

Yukon River Panel, Communications Committee
Project CC-01-11

Yukon River In-Season Salmon Management Teleconferences, 2011
Final Report

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ABSTRACT

Teleconference calls are a practical and useful method for discussing the complexities of salmon management and for gaining immediate real-time information from fishers along the expanse of the Yukon River. As such, the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association (YRDFA) hosted weekly in-season teleconference calls during the 2011 Yukon River salmon fishery season, from June through August. The teleconference calls, held every Tuesday at 1 p.m. Alaska time (2 p.m. Yukon time), were a means to exchange information on run timing, abundance, and escapement data; discuss management strategies; facilitate open dialogue between users and management entities; and enable salmon resource users drainage-wide to communicate. In addition to reports of local observations, the calls provided information to fishers regarding research and escapement monitoring tools operated by management entities, and facilitated information sharing and capacity building amongst all interested parties. Calls were typically 1-2 hours in length. Summaries of each call were written and distributed to teleconference participants within three days. In total, 13 teleconferences were held in the 2011 fishing season.

Funding for the Yukon River In-Season Salmon Management Teleconferences was provided by the Yukon River Panel Communications Committee and the U.S. Fisheries Information Service, Office of Subsistence Management.

Key Words: Alaska, Canada, Chinook, chum, commercial fisheries, fisheries management, in-season management, salmon, subsistence harvest, teleconference, Yukon River, Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association.

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INTRODUCTION

Since its inception in 1994, the in-season management teleconference program has provided a practical and useful method for fishers, processors, managers, and other stakeholders in Yukon River salmon fisheries to discuss the complexities of salmon management and gain immediate real-time information across the more than 2,000 mile expanse of the Yukon River. Facilitated by the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association (YRDFA), these teleconferences have enabled local users to provide valuable insight to fisheries managers on in-season salmon subsistence needs, river conditions, and abundance and quality of salmon available. In addition to reports of local observations, the calls have provided information to fishers regarding research and escapement monitoring tools operated by management entities, and have facilitated information sharing and capacity building amongst all interested parties.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this program are:

1. Promote, coordinate, facilitate, and summarize weekly in-season management teleconferences in the summer of 2010 for fishers, managers, processors, and other stakeholders in Yukon River drainage fisheries.
2. Provide a forum for sharing information and ideas, building understanding and capacity, among all user groups in the Yukon River drainage.

METHODS

Pre-Season

To organize and carry out weekly teleconference calls during the 2011 summer and fall fishing season, YRDFA first looked back at the 2010 teleconferences, which were the best attended on record, to see what worked and what did not. Also, YRDFA consulted managers from ADF&G and USFWS. All parties agreed that the calls needed to focus on in-season issues, rather than external factors such as bycatch, to keep calls shorter and more productive. In the past some calls were as long as 3 hours, and in the interest of respecting participants' time this change was made. However, on the slower calls, callers would be given more latitude, recognizing that the teleconferences do provide a useful forum for dissemination of all sorts of fisheries information.

Also, in 2010 there was some finger pointing between districts regarding responsibility to conserve salmon. While one purpose of the calls is to share viewpoints, some comments are simply not productive and instead cause animosity. As such, YRDFA moderators dedicated themselves to watching for such attitudes and limiting these comments to a minimum.

Lastly, all parties agreed that during busy calls segmenting the public comment period into a few key topics helps to focus discussions and decreased repeat questions. As such, it was decided that on the busier calls the public comment period would be divided as follows: (1) run assessment (sonar, test fish, what people think of the run), (2) management actions, and (3) other issues.

Agenda items included village identification and subsistence reports, management updates and strategies, and public comments. Calls were slated to be held every Tuesday at 1 p.m. Alaska time (2 p.m. Yukon time) and to last no more than two hours, and ideally one hour.

Prior to the first teleconference of the season, YRDFA launched a promotional campaign targeting fishers and user groups riverwide. Postcards were mailed to more than 2,100 fishery stakeholders in the U.S. and Canada. 750 full-page flyers were distributed in batches of ten to 48 U.S. Tribal Councils and 27 Canadian First Nations, Renewable Resource Councils, and other fisheries-related groups (Appendix A). In addition, the teleconferences were promoted in YRDFA's spring newsletter and the May and June editions of YRDFA's E-News. Teleconference information was posted on YRDFA's homepage, and staff handed-out decks of promotional playing cards at meetings and during travel on the river. While this was a reasonably comprehensive campaign, it was not as large as in 2010, which included waterproof mailers, advertisement in regional newspapers, and weekly targeted phone calls. Given the high participation rates in 2010, YRDFA staff felt that the public was well aware of the program and chose to simply remind stakeholders of the key details. Also, there was additional funding in 2010 for promotions through another grant source; this funding was not available in 2011.

In-Season

From June 7 to August 30, 2011, teleconference calls were facilitated by YRDFA's executive director or communications director every Tuesday at 1 p.m. Alaska time (2 p.m. Yukon time). Each call lasted between 35 and 120 minutes, depending on the level of participation and amount of discussion. A brief summary of each call was written and emailed to teleconference participants within 3 days after each call (Appendix B). The summaries were also posted on the YRDFA website, along with summaries of every in-season teleconference held since 2003. As a change, this year the summaries were streamlined to focus on fishers' reports and questions/comments. Website links were provided for most of the agency information, which is available online. The goal was to keep the summaries focused on new information and make them as brief and to the point as possible.

Post-Season

In the fall of 2011, YRDFA staff spoke with representatives from management agencies to evaluate the program for the season. In addition, in preparation for the next season of teleconferences, YRDFA staff researched promotional items.

RESULTS

During the 2011 salmon fishing season, YRDFA organized and carried out a total of 13 in-season management teleconferences. Participation in terms of number of communities actively participating was equal to previous 5 year average, though it was down 8% from 2010 (Figure 1). This drop was due to lower participation from U.S. communities; Canadian community participation held steady (Figure 2). Average participation for the entire season was above the 9 year average, though below that of the previous three years (Figure 3).

As is typical, overall call volume tracked well with Chinook and fall chum salmon run timing past Pilot Station sonar, indicating that fishers wanted to learn about pulse timing and run strength as the fish were coming in the river (Figures 4 & 5). This was driven by U.S. participation; there are more communities in the U.S. portion of the drainage. Canadian participation tracked reasonably well with Chinook and fall chum salmon run timing past Rapids Video Test Fishwheel, indicating that Canadian fishers wanted to learn about pulse timing and run strength shortly before the fish were to enter Canadian waters (Figures 6 & 7).

Active participation—direct verbal input from a caller—varied by community. As usual, it was strong in a number of communities, notably including the 10 U.S. communities with in-season harvest interviewers and the lower river (Figures 8 & 9). The number of communities actively participating in each teleconference tracked well with the number of phone lines in use during each teleconference (Figure 10).

Anecdotally, there was quite a bit of information sharing on the teleconferences. For example, DFO explained the scope and practices of the fall chum commercial fishery in Canada, which helped to clear-up misconceptions held by fishers in the U.S. There was also information broadcasting, such as when the Office of Subsistence Management made announcements regarding a comment period for proposed regulatory changes and ADF&G promoted upcoming projects in the field. Some fishers did bring up issues external to in-season management, and they were either answered briefly or put in contact with experts to speak with outside of the teleconferences.

Summaries for each teleconference provided highlights on fishers' reports, questions, and comments, along with key management updates. These summaries, each 1 to 2 pages in length, were shared with teleconference participants and other interested parties through email and on YRDFA's website within 3 days of each call.

Post-Season

Generally speaking, fisheries managers were pleased with the 2011 teleconferences. They noted that these calls are informational for the public and do provide some insight for management, but because the calls are open to anyone the quality of user feedback on management issues is sometimes lower / less detailed than desired. They also asked about metrics for measuring success. YRDFA staff related the information detailed in this report, and noted that participation in terms of active participation by communities and number of line minutes used are the primary quantitative metrics used to evaluate success, and interaction between managers and stakeholders is the qualitative metric.

For next season, YRDFA ordered 1,000 promotional playing cards and 375 promotional fillet knives (Appendix C). These items will be distributed at the many winter and spring fisheries-related meetings that already occur, and will serve to reinforce more traditional promotional efforts.

Financial Statement: Budgeted Versus Actual Expenditures

Spending on this project varied from the original budget, though the expenditures matched-up well with the goals and objectives and all categories were spent within a variance of 10% of the total grant amount.

This project is supported by three grants: Yukon River Panel, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Office of Subsistence Management. Typically, the primary expense related to this project is teleconferencing phone services, with bills totaling \$17,000 to \$20,000. However, this expense was effectively lowered this year for three reasons:

1. Participation in terms of number of phone lines in use, while relatively high, was lower than rates seen in the last three years. This directly resulted in lower teleconferencing phone service costs.
2. Duration of teleconferences was kept shorter by focusing on in-river issues. This directly resulted in lower teleconferencing phone service costs.
3. This year the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provided additional funds toward the project, which were applied to the teleconferencing phone service bills. This was a special occurrence that cannot be expected in the future.

Due to these reasons, no Yukon River Panel funds were spent on teleconferencing phone services this year. This freed up funds to be applied to other project-related expenditures. Specifically, by budget category:

Other

In a normal year, much of the money available in this category goes to teleconferencing phone services. The remainder goes such things as promotional materials and related costs. This year no money was used for teleconferencing phone services. Instead, YRDFA used the surplus of funds to purchase additional, somewhat nontraditional promotional items. This was done in the fall, after the teleconferences were complete for 2011, to ensure that money would be available for teleconferencing phone services if needed. The items ordered were promotional playing cards (1000 decks) and promotional fillet knives (375 knives). See Appendix C to view images of these items, which will be distributed at fisheries meetings in the winter and spring of 2012, and possibly through village visits and mailings in the spring and summer of 2012. The category was still underspent, but by less than 10% of the total grant amount.

Personnel

This category was within 10% of the total grant amount, though it did go over the original budget. Liaising with managers and stakeholders, preparing for each teleconference, and writing and posting summaries can require additional staff time in some years, such as a year of highly varied management actions, like 2011.

Supplies

The vast majority of this category was spent on spring advertising for the teleconference program. Due to exceptionally high participation rates in 2008, 2009, and 2010, pre-season advertising was reduced a little bit from recent years, as reflected by the category being slightly underspent.

CONCLUSIONS

Participation was strong relative to the 9 year average, but it did decrease relative to the record-setting prior 3 years. This decrease was probably due to a number of factors, chiefly:

- Decreased promotion of the program;
- Since this was the third year of low run strength, stakeholders have grown more accustomed to poor Chinook salmon returns.

Participation levels likely remained higher than average because the Chinook salmon runs are still low and stakeholders are seeking information and a means to communicate their thoughts with management in-season.

The stronger concentration on in-season issues did help confine the teleconferences to no more than 2 hours each, which was less of a burden on participants, kept the phone bills within the budget, and did not seem to diminish the value of the calls. Those callers who brought up issues external to in-season management still received the information they sought, but by directing the bulk of those discussions to take place outside of the teleconferences each call maintained its primary focus as set by the objective of the program.

The in-season management teleconferences have proved a valuable resource for members of the public, Yukon River fishers and community members, managers, Tribes, First Nations, fish processors, and others. These teleconferences are a model for managers and local users on how to communicate and share information about the condition of salmon runs and management strategies. However, management's questions regarding evaluation of success have led staff to consider setting more detailed goals with specific metrics in terms of participation.

Hearing in-season subsistence reports and learning what percentage of the local harvest has been met allows managers to anticipate fishing activity and provides pieces of information to better understand and manage the salmon runs. Further, this sharing of information allows fishers along the river to better anticipate, plan for, and harvest their catch. It also provides them with a simple, viable means of informing and influencing management. Teleconference calls are an effective and rapid means to extend real-time knowledge about the salmon fishery across hundreds of miles.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Funding for the Yukon River In-Season Salmon Management Teleconferences was supported by the Yukon River Panel Communications Committee and the U.S. Fisheries Information Service, Office of Subsistence Management. In addition to our funders, YRDFAs would like to offer special thanks to everyone who dialed in to the 2011 weekly teleconferences, whether this was their first season or they've been calling for years. A strong, regular presence from all stakeholders—fishers, managers, Tribes, First Nations, processors, inter-tribal consortiums, and others—maximizes the effectiveness and utility of the calls and goes a long way in building understanding of the run in real time throughout the drainage.

FIGURES

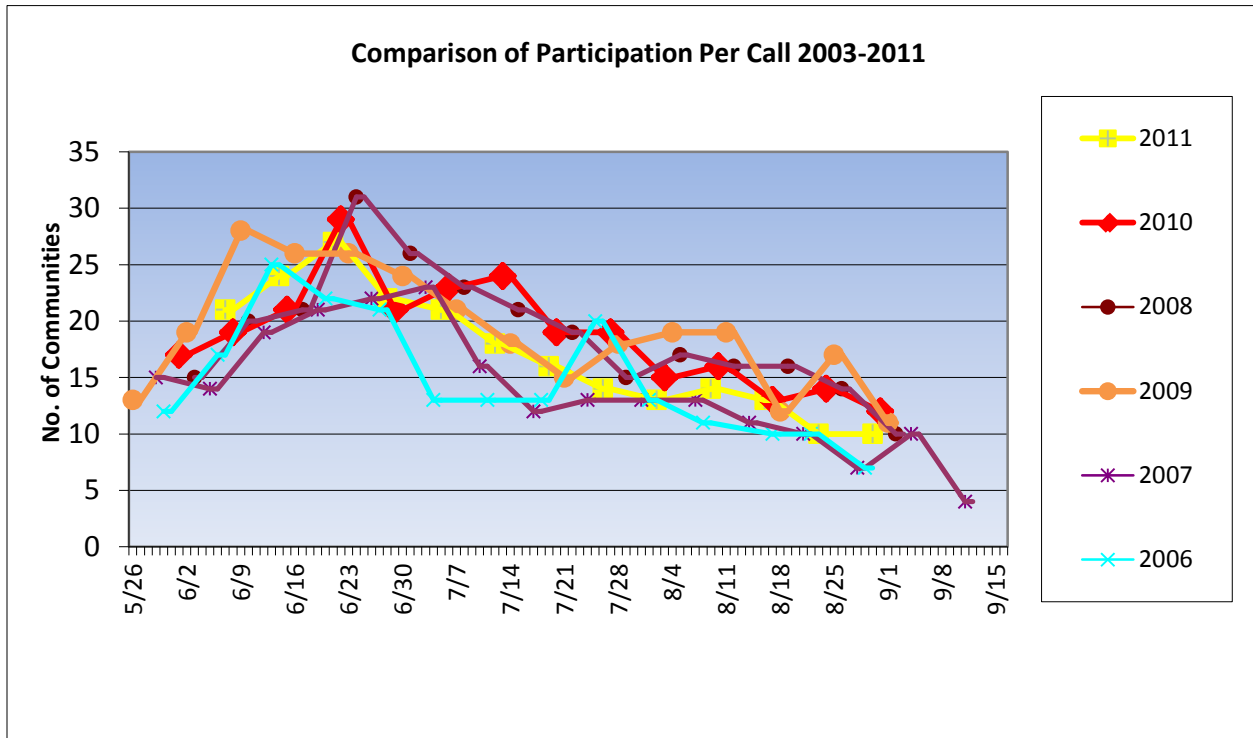


Figure 1. Comparison of weekly participation as measured by the number of communities on each call each week, 2003-2011.

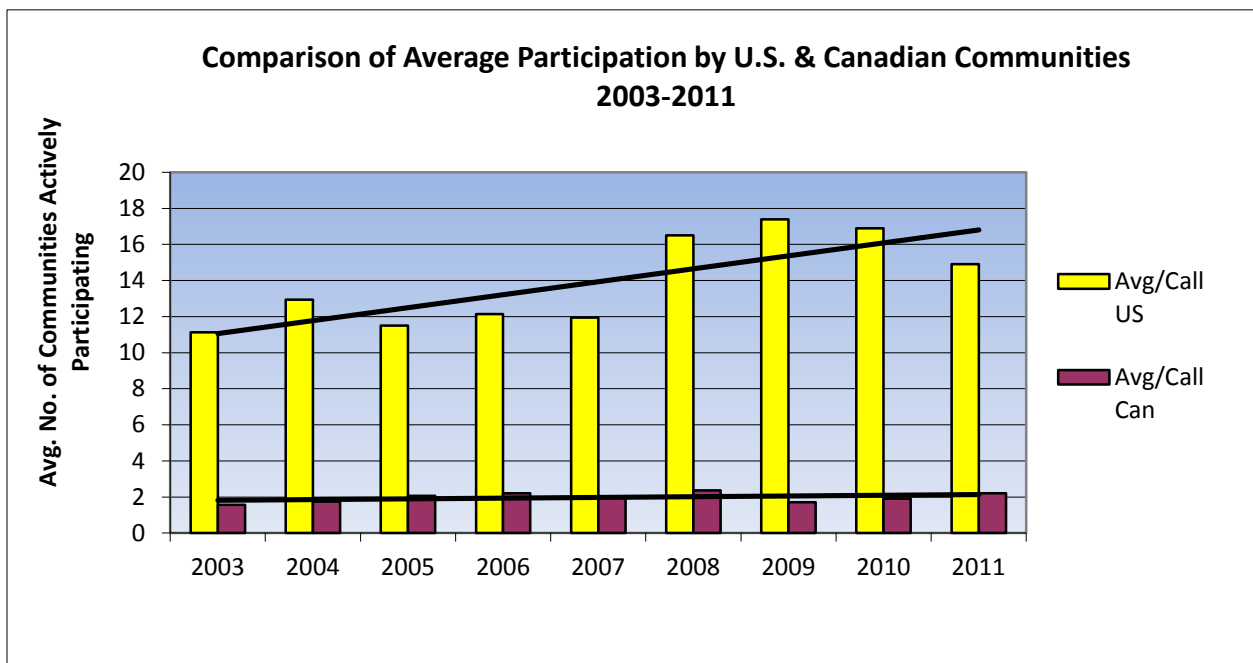


Figure 2. Comparison of average annual participation by U.S. & Canadian communities as measured by the average number of communities actively participating in each call each season, 2003-2011.

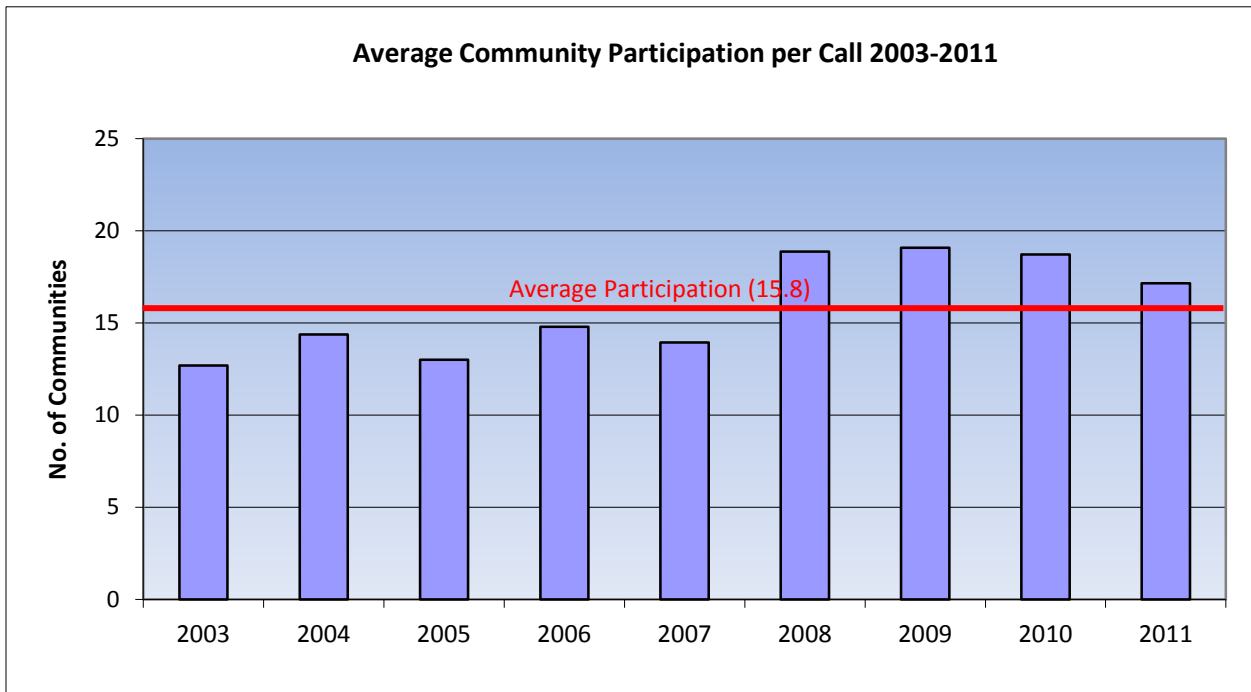


Figure 3. Average number of communities participating in each call. 2003-2011.

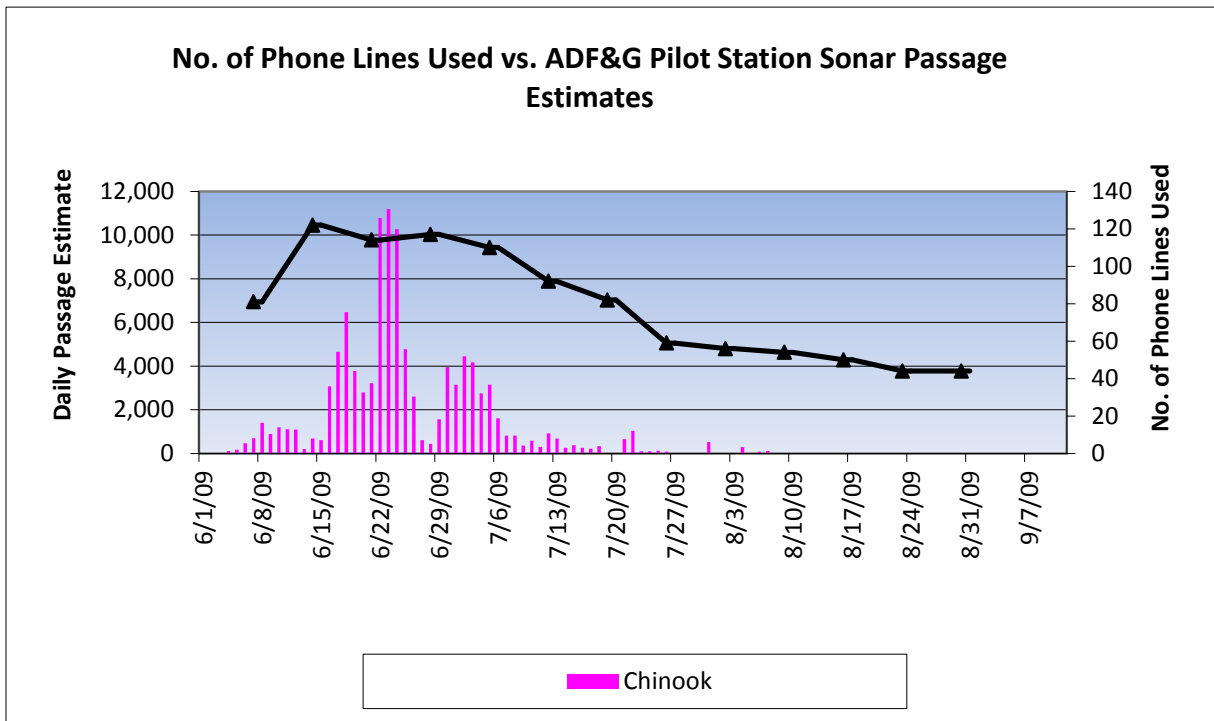


Figure 4. Number of phone lines used vs. ADF&G Pilot Station Sonar Passage Estimates for Chinook salmon. 2011.

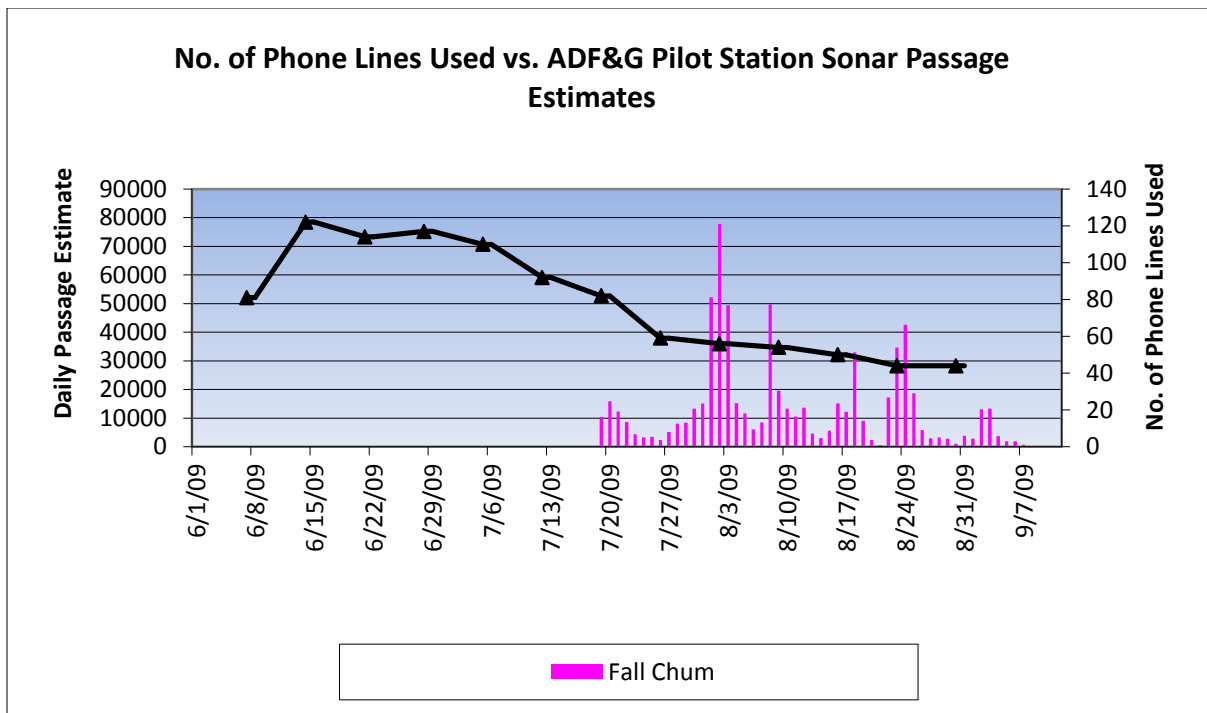


Figure 5. Number of phone lines used vs. ADF&G Pilot Station Sonar Passage Estimates for Fall Chum salmon, 2011.

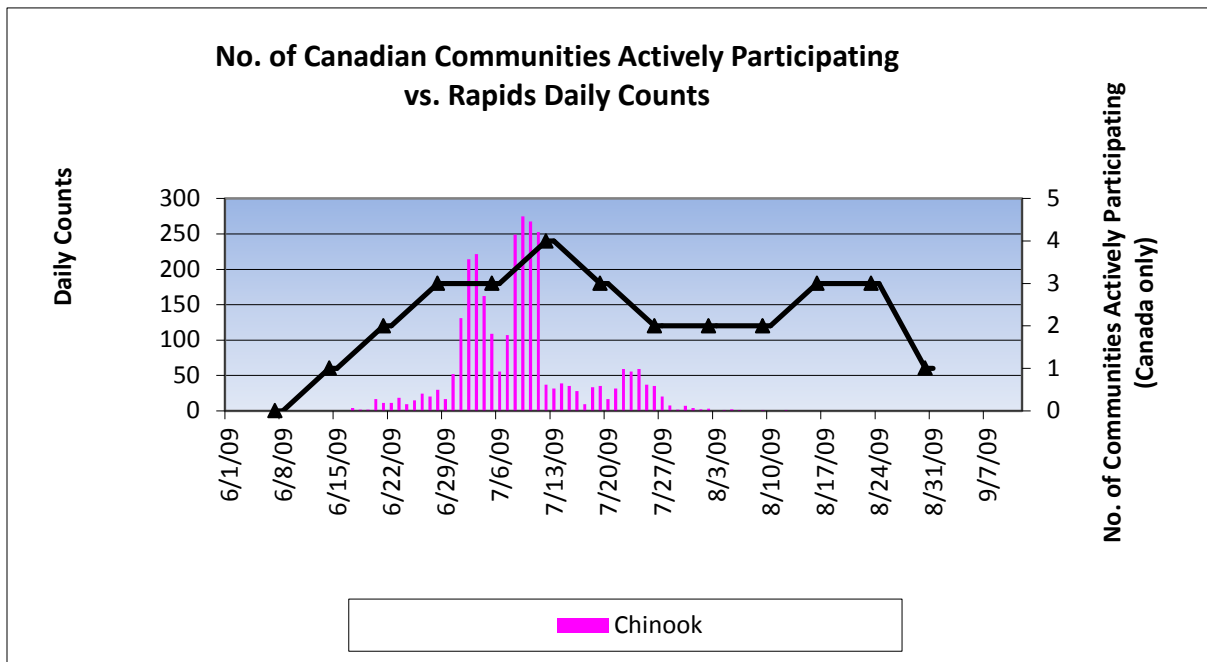


Figure 6. Number of Canadian Communities Actively Participating vs. Rapids Daily Counts for Chinook Salmon, 2011.

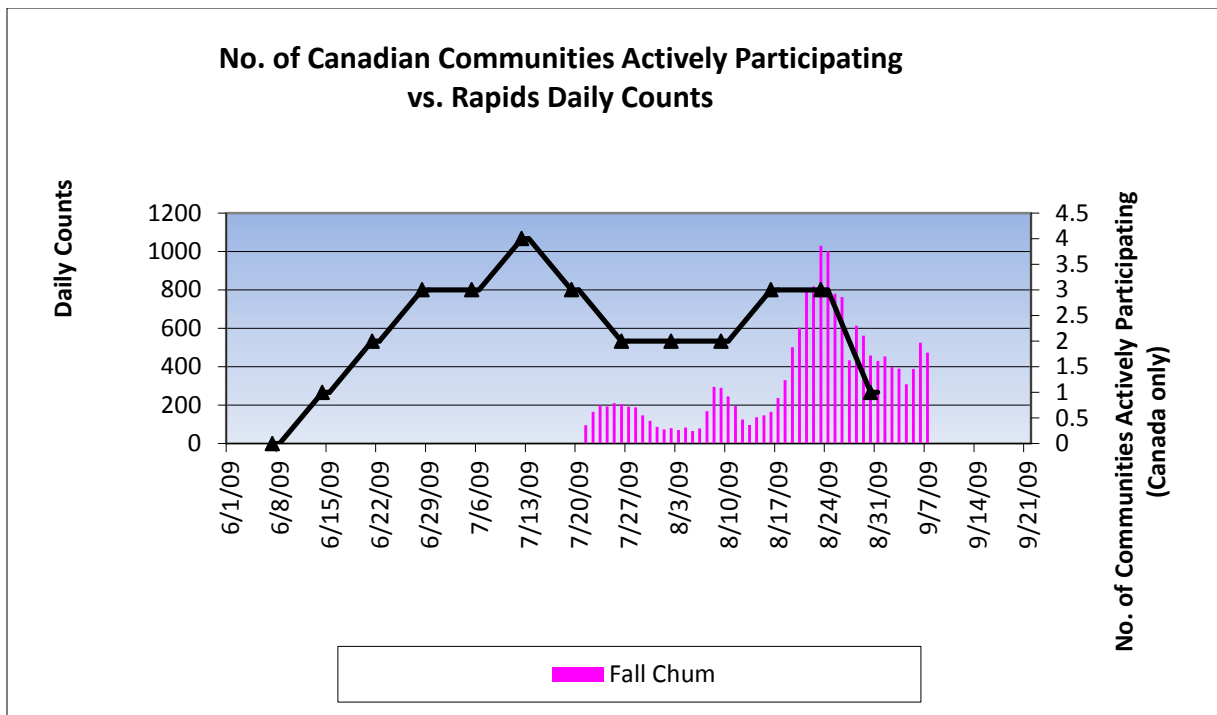


Figure 7. Number of Canadian Communities Actively Participating vs. Rapids Daily Counts for Fall Chum Salmon, 2011.

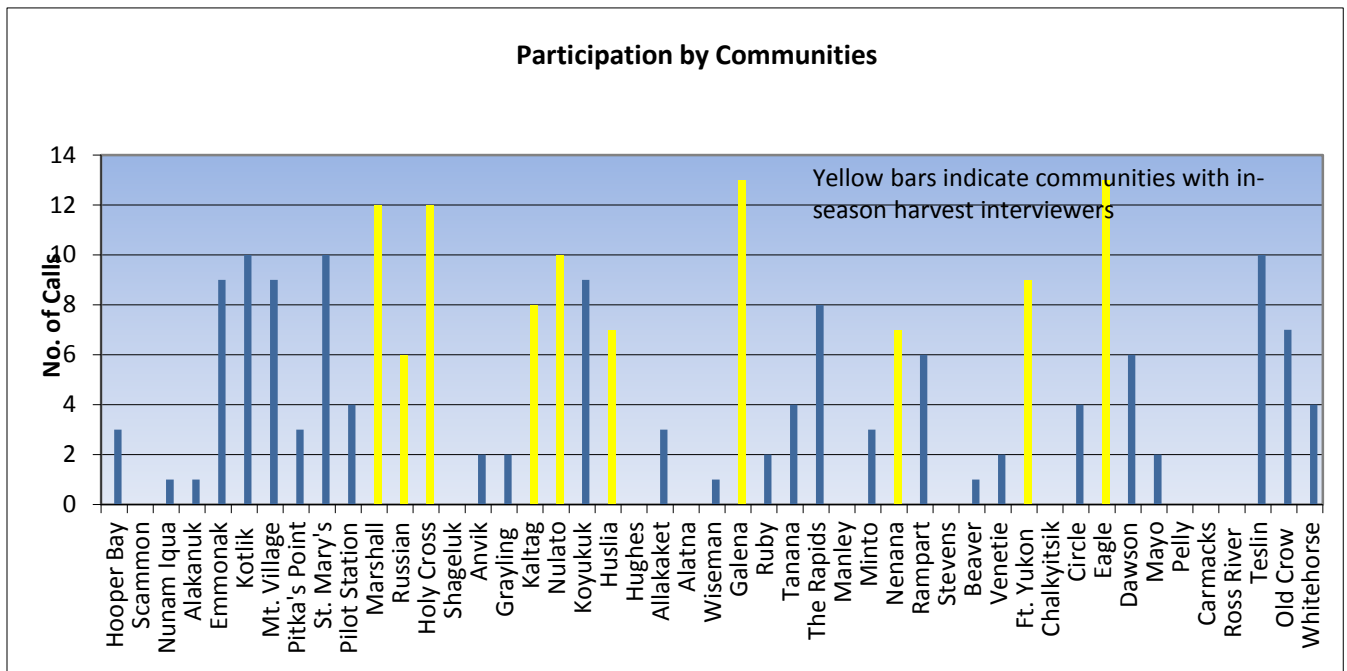


Figure 8. Active participation by communities, 2011.

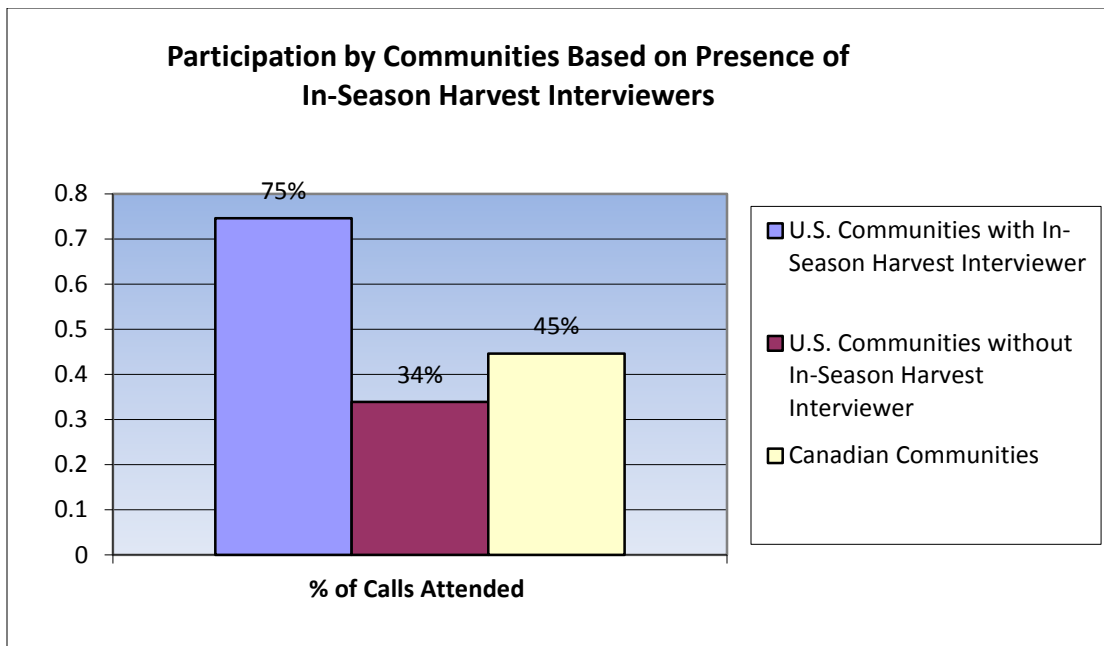


Figure 9. Participation by No. of Communities Based with In-Season Harvest Interviewer Communities Broken-Out.2011.

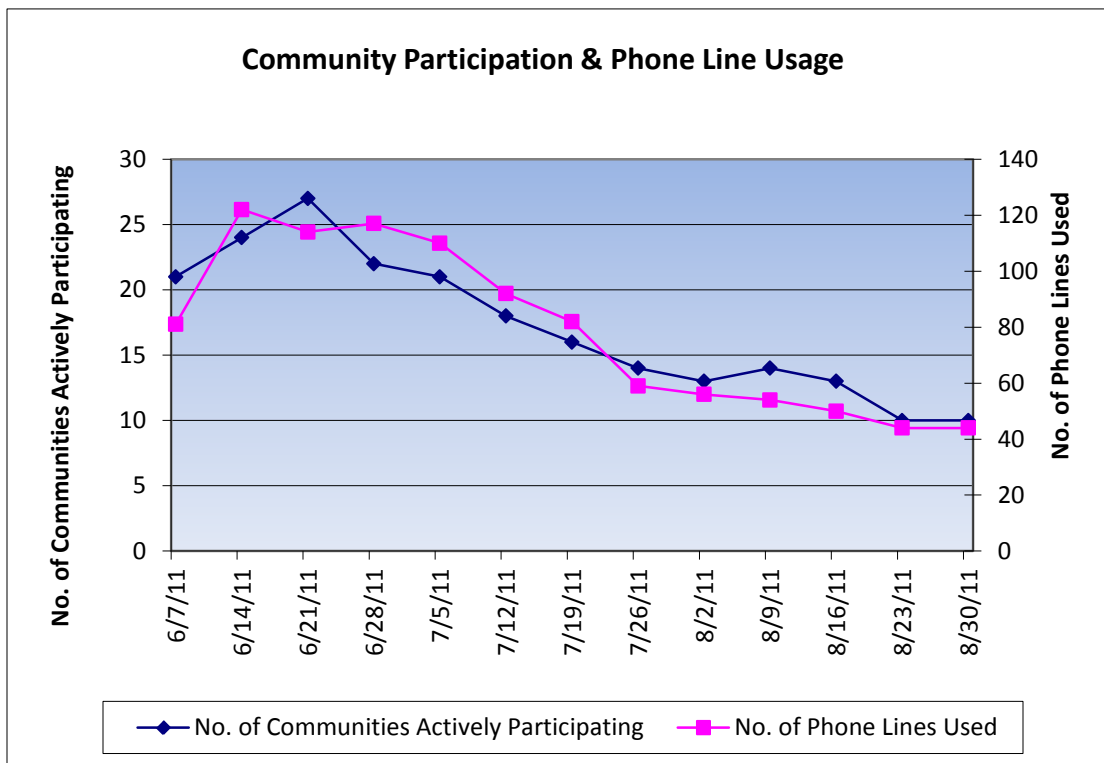


Figure 10. Community participation & phone line usage. 2011.

APPENDIX A: Promotional Postcard and Flyer

Yukon River Fisheries Inseason Management Teleconferences

*Tracking the run,
one week
at a time*

**EVERY
TUESDAY**
JUNE THROUGH AUGUST

1:00 pm Alaska Time | 2:00 pm Yukon Time

1-800-315-6338
Participant Code YUKON# (98566#)

Yukon River Fisheries Inseason Management Teleconferences

Agenda

- Subsistence Reports
- Management Update and Strategy
- Local Input, Questions, and Closing Comments

Subsistence Questions

- Are your catches up or down relative to last year?
- How far along are local fishers in their subsistence harvests? (are they 25% done? 50% done? 100%?)
- What is your assessment of run strength?
- What is the quality of the fish?
- What are the current river conditions? (water level, clarity, amount of debris)
- Each year, please note when the first king salmon is caught in your community

**EVERY
TUESDAY**
JUNE THROUGH AUGUST

1:00 pm Alaska Time | 2:00 pm Yukon Time

1-800-315-6338

Participant Code YUKON# (98566#)

Get Involved

Discuss fishing conditions & management strategies with managers and fishers throughout the Yukon River Drainage

Tracking the run, one week at a time



YUKON RIVER SUBSISTENCE ASSOCIATION

Facilitated by YRDM - yukonriversubsistence.org

Sponsored by the Office of Subsistence Management and the Yukon River Panel

APPENDIX B: Weekly Teleconference Summaries

(also available at <http://www.yukonsalmon.org/Teleconferences/2011summaries.pdf>)

Yukon River Salmon In-Season Management Teleconference Call # 1 – June 7, 2011

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

Communities participating this week: Hooper Bay, Nunam Iqua, Emmonak, Kotlik, Mountain Village, Saint Mary's, Pilot Station, Marshall, Russian Mission, Holy Cross, Kaltag, Nulato, Koyukuk, Galena, Tanana, Fairbanks, Minto, Nenana, Rampart, Fort Yukon, Circle, Eagle

Subsistence Reports: Salmon are just entering the Yukon River and some people are already out fishing while others are still getting ready. People from the villages of Hooper Bay, Emmonak, Mountain Village, Saint Mary's, Marshall, and Russian Mission had reported harvests of Chinook and summer chum salmon. People in Kotlik are catching smelts and herring and people in Marshall caught smelts, as well. The lower river was seeing swift water and debris up until Holy Cross. In the middle river around Kaltag, Nulato, Koyukuk, and Galena, no one is fishing yet; the water is clear, calm, and dropping. People on the Tanana River were also getting some sheefish. The water is dropping, relatively calm, and there is no debris. Around Rampart, the water was also reported as dropping and calm, but in Fort Yukon and Eagle there is high water and little debris.

Public comments, questions, and answers: Due to the new gear regulation, people are hanging new nets and some people are still waiting to receive their new webbing. It was asked what to do if people have not received their new 7.5 inch webbing; management responded that they can use any gear they have that is smaller, but not bigger.

As this was the beginning of the season, it was asked if the fish are coming in all three mouths of the Yukon River (north, middle, and south). Traditional knowledge states that if fish come in all three mouths, it should be a good year for fishing. Management reported that fish were coming in all three mouths. People also discussed when the first king salmon were caught. On June 3 the lower Yukon test fishery reported its first king and on May 27 in Hooper Bay they caught king salmon. Around May 28 and 29 king salmon were reported in Alakanuk.

People asked questions about the test fisheries and the sonar, about the types of technology used, and whether both banks of the river were being counted. Management responded that they were using split beam, Didson, and side scan from a boat, as well as a suite of nets at the sonar site. There has been debris and this has impacted the test fishery operations, but they are working around the clock to resolve it. Other questions were about other test fisheries in the river, run timing, and when the first pulse closures will take place. The Alaska Department of Fish and Game discussed the Yukon Advisory Group, made up of U.S. representatives to the Yukon River Panel, which will be meeting via teleconference to discuss critical fisheries management decisions as they arise throughout the summer. There was some discussion about how Panel members and advisors are selected and who is currently serving in these roles on the Alaskan side of the Yukon River.

**Yukon River Salmon In-Season Management Teleconference
Call #2 – June 14, 2011**

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

Communities participating this week: Hooper Bay, Alakanuk, Emmonak, Kotlik, Mountain Village, Pitkas Point, St. Mary's, Marshall, Russian Mission, Holy Cross, Grayling, Kaltag, Nulato, Koyukuk, Huslia, Allakaket, Wiseman, Galena, Ruby, Tanana, Fairbanks, Ft. Yukon, Circle, Eagle, Old Crow

Subsistence Reports: Fishers in Hooper Bay are catching large summer chum salmon. In the lower river, water levels are dropping and there is not much debris. In Emmonak, fishers are catching sheefish, king salmon, and smelts. In Kotlik they are catching herring; it was reported that king salmon have not entered the north mouth of the river yet. From Mountain Village to Russian Mission some fishers are far along in their king salmon harvest while others are just beginning. Holy Cross and Grayling reported low king salmon harvests, and the first kings were caught in Kaltag and Galena this week. From Galena to the U.S./Canada border water is higher than normal, there is little-to-no drift, and people are getting ready to fish. In Old Crow fishers are catching whitefish.

Public comments, questions, and answers: The vast majority of questions and comments regarded ADF&G's sonar at Pilot Station and the fishing schedule in the Alaskan portion of the drainage.

Several callers asked whether the first pulse of king salmon had passed the sonar. ADF&G replied that while a strong group of early fish has passed the sonar, it was not considered the first pulse; it does appear that the first pulse is entering the mouth of the river at this time. ADF&G also noted that fish passage numbers from the sonar last week are "conservative" due to difficulties caused by high water, heavy silt loads, and drift. However, at this point their confidence in the sonar numbers is high.

There were a number of questions regarding when fishing schedules started in different districts. This information can be found at the bottom of the U.S. pre-season management flyer:

<http://yukonsalmon.org/news/ENews/ManagementFlyer.AK.5-11.pdf>

Other fishers asked when a period would be cancelled in their fishing districts to protect the first pulse of king salmon. ADF&G replied that notice will be short—roughly 24 hours—and fishers should watch their normal means of receiving information, including faxes to Tribal offices and emails. ADF&G indicated that they anticipate cancelling the next fishing period in Y-2. ADF&G will assess the run to determine whether additional closures are necessary.

Lastly, a middle river fisher shared his belief that fisheries management agencies really are working to help the people on the Yukon River and all users have to work together.

**Yukon River Salmon In-Season Management Teleconference
Call #3 – June 21, 2011**

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

Communities participating this week: Hooper Bay, Emmonak, Kotlik, Mountain Village, St. Mary's, Marshall, Russian Mission, Holy Cross, Anvik, Grayling, Kaltag, Nulato, Koyukuk, Huslia, Allakaket, Galena, Ruby, Tanana, Rapids, Rampart, Nenana, Fairbanks, Ft. Yukon, Venetie, Circle, Eagle, Teslin, Old Crow

Subsistence Reports: From Hooper Bay to Mountain Village, most people have just about met their subsistence needs for king salmon, and some are doing well harvesting summer chum salmon. In St. Mary's and Marshall some people are doing well in their king salmon harvests and others are not; also, a few red kings and colored chum are showing up. From Russian Mission to Rampart king salmon fishing is slow, with some families just getting started, others one-third to one-half done, and at least one household that is done fishing. In Anvik and Grayling set nets are catching better than drift nets, and in Ruby fish wheels are catching better than set nets. On the Koyukuk River, there aren't many fish and isn't much fishing activity. The first king salmon was just caught in Nenana, and from Ft. Yukon to the border there's no fishing and water is still high but dropping. Water levels are dropping in Teslin and are quite high in Old Crow, where there has been quite a bit of rain. Throughout the drainage water levels are variable and there is little to no debris.

Management Update: The king salmon run appears to be weak, warranting further U.S. protection measures to get fish to the spawning grounds. In addition to pulling a fishing period during the first pulse of king salmon, a period will be pulled during the second pulse, as well. Due to the timing of this decision, District Y-1 will fish under two shortened periods during the second pulse, as there was not time to announce a full closure in that district. For additional information, visit <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishingcommercialbyarea.interior>.

Public comments, questions, and answers: The majority of the discussion focused on fishing schedules, management communication, clarification of the first pulse versus early fish, bycatch, and low fish returns.

Fishing schedules and management communication: Several fishers relayed strong concerns over local confusion and uncertainty regarding changes to fishing schedules. With closures announced for the U.S. on both the first and second pulse of king salmon, fisheries managers recommend that all fishers watch for daily schedule updates. Updates are broadcasted in a number of ways, including press releases, announcements on VHF, faxes to Tribal Council offices, and on a toll free hotline (1-866-479-7387). Some teleconference participants suggested further promotion of these last minute schedule changes to be sure that fishers receive the information in as timely a manner as possible, and managers indicated that they would work to improve their communication efforts.

First pulse versus early fish: These terms caused confusion for many participants and ADF&G tried to clarify the difference. The early fish are the front runners of the run that trickle in to the river in relatively low daily numbers before the first big pulse, or concentrated group, of fish is seen. Early fish start entering the river several days before that first pulse.

Bycatch: Several participants expressed concerns over bycatch in the Bering Sea pollock fishery and there was a brief discussion on related points. Everyone seemed to agree that bycatch is something that must be watched.

Low fish returns: At least one participant expressed concern over the low number of king salmon that have entered the river to date. He commented that it seems we're behind by roughly 50 percent, and management agreed. A biologist with ADF&G shared that to achieve decent border passage there needs to be more than 135,000 king salmon past the Pilot Station sonar, and we're not even a quarter of the way there despite being past the quarter point in the run already.

Greetings from the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association!

Here is a summary of the 4th Yukon River Salmon In-Season Management Teleconference held this past Tuesday, June 28, 2011.

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

Communities participating this week: Kotlik, Mountain Village, Pitkas Point, St. Marys, Marshall, Russian Mission, Holy Cross, Anvik, Kaltag, Nulato, Koyukuk, Huslia, Allakaket, Galena, Tanana, Fairbanks, Minto, Rapids, Ft. Yukon, Eagle, Old Crow, Dawson, Teslin (participating via the Salmon Summit in Whitehorse).

Subsistence Reports: In the upper Canadian headwaters, the water dropped, but it is raining again, there are people fishing for trout and whitefish and there was a report of a salmon jumping in the Dawson area. In Eagle, people are waiting until after July 4 to begin fishing and in the Yukon Flats region, the water is high and a few individual fish have been caught. In the rapids above Tanana fishing is slow but they are expecting the first pulse in a day or two. On the Tanana River people from Minto caught 2 king salmon and they are catching whitefish too. In Tanana there was too much drift and wheels were shut down to prevent losing them. Galena mentioned that the set netters are doing well and the first pulse is passing through. On the Koyukuk River, it is raining; there are a lot of sticks and some villages have heard of small male kings being caught and a lot more chum salmon while others have no salmon reports yet and are at camps getting ready. In the middle river area of Koyukuk, Nulato and Kaltag people are disappointed with the salmon closures and think it is a poor run. Some people have not yet fished and missed the early fish as they went by. Some have caught salmon, and they heard that Bishop Mountain is doing well. In the GASH region, Anvik said a big run passed by and they only got a few and then it slowed down. It was also reported here that set netters are doing better than drifters and Holy Cross said it was slow. In the lower river people are almost done with their subsistence harvests and fish has moved into the smokehouses and people are canning and salting fish. There have been commercial chum openings where people caught jacks and saw big king salmon roll off the nets. At the north mouth of the river, it was reported that they are seeing big pulses of salmon go through and several households are fishing and sharing. There is a good pulse going up now, tides bring the fish in and a southeast wind still led fish to come in the middle mouth which was unusual. The commercial chum fishery was slow in the north mouth but middle mouth did well and people took the kings home for subsistence and were not allowed to sell them.

Management reports, public comments, questions, and answers: The Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service reported on fisheries data, management strategies and fishing schedules. The vast majority of questions and comments regarded fishing times and periods in the Alaskan portion of the drainage.

There have been fishing period closures due to low Chinook salmon returning to the Yukon River and these salmon in the first two pulses are being protected with fishing period closures to ensure fish make it upriver and will be protected up to the border for passage into Canada. It was brought up that people in the lower Yukon River have had access to fish and the middle river area is having a challenging time meeting their subsistence needs and the fish are passing them by. They discussed the possibility of a fishing extension and the department said they would see if they could adjust it but they do need to

protect the fish. People discussed the fish pulses, where they are in the river and what stocks comprise these pulses. People are trying to understand the assessment of the salmon fisheries by asking questions related the test fisheries, the sonar counts and the genetic test results from the salmon samples taken. Commercial chum salmon fisheries did take place in the lower river and incidental king harvests were not allowed to be sold, but had to be brought home for subsistence. If the fish could not be used by families, the processor will donate it to someone in need.

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

For Alaskan management information, please visit:

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

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

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

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

Have a great weekend,

Jason Hale

Communications Director

Greetings from the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association!

Here is a summary of the 5th Yukon River Salmon In-Season Management Teleconference held this past Tuesday, July 5, 2011.

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

Communities participating this week: Emmonak, Kotlik, Mt. Village, St. Mary's, Pilot Station, Marshall, Russian Mission, Holy Cross, Kaltag, Huslia, Galena, Minto, Nenana, The Rapids, Rampart, Beaver, Fort Yukon, Eagle, Fairbanks, Old Crow, Dawson and Teslin.

Subsistence Reports: In the upper Canadian headwaters, there hasn't been that much rain, the water has dropped, 6-7 fishers have caught 10 Chinook salmon, many fishers are absent due to a wedding, they appreciate the actions that have taken place along the Alaskan portion of the Yukon River and said thank you towards conserving Chinook salmon for the spawning grounds. They have also taken the similar measures for the past few years to conserve the Chinook salmon. In Eagle, the water is high but starting to drop and the community has just starting their fishing. In the Yukon Flats region, the water is high and they have not been catching that much fish so far. The Tanana River area's water temperature has been average, the water is dropping, pulse one has passed, pulse two is starting up, they have been catching a few fish but they are concerned about the restrictions on fishing. The Koyukuk River area's water is raising and the Chinook salmon that are caught have been reported as small, and some families are done with their subsistence fishing. The lower river's water has been dropping, some families are still subsistence fishing and some are done, the week has been reported as good, high numbers in catches on subsistence of Chum salmon have been reported and a boat has been sighted by local people and reported for fishing during a closure. The coastal waters have been reported as high, the weather has been mostly windy, high numbers in Chum salmon catches have been reported, and not many Chinook salmon have been caught.

Management reports, public comments, questions, and answers: The Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service reported on fisheries data, management strategies and fishing schedules. Discussion focused on the fishing schedules due to the fishing period closures happening in various districts along the Yukon River at different times. Additionally there are sub-districts within districts that are also being closed and opened at different times, leading to a lot of information to relay to fishing families about when they can and cannot fish. Additionally, fishers wanted to discuss where the first and second pulses are in the river and the managers were discussing the third pulse that was in the lower river still. There was some encouragement from fishermen in Alaska related to the closures in order to continue to move the fish upriver and to spawning grounds to have fish for the future, but overall many people in many parts of the Yukon River are concerned about getting enough fish to eat and to share with others who also eat the salmon and are disappointed in the amount of fishing time they have had. There have continued to be commercial summer chum salmon fisheries with restricted gear to 6 inches and no Chinook salmon can be sold.

Canadian fishers expressed appreciation and thanks to the Alaskans for moving the Chinook salmon up the river to the Canadian border and mentioned how they too have conserved over the past years when the runs were low. The Department of Fisheries and Oceans in Canada is taking a conservative approach and will close the recreational fishery to zero retention later this week. They also appreciate the U.S. efforts by the managers and the people along the river.

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

For Alaskan management information, please visit:

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

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

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

I hope you'll join us on the next teleconference, Tuesday at 1 p.m.

Alaska time (2 p.m. Yukon Time). As a reminder, the toll free number is 1-800-315-6338 and the code is YUKON# (98566#).

Have a great weekend,

Jason Hale

Communications Director

Greetings from the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association!

Here is a summary of the 6th Yukon River Salmon In-Season Management Teleconference held this past Tuesday, July 12, 2011.

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

Communities participating this week: Kotlik, Mountain Village, Pitka's Point, St. Mary's, Marshall, Russian Mission, Holy Cross, Kaltag, Nulato, Koyukuk, Galena, Rampart, Ft. Yukon, Eagle, Dawson, Mayo, Whitehorse, and Old Crow.

Subsistence Reports: Generally speaking, fishers reported that the run is worse than last year. In the lower river, there is very little subsistence fishing activity, and fishing conditions are poor due to rain, wind, and high water. Kotlik indicated there are no more king salmon entering the river. Reports from Pitka's Point and St. Mary's revealed that commercial summer chum salmon fishing has generally been poor in District Y-2, though some fishers have done well. In the middle river from Kaltag to Nulato, many fishers are 50 percent done with their subsistence harvests, with some doing better than others; there are also high winds and variable water conditions. In the upper river from Rampart to Eagle, water is high but dropping and most fishers are not very far along in their harvests. In the Yukon Territory, the first king salmon are being caught in Dawson and Old Crow, and people are gearing up for fishing in Mayo.

Management Update: ADF&G is projecting that the final king salmon count past the Pilot Station sonar will be 107,000 fish; this is a conservative number due to difficult conditions early in the run. The third pulse of king salmon appears to be weaker than expected. Alaskan management strategies have followed the pre-season plan and protected king salmon up the river. The first and second pulses were protected in districts 1 through 5, commercial summer chum salmon fishing was delayed to let king salmon pass, and a number of actions are being taken in districts with commercial salmon fishing to not increase fishing pressure on the king salmon run. In the Yukon Territory, DFO will take a precautionary approach to management, with a normal aboriginal fishery but zero retention in the recreational fishery.

Fall chum salmon management begins in the lower river on July 16. The projection is for 605,000 to 870,000 fish, which ADF&G indicated should provide for escapement, subsistence, and commercial fishing.

Public comments, questions, and answers: There was quite a bit of discussion regarding mesh size. Some lower river fishers requested the 6 inch mesh restriction, which is in place in districts with commercial summer chum salmon fishing (Y-1 and Y-2), be lifted from subsistence users so that they can target more king salmon with 7.5 inch mesh. ADF&G said they would consider this and pointed out that the restriction was implemented to provide commercial fishing opportunity without taking more king salmon than would have been harvested without commercial fishing. Several callers asked why test fisheries are allowed to use mesh larger than 7.5 inch when it is illegal for fishers to do so. ADF&G explained that they need to continue past practices for continuity in the data and more accurate run assessment, and further pointed out that there are only a few nets in use with larger than 7.5 inch mesh. A few callers asked about establishing test fisheries in new areas, possibly run by Tribes. ADF&G noted that anyone can apply to the Yukon River Panel's Restoration and Enhancement Fund to operate a test

fishery, but warned that many of these projects can be fairly expensive and involved. They also indicated that anyone interested in such a project would be welcome to call ADF&G and USFWS staff to discuss it. Ft. Yukon expressed concern that their next opener is only 2 days in length, followed by a pulse closure. Catches have been poor in that community to date, so they requested an extension. ADF&G said that they would watch the Eagle sonar numbers and consider the request. For further information, please contact the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association at 907-272-3131 or look for us on the web at www.yukonsalmon.org.

For Alaskan management information, please visit:

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

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

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

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

Have a great week,

Jason Hale

Communications Director

Greetings from the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association!

Here is a summary of the 7th Yukon River Salmon In-Season Management Teleconference held this past Tuesday, July 19, 2011.

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

Communities participating this week: Emmonak, Kotlik, Mt. Village, St. Mary's, Marshall, Holy Cross, Kaltag, Huslia, Galena, Nenana, Fort Yukon, Venetie, Eagle, Fairbanks, Old Crow, Dawson and Teslin.

Subsistence reports: The lower river's water is dropping, debris is present, most households are nearly done with their Chinook salmon subsistence harvest, the weather has been windy and rainy which prevented some from getting to camp, in the Saint Mary's area some are still hanging fish, the weather has been reported as rainy, wet and the water is high. The middle river reported that most were done with their subsistence harvest, recently had lots of rain and that they are waiting on silvers. The Koyukuk area's water is high, some are waiting on Fall Chum to arrive, they recently had lots of rain, subsistence fishers report to be about 90% complete with their Chinook salmon harvest, 2 active camps are now closed, a culture camp has set a net for Fall Chum salmon and thanks went out to Yukon River fishers for cutting back on their harvest and they stated that it helps a lot. The Tanana area's water is high, fishing is reported good, they are thankful for downriver using 7.5" mesh, they stated that it's working, the Chinook salmon in the area are running good, subsistence fishers report that most are 50%-75% done, the quality of Chinook salmon is better and the people are happy. Fort Yukon stated that they were catching low Chinook salmon numbers, the quality of the fish is low and that there is drift debris heading down river.

Venetie reported that 5 fish were caught on the Chandalar River but haven't caught any fish for the past 3 days, the water is high but going back down. Eagle, the water is high, they have reported getting low numbers of fish and the quality is poor, the fish seem smaller and they stated that they reduced their subsistence catch and suggested closing all of Y5-D so more fish can go to Canada. In the upper Canadian headwaters, the water is high but going down, Old Crow has 80-100 Chinook salmon and need to get more, Dawson caught 30 Chinook salmon with 5 nets and they are hoping for better numbers next week and the water on the Stuart River is high.

Management reports, public comments, questions, and answers: The Alaska Department of Fish and Game and the U.S Fish and Wildlife Service reported on fisheries data, management strategies and fishing schedules. The season has transitioned to fall chum management, but the Eagle sonar is being monitored for Chinook salmon passage and management will determine if closures need to be added in the Y-5D district. The first pulse of Chinook salmon at Eagle sonar was detected on July 11 and on July 18, 11,590 fish were counted. The LYTF caught 11,200 Fall Chum salmon and their average weight was 7.6 pounds. Discussion took place between fishers and ADF&G about commercial fishing for Fall Chum salmon. ADF&G stated that the buyer/processor only has the capacity to buy in Y-1 and one period has been held so far. Some fishers in the Y-2 district expressed concern for wanting to participate in commercial fishing. A question came up about the use of fish wheels in the lower river and they are legal for subsistence use in Y-1, 2, and 3 districts. Another question came up about the tracking of individual runs in the Yukon River in-season. There are projects in individual rivers to see what fish go there and there are tributary escapement goals. Genetic information is used to look at post-season data; it is also used in Canada as well. Those projects take place in both in-season and post-season.

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

For Alaskan management information, please visit:

<http://cts.vresp.com/c/?YukonRiverDrainageFi/2352ae9511/TEST/08c7905e23/adfg=fishingCommercialByArea.interior>

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

<http://cts.vresp.com/c/?YukonRiverDrainageFi/2352ae9511/TEST/ca7e224de0>

I hope you'll join us on the next teleconference, Tuesday at 1 p.m.

Alaska time (2 p.m. Yukon time). As a reminder, the toll free number is 1-800-315-6338 and the code is YUKON# (98566#).

Have a great week,

Jason Hale

Communications Director

Greetings from the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association!

Here is a summary of the 8th Yukon River Salmon In-Season Management Teleconference held this past Tuesday, July 26, 2011.

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

Communities participating this week: Mountain Village, Marshall, Holy Cross, Kaltag, Nulato, Koyukuk, Galena, Rampart, Nenana, Ft. Yukon, Circle, Eagle, Mayo, and Teslin.

Subsistence Reports: There is very little fishing for king salmon in Alaska, with some effort still occurring in the upper river. Fishers from Holy Cross to Eagle reported that they are waiting for fall chum. Water levels are very low in Mountain Village, dropping through Holy Cross, and generally high from Kaltag to Rampart. Kaltag fishers met their king salmon needs, though in Koyukuk and Rampart many people only met one-quarter of their needs, and Ft. Yukon and Circle fishers are doing poor and unable to fish due to closures. People are catching lots of chum salmon in Galena. In Eagle people are not fishing for king salmon at this point, either because they never started or they are cutting back this year. In Nenana the water is stable, lots of king salmon have passed by, people met 25-50% of their needs, and commercial summer chum salmon fishing has been good.

In Mayo and Teslin water levels are high and catch rates are low. The first king salmon was caught in Teslin on July 23.

Management Update: ADF&G reported that fall chum should be arriving between Anvik and Kaltag, and management is still operating under the pre-season projection of 750,000 fish, which should provide for escapement, subsistence, and commercial fishing. Three commercial fishing periods for fall chum have been held in the lower river. As for king salmon, escapement goals are being met within Alaska, and it is uncertain whether escapement and harvest share goals will be met at the Canadian border. As such, in addition to protecting the first and second pulse of king salmon throughout the Alaska portion of the drainage, the third pulse is being protected in the upper river with additional fishing closures. A detailed fishing schedule for the Alaskan portion of the drainage is available at 1-866-479-7387.

DFO reported that they are still operating in the conservative yellow management zone. There has been low effort in the Aboriginal fishery to date, with 300 king salmon harvested so far. High water is a contributing factor.

Public comments, questions, and answers: A number of callers from upper river communities expressed great concern over a lack of equality in management between the lower and upper river in Alaska. They pointed out that upper river fishers are being restricted on the third pulse and not meeting their needs, while many people in the lower river did meet their needs. They called for more stringent management in the lower river in future years to be sure enough fish reach the upper river. Some middle and upper river fishers expressed concern over fall chum directed commercial fisheries, as they are depending on fall chum to make up for low king salmon harvests. ADF&G responded that the projection indicates a surplus of fish, but they are taking it easy on the commercial openers until they have more in-season information. They noted that the first quarter point should be this weekend.

One caller asked whether the Eagle sonar is operating 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to count all the king salmon that were protected. ADF&G confirmed that this is the case. Another caller stated that due to smaller mesh used in Alaska fishers caught more male king salmon and more females should reach Canada. He noted that this means higher quality of escapement and more eggs in the gravel, though he also noted the importance of getting enough fish on the spawning grounds.

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

For Alaskan management information, please visit:

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

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

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

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

Have a great week,

Jason Hale

Communications Director

Greetings from the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association!

Here is a summary of the 9th Yukon River Salmon In-Season Management Teleconference held this past Tuesday, August 2, 2011.

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

Communities participating this week: Kotlik, Mountain Village, St. Mary's, Marshall, Holy Cross, Koyukuk, Huslia, Galena, The Rapids, Rampart, Fairbanks, Eagle, Dawson, and Teslin

Subsistence Reports: Wet weather and good looking chum salmon were reported through much of the river. In St. Mary's and Marshall, high quality, good sized fall chum are being harvested in the commercial fishery and people have begun picking berries. Through Holy Cross, people are not subsistence fishing and water levels are dropping. The fall chum arrived in Koyukuk on Friday, and one fisher got 40. In Huslia and from Galena to Rampart the water is still high. At The Rapids, the king salmon run is basically over, with only a few low quality kings passing each day, and people are catching chum, split evenly between summer and fall chum. Fishers in Rampart are waiting for fall chum, in Fairbanks they are seeing lots of good looking chum, and in Eagle no one is fishing and the water is rising.

In Teslin a local fisher set a net for 44 hours this weekend. She caught 2 king salmon on Saturday and 2 on Sunday.

Management Update: The fall chum run size projection to date is 197,000 fish. The midpoint should be August 11. ADF&G is no longer restricting the sale of king salmon and not restricting mesh to 6 inch in commercial fisheries.

King salmon escapement and harvest share goals into Canada should be met, with a projected border passage of 48,000-52,000 fish. A minimum of 42,500 fish need to get across the border to meet escapement goals, along with at least another 5,000 fish for harvest share.

DFO reported that they are still operating in the conservative yellow management zone. In the Aboriginal fishery 746 king salmon have been harvested in the mainstem and 136 king salmon have been harvested on the Porcupine River to date. Fishing has been good in Carmacks and Pelly Crossing.

Public comments, questions, and answers: There was a brief discussion of the effects of smaller mesh used in Alaska this year on quality of escapement. ADF&G noted that it's too early to tell, though some callers offered optimistic viewpoints.

Also, the USFWS reminded people of a looming deadline regarding customary trade. The Tri-RAC subcommittee on customary trade of Yukon River king salmon met in May and made several suggestions for changes in regulations. The subcommittee is now seeking public response to these suggested changes; the deadline for comments is August 15. The subcommittee will meet again in late August to consider any responses to these suggestions. For more details, visit the OSM website at <http://alaska.fws.gov/asm/deadline.cfm>, and feel free to contact Fred Bue, USFWS, at 907-455-1849 with input.

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

For Alaskan management information, please visit:

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

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

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

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

Have a great week,

Jason Hale

Communications Director

Greetings from the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association!

Here is a summary of the 10th Yukon River Salmon In-Season Management Teleconference held this past Tuesday, August 9, 2011.

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

Communities participating this week: Emmonak, Kotlik, Pilot Station, Holy Cross, Nulato, Koyokuk, Huslia, Galena, The Rapids, Nenana, Fairbanks, Ft. Yukon, Eagle, Lake LeBarge, Teslin.

Subsistence Reports: Wet weather and limited fishing was reported throughout much of the river: the rain is just clearing today. In Pilot Station there is no subsistence fishing taking place and river conditions are high for this time of year. In Holy Cross there has been little fishing activity because of the weather, but some silvers are being caught now. In Nulato the water is dropping and fishers are waiting for the first pulse of silvers to hit and have been catching whitefish and sheefish. In Koyokuk the water has risen in the past couple days and fishers have been catching whitefish, summer chum, pinks and kings and no fall chum have been caught yet. In Huslia the water is also up and fishers are still catching summer chum in limited numbers. In Galena and Nenana there has not been much fishing this week because of the weather. At The Rapids the 2nd group of fall chum have hit, but fishers have put cutting on hold because of the rain. Water temperature is high and height is record high. In Ft. Yukon fishing is slow and fishers are having difficulty in getting their kings and in Eagle people are not fishing, water is down and there is little to no driftwood.

At Lake LeBarge, the Ta'an Kwäch'än caught 22 kings at their family fish camp and 2 families are out fishing now. In Teslin, 3 families are fishing and caught a total of 19 healthy-looking kings (13 male/6 female) in 97.5 hours.

Management Update: The fall chum run size estimate to date is 490,000 fish as of August 8 based on the Pilot Station Sonar. The total run size projection is for greater than 800,000 fish. The midpoint should be August 11. To date 93,000 fall chum and 3,000 coho salmon have been harvested in districts Y-1, Y-2 and Y-5B and C.

At this point, ADF&G has determined that King salmon escapement and harvest sharing obligations will likely be met. The current border passage at Eagle is 49,269 king salmon as of Aug. 8. A minimum of 42,500 fish needed to meet the Canadian escapement goals, along with at least another 5,000 fish for harvest share.

DFO reported that they are still operating in the conservative yellow management zone. They are considering opening the sport fishery in Tatchun Creek.

Public comments, questions, and answers: One caller asked whether ADF&G projects in Emmonak closed early. ADF&G staff clarified that all projects are still running and will continue to run, but the office in Emmonak is closed for the season. Fishers in Y-4B requested that fishing be open for 7 days/week to accommodate people in fish camps. Fishers in Koyokuk requested that ADF&G eliminate the windows schedule after mid-September as it interferes with fall fishing. ADF&G responded that they would consider these requests. A fisher in Canada asked DFO what the trigger is to go to green zone

management and if they are planning to open a commercial fishery: DFO responded that 53,000 king salmon at Eagle sonar is the green zone trigger and currently they do not have plans to open a commercial fishery.

For further information, please contact the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association at 907-272-3141 or look for us on the web at www.yukonsalmon.org.

For Alaskan management information, please visit:

<http://cts.vresp.com/c/?YukonRiverDrainageFi/8996dbb3ea/d6d2997965/5c25fa1292/adfg=fishingCommercialByArea.interior>

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

<http://cts.vresp.com/c/?YukonRiverDrainageFi/8996dbb3ea/d6d2997965/93b9ba1ca7>

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

Have a great week,
Becca Robbins Gisclair
Policy Director

Greetings from the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association!

Here is a summary of the 11th Yukon River Salmon In-Season Management Teleconference held this past Tuesday, August 16, 2011.

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

Communities participating this week: Emmonak, St. Mary's, Marshall, Holy Cross, Nulato, Koyukuk, Galena, The Rapids, Nenana, Fairbanks, Eagle, Dawson, Whitehorse, Teslin

Subsistence Reports: As a welcome relief to all the rains of late, good weather was reported through most of the drainage. In Emmonak, St. Mary's, Marshall, and Holy Cross there are a few people still fishing for coho and fall chum salmon; Emmonak reported that a good pulse of fall chum just past, and Holy Cross noted good coho salmon catches. In Nulato, Koyukuk, and Galena people are catching high quality fall chum; the first pulse of fall chum arrived in Koyukuk on Saturday. In The Rapids fall chum numbers are low and poor weather has limited fishing, but there have been plenty of fish for people-food and good numbers of sheefish. In Nenana and Eagle fishers are waiting for fall chum salmon to arrive.

In Dawson, people are done fishing for king salmon, and they harvested what they needed for themselves while fishing conservatively and not catching for other families. They reported that the run was good, and they will fish for fall chum in late September, when the weather is cooler. In Teslin, they fished three setnets this past weekend and harvested 25 king salmon, which were reported to be in good condition. They are also once again buying salmon from the Taku River to allow more Yukon River king salmon to reach the spawning grounds. The entire Aboriginal harvest for the Yukon Territory is roughly 2,000 king salmon to date, with a projected total harvest of 6,000 fish by the end of the season.

Management Update: The fall chum salmon run is projected to be 800,000 to 1,000,000 fish. To date, 142,000 fall chum and 24,800 coho salmon have been harvested in commercial fisheries in the Alaskan portion of the drainage. As of yesterday, 51,000 king salmon have past the Eagle sonar; the community of Eagle's harvest will need to be subtracted from that number to determine border passage into Canada. International spawning escapement and harvest share goals have been met.

Based on the number of fish that have entered Canada, DFO has reopened the recreational fishery. However, they are not considering opening the commercial or domestic fisheries.

Public comments, questions, and answers: One fisher asked about escapement in the Koyukuk drainage, and USFWS reported that it was above average for king salmon and well above average for summer chum salmon. Another fisher asked for some statistics on king salmon from The Rapids video wheel project: the percentage of females recorded at that project is 19% and the average weight is 14 pounds (roughly the same average weight as in 2009, which is well above the average weight of 9 pounds in 2008 and 2010; the project operator attributed this to pulse protection in 2009 and 2011).

A caller asked when drifting will close in sub-district Y4-A, and ADF&G replied that it will be allowed above Stink Creek whenever the fishery is open through the remainder of the season. Lastly, a caller asked how the coho salmon run is doing, and ADF&G shared that it's slightly above average for this date.

For further information, please contact the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association at 907-272-3141 or look for us on the web at www.yukonsalmon.org.

For Alaskan management information, please visit:

<http://cts.vresp.com/c/?YukonRiverDrainageFi/8996dbb3ea/d6d2997965/5c25fa1292/adfg=fishingCommercialByArea.interior>

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

<http://cts.vresp.com/c/?YukonRiverDrainageFi/8996dbb3ea/d6d2997965/93b9ba1ca7>

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

Have a great week,

Jason Hale

Communications Director

Greetings from the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association!

Here is a summary of the 12th Yukon River Salmon In-Season Management Teleconference held this past Tuesday, August 23, 2011.

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

Communities participating this week: Emmonak, Marshall, Holy Cross, Nulato, Galena, The Rapids, Eagle, Whitehorse, Teslin, Old Crow

Subsistence Reports: The fishing season is winding down through much of the drainage, and teleconference participation is following suit. There is still some fishing activity, but many have turned their attention to harvesting moose and berries. Fall chum salmon quality remains high, as reported in the lower and middle river in Alaska.

In the lower river, no one is fishing for subsistence, but some people are still commercial fishing for fall chum and coho salmon; water levels are dropping. In the middle river, a few people are still subsistence fishing for fall chum, but many have stopped for the season. Water levels are rising in Tanana and Eagle, and fishers in Eagle are gearing up to harvest fall chum.

In Teslin, the king salmon run is cooling down and water levels are rising. In Old Crow, there are some "good looking" chum salmon and water levels are dropping.

Management Update: The fall chum salmon run is projected to reach 800,000 to 900,000 fish. To date 185,300 fall chum and 45,800 coho salmon have been harvested commercially.

The annual Alaska Department of Fish & Game subsistence fishing survey will be taking place along the Yukon River in September and October. During September, surveyors will visit lower Yukon River communities up to Grayling, and in October they will continue up the Yukon and Koyukuk rivers. Faxes will be sent to local post offices, schools, and stores announcing the expected survey dates, however these dates may change due to weather and travel delays.

Public comments, questions, and answers: One caller asked how much more commercial fishing can be expected in the lower river. ADF&G replied that there should be fishing periods through the first couple days of September, at which time the fall chum salmon run should be dropping off.

A representative of the Council of Yukon First Nations (CYFN) thanked Kwik'Pac Fisheries for a generous donation of salmon. Kwik'Pac processed this salmon and delivered it to CYFN, who in turn distributed the salmon to Elders across the Yukon Territory. The donation was much appreciated.

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

For Alaskan management information, please visit:

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

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

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

I hope you'll join us on the next teleconference, Tuesday at 1 p.m. Alaska time (2 p.m. Yukon time). This will be the final in-season teleconference for this year. As a reminder, the toll free number is 1-800-315-6338 and the code is YUKON# (98566#).

Have a great week,

Jason Hale

Communications Director

Greetings from the Yukon River Drainage Fisheries Association!

Here is a summary of the 13th Yukon River Salmon In-Season Management Teleconference held this past Tuesday, August 30, 2011.

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

Communities participating this week: Emmonak, Kotlik, St. Mary's, Pilot Station, Marshall, Nulato, Galena, The Rapids, Eagle, and Teslin

Subsistence Reports: Kotlik reported that there are no more salmon in the river; some people are catching whitefish. In the rest of the lower river, nobody is subsistence fishing, having turned to harvesting moose, birds, and berries. In the middle river they are still seeing high quality fall chum salmon. In Galena, some people are still putting up the nice fall chum for strips and the poor fall chum for dog food. The Rapids reported that the first pulse of fall chum just passed, nearly all camps have emptied, and people are setting up to fish for dry fish and crib fish in Tanana. In Eagle, fishers are getting ready to harvest fall chum, and one family is already fishing.

Nobody fished for king salmon in Teslin this past week.

Management Update: It seems to be nearing the end of the chum salmon entering the river, though it's not unprecedented for one more pulse to appear. To date 219,300 fall chum and 62,500 coho salmon have been harvested commercially in the Alaskan portion of the drainage; both runs are above average for this date.

The commercial buyer in District Y-2 has shut its doors for this season. Any fisher with a commercial permit for Y-2 who would like to switch to Y-1 should contact ADF&G. Likewise, if there are any catcher-sellers interested in fishing in Y-2, they should contact ADF&G.

The fall chum salmon pulses are expected to be in the following locations:

- 1st pulse: between Beaver and Ft. Yukon
- 2nd pulse: between Rampart and Stevens Village
- 3rd pulse: Koyukuk
- 4th pulse: Anvik

In Canada, they are wrapping up king salmon management season. Aboriginal harvest is projected to reach 4,000 king salmon; the reported harvest to date is 2,831 fish in the mainstem and 135 fish on the Porcupine River. Canada should be in the green management zone for fall chum salmon. There was a commercial fall chum opener August 26-29, and another 4-day opener is anticipated for this weekend. Effort in the commercial fishery is expected to be low.

Public comments, questions, and answers: A fisher asked ADF&G whether the counts reported from assessment projects are adjusted to include projected harvest numbers. ADF&G replied that they are not; the numbers reported are the actual number of fish counted at each project. Another fisher asked for more details on the commercial fishery in Canada. DFO responded that it mostly takes place around

Dawson with set gillnets and fishwheels, effort is typically low, and there is not a big commercial market—the fish is mostly used for feeding dogs.

Lastly, a caller asked Alaskan managers to provide information on how the mesh size reduction has affected the fishery. USFWS replied that they will be looking at that issue, but did note that it will be complicated due to the fishing restrictions that were in place this season.

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

For Alaskan management information, please visit:

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

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

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

This was the final in-season management teleconference for this year. I'd like to sincerely thank everyone who participated. You made these calls a useful tool for fishers and managers throughout the drainage. I hope to hear your voice the first Tuesday of June 2012 as we start it all over again!

Have a great winter,

Jason Hale

Communications Director

APPENDIX C: Promotional Playing Cards and Knives



Note: some small detail maynot be lasered out

