



Hazel Nelson  
USA

Co-Chairs

Steve Gotch  
Canada

Yukon River Panel 100 – 419 Range Road Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 3V1

---

## **PRESS RELEASE - April 27, 2015**

The Yukon River Panel (Panel), established by the U.S./Canada Yukon River Salmon Agreement, met in Whitehorse, Yukon from April 12 through 16 to review the status of 2014 Canadian-origin salmon runs and fishery management regimes and received 2015 Yukon River Chinook and chum salmon outlooks. The Panel also reviewed detailed project proposals submissions for Restoration and Enhancement Fund and associated public comments received. The Panel, which operates under the *Yukon River Salmon Agreement (Pacific Salmon Treaty)*, consists of 12 Alaska and Yukon Territory residents from throughout the Yukon River system, and is supported by regional advisors, scientists, and managers from Canada and the United States.

### **2014 Canadian-Origin Salmon Run, Harvest, and Escapement Estimates**

#### Chinook Salmon (Yukon River Mainstem)

- Total estimated run size: 64,773
- Harvest: 1,342 (U.S), 100 (Canada)
- Spawning escapement: 63,331

#### Chum Salmon (Yukon River Mainstem)

- Total estimated run size: 184,000\*
- Harvest: *Estimate not available* (U.S.), 3,050 (Canada)
- Spawning escapement: 157,796

#### Chum Salmon (Fishing Branch River (Porcupine Drainage))

- Total estimated run size: *Estimate not available*
- Harvest: 1,931 (Canada)
- Spawning escapement: 7,304\*\*

\**Preliminary estimate*

\*\**Preliminary estimate derived from mainstem Porcupine River (Canada) chum salmon estimate (17,756).*

## **2015 Canadian-Origin Salmon Escapement Goals and Preseason Forecasts**

### Chinook Salmon (Yukon River Mainstem)

- Interim Management Escapement Goal: 42,500 – 55,000
- Pre-Season estimate forecast outlook range: 59,000 – 70,000

### Chum Salmon (Yukon River Mainstem)

- Interim Management Escapement Goal: 70,000 – 104,000
- Pre-Season estimate forecast outlook range: 236,000 – 294,000

### Chum Salmon (Fishing Branch River (Porcupine Drainage))

- Interim Management Escapement Goal: 22,000 – 49,000
- Pre-Season estimate forecast outlook range: 14,000 – 26,000

## **2015 Management Summary**

The preseason forecast for Yukon River mainstem Chinook salmon identifies a below-average return is anticipated for 2015. In this regard, a conservative management approach will likely be required in order to achieve the interim escapement goal. The mainstem chum salmon return is projected to be slightly below average for odd-numbered year runs, although sufficient abundance to support both escapement requirements and provide allocations to U.S. and Canadian fisheries is likely. Poor escapement of chum salmon to the Fishing Branch River in both 2010 and 2011 is likely to result in a below-average return in 2015. As the abundance of chum salmon may be insufficient to achieve the lower-end of the interim management escapement goal, conservative management measures will likely be warranted. Further information may be found in the Yukon River Salmon 2014 Season Summary and 2015 Season Outlook found at:

[www.yukonriverpanel.com/salmon/publications/joint-technical-committee-reports/](http://www.yukonriverpanel.com/salmon/publications/joint-technical-committee-reports/)

## **Restoration and Enhancement Fund**

The Yukon River Panel approved \$1.2 million U.S. of funding for 30 project proposals for salmon and habitat Restoration and Enhancement projects in Alaska and Yukon to be undertaken in 2015. The Panel has allocated more than \$13.0 million U.S. since 2002 to community-based projects, including stewardship projects, directly supporting the management and recovery of Yukon River salmon stocks originating in Canada. In addition, the Yukon River Panel revised the 2016 near-term priorities for the Restoration and Enhancement Fund and confirmed the intent to expend approximately \$0.7 million U.S. of residual funds on projects focusing on the “restoration” priorities over the next three years.

<b>Approved Yukon River Restoration and Enhancement Fund Project Proposals (2015)</b>
Collection and Analysis of Yukon River DNA Baseline Samples in Alaska and Canada.
Genetic stock identification of fall chum salmon in commercial harvests, Yukon River.
Genetic stock identification of fall chum salmon in subsistence harvest from the Tanana Area.
Yukon River Chinook Salmon Subsistence Sampling: (Anvik, Galena, Ruby, Fort Yukon).
Rapids All Season Video Monitoring, 2015.
Yukon River Salmon Stock Identification.
Mainstem Teslin River Chinook Sonar Project - 2015.
Porcupine River Sonar Program - Chinook Salmon.
Radio tracking of chum salmon in the Porcupine River, Canada.
Blind Creek Chinook Salmon Enumeration Weir.
Sonar Enumeration of Chinook Salmon on the Big Salmon River.
Stewart River Sonar Pilot Program
Draanjik Salmon Weir, Yukon Flats National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska.
Big Salmon River Juvenile Chinook Out-migrant Assessment Study 2015.
Radio tracking of Chinook salmon and genetic sampling in the Porcupine River, Canada.
Temperature monitoring of Yukon River Chinook Salmon spawning and migration habitats in Canada.
Fishing Branch River Chum Salmon Habitat Assessment.
2015 Michie Creek Salmon and Habitat Monitoring Project.
Southern Lakes Chinook Salmon Restoration and Enhancement.
Ta'an Kwäch'än Council Fox Creek Salmon Restoration Project.
Yukon River Chinook Salmon Mainstem Outplant Program spawning evaluation.
Teslin River Chinook Stock Restoration Investigation.
Yukon River Chinook Salmon Hatchery Augmentation Feasibility Assessment and Development.
Salmon Stewardship Coordinators for Yukon Schools.
Yukon River North Mainstem Stewardship.
Yukon River Chinook Salmon Stock Restoration Community Technical Advisor.
Yukon River In-Season Salmon Management Teleconferences.
Yukon River Education Exchange Program.
Yukon River Pre-Season Planning Meeting.
Yukon River Chinook Salmon Stock Restoration Education Initiative.

The Yukon River Panel's next meeting will be held in Whitehorse, Yukon from December 13 to 17, 2015. Confirmation of meeting details, including specific location, venue, agenda items and timing of public / closed sessions will be available on the Yukon River Panel's website:

<http://yukonriverpanel.com/salmon/meetings/meeting-schedule/>