

Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group

1 (800) 315-6338 (MEET) Code: 58756# (KUSKO)

ADF&G Bethel toll free: 1 (855) 933-2433

Meeting Agenda

Date: **May 10, 2013**

Time: **10:00 am**

Place: **ADFG, Bethel**

Time Called to Order

Chair

Time Adjourned

ROLL CALL TO ESTABLISH QUORUM: **QUORUM MET? Yes / No**

Upriver Elder:

Processor:

Downriver Elder:

Member at Large:

Commercial Fisher:

Sport Fisher:

Lower River Subsistence:

Western Interior RAC:

Middle River Subsistence:

Y-K Delta RAC:

Upper River Subsistence:

ADF&G:

Headwaters Subsistence:

INTRODUCTIONS:

INVOCATION:

APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

PEOPLE TO BE HEARD:

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Revisit the Working Group membership/attendance questions.
2. Public outreach: sign up for news releases, schedule radio shows, schedule public meetings in communities, etc.
3. Discussion of changes to the KRSMWG By-laws.
4. Power point: preliminary 2012 run information (subject to change)
5. MSE committee: status update
6. Letters from the KRSMWG: status update
7. Ideas for honoring WG members
8. Discussion on whether to support tributary closures with the addition of buffer zones around tributary mouths (Preseason Strategy).

NEW BUSINESS:

1. Kuskokwim River Chinook salmon forecast 2013.
2. Preseason strategy for Kuskokwim River Salmon Management in 2013.
3. Invasive Plant Watch (effects on fisheries)

COMMENTS FROM WORKING GROUP MEMBERS:

NEXT MEETING DATE: _____ **Time:** _____ **Place:** _____

Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group

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Information Packet

May 10, 2013

Working Group Membership/attendance:

2012 KRSMWG SEASON MEETING ATTENDANCE																	
MEMBER SEAT	MEMBER	# Total Meetings	ANC														
			3/30/20	5/30/12	6/6/12	6/8/12	6/15/12	6/20/12	6/26/12	7/7/12	7/9/12	7/11/12	7/14/12	8/21-22/12	9/27/12	11/3/12	11/30/12
<i>Downriver Elder</i>	James Charles	12	x	x	x	x		x		x		x		x		x	
	Chuck Chaliak	3	x														
<i>Headwaters Subsistence</i>	Daniel Esai	6	x	x										x			
	Nick Petruska	2	x?							x							
<i>Upriver Elder</i>	<i>vacant</i>																
<i>Lower R. Subsistence</i>	Mike Williams	14	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
	Casie Stockdale	na															
	Greg Roczicka	8															
<i>Middle R. Subsistence</i>	Gerald Simeon	11	x	x	x	x	x	x	x								
	Angela Morgan	2			x				x								
	Wayne Morgan																
	Dave Canon	na															
	Carl Morgan	1			x												
<i>Upriver Subsistence</i>	Evelyn Thomas	8	x	x		x	x		x							x	x
	Mark Leary	5							x	x						x	x
	Pete Mellick																
	Sophie Gregory																
<i>Processor</i>	Stuart Currie	10		x		x	x			x	x	x	x	x	x		x
	Nick Souza	8	x	x	x				x				x	x			
	Tony Joaquin																
<i>Member at Large</i>	Henry Lupie	4	x		x	x		x									
	Fritz Charles	9		x	x		x	x	x	x							x
	Ron Simon																
	George Alexie																
<i>YK Delta RAC</i>	Bob Aloysius	5			x		x	x					x			x	
	John Andrew	6	x						x					x			x
<i>Commercial Fisher</i>	Charlie Brown	7	x	x		x	x			x							x
	George Alexie																
	Sam Alexie																
<i>Western Interior RAC</i>	Ray Collins	7	x			x		x					x	x			x
	Carl Morgan	2			x				x								
<i>Sport Fishing</i>	Lamont Albertson	10	x	x	x				x	x			x		x	x	x
	Beverly Hoffman	12	x	x	x	x	x	x		x			x		x	x	x
<i>ADF&G</i>	Travis Elison	14	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
<i>Chair</i>			Lamont	Greg	Bev	Bev	Greg	Bev	Bev	Bev	Bev	Travis	Bev	Greg	Lamont	Greg	Greg
<i>Quorum established?</i>			yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes
	Indicates no quorum (ADF&G cannot vote on management recommendations)																
	Did not attend any inseason meetings																

2011 KRSMWG SEASON SUMMARY ATTENDANCE												
MEMBER SEAT	Paid invite	MEMBER	# MEETINGS	MEETINGS								
				3/18/11	5/3/11	5/17/11	6/13/11	6/20/11	6/27/11	7/1/11	7/20/11	7/27/11
Downriver Elder		James Charles	6	x			x	x	x	x	x	
		Chuck Chaliak	0									
Headwaters Subsistence		Nick Petruska	0									
		Nick Alexia Sr.	0									
		Daniel Esai	2	x	x							
Upriver Elder		vacant	0									
Lower R. Subsistence		Mike Williams	5					x	x	x	x	x
		Greg Roczicka	5	x	x	x	x					x
Middle R. Subsistence		Gerald Simeon	2							x	x	
		Angela Morgan	4	x		x	x	x				
		Wayne Morgan	2				x			x		
Upriver Subsistence		Evelyn Thomas	1	x								
		Pete Mellick	0									
		Sophie Gregory	0									
Processor		Stuart Currie (Kusk. Seafoods)	7		x		x	x	x	x	x	x
		Nick Souza (CVS)	1				x					
		Neil Rodriguez (CVS)	1	alternate	x							
Member at Large		Henry Lupie	2	x						x		
		George Alexie	1									x
		Ron Simon	0									
		Fritz Charles	4				x	x	x	x		
YK Delta RAC		Bob Aloysius	7	x	x		x	x	x		x	x
		Mary Gregory	0									
Commercial Fisher		Charlie Brown	2	x								x
		George Alexie	4				x	x	x	x		
		Sam Alexie	0									
		Douglas Kernak	0									
Western Interior RAC		Ray Collins	8	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x
		Carl Morgan	0									
Sport Fishing		Lamont Albertson	5			x	x	x			x	x
		Beverly Hoffman	6	x	x	x	x		x	x		
ADF&G chair		Charles Brazil	9	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
				Lamont	Bev	Greg	Greg	Bev	Bev	Greg	Bev	Greg
		Indicates a quorum was not established with less than 7 members in attendance from different organizations.										
		Attended no meetings inseason										

2010 KRSMWG SEASON SUMMARY ATTENDANCE									
MEMBER SEAT	Paid invite	MEMBER	# MEETINGS	4/1/10	6/22/10	7/5/10	7/8/10	7/12/10	7/17/10
<i>Downriver Elder</i>		James Charles		X	X	X	X		X
		Chuck Chaliak						X	
<i>Headwaters Subsistence</i>		Nick Petruska		X	X				
		Nick Alexia Sr.							
<i>Upriver Elder</i>		VACANT							
<i>Lower R. Subsistence</i>		Mike Williams			X			X	
		Greg Roczicka		X	X		X		
<i>Middle R. Subsistence</i>		Calvin Simeon		X	X			X	X
		Angela Morgan			X		X		
		Wayne Morgan					x		
<i>Upriver Subsistence</i>		Evelyn Thomas			X				
		Pete Mellick							
		Sophie Gregory							
<i>Processor</i>		Stuart Currie		X*	X	X*	X	X*	X
<i>* voting member</i>		Bill McDonnell		X	X*	x	X*	X	x*
		Nick Souza		X	X	x		X	
<i>Member at Large</i>		Henry Lupie							
		George Alexie							X
		Ron Simon							
		Fritz Charles							
<i>YK Delta RAC</i>		Bob Aloysius		X	X			X	
		Mary Gregory							
<i>Commercial Fisher</i>		Charlie Brown		X		X		X	X
		George Alexie							
		Sam Alexie							
		Douglas Kernak							
<i>Western Interior RAC</i>		Ray Collins		X	X		X	X	X
		Carl Morgan							
<i>Sport Fishing</i>		Lamont Albertson							
		Beverly Hoffman		X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>ADF&G</i>		Charles Brazil/Travis Ellison		X	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Chair:</i>				bev/greg	greg	Bev	Bev	Bev	Bev

Public outreach:

To sign up for the ADF&G Commercial Fishing News Release system, please go to the link below and follow the directions presented there:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=cfnews.main>

Proposed changes to the Working Group By-laws:

Please view the subsequent pages. Proposed edits have been discussed by WG chairs. Proposed changes appear as ~~slashed~~ text for removals and underlined text for new additions.

BY-LAWS OF THE
KUSKOKWIM RIVER SALMON MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP

PURPOSE

To provide local fishers and other users with an avenue for direct involvement in the management of their fishery. The goal is for all parties to work together to reach a consensus on management of the fishery. Final emergency order authority continues to rest with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

Comment [CS1]: The authority of the department in this is mandated by the Alaska State Constitution and detailed in Alaska Statute 16.05.020. The authority belongs to the commissioner of Fish and Game and is delegated downward to the regional and local level to managers.

RULES OF CONDUCT

Meetings will be conducted by Robert's Rules of Order. The sequence of meetings is as follows:

- I. Call to order (by chair)
- II. Roll Call (by chair)
- III. Invocation
- IV. Approval of Minutes
- V. Approval of Agenda
- VI. People to be heard
- VII. Continuing Business

1. Subsistence Reports/Traditional Native Fisheries Knowledge

- a. Lower River:
- b. ONC Inseason Subsistence:
- c. Middle River:
- d. KNA Inseason:
- e. Upper Subsistence:
- f. Headwaters:

4-2. Overview of Kuskokwim River Salmon run assessment projects:

1. Bethel Test Fish
2. Weir/Mark-Recapture/Aerial Surveys/Other:
3. Commercial Catch Report:
4. Processor Report:
5. Sport Fish Report:
- ~~2-6.~~ Intercept Fishery Report
7. Weather Forecast:
8. Recommendation:

Comment [CS2]: This was proposed to replace the no longer relevant "area M report" which we eliminated from the agenda but persisted in the by-laws.

However, I don't think the department can provide a report every week that satisfies this. maybe some other group or individual would like to give this report on a regular basis?

- VIII. Old Business
- IX. New Business
- X. Meeting Action Announcement
- XI. Date, Time, and Place of next meeting
- XII. Adjournment

(This sequence may be changed at the discretion of the Group)

People To Be Heard and Continuing Business reports may not exceed 3 minutes in length, excluding questions and answers.

Under the ‘People to be heard’ agenda item the public would be provided an opportunity to discuss only topics or items which are **not** already listed as specific agenda items. A member of the public may also ask the Group to place an issue on the agenda.

Unlike other institutions or committees, the Working Group operates on a consensus basis. When discussing fisheries management issues, A simple majority vote of the members is not sufficient to pass a motion. For the purposes of the Group all fisheries management related motions must pass by a consensus of the members present at the meeting. If 7 (seven) or less-fewer of the members are present, then consensus is defined as a situation wherein either all voting members vote "yea" or all voting members vote "yea" except for one "nay" vote. If 8 (eight) or more of the members are present, then consensus is defined as a situation wherein either all voting members vote "yea" or all voting members vote "yea" except for two "nay" votes. Note that the Alaska Department of Fish and Game does not have voting status on motions concerning the setting of commercial openings.

When voting on motions not related to fisheries management or seat elections, a consensus vote is not required.

Comment [CS3]: This protects the group by making sure that there is a clear majority that agree on fisheries issues.

Remember: currently if the minimum Quorum is present, a motion can pass with only six votes. That is actually less than half of the total number of seats on the Working Group.

If we were to change to a majority vote situation, a motion could conceivably pass with no more than 4 total votes which is less than 1/3 of the total number of seats on the Working Group.

Comment [CS4]: This is really the only place where some voting right might appear for the department. In other sections it just says the department cannot vote... so we have a problem.

ARTICLE I, OFFICE

The principal office of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (Working Group) shall be located in the City of Bethel, Alaska 99559.

The current address of the principal office is, P.O. Box 1467, Bethel, Alaska 99559. The physical address is 570 4th Avenue.

ARTICLE II, MEMBERS

Section 1. Members: The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group shall have 13 member organizations or constituencies. These members represent: Elders (Upriver, Downriver) (2), Subsistence Fishermen (Lower River, Middle River, Upriver, and Headwaters) (4), Processors (1), Commercial Fishermen (1), Sport Fishers (1), Member at Large (1), Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Committees (Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, Western Interior) (2), and the Department of Fish and Game (1). Each member of the Working Group will designate a representative and an alternate or alternates in the event the representative is unable to attend a meeting. In the case where more than one person is nominated to represent a member organization or constituency, the Working Group will appoint one of the nominees to represent the member organization or constituency.

Comment [CS5]: It should be defined that it is ok to have more than one alternate.

Section 2. Annual Meeting:

An annual meeting of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group may be held in Bethel or Anchorage during the month of March to coincide with the Kuskokwim Salmon Interagency Meeting at the call of the Co-Chairs. The purpose of the meeting will be to conduct any unfinished administrative functions that the Working Group needs to complete for the following year.

Section 3. Special Meetings:

Special meetings of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group may be called by the Co-Chairs.

Section 4. Notice of Meetings:

The Department of Fish and Game will be responsible for informing the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group members of the time, place and date of any meetings. Notification of meetings to the Working Group will be not less than 48 hours (when possible) or more than 30-45 days in advance.

Section 5. Quorum:

In order for a meeting of the Working Group to be held and for actions taken at a meeting to be legitimate, it is necessary for there to be a quorum at a meeting, that is at least 7 of the 13 member constituencies must be represented.

For Fisheries management meetings, there must be 7 members plus the department representative.

For executive sessions, the quorum may be 7 members including the department representative, however, this meeting cannot entertain motions regarding fishery decisions.

If a quorum of the full committee is not present, business may be conducted in executive session. The executive committee is composed of at least 5 representatives: one Co-Chair, any two representatives of the following member groups; Member at Large, Processors, Commercial Fisherman, and any two representatives of the following member groups; Lower, Middle, Upriver and Headwaters Subsistence, Federal RAC, Sport Fisher.

ARTICLE III. REPRESENTATIVES

Section 1. Working Group:

The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group shall be comprised of 13 representatives from the areas described in Article II, Section 1.

Section 2. General Powers:

The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group shall make recommendations to the Department of Fish and Game for the purposes of managing the salmon fisheries on the Kuskokwim River after subsistence and commercial catch, test fishery, weir, tower and sonar reports and other information are provided to the group.

Section 3. Voting RightsMembership:

Each Working Group member shall be entitled to one vote. One Aalternates designated by the member shall ~~also~~ be entitled to one vote in the absence of that member. Members may abstain from voting on any motion. The Department of Fish and Game may vote on motions unrelated to fisheries management decisions only.

The Elder member shall designate any respected Elder to serve as their alternate as approved by a majority of Working Group members.

Working Group members must hear all the Continuing Business reports to vote on a motion to set commercial openings

Comment [CS6]: If a quorum of non-agency members does not exist, motions regarding fisheries decisions should be prohibited. They are misleading, suggesting that a consensus of WG members agreed, when that did not happen.

Comment [CS7]: Consensus or Majority

Comment [CS8]: The addition of these ideas will only be necessary if we stay with a consensus vote.

Comment [CS9]: If this is the same as designating any other alternate, do we need to restate it here?

Section 4. Resignation:

Any member or representative may resign by submitting a letter of resignation to a Co-Chair of the Working Group. The resignation must give the Working Group at least 4 weeks notification so that a new member or representative may be appointed.

Comment [CS10]: Necessary? what does the group think?

Section 5. Vacancies:

A vacancy on the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, forfeiture or otherwise, may be filled by the Working Group from nominations by member groups for the remainder of the term.

Section 6. Forfeit, participation or removal:

A. FORFEIT. The Working Group will give written notification, by certified mail, to any member organization, their representative and alternate whose seat has not been represented for 2 consecutive meetings that their membership in the Working Group will be forfeited if the seat is not represented by the following meeting. Whereas, a member's failure to be represented at a meeting is excused by the Working Group, as appropriate, such failure shall not be considered an absence within this section.

Furthermore, any member or alternate the chronically does not participate in Working Group process may be removed.

B. PARTICIPATION. No representative will be allowed to participate in a Working Group meeting who is deemed to be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.

C. REMOVAL. A representative may be removed from their seat on the Working Group for cause and must be provided the opportunity for a hearing before appeal this removal at a subsequent meeting of -the Working Group. A representative may be removed for cause for any reason allowed, including but not limited to, conviction of a felony, gross misconduct, violation of their trust to the Working Group as a representative, or harassment of any kind to the other representatives of the Working Group.

Comment [CS11]: Do we need to put a time limit on this?

ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS OF THE WORKING GROUP

Section 1. Officers:

The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group shall elect Co-Chairs for the purpose of conducting meetings. The Co-Chairs will be elected annually at the first meeting occurring after March 1st. The Working Group shall elect or appoint other officers as deemed necessary. An officer of the Working Group may not hold more than one position. The Co-Chairs must be official representatives of the Working Group.

Section 2. Terms of Office:

Each representative of the Working Group shall be elected or appointed ~~every 2 years~~. A representative shall hold their position until their successor has been duly elected or appointed and has been qualified

Section 3. Co-Chair:

A Co-Chair of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group shall preside at all meetings of the Working Group. If a pre-designated co-chair is not present, those present may elect a temporary chair to preside for that meeting.

Section 4. Other Committees:

The Co-Chairs shall have the authority to appoint representatives to serve on committees as deemed necessary. Any representative appointed to a committee may be removed in the best interest of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group.

ARTICLE V. DEFINITIONS

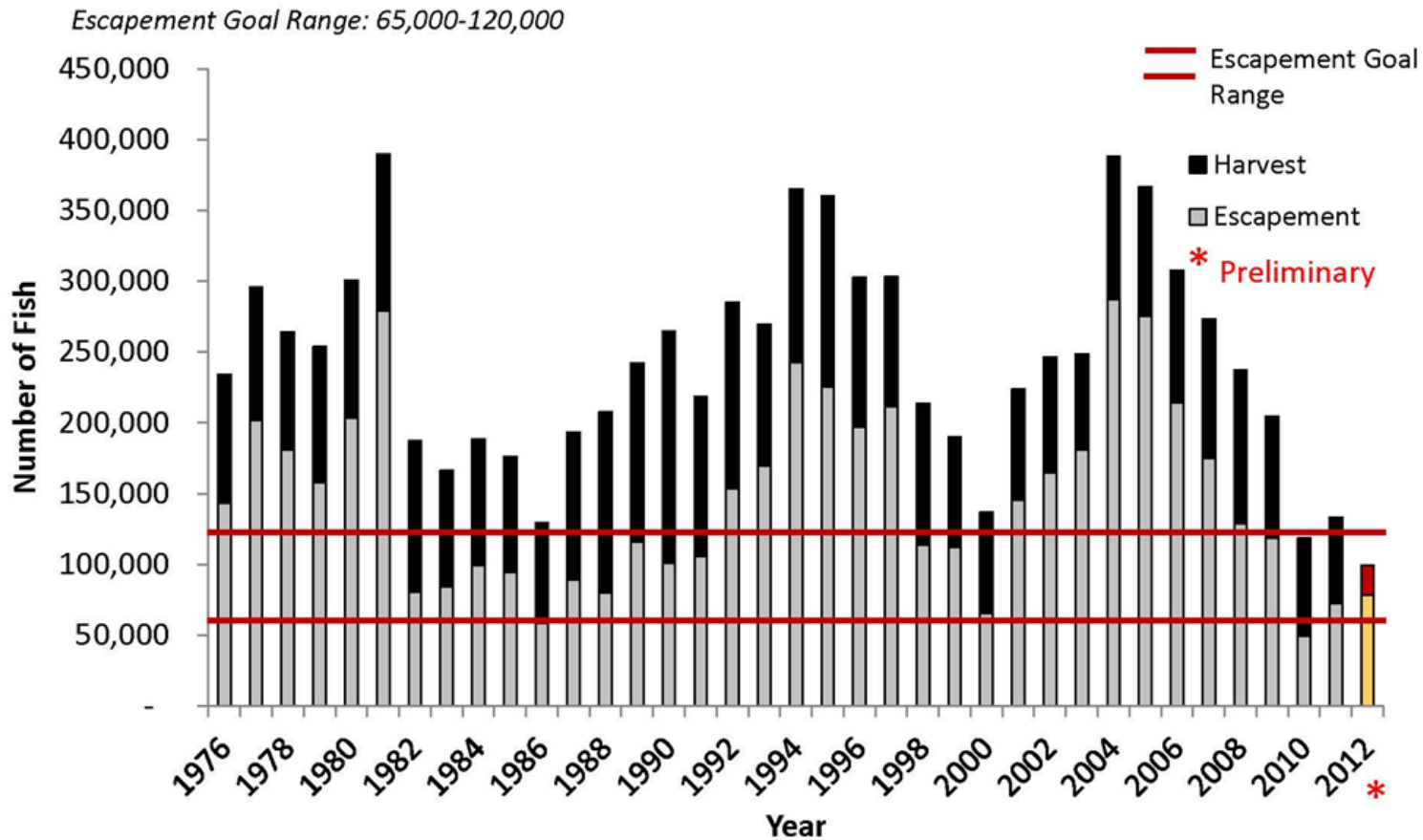
1. **Member.** The member organizations or constituencies of the Working Group as listed in Article II, Section 1.
2. **Alternate.** An individual designated to act in the place of a member or representative unable to attend a meeting.
3. **Representative.** Person designated by a Working Group member organization or constituency to represent that member organization or constituency at Working Group meetings.
4. **District W-1.** The Lower Kuskokwim River consists of the Kuskokwim River from a line between Apokak Slough and Popokamiut, upstream to a line between ADF&G regulatory markers located about eight miles above the Tuluksak River.
5. **District W-2.** The middle Kuskokwim River consists of the Kuskokwim River from ADF&G regulatory markers located at the upstream entrance to the second slough on the west bank downstream from Kalskag to the regulatory markers at Chuathbaluk.
6. **Elder.** Any respected Elder that resides within the Kuskokwim Area.
7. **Headwaters Subsistence.** Representatives that are active subsistence users in the Kuskokwim River drainage from McGrath upstream to the headwaters of the Kuskokwim River.

8. **Upriver Subsistence.** Representatives that are active subsistence users in the Kuskokwim River drainage above Chuathbaluk.
9. **Middle River Subsistence.** Representatives that are active subsistence users in the Kuskokwim River drainage from Lower Kalskag to Chuathbaluk within District W-2.
10. **Lower River Subsistence.** Representatives that are active subsistence users in the Kuskokwim River drainage from Eek to Tuluksak within District W-1. Appendix A1.–Page 7 of 8.
11. **Processor.** Representatives that own or operate commercial salmon buying and/or processing businesses within District W-1 and W-2.
12. **Member at Large.** Representatives that are Area residents selected by the Working Group for their knowledge of, appreciation for, and experience with Kuskokwim River fisheries.
13. **Federal Regional Advisory Council.** Representatives that are current members of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and Western Interior Advisory Councils and reside in the Kuskokwim Area.
14. **Commercial Fishermen.** Kuskokwim commercial fishing permit holder or crew member, supported by commercial fishing permit holders who fish primarily within Districts W-1 and W-2.
15. **Sport Fisher.** Representatives that actively participate in sports fishing within the Kuskokwim River drainage.
16. **Alaska Department of Fish and Game.** Representatives that are presently employed with ADF&G in Bethel. This position is an associate member and may only vote on decisions not directly related to fisheries management ~~has no voting powers but has the authority to veto recommendations for commercial fishing periods from the Working Group.~~ Final emergency order authority continues to rest with the ADF&G.

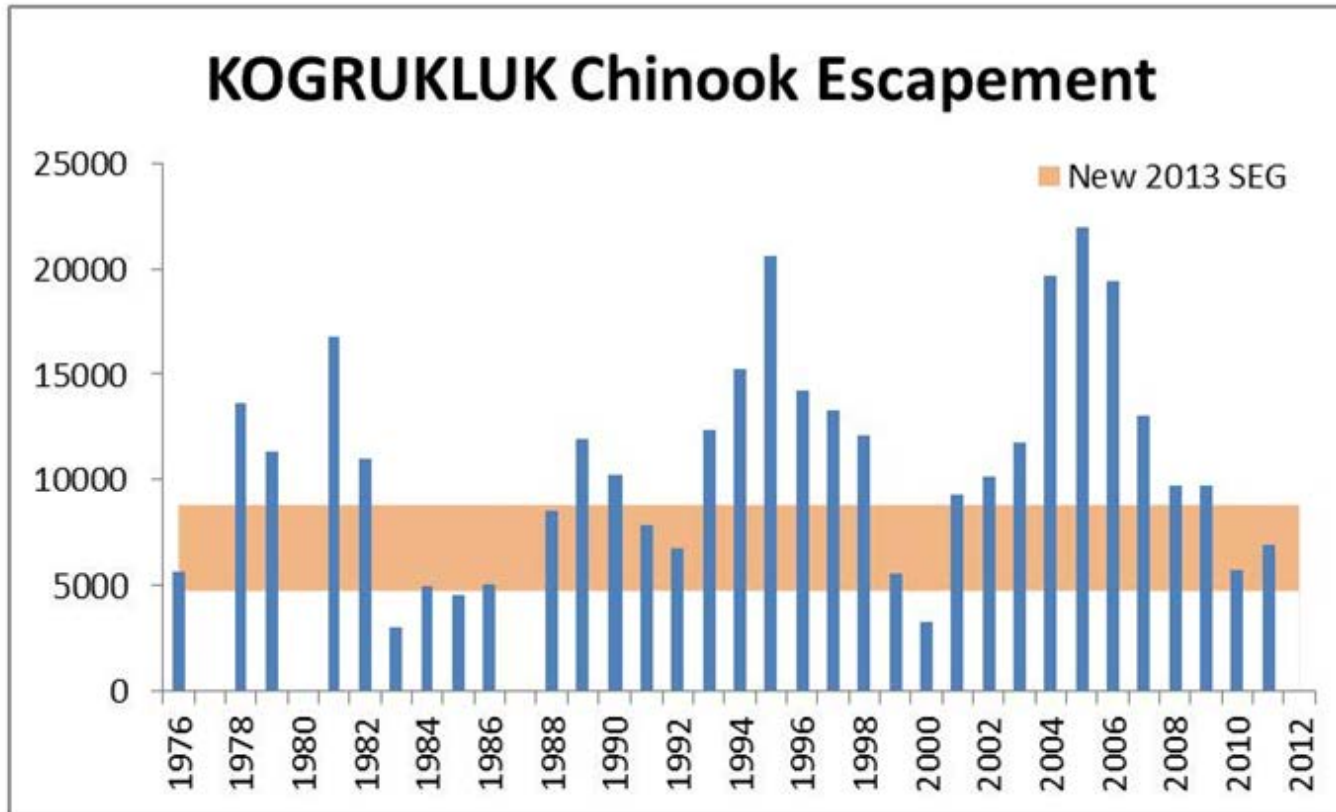
ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENT TO BY-LAWS

These by-laws may be altered, amended or repealed and new by-laws may be adopted by consensus of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group representatives present at any regular or special meeting, if at least thirty (30) days written notice is given by certified mail, phone call, or intention to alter, amend or appeal or to adopt new by-laws at such meeting.

Chinook Salmon Run Reconstruction

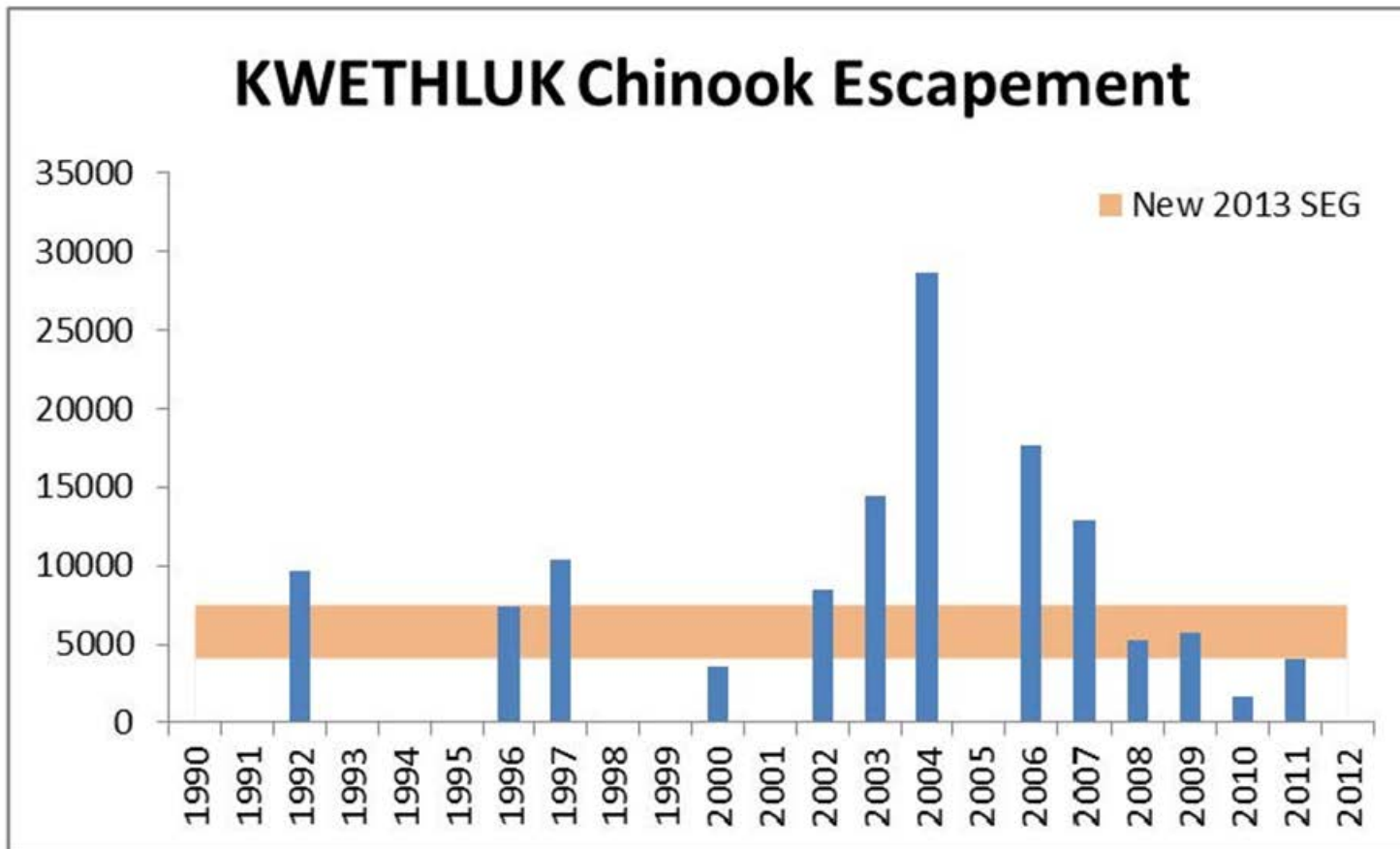


Escapement Performance

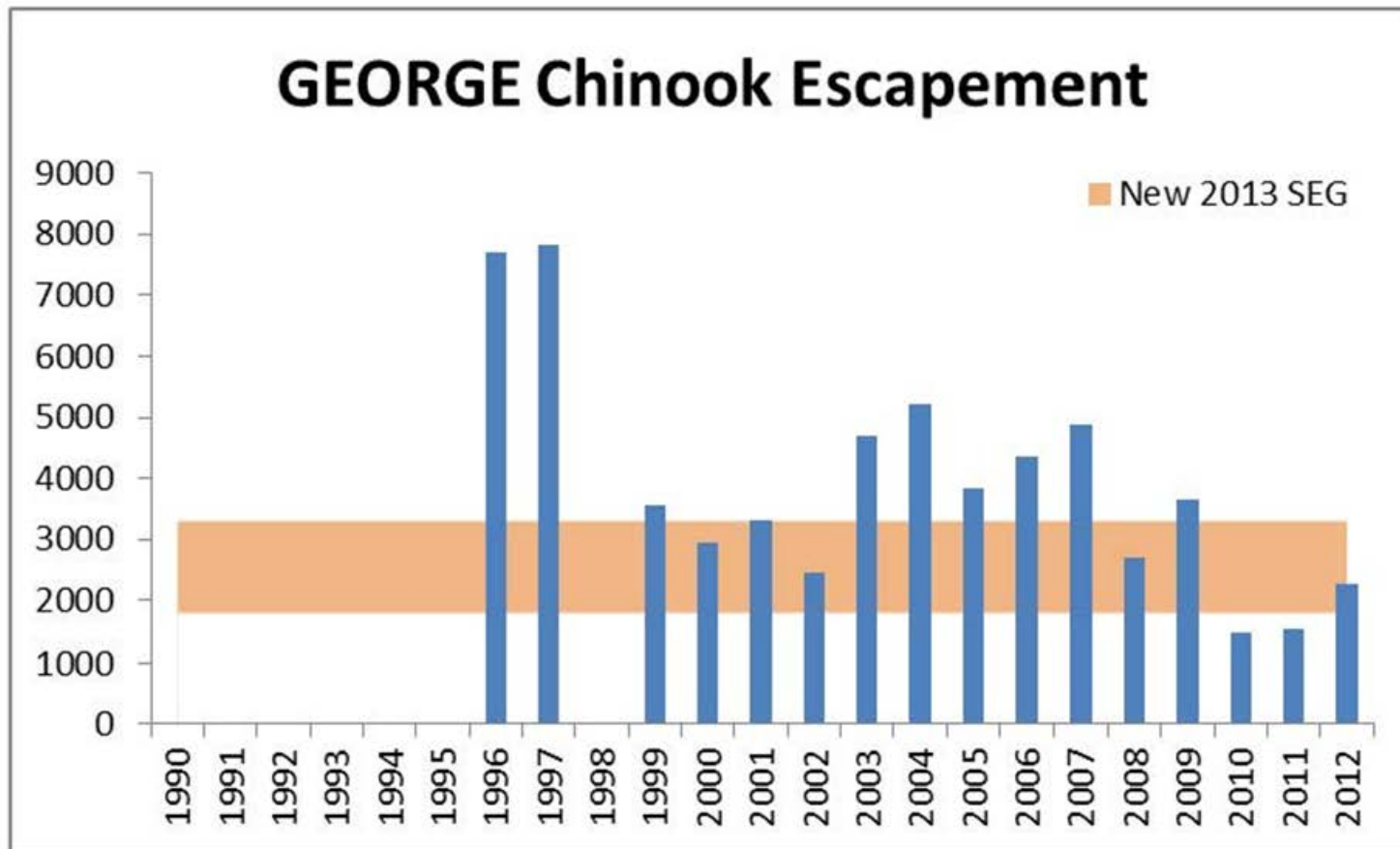


2

Escapement Performance



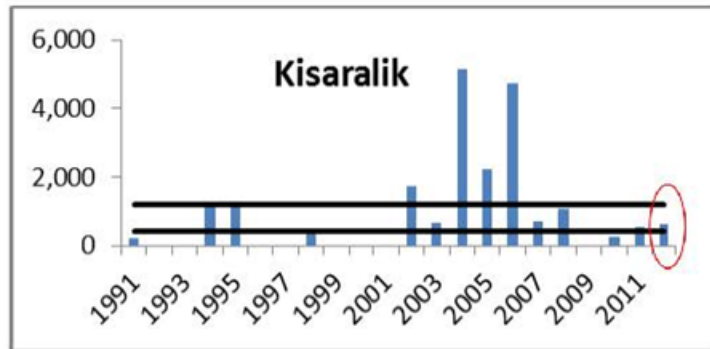
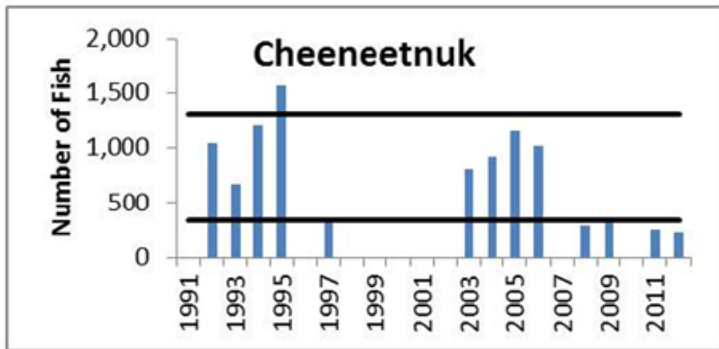
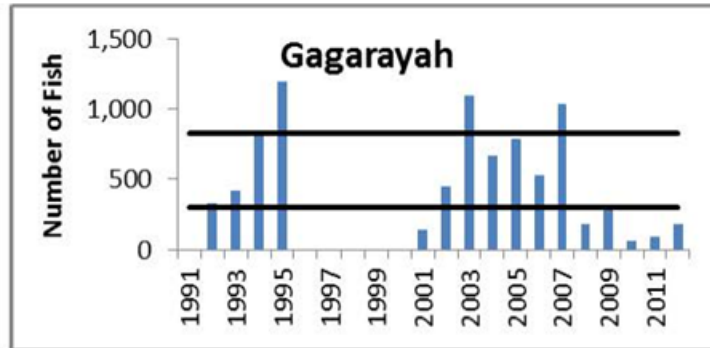
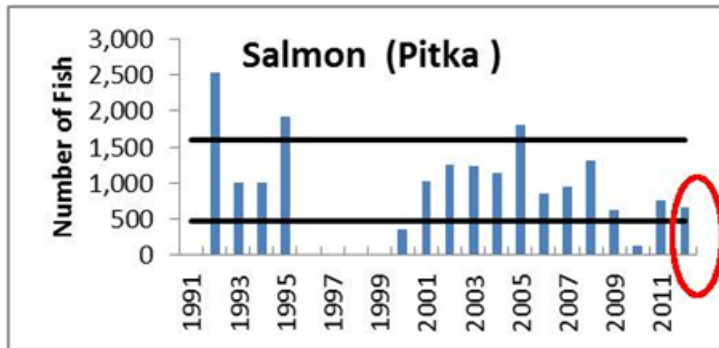
Escapement Performance



4

Successful Chinook aerial surveys

(with escapement goals)



Letters from the KRSMWG:

Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group

P.O. Box 1467 • Bethel, AK 99559 • 907-543-2433 • 907-543-2021 fax

To Whom it may Concern:

The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (KRSMWG) wants you to know how much we appreciate the overall support your staff in Bethel provides for us. Their research, their willingness to educate us as their research provides new insights into salmon behavior, their actions in terms of salmon conservation, demonstrates their commitment to the maintenance of the subsistence lifestyle which so enriches the souls of the Kuskokwim people and lies at the very heart of the culture of our region and the Kuskokwim River communities.

We understand that the roles your staff members play represent an underlying philosophy of United States Fish and Wildlife Service. We thank you for the expression of that philosophy through these professionals. But we also believe that individual personalities play a large role, and as such is the case, there are staff members we will cite by name who have been particularly supportive of our shared efforts in conserving the Kuskokwim's salmon and our way of life.

Gene Peltola, Jr., the Yukon Kuskokwim Delta Wildlife Refuge manager, is a son of the Delta and is particularly sensitive to the broad needs of the resources on the Refuge and also of the human needs of our region and communities. We salute him for his knowledge and leadership. His able bodied and talented Assistant Refuge manager, Tom Doolittle, is as reliable as the sun, and is a gifted communicator and an educator in his own right. Dan Gillikin and Steve Miller, both fisheries biologists, Robert Sundown, pilot and resource specialist, all have been invaluable to us. They make things happen afield and are all keen observers of the natural environment while at the same time taking time to be sharing, communicative, contributing members of our communities and region. These people make a difference, a most positive difference! It is impossible for me to overstate this.

It is important that you understand that their participation in the KRSMWG discussions and active participation in the decision making processes is essential to what is the fair and honest management of the resources of our region. They have our confidence, they understand subsistence needs.

We hope that you will continue to empower them and that you will take time to recognize them for the work that they have done and will continue to do in the Kuskokwim area. We need them so that they can continue to enhance our understanding as we make recommendation towards the fair management of the resources of the Kuskokwim River.

Thank you for your attention.

LaMont E. Albertson; Co-Chair, KRSMWG

Kuskokwim River Chinook salmon forecast 2013: Email from Travis Elison to WG participants sent on May 3, 2013.

To Working Group members, participants, and interested parties:

Since the Kuskokwim Interagency Meeting in March, ADF&G, in consultation with USFWS, has conducted an in-depth forecasting/hind casting analysis to assess the precision and accuracy of different forecasting methods. The methods assessed included forecast based on a population level Ricker forecast model and age-class specific forecast models. The age-class specific forecast method selects the best of six possible forecast models for each age group, based on the recent performance, and the sum of all the age classes results in the total run forecast estimate.

The hind casting analysis showed that no one particular forecast model performs better than other models on any given year. This analysis also showed that each particular model and combinations of the different models results in similar forecast estimates. It was therefore determined that using age-class forecast method as we used last year is most appropriate, and it is also used in other areas of the state such as Bristol Bay.

Since the Interagency Meeting there has also been additional error checking of the subsistence harvest data. There were no significant errors found, so the 2012 subsistence harvest estimate is not expected to change significantly.

Now that we have done our due diligence we are comfortable releasing the 2013 Kuskokwim River Chinook Salmon Forecast.

The Kuskokwim River Chinook salmon forecast is for a total run of 160,000 to 240,000.

This is 20,000 fish higher than the forecast discussed at the Interagency Meeting, however we feel the management strategy will be similar to that discussed under the previous forecast scenario.

ADF&G and USFWS will come to the Working Group Meeting on May 10 with preseason management strategy recommendations for the Working Group to discuss and vote on. We will release the final forecast and management strategy through a news release after that meeting.

Forecasts are developed to give managers and users an idea of what to expect in the upcoming season. Given this forecast range we feel cautiously optimistic that subsistence restrictions in the mainstem may not be needed, however **final management decisions on the mainstem will be based on inseason information.**

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Preseason strategy for Kuskokwim River Salmon Management 2013: Proposed text for the ADFG News Release to explain concepts and terms:

Description of Potential 2013 Kuskokwim River Subsistence Fishing Restrictions

This is an announcement from the Alaska Department of Fish and Game for subsistence salmon fishermen in the Kuskokwim River Drainage.

The preliminary estimated 2012 total run of king salmon in the Kuskokwim River was the lowest on record, which goes back to 1976. The preliminary 2012 subsistence king salmon harvest estimate was the smallest king salmon subsistence harvest estimate in our dataset, which goes back to 1990. The sacrifices made by subsistence users last season did have a positive impact on escapement. However, weir based escapement goals were not achieved in 2012.

The 2013 Kuskokwim River king salmon forecast is for 160,000–240,000 fish. The drainage-wide king salmon escapement goal is 65,000–120,000. If the run comes back as forecast then there would be enough king salmon to provide for escapement and subsistence needs. However, given consecutive years of low king salmon runs to the Kuskokwim River, subsistence salmon fishing restrictions may again be necessary in 2013 to ensure sustainable runs for future generations. If warranted, subsistence salmon fishing restrictions in the mainstem Kuskokwim River will be based on inseason information. **This News Release is intended to inform subsistence fishermen of potential management actions, and the intent of those actions, that may be used for king salmon conservation in 2013.**

Salmon fishing closures and subsistence fishing restrictions to 4-inch or less mesh size gillnets not to exceed 60 feet in length:

Early in the season when king salmon are the primary species available, the use of gillnets with 4-inch or less mesh size not to exceed 60 feet in length is allowed. Use of this gear type during salmon fishing closures is intended to provide subsistence harvest opportunity on species other than salmon such as whitefish. This type of closure and restriction is effective for conserving king salmon in early to mid-June before chum and sockeye salmon become abundant. It is recognized that this gear type may incidentally harvest some salmon, including king salmon. Salmon incidentally harvested may be retained, but this gear may NOT be used to target salmon during closed periods. If a person intentionally attempts to harvest salmon with this gear type during a closed period that person may be charged with fishing for salmon in closed waters.

If there is a salmon fishing closure, the Department and Alaska Wildlife Troopers will closely monitor the use of this gear type. If incidental harvest of king salmon using this gear type is determined to be too high then the Department may remove the provision to allow 4-inch or less gillnets, at which time all fishing would be closed.

Subsistence salmon fishing restrictions to the use of gillnets with 6-inch or less mesh size:

For king salmon conservation when chum and sockeye salmon are abundant, the Department may restrict the use of gillnets to 6-inch or less mesh size. These gillnets must not exceed 50 fathoms in length and 45 meshes deep. The intent of restricting to 6-inch or less mesh size is to provide subsistence harvest opportunity for chum and sockeye salmon. This gear restriction is effective for conserving king salmon from late June through early July; however, if incidental harvest of king salmon using this gear type is determined to be too high then the Department may remove the

provision to allow 6-inch or less gillnets The Department recognizes that many people prefer to utilize king salmon to meet their needs, but when king salmon conservation is necessary people should make every effort to utilize other salmon species in order to meet subsistence needs.

Subsistence Fish wheels equipped with a live box:

For king salmon conservation, the Department may require subsistence fish wheels be equipped with a livebox that contains no less than 45 cubic feet of water volume while in operation. The live box must be checked at least once every six hours while in operation and all king salmon must be returned to the water alive. The intent of this requirement allows people to harvest chum and sockeye salmon while conserving king salmon. This regulation would be used during the same times that gillnets are restricted to 6-inch or less mesh size.

King salmon subsistence hook and line fishing closures or bag limits:

For king salmon conservation, the Department may close subsistence hook and line fishing directed at king salmon or apply bag and possession limits. During king salmon closures, hook and line fishing for other salmon species would remain open and all king salmon caught must remain in the water and immediately released alive.

Tributary Closures:

As in previous years, individual tributaries including buffers in adjacent waters may be closed pre-season to salmon fishing with gillnets and king salmon hook and line fishing. In these tributaries, gillnets would be restricted to 4-inch or less mesh size not to exceed 60 feet in length and close hook and line king salmon fishing. Effective dates would be from June 1 through July 25. Due to habitat impairments in the Tuluksak River and recent low escapements, this tributary will be closed to king salmon fishing from June 1 through July 25, 2013. Other tributaries under consideration include the Kwethluk, Kasigluk, Kisarolik, Aniak, Holokuk, Oskawalik, and George Rivers.

Rolling Closures:

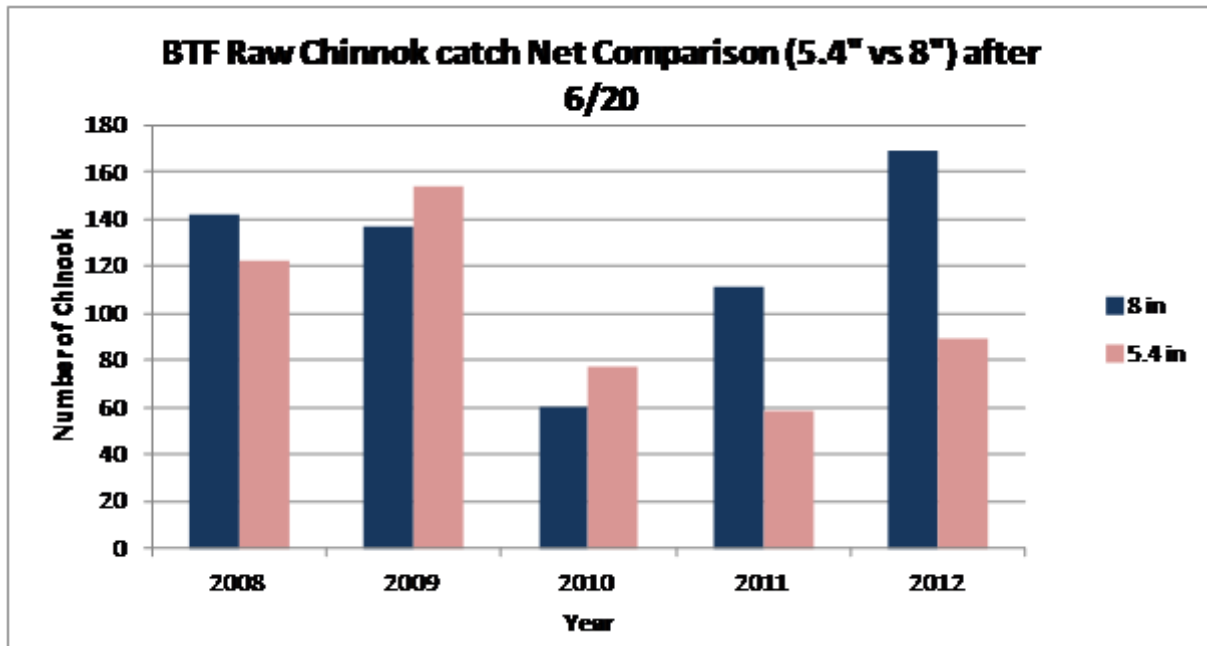
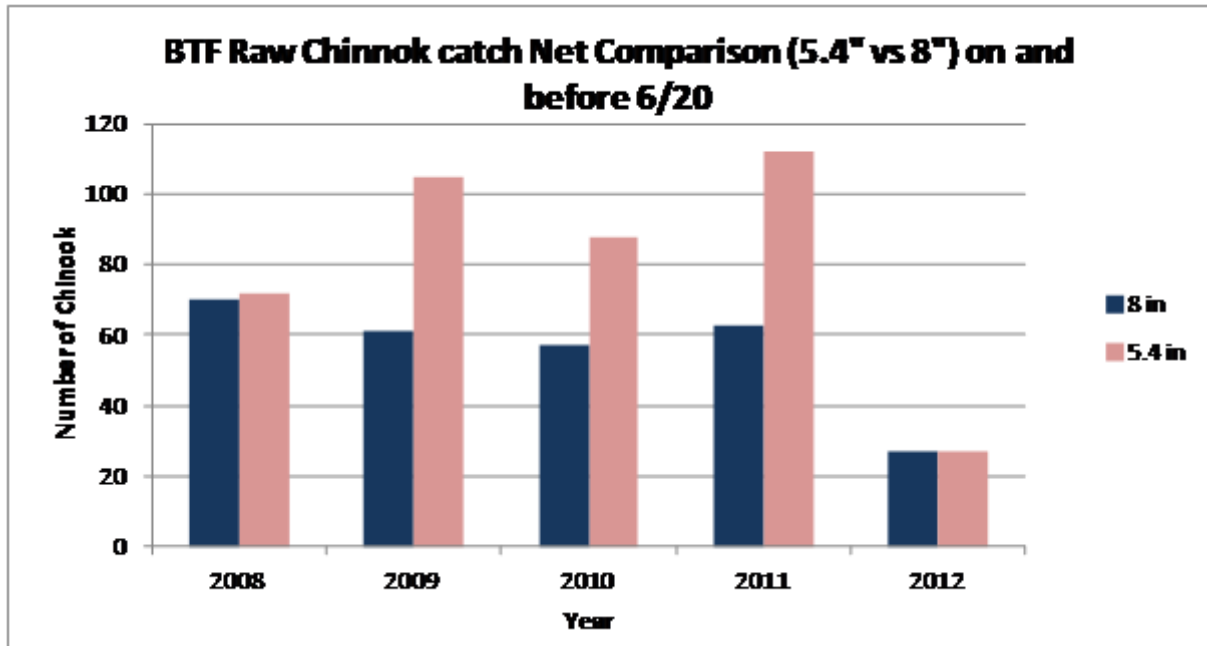
“Rolling Closures” refers to the implementation of closures or restrictions in each section of the Kuskokwim River timed to coincide with salmon migration upstream. By dividing the river into five different sections, greater protection can be provided for migrating salmon with fewer days of closures and restrictions in each section.

Elder’s Fishery:

A new management tool available to the Department that may be implemented in 2013 is called the “Elder’s Fishery.” During times when the amount of fish available for subsistence harvest is very small, the Department may open a fishing period during which king salmon may only be taken by persons 60 years of age or older. Persons 60 years of age or older can only be assisted by family members “within the second degree of kindred,” which is defined as parents, siblings, children, grandparents, grandchildren, in-laws, step-parents, step-siblings, and step-children. The persons 60 years of age or older must be present while fishing and proxies are not allowed.

This regulation was adopted by the Board of Fisheries in response to public testimony that asked for provisions to allow elders to harvest king salmon during times when there are not enough fish to allow everyone to harvest king salmon. King salmon harvested during an “Elder’s Fishery” are intended to contribute to the subsistence needs of elders and not for entire subsistence sharing groups. An additional intent of this regulation is to provide opportunity for the passing of knowledge about cultural fishing practices from older generations to younger generations. □

Comparison of catches of Chinook by mesh size in BTF:



Invasive Plant Watch:

Invasive Plants Handout Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group May 2013

WHAT ARE INVASIVES?

Invasive plants are not native to a region and have negative impacts to the economy, environment, and/or human health.

HOW DO THEY GET HERE?

They are spread to new areas through many vectors including human traffic (e.g., stuck to shoes and pant legs), equipment that comes in by barge from far away places, contaminated gravel or soil, and straw. Once introduced, invasive plants may spread rapidly and can be carried long distances by wind, water, birds, or people.

WHY SHOULD THE KRSMWG CARE?

- Invasives are the No 2. reason for loss of bio-diversity (behind habitat destruction) world-wide.
- Invasive plants pose threats to:
 - * **Fisheries** by reducing water quality, clogging streams, & degrading fish spawning habitat
 - * **Wildlife** by out-competing the native vegetation that wildlife depends on
 - * **Ecosystems** by altering frequency & intensity of wildfire, increasing erosion, & decreasing biodiversity
 - * **Subsistence Resources** by crowding out native plants and wildlife
 - * **Land Values** because established infestations can be costly to control or eradicate
- Prevention is the key to protect our natural resources and habitat!
- Prevention requires public awareness and involvement.

WHAT INVASIVES DO WE HAVE ON THE KUSKOKWIM?

Dave Cannon surveyed middle Kuskokwim and Yukon villages and found: foxtail barley, narrowleaf hawksbeard, oxeye daisy, yellow toadflax, splitlip hempnettle among other non-natives of less concern. European bird cherry, Siberian peashrub, Oxeye daisy, and yellow toadflax are reported to be in Bethel. It is likely surrounding villages have these as well; we just haven't looked!

So keep your eyes open!

WHAT PLANTS SHOULD WE BE ON THE LOOK OUT FOR?

KUSKOKWIM WATCH LIST:

Orange Hawkweed	Bird vetch	White sweetclover
Reed canary grass	Elodea (aquatic)	European bird cherry

HOW DO I GET MORE INFORMATION?

- UAF Cooperative Extension Service, Gina Graziano, Invasive Plants Instructor: 907-786-6315; Email: gagraziano@alaska.edu; Website: <http://www.uaf.edu/ces/ipm/invasiveplants/>

Local Contacts:

- Pat Sampson, The Kuskokwim Watershed Council : 907-543-1426; Email: invasives@kuskokwimcouncil.org; Website: <http://www.kuskokwimcouncil.org/>
- Dave Cannon, Native Village of Napaimute: 907-675-4443 or 907-676-0012

Known Invasives on the Kuskokwim River



Kuskokwim Invasives Watch List



Available Resources



Sources:

<http://www.uaf.edu/ces/ipm/profiles/>

<http://www.invasive.org/>

<http://alaska.fws.gov/fisheries/invasive/reports.htm>