

Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group

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

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

July 3, 2019

Meeting called to order at 10:05 a.m. on Wednesday July 3, 2019 and adjourned at 12:38 p.m. Meeting time was approximately 2 hours and 30 minutes. Seven full voting members were present and a quorum was established. Alissa N. Rogers chaired the meeting.

AGENDA ITEMS:

USFWS/KRITFC Update:

Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) Management Actions Under Consideration:

People to be Heard:

Continuing Business: Run assessment and management actions.

Old Business Discussion Topics:

New Business Discussion Topics:

- Area Management Biologist
- Aniak Test Fish
- Letter to Government Officials

WORKING GROUP ACTION ITEMS:

WORKING GROUP MOTIONS:

1. Approve the agenda. *Passed (Unanimous)*
 2. Write a letter of support for community based monitoring program. *Passed (Unanimous)*
 3. Request that ADF&G create a visual (or graphic representation) which reflects the 2019 Chinook run in a historical context. *Passed (Unanimous)*
 4. Schedule an end of the season Working Group meeting. *Passed (Unanimous)*
 5. Extend working group meeting to 12:40 pm. *Passed (Unanimous)*
 6. To schedule the next Working Group meeting for Wednesday July 10, at 10:00 a.m. *Passed (Unanimous)*
 7. Adjourn at 12:38 p.m. *Passed (Unanimous)*
8. **KRITFC/ USFWS UPDATE:** Gary Decossas (USFWS) reported that as of July 1, all federal restrictions on Chinook were lifted. Mr. Decossas commented that everything goes to ADF&G by emergency order for restrictions for the rest of the 2019 season.
9. **ADF&G MANAGEMENT ACTIONS UNDER CONSIDERATION:** Aaron Tiernan (ADF&G, Area Management Biologist) reported the river is still 6 inch mesh or less gillnets. Below the Johnson River 50 fathoms length. Above the Johnson River mouth 25 fathoms in length. Mr. Tiernan commented that gillnet closures within the major lower river salmon tributaries are still in place to protect stocks.
10. **PEOPLE TO BE HEARD:**
- **SUBSISTENCE REPORTS:**
 - **ONC Subsistence Report:** Avery Hoffman (ONC) reported visiting 30 fish camps. He commented on one report of rod and reel to target sockeye. Mr. Hoffman reported after eleven fishing trips, the average number of Chinook salmon harvested was 2.2, lower than last report. The average number of chum

Meeting summaries are prepared and distributed by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). The department is responsible for summary content. Summaries are not comprehensive or considered meeting minutes, and are designed to provide context on meeting proceedings for the convenience of interested parties/participants. Audio recordings of meetings can be found at: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareakuskokwim.kswg#2019>

Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group

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

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

harvested was 7.8, higher than last report. The average number of sockeye was 33.2. Peter Crow (ONC) reported seventy percent of people surveyed at fish camps said they have made their Chinook and sockeye salmon goal for the 2019 harvesting season. Fifty percent of people surveyed have met their chum goal for 2019 harvest season. Mr. Crow commented that community involvement in ASL sampling is at its highest since 2011.

- **Lower River:** Robert Lekander (KRITFC) reported that he caught twenty chums. Mr. Lekander commented that that he had caught enough Chinook salmon to be satisfied and is done fishing for the 2019 season. Greg Hoffman Jr. (Commercial fishing) reported he caught three Chinook, five chums, and twenty-five reds.
- **Middle River:** Lisa Feyereisen (Middle River Subsistence alternate) reported that despite people having difficulty catching sockeye, they have commented that the Chinook salmon have had a strong run this 2019 season.
- **Upriver:** Barbara Carlson (Member at Large alternate) reported that Chinook salmon runs have been stronger this week and that she caught her first female. Ms. Carlson commented that she caught two Chinooks and seven sockeye and that people have reported the Chinook salmon being caught as small.
- **CONTINUING BUSINESS:**
 1. **Overview of Kuskokwim River Salmon Run Assessment Projects:** Nick Smith (ADF&G) provided an overview of the ADF&G assessment projects. *(For more information on the 2019 inseason assessment projects, please see the July 3 Informational Packet).*
 - **Bethel Test Fish:** Mr. Smith reported that as of July 1, the cumulative CPUE at the BTF for Chinook salmon was 741. Based on historical data, the 2019 Chinook salmon run is at its highest cumulative CPUE since 2008. The 2019 Chinook salmon run appeared to be tracking at an average run time. As of July 1, chum cumulative CPUE at the BTF was 661. As of July 1, sockeye cumulative CPUE at the BTF was 413. Based on historical data, the 2019 chum and sockeye run appeared to be tracking lower than average for this date in the season.
 - **Aniak Test Fish:** Chums are starting to show up in the middle river in greater numbers than the Chinook. ATF will discontinue on Friday, July 5 due to budget and good numbers.
 - **Sonar:** As of June 30, the sonar project is showing an estimate of 132,000 salmon passing through the sonar. 47,700 chum salmon have passed through the sonar. 341,000 sockeye salmon have passed through the sonar.
 - **Weirs:** Aaron Webber (USFWS) commented that all is well at the weir site.
 - **Subsistence Division project update:** No projects in the water.
- 2. **Sport Fishing:** Lamont Albertson (Sport Fishing) reported that fishing guides are doing well.
- 3. **Discussion of ADF&G Management considerations and discussion of possible alternatives:**
(Please see Motion 4 on page 3).

OLD BUSINESS:

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Area Management Biologist:** Aaron Tiernan (ADF&G) announced that he was leaving his position as Area Management Biologist for the Kuskokwim. He thanked the Working Group members, staff, and other agencies for his time in Bethel.
- **Aniak Test Fish:** Letter of support from the Working Group for a proposal of funding for the Aniak Test Fishery for a four year period.

Meeting summaries are prepared and distributed by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). The department is responsible for summary content. Summaries are not comprehensive or considered meeting minutes, and are designed to provide context on meeting proceedings for the convenience of interested parties/participants. Audio recordings of meetings can be found at: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareakuskokwim.kswg#2019>

Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group

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

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

- **Letter for Government officials:** Write a letter to our government officials in regards to the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group meetings on the importance of funding to keep the Working Group.

WORKING GROUP MOTIONS:

1. **Approve the agenda. Passed (Unanimous)**
2. **Write a letter of support for the community based monitoring program. Passed (Unanimous)**
3. **Request ADF&G create visual (or graphic representation) which reflects the 2019 Chinook run in a historical context. Passed (Unanimous)**
4. **Schedule an end of the season Working Group meeting. Passed (Unanimous)**
5. **Extend the July 3 Working Group meeting to 12:40 p.m. Passed (Unanimous)**
6. **To schedule the next Working Group meeting for Wednesday July 10 at 10:00 a.m. Passed (Unanimous)**
7. **Adjourn at 12:38 p.m. Passed (Unanimous)**

COMMENTS FROM THE WORKING GROUP: *No additional comments were provided from the Working Group members.*

Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group

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

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

WORKING GROUP ATTENDANCE:

MEMBER SEAT:	NAME:
DOWNRIVER ELDER	Absent
UPRIVER ELDER	Absent
LOWER RIVER SUBSISTENCE	Mike Williams Sr.
MIDDLE RIVER SUBSISTENCE	Lisa Feyereisen
UPRIVER SUBSISTENCE	Barbara Carlson
HEADWATERS SUBSISTENCE	Absent
MEMBER AT LARGE	Fritz Charles
WESTERN INTERIOR RAC	Ray Collins
YK DELTA RAC	Absent
COMMERCIAL FISHING	Greg Hoffman Jr.
SPORT FISHING	LaMont Albertson
PROCESSOR	<i>Vacant</i>
KRITFC	Robert Lekander
ADF&G	Aaron Tiernan
CHAIR	Alissa N. Rogers

Other Participants:		
ADF&G Comm. Fish: Ben Gray, Nick Smith, Lily Reichard, Zach Liller, Keegan Birchfield Sport Fish: John Chythlook Subsistence Division: Dave Runfola		
USFWS: Aaron Webber, Aaron Moses, Gary Decossas OSM: Eva Patton		
Janessa Esquible (ONC) Avery Hoffman (ONC) Peter Crow(ONC) Dan Gillikin (NVN) Bill Bechtol (KRITFC) Orië Reich (BSFA)	Erica Kameroff (AVCP) Brittany Rutherford (KRITFC)	Media: Anna Rose MacArthur (KYUK)
		WG Alternates: Mary Peltola (Lower River Sub. Alt.)

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS:

Alaska Department of Fish and Game (**ADF&G, department, State**), Orutsararmiut Traditional Native Council (**OTNC**), Association of Village Council Presidents (**AVCP**), Georgetown Traditional Council (**GTC**), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (**USFWS**), Bethel Test Fishery project (**BTF**), Catch Per Unit Effort (**CPUE**), Coastal Village Seafoods (**CVS**), ADF&G Commercial Fisheries Division (**CF**), ADF&G Sport Fisheries Division (**SF**), Regional Advisory Council (**RAC**), Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (**KRSMWG, Working Group, or WG**), Sustainable Escapement Goal (**SEG**), Biological Escapement Goal (**BEG**), Management Objective (**MO**), Amounts Reasonably Necessary for Subsistence (**ANS**), Emergency Order (**EO**), Bering Sea Fishermen's Association (**BSFA**), Law Enforcement (**LE**), Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (**KRITFC**), Native Village of Napaimute (**NVN**), Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation (**YKHC**), Alaska State Troopers (**AST**), University of Alaska Fairbanks (**UAF**)

Meeting summaries are prepared and distributed by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). The department is responsible for summary content. Summaries are not comprehensive or considered meeting minutes, and are designed to provide context on meeting proceedings for the convenience of interested parties/participants. Audio recordings of meetings can be found at: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareakuskokwim.kswg#2019>