

Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group

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

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

May 3 and 4, 2021

On Monday, May 3, 2021 the meeting was called to order at 9:06 a.m., recessed for lunch at 11:55 a.m., and reconvened at approximately 1:15 p.m. The meeting adjourned at 4:57 p.m. Meeting time was approximately seven hours. A quorum was established and kept with seven to ten full voting members in attendance throughout the day. Fritz Charles and Alissa Rogers co-chaired the meeting.

On Tuesday, May 4, 2021 the meeting was called to order at 9:03 a.m., recessed for lunch at 11:37 a.m., and reconvened at 1:00 p.m. The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:00 p.m. Meeting time was approximately five hours. A quorum was established and kept with seven to twelve full voting members in attendance throughout the day. LaMont Albertson and Barbara Carlson co-chaired the meeting.

AGENDA ITEMS AND SUMMARY INFORMATION:

PEOPLE TO BE HEARD: *None*

A. 2020 Season Recap / Presentations

- **Subsistence Section Project Overview (Dave Runfola, ADF&G)**
 - Please see the Information Packet pages 4–9 for this presentation.
 - *Audio begins at 00:11 – Meeting Audio - 05/03/21 - Part 1 (Note: audio was cut short due to technical difficulties at the beginning of the meeting)*
- **Southern Bering Sea Survey (Sean Larson, ADF&G)**
 - *Audio for this presentation begins at 43:20 – Meeting Audio - 05/03/21 - Part 1.*
- **Assessment projects review (Weirs, Aerial, ASL) (Sean Larson, ADF&G)**
 - Please see the Information Packet pages 10–13 for this presentation.
 - *Audio begins at 59:35 – Meeting Audio - 05/03/21 - Part 1.*
- **Chinook salmon total run and drainage wide escapement estimate (Sean Larson, ADF&G)**
 - Please see the Information Packet pages 14–21 for this presentation.
 - *Audio begins at 1:22:30 – Meeting Audio - 05/03/21 – Part 1.*
- **2021 Chinook Salmon Forecast (Sean Larson, ADF&G)**
 - Please see the packet pages 22–24 for this presentation.
 - *Audio begins at 12:12 – Meeting Audio - 05/03/21 – Part 2.*
- **Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge (Boyd Blihovde, US Fish and Wildlife Service)**
 - *Audio for this presentation begins at 26:55 – Meeting Audio - 05/03/21 – Part 2.*
- **Overview of the Kuskokwim River Management Strategy Evaluation process (Curry Cunningham, University of Alaska Fairbanks)–**
 - *Audio for this presentation begins at 1:27:55 – Meeting Audio - 05/03/21 – Part 2*

B. 2021 FISHERY MANAGEMENT

- **2021 Assessment projects (Sean Larson, ADF&G)**
 - **ADF&G** – Please see the Information Packet pages 25–27. *Audio begins at 2:06:30 – Meeting Audio - 05/03/21 – Part 2.*
 - **NVN** – Dan Gillikin spoke about 2021 NVN assessment projects. *Audio begins at 2:11:00 – Meeting Audio - 05/03/21 – Part 2.*
 - **USFWS** – Frank Harris spoke about 2021 USFWS assessment projects. *Audio begins at 2:12:30– Meeting Audio - 05/03/21 – Part 2.*

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- **BSFA/ KRITFC** – Kevin Whitworth spoke about the 2021 BSFA/KRITFC assessment projects. *Audio begins at 2:13:51– Meeting Audio - 05/03/21 – Part 2.*
- **ONC (Katherine Russell, Danielle Lowrey, ONC)** - *Audio begins at 2:17:50 – Meeting Audio - 05/03/21 – Part 2*

- **ADF&G Management Presentation & Discussion On Specific Management Actions For 2021 (Nick Smith, ADF&G).**

- This presentation begins on pages 29–33 of the Information Packet.
- **First day audio for this presentation begins at 2:33:13 – Meeting Audio - 05/03/21 - Part 2.**
- **Second day audio begins at 21:30 – Meeting Audio – 05/04/21 – Part 1.**
 - **Date to begin early season closure-**
 - **Set gillnet fishing periods during early season closure**
 - *See Motions 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, and 12 below for audio specific to the topic of the early season closure.*
 - **Tributary Management**
 - **Salmon Tributaries (Eek, Kwethluk, Kisaralik, Kasigluk, Tuluksak, and Aniak Rivers)**
 - This specific topic was not discussed at length among Working Group members, *Actions taken on Motions 7, 9, and 12 are most applicable.*
 - **Non-Salmon Tributaries (i.e. Gweek, Tunt, Johnson Rivers)**
 - *See Motion 8 below for Audio specific to the topic of fishing in the non-salmon tributaries.*
 - **Use of live release gear (fish wheels, dip nets, beach seines, and hook and line)**
 - *See Motion 9 below for Audio specific to the topic of live release gear use.*
 - **Post-Front End Closure management**
 - *This topic was not discussed at length due to actions taken by the Working Group on Motions 10 and 12 (see below for audio). There was some discussion about the household permits for Sections 4 and 5 beginning at 29:42 – Meeting Audio – 05/04/21 – Part 2.*
 - **Chum/sockeye management**
 - *This topic was briefly discussed at 34:30 – Meeting Audio – 05/04/21 – Part 2).*
 - **2023 Alaska Board of Fisheries (Nick Smith, ADF&G)**
 - *See page 33 of the Packet for more 2023 Board of Fisheries information. Audio begins at 2:24:40 – Meeting Audio – 05/04/21 – Part 1.*
 - **Sport Fishing (John Chythlook, ADF&G)**
 - *See page 34 of the Packet for more 2021 Sportfishing information.*

C. WORKING GROUP BUSINESS: (Please see Motions 13–33)

- **Bylaws change:** Create a second Member at Large seat to replace the Processor seat, with the stipulation that a processor could hold this seat in the future. ***Please refer to Motion 13 for more information.***
- **Vacant Seat Election(s):** ***Please refer to Motions 14–18 for more information.***
- **Election of Co-Chairs:** ***Please refer to Motion 19 for more information.***

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- Working Group In-Season Meeting Schedule: *Please refer to Motions 20 and 21 for more information.*
- Nominate WG representative to serve at KRITFC inseason meetings: *Please refer to Motions 22 and 23 for more information.*
- ONC Letter of Support inseason harvest monitoring and King salmon age-sex-length sampling: *Please refer to Motion 24 for more information.*

D. COMMENTS FROM WORKING GROUP MEMBERS:

- a. Comments from Working Group Members begin at 2:13:52 – *Meeting Audio - 05/04/21 – Part 2* and continue through the remainder of the meeting audio.

WORKING GROUP MOTIONS:

1. **Motion 1:** Approve the agenda as amended. *Passed (Unanimous)*
2. **Motion 2:** For the Working Group to support the Emergency Federal Special Action, and actions therein, taken by the US Fish and Wildlife Service Refuge Manager. *Failed (6 yes, 3 no)*
 - a. *Discussion on this motion begins at 42:44 – Meeting Audio - 05/03/21 – Part 2. The motion was made by Mike Williams, Sr. and seconded by LaMont Albertson.*
3. **Motion 3:** To add a trawl bycatch report to each Working Group meeting agenda. *Passed (Unanimous)*
 - a. *Discussion on this motion begins at 2:01:45 – Meeting Audio - 05/03/21 – Part 2. The motion was made by LaMont Albertson and seconded by Lisa Feyereisen.*
4. **Motion 4:** For the 2021 Front-end and rolling closures to mirror that from last year – starting June 1 in Sections 1 and 2, June 3 in Section 3, June 9 in Section 4, and June 11 in Section 5. *Failed (2 yes, 4 no, 1 abstention)*
 - a. *Discussion on this motion begins at 2:47:07– Meeting Audio - 05/03/21 – Part 2. The motion was made by Barbara Carlson and seconded by Lisa Feyereisen.*
5. **Motion 5:** Adjourn the first day of meetings at 4:57 p.m. *Passed (Unanimous)*
6. **Motion 6:** For the Working Group to recommend to ADF&G that the Front-end closure begin June 9 in Section 4 (from YK Delta Refuge boundary near Aniak to the Holitna River Mouth) and June 11 in Section 5 (Above the Holitna River mouth to the headwaters of the Kuskokwim River) *Passed (6 yes, 2 no, 1 abstention)*
 - a. *Discussion on this motion begins at 34:00 – Meeting Audio – 05/04/21 – Part 1. The motion was made by Kevin Whitworth and was seconded by Fritz Charles.*
7. **Motion 7:** For ADF&G to follow what the US Fish and Wildlife Service and Kuskokwim River Intertribal Fish Commission has presented for Sections 1, 2, and 3 to close on June 1. *Failed (2 yes, 7 abstentions)*
 - a. *Discussion on this motion begins at 50:10– Meeting Audio – 05/04/21 – Part 1. The motion was made by Barbara Carlson and seconded by Lisa Feyereisen.*
8. **Motion 8:** For the Working Group to recommend that ADF&G close fishing with gillnets in non-spawning tributaries from their confluence with the Kuskokwim River upstream 100 yards. *Passed (Unanimous)*
 - a. *Discussion on this motion begins at 1:10:09 – Meeting Audio – 05/04/21 – Part 1. The motion was made by Kevin Whitworth and was seconded by Barbara Carlson.*

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9. **Motion 9:** For the Working Group to recommend to ADF&G to allow use of selective gear types (beach seines, fish wheels, rod and reel, dipnets) with live release of Chinook salmon requirements in the mainstem and tributaries of the Kuskokwim River. *Passed (Unanimous)*
 - a. **Discussion on this motion begins at 1:13:05 – Meeting Audio – 05/04/21 – Part 1. The motion was made by Kevin Whitworth and was seconded by Fritz Charles.**
10. **Motion 10:** For the Working Group to recommend to ADF&G to not have concurrent setnet and driftnet openers to those announced by the US Fish and Wildlife Service during a Federal Special Action. *Passed (6 yes, 1 no, 2 abstentions)*
 - a. **Discussion on this motion begins at 1:32:01 – Meeting Audio – 05/04/21 – Part 1. The motion was made by Mike Williams, Sr. and was seconded by Kevin Whitworth.**
11. **Motion 11:** To follow ADF&G recommendations for a setnet fishing opener to occur in Section 4 during a Front-end closure, June 1–11. *Passed (Unanimous)*
 - a. **Discussion on this motion begins at 12:25 – Meeting Audio – 05/04/21 – Part 2. The motion was made by Lisa Feyereisen and was seconded by Kevin Whitworth.**
12. **Motion 12:** For the Working Group to take no action on Sections 1, 2, and 3 while those sections are under Federal Management. *Passed (7 yes, 2 no)*
 - a. **Discussion on this motion begins at 49:04 – Meeting Audio – 05/04/21 – Part 2. The motion was made by Fritz Charles and was seconded by James Charles.**
13. **Motion 13:** To amend the Working Group bylaws as to replace the Processor seat with a second Member at Large seat, with the stipulation that a processor could hold this seat in the future. *Passed (7 yes, 1 no, 1 abstention)*
 - a. **Discussion on this motion begins at 1:09:15 – Meeting Audio – 05/04/21 – Part 2. Motion made by John Andrew and was seconded by Fritz Charles.**
14. **Motion 14:** To immediately fill the second Member at Large seat. *Passed (8 yes, 1 no)*
 - a. **Discussion on this motion begins at 1:17:50 – Meeting Audio – 05/04/21 – Part 2. Motion made by Mike Williams, Sr. and was seconded by LaMont Albertson.**
15. **Motion 15:** To elect Mary Peltola as the primary member of the second Member at Large seat. *Passed (8 yes, 1 no)*
 - a. **Discussion on this motion begins at 1:31:35 – Meeting Audio – 05/04/21 – Part 2. Motion made by Mike Williams, Sr. and was seconded by Fritz Charles.**
16. **Motion 16:** To elect Fred Bobby as first alternate member and Ruby Egrass as the second alternate member of the Upriver Subsistence seat. *Passed (Unanimous)*
 - a. **Discussion on this motion begins at 1:36:05 – Meeting Audio – 05/04/21 – Part 2. Motion made by Fritz Charles and was seconded by LaMont Albertson.**
17. **Motion 17:** To elect Kevin Whitworth as the primary member of the Western Interior RAC Working Group seat, and for Rebecca Wilmarth to be his alternate. *Passed (Unanimous)*
 - a. **Discussion on this motion begins at 1:43:30 – Meeting Audio – 05/04/21 – Part 2. Motion made by LaMont Albertson and was seconded by James Nicori.**
18. **Motion 18:** To elect Walter Morgan as the primary member of the Middle River Subsistence seat. *Passed (Unanimous)*
 - a. **Discussion on this motion begins at 1:47:00 – Meeting Audio – 05/04/21 – Part 2. Motion made by LaMont Albertson and was seconded by Mike Williams, Sr.**
19. **Motion 19:** To elect Fritz Charles, Alissa Rodgers, LaMont Albertson, Mary Peltola, and Barbara Carlson as the 2021 Working Group Co-chairs. *Passed (Unanimous)*

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- a. Discussion on this motion begins at 1:52:14 – Meeting Audio – 05/04/21 – Part 2. Motion made by Mike Williams, Sr. and was seconded by Fritz Charles.*
20. **Motion 20:** To schedule 2021 inseason Working Group meetings for Wednesday’s from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. *Passed (Unanimous)*
- a. Discussion on this motion begins at 1:55:00 – Meeting Audio – 05/04/21 – Part 2. Motion made by Mary Peltola and was seconded by LaMont Albertson.*
21. **Motion 21:** To schedule the next Working Group meeting for Wednesday, June 2 from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. *Passed (Unanimous)*
- a. Discussion on this motion begins at 1:58:00 – Meeting Audio – 05/04/21 – Part 2. Motion made by Fritz Charles and was seconded by LaMont Albertson.*
22. **Motion 22:** For LaMont Albertson to serve as a representative of the Working Group at Kuskokwim River Intertribal Fish Commission meetings. *Passed (Unanimous)*
- a. Discussion on this motion begins at 2:00:25 – Meeting Audio – 05/04/21 – Part 2. Motion made by Mike Williams, Sr. and was seconded by John Andrew.*
23. **Motion 23:** To designate Fritz Charles as LaMont Albertson’s alternate to represent the Working Group at Kuskokwim River Intertribal Fish Commission meetings. *Passed (Unanimous)*
- a. Discussion on this motion begins at 2:04:05 – Meeting Audio – 05/04/21 – Part 2. Motion made by Mary Peltola and was seconded by Kevin Whitworth.*
24. **Motion 24:** To write a letter of support for ONC’s inseason harvest monitoring program. *Passed (Unanimous)*
- a. Discussion on this motion begins at 2:07:40 – Meeting Audio – 05/04/21 – Part 2. Motion made by Fritz Charles and was seconded by James Charles.*

WORKING GROUP ATTENDANCE:

MEMBER SEAT:	NAME:
DOWNRIVER ELDER	James Charles
UPRIVER ELDER	Allen Simeon
LOWER RIVER SUBSISTENCE	Mike Williams Sr.
MIDDLE RIVER SUBSISTENCE	Lisa Feyereisen
UPRIVER SUBSISTENCE	Barbara Carlson
HEADWATERS SUBSISTENCE	Kevin Whitworth
MEMBER AT LARGE SEAT 1	Fritz Charles
MEMBER AT LARGE SEAT 2	<i>Mary Peltola (elected second day)</i>
WESTERN INTERIOR RAC	<i>Kevin Whitworth (elected second day)</i>
YK DELTA RAC	John Andrew
COMMERCIAL FISHING	Charles Guest
SPORT FISHING	LaMont Albertson
ADF&G	Nick Smith
CHAIR	LaMont Albertson/ Barbara Carlson/ Fritz Charles/ Alissa Rogers

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<u>ADF&G Comm. Fish:</u> Nick Smith, Ben Gray, Chuck Brazil, Sean Larson, Zach Liller, Keegan Birchfield, Bobette Dickerson, Andrew Kastning	
<u>Sport Fish Division:</u> John Chythlook, Klaus Wutig	
<u>Subsistence Division:</u> David Runfola, Chris McDevitt	
<u>USFWS:</u> Boyd Bilhovde, Aaron Webber, Spencer Rearden,	
<u>OSM:</u> Eva Patton, Corey Graham	
<u>NVN:</u> Dan Gillikin	
<u>ONC:</u> Janessa Esquible, Katherine Russel, Danielle Lowry, Robert Lekander	
<u>AVCP:</u> Jennifer Hooper, Paige Jones	
<u>KRITFC:</u> Joe Spader, Jim Simon, Terese Schomogyi	
<u>UAF:</u> Curry Cunningham	
<u>WIRAC:</u> Jack Reakoff	
<u>WG Alternates: (not already listed above)</u>	
Alissa Rogers (Lower River Subsistence)	

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS:

Alaska Department of Fish and Game (**ADF&G**), 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**), ADF&G Subsistence Division (**SD**), 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**),

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