

# Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group

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## Meeting Summary

**June 26, 2013**

Meeting called to order at 10:05 am and adjourned at 1:35 pm. Eleven full voting members were present and a quorum was established.

### AGENDA ITEMS:

Continuing Business: Run assessment and management actions.

Old Business Discussion Topics: *None*

New Business Discussion Topics:

1. Working Group representative to attend Round Table Discussion and Listening Session on Magnusson-Stevens Act Reauthorization with Senator Mark Begich

WORKING GROUP ACTION ITEMS: none

### WORKING GROUP MOTIONS:

1. To accept the agenda as amended. Motion passed unanimously.
2. To restrict all fishing in the Kuskokwim River Drainage to 6-inch or less mesh gillnets for the rest of the season. Motion failed.
3. To accept ADF&G's recommendation that, effective 1:00 am, Friday, June 28, 2013 until 11:00 pm, Wednesday, July 3, 2013, subsistence salmon fishing from the mouth of the Kuskokwim River to Tuluksak is restricted to the use of gillnets with 6-inch or less mesh size, not exceeding 50-fathoms in length and 45 meshes deep. Effective 1:00 am, Wednesday, July 3, 2013 until 11:00 pm, Saturday, July 6, 2013, subsistence salmon fishing from Tuluksak to Chuathbaluk is restricted to the use of gillnets with 6-inch or less mesh size, not exceeding 50-fathoms in length and 45 meshes deep. Hook and line fishing for king salmon is also closed. All existing Tributary Restrictions will remain. Motion passed unanimously.

PEOPLE TO BE HEARD: *Working Group members provide comments at the end of the meeting under "Comments from the Working Group." People to be Heard is reserved for non-working Group members speaking on items not included in the Agenda.*

1. Dan Ausdahl from Kalskag said that he caught about 60 kings to share between 3 families and he felt that there were not many kings this year.
2. Ana Goddhun (ADF&G) presented the Subsistence Division's Kuskokwim Salmon Ethnology (KSE) project. She wanted villages involved in the project to know that a full color summary will be sent to each household. Ana said that the goal of the project was to study how subsistence ways change over time. *Please see the June 26 Information Packet.*

3. Ken Actin (Alaska State Troopers) reported that he has seen more compliance with fishing regulations and boating safety. He was currently concerned about nets blocking channels in Akiachak, Oscarville, and Napaskiak; fishermen who have ignored notices about unmarked setnets; and abandoned setnets with rotten fish that the Troopers have been trying to pull out of the river. He said that one net had 74 kings in it. Ken passed out photographs and asked people to call the Troopers if they find abandoned nets. He said that the owners of the net will be cited and fish that are still edible will be donated.
4. Lucy Simeon from Chuathbaluk commented that fishing for Chinook seemed slow. She reported that her family harvested fewer than 30 kings so far and asked that downriver allow the first fish pass so that upriver may harvest them.
5. Wayne Morgan gave a fishing report from Aniak. He said that two families that started fishing on June 15<sup>th</sup> with 7-inch gear averaged 2 kings per day (with 3 hours of drifting.) Wayne noted that fishing increased on June 22 and then slowed down again. He commented that Chinook are usually caught on the north side of the river, but this year fishing is better on the south side. Wayne said that he harvested 30 kings this year.
6. Dwayne Hoffman from Kalskag reported that fishermen were catching 2 or 3 Chinook in 4 hours of drifting. Then there was a spike and people could catch 15 Chinook if they drifted all day. Dwayne said he harvested 24 kings for his family so far and estimated that other families averaged the same amount. He commented that it has been good drying weather and he supports implementing 6-inch mesh restrictions on the lower river.
7. Betty Turner from Kalskag said that people in Bethel seem to be averaging 30-40 kings per drift. She said she wanted the lower river closed because people were only catching 2 to 3 kings per drift in Kalskag. Betty said she had harvested 30 kings so far to share with 5 families.
8. Julia Dorse from Kalskag reported catching an average of 1 king per 10 drifts. Her family had harvested 20 kings so far.
9. Gerald Kameroff from Kalskag also said that people in Kalskag were not catching very many kings. He had caught less than 20 kings so far and was concerned about the price of gas. He would like to see closures downriver.
10. Phyllis Evan from Lower Kalskag said that fishing was slow and the elders were worried about the high price of gas because they are on a fixed income. She had harvested 14 kings so far to share with multiple families. Yesterday she caught only 2 reds after drifting all day.
11. Edward Nikolai from Atmautluak said that he would appreciate a Working Group representative from his area. He commented that some village members have not finished fishing because they had to wait to get their paychecks to buy gas.

### **CONTINUING BUSINESS:**

#### **1. Subsistence Reports**

- Lowest River Reports:

Charlie Brown (Commercial Fisher member) from Eek said that people appreciated Travis' service this year and the Department allowing salmon harvest. Charlie reported that everyone was finished fishing and busy looking for driftwood for their smokehouses.

- James Charles (Downriver Elder) told Travis Elison that many people from Kwigillingok, Kongiganak, and Tuntutuliak asked him to thank ADF&G and federal staff for "allowing us to fish." James said that many people had finished fishing two weeks ago. He commented that had fished three times and his boys fished 3 times, for a total harvest of 50 kings in 2013. James said that setnets are never left unattended at the mouth because of strong winds, tides, and the long travel required.

- **ONC Inseason Subsistence Report:**

Alissa Joseph (ONC) reported that many families had thanked state and federal staff for allowing subsistence fishing in 2013. She reported that many families had already met their subsistence harvest needs. She commented that some people complained about barges anchoring in fishing sites and ruining people's nets. *See the June 19 Information Packet for full survey results*

- **Lower River Reports:**

Fritz Charles (Member at Large alternate) said that he fishes for four families and was almost finished. He had a total of 10 strips of king salmon in his smokehouse. Fritz also commented that many people thanked ADF&G and USFWS on a June 24 KYUK radio talk show.

Greg Hoffman (Commercial Fisher alternate) said that his family was finished fishing. They kept 6 Chinook and the rest were sockeye.

Greg Roczicka (Lower River Subsistence alternate) commented that fishing in the Bethel area had slowed down and most fishing groups harvested an average of 40-50 kings. People he talked to said they met their needs and were happy.

Bev Hoffman (Chair) reported that she had put up 28 kings, 20 reds, and 10 chum for three families. She said that she usually harvests 80 kings, but purposely put up fewer and kippered quite a few chum and reds instead. Bev commented that people were worried that Chinook could not pass through areas "choked off" by 300 foot nets. Bev also said that, "There are a lot of people coming from the Yukon and all over to fish Kuskokwim kings. We are the only healthy river right now." She talked to many people concerned that the run was being "exploited" or "overharvested" so they were in favor of 6-inch mesh restrictions on the lower river.

John W. Andrew (YK Delta RAC alternate) from Kwethluk said that the majority of people were finished harvesting kings and were now using chum gear. He said that people had asked him to thank the Department and Working Group for allowing early salmon fishing this year. People also asked if tributary restrictions would be lifted on June 26<sup>th</sup>, and staff clarified that tributary restrictions were in effect until July 26. John said that he had caught 10 more kings using 5-1/2" gear

than he did in 2012. He also caught about 70 chum and reds this year, so he was done fishing.

- Middle River Reports:

Bob Aloysius (YK Delta RAC member) made several points. First, he said, "The thing that really pleases me is that people are smiling, that they are able to catch fish. Maybe they don't catch as many as they want or need, but they are able to fish. The drawback is the price of gasoline. You hear that all over." He said that the week before, people had averaged 10 kings in 20 drifts. Bob also commented that people who abandon setnets hurt the native people's image: "They have the ability to go out and fish and they abuse it. They have no respect for the fish, they have no respect for the river, and they have no respect for people who really have to fish for their food. Wasted, absolutely not called for in the Yup'ik culture." Then Bob talked about greed: "Why a 50 fathom net for a handful of fish when you know you are going to get 50 or 60? It's ridiculous." Other comments from Bob were that elders wanted to remind people that we are not fishing "for winter," we are fishing for the next 364 days. He said that he told people who were worried about king numbers to wait about 10 days for abundance to be up again. Lastly, Bob said that many families would like to see 6-inch mesh restrictions on the Lower River.

Gerald Simeon (Middle River Subsistence) said that many boats were sharing fishing sites in Aniak which made fishing difficult. He estimated that people were only averaging 1 king per every couple of drifts. However, he said that families were halfway finished with their subsistence harvest and ~~the~~they were happy to be able to fish.

LaMont Albertson (Sport Fishing) in Aniak said that many people have not caught as many Chinook as they want and have decided to rely more on chum and reds.

Dave Cannon (Middle River Subsistence alternate) commented that he was not going to fish until silvers arrive.

- KNA Inseason Subsistence Reports: LaDonn Robbins (KNA) gave an oral report from the first week of KNA inseason subsistence surveying. *The report she read has been included at the end of this document, since it was not in the June 26 Information Packet.*

- Upper River Subsistence Reports:

Mark Leary (Upriver Subsistence) commented that he had stopped fishing the day before, saying his 6-inch net was taking too many chum. He had harvested 56 kings so far, and noted that those caught recently were smaller and more deteriorated. Mark said he would normally have taken 120 kings if he weren't concerned about conservation. He said that he hopes people understand that, "We can't do what we used to do. There are too many people fishing. The people need to think about their friends and relative above them that still need fish, and about enough getting to spawn - those big females." He said that in the 10 days he had fished this year, Mark put up 39 reds and 40 chums. He commented, "We have everything we need. Less kings, but we have everything we need." He added that he was very glad to hear that lower river subsistence

fishermen met their harvest goals. However, Mark said he was concerned that the big females were getting hit hard by “trophy fishers,” or “people who don’t really need fish.” He also said that someone bragged on Face book that they caught 26 waist-high kings and another person was trying to give away leftover fish from 2012. He stated, “I thought there wasn’t enough fish last year. Time to slow down king fishing in the lower river, please.”

Barbara Carson (Upriver Subsistence alternate) in Sleetmute said that catch numbers for Chinook were good, but the fish were small and mostly male. For example, a catch of 10 kings would be all “jacks” with only 1 or 2 females. She said that there were many chum and sheefish, though. People were smoking sheefish and preparing to put more effort towards harvesting chum and sockeye if the Chinook “did not come in as well up here as they did downriver.”

The Chair said that Evelyn Thomas (Upriver Subsistence alternate) sent an email saying that fishing was slow in Crooked Creek.

Alice Bailey (ADF&G) said that Pete Mellick (Upriver Subsistence alternate) had given her a report similar to the one from Barbara Carlson: many sheefish but no kings yet. Pete thought that it was somewhat normal for kings not to be there at this time of year.

- Headwaters Report:

Dan Esai (Headwaters Subsistence) in Nikolai said that he went fishing for 36 hours around June 22 and caught 32 kings, 3 of which were female. The first king he caught this year was on June 15 in between McGrath and Nikolai. He also noted that the kings have been very oily and good. Dan also commented that gas costs \$8 per gallon in the headwaters area.

Ray Collins (Sport Fishing) said that fishing was very slow and only 2 Chinook had been caught in McGrath so far. He commented that it was significant that Dan Esai caught a Chinook salmon at the Big River before McGrath saw any. Ray thought that it must have made it upriver before fishing started.

- Questions/Comments:

There was some discussion about the *Ichthyophonus* parasite in salmon. Alissa Joseph clarified that ONC surveyors only collect samples from fish with signs of *Ichthyophonus*; they do not process samples. Ken Harper explained that *Ichthyophonus* is a parasite that infects Chinook salmon and other marine species of fish that gives the fish a fruity smell and pustules in the meat. He said that infected fish are safe to eat if cooked, but he was not sure if they would be safe to eat when dried. Tim Andrew (AVCP) commented that *Ichthyophonus* had been prevalent on the Yukon River in the past. He said that the disease affects the heart of the salmon and makes the flesh difficult to dry. *Later in the meeting, Ken Harper stated that if people preserved the fish with signs of Ichthyophonus on ice he would ship them to Anchorage to test them.*

Bob Aloysius asked for clarification on rod and reel fishing regulations at the mouth of the Aniak River. Travis Elison replied that current tributary restrictions for subsistence fishing only apply to inside the Aniak River. Therefore,

subsistence fishing for Chinook salmon with rod and reel at the Aniak seawall is currently allowed.

## 2. Overview of Kuskokwim River salmon run assessment projects:

- Bethel Test Fishery: Colton Lipka (ADF&G) reported that the river had dropped to an average water level. He said water temperature was average and water clarity remained below average. Colton commented that the June 25 Chinook salmon Cumulative CPUE was similar to last year, the chum salmon Cumulative CPUE was near previous years, and the sockeye Cumulative CPUE looked good. *Please see June 26 Information Packet for CPUE values.*

Discussion:

Bob Aloysius asked why the water level was measured at Crooked Creek. Kevin Schaberg replied that the Department used data from a USGS automatic gauge located at that village. He said that Crooked Creek is a good location because it is not affected by tides.

Casie Stockdale asked what percentage of fish caught at BTF were female. In response, Amy Brodersen (ADF&G) gave some preliminary data from 2013 BTF Chinook scale samples. Amy said that the average sex ratio caught with 8-inch mesh was 63% male to 30% female, while the average sex ratio caught in 5 3/8-inch mesh was 86% male to 14% female. She noted an increase in females from June 22-23 in both net sizes. She said that average fish length was 32 inches (790 mm) in the 8-inch net and 24 inches (591 mm) in the 5 3/8-inch net.

Gene Peltola (USFWS) asked for an explanation of the cumulative CPUE figure for Chinook salmon. Kevin Schaberg (ADF&G) replied that, "A projection from the BTF tool looks like we are going to achieve a BTF value above our target." Kevin clarified that even though 2012 achieved the escapement goal, it took 35 days of restriction and significant harvest reduction. He said that the Department will manage conservatively because there has been more harvest this year above the BTF site. Kevin also noted that the 2013 Chinook CPUE figure is adjusted to the new Escapement Goal Range (65,000-120,000).

Mark Leary commented that people surveyed by ONC said that Chinook run timing seemed normal, but the BTF graph indicated late run timing. Kevin Schaberg replied that Chinook run came in about 1 week late and relatively strong, so there was less time in between the beginning of the run and higher densities of fish. Kevin stated that BTF had not seen a spike in the Chinook Cumulative CPUE because of harvest in the lower river. He also clarified that the graph only shows run timing at the BTF site.

- Weirs:

Brittany Blain (ADF&G) stated that all weirs were operational except for Kogrukluuk, which should be operational within a day. She gave updated cumulative passage counts for Chinook, chum, and sockeye salmon. *Please see June 26 Information Packet for weir counts.*

Questions/Comments:

James Charles commented that when people complain about weirs, he tells them that weirs are good tools. James asked if many fish go up side creeks before reaching the weirs. Travis Elison replied that only 25% of escapement is counted by weirs, so the majority of fish do not have to go through them. In response to people's concerns about weirs, Kevin Schaberg said that fish passage is only hindered temporarily while crews count. He added that the opening where fish pass upriver is placed where they naturally want to swim. Bev commented that it is good for Working Group members to explain the value of run assessment tools to the public, like James did.

Bob Aloysius asked if Aniak Sonar was operational this year, and Kevin Schaberg replied that the project was not.

**3. Intercept Fisheries Report:** *Please see June 26 Information Packet*

**4. Weather:**

- The forecast for the Kuskokwim River was to remain partly cloudy with 10-15 mph north/northwest winds, followed by west winds for a few days.

**5. Discussion about implementing a 6-inch mesh restriction on the lower river for king salmon conservation purposes:**

- Mark Leary said he introduced this agenda item because "It's been a very good year for the lower river and they've had a good opportunity to fish, and we are glad for them. We would just like the same opportunity and at the same time take some concrete steps to save what's left of the run, especially those females." He was concerned that female kings were getting caught somewhere because he has seen very few of them. Mark suggested going to smaller gear because it was the only other option besides total closure.

- Discussion:

James Charles commented that he and other fishermen in Tuntutuliak were not catching many female Chinook, either. He said that he tried to help upriver by using 6-inch mesh at the beginning of the season. James supported Mark's recommendation.

In regard to salmon age, Amy Brodersen commented that 2013 scale samples to date indicated that the 8-inch BTF net caught more 5-6 year old Chinook salmon and the 5 3/8 net caught more 4-year olds.

Greg Roczicka commented that last week could have been too early for catching large Chinook in Napaimute because of the late run timing. Greg predicted that a second pulse of Chinook would arrive in the next 5 days, so he thought it was a good time for mesh restrictions. He said it was also a good time because most people in the lower river already had full fish racks.

NOTE: *At this point Motion 2 was made. See more discussion on the topic of 6-inch mesh restrictions under Comments for Motion 2 and Comments for Motion 3.*

**6. Recommendation:** Effective 1:00 am, Friday, June 28, 2013, until 11:00 pm, Wednesday, July 3, 2013, subsistence salmon fishing from the mouth of the Kuskokwim River to Tuluksak is restricted to the use of gillnets with 6-inch or less mesh size, not exceeding 50-fathoms in length and 45 meshes deep. Effective 1:00 am, Wednesday, July 3, 2013 until 11:00 pm, Saturday, July 6, 2013, subsistence salmon fishing from Tuluksak to Chuathbaluk is restricted to the use of gillnets with 6-inch or less mesh size, not exceeding 50-fathoms in length and 45 meshes deep. Hook and line fishing for king salmon is also closed. All existing Tributary Restrictions will remain.

- Remarks by state and federal staff:

Tom Doolittle (USFWS) said that the initial action for this recommendation was based on conservation concerns. When agency staff saw that the Cumulative Chinook CPUE was close to 2012, "one of the worst runs on record," they decided to take regulatory action. Tom said that the Refuge was more confident that escapement goals will be met in 2013, but it was time to protect some of the larger females headed to lower river tributaries. He also stated that, "...the future of subsistence is to protect these fish."

Kevin Schaberg said that ADF&G had some concern for escapement: "We have information that says we may achieve [escapement]. So to be as minimally impacting as we can for everyone, we came up with this idea of restrictions." He pointed out that run was at 30% at Tuluksak, so the bulk of the run had not reached areas where people currently have fishing concerns. Nevertheless, the restrictions were intended to be at the peak of the run in each closure section and the 6-inch gear restriction would help larger Chinook make it to spawning grounds.

Gene Peltola stated that USFWS agreed to the recommendation based on these factors: "First and foremost, conservation of the resource." He said there were concerns about escapement on the Kwethluk and Tuluksak Rivers, and some people were also concerned about conservation on the Aniak River. Secondly, he said that the recommendation was designed so that the lower section would have more days of restriction than the upper section. Gene noted that, "This is one of the first times that we have looked at, as a group, the disparity between the lower river and the upper river. I think that this is a ...step in the right direction."

Kevin Schaberg said that, based on estimates of run timing, 24% of the run would be protected in the lower section and 17% in the upper section, which allows more subsistence fishing opportunity and better densities of Chinook in the upper river.

- Agreement:

Gerald Simeon said he agreed with the Department's choice of restriction dates because he thinks Aniak will be "slammed" with fishermen over the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend.



Greg Roczicka said that the recommendation was “fair” because everyone has had 26 days of unrestricted fishing, not just the lower river. He pointed out that many people upriver have harvested more kings than he had in Bethel. For example, Greg said that his harvest was only 16 “mixed” species of salmon.

- Disagreement:

Bob Aloysius explained that he made Motion 2 (restricting the whole river to 6-inch mesh for the entire season) because, “Simply everybody is concerned about conserving king salmon.” Bob remarked that the Department’s recommendation was too “wishy-washy.”

Mark Leary thanked the Department for taking some measure, but said he disagreed with restricting above Tuluksak. Travis Elison replied that Tuluksak to Chuathbaluk would only be restricted for 4 days, which is shorter than downriver. He said that the Aniak River was included in the restricted area because it is a big producer of Chinook salmon and the communities of Kalskag and Aniak harvest a significant amount of kings. Travis also said he wanted to include the seawall in Aniak because it has become a “harvest hotspot.”

- Other comments:

Casie Stockdale suggested extending restrictions on the Lower River to protect fish during the 4<sup>th</sup> of July weekend, then push back or overlap the upper section’s closure dates. Travis Elison replied that 90% of the Chinook run would be past Bethel by July 8<sup>th</sup>, and the remaining 10% comes in over a 3-week period, so changing the dates would not protect many fish. Casie later thanked Kevin Schaberg for explaining that the dates were chosen based on when the run would be most protected.

Mark Leary commented that it looks like the cumulative CPUE for BTF had peaked. Kevin Schaberg clarified that we are close to 50% of the run, but to remember that some tides catch more fish than others when looking at the daily BTF CPUEs.

Dave Cannon said that we are approaching “conservation mode” because too many lower river fishermen have had unlimited fishing. Bev replied that subject of Bethel’s large fishing population will be interesting discussion at the Interagency Meeting. Dave Cannon also wanted clarification on hook and line fishing because many sport fishers still catch and release Chinook. Ken Actin explained that Chinook cannot be targeted in Sport Fishing, and if they are caught they have to be left in the water and released immediately.

**OLD BUSINESS:** none

**NEW BUSINESS:**

- Working Group representative to attend Round Table Discussion and Listening Session on Magnusson-Stevens Act Reauthorization with Senator Mark Begich. *Chris Shelden (ADF&G) stated that the Co-chairs will choose a representative to send to the discussion and for members to email suggestions for talking points to him.*

## WORKING GROUP MOTIONS:

**MOTION 1:** To accept the agenda as amended. Motion passed unanimously (11 yeas, 0 nays).

**MOTION 2:** To restrict all fishing in the Kuskokwim River Drainage to 6-inch or less mesh gillnets for the rest of the summer. Motion failed (2 yeas, 7 nays).

## COMMENTS FOR MOTION 2:

- Disagreement:

Greg Roczicka suggested that restrictions be in effect for the remainder of the month or Chinook run, not for the rest of the season.

Glen Kameroff was concerned that 6-inch mesh would target smaller Chinook that could return to the ocean and grow more. Bev Hoffman corrected him, saying once salmon go upriver they spawn and never come back. Glen then said that 6-inch mesh would prevent people from catching good-sized kings, so he only wanted restrictions for the lower river.

Mark Leary clarified that he recommended restrictions only for the lower river.

Dwayne Hoffman commented that he supported restricting only the lower river because people in the upper river had not met their subsistence needs yet.

- Other comments:

Stuart Currie asked when 90% of the Chinook run was at Bethel. Travis Elison estimated between July 5-8<sup>th</sup>.

**MOTION 3:** To support the ADF&G recommendation.

## COMMENTS FOR MOTION 3:

*Please see Agreement / Disagreement / Other Comments under the ADF&G Recommendation in Continuing Business.*

## GENERAL COMMENTS FROM WORKING GROUP MEMBERS:

James Charles reiterated his appreciation of decisions made by the Department and USFWS this season. He said that people wanted the Working Group to know they were catching fish this year, unlike last year. James pointed out that people have gone outside of boundaries to catch kings before, and they may go up above the boundary to do that with this recommendation.

Dan Esai commented that he is "good with it" (the recommendation).

Henry Lupie said that both he and his people think that this year was "a great improvement in the effort made by ADF&G and USFWS." He said that many people already switched to 5 ½- inch gear and try to fish during the high tide.

Ray Collins commented, "We need to talk about what is a 'reasonable' harvest for subsistence of kings." Ray said that people couldn't expect more than 30 kings for the entire community of McGrath, but some *individuals* are taking more than that downriver.

He said that he didn't expect the Chinook run to continue at the level we are harvesting. Ray was happy that many people were making efforts to use smaller gear and other species.

John Andrew said that most people in his village switched to 6-inch gear a few years ago and were happy with catching kings incidentally. He said he did not like to hear complaints about downriver having 26 days of unrestricted subsistence fishing because last year he fished 2 days and this year he fished 4 days. He said, "There is a certain amount of fish you can take and process for the day. If you take too much it will spoil."

Stuart Currie said that the meeting had good discussion and the recommendation was the best solution because it seemed the most fair for everyone.

Casie commented, "This was a pretty tough conversation that went pretty well. Some people might go home with hard feelings, but I want to encourage the people from upriver to continue participating because it's really important to hear everybody."

Fritz Charles commented that people have to buy at least 15-20 gallons of gas for their boats per fishing trip in Tuntutuliak and Eek. He said, "Yes, you might get more fish, but ~~it's~~ still 20 gallons." He speculated that people upriver needed only half as much gas. Fritz also reminded the Working Group that Bob Aloysius kept wanted "Lowest River" added to Subsistence Reports on the agenda. Finally, he said that 95% of the kings he put away were males, and it didn't seem like there were very many females coming up the river. He reiterated that he only harvested 6 kings for 4 families.

Travis Elison requested that, "When people are concerned about salmon management on the Kuskokwim River, concerns need to be directed ...to Fish and Game, and preferably to myself." He explained that even though ADF&G works with USFWS, ADF&G's Commercial Fisheries Division is the lead management agency for Kuskokwim River salmon, and he, Travis, is the lead manager. Travis said that he had only talked to one person who had a concern before this meeting, but at the meeting it seemed like many people wanted 6-inch mesh restrictions and weren't getting enough fish upriver. He urged, "That stuff really needs to go through me so that we can be most effective in management."

**WORKING GROUP ATTENDANCE:**

<b>MEMBER SEAT:</b>	<b>NAME:</b>
DOWNRIVER ELDER	James Charles
UPRIVER ELDER	<i>Vacant</i>
LOWER RIVER SUBSISTENCE	Greg Roczicka
MIDDLE RIVER SUBSISTENCE	Gerald Simeon
UPRIVER SUBSISTENCE	Mark Leary
HEADWATERS SUBSISTENCE	Dan Esai
MEMBER AT LARGE	Henry Lupie
WESTERN INTERIOR RAC	Ray Collins
YK DELTA RAC	Bob Aloysius
COMMERCIAL FISHING	Charlie Brown
SPORT FISHING	LaMont Albertson
PROCESSOR	Stuart Currie
ADF&G	Travis Elison
CHAIR	Bev Hoffman / Fritz Charles

<b>Other Participants:</b>	
<p><u>ADF&amp;G Comm. Fish:</u> Chris Shelden, Corrine Truesdale, Amy Brodersen, Colton Lipka, Kevin Schaberg, Travis Elison</p> <p><u>Sport Fish:</u> John Chythlook</p> <p><u>Subsistence Division:</u> Hiroko Ikuta, Anna Goddhun, Dave Runfola</p>	
<p><u>USFWS:</u> Steve Miller, Tom Doolittle, and Gene Peltola, Jr.</p> <p><u>OSM:</u> Don Rivard, Ken Harper</p>	
<p>LaDonn Robbins (KNA)            Casie Stockdale (AVCP)            Alissa Joseph (ONC)            Roberta Chavez (ONC)            Shawna Thoma (Senator Begich)            Gerri Sumpter (Senator Murkowski)            Melvin Pavilla (KYUK radio)            Wayne Morgan (Aniak)            Kate Schaberg (Georgetown)            Audrey Leary (Napaimute)            Lisa Meyerheisen (Chuathbaluk)</p>	<p>Betty Turner (Kalskag)            Julia Dorse (Kalskag)            Phillip Evan (Kalskag)            Natasia Levi (Lower Kalskag)            Dwayne Hoffman (Kalskag)            Dan Ausdahl (Kalskag)            Ken Actin (Alaska Wildlife Troopers)            Dave Cannon (alternate member)            Barbara Carson (alternate member)            John Andrew (alternate member)            Fritz Charles (alternate member)            Greg Hoffman, Jr. (alternate member)</p>

**GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS:**

Alaska Department of Fish and Game (**ADF&G**), Orutsararmiut Native Council (**ONC**), Kuskokwim Native Association (**KNA**), Association of Village Council Presidents (**AVCP**), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (**USFWS**), Bethel Test Fishery project (**BTF**), Catch Per Unit Effort (**CPUE**), Coastal Village Seafoods (**CVS**), ADF&G Commercial Fisheries Division (**CF**), ADF&G Sport Fisheries Division (**SF**), Regional Advisory Council (**RAC**), Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (**KRSMWG or Working Group, WG**), Sustainable Escapement Goal (**SEG**), Biological Escapement Goal (**BEG**), Management Objective (**MO**), Amounts Reasonably Necessary for Subsistence (**ANS**), Emergency Order (**EO**)

## KNA Weekly Subsistence Fishing Reports

\*NR = No Response

VILLAGE	GEAR TYPE	SPECIES	Weekly Total of fish caught
<b>Aniak</b>	Driftnet 6"		
<u>Comments:</u> Fished two days, 6 drifts. Took a lot more drifts this year than last year. Wants 30 sockeye and 30 coho still. Weather is making it more difficult. The water is too calm. Less chum & kings this year since last year. Conservation is Imperative.		<b>Sockeye</b>	0
		<b>Chinook</b>	3
		<b>Coho</b>	0
		<b>Chum</b>	2
<b>Aniak</b>	Driftnet		
<u>Comments:</u> 4 1/2 mesh & 6 1/2 Chinook mesh. Red run is easier. Wants 100 more salmon. Thinks the late break up had an effect on the salmon runs.		<b>Sockeye</b>	7
		<b>Chinook</b>	5
		<b>Coho</b>	0
		<b>Chum</b>	15
<b>Aniak</b>	Setnet (Dog net)		
<u>Comments:</u> Setnet 12 days ago. More fish than last year. Plan for 100 more dog salmon (Chums). Gets what they need every year.		<b>Sockeye</b>	21
		<b>Chinook</b>	21
		<b>Coho</b>	0
		<b>Chum</b>	28
<b>Aniak</b>	Driftnet, Setnet & Rod n Reel		
<u>Comments:</u> The setnet is checked every day. Started fishing 2 weeks ago. Chum Net and King net. Kings were bigger last year. 30 drifts and got only 2 kings. More chums. Red run is the same. Want 50 more fish. Thinks Bethel takes all of the fish.		<b>Sockeye</b>	7
		<b>Chinook</b>	13
		<b>Coho</b>	0
		<b>Chum</b>	40
<b>Red Devil</b>	Setnet		
<u>Comments:</u> Reported they are catching sockeyes and reds on the south side and whitefish on the north side of the river. They have been fishing since the beginning of June and have caught only 4 Kings. The chum salmon look really good though, better than last year and they are putting up some of those. They are worried about the lower river catching all of the kings, lowering the chances of people up river catching Kings.		<b>Sockeye</b>	
		<b>Chinook</b>	4
		<b>Coho</b>	
		<b>Chum</b>	
<b>Aniak</b>	Driftnet 8"		
<u>Comments:</u> Fished for 12 hours on 6/23 (Sunday) and caught 3 kings and 3 reds. Did 4 drifts 6/24 (Monday) and caught 3 kings and 3 reds. Fishing seems to be picking up, hopefully.		<b>Sockeye</b>	6
		<b>Chinook</b>	6
		<b>Coho</b>	
		<b>Chum</b>	

## KNA Weekly Subsistence Fishing Reports

\*NR = No Response

VILLAGE	GEAR TYPE	SPECIES	Weekly Total of fish caught
<b>Aniak</b>	Setnet 5"; Drift net 6"		
<p>Drifted with a 6" mesh last Friday for 20 minutes and caught 1 small king, 1 small red, and 3 chum. Mostly fishing with a 5" setnet right now and only catching whitefish. Drifting is not worth the cost of gas right now. Will try again the end of next week. Hopefully will be more fish in the river when people are done fishing around Bethel. Many years ago used to be done fishing by solstice but not in many years because the price of gas doesn't make it worth it for the effort.</p>		<b>Sockeye</b>	1
		<b>Chinook</b>	1
		<b>Coho</b>	0
		<b>Chum</b>	3
<b>Aniak</b>	Drift net 6"		
<p><u>Comments:</u> Started fishing a week ago, more kings and reds this year, made 4-5 drifts. Thinks the late break up made the fish late.</p>		<b>Sockeye</b>	6
		<b>Chinook</b>	6
		<b>Coho</b>	0
		<b>Chum</b>	14
<b>Aniak</b>	Setnet - checks every day		
<p><u>Comments:</u> Started 3 weeks ago, more kings last year and bigger. Chums are getting thicker, and the reds never change. Done for the season. The weather is better this year. They would like to see more fish monitoring.</p>		<b>Sockeye</b>	20
		<b>Chinook</b>	50
		<b>Coho</b>	0
		<b>Chum</b>	12
<b>Aniak</b>	Drift net - King net		
<p><u>Comments:</u> Averaging 6 drifts a day, more kings than last year. Reds and chum are the same. Want 100 fish. Likes that there are no closures for middle Kuskokwim. Said the closures last year were timed wrong. Wants house hold limits depending on size.</p>		<b>Sockeye</b>	5 - 6/24, 10 - 6/25
		<b>Chinook</b>	8 - 6/24, 14 - 6/25
		<b>Coho</b>	
		<b>Chum</b>	2 - 6/24, 25 - 6/25
<b>Aniak</b>	Drift Net - 8"		
<p><u>Comments:</u> Has been fishing for 8 days. Feels that the king run is average this year, there are lots of chum salmon, and less reds. Usually puts up 9-10 kings in the smokehouse so is done for the season. Enjoying the beautiful weather.</p>		<b>Sockeye</b>	4
		<b>Chinook</b>	8
		<b>Coho</b>	
		<b>Chum</b>	4
<b>Aniak</b>	Driftnet 6"		
<p><u>Comments:</u> Drifting with 6" mesh caught 2 jack kings, 2 sheefish, and a lot of chum. Tried a short king net but didn't catch anything. This is the first time in probably 30 years don't have 10 kings and some reds in the smokehouse by this time of year. Some people got fish early but not much since then. Hoping there's going to be another run. Surprised people are fishing so hard down river on a low run.</p>		<b>Sockeye</b>	0
		<b>Chinook</b>	2
		<b>Coho</b>	0
		<b>Chum</b>	many (did not count)

## KNA Weekly Subsistence Fishing Reports

\*NR = No Response

VILLAGE	GEAR TYPE	SPECIES	Weekly Total of fish caught
<b>Sleetmute</b>			
<u>Comments:</u> They have not started fishing yet.		<b>Sockeye</b>	
		<b>Chinook</b>	
		<b>Coho</b>	
		<b>Chum</b>	
<b>Stony River</b>			
<u>Comments:</u> Have not started fishing yet due to the slow run. People who are fishing in Stony River aren't getting enough yet to make it worthwhile to go out.		<b>Sockeye</b>	
		<b>Chinook</b>	
		<b>Coho</b>	
		<b>Chum</b>	
<b>Red Devil</b>			
<u>Comments:</u> Tried to fish a couple of times, but were not catching adequate numbers to keep wasting gas.		<b>Sockeye</b>	
		<b>Chinook</b>	
		<b>Coho</b>	
		<b>Chum</b>	