

Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group

1 (800) 315-6338 (MEET) Code: 58756# (KUSKO)

ADF&G Bethel toll free: 1 (855) 933-2433

August 23, 2017

Meeting called to order at 10:01 a.m. on Wednesday August 23, 2017 and adjourned at 11:44 a.m. Meeting time was approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes. Six full voting members and the ADF&G representative were present; a quorum for non-fishery management issues was established.

AGENDA ITEMS:

Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) Management Actions Under Consideration:

Continuing Business: Run assessment and management actions.

People to be Heard:

Old Business Discussion Topics:

- FACA group update.
- Working Group By-Laws update.
- National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis (NCEAS) meeting.

New Business Discussion Topics:

- Spring Working Group meeting and dates.
- BSFA'S Kuskokwim River salmon production planning process.

WORKING GROUP ACTION ITEMS: *No Action Items at the time of this meeting.*

WORKING GROUP MOTIONS:

1. Approve the agenda as amended. *Passed (Unanimous)*
2. To add Ray Collins as a Working Group representative during the formation of the Kuskokwim River Partnership (FACA group). *Passed (Unanimous)*
3. Support the Bering Sea Fisheries Association (BSFA) in development of a Kuskokwim River Comprehensive Salmon Production Plan. *Passed (6 yeas, 0 nays, 1 abstention)*
4. Adjourn at 11:44 a.m. *Passed (Unanimous)*

ADF&G MANAGEMENT ACTIONS UNDER CONSIDERATION: Aaron Tiernan (ADF&G acting Area Management Biologist) reported that ADF&G was considering rescinding the Kuskokwim River tributary restrictions in place throughout the 2017 fishery season. Mr. Tiernan commented that there would be no additional catcher-seller opportunities for the 2017 coho salmon season.

PEOPLE TO BE HEARD:

- Tim Andrew (ONC) suggested that other harvest methods for abundant fish species during times of conservation be considered in the future. He announced that on September 6–7, 2017 the Conservation of Arctic Flora and Fauna (CAFF) would be meeting in Bethel.
- Albert Kawagley (Bethel) commented that he appreciated what he learned during the 2017 Working Group meetings.

SUBSISTENCE REPORTS:

- **Lowest River:** James Charles (Downriver Elder) commented that fishers reported a good coho salmon run in the lower river to date and that people were meeting their subsistence needs with coho salmon.
- **Upriver:** Barbara Carlson (Upriver Subsistence alternate) reported that the Sleetmute fish wheel was in operation and coho salmon, to date, were arriving in quantity. She commented that the coho salmon appeared to have a later than normal run timing. People continued to harvest fish in her area using gillnets, hook and line and the fish wheel.

Meeting summaries are prepared and distributed by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) in cooperative agreement with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service Office of Subsistence Management (USF&WS OSM). The department is responsible for summary content. Summaries are not comprehensive or considered meeting minutes, and are designed to provide context on meeting proceedings for the convenience of interested parties/participants. Audio recordings of meetings can be found at: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareakuskokwim.kswg#2017>

Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group

1 (800) 315-6338 (MEET) Code: 58756# (KUSKO)

ADF&G Bethel toll free: 1 (855) 933-2433

CONTINUING BUSINESS:

1. **Overview of Kuskokwim River Salmon Run Assessment Projects:** Nicholas Smith (ADF&G) provided an overview of the assessment projects. (*For more information on the 2017 inseason projects, please see the August 23 Informational Packet*).
 - **Bethel Test Fish:** As of August 22, the cumulative CPUE for coho salmon was 3,057. To date, approximately ~94% of the coho salmon run had passed Bethel based on historical run timing data; BTF indicated that the coho salmon run was late.
 - **Radio Tagging:** Residents from Kwethluk and Napaskiak had won the June and July radio tagging lottery drawings. Two additional drawings were scheduled to occur in 2017.
 - **Weirs:** Based on historical data, ~15-30% of the coho salmon run had passed through all weir projects. The Kogrukuk River weir became fish tight on August 21; this project had been inoperable due to high water since July 26. The Tatlawiksuk River weir remained inoperable due to high water and broken panels.
2. **Commercial:** The single registered Kuskokwim River catcher-seller had completed their 2017 commercial fishing operations for coho salmon.
3. **Sport Fish:** John Chythlook (ADF&G) commented that sport fishing reports indicated a successful coho salmon sport fishery in the Kuskokwim River drainage.
4. **Intercept Fishery:** Jennifer Hooper (AVCP) reported that SeaShare representatives had met with local organizations to determine interest in program participation. Janessa Esquible (ONC) commented that ONC met with SeaShare and discussed acquiring equipment for local fish distribution for the 2018 fishing season.
5. **Discussion of ADF&G Management Consideration and Discussion of Possible Alternatives:** *There were no fishery management motions for discussion.*

OLD BUSINESS:

- **FACA Group update:** Barbara Carlson summarized the August 17, 2017 FACA group meeting; *Kuskokwim River Partnership* had been selected as the group's official name. Ms. Carlson reported that the partnership's facilitator would be a USFWS employee and there would be 13 stakeholder seats. She commented that once the final draft of the charter had been completed, she would provide it to Working Group members for their review. (*See Motion 2*).
- **Working Group By-Laws update:** Jen Peeks (ADF&G) commented that a draft of the proposed Working Group by-law changes would be distributed to Working Group members for their review prior to the 2018 spring meeting.
- **National Center for Ecological Analysis and Synthesis (NCEAS) meeting:** Working Group members discussed sending an additional Working Group representative to the fall 2017 NCEAS meeting in Santa Barbara, California. Lisa Feyereisen (Middle River Subsistence alternate) had expressed interest in attending. Barbara Carlson and LaMont Albertson planned to follow-up on funding options.

NEW BUSINESS:

- **Spring Working Group meeting and dates:** Working Group members recommended that the 2018 spring meeting occur during the last two weeks in March. Some members suggested that the spring meeting location alternate between Bethel and Anchorage.

Meeting summaries are prepared and distributed by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) in cooperative agreement with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service Office of Subsistence Management (USF&WS OSM). The department is responsible for summary content. Summaries are not comprehensive or considered meeting minutes, and are designed to provide context on meeting proceedings for the convenience of interested parties/participants. Audio recordings of meetings can be found at: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareakuskokwim.kswg#2017>

Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group

1 (800) 315-6338 (MEET) Code: 58756# (KUSKO)

ADF&G Bethel toll free: 1 (855) 933-2433

- **BSFA'S Kuskokwim River salmon production planning process:** James Simon (BSFA, Jim Simon Consulting Group, LLC) provided an overview of the Alaska salmon fishery enhancement program. He explained that the program aimed to improve salmon harvest opportunities within regional salmon fisheries without negatively impacting natural stocks. BSFA intended to recommend to the ADF&G Commissioner the establishment of a Kuskokwim River regional planning team. BSFA sought Working Group support. *(For more information, please see the August 23 Informational Packet and Motion 3.)*

WORKING GROUP MOTIONS:

1. **Approve the agenda as amended. Passed (Unanimous)**
2. **To add Ray Collins as a Working Group representative during the formation of the Kuskokwim River Partnership (FACA group). Passed (Unanimous)**
3. **Support the Bering Sea Fisheries Association (BSFA) in development of a Kuskokwim River Comprehensive Salmon Production Plan. Passed (6 yeas, 0 nays, 1 abstention)**
4. **Adjourn at 11:44 a.m. Passed (Unanimous)**

COMMENTS FROM THE WORKING GROUP:

- LaMont Albertson (Sport Fishing) thanked ADF&G for their recommendations and management efforts during the 2017 salmon fishery season.
- James Charles thanked Jen Peeks for assisting with the Working Group meetings.
- Ray Collins (Western Interior RAC) commented that he appreciated the 2017 Chinook salmon conservation in the lower river and recognized the hardships that may have occurred. He added that he hoped that the conservation efforts would continue into the future to help increase salmon production.
- Barbara Carlson thanked the Working Group participants for attending the 2017 inseason meetings.

Meeting summaries are prepared and distributed by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) in cooperative agreement with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service Office of Subsistence Management (USF&WS OSM). The department is responsible for summary content. Summaries are not comprehensive or considered meeting minutes, and are designed to provide context on meeting proceedings for the convenience of interested parties/participants. Audio recordings of meetings can be found at: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareakuskokwim.kswg#2017>

Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group

1 (800) 315-6338 (MEET) Code: 58756# (KUSKO)

ADF&G Bethel toll free: 1 (855) 933-2433

WORKING GROUP ATTENDANCE:

MEMBER SEAT:	NAME:
DOWNRIVER ELDER	James Charles
UPRIVER ELDER	<i>Vacant</i>
LOWER RIVER SUBSISTENCE	Mary Peltola
MIDDLE RIVER SUBSISTENCE	Absent
UPRIVER SUBSISTENCE	Mark Leary
HEADWATERS SUBSISTENCE	Absent
MEMBER AT LARGE	Absent
WESTERN INTERIOR RAC	Ray Collins
YK DELTA RAC	Absent
COMMERCIAL FISHING	Greg Hoffman Jr.
SPORT FISHING	LaMont Albertson
PROCESSOR	<i>Vacant</i>
KRITFC	Absent
ADF&G	Aaron Tiernan
CHAIR	LaMont Albertson

Other Participants:

ADF&G Comm. Fish: Aaron Tiernan, Charles Brazil, Nicholas Smith, Jordan Head, Jen Peeks

Sport Fishing: John Chythlook, Tim Viavant

Subsistence Division: Lisa Olsen, Dave Runfola

USFWS: Ken Stahlnecker, Lew Coggins, Aaron Webber

OSM: Frank Harris

Jim Simon (BSFA, KRITFC)	Jeff Sanders (Bethel)	<u>WG Alternates:</u> Greg Hoffman Jr.
Janessa Esquible (ONC)	Albert Kawagley (Bethel)	
Time Andrew (ONC)	Bill Bechtol (KRITFC)	
Jennifer Hooper (AVCP)	Orie Reich (BSFA)	
Dan Gillikin (NVN)	<u>Media:</u> Anna Rose MacArthur (KYUK)	
Karen Gillis (BSFA)	Lisa Demer (ADN)	

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS:

Alaska Department of Fish and Game (**ADF&G, department, State**), Orutsararmiut Native Council (**ONC**), Association of Village Council Presidents (**AVCP**), Georgetown Traditional Council (**GTC**), 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, Working Group, or WG**), Sustainable Escapement Goal (**SEG**), Biological Escapement Goal (**BEG**), Management Objective (**MO**), Amounts Reasonably Necessary for Subsistence (**ANS**), Emergency Order (**EO**), Bering Sea Fishermen's Association (**BSFA**), Law Enforcement (**LE**), Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (**KRITFC**), Federal Advisory Committee Act (**FACA**).

Meeting summaries are prepared and distributed by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) in cooperative agreement with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service Office of Subsistence Management (USF&WS OSM). The department is responsible for summary content. Summaries are not comprehensive or considered meeting minutes, and are designed to provide context on meeting proceedings for the convenience of interested parties/participants. Audio recordings of meetings can be found at: <http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareakuskokwim.kswg#2017>