

Western Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council

c/o U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
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DEC 17 2013

LaMont Albertson and Beverly Hoffman, Co-Chairs
Kuskokwim River Salmon Working Group
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
Anchorage Regional Office
333 Raspberry Road
Anchorage, Alaska 99518-1599

Dear Mr. Albertson and Ms. Hoffman:

The Western Interior Alaska Subsistence Regional Advisory Council (Council) was established by the authority in Title VIII of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) and chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act. Section 805 of ANILCA and the Council's charter recognize the Council's authority to initiate, review and evaluate proposals for regulations, policies, management plans, and other matters related to subsistence uses of fish and wildlife on public lands within the region. Section 805 of ANILCA and the Council's charter also provide a forum for the expression of opinions and recommendations regarding any matter related to the subsistence uses of fish and wildlife on public lands within the region.

The Council met in Fairbanks, Alaska in November 2013, and held a follow-up teleconference on December 11, 2013. The Council discussed the past few years of low Yukon and Kuskokwim Chinook salmon runs.

This Council is very concerned about and alarmed with the underachievement of escapement goals on the Kuskokwim River in 2013, especially considering subsistence needs appear to have been met in the Lower Kuskokwim River. This shows that while overall escapement goals are not being met, no changes are being made to Lower Kuskokwim subsistence harvest levels in order to enact some conservation measures.

The Council has directed member Raymond Collins, who is also a member of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (KRSMWG), to relay our concerns about the Kuskokwim River Chinook Salmon to the KRSMWG and discuss appropriate management actions for the 2014 fishing season and beyond. Actions must be taken to maintain adequate escapement enumeration and to ensure escapement goals are met. This important salmon run



must meet escapement goals, and the public must understand the resource will be or may already have been irreparably damaged if overharvest continues. As difficult as it may be comprehensive conservation measures need to be enacted in order to rebuild the population.

Thank you for the opportunity for this Council to provide input on this very important matter. We look forward to continued discussions and dialogue about the issues of and concerns of the subsistence users of the Western Interior Region. If you have any questions about this correspondence, please contact me via Melinda Burke, Subsistence Council Coordinator, with the Office of Subsistence Management at (907) 786-3885 or melinda_burke@fws.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jack Reakoff".

Jack Reakoff, Chair

cc: Federal Subsistence Board

Eugene R. Peltola, Jr. Assistant Regional Director, Office of Subsistence Management

Kathleen M. O'Reilly-Doyle, Deputy Assistant Regional Director

Office of Subsistence Management

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Jennifer Yuhas, Assistant Director, Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Karl Johnstone, Chairman, Alaska Board of Fisheries

Administrative Record