



**Alaska Bycatch Review Task Force (ABRT)
Western Alaska Salmon Subcommittee
Friday, September 16th 9:00 a.m (AST)**

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/89940583955?pwd=S1JQL2wxVXlpSIZQZUlwZmhubGtGdz09>

Meeting ID: 899 4058 3955

Passcode: 091622

Call-in number: (833) 548-0282 US Toll-free

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 9:00 AM by Co- Chair Stephanie Madsen
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 for Representative Bryce Edgmon
 - ABRT Members present: Tommy Sheridan, John Jensen, Linda Kozak, Jim Anderson DCCED
3. Approve agenda: September 16, 2022, Approved
4. Approve minutes: August 26, 2022, Approved
5. Old business: Review workplan
 - Co-Chair Madsen went over the plan moving forward for the committee and the ABRT as previously discussed in other meetings.
6. New business:
 - State Engagement Recommendations
 - i. State of Alaska should establish a method to communicate bycatch information (numbers and fisheries) in both State and Federal fisheries for easy access to the public. This could be a page on the ADF&G website with links to NMFS Alaska Region and NPFMC or other communication tools
 1. Co-Chair Madsen introduces the topic providing a brief introduction of where this came from. Notes that comment by co-chair Guy does not necessarily address bycatch but that it is concerning and especially for the

- coho runs this year. The eco system and climate change are causing disruptions and further exacerbating the issues on the Yukon and Kuskokwim.
2. Co-Chair Guy notes that based on the national fisheries magazine 2 years ago there was a bycatch of over 1 million chum under the state management regime this past year there was a bycatch of over 529 thousand chum taken as bycatch under the Commercial section and here us being on the Kuskokwim and the Yukon were being restricted were they cannot have food security for our people so this management regime need to be further examined at a state level for commercial and subsistence users. This concern along with the disappearance of cohos this year on the Kuskokwim river something is wrong with the eco system in the Bering Sea or Area M. Something dramatic is going on and needs to be caught on the radar so that concerns can be addressed chinook might become endangered on the Yukon as well as the Kuskokwim so wants concerns to be noticed and looked into.
 3. ABRT Member Kozak notes both the BSAI and GOA salmon and Halibut committee both adopted this as a priority for SOA engagement so wants to note the consistency. GOA salmon and halibut recommends SOA establish a permanent advisory committee.
- ii. State of Alaska Federal Fisheries Staff should continue to offer the public an opportunity to provide input on NPFMC issues before each NPFMC meeting.
1. Co- Chair Madsen introduced the topic and some of the reasoning behind it. Commented to Member Ulvi that developing another bullet or sub bullet to provide a specific opportunity to approach this outreach model of commenting through the AC's. Will work with Member Ulvi to develop this request further. Responds to Member Ulvi's question NPFMC accepts written comments by agenda item through their online portal, in person public comments, also virtual public comment during the meeting. Notes that what this bullet does is provide another step for Alaskans to have State staff take comment on Council items outside of the council process that can then be passed on to the council through department staff. Recognizes Member Alstrom makes a good point about how some kind of educational material/ entity to help understand the NPFMC process would be helpful as it differs greatly from the Board of Fish process, we are all used to in Alaska. Responds to ABRT Chair Jensen thanking him for that info but does believe there needs to be state help to educate participants on the council process and make it easier to understand. Does note Melissa from Bering Sea elders' group does sit on the advisory panel and has a voice there the Council is also voting on providing a designated tribal seat on the advisory committee. The deadline for submitting names for that seat will be November 30th once this is voted on in October. Appreciates the clarification and wants to get more of this engagement process out there and notes there is a federal avenue for tribal consultation but does want the state to provide more of these opportunities.
 2. Member Ulvi not sure how public outreach would work but encourages reaching out to Tribal communities and the Advisory Committees on the Yukon/Kuskokwim maybe a comment form or something through that

platform to provide further comment to the State. Or the State possibly contacting the ACs to figure out if there are any comments on bycatch coming from the members of those ACs. Asked what the process is to put in comments for NPFMC meetings? Does not see anywhere in these recommendations where people from the Tribal entities/Yukon have a seat at the table and have their voices being heard since it is very important as this affects their lives and livelihoods. Responds to member Kozak that she was getting at how tribal engagement in both the State and Council process. All of this is very big and hard to maneuver through all of this and who they are supposed to speak with. So, she is just trying to understand and make tribal/Yukon voices are heard. So, if this means engagement before the state goes to the council that would be amazing.

3. Member Alstrom notes a familiarity with the BOF process also thinks there should be some department federal fisheries staff to provide some information/education on the process at the NPFMC so that the federal and state advisory committees are more able to follow this process and the public is more informed of how these processes work.
 4. ABRT Chair Jensen: Comments that the council does have some materials available to inform on the council process already and it is just a matter of getting people to these materials and helping people to understand what that means to them. Notes that the joint protocol committee might be the right platform to hear from the public on this issue. Comments that yes the chair dedicated to a tribal member on the council will be voted on in October.
 5. ABRT Member Kozak asked Member Ulvi were you speaking about how the State develops their bycatch policy prior to going to the council and you would like to see understated engagement something more formal in regards to tribal engagement or more about the process in general.
- iii. Education Tax Credit Program- Support legislative action to remove sunset of program and consider expanding program to specifically allow gear modification or technology improvements that would help reduce bycatch
 1. Co-Chair Madsen introduces the topic and provides some history to it.
 2. Member Alstrom agrees that expanding this program to include bycatch would be very helpful
 - iv. State should work with other entities, including the State Department, to request that the State Department, through bilateral and multilateral diplomatic channels with Russia, request information on bycatch of chinook salmon and chum salmon taken in the Russian domestic fisheries (specifically, the number of salmon caught in their groundfish and salmon fisheries, and the genetic origin of these salmon.
 1. Co-Chair Madsen introduces the topic and provides some history to it.
 - v. Member Ulvi request to add a permanent advisory council on bycatch would like to propose that this be added to state engagement. With no opposition this is added
 1. Co-Chair Madsen notes funding might be an issue but has no issue adding it here for discussion going forward.
 2. ABRT Chair Jensen does not an advisor to the Governor and/or the Commissioner of Fish and Game could fulfill this role.

7. Public comment: three-minute (3) limit to individual comments
 - Martin Nicolai: Notes the NPFMC is allowing the continued destruction of sea life including salmon, crab and halibut in the Bering Sea along with their habitat and there should be a recommendation on putting a moratorium on trawling in the Bering Sea to make an effort to stop the destruction and allow the habitat and species to recover. How many of us in Alaska are not becoming aware of how detrimental trawling is to the state residents and resources. The bullet points are not providing any way for bycatch to be reduced or controlled and they are just promoting the trawl industries destruction of species and habitat.
8. Management Recommendations
 - Member Madsen Opens with this being an opportunity to the committee to put forth recommendations to be discussed on Monday. Notes there is a salmon bycatch committee being put together by NPFMC and nominations are still open and can be submitted here <https://www.npfmc.org/nominations-open-for-salmon-bycatch-committee/>
 - Member Alstrom makes a management recommendation that the State really step up in real time management of the composition of bycatch so if there is bycatch bound for western Alaska no matter the species of salmon, we need the state to provide the information as quickly as possible to Western Alaska from industry so that better real time management can be conducted to reduce bycatch. A permanent advisory committee on bycatch is really a good idea and because it is so complicated (what is caught, who it is caught by) it takes a committee to understand all of this and provide informed input to regulatory bodies. Appreciates Co-Chair Madsen's wording and opinion just reiterates getting the information as quickly as possible is the most important thing so that a better job at management can be done.
 - i. Co-Chair Madsen: notes that real time information might be better placed in SOA engagement or research priorities and wants to go back and see if maybe the suggestion by Member Alstrom that we could highlight it in research, or possibly a management recommendation that addresses the need that real time genetics and composition of bycatch is critical for any management moving forward so make it a management recommendation but also acknowledging in research. Acknowledges support of Member Ulvi's recommendation for a permanent advisory committee and does support that. Co-Chair Madsen responds yes, she took the first stab at writing the state engagement recommendations, but it is up to the committee to make the final recommendations and appreciates any and all input from committee members. Co-Chair Madsen will do her best to get the management recommendations and state engagement recommendations up for the review of the committee and the public. Notes that real time genetics issue might be technology at this point as right now that is being further developed.
 - ii. Member Ulvi asked who wrote the State engagement recommendations? Requests that there be an open document during discussions so that as the committee discusses changes to recommendations those can be seen in real time and discussed while being changed. Requests this be done with the management section so the changes can be done in real time.
 - iii. ABRT member Kozak notes that next Tuesday the full task force will be meeting and focusing on research recommendations. Notes that GOA has requested genetic work be done but the Bering Sea did not recommend real time genetic information be developed for the Bering Sea. Most likely to be added at the ABRT meeting.

9. Committee comments:
 - No further comments by committee or the public
10. Next Meeting Date: September 19, 2022, at 9:00 am
11. Adjournment by 10:18 am