

Koyukuk River Fish & Game Advisory Committee
Wednesday, January 11th, 2022 at 1:00 pm
Teleconference

To join the meeting, dial the number below and enter the meeting ID when prompted:

Dial in: (888) 475-4499 (US Toll-free)

Meeting ID: 841 9214 8939

Or join the meeting online: <https://bit.ly/KoyukukACjan11>

Prior to start of meeting: Rudy Moses from Allakaket appointed as alternate by Chair Jack Reakoff. Harding Sam and Jared Sam's seats from Alatna declared vacant by Chair Jack Reakoff.

- I. Call to Order: 1:24 pm
- II. Roll Call: Jack Reakoff (chair), Darrel Vent (vice-chair), Vincent Simon, Charles Ned, Jack Wholecheese, Rudy Moses (alternate)

Absent: Wilmer Beetus, Hugh Bifelt, Shawn Huffman,

Number Needed for Quorum on AC: 5

- III. Fish and Game Staff Present: Kyle Campbell (Boards Support), Lisa Stuby (Sport Fish), Deena Jallen (Comm Fish), Sam Decker (Comm Fish), Christy Gleason (Comm Fish), Shane Ransbury (Comm Fish), Jesse Coleman (Subsistence), Glenn Stout (Wildlife Conservation), Sara Longson (Wildlife Conservation), Jeremy Choleva (Wildlife Conservation)
- IV. Guests Present: Jeremy Havener (USFWS), Erin Julianus (BLM)
- V. Approval of Agenda – motion by Darrel Vent 2nd by Charles Ned
- VI. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes: February 15th, 2022 – motion by Darrel Vent 2nd by Jack Wholecheese
- VII. Reports
 - a. Chair's report: Wrote the Dall Sheep letter of concerns to the Board. Listened into the statewide Board of Game meeting last spring, and that other AC representatives expressed concern about Dall sheep populations.
 - b. ADF&G Yukon Summer Season Summary report – Deena Jallen
Very low numbers for Chinook and summer salmon runs. Mentioned Ichthyophonous sampling project at Pilot station. Questions from Jack Reakoff on Ichthyophonous sampling, and Jack Wholecheese regarding where Chinook escapements may go in the Yukon drainage and the various sample projects at the Rampart rapids, answered by Deena.

- c. ADF&G Yukon Fall Season Summary report – Christy Gleason
3rd year in a row of falling below escapement goal for fall chum. Counted 243,000 fall chum, compared to historical run of 1,000,000. Coho count 102,000 with an average of 234,00 Second lowest fall coho run on record. Escapements for both species were not met, or Canadian agreements with full closures. Shejik sonar restarted, telemetry 350 in Coho salmon in the Yukon drainage, samples in fall Chum stress hormones, and marine studies showing warmer waters reducing food availability to first year Chum salmon. Questions from Jack Reakoff regarding strong returns to Kotzebue Sound in 2022, compared to Yukon weights. Chum salmon coming in the last two years are 1-2' smaller, but no fat indices taken. Discussion regarding projected Chum increase for 2023? Smolt out migration indices? Jack Wholecheese questions regarding by-catch trawl take. Discussion regarding Area M by-catch and the need to comment on BOF February. South Alaska Peninsula/ Aleutian proposals. Christy & Deena answered all questions.

Deena Jallen shared information about the North Pacific Fisheries Management Council's call for Alaska Native Tribes and communities to fill a seat designated for Alaska Native Tribal Members on it's advisory panel. To be considered, a candidate must be nominated by a Tribe and/or Tribal Consortium. Candidates should also provide a letter of interest with a description of their background, as well as any additional letters of support. All materials should be submitted through the comment portal at the link below by February 3rd, 2023, at 5pm.
<https://meetings.npfmc.org/Meeting/Details/2960>

Area Biologist Glenn Stout was asked if he had a report or comments: ADF&G Wildlife report- Glenn Stout suggested holding another AC meeting for the Koyukuk River to discuss AC generated proposals for the Interior Region III ahead of the May 1st 2023 deadline. His reports will be provided at that time.

Chair asks if there were any public members on the phone for comments or questions. No response.

The Committee members were asked to make general comments.

Darrel Vent asked questions/made comments about trawling and hatchery stocks, concerned about over-injection of hatchery fish into wild stocks

Vincent Simon asked for reports on fish counts at Hinshaw or Alatna. Deena Jallen said Hinshaw did not operate this year because the weir needed to be repaired. Henshaw weir was damaged from high water in 2021 so did run in 2022.

Vincent and Jack Reakoff also shared concerns about contaminants coming into the river on the south side of the Brooks Range. Mud, iron, and copper sulfates from climate warming thawing ice masses. Need for assessments of water quality for spawning habitats PH and other impacts on fisheries. A comparison to previous work done by Alyeska before to TAPS construction is needed. Vincent asks if the minerals could be filtered. The sources are large scale and could not be stopped. Christy will try to get a report from habitat division for the next Koyukuk River AC meeting regarding this issue.

Vincent Simon concerned about the number of outside hunters coming up to central Brooks Range via the haul road would like harvest numbers provided by ADFG and USFWS. Chairman Reakoff lives in the area, responds that most caribou harvest I

Darrel Vent concerned about subsistence fish harvest opportunities, especially non-salmon as reliance shifts away from non-salmon species. Concerned about sheefish and whitefish sustainability in particular. Would like to get better numbers from ADFG on these non-salmon species. Deena Jallen provided an initial comment in response, household surveys show reduced non-salmon take due to incidental take in association to salmon closure. The recent take is about 30% of the average take in the household surveys.

Vincent Simon would like the Koyukuk River AC to meet up face to face. More input = more progress. Next meeting should be in person.

Charles Ned thanked Jack Wholecheese for bringing up trawler issue. These commercial harvests affect all of the communities upriver on the Yukon

Public Comment: none

VIII. Old Business: none

IX. New Business

a. AYK Board of Fisheries Proposals:

Proposal 79: SUPPORTED 5-0. Motion by Vincent S., 2nd by Rudy M.

Discussion with Denna Jallon explains the proposal parameters. Proposal allows Customary practices of taking fish with hook and line and poll.

Proposal 80: OPPOSED 0-5. Motion by Darrel V. 2nd by Jack W.

Deena J. ADFG presents the proposal answers questions from the committee Committee discussion regards clarifying intent. Committee feels ADFG has management authority to manage subsistence take of Chinook salmon for sustained yield. Subsistence users needs have variations due to house hold size.

Proposal 81: OPPOSED 0-5. Motion by Darrel V., 2nd by Jack W.

The Committee felt that small jacks are a natural part of the run. Jacks do spawn and contribute to the defense of the red from predation. Handling of fish to assess the marginal sizes, then releasing the ones found over 24 inches, may lead to subsequent mortalities.

Proposal 82: SUPPORT AS AMENDED 4-1. Motion by Darrel V., 2nd by Rudy M.

The Committee deliberated the intent of the proposal. What other fishers comments and modification suggested. The committee felt that placement of marking buoys to still allow submerged nets, to show where the net is placed, during the proposed dates would assist enforcement and in navigational hazards.

Amendment: Submerged nets from May 1 to September 30 shall be marked by bouys on both end of a 60 foot net or, nets over 60 feet shall have buoys placed on both ends, and a buoy in the middle of the net to define placement.

Proposal 84: SUPPORT 5-0. Motion by Rudy M., 2nd by Vincent S.

The committee discussed several aspects and clarified the proposal.

The changes will be beneficial to in season managers abilities to optimize conservation and harvest of subsistence fisheries.

Proposal 86: SUPPORT 6-0. Motion by Darrel V., 2nd by Vincent M.

The committee is supportive of reducing incidental harvest mortality of catch and release fishing especially salmon stocks of concerns.

Proposal 88: SUPPORT 5-0. Motion by Darrel V., 2nd by Charles N.

The Committee supports the Departments ability to surgically manage fisheries to benefit harvest of mixed stocks, and all users groups.

Proposal 89: TOOK NO ACTION. Motion by Jack W., 2nd by Darrel V.

Proposal 140: SUPPORT 5-0. Motion by Darrel V., 2nd by Charles N.

The Koyukuk River AC. Is very concerned about the high by-catch of Yukon Salmon stocks of concern, Chum salmon in particular, during the South Unimak and Shumigan Islands mixed stock fishery. Genetic analysis of all chum salmon taken is an important aspect in the management plan.

See table of actions and comments on proposals on following pages.

b. Schedule next Advisory Committee meeting & elections

Darrel suggested holding next meeting in Fairbanks around March 20th.

Glenn Stout suggested holding meeting in one of the represented villages.

Kyle Campbell suggested holding a meeting with elections for expired and vacant seats for Alatna, Allakaket, Bettles, Huslia, and Undesignated seats.

Rudy Moses informed the committee that Allakaket would likely not be able to host a meeting in March.

Jack Reakoff suggested mid-March meeting in Huslia and hold elections. Date not finalized.

X. Select representative(s) for board meeting: Darrel Vent will represent the AC for the AYK Board of Fisheries meeting Jan 14-18 in Anchorage; tentatively Darrel will also represent the AC for the AK Peninsula Board of Fisheries Meeting February 20-25th.

XI. Set next meeting date: TBD

XII. Adjourn

Alaska Board of Fisheries: Arctic/Yukon/Kuskokwim			
January 14-18, 2023 Anchorage, AK			
Proposal Number	Proposal Description		
Support/ Support as amended/ Oppose/ No Action	Number Support	Number Oppose	Comments, Discussion (pros & cons), Voting Notes, Amendments
<i>Note: Effective September 2019, when abstentions occur, the action or decision of a majority of the remaining members at a meeting at which a quorum is present is an act of the committee. For example, a vote tally of 7-6-2 means the motion carries. Members abstaining from voting must provide an explanation that is included in the committee record.</i>			
79	Allow hook and line attached to a rod or pole when subsistence fishing upstream of the Nulato River mouth, to and including the Koyukuk River drainage up to the closed waters of the Koyukuk and the subsistence permit area.		
SUPPORT	5	0	This is a customary and traditional practice, and this proposal would make this practice legal for subsistence use.
80	Restrict subsistence king salmon harvest in the middle and upper Yukon River.		
OPPOSE	0	5	The department has sufficient tools to adjust management of salmon on the Yukon as needed.
81	Implement a Yukon River drainage subsistence salmon permit to allow retention of king salmon less than 24 inches in length with an annual limit 10 fish during times of king salmon conservation.		

Alaska Board of Fisheries: Arctic/Yukon/Kuskokwim January 14-18, 2023 Anchorage, AK			
Proposal Number	Proposal Description		
Support/ Support as amended/ Oppose/ No Action	Number Support	Number Oppose	Comments, Discussion (pros & cons), Voting Notes, Amendments
OPPOSE	0	5	The Committee felt that small jacks are a natural part of the run. Jacks do spawn and contribute to the defense of the red from predation. Concerns about how feasible it would be to implement this proposal and overhandling of fish that are near 24 inches and then released.
82	Modify the dates sinking of gillnets is allowed in the Yukon Area from October 1 to April 30.		
SUPPORT AS AMENDED	4	1	Amended language: Amendment: Submerged nets from May 1 to September 30 shall be marked by buoys on both end of a 60 foot net or, nets over 60 feet shall have buoys placed on both ends, and a buoy in the middle of the net to define placement.
84	Repeal and readopt Yukon Area subsistence fishery lawful gear and gear specifications.		
SUPPORT	5	0	The changes will be beneficial to in season manager's abilities to optimize conservation and harvest of subsistence fisheries.
86	Require retention of sport caught salmon, if removed from the water, in the Yukon River Area.		
SUPPORT	6	0	Support the safe release of sport fish caught salmon.
88	Repeal and replace Yukon Area commercial salmon fishing gear specifications.		
SUPPORT	5	0	The Committee supports the Departments ability to surgically manage fisheries to benefit harvest of mixed stocks, and all users groups
89	Modify Yukon Area commercial dip net gear operations in the commercial fishery to include a single rigid handle with a single line attached.		
TNA			Not applicable to Koyukuk River AC region

Alaska Board of Fisheries: Alaska Peninsula/Aleutian Island/Chignik February 20-25, 2022 Anchorage, AK			
Proposal Number	Proposal Description		
Support/ Support as amended/ Oppose/ No Action	Number Support	Number Oppose	Comments, Discussion (pros & cons), Voting Notes, Amendments
<i>Note: Effective September 2019, when abstentions occur, the action or decision of a majority of the remaining members at a meeting at which a quorum is present is an act of the committee. For example, a vote tally of 7-6-2 means the motion carries. Members abstaining from voting must provide an explanation that is included in the committee record.</i>			
140	Amend the South Unimak and Shumagin Islands June Salmon Management Plan to reduce commercial salmon fishing time.		
SUPPORT	5	0	The Koyukuk River AC. Is very concerned about the high by-catch of Yukon Salmon stocks of concern, Chum salmon in particular, during the South Unimak and Shumigan Islands mixed stock fishery. Genetic analysis of all chum salmon taken is an important aspect in the management plan.

Adjournment: 4:00 pm; motion by Darrel Vent 2nd by Charles Ned

Minutes Recorded By: Kyle Campbell & Jack Reakoff

Minutes Approved By: _____

Date: _____