

Mid-Lower Yukon Fish and Game Advisory Committee  
MEETING MINUTES

RC 047

Thursday, December 18, 2014, 1:00 pm, St. Mary's

Chair: Stan Shepard, Mountain Village

1(800) 504-8071 access code: 5432709#

For info contact Holly Carroll at 543-1677, [holly.carroll@alaska.gov](mailto:holly.carroll@alaska.gov)

- I. Call to Order: 2:00
- II. Invocation: Harry Wilde, Sr.
- III. Roll Call:  
Number Needed For Quorum on AC: **5, quorum met**  
**Evan Polty, Stanley Peters, Vassily Sergie, Sr., June Yupanik, Paul Beans, Bill Alstrom, Peter Tyson, Stan Sheppard (Chair)**  
Introduction of guests
- IV. Approval of Agenda: **approved**
- V. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes: **November 12, 2014 minutes sent with packet-approved with addition of "Federal" to Page 2 paragraph one: YK Delta Rac- APPROVED**
- VI. Fish and Game Staff Present:  
**Boards Support Western Region Coordinator, Holly Carroll**  
**Wildlife biologists (Bethel office) Philip Perry and Patrick Jones, Jeff Estensen, Yukon Area Fishery Biologist, Christie Gleason Asst. Area manager Fall season, Seth Wilson Subsistence Division, Stephanie Schmidt Yukon Area Manager (summer season), Sabrina Garcia, Yukon Asst. Area manager; Aaron Tiernan Asst. Area Biologist Kuskokwim; Fred Bue USFWS Fishery Biologist**
- VII. Guests Present: 25 members of the public representing Andreafski, Mt. Village, Pitka's point, St. Mary's,
- VIII. Old Business:  
**Group should vote to support/oppose BOG and BOF proposals Tabled at last meeting (Details below)**  
New Business:
  - IX. People to Be Heard: **Questions/Concerns of the AC members and public**  
Francis- Mt. Village- Alexi Walter's daughter wants to invite anyone to go and eat potluck because one year anniversary of his death. He was an elder devoted to subsistence way of life. Question about selecting reps and alternates. HC gave background.  
Paul Beans describes how this AC came to be: Harry Wilde was travelling a lot to address fish and game issues and needed help. 2007, there was 10 people in the Mt. village working group. Lower Yukon advisory committee, Mt. Village wanted their own AC and submitted signatures to BOF. Mt village will continue their working group because of king salmon concerns. They only had one voice, now they have 2 voices with the BOF, the lower Yukon and the Mid-lower. John Riley (Pitkas) commended having working groups  
Paul Beans- mentioned no commercial since 2007, subsistence is hard, and Bering Sea bycatch is problem.  
Bill Alstrom- glad they split the advisory committee in half, issues pertain to just them here.  
Sven Paukan- asked when to have the meeting and will there be a joint meeting? Do they want a joint teleconference with Coastal Lower Yukon? HC explained the budget limitations

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making it so they can only have one face to face meeting but more teleconferences. They can do that to discuss certain issues as they want.

Stan wants to come up with a couple resolutions to allow our elders be able to use gillnet (restricted). The other one is to submit to feds and state to let them know when they came up with these restrictions, Canada is obligated to escapement, Pollock bycatch. When they shut off fisheries, they continued to allowed bycatch and escapement to Canada but did not allow a certain quota per village of fish.

Vassily (Marshall) alternate, when he went to Bethel, there was no member of the public. This is his second meeting on the Yukon area, doesn't want these meetings in Bethel. He's happy to see members of the public.

Felix Hess- every member of community impacted. New administration in Juneau now, more open policy to have tribes and non-profits involved, will AVCP make recommendations on our behalf. Encourages people to have active role, corporation tries to support people to go and testify at NPMFC. Many proposals that restrict fishing come from upriver, so important for our voice to be heard. Lower Yukon was first to do moratorium on moose and Kuskokwim followed examples. He's worried about sport hunters coming in now that moose population is good, this council will need to write a proposal to address that.

- Updates or Information sharing from Regional Coordinator **Handouts/ update provided by Holly Carroll Boards support**
  - a. Membership update- St. Mary's and Pitka's point.
    - i. **June Yupanik-selected as secretary, much discussion about the group thinking the secretary should have a computer to take notes with. H Carroll**
  - b. Suggest to authorize Chair or a 'standing committee' to approve meeting minutes to speed up submission to Boards for on-time recommendations
  - c. Motion to appoint Chairman and new Secretary June as standing committee to approve minutes- motion passed unanimous.
  - d. **Update on BOG Proposal 201-(Deadline Dec 26, 2014)**
  - e. **Update on BOG Proposal 206- (Deadline March 3, 2015).**
  
- X. **Get AC recommendations and/or comments on the following (prioritized by deadline in case we run out of time):**

**Other Business:**

- Report from Chair from North Pacific Fisheries Council meeting in Anchorage
- Moose report from ADFG staff- **did not get to this item in the agenda because fish and game staff had left the call**

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- Discuss the dip net usage in lower river vs. fish wheels in the upper Yukon River for subsistence salmon harvest- Fish and Game invited to give presentation/answer questions.
  - a. **Stephanie Schmidt clarified that fish wheels are a legal gear to use down here. Someone down here tried it but it was during a pink year so they didn't catch as many target salmon because of that. But they are a legal method. Dip nets was only a measure taken to target summer chum and easily release kings. They aren't going to allow dip nets to target kings for subsistence. District 5 had no fishing opportunity at all until 99% of king run was past, fish wheels were shut down, and in that region they don't have an area where dip nets will work, not that they weren't allowed up there. She explained that people want to use the dip nets down here because it's a way to catch summer chum. It's about available gear types and how people want to count.**
  - b. **Stanley Peters said that fishing with a fish wheel in Y3 and because of debris you break a fish wheel, but a dip net you can still fish even when there's debris- he had no problem using the dip net, but the fish have to be there by the 1000's. Fish wheel when there's no debris is physically easier, but a storm or something. There are lots of things influence the gear that works. Stephanie clarified, all fish can be retained with 6" or 4" mesh, but if enforcement thinks people are targeting kings, they can revoke the use of 4" mesh. But with a dip net, all kings must be released no matter what (though that method should not kill kings). Members have heard that if you do retain a dead king in a dip net, you can have your boat seized, etc., but Stephanie did not hear of any enforcement that confiscated anything. Members said it was confusing last summer what could be retained.**
  - c. **Member of public from Nightmute wasn't having to dip net. Question is: is coastal area restricted too or just in the river? Stephanie said they do restrict the Northern coastal district- closed for most of season and the southern coastal district they were restricted to 6", but out there it's a smaller group of people and their efficiency is dependent on tides and fish and they can have a hard time getting what they need.**
  
- Discuss any proposals this AC may want to submit for BOF due April 10, 2015 or BOG due May 1, 2015.
  - a. **Bill Alstrom says he's considering if there's a point when a certain number of fish pass Pilot Station they could open up for subsistence. Stephanie clarified they already have the authority to do that. Stanley Peters suggested they allow harvest for example for a potlatch, like is allowed with moose. So that elders at the least could have fish for group events, depending on population of village. It would have to be determined by the Board of Fisheries, ADFG couldn't decide that. The department does take requests for potlatches or ceremonial and customary use.**

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Paul Beans talked about Mt.Village working group how they go and testify for boards and NPMFC so often they are getting to know them. He encouraged each village can create a working group and select people to send to big events. AVCP and Kwik Pak have given partial refunds.

Stanley Peters- trying to get funding from Coastal Villages to have a regional office here, AVCP hasn't done that. He urged people to vote for regional tribal government. AVCP and TCC had meeting here in St. Mary's; it was decided at this meeting to voluntarily lay off Chinook salmon for 2014.

Evan Polty- said that he has a dietary need to put away more salmon, rich in oil, and if they need to go to federal to get surplus while they're running.

Sven Paukan- wants a proposal from the AC to BOG to limit moose hunting and destruction of the antlers and restrict big game and sports hunters. They are seeing people with antlers but no moose. He acknowledged they may have too many moose near Russian Mission, they destroy habitat, and he appreciates people coming from Kuskokwim but he wants better enforcement then. But the group doesn't want so much moose meat wasted.

Vassily Sergie, Sr. commented about how big corporations come into villages with money. He thinks they should only deal with proposals written by their own people, not outsiders.

Evan Polty- wants a teleconference possibly to get a moose report and also to restrict sport fishing and sport hunting and those wasting meat.

Question from public member- how are you going to address putting in the suggested moose proposal?

Stanley Peters- said that Federal lands are different than State lands. R.C Holly suggested that the TC present the proposal to the AC and then hold a meeting to discuss and can invite biologists to advise them.

Member of public gave a word of caution that executive order can become regulation. Talked about the voluntary moratorium. So suggests they review the conservation plan for the refuge

Decide date and time for next meeting: **call of the chair**

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BOG or BOF	Proposal Number	Proposal Description	
Supports or Opposes?	Number Support	Number Oppose	Comments/Discussion (list Pros and Cons)/Amendments to Proposal
BOG	43	<b>Reauthorize the current resident tag fee exemptions for brown bear in Units 18, 22, 23 and 26A. (On-time comment deadline Dec. 26, 2014)</b>	
support	7	0	Motion passes unanimously
BOG	201	<b>Salvage of game meat, furs and hides. (On-time comment deadline Dec. 26, 2014)</b>	
oppose	0	7	<p>Didn't have proposal to read in complete form, a basic background was given by HC and the Wildlife Biologist Philip Perry. Discussion that use of this word "lawful" could cause confusion. How are they supposed to pursue the animal if it's wounded? Under 'reasonable' or 'legal' methods it's not clear what would be allowed? Recommendation to take no action on this until they get more information. There was concern this would have an effect if you Kill a DLP bear. Too m any questions not answered.</p> <p><b>Unanimously opposed.</b></p>
BOG	205	<b>Permits for taking incidental or stranded musk oxen Unit 18 (On-time comment deadline March 3, 2015)</b>	
			Philip Perry discussed it. Motion to take no action. Passed unanimously
BOF	273	<b>Consider changing the date during which drift gillnet fishing for summer chum salmon may begin in the upper section of Yukon River Sub district 4A (On-time comment deadline March 3, 2015)</b>	
support	7	0	<p>Fishing is closed in lower river, then when they get to the upper river, there are many fish, but upriver there's less people up there than downriver. There's many snags up by Holy Cross. Stephanie Schmidt explained all other districts are allowed to fish with drift gillnets for summer chum once 90% of the Kings have passed and this is an opportunity for allowing them to meet their subsistence needs for chum salmon, by emergency order only.</p> <p>Discussion included concerns about estimating the run with the sonar if it's accurate. Bill Alstrom explained that they are the only tools available Fish and Game has, plus the teleconferences. YRDFA teleconferences people spoke about drifting in 4A, and how other fishermen come in from 4B and 4C fishing in that area.</p> <p>Former AC member, John Riley pointed out they're just asking to have a date to allow fishing, to put food on table.</p> <p>Motion passes unanimously.</p>
BOF	274	<b>Consider allowing fish wheel fishermen in the Yukon Area to retain king salmon when some harvest is justified based upon in season run assessment. (On-time comment deadline March 3, 2015)</b>	

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Support	7		Stephanie Schmidt (ADFG) Yukon area biologist explained the proposal is trying to give equity to fishermen using fish wheels so that they have the same opportunity as drift gillnet fishermen. Yukon River panel is in support of this. The only other AC that voted at this time was Tanana and it was explained they were split on it because they are very conservative and want all Kings released. One member said he'd sure like to use a fish wheel; it can be a conservation tool because you can turn it off and on. Members also mentioned there are fishers that are being greedy, and also selling subsistence fish. We have to put pressure on law enforcement to preserve salmon. Member <b>Unanimously supported.</b>
BOF	272		<b>Consider providing the commissioner of ADF&amp;G emergency order authority to restrict gillnet gear in the Kuskokwim River drainage (On-time comment deadline March 3, 2015)</b>
No action	7		Motion to take no action- unanimously approved

**XI. Adjourn: 6:50 PM**

Minutes Recorded By:     H. Carroll (R.C.)

Minutes Approved By:     SUB-Committee                     

Date:     12/22/14