

# Chignik Advisory Committee

Tuesday and Wednesday, March 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, 2025 at 9am- 12:45pm | Online/teleconference

Join Online: [3.25 Zoom Link](#) and [3.26 Zoom Link](#) | By Phone: 253 215 8782 or 888 475 4499

Tuesday, March 25<sup>th</sup> Meeting ID: 893 1303 3991 | Wednesday, March 26<sup>th</sup> Meeting ID: 859 4340 5215

Call to Order: 9:12 a.m.

## I. Roll Call

- I. Members Present: Austin Shangin, Perryville;  
Ben Allen, Chignik Bay;  
Raechel Allen, Chignik Bay  
Alfredo AbouEid, Chignik Lagoon;  
Marty Takak, Chignik Lake  
Jacob Shangin, Ivanof Bay  
Boris Kosbruk, Perryville  
Axel Kopun (alternate)  
Henry Ericksen (alternate)
- II. Members Absent (Excused): Gene Carlson
- III. Members Absent (Unexcused): Tony Gregorio, Natalie Lind, Edgar Shangin, Steven Shangin, Andrew Lind Sr.,
- IV. Number Needed for Quorum on AC: 7

- II. Fish and Game Staff Present: Carl Burnside, Chignik Area Management Biologist; Natalie Romo, Board Support; Jeff Wadle, Regional Manager; Matt Keyse, Area M Management Biologist; Cassie Whiteside,
- III. Guests Present: Earnie Carlson, Hank Brandal, Chuck McCallum, Earl Krygier, Mallory Zharoff, Mark McNeely, Peter Anderson, Robert Carpenter, Rodney Anderson, Tony Hoblet, Tyler McCormick, Sierra Anderson, Eric Anderson
- IV. Approval of Agenda: Ben made motion to approve. Alfredo seconds. Approval is unanimous.
- V. Reports
  - I. ADF&G-Matt Keyse explains the additional actions to protect kings in Area M in 2025 beginning July 1 (28" or greater non-retention and 1000 trigger cap in Shumagins found in Sand Point Update #1). Carl Burnside gave the current Chignik plan for Chignik king protection. (28" or greater non-retention. 1000 king catch will shut the primary district for 7 days. 5000 kings will trigger a season closure in the district of the primary catch of kings. Also, the Chignik Bay District will be limited to 48 hrs a week fishing.)

Axel asked why there are differences (ie. the 5000 cap in Chignik, the caps only applying to the Shumagin Section vs. all of Chignik, and closing a district vs. closing stat areas) between the Area M and the Chignik Area since Area M historically catches more kings. The department explained that they focused on the area where the highest % of king catch which was the Shumagins. Also, the strong pink forecast in Area M would need other tools to avoid over escapement. Axel pointed out that if a District closes in Chignik, it is going to over escape pinks as well. The pinks in the Shumagins can be caught elsewhere. It all seems unfair. Why does Chignik have harsher restrictions than Area M and Area K? There should be equal application between Areas. The department mentioned that inner bays could still be opened in Chignik. Axel points out that inner bays could be opened also in Area M.

Alfredo also sees that Chignik is being restricted differently in like situations from one area to another.

Raechel asked in Area M, what was the minimum mesh size for gillnets since they could remain open when the seiners were closed from king restrictions. The department was unsure but reported there were less than 200 kings annually contributed from gillnets in the S. Peninsula. Axel explained there is no gillnet minimum mesh size. Raechel asked how gill nets [in the S. Peninsula] are avoiding the kings? The department explained they don't fish in primary king catching areas and they use mesh size that targets sockeye.

Ben asks why the non-retention in area M begins in July and not all season? We are trying to save kings. Department explained that the month of June has full retention in regulation that is in part due to chum conservation.

Ben asked why there isn't a 5000 king triggering shutdown in area M. The department answered that the dynamics of the fishery changes (different locations). Ben sees the Chignik fishery being prosecuted in like manner and doesn't see why the 5000 king cap shouldn't apply in area M likewise or conversely that Chignik should shut a District based on 5000 catch total. Shutting the District in Chignik is too broad of prescription and he feels the approach should be the same in both Areas as all fishermen will go after the fish if they can "to pay the bills". The department states that discussions were made at different times and that contributed to the disparity between areas seen in decisions made from the Commissioner. Ben asked if they will be modified. The department says they are not E.O.'s and there may be in-season flexibility. The intent is to prevent king harvest that is reasonable based on past years.

Axel thinks the cap is punitive but should have been applied to both areas. He also notes that catch reports are given weekly now and that gives less opportunity for fishermen to police themselves. Carl will ask the processors to waive the confidentiality for more timely reports.

Alfredo states that there are areas with little kings caught. Smaller [more discreet stat areas] should be shut based on caps.

The department explained their concern was that an incentive [5000 district shut down trigger] to not hit the caps was needed.

Alfredo doesn't like the varied incentives between the areas and feels that one bad apple or a non-local could spoil it for everyone.

II. Chair: none

III. Others: Chuck McCallum explained there was nothing new yet on the 2020 ,21 and 24 disasters. Raechel asks that everyone with expired terms please go to their respective tribal councils and bring the AC rosters to current status. Natalie Romo has necessary paperwork to be filled out. Austin requested she e-mail these to each member.

IV. Public Comment: Mallory Zharof with the Subsistence Resource Commission working as the tribal liaison and subsistence coordinator with the Katmai National Park is recruiting four members. The commission recognizes the importance of local knowledge and is reaching out to the AC's near the Aniakchak National Monument and other locations. Chuck McCallum has received the flyer.

Ben motions for a ten min. break. Marty seconds.

Reconvened 10:30 am, rollcall, all returned.

#### V. New Business

Area M and Chignik Finfish Call for Proposals: Ben described various fishing options through charts for various fishing times in the Lagoon to avoid Chinook. For comparison Area M has 84 hrs open/36hrs closed for windows.

Rodney suggests shutting at night for maximum use of the time.

Axel, Earl, George and Chuck had gone to BOF meeting. Board members explained that if you want more area, then you give up hours and that breaking up into smaller blocks of time would get no BOF support. We have to meet escapement for 3 yrs to leave stock of concern status.

Chuck spoke on the seriousness of the Chinook run failure and that Chignik should seek solutions that conserve the same amount as the states approach.

Carl described further that to remove the stock of concern designation, then needed is 3 consecutive years of meeting escapement or 4 out of 6 years and that the department believes that the goal will continue to be met.

Axel introduced a possible proposal for when Chinook to better conserve Chinook under certain parameters that would be progressively restrictive. Discussion followed. Carl reported that for the upcoming season he split the Chignik Bay into two stat areas to differentiate harvest information.

Chuck gave some background where at the last BOF meeting there were positions to choose from and the most lenient was chosen in regard to the Chinook stock of concern designation. This issue should have been addressed at many points along the way including at the BOF, before the harvest strategy, and at the in area pre-season meeting. Instead, the announced [in season] closures in 2024 were shocking, lastminute and severely restrictive. A number of stakeholders stated they might not

have gone fishing if they had known the restrictions were going to be that bad. Local knowledge should have been sought earlier. Chuck appreciates the departments open mind at this present time.

Raechel thinks its geat that the AC is addressing this in Chignik so fishing locally can continue in the near term, but recognizes Chignik's lack of Chinook as still a part of a statewide problem (not from Chignik fishing) and thinks the AC should be looking at statewide proposals such as to lowered [less] net depths to correct the problem. The other areas on either side need to be as proactive as Chignik. More needs to be done in all areas around the state as well as federal waters.

Axel mentions he is submitting a proposal to shallow up the nets. If we are serious about protecting kings.

Ben asks if the department would be willing to modify to a larger closed block but shift the hours to later in the month or perhaps to adapt for ease of processing etc. Carl said there was pushback in 2024 and expects dislike for splitting it further apart but he is open to the idea and discussing it.

Henry thinks splitting lagoon into areas is a good tool. He encourages redistricting the lagoon to help keep the lagoon open. Running back and forth between the outside and lagoon from closures is uneconomical.

Marty spoke about window openings historically. He has watched the kings diminishing for some time. Places where they once were found, they have completely disappeared. He believes 12hrs on 12hrs off would help restore the populations.

Carl notes that in like 2020 and 2018 where there Chignik fishing didn't contribute but there wasn't enough kings and that flexibility in this proposal to choose one or both options would help.

Boris asked about kings that rear below the weir. Carl explained they have never been counted to the goal. The goal would most likely raise if they were counted.

Austin is in favor of the proposal that we have to do something, change, to help the king population but it's going to hurt a lot of people.

Rodney believes that the restrictions will help juveniles as they drop into the lagoon but this is only one part of the solution key.

Alfredo asked what would happen if there are no more kings coming back. He would like to know what percent spawns below the weir.

Ben would rather more days if he was fishing the lagoon rather than area.

Laura Stepanoff shared written thoughts that are read. The cannery doesn't like 2 days off in August and it needs to be changed to fishing from 6am-9pm. She would like help from someone to put it in as a proposal.

Motion to recess until 3/26 made by Ben. Seconded by Marty. Recess until 3/26.

3/26/25 Call to order at 9:05 am.

Boris, Austin, Jacob, Marty, Alfredo, Raechel, Ben, Axel, and Henry are present at roll call making quorum.

Cassie Whiteside, ADFG

Chuck McCallum, Earnie Weiss, Mark McNeely, Robert Carpenter, Tyler McCormik, Earl Kreiger, Tom Hoblett are guests announced or listed online.

New Business cont... Axel introduced the adjusted proposal (reworked with F&G input). He confirmed with Carl the intent is kept while giving department flexibility. Axel sees the caps are unfairly burdensome to Chignik and finds little equity in the E.O's in the neighbor Areas [which usually catch double the # of kings than Chignik] for the same stream of Kings. Axel doesn't want arbitrary, punitive and unequal rules and restrictions applied to Chignik such as in the Commissioner's Updates and E.O's. Chignik should have a say in the caps.

Chuck, after reviewing the recent king announcements [from the department], sees the same vulnerable (to fishing) stream of fish existing in Area M as are at Mitrofanina in Chignik yet inequity [in protections and management] existing.

Ben has heard the department respond that they don't know where the kings present at any given time are from. That leads him to believe this is a statewide problem because [Southwest Alaska] is a mixing area and the same rules need to be implemented in all areas where kings are present as it is a responsibility as good stewards to protect them. He explained that it is a fact that at times we catch kings from Washington. They are mixed everywhere. Because they can't be identified but are trending to be placed on the endangered species list, we all should be bound by the same protective rules before the hammer comes down.

Alfredo agrees and doesn't see why Chignik has to shoulder the burden. The draggers catch lots of kings and should share in the rules and restrictions. Everybody has to be treated the same. Also, he would like to look at sunseting any gear depth changes when the kings recover.

Ben looks to understand if the state has ability to control parallel federal fisheries in state waters [within 3 miles]. Cassie mentioned pelagic trawling is allowed in Chignik with applicable triggers/caps and is managed by NOAA. She is not sure what state authority over that fishery is. Ben shared that he has had gear conflict with trawlers while halibut fishing in Chignik. That depth is enough to catch kings.

Earl explains the state has plenty authority to manage groundfish in state waters and to make regs through the BOF and to use E.O's to close an area unless something has changed. He referenced the PWS pollock fishery.

Alfredo during winter fisheries, has seen draggers up inside the bays and has seen them catching lots of kings and other salmon. He has taken salmon from them. He has seen them dumping salmon in bays. They have a much higher king quota than 5000. The fish and game should be doing something about that and controlling it more.

Axel sees the industry running itself and the issue [dragging]. Once kings are placed on the endangered species list the locals will be left holding the bag while the processors and trawlers will leave. The arbitrary caps in Chignik and non-retention don't stop the catches in historically identified locations elsewhere in areas identified by catch data.

The Annual Management Reports in Kodiak are vague and mask information. The commissioner tried to persuade UAF to not work with Chignik in some CIC studies. There are few restrictions being placed on the two biggest interception fisheries in the state [Kodiak and S.Pen]. He feels Chignik is being targeted.

Ben asked if the Mitrofanina section can be split in half because most all of the Chinook are caught in a very small section of the island?

Axel noted that in the past the department hasn't been willing to be precise with management in aiding Chignik to catch surplus salmon. It will depend on the department willingness.

Jacob asked for clarification of what 3 areas in Chignik were the highest catch areas. Carl reported it was Mitrofanina, Hook Bay, and the lagoon then Castle Cape. But they spike inconsistently from year to year. Jacob thought that it might make sense to treat Hook Bay like Mitrofanina then and curtail them both.

Carl said it is too late in the year to split Mitrofanina but it could be a proposal.

Axel recalls [the fleet] being jammed into Central in 2016 in August because of a pink disaster. There was a prevalence of feed in the area and a lot of traveling kings . He doesn't see that happening often.

Alfredo discusses the option of a test fishery if it could help.

Austin asked if anyone would be opposed to a test fishery? Axel wouldn't oppose a test fishery for kings. Immature has to be better defined in the state. Henry wouldn't want test kings held against a cap. Marty would support. Boris would support. Ben supports because the immature kings aren't counted well as they aren't counted well in other test fisheries. More discussion considering locations and timing and how to implement it occurred. The department identified the general timeframes to focus on were the from the middle of July through the first week in August, but narrowed it to 7/15 thru 7/25. Alfredo commented that the kings can move into an area and out again in a few sets timeframe and that kings need to be reported. It was noted that there was only one day last year that was a problem.

Raechel backed off her opinion and while she still likes the idea of a test fishery it should be specifically to identify and count kings. The king problem is state wide, not just Chignik kings and a test fishery is not a deterrent. Test fisheries that sample a few days and then allow everyone to go out and fish as hard as they are allowed, such as in Area M, do not qualify as a deterrent. She thinks the proposal that Axel put out there I think it's going in the right direction. It's to help us get out fishing and it is a deterrent to avoid the King Salmon. In the proposal she would like to see Mitrofanina split into two different stat areas. From her experience, King Salmon aren't on the west side at least not immatures. She also points out that the immatures won't be affected by the net depth changing. The depth doesn't stop you from catching immatures as they tend to be higher up. It's only the over 28 inches or maybe 20 inches that you catch deeper down. There is a difference between immature and adult king salmon and how to protect them differs.

The members discuss how to split Mitrofanina into east and west stat areas. No one opposed the idea.

Ben motions for a ten-minute break. Alfredo seconds.

10:35 a.m. Austin brings the meeting back to order. Roll is called. All 9 members have returned. Austin asked Natalie for clarification that after 3 unexcused meetings the member seat could be vacated. Natalie added that it is at the discretion of the Chair. Discussion of proposals continues...

Alfredo believes shallow nets will help chums and coho more.

Henry acknowledges the immatures are all through the net [depths] but mature kings are deep.

Some minor housekeeping on lagoon gear is needed in 5aac.15.332 seine specifications.

Alfredo from experience recommends sunset clauses if kings return to health because it is hard to get it back (at least 10 years)

Axel points out that seiners catch the vast majority of kings [compared to other gear types] Area M needs to be at 325 as well. If we aren't proactive, it might be imposed on us anyway.

It is noted if the AC submits proposals, that they can be readdressed and edited at later meetings.

Ben motions to support the 3 proposals as a block and submit them – a suite of restrictions in the lagoon to protect kings, splitting Mitrofanina into an east and west section, and shallowing seine depths. Alfredo seconds. Ben calls question. Unanimous consent is given.

Axel presents a joint proposal with AYK to have closure windows in the Shumagins and S. Unimak in June.

Ben gives history of the last recovery from the mid 1900's where the BOF made mandatory windows of 72 hours on and 72 hours off.

Axel describes the proposal and reasoning for this proposal. Kings, chums and sockeye need time to transit the S Pen. It brings the S.Pen back in line with historic amounts of fishing times fished in June. Doubling their hours recently has negatively affected other areas like Chignik, South Central and AYK.

Ben points out that wassip rates are often leaned on to justify fishing, but the reality is that there is no real volume of local sockeye or any local stocks of Chinook in the S.Pen, yet they impact many other areas indiscriminately. It is a melting pot. The significant windows are important for fish to transit through areas as can be seen in Chignik being shut for 5 days a week last year.

Alfredo says it takes 3 days to move fish from the Dolgois to Chignik. He agrees with the proposal to help kings and agrees with Ben.

Raechel notes this would help the Nushagak [kings] as well.

Ben makes a motion to support and submit [preferably jointly with] the proposal as currently written. Seconded by Axel. Unanimous approval given. Axel agreed to reach out to AYK to update them of this action.

Axel inquired if we should submit a proposal to apply the same rules and restriction that are applied to [Chignik]. Ben thinks it is appropriate as [kings] are is a statewide issue. Cook Inlet has problems. Washington and Canada have problems. Henry agrees we should put in something to that effect. Alfredo agrees as Area M fishes like us and what is good for us should be good everywhere. Boris agrees. Ben is concern that we don't become police. Raechel likes the concept but has reservations. Axel explained that this is not an allocation issue and that if the state is really going to do something about it, the restrictions need to be applied across the board in other areas as well, to make a difference. Or things are going to get worse and we will become further restricted. The commissioner is not applying restrictions fairly or evenly between areas that historically catch far more king salmon than Chignik. The issue is what will the future look like? Will Chignik continue to pay the price and carry the burden to solve the problem while other areas keep getting away with [ie. time and area fishing with no applicable conservation burden] stuff. It's not appropriate to having some areas to carry the burden of conservation while other areas don't have to worry about it.

Alfredo says it cannot be just the terminal areas. Earl warns about significant restrictions that happen for instance in CA and OR where complete seasons are closed from the Mexican boarder to Cape falcon. The concern, looking around state at specific King salmon runs in critical condition, is that even if they are small components, need to be addressed by board.

Ben appreciates the restrictions placed on Chignik [to protect kings] but doesn't see it being effective if the fish can't get back to the area. The restrictions need to be implemented everywhere.

Ben suggests a formal letter be sent to the Commissioner from the AC requesting that this be done in other areas so we don't enter the endangered species listing.

Ben makes a motion send a letter to the Commissioner D.V.-L. and to generate a proposal putting like protections as are in Chignik on neighboring areas for kings. Jacob seconds. Ben calls question. Motion carries unanimously. Chuck volunteers to help with the letter. Austin agrees to sign letter.

- VI. Miscellaneous business: Alfredo would like a proposal for a 58" limit on crab boats and a 700-pot limit in the Chignik area with dates from June 1 through Nov., for the next cycle. Chuck agrees with writing it now. Ben suggests adding it to the next agenda. It wouldn't be due until spring of 2027.



VII. Set date of next meeting: April 17<sup>th</sup> at 5 p.m.

VIII. Other: Next meeting will hold officer elections. Natalie will send out memos to members and tribes to get letters of support for member designations. There is a new rule that each community may have one AC alternate as well as the two “undesigned alternates”.

Ben motions to adjourn. Boris seconds.

**ADJOURN:12:02 p.m.**

**Minutes approved by the whole \_\_\_\_\_**  
**Minutes taken by Raechel Allen**