



## Alaska Bycatch Review Task Force (ABRT) Western Alaska Salmon Subcommittee Friday, August 26<sup>th</sup> 9:00 a.m (AST)

Join Zoom Meeting

• <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/84847392524?pwd=M0pTS0hkMDd0Z2R1NVBZaU9wN2gyQT09>

Meeting ID: 848 4739 2524

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**Committee members:** George Guy-Co chair, Stephanie Madsen-Co chair, Ragnar Alstrom, Karma Ulvi, Representative Bryce Edgmon

1. Call to order at 9:00 a.m Alaska Bycatch Review Task Force (ABRT) Western Alaska salmon committee meeting called to order at 9:10 AM by Co- Chair George Guy
2. Roll call of committee and ABRT members
  - Committee members present: George Guy-Co chair, Stephanie Madsen-Co chair, Ragnar Alstrom, Karma Ulvi, Seth Whitten and Amory Lelake for Representative Bryce Edgmon
  - ABRT Members present: Erik Velsko, Linda Kozak
3. Approve agenda: August 26, 2022, Approved
4. Approve minutes: August 12, 2022, Approved
5. Old business:
  - a) Review workplan for September.
    - Co-Chair Madsen went over a general plan for September meetings and what that will mean for the Committee work being completed by September 23
  - b) Finalize and approve Research Recommendations
    - *These general 3 bullets were adopted by the subcommittee.*
    - **Develop state bycatch research priorities to share with funding entities that would help identify and acquire research funds.**
    - **Implement strategies to encourage and facilitate industry/agency cooperative research to reduce bycatch and associated mortality.**
    - **Create methods for collaboration with other research entities to better track proposed or funded bycatch research, along with developing opportunities for cooperative projects and combined reporting of findings.**
    - ABRT Member Kozak read off the general recommendations as changed by the committee

process. Referenced Member Alstrom back to the first of the three general research priorities to answer his question regarding leverage.

- *Specific Research Recommendations*

- *List posted and discussed with a few changes to recommendations will be forwarded to the STI committee.*
- Co-Chair Madsen spoke to the documents made available at the previous meeting as well as this one to help determine these more specific recommendations and requested the Department respond to make sure everything made sense. The Department agrees it does make sense. Co-Chair Madsen noted that funding is always something that would need to be found but having clear research priorities and projects the easier it is to go out and get those particular projects funding. Requested Member Ulvi further clarify what she means regarding the specific research recommendations as compared to the other committees these are more specific given, they were pulled from the people conducting these research projects. Co-Chair Madsen stated that as it is hard to take bycatch out of the other contributing factors to the decline of a species, noted that she will take the recommendation regarding hatcheries to the STI committee and the ABRT as a whole as a recommendation not on bycatch but on something specific to at sea survival of salmon.
- Member Ulvi is concerned that the specific research recommendations are not specific enough. Also concerned where the funding is coming from. Member Ulvi is concerned if the research requests are too board and nonspecific then the research will not be done where it is needed must in the intense/emergency level way it needs to be done to figure out what is happening to the Western Alaska river systems. Pointed out maybe emergency research is needed to figure out why things are going so wrong with Salmon in the Yukon area. Noted that the Yukon is in a state of emergency and there should be specific research done in that area to address the state of emergency that is occurring in that populations on the river can no longer subsist off the river. Member Ulvi does not see anything in the general recommendations that emphasize the issue that are being experienced by the subsistence users in Western Alaska.
- ADF&G Staff Howard was asked to further respond to the question of how to prioritize research. She noted that all the research needs to be done simultaneously to better determine if bycatch is the most limiting factor in the returns to the Yukon area or if it is some other factor that is causing a more major concern to the stocks.
- ADF&G Staff Templin responded to Member Ulvi's question pointed out that most of the work on the research recommendation list is based on work that has been done or that is ongoing. Spoke to where funding for research would come from and how the Department patches together funding sources and research projects to be able to provide this information. Also mentioned other places to gather information specific to the area Member Ulvi is asking about.
- Member Alstrom Questioned what the leverage will there be for the bycatch Task force to prioritize research related to bycatch. Likes the idea of the research entities meeting together and collaborating. Likes the three main points of research recommendations made.

6. New business: Discuss ideas for State Engagement and Management

- State engagement recommendations
  1. Develop a process/mechanism to make this information more readily available to the public. Need for better outreach to the public on what bycatch numbers are who is catching bycatch and in what amounts and where and when this is occurring.

- Management Recommendations
  - 1. Look at Council information regarding a chum cap.
- ABRT Member Kozak noted suggestions made at the other committees
- 7. Public comment: three-minute (3) limit to individual comments
  - Rebecca Skinner Commented on the proposed research recommendations to put forth. Agrees with Member Alstrom in that some things that aren't being looked at due to not being specific to bycatch that the big picture needs to be looked at to make a clearer picture of what is going on and huge gaps in knowledge need to be addressed regardless of if they are specific to bycatch or not.
  - c) Brent Paine Commented on research recommendations notes that foreign hatchery production chum are not mentioned and there are concerns that prey is being consumed by these fish and are not leaving prey to be consumed by Alaska fish. Is emphasizing that the industry is trying to follow hot spot research and not be active in places that are experiencing high volume of bycatch.
  - d) Ernie Weiss Asked when the draft comments will be available to the public.
  - e) Martin Nicolai lives near Kuskokwim river very concerned about the Yukon river salmon returns for the second year in a row is concerned over USFWS and ADF&G taking away a Chinook caught on the Yukon river is concerned over bycatch waste of Chinook and how no one seems concerned of this. Kuskokwim is having a very poor return of silvers and all the while Commercial Fishery bycatch is continuing and he sees this as a destruction of Alaska Salmon. Western Alaska Salmon in river systems doesn't need data or research there needs to be a full stop on catching any salmon in the Bering Sea a moratorium on any type of trawl fishing.
- 8. Committee comments:
  - ABRT Member Kozak responded to Mr. Paine that the hatchery production component was discussed but since it does not have anything to do with bycatch it is not a specific recommendation being made by any of the bycatch task force committees. ABRT Member Kozak: Wants to bring attention to NOAA fisheries article dated August 23 there is a lot of information included in this article that would be helpful to this committee and the public. Mentioned next Crab committee meeting dates and GOA Halibut and Salmon Committee meetings as well.
- 9. Next Meeting Date: September 14, 2022, at 9:00 am possibly 9/18
- 10. Adjournment by 10:22 am