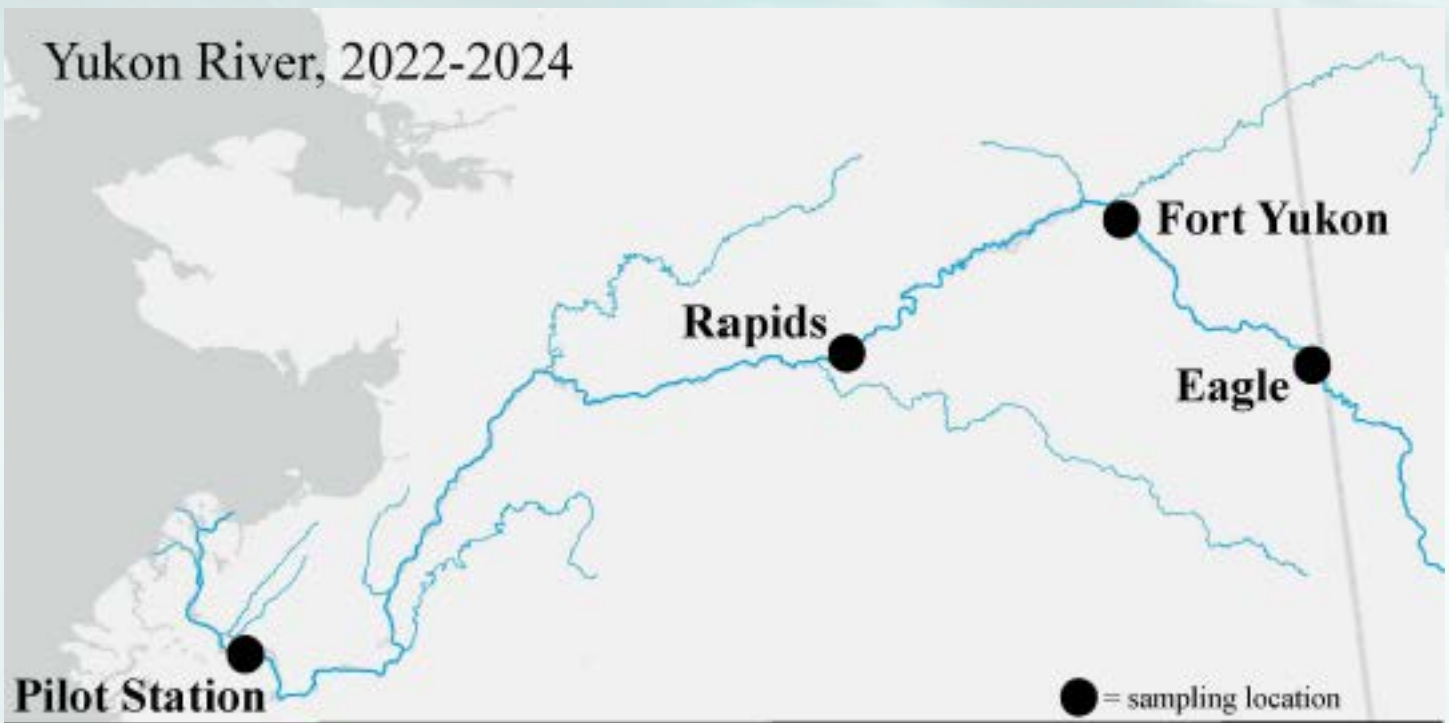
Findings

Ichthyophonus parasites can cause visible inflammation in tissue, often marked by white spots that indicate infection, especially prominent in the hearts of king salmon caught near or after the middle river. The visual signs of disease are not as noticeable in the lower river. Histology results show that Ichthyophonus parasites were present in about 30 to 40% of the sampled kings each year, with similar rates across sampling locations. However, measuring parasite intensity (the number of parasites within infected heart tissue) provides more insight into potential impacts than simply looking at presence or absence. Kings with higher parasite counts are less likely to complete the long migration and may die before spawning. Yukon fishers from the upper river have typically seen fewer signs of disease, which supports the idea that the kings that remain actively swimming past upper river communities tend to have mild or no infection. Assessing parasite intensity is useful to estimate disease-related mortality and better understand Ichthyophonus impacts.

Complementary Studies

Additional partner projects helped us explore different stressors affecting Yukon River king salmon. These efforts tested other ways to identify diseases, including the potential use of muscle or blood which wouldn't require killing fish. Some investigated the impacts of diet deficiencies or heat stress caused by increased water temperature. In laboratory settings, researchers studied Ichthyophonus infections in juvenile kings over a range of water temperatures. Other work focused on marine food webs and identified opportunities to expand community-based monitoring. Together, these projects highlight the broad knowledge needed to identify the health threats salmon face. More detailed reports are expected in fall 2026.

Yukon River, 2022-2024



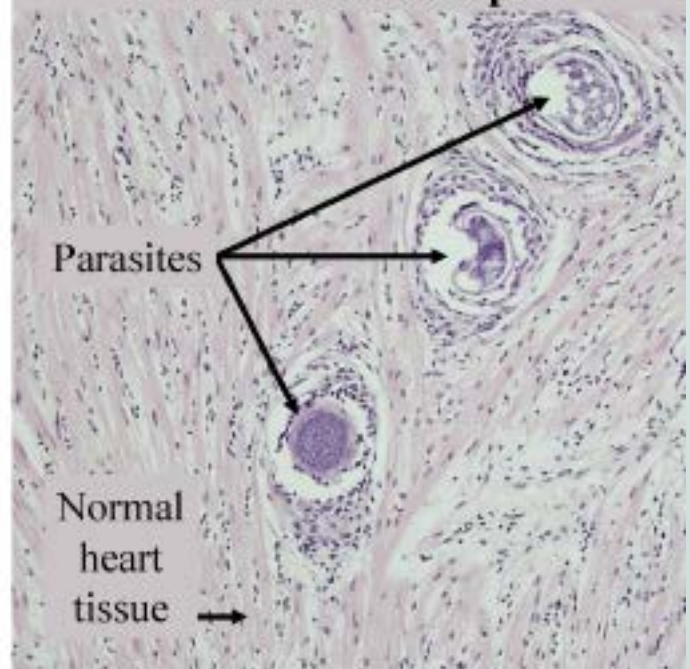
Ichthyophonus parasite intensity As king salmon migrated upriver



Ichthyophonus in heart tissue

- Parasite intensity was based on the number of parasites counted using histology
- Parasite counts progressively decreased in fish caught farther upriver – likely due to highly infected fish dying before reaching the middle or upper river
- Parasite counts were highest in 2022 and decreased in 2023 and 2024
- Higher parasite counts were found in larger and later migrating kings

Count *Ichthyophonus* parasites under microscope





YRDFA & Nalaquq Partner To Advance Drone-Based Salmon Monitoring Initiative

Authors: Brian McKenna, YRDFA Biologist
Lynn Church, Nalaquq CEO

The Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association (YRDFA) continues to advance efforts to develop a community-centered, drone-based salmon monitoring program for the Yukon River watershed. Building on a growing interest in innovative fisheries monitoring tools, YRDFA is working to combine traditional knowledge, local capacity building, and emerging drone and remote sensing technologies to support the future of Yukon River salmon research and management.

A key component of this effort is YRDFA's growing partnership with Nalaquq LLC, an Alaska Native-owned subsidiary of

Qanirtuuq, Inc., which is becoming a recognized innovator in Alaska in the use of drones and remote sensing technologies for fisheries and environmental monitoring. Through this partnership, YRDFA and Nalaquq are collaborating to share technical expertise, field experience, and community-based approaches that support salmon monitoring efforts and strengthen community capacity across Alaska.

This collaboration represents an important cross-regional effort connecting Western Alaska and Yukon River communities around a shared goal: developing innovative and locally driven tools to improve salmon monitoring and conservation statewide. By bringing together organizations and communities from different regions of Alaska, the partnership aims to build long-term local capacity and create scalable monitoring approaches that can be adapted to remote salmon systems throughout the state.

As part of these efforts, YRDFA staff and partners will participate in an upcoming intensive drone training program being led by Nalaquq, LLC Research & Development, Dr. Sean Gleason alongside CEO, Lynn Marie Church, from June 6–14 in Quinhagak. Funding support provided by Calista Corporation and the Alaska Ocean Observing System (AOOS) has enabled YRDFA to recruit three drone pilots from St. Mary's and Pilot Station to travel to Quinhagak to participate in the drone training event. The training will focus on drone operations, remote sensing applications, field deployment techniques, and the use of unmanned aircraft systems (UAS) in fisheries and environmental monitoring. This hands-on opportunity will allow participating drone pilots to gain practical experience from Alaska-based experts who have pioneered the use of drones for salmon monitoring and habitat assessment in remote regions of the state.



Isaiah Fancyboy, Drone Training participant from Pilot Station, launches a drone from his hand during training in Quinhagak, Alaska.



Derek Edwards (St. Mary's), Brian McKenna (YRDFA), Isaiah Fancyboy (Pilot Station) check out the drone equipment during training.

to evaluate the effectiveness of drone-based monitoring efforts to supplement or become an alternative to traditional salmon assessment methods in remote areas where monitoring capacity has declined in recent years. As part of the program, Nalaquq will help co-production strategies to integrate local knowledge into existing protocols and scale solutions.

This initiative comes at a critical time for Yukon River salmon management, as many long-term monitoring projects across the watershed have faced reductions or decommissioning due to funding limitations and logistical challenges. YRDFA believes that combining local knowledge with modern technology may help develop cost-effective, community-driven monitoring strategies that strengthen salmon conservation while creating educational and workforce development opportunities in Yukon River communities.

Over the coming year, YRDFA will continue engaging with communities, Tribal governments, fisheries managers, researchers, and local residents as the program develops. Additional updates, training opportunities, and project announcements will be shared as funding and partnerships advance. Please connect with YRDFA and Nalaquq if you are interested in upcoming training events or engaging with future projects.

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In addition to advanced technical training, YRDFA is planning a future Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Part 107 certification training opportunity for interested Yukon River residents and community members who would like to become certified drone pilots. The goal is to build local expertise and create opportunities for community members to directly participate in fisheries monitoring, research, and stewardship efforts throughout the Yukon River drainage.

YRDFA is also actively pursuing grant funding to support a larger feasibility study anticipated to launch in 2027. The proposed project would explore the effectiveness of integrating traditional ecological knowledge, drone technology, and remote sensing methodologies to monitor Yukon River salmon spawning populations and escapement trends. The study aims



Sean Gleason, Nalaquq Drone Instructor, during a field exercise in Quinhagak, Alaska.



Drone training participants: Angela Olrun (Mekoryuk), Brian McKenna (YRDFA), Derek Edwards (St. Mary's), Kimuel Latham, (Bethel) Jake Colberg (Palmer), Sean Gleason (UAV Instructor), Isaiah Fancyboy (Pilot Station), Byron Petluska (Quinhagak)

“ This workshop allowed for so many of my questions to be answered. It’s given me confidence to speak more confidently. ”

“ 10/10! Great to put personalities to names and to humanize the Council, the SSC, and NMFS. It was a good opportunity to connect with other stakeholders and industry professionals, and learn from one another. ”

“ I’d recommend this program for those just entering the process. It’s genuinely informative and demystifies the process. ”

**Marine Resource
Education Program**
NORTH PACIFIC

The Marine Resources Education Program (MREP) is a neutral and objective education program to empower fishery participants to effectively engage in federal fisheries science & management processes at the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (NPFMC). Designed by and for fishery users impacted by federal fisheries management decisions, MREP provides fishermen an opportunity to gain insight into who is involved and how decisions are made in the NPFMC process. The program also provides the opportunity to learn how fisheries health and potential are assessed, and how that information influences fisheries regulations and policy that ultimately lead to outcomes on the water.

If you’re interested in shaping the fisheries you’re involved in, apply for the workshop today!

Preference will be given to applications received by **October 12**. Learn more at mrep.gmri.org.

Applicants will be updated with their status by October 24.

MREP Fisheries Science & Management Workshop

February 23-27, 2026 | Juneau, AK

Apply today! Scan the QR code or visit: mrep.gmri.org/apply



Participants can expect to learn about:

Fisheries science

- Data collection (fisheries dependent + independent)
- Local and traditional knowledge task force
- Fishermen's science + collaborative research
- Scientific uncertainty and how it is handled
- Survey methodology
- Oceanography
- Stock assessment overview (groundfish)
- Scientific specs for other species
- Lab tour for hands-on learning

Fisheries management

- Magnuson-Stevens Act and other laws that pertain to Council decision-making
- Council process overview
- Federal fisheries management (bodies, how they integrate)
- Robert's Rules (the "language" used at the Council)
- A mock council exercise
- How to get involved - bringing it all together!

Each year, MREP brings together a diversity of fishery users including commercial, charter, recreational and subsistence fishermen with scientists, managers, and other marine resource professionals in the North Pacific fisheries region to learn and network in a neutral and casual yet professional setting.

The workshop is free to participants. In addition, through grant funding, we pay for your travel to/from the workshop, and your meals and accommodation during travel as well as at the workshop.

Seats are limited. The program managers at the Gulf of Maine Research Institute (GMRI) will facilitate a collaborative applicant review call with a subset of the MREP North Pacific Steering Committee to determine which applicants will be accepted into the 2026 workshop. If not accepted, we will ask if you wish to be considered for MREP the following year (dates not yet set). Our goal is to bring together a group representing a variety of perspectives across the region. If we do not have a seat for you this year, we will carry your application forward for next year's applicant review.

Regional industry and community leaders involved in shaping this workshop are available to respond to inquiries about the workshop:

mrep.gmri.org/mrep-industryleaders/north-pacific



MREP is managed by a neutral facilitator at the Gulf of Maine Research Institute (GMRI). General questions about the program should be directed to Lauren O'Brien, MREP Senior Program Manager, (978) 844-2354 or lobrien@gmri.org.





YRDFA Preseason Meeting 2026

The 2026 YRDFA Yukon River Preseason meeting was held at the Captain Cook Hotel in Anchorage, Alaska on April 21-22, 2026. There were many participants from Yukon River residents to Yukon River Managers from the Alaska Department of Fish & Game and U.S. Fish and Wildlife. YRDFA worked with Kerry Nelson from Information Insights to help facilitate the meeting and coordinate the discussion groups.



Serena Alstrom, YRDFA Executive Director gives the welcome address

Many questions and concerns were made by Yukon River residents on the upcoming 2026 fishing season. There was breakout sessions on the Seven-year agreement and Resiliency + Action.

The meeting concluded with public/closing comments followed by reflection and overview of the meeting for the upcoming 2026 Yukon River fishing season.

YRDFA Preseason Meeting video links:

Day 1:

<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/1190248062>

Day 2:

<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/1190559764>

On the first day Serena Alstrom, YRDFA Executive Director, gave the welcome address. A presentations was given on the Chinook Rebuilding Plan by the Yukon River Panel. Many questions were asked during open discussion from concerned Yukon River residents regarding the rebuilding plan. A breakout session was held on the Chinook Rebuilding Plan by participants. Many questions and concerns were raised during the discussion.

On the second day Olivia Irwin started the day by giving the Youth Keynote address. The 2026 Yukon River Pre-season outlook presentation was given by Alaska Department of Fish and Game and US Fish and Wildlife organizations.



One of the groups during a breakout session.



Serena Alstrom, YRDFA Executive Director gives the Welcome Address during the 2026 Yukon River Science Symposium

2026 Yukon River Science Symposium - May 15, 2026

The 2026 Yukon River Science Symposium was held at the Denali Tower in Anchorage, Alaska on May 15, 2026. The Yukon River Science Symposium brings together Yukon River residents and organizations to give updates on Yukon River Projects that are happening within the river.

Serena Alstrom, YRDFA Executive Director, gave the welcome address while Kerry Nelson, Information Insights, facilitated the event. There was many presentations from Yukon River organizations operating research projects.

Brandy Mayes with the Kwanlin Dun First Nation gave a presentation on KDFN Elders and the Whitehorse Dam. Zachary Liller, ADF&G gave a presentation on multi-year collaboration to understand and monitor natural mortality of Yukon River Chinook Salmon. Elizabeth McDonald, Council of Yukon First Nations gave a presentation on the Domestic Rebuilding Plan. Brian McKenna, YRDFA, gave a presentation on YRDFA's Drone-Based Salmon Monitoring Program. Deena Jallen and Matthew Olson, ADF&G, presented



Brandy Mayes with the Kwanlin Dun First Nation gives a presentation on Kwanlin Dun Elders and the Whitehorse Dam.

the 2026 Yukon River Pre-season Outlook. Jeff Muehlbauer, UAF Alaska Rivers Lab, gave a presentation on Stream restoration research to support Chinook Salmon recovery in Interior Alaska. James Van Lanen, YRDFA, presented Watershed Ecosystem Action Plan STORY Map and finished with Grace Kirkey, YRDFA, gave an update on Engaging Fishers in Research on Yukon River Salmon.

2026 Yukon River Science Symposium video links:

Yukon River Science Symposium 1 of 2:

<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/1193427603>

Yukon River Science Symposium 2 of 2:

<https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/1193438529>

TEAM DIRECTORY

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

District	Name	Community
Coastal, Seat 1	Clifford Kaganak Sr.	Scammon Bay
Y-1, Seat 1	Stanley Pete	Nunam Iqua
Y-1, Seat 2	John Strongheart	Alakanuk
Y-1, Seat 3	Paul Andrews	Emmonak
Y-2, Seat 1	Bill Alstrom	St. Mary's
Y-2, Seat 2	Mike Peters	Marshall
Y-2, Seat 3	Stanislaus Sheppard	Mountain Village
Y-3, Seat 1	Alfred Demientieff Jr.	Holy Cross
Y-4, Seat 1	Fred Huntington Sr.	Galena
Y-4, Seat 2	Robert Walker	Anvik
Y-5, Seat 1	Charlie Wright	Tanana
Y-5, Seat 2	Brooke Woods	Rampart
Y-6, Seat 1	Dorothy Shockley	Manley Hot Springs
Y-6, Seat 2	Victor Lord	Nenana
Koyukuk River	Darrell Vent	Huslia
Flats, Seat 1	Jan Woodruff	Eagle
Canadian, Seat 1	VACANT	-

ALTERNATES

District	Name	Community
Coastal, Alt. 1	Richard Tuluk	Chevak
Coastal, Alt. 2	VACANT	-
Y-1, Alt. 1	Marvin Okitkun	Kotlik
Y-1, Alt. 2	Brandon Kameroff	Emmonak
Y-2, Alt. 1	Rex Nick	Pilot Station
Y-2, Alt. 2	VACANT	-
Y-3, Alt. 1	Basil Larson	Russian Mission
Y-4, Alt. 1	Tommy Kriska	Nulato
Y-4, Alt. 2	VACANT	-
Y-5, Alt. 1	Janessa Newman	Rampart
Y-6, Alt. 1	Phillip Titus	Minto
Y-6, Alt. 1	Kathleen Demientieff	Nenana
Koyukuk River	VACANT	-
Flats, Alt. 1	Rochelle Adams	Fort Yukon/Beaver
Canadian, Alt. 1	VACANT	-

YOUNG FISHERS REPS

District	Name	Community
Lower River	Kerri Kelly	Pilot Station
Upper River	Katlyn Zuray	Fairbanks (Tanana)

Yes!

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