

Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group

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

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

July 18, 2018

Meeting called to order at 10:08 a.m. on Wednesday July 18, 2018 and adjourned at 11:38 a.m. Meeting time was approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes. Eight full voting members were present and a quorum was established. Barb Carlson and LaMont Albertson chaired the meeting.

AGENDA ITEMS:

USFWS/KRITFC Update:

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

People to be Heard:

Continuing Business: Run assessment and management actions.

Old Business Discussion Topics:

- Conducting Working Group meetings in middle and upper river communities.

New Business Discussion Topics: *N/A*

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

WORKING GROUP MOTIONS:

1. Approve the agenda. *Passed (Unanimous)*
2. To approve the filming and photographing of the Working Group meeting by Alice Bailey. *Passed (Unanimous)*
3. To request that the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) look into the possibility of having Working Group meetings in Aniak or McGrath. *Passed (Unanimous)*
4. For the next Working Group meeting to be scheduled for Wednesday July 25, 2018 beginning at 10:00 a.m. *Passed (Unanimous)*
5. To adjourn [11:38 a.m.]. *Passed (Unanimous)*

USFWS/KRITFC UPDATE: Ken Stahlnecker (USFWS) commented that there were no new updates for USFWS or the KRITFC.

ADF&G MANAGEMENT ACTIONS UNDER CONSIDERATION: Aaron Tiernan (ADF&G Area Management Biologist) reported that there were no new ADF&G management actions under consideration at the time of the meeting. Mr. Tiernan reported that the George River weir had achieved the lower bound of the escapement goal and that aerial surveys were scheduled to begin on July 20, 2018.

PEOPLE TO BE HEARD:

- Alice Bailey (Virginia) requested permission from the Working Group to record the July 18 Working Group meeting using video and audio equipment for a project that focused on the Working Group process and its members. *(See Motion 2 on page 3)*

SUBSISTENCE REPORTS:

- **Lowest River:** James Charles (Downriver Elder) reported that people were waiting for coho salmon to continue fishing. William “Charlie” Brown (Commercial Fishing) thanked USFWS and KRITFC for their management at the beginning of the 2018 season. He commented that he was also thankful for the management consideration of allowing fishing in Pailleq Slough.
- **ONC Subsistence Report:** Janessa Esquible (ONC) reported that at the time of the July 18 meeting, people in the Bethel area were waiting for silver salmon to continue fishing. *(For more information on the ONC summary, please see the July 18, 2018 Informational Packet.)*

Meeting summaries are prepared and distributed by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). 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#2018>

Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group

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

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

- **Lower River:** Mary Peltola (Lower River Subsistence alternate) commented that she had taken half of her fish out of the smokehouse and planned to remove the remaining fish on July 18. She commented that she would continue fishing when the silver salmon arrived.
- **Middle River:** Darren Deacon (Middle River Subsistence alternate) reported that he operated a 30', 5 ¾" mesh set gillnet and caught 14 "reds" within the first few hours; the next day he caught 15 "reds" and 1 chum salmon. Lisa Feyereisen (Middle River Subsistence alternate) reported that she was putting up fish for "half dried." She commented that people were waiting for silver salmon and did not appear "anxious."
- **Upriver:** Barb Carlson (Upriver Subsistence alternate) reported that the "reds" were coming in strong and the fish wheel had been operating. She commented that smokehouses were active.
- **Headwaters:** Ray Collins (Western Interior RAC) reported that the Native Village Council had been operating the fish wheel and that people were waiting for silver salmon. Dan Esai (Headwaters Subsistence) commented that people in Nikolai had completed their fishing.

CONTINUING BUSINESS:

1. **Overview of Kuskokwim River Salmon Run Assessment Projects:** Nick Smith (ADF&G Research Biologist) provided an overview of the ADF&G assessment projects. Mr. Smith reported that, to date, the water temperature was below the historical average, water clarity was slightly below the historical average; and the water level was above average. (*For more information on the 2018 inseason assessment projects, please see the July 18 Informational Packet*).
- **Bethel Test Fish:** Chinook salmon continued to be caught at the BTF in single digits. Chum and sockeye salmon were consistently being caught at the BTF.
- **Sonar:** Chinook salmon catches were decreasing at the sonar site; chum and sockeye salmon continued to be caught.
- **Weirs:** The George River and Salmon River (Pitka Fork) weirs were fully operational at the time of the meeting. The George River weir had achieved the lower bound of the Chinook salmon escapement goal and, in recent days, the Salmon River (Pitka Fork) weir was passing ~500 fish per day. Sockeye salmon were beginning to arrive at the Telaquana Lake weir. Aaron Webber (USFWS) commented that July 17 was the first day the Kwethluk River weir was fully operational.
- **Subsistence Division:** Chris McDevitt (ADF&G) summarized the results of the household surveys that had been conducted in the middle river.
- **NVN Projects:** Rebecca Wilmarth (NVN) reported that many people in the middle river had harvested what they needed; overall people appeared happy with the 2018 salmon harvest.
2. **Sport Fish:** LaMont Albertson (Sport Fishing) requested that law enforcement patrol the Aniak River to ensure that guides and sport fishers were following the king salmon regulations.
3. **Discussion of ADF&G Management Consideration and Discussion of Possible Alternatives:** *There were no management motions made at the time of this meeting.*

OLD BUISNESS:

- **Conducting Working Group meetings in middle and upper river communities.** Working Group members discussed conducting Working Group meetings in communities other than Bethel; McGrath and Aniak were suggested as alternative venues. Aaron Tiernan commented that OSM was no longer funding the Working Group and the current Working Group budget was uncertain. Mary Peltola commented that KRITFC may be able to partner with ADF&G in order to gain additional funding for Working Group meetings and outreach. (*See Motion 3 on page 4*)

Meeting summaries are prepared and distributed by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). 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#2018>

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 MOTIONS:

- 1. Approve the agenda. Passed (Unanimous)**
- 2. To approve the filming and photographing of the Working Group meeting by Alice Bailey. Passed (Unanimous)**
- 3. To request that the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) and the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) look into the possibility of having Working Group meetings in Aniak or McGrath. Passed (Unanimous)**
- 4. For the next Working Group meeting to be scheduled for Wednesday July 25, 2018 beginning at 10:00 a.m. Passed (Unanimous)**
- 5. To adjourn [11:38 a.m.]. Passed Unanimous**

COMMENTS FROM THE WORKING GROUP:

- William “Charlie” Brown commented that he was interested in obtaining bug netting through the USFWS *Kuskokwim Salmon Preservation Study*.
- Barb Carlson thanked Working Group participants who remained active in the management meetings through the end of the salmon season after the Chinook salmon management had completed.
- Mary Peltola responded to the July 11 Working Group discussion on the FACA group and its current status. She reported that the KRITFC decided to “walk away” from the FACA process in the fall of 2017; she explained the KRITFC reasoning for this decision. Ms. Peltola encouraged people and agencies to be honest when talking about these relationships.

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>Absent</i>
LOWER RIVER SUBSISTENCE	Alissa Rogers
MIDDLE RIVER SUBSISTENCE	Darren Deacon
UPRIVER SUBSISTENCE	Barbara Carlson
HEADWATERS SUBSISTENCE	Daniel Esai, <i>Arrived 11:05 a.m.</i>
MEMBER AT LARGE	Fritz Charles, <i>Excused 11:04 a.m.</i>
WESTERN INTERIOR RAC	Ray Collins
YK DELTA RAC	<i>Absent</i>
COMMERCIAL FISHING	William "Charlie" Brown
SPORT FISHING	LaMont Albertson
PROCESSOR	<i>Vacant</i>
KRITFC	<i>Absent</i>
ADF&G	Aaron Tiernan
CHAIR	Barbara Carlson/ LaMont Albertson

Other Participants:

ADF&G Comm. Fish: Nick Smith, Keegan Birchfield, Bobbette Dickerson, Jen Peeks

Subsistence Division: Chris McDevitt

Sport Fish: John Chythlook

Commissioner's Office: Jill Klein

USFWS: Ken Stahlnecker, Aaron Webber

OSM: Christine Bremmer

Avery Hoffman (ONC)	Alice Bailey (Virginia)	<u>Media:</u> Anna Rose MacArthur (KYUK) Petra Harpak (KYUK)
Janessa Esquible (ONC)	Destiny Ropati (ONC)	
Rebecca Wilmarth (Red Devil)	<u>WG Alternates:</u>	
Janelle Carl (ONC)	Lisa Feyereisen Greg Hoffman Jr.	

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS:

Alaska Department of Fish and Game (**ADF&G, department, State**), Orutsarmiut 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, 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**), Native Village of Napaimute (**NVN**), Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation (**YKHC**), Alaska State Troopers (**AST**)

Meeting summaries are prepared and distributed by the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G). 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#2018>