

Chignik Advisory Committee
January 4th, 2023
Zoom/Teleconference

I. Call to Order: 1:09 p.m. by Austin Shangin

II. Roll Call

Members Present: Austin Shangin (Chair), Perryville
Boris Kosbruk, Perryville
Jacob Shangin, Ivanof Bay
Edgar Shangin, Ivanof Bay
Andrew Lind Sr., Chignik Lake
Marty Takak, Chignik Lake
Natalie Lind, Chignik Lake
Ben Allen (Vice Chair), Chignik Bay
Raechel Allen (Secretary), Chignik Bay
Gene Carlson, Chignik Bay
Henry Erickson (alternate), Chignik Lagoon
*Axel Kopun (alternate), Chignik Bay (*added after elections for alternate)

Members Absent: Stephen Shangin, Tony Gregorio, Alfredo AbouEid (excused)

Number Needed for Quorum on AC: 7

III. Approval of Agenda: Proposal 128 is added (Ben motions, Raechel 2nds). Ben motions to adopt revised agenda. Gene seconds. Unanimously approved.

IV. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes: Ben motions to approve the minutes from 11/3/22 and 12/6/22. Boris seconds. Unanimous approval is given.

V. Staff and Guests

- Fish and Game Staff: Jeff Wadley, Westward Region Comm Fish; Carl Burnside, Chignik Area Comm Fish; Forrest Bowers, Deputy Director Comm Fish; Lisa Fox, South Peninsula Comm Fish; Charles Russell, North Peninsula Comm Fish; Taryn O'Connor-Brito, Boards Support
- Guests: Mark McNeley, Nelson Lagoon AC; Samantha McNeley, Nelson Lagoon AC; Angela Johnson, Nelson Lagoon AC; Darren Johnson, Nelson Lagoon AC; Shannon Johnson, Nelson Lagoon AC; Tim Heuker, Nelson Lagoon AC; Trevor Edwards, Nelson Lagoon; Marrit Carlson Vandort, BOF Chair; Harry Kalmokoff, Chignik Lake; Gayla Hoseth, BBNA; Cody Larson, BBNA; Rene Roque, BBNA; George Anderson, Chignik Intertribal Coalition; Gail K. Vick, Fairbanks AC; Jared Danielson, CAMF; Chuck McCallum, Lake and Pen Borough; Zack Wooding, Heather Thompson,

- VI. Elections for one Alternate: Nominations are opened. Ben nominates Axel. Marty nominates Harry Kalmakoff Jr. Harry declines. Ben motions to close nominations. Gene 2nd's. Axel becomes an alternate with no objections.
- VII. Updates
- Chair's report: Plan on creating a subcommittee for BOF meeting.
 - ADF&G: Jeff staff comments are still under review. Ben asks when staff comments would be released to public? Only 105 and 132 were released to the AC pre-publishing. Ben notes getting mail out in Chignik is slow. Dates are not set yet for public release of staff comments.
 - Others: none
- VIII. Public Comment: Harry Kalmakoff asks how much information do we have on subsistence use from the Department? Some residents in Chignik lake, including himself, reported difficulty getting subsistence in September and hardly any fish were at the traditional places (spawning grounds) where salmon are taken. The Dept. won't have data back until post bof meeting so reporting to the board is not necessarily planned. Ben asked of the frequency of subsistence data reported by the department. Data is in from 2021 however Ben points out that even while escapements are being met, a large reduction in the ease of procurement/availability is occurring. Raechel notes that lowering escapements discussed in Proposal 105 will make subsistence ever more difficult to find/procure. Marty states that the lack of subsistence in traditional location has existed for multiple years now and it has been brought up before (as recently as last April). Subsistence users are having to search for new locations further down river to find subsistence fish, but fish aren't accumulating.
- IX. Old Business:
- Board of Fisheries Alaska Peninsula/Aleutian Islands/Chignik Finfish Proposals
February 20-25, 2022 | Anchorage, AK

Support/ Support as amended/ Oppose/N o Action	Number Support	Number Oppose	Comments, Discussion (pros & cons), Voting Notes, Amendments
105	Amend the Chignik Area Salmon Management Plan to reflect changes to Chignik River sockeye salmon escapement goals.		
Oppose	0	12	below
Ben motions to adopt. Marty 2 nd 's. Discussion: Ben requests a table of escapement distribution throughout the summer if escapements in 105 were implemented. He believes lower end escapement (in graph) appears			

extremely low for the first run and possibly the second run. Lowering escapement numbers is frightening in part since subsistence users are already having difficulty finding fish.

- Axel doesn't see enough information on what 105 will do/accomplish. What are the "nuts and bolts"? There is no peer review, limited public process, and little science for a change of this magnitude. There is nothing proving this (merging runs and changing escapement) is necessary. This hasn't been done before and Bristol Bay management is a poor comparison. Chignik is manageable as two distinct runs. Chignik just got 2 stocks of concern designated for Sockeye and Chinook. Also, there is no way to tell if [merging runs with a wider escapement range] is working/helping. It is like a self-fulfilling prophesy where lowering escapements will get lower returns but the protocol was initially based a premise of lower productivity possibly due to system changes. He believes this should be postponed until at least next cycle. We were told the problem was the "blob" initially. Give a chance/more time to see what's really happening. [Merging runs and introducing wider ranges of escapements] is too much, too soon and adds more variables to what we already don't understand. More studies should occur first. No studies have even been done yet even on the 2018 disaster. Last years early run seemed to rebound. To throw out what has worked successfully for the last 70 years without comprehensive study is like throwing the baby out with the bathwater. We should postpone at least until next cycle.
- Ben doesn't see a greater negative impact [to run health] from 105 not being implemented, but there could be unforeseen consequences from adding changes/variables. He sensed circular reasoning from the department at the last meeting where it was presented that production is down [seen from algorithms] so therefore the lake is having a problem which is identified because production is down. There are other [interception] fisheries identified that aren't even counted in Chignik production figures. Are we sure the problem is at the production point or are salmon not making it back from the ocean? He concurs postponing until next cycle is prudent.
- Henry sees a potential danger of messing up the runs even worse. We have two runs and it is not always the same run suffering from year to year. He sees 105 as a blanket covering up the problems and it could hurt things rather than help things. We don't have the science to back it up.
- Edgar thinks it would be devastating to turn the Chignik River system into one run and it would not be right to do.
- Marty says he was always told /warned for years that the department would be turning the Chignik system into one run. Now it is becoming a reality unfortunately.
- Andrew agrees with AC members.
- Jacob would like to see it postponed for peer review.
- Natalie agrees [with AC views].
- Boris concurs with everyone's comments.
- Gene hears a "less is more" philosophy [from department]. If we had gone fishing from lower escapement thresholds in 2018 and caught another 20,000 sockeye, we would have wiped out another portion of the run. Back in the day when we were building back these runs, one run would get fished to hard and then the other . If we start hammering on the

second run to hard now it will die off, too. What saved the runs a lot of times in the past was fisherman being on strike and so there were big escapements and build-ups. One time the fishermen disagreed with the management that there was not enough escapement and stood down and it was the right decision. Cutting terminal fishery escapement will hurt the system.

- Alfredo shared his view with Austin earlier in the day and he is clearly not in favor of 105 and 132.
- Austin is not in favor of 105 or 132. It is playing with people's livelihoods and it could come back to bite us. Then we will all be sitting on the beach.
- George agrees with everything that has been said. Basically, all Chignik has is sockeye. CRAA has been invested with working with the department over the years in science. There may come a time when science will show this is the right thing, but for now, more time is needed to understand things and suggests moving forward cautiously.
- Ben believes an error has happened and a shift has occurred from a yield-based perspective to maintain fisheries through yield to one of pushing forward existing fisheries regardless of the impacts made. If Bristol Bay failed...the view would be considered one of dire jeopardy, [but that same view is not happening now with smaller fish stocks (implied)]. Nelson Lagoon for instance is also suffering with problems similar to Chignik. The fish are not making it back. But the department now takes a view looking at the entire fish migrating by, and that because the minimal escapement exists and as long as the river exists and somebody can go fishing, then it's okay. That's not how this was set up long before any of us were fishing (except maybe Gene). Our predecessors fought hard to bring these runs back (at statehood) and there were guarding rules that are getting manipulated away from. The goal should again be returning a higher yield. The attitude that the yield will be the yield no matter what the yield is is not any way to run things.
- Raechel notes the timeline that shows decrease in productivity (1998 on) also aligns with the 2004 regulation changes (affecting returns from 1998) in the south pen fisheries and interception is likely a driver in productivity decline. Another point is if we have lower escapement ranges it often makes interception fisheries able to fish sooner. And if interception fisheries have escapements that drop lower (which is happening), then they get to fish sooner. But how does dropping escapements and fishing sooner help the river's productivity especially ones that are struggling.
- Gene believes the problem started when we started fishing for days on end with no windows. What worked before when we built the runs back [60's and 70's and into 80's] is we would open for 3 days a week. That doesn't give a good mixture of salmon up the rivers- a lot of males and few females sometimes. A Monday, Wednesday, and Friday fishery would work but fish and game say it's not feasible for instance because they say boats outside need 48 hours at least. But that shouldn't be management's objective (how

long boats can fish). It should be to manage the fish not the boats and how long they can fish.

- Raechel asks the department what the new lower end escapement would be on June 30th? [approx. 150,000] and August 1st? [375,000]. This is concerning because of subsistence needs are already a struggle to meet [this would be less fish on grounds]. In the 80's when the runs were rebuilding, 400,000 sockeye was the minimum escapement goal attained by June 30th or July 4th. That Chignik has gone from 400,000 minimum sockeye around 6/30 down to 150,000 is startling at best. It's improbable that this could create productivity or a sustainable fishery by dropping the escapement this low. Having fished since the 80's it is disappointing to see [Chignik runs] being managed for a collapse.
- Ben calls question requesting unanimous consent to oppose.

[132](#)

Amend the Southeastern District Mainland Salmon Management Plan to reflect changes to Chignik River sockeye salmon escapement goals.

Oppose

0

11

Ben motions to adopt. Axel 2nd's.

- Ben notes language has been changed in the new plan version. "Expected to reach or exceed" vs "reaches or exceeds" and removing "25,000 sockeye salmon" is much less prescriptive.

The concerning language is: *(2) if the Orzinski Bay escapement is expected to reach or[REACHES OR] exceed [EXCEEDS] the upper bound of the sockeye salmon escapement goal range[25,000 SOCKEYE SALMON], the commissioner may, by emergency order, open the Northwest Stepovak Section, including all of Orzinski Bay with fishing periods as follows: .*

Management often changes the parameters of escapement goals and lowering the goals which effectively enables greater fishing/interception. If 132 were to be adopted, then in subsequent years the escapement team could adjust escapements lower [with little to no public say or other oversight] and if that were to happen, the interception of migrating stocks in the area would continue to increase (some of which would return to Chignik). 132 is removing sideboards. It appears potentially allocative. Proposal 132 doesn't pass the straight face test.

- Axel references all his comments from 105 to apply to 132.

Each member was polled individually and all opposed with most referencing the inclusion of statements made in 105 and/or the need for more studies and review.

Edgar was excused for an appointment.

- George notes it is not prescriptive enough and language is very open ended, adding latitude, and leads to managers interpretation.
- Comments from 105 are applied to 132.
- Ben calls ? and requests unanimous consent.

New Motion	Postpone escapement changes		
Support	11	0	
Axel makes a motion to request the Board of Fish and the ADFG to defer the escapement goal changes until after the next board cycle to gather more information. Ben 2nd's. Ben comments that 2018 and 2020 disaster funds should be available for studying this so as to not make rash decisions. Axel requests comments from 105 be applied to his motion's discussion. Ben calls ? and asks for unanimous consent. Motion carries 11-0.			
120	Modify fishing periods in the Northern District.		
Support	11	0	
Ben makes motion to adopt. Axel 2nd's. - Mark McNeley explained a emergency petition was submitted and contains what the NLAC wants from 120. It includes important closure windows (4 day windows). There is basically non-stop fishing on the North Pen. After July 15th the NL run is basically done. - Ben sees North Pen, South Pen and Chignik lowering lower end escapements. He asks is productivity down in all these areas? Department was not ready to respond. Ben notes that if productivity is dropping everywhere except mainly the Bristol Bay run, outside areas fishing are advancing while traditional areas are struggling. - George notes petition was voted down in the work session because the concepts were elsewhere in proposal form. - Chuck notes the issues in the petition were believed to be covered in proposls. - Mark explained that it wasn't comprehensive of all species affected. It needs to be stated that steady fishing is hurting Nelson Lagoon. Timespans were not comprehensive. A proposal from NLAC couldn't be submitted because the AC was in process of being formed. Not all of his comments were heard at WS. - Gale Vick, chair of Fairbanks sub-AC, would like to give support to include relevant concerns from NL and Chignik in their proposals/amendments and are interested such language to consider incorporating. Gale agrees steady fishing is causing problems everywhere. Many non-terminal fisheries affect the AYK in the same way. - Axel notes that NL/120 mirrors the problems in Chignik. The problem basically started in 2004 when the BOF created a new intercept when they opened the Dolgoi's in June and allowed basically non-stop fishing everywhere. When one gear group was open, the other was closed and vice-versa (always some form of gear in the water). Since 2004 Area M seine permits have increased in value, boats have gotten bigger. It only takes a couple of deep seines on a cape to knock off a serious stream of [salmon]. Weather isn't much of a limiting factor anymore with bigger boats and more carrying capacity. The killing power is more than it was even 20 years ago. - Raechel's understanding of NL area is that they use smaller gear and typically smaller boats and it is a very traditional fishery, so while they are allowed to move to other			

places, the gear/boats used in NL are not suitable elsewhere. NL issues mirror Chignik issues and will be supporting 120. Ben notes a future version is expected. Ben calls ? asks for unanimous consent. Motion carries to support 120.			
128	Amend Gillnet specifications and operations to reduce commercial salmon harvest in the North Peninsula using gillnet depth reductions.		
Support w/optional amend	11	0	
Ben moves to adopt. Boris 2nd's. - There is a need to limit gear to conserve salmon. - Angela's intent is to return to how gear was in the past when salmon runs to NL weren't depleted. It used to be 45 meshes. Also NL gear should remain at 29 meshes. - Ben thinks it is appropriate to reduce nets in the water column to protect species like Chinook and Chum as well. - Axel asked what year was the change to deeper than 45 meshes? (through the department: 1989 approx. at the board meeting before 1992) There might be other AYK proposals addressing gear depth. - Ben looks a vehicle to shallow seine depth as well. - Angela understands reasons to adjust gear on the South Pen and agrees her proposal could be adjusted for that purpose. - Mark notes that boats have to be far off shore to not anchor a 90 mesh net with the leadline. - Gale believes there are other proposals they are looking at for gear adjustments. - Axel points out 149 may be a good vehicle for change. Shallowing [seine] gear on the south peninsula will help save chum and chinook most. - Raechel will be in support as written but would also support a board generated change that makes gear more conservative and shallower in the South Pen. Ben makes motion to support 128 and welcome adjustments to shallow other gear in Area M. Marty 2nd's. Ben calls ? and requests unanimous support.			

II. Board of Fisheries Statewide Finfish Proposals

<u>154</u>	Allow the use of purse seine drums.		
Oppose	0	11	
Ben motions to adopt. Axel 2nd's • Axel's grandfather had a reel before they were banned. They were banned to keep crew employment up just after statehood. It was too heavy for his boat. They are common in other areas. • Ben believes this would make larger vessels out class smaller vessels and this would give unfair advantage. He is opposed to 154. • Raechel has literature by the state explaining that drum seining was also too efficient. This proposal reveals that boats and gear with power-wheels today have in fact become ever more efficient [more killing power]. • Axel doesn't have a problem with this one especially in SE. Seine efficiency is high already. • Raechel sees this would negatively affect struggling Chinook, Chum and Sockeye runs and is opposed. Ben calls ? and requests unanimous consent to oppose.			

X. New Business

- I. Select representative(s) for board meeting: An AC sub-committee is chosen. Austin, Ben, Raechel, and Axel will be at the meeting. A daily evening meeting is tentatively chosen. Minutes will be taken to be distributed at the following full AC meeting. Members are polled. No objection was given.
- II. Set next meeting date: Tentative time and place at Board of fish meeting in February to be set later for the AC sub-committee.
- III. Approval of meetings minutes. Ben makes motion for Austin or the current sitting chair to approve the minutes for on-time submission as a standing AC rule. It should be noted every meeting under Miscellaneous in the Agenda so members could would have opportunity to oppose. Boris 2nd's. Ben calls ? and asks for unanimous consent.
- IV. BBNA has a budget for travel arrangements (travel-hotel-meals) at the Board of Fish meeting for AC members (contact Cody Larson and Gayla Hoseth). Taryn confirms that the Department has funds for one AC representative. George offers direction to call himself or Chuck McCallum with the Lake and Pen Borough for travel assistance for non-AC-members.
- V. On-time comments are due February 3rd, 2023

XI. Adjourn at 3:36 p.m.

Minutes Recorded By: Raechel Allen

Minutes Approved By: Chairman Austin Shangin

Date: 1/23/2023