

Activities of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group, 2014

**Annual Report for Study 14-354
USFWS Office of Subsistence Management
Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program**

by

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and

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Divisions of Sport Fish and Commercial Fisheries



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Weights and measures (metric)		General		Mathematics, statistics	
centimeter	cm	Alaska Administrative Code		<i>all standard mathematical signs, symbols and abbreviations</i>	
deciliter	dL		AAC		
gram	g	all commonly accepted abbreviations	e.g., Mr., Mrs., AM, PM, etc.	alternate hypothesis	H _A
hectare	ha			base of natural logarithm	<i>e</i>
kilogram	kg	all commonly accepted professional titles	e.g., Dr., Ph.D., R.N., etc.	catch per unit effort	CPUE
kilometer	km			coefficient of variation	CV
liter	L			common test statistics	(F, t, χ^2 , etc.)
meter	m	at	@	confidence interval	CI
milliliter	mL	compass directions:		correlation coefficient (multiple)	R
millimeter	mm	east	E	correlation coefficient (simple)	r
Weights and measures (English)		north	N	covariance	cov
cubic feet per second	ft ³ /s	south	S	degree (angular)	°
foot	ft	west	W	degrees of freedom	df
gallon	gal	copyright	©	expected value	<i>E</i>
inch	in	corporate suffixes:		greater than	>
mile	mi	Company	Co.	greater than or equal to	≥
nautical mile	nmi	Corporation	Corp.	harvest per unit effort	HPUE
ounce	oz	Incorporated	Inc.	less than	<
pound	lb	Limited	Ltd.	less than or equal to	≤
quart	qt	District of Columbia	D.C.	logarithm (natural)	ln
yard	yd	et alii (and others)	et al.	logarithm (base 10)	log
		et cetera (and so forth)	etc.	logarithm (specify base)	log ₂ , etc.
Time and temperature		exempli gratia		minute (angular)	'
day	d	(for example)	e.g.	not significant	NS
degrees Celsius	°C	Federal Information Code	FIC	null hypothesis	H ₀
degrees Fahrenheit	°F	id est (that is)	i.e.	percent	%
degrees kelvin	K	latitude or longitude	lat or long	probability	P
hour	h	monetary symbols		probability of a type I error	
minute	min	(U.S.)	\$, ¢	(rejection of the null hypothesis when true)	α
second	s	months (tables and figures): first three letters	Jan,...,Dec	probability of a type II error	
Physics and chemistry		registered trademark	®	(acceptance of the null hypothesis when false)	β
all atomic symbols		trademark	™	second (angular)	"
alternating current	AC	United States		standard deviation	SD
ampere	A	(adjective)	U.S.	standard error	SE
calorie	cal	United States of America (noun)	USA	variance	
direct current	DC	U.S.C.	United States Code	population	Var
hertz	Hz			sample	var
horsepower	hp				
hydrogen ion activity (negative log of)	pH				
parts per million	ppm	U.S. state	use two-letter abbreviations		
parts per thousand	ppt, ‰		(e.g., AK, WA)		
volts	V				
watts	W				

FISHERY MANAGEMENT REPORT NO. 15-33

**ACTIVITIES OF THE KUSKOKWIM RIVER SALMON MANAGEMENT
WORKING GROUP, 2014**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
LIST OF TABLES.....	ii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	ii
LIST OF APPENDICES	ii
ABSTRACT	1
INTRODUCTION.....	1
PROCESS.....	2
2014 SEASON.....	3
Working Group Meetings.....	3
JANUARY 8–9, 2014.....	3
MARCH 11, 2014.....	3
APRIL 3–4, 2014.....	4
MAY 20, 2014.....	4
JUNE 5, 2014.....	4
JUNE 17, 2014.....	5
JUNE 26, 2014.....	5
JULY 2, 2014.....	5
JULY 8, 2014.....	5
JULY 16, 2014.....	6
JULY 23, 2014.....	6
JULY 30, 2014.....	6
AUGUST 6, 2014.....	7
AUGUST 12, 2014.....	7
AUGUST 20, 2014.....	7
AUGUST 26, 2014.....	8
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	8
REFERENCES CITED	8
TABLES AND FIGURES.....	9
APPENDIX A: JOINT STATEMENT ON THE MANAGEMENT OF THE KUSKOKWIM RIVER FISHERY ...	13
APPENDIX B: BYLAWS OF THE KUSKOKWIM RIVER SALMON MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP ...	15

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1 Kuskokwim River salmon management Working Group representation, 2014.	11

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Page
1 Map of Kuskokwim management area including 2014 escapement projects.	10

LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix	Page
A1 Joint Statement on the Management of the Kuskokwim River Fishery.	14
B1 Bylaws of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group, 2013.	16

ABSTRACT

The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (Working Group) meetings provide the forum for area fishermen, user representatives, community representatives, Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Council representatives, Alaska Department of Fish and Game Advisory Committee (ADF&G AC) members, and state and federal managers to come together and discuss issues relevant to management of the Kuskokwim River salmon fishery. The Working Group met 17 times in 2014 to discuss salmon resource management in the Kuskokwim River. A total of 18 informational packets were distributed to the Working Group and interested parties, 17 meeting summaries were produced, and 22 audio recordings were published to the ADF&G Working Group website. Informational packets, summaries, and meeting audio recordings were published on the ADF&G website.

Key words: Chinook *Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*, chum *O. keta*, sockeye *O. nerka*, and coho salmon *O. kisutch*, subsistence fishing, commercial fishing, salmon fishery management, co-management, Bethel, Kuskokwim River.

INTRODUCTION

This report serves to document the 2014 proceedings of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (Working Group). A brief description of the Working Group and its history is provided along with a brief description of each meeting. Detailed informational packets, meeting summaries, and meeting audio recordings can be found on the Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G) website:

(<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareakuskokwim.kswg#2014>).

The Working Group was formed in 1988 by the Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) in response to requests from stakeholders in the Kuskokwim Area (Figure 1) who sought a more active role in the management of salmon fishery resources (Appendix A; Francisco et al. 1989). The Working Group has become the forum through which inseason management decisions are made regarding Kuskokwim River subsistence, commercial, and sport salmon fisheries.

The Working Group is made up of 13 member seats representing a group of salmon users with a vested interest in management of the fishery (Table 1). These members represent: Elders (Upriver, Downriver; total of 2 seats), Subsistence Fishermen (Lower River, Middle River, Upriver, and Headwaters; total of 4 seats), Processors (1 seat), Commercial Fishermen (1 seat), Sport Fishermen (1 seat), Member at Large (1 seat), Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Committees (RAC; Yukon Kuskokwim Delta, Western Interior; total of 2 seats), and ADF&G (1 seat). Representatives from each type of user group volunteer or are nominated to act as representatives for that group. Alternates are similarly selected to serve in the event the representative is unable to attend a meeting. Non-agency members participate on a voluntary basis and receive no compensation.

Participation in the Working Group process requires a great deal of time from its members and agency staff. The Working Group typically meet in the spring of each calendar year in Anchorage, conduct intensive and frequent meetings during the summer fishing season in Bethel, and hold a wrap-up session in fall or early winter. From 2012 through 2014, periodic Working Group meetings were scheduled throughout the winter months as well. Working Group members have also participated in other Kuskokwim River fisheries regulatory meetings and processes.

Funding provided by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Office of Subsistence Management (OSM; project FRMP 14-354, effective 2014–2017) was essential to the Working Group process in 2014. This funding provides for Working Group member travel to meetings and other conferences relevant to Kuskokwim River fisheries, such as the Kuskokwim Area

interagency meetings, science symposia, other advisory group meetings, and BOF meetings. The funding also provides for teleconference fees; meeting supplies and arrangements; and ADF&G staff time to coordinate the Working Group process, prepare and distribute updated fishery status information packets, and to summarize the activities of the Working Group. State general funds provide additional salary for ADF&G staff, teleconference costs, and travel costs in support of the Working Group.

PROCESS

The Working Group process is governed by a set of bylaws, most recently amended June 11, 2013 (Appendix B). The bylaws describe the purpose, rules of conduct, representation, and selection of officers for the Working Group process. Beyond those procedures defined in the bylaws, meetings are conducted according to Robert's Rules of Order (Robert III et al. 2011). Inseason meetings are generally held in the conference room located in the ADF&G Bethel field office. Working Group members from villages outside of Bethel (particularly upriver representatives) often participate in meetings by teleconference. Efforts are made to conduct at least 1 meeting per year where all members are able to attend in person. These meetings are generally held during the spring, before the fishing season, in Anchorage and coincide with the annual Kuskokwim Interagency meeting.

Working Group meetings follow a standard agenda that is defined by the bylaws and provides for a full and complete discussion of Kuskokwim River salmon fisheries (Appendix B). Reports are heard and discussed regarding test fishery and escapement monitoring projects, and subsistence and commercial harvests. Based on these reports, ADF&G presents a recommended course of action to the Working Group concerning management of Kuskokwim River salmon fisheries. The Working Group conducts facilitated discussion on these recommendations and works towards agreement on management decisions. Working Group motions are passed by consensus, which is defined in the bylaws (Appendix B). ADF&G has management authority, and therefore has no voting status on Working Group motions concerning the setting of commercial openings, subsistence fishing restrictions, and subsistence fishing closures.

Through this process, the Working Group has the ability to provide valuable input and affect management decisions; however, the authority and responsibility to implement management actions rests with ADF&G staff. The Working Group passes resolutions stating consensus positions, recommendations, and opinions, and then communicates these resolutions to agencies, organizations, and the public. The Working Group also participates on a wider stage by appointing representatives to attend meetings of the BOF, Federal Subsistence Board, RAC, and other public meetings dealing with relevant fisheries issues.

In support of Working Group meetings, ADF&G:

1. Informs Working Group members and members of the public and other agencies about scheduled meetings through phone, mail, email, and fax;
2. Assembles, copies, and distributes materials including meeting announcements, agendas, information packets, action statements, meeting summaries, and news releases;
3. Initiates Working Group meeting teleconferences;
4. Organizes and provides logistics for member travel;
5. Drafts an annual report of Working Group proceedings; and
6. Secures funding for the Working Group process.

2014 SEASON

WORKING GROUP MEETINGS

The Working Group met 17 times during the 2014 calendar year. Three meetings occurred in 2014 between January and April, primarily for the purpose of preseason planning. The third of these was held in conjunction with the ADF&G Kuskokwim Area Interagency Meeting in Anchorage at the William Jackson Hernandez Sport Fish Hatchery conference room. Sixteen meetings (including 2 of the planning meetings) occurred at the ADF&G conference room in Bethel. Information packets were distributed prior to each meeting to update members and other participants on run assessment data, commercial catch reports, and other requested information. Run assessment data early in the season consisted of Bethel test fishery (BTF) catch per unit effort (CPUE) indices of salmon abundance, subsistence fishing reports from members, and weekly reports from the Lower Kuskokwim River inseason subsistence salmon catch monitoring project (Roberta Chavez, Orutsararmiut Native Council, Bethel; personal communication). Kuskokwim Native Association (KNA) in Aniak also provided community feedback from subsistence users. Escapement data from weirs and aerial survey were incorporated into packets as they became available. Meeting agendas were distributed with packets the day prior to each inseason meeting. Meeting summaries were written and distributed after each meeting. A quorum was established for 14 of 17 meetings. Working Group meeting materials have been archived and will remain available on the ADF&G website:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareakuskokwim.kswg#2014>

JANUARY 8–9, 2014

The first Working Group meeting of 2014 was held in Bethel at the request of Working Group members. Members requested and received presentations recapping the 2013 Chinook run and preliminary management strategy, and another explaining the methods behind salmon forecasting. Letters from KNA and the Nunapitchuk City Council regarding management were reviewed and discussed. Kevin Schaberg and Dave Runfola of ADF&G gave an update on the State of Alaska's *Chinook Salmon research initiative* to study recent statewide declines in Chinook salmon runs. The Working Group failed to pass a motion in support of the Kuskokwim River 2014 Preliminary Management Strategy because of a suggested May 15 closure to salmon fishing in all sections of the river. The Working Group discussed draft emergency petitions to the BOF regarding the use of dip nets for salmon subsistence and limits to gillnet lengths. A total of 10 motions were made.

MARCH 11, 2014

The Working Group held a nonpublic teleconference to prepare for the coming BOF and Kuskokwim Interagency meetings. Dave Cannon (Middle River Subsistence) discussed a pair of emergency petitions he had provided to the BOF regarding the use of dip nets as legal gear for other salmon species and the limitation of 25-fathom gillnet length during Chinook salmon conservation. Working Group members discussed input and concerns from the public regarding Chinook salmon conservation measures, including both support and opposition to conservation. The Working Group discussed approaches for spreading the conservation message to the communities and individuals. Possible proposals for changes in the state and federal regulations were discussed.

APRIL 3–4, 2014

The Working Group met with state and federal managers to discuss the upcoming 2014 fishing season. The need for users and managers to work together was stressed, and challenges and differing opinions were acknowledged. ADF&G provided updates regarding the 2 emergency petitions that had gone before the BOF. These included the use of dip nets for the harvest of chum and sockeye salmon and requiring live release of Chinook salmon during times of Chinook salmon conservation, and the possible limiting of gillnet length in subsistence fisheries to conserve Chinook salmon. Dave Cannon (Middle River Subsistence) provided a presentation on the Endangered Species Act, with reference to how it might play into Chinook salmon management on the Kuskokwim. Gene Peltola Jr. (OSM) spoke regarding the process that would govern a Federal Tier II designation for the Kuskokwim Chinook salmon. Management tools and options for the 2014 fishing season were presented and discussed. ADF&G provided information on run timing and harvest data to inform discussions on fishing schedules. Bill Bechtol for the Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) presented an analysis of the Bethel test fishery tool that had been used in 2013. The group discussed the need to educate the Kuskokwim River community regarding Chinook salmon conservation during the 2014 fishing season, and a set of talking points was developed to assist with this effort. The Working Group discussed drafting an emergency petition that would allow managers to designate the use of 4.0-inch mesh gillnets as “setnet only” during times of salmon conservation. During the Working Group business meeting, officers were re-elected and new members were appointed to Working Group seats.

MAY 20, 2014

Subsistence reports indicated that a few people were starting to catch Chinook salmon in the lower river area. USFWS and ADF&G discussed similar but separate management strategies for the 2014 season in the Kuskokwim drainage. USFWS would manage the lower river within the Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge as a federal special action and ADF&G would manage the remainder of the Kuskokwim Area per its mandate. The agencies agreed there was a need to be conservative in Chinook salmon management. Mike Williams (Lower River Subsistence) provided an update on recent discussions between the Yupiit Nation and AVCP regarding the inclusion of tribal governments in management. ONC and the Bethel test fishery (BTF) staff discussed coordinated efforts to distribute Chinook salmon among Bethel residents and local villages during the 2014 season. Working Group members requested ADF&G investigate the possibility of incorporating a few management strategies that were being used in federal waters in 2014. The Working Group declared support for weir monitoring projects throughout the Kuskokwim River drainage.

JUNE 5, 2014

Subsistence reports indicated that many people had either not started harvesting fish due to the gear restrictions or had harvested limited amounts of whitefish and a few salmon. ADF&G and ONC discussed their collaboration in distributing fish caught from the Bethel test fishery. There were no management recommendations. There was discussion regarding confusion over differing management details within state and federally managed waters. There was discussion regarding a potential fishery opening for dip netting, fish wheels, and the USFWS social and cultural harvest permits. Several people expressed frustration regarding the subsistence fishing restrictions. Dave Cannon (Middle River Subsistence) provided an update on the smelt study that

had been conducted in the middle river area. Mary Sattler was appointed to the seat of Lower River Subsistence alternate on the Working Group.

JUNE 17, 2014

Subsistence reports indicated that most people had not met subsistence harvest needs, that dip nets were not widely considered to be effective, and that some people were waiting until restrictions were lifted to begin fishing. ADF&G reported that the number of chum and sockeye salmon caught in the Bethel test fishery (BTF) had increased and state salmon escapement assessment projects were operational. USFWS reported having begun installation of its monitoring projects on the Kwethluk and Tuluksak rivers despite objections from local communities. ADF&G announced that it would open a dip net and fish wheel fishery on June 19, 2014, and were considering an elder fishery in the upper river area. ADF&G discussed a possible subsistence opening in the lower river with 6.0 inch mesh drift gillnet to harvest sockeye and chum salmon. The Working Group was in support of the federal and state management opening subsistence fishing for chum and sockeye salmon. Several people reported that families were feeling stressed due to the restrictions on subsistence fishing.

JUNE 26, 2014

Subsistence reports indicated that most families along the river continued to harvest salmon for subsistence. Managers discussed recent subsistence fishing openings that had allowed the use of 6.0 inch mesh gillnets in the lower river on June 20 and June 24, 2014. Managers reported they were shifting their focus toward chum and sockeye salmon fisheries. They were also considering rod and reel opportunities in salmon conservation Section 5 (upper river). ADF&G provided an update on statewide 2014 Chinook salmon runs. USFWS provided an update on the June 20 and 24 subsistence openings, which resulted in an estimated Chinook salmon harvest of approximately 2,700 fish.

JULY 2, 2014

Subsistence harvest reports from fishermen in Lower river communities indicated that the majority of people had completed their subsistence salmon harvest and were busy processing. ONC's weekly report indicated that in the prior week, 37 of 42 families surveyed in the Bethel area were still fishing for salmon. The majority of Middle and Upper river communities reported that they had not met their subsistence needs and were having mixed success in catching chum and sockeye salmon even when using 6.0 inch mesh driftnets. Chinook salmon were reported to have arrived in some headwaters locations. As of June 30, 2014, all weirs were fish tight. ADF&G announced that as of July 3, 2014, the entire Kuskokwim River drainage would be opened to 6.0 inch mesh gillnets until further notice. Management remained in a Chinook salmon conservation mode. Under *New Business*, Myron Naneng with AVCP reported on the efforts made toward establishing an Intertribal Fish Commission on the Yukon and Kuskokwim rivers.

JULY 8, 2014

A quorum was not established and the meeting was conducted as an executive session. Subsistence reports indicated that the majority of people in the lower river areas discontinued salmon harvest either because their needs were met or they were waiting for coho salmon to arrive. The majority of people in the Middle and Upper river communities reported they had not met their subsistence needs and continued to fish. Concerns from Working Group members and the public were raised regarding the recommendation by ADF&G to open a commercial fishery

for chum salmon in the lower river. Many people requested that a commercial opening be delayed in order to allow for additional subsistence opportunity in the middle and upper river areas. Coastal Villages Seafoods (CVS) was ready for a commercial opening when allowed by management and would not be buying Chinook salmon. Brian McCaffrey with USFWS provided an overview of the Yupiit Nation Tribal Fish Forum held on July 1, 2014, in Napaskiak. Under *New Business*, the Working Group discussed a letter submitted to the BOF regarding a Tier II permit system on the Kuskokwim River.

JULY 16, 2014

Subsistence reports indicated that Middle and Upper river communities continued to fish for subsistence needs. There had been 1 commercial opening on July 14; CVS said they would be ready for future openings during the 2014 season. The Working Group voted against ADF&G's recommendation for a commercial opening on July 18. A Tier II permit request by Grant Fairbanks was discussed by the Working Group. Concerns regarding waste of chum salmon in a portion of the river were discussed and the Working Group supported management efforts to address the issue. Members spoke regarding the importance of coho salmon for subsistence purposes during the 2014 season.

JULY 23, 2014

Several community members from along the Kuskokwim River spoke during *People to be Heard* regarding subsistence and commercial fisheries. Many Lower river people and commercial fishermen spoke in favor of commercial openings, while Middle and Upper river people spoke against commercial openings in order to allow more opportunity to meet subsistence needs. Subsistence reports in the lower river indicated that needs had been met while middle and upriver area reports indicated that people continued to work toward meeting their subsistence needs. Commercial catch reports were provided for the 3 openings in the Kuskokwim River on July 14, July 18, and July 21, 2014. Working Group members and management expressed concern over difficulties in their working relationships. State managers explained the management process, including how regulation governed management action and how decisions are made. They went on to explain the regulatory process and how changes could be sought through engagement with the BOF. ADF&G expressed support for the Working Group's efforts in writing proposals to the BOF in response to allocation concerns. The Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) spoke regarding the recent requests by Kuskokwim organizations for federal management of the river.

JULY 30, 2014

Many Kuskokwim River residents spoke during *People to be Heard* in regards to potential commercial openings. Several people from Middle and Upper river communities requested that commercial fishing be delayed until the coho salmon run had reached their waters in strength to ensure that they would be able to meet their subsistence needs. Commercial fishermen in the lower river were in favor of a commercial opening. Subsistence reports indicated that most people in the lower river had met their subsistence needs and were continuing to harvest on a limited basis. The Middle and Upper river communities said that coho salmon would be used to meet their primary needs in 2014, because all others species had not been available in adequate numbers to date. ADF&G reported that aerial surveys had been completed and indicated that some aerial survey escapement goals had been met for Chinook salmon. ADF&G recommended continued monitoring of the coho salmon run through the BTF and subsistence reports along the

Kuskokwim River with no scheduled commercial openings. The Working Group declined to make a motion regarding the recommendation. The Bering Sea Fisherman's Association (BSFA) discussed a recent proposal to conduct capacity building workshops. Follow-up was provided regarding the Tier II permit discussion and the request for federal management of the river. Working Group members discussed the continued need for improvements in communication between the Kuskokwim River communities and management. The development of a Kuskokwim drainage exchange program and a 2014 *Middle and Upper River subsistence creel survey project* were both discussed under *New Business*.

AUGUST 6, 2014

The challenges and successes of the 2014 dip net fishery were discussed during *People to be Heard*. Subsistence reports indicated that the coho salmon run was strong in the lower portion of the river. People in Middle and Upper river communities were starting to harvest coho salmon and were happy for the delay in commercial fishing. ADF&G reported on a creel survey being conducted in the middle and upper portions of the river. Escapement projects indicated that 95% of the Chinook salmon run and 90% of the chum and sockeye run had passed. ADF&G recommended that management continue to assess the coho salmon run through the BTF and subsistence user reports with a possibility of a commercial opportunity during the following week. A motion to support the recommendation failed 5 to 3, showing that Working Group members were mixed regarding the recommendation. Some members said it was a fair recommendation, while others wanted a commercial opening sooner. A few supported a delay on commercial openings until all subsistence needs had been met along the river.

AUGUST 12, 2014

Subsistence reports for Middle and Upper river communities indicated that people were harvesting coho salmon and meeting their subsistence needs. People from Middle and Upper river communities thanked the commercial fishermen and ADF&G for delaying commercial openings during the beginning of the coho salmon run. A commercial opening on August 11, 2014 harvested a total of 23,999 coho salmon. The Working Group unanimously supported a recommendation from ADF&G for further commercial openings. ADF&G also explained the process required to request a dip net fishery for the full season and offered assistance in drafting proposals to the BOF. The Working Group supported a project proposal by the USFWS for a graduated-field electrode array salmon counting system. Members of the Working Group expressed concerns regarding the current escapement goals and the process used to develop those goals. The department described the escapement goal development process and noted that during the upcoming review there would be time allotted for public comments. The Working Group resolved to continue the discussion of escapement goals in future meetings.

AUGUST 20, 2014

A quorum was not established and the meeting was conducted as an executive session. Subsistence reports indicated that the majority of people in the Lower and Middle river communities were no longer subsistence fishing for salmon. Communities in the upper and headwater sections continued to harvest to meet their needs. Assessment projects indicated that the 2014 coho salmon run was strong. A commercial opening was scheduled in Subdistrict W1-B for August 21. There was a significant discussion regarding the escapement goals and the upcoming review. Jan Conitz (ADF&G) provided an overview of the escapement goal review process. Many Working Group members wanted more information about the peer review process, timelines, and expected changes

to the current goals. There was some discussion on the role that subsistence activities played in the creation of escapement goals. Jim Simon (ADF&G) discussed the process for creating a proposal to the BOF for a subsistence dip net fishery on the Kuskokwim River all season long. Grant Fairbanks' BOF agenda change request requesting a Tier II permit system was shared. ADF&G Subsistence Division said they were developing an informational presentation for Working Group members in September 2014 on the Tier II permit system.

AUGUST 26, 2014

A quorum was not established and the meeting was conducted as an executive session. According to subsistence reports, the majority of people in the lower and middle river areas were finished with their subsistence fishing. Upper river and Headwater communities continued to fish for coho salmon and other fish species. Overall, people were happy with the coho salmon run. ADF&G reported that the 2014 coho salmon run had been the fourth highest observed in the BTF. ADF&G reported a total commercial catch of 107,421 coho salmon to date during Subdistrict W1-B commercial openings in 2014. Additional coho salmon commercial openings would be scheduled contingent on the outcome of the August 26 commercial opening and processor interest. Jim Simon (ADF&G) provided an update on the dip net fishery proposal. Dan Gillikin (KNA) offered to facilitate an escapement goal work session meeting on September 27 and September 28, 2014, and requested input from Working Group members. Working Group members and management stressed the importance of developing and sharing the 2015 Chinook salmon season strategy with the public at the earliest possible opportunity.

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<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareakuskokwim.kswg#2014>

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TABLES AND FIGURES

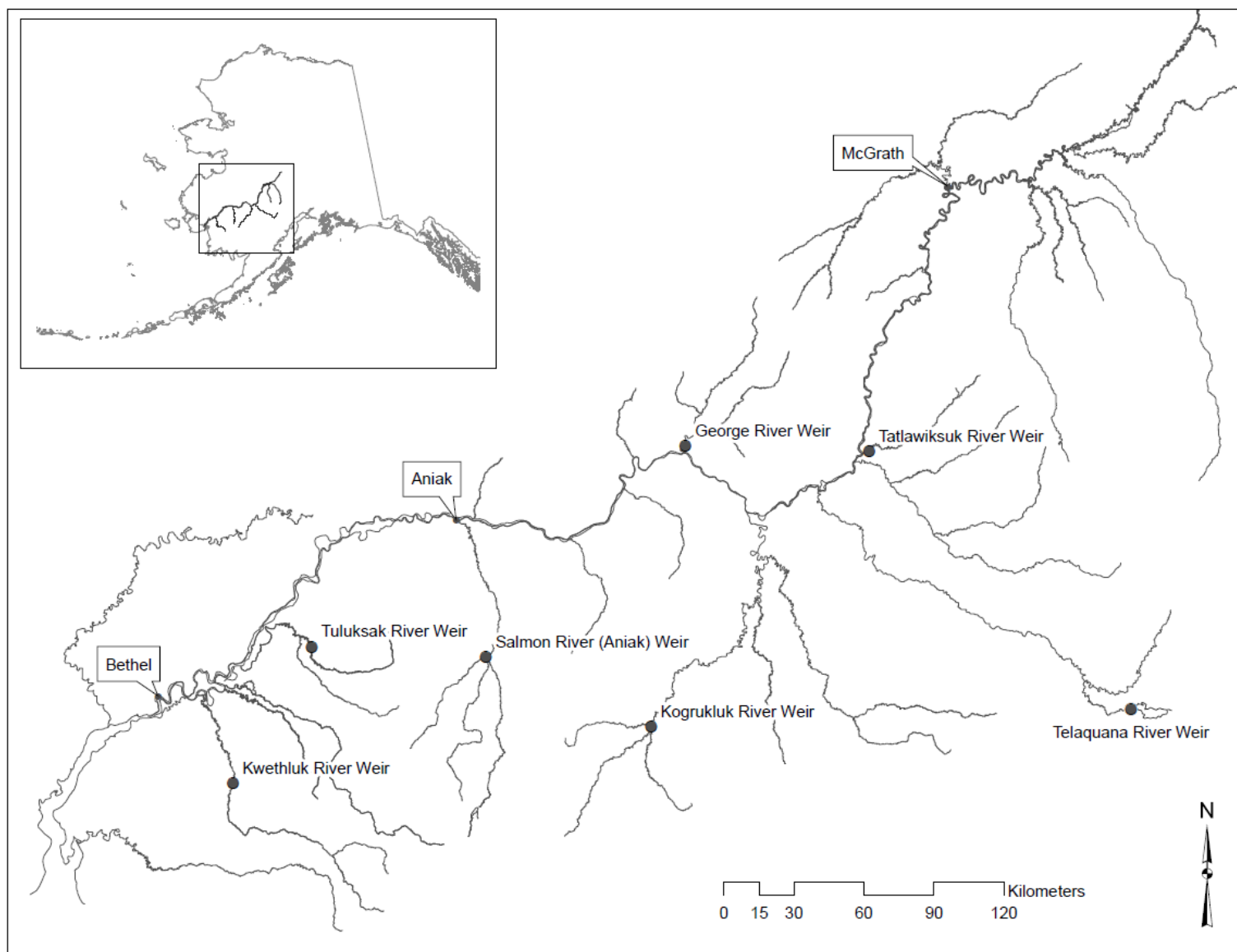


Figure 1.—Map of Kuskokwim management area including 2014 escapement projects.

Table 1.–Kuskokwim River salmon management Working Group representation, 2014.

Member seat	Primary	Alternate	Alternate
Downriver Elder	James Charles, Tuntatuliak	John Andrew, Kwethluk	
Upriver Elder	<i>vacant</i>		
Lower River Subsistence	Mike Williams, Akiak	Greg Roczicka, Bethel	Casie Stockdale, Bethel
Middle River Subsistence	Dave Cannon, Aniak	Nick Kamerooff, Aniak	Wayne Morgan, Aniak
Upriver Subsistence	Mark Leary, Napaimute	Barbara Carlson, Sleetmute	
Headwaters Subsistence	Daniel Esai, Nikolai	Peter Tony, Nikolai	
Processor	Henry Mitchell, Coastal Villages Seafoods		
Member at Large	Fritz Charles, Bethel	Henry Lupie, Tuntatuliak	
YK Delta RAC	Bob Aloysius, Kalskag		
Commercial Fisherman	Charlie Brown, Eek	Greg Hoffman, Jr., Bethel	
Western Interior RAC	Ray Collins, McGrath	Carl Morgan, Aniak	
Sport Fishing	LaMont Albertson, Aniak	Beverly Hoffman, Bethel	
ADF&G co-chairs	Aaron Poetter, Area Manager, Lamont Albertson, Beverly Hoffman, Fritz Charles, Mark Leary, Casie Stockdale		

**APPENDIX A: JOINT STATEMENT ON THE
MANAGEMENT OF THE KUSKOKWIM RIVER FISHERY**

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JOINT STATEMENT ON THE MANAGEMENT OF THE
KUSKOKWIM RIVER SALMON FISHERY

The Board of Fisheries, the Department of Fish and Game, the local Fish and Game Advisory Committees, and local subsistence and commercial fishermen agree to work together towards the goal of increasing the sustained yield of Kuskokwim River salmon stocks to provide for subsistence needs and an economically viable commercial fishery. To achieve that goal, the parties agree to the following:

1. Kuskokwim River salmon users will form a working group.
2. The local department staff will meet with the working group to discuss pre-season and in-season management of the fishery and evaluate items such as, but not limited to:
 - (a) test fishery data;
 - (b) CPUE data from historic and in-season commercial fisheries; and
 - (c) in-season subsistence catch data.
3. It is understood that the purpose of these meetings shall be to arrive at a consensus regarding the openings and closures of the Kuskokwim River fishery. If a consensus cannot be reached emergency order authority will continue to be at the area management biologist's discretion.
4. The department will announce the opening of the first commercial fishing period by June 10.
5. The fishing periods may be separated by six days to assist king salmon passage.
6. The department and the working group will work towards the development of a comprehensive management plan for all of the Kuskokwim River salmon stocks, and report to the board on their progress.
7. Working group/staff meetings will be at the discretion of the chair of the working group.


Gary Slaven, Chairman
Board of Fisheries

Date: March 14th 1988


Don W. Collinsworth
Commissioner, ADF&G

Date: 4-20-88

**APPENDIX B: BYLAWS OF THE KUSKOKWIM RIVER
SALMON MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP**

BYLAWS OF THE

KUSKOKWIM RIVER SALMON MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP

PURPOSE

To provide local fishers and other users with an avenue for direct involvement in the management of their fishery. The goal is for all parties to work together to reach a consensus on management of the fishery. Final emergency order authority continues to rest with the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

RULES OF CONDUCT

Meetings will be conducted by Robert's Rules of Order. The sequence of meetings is as follows:

- I. Call to order (by chair)
- II. Roll Call (by chair)
- III. Invocation
- IV. Meeting Minutes
- V. Approval of Agenda: *Optional*
- VI. People to be heard
- VII. Continuing Business
 1. Subsistence Reports/Traditional Native Fisheries Knowledge
 - a. Lower River:
 - b. ONC Inseason Subsistence:
 - c. Middle River Subsistence:
 - d. KNA Inseason:
 - e. Upper River:
 - f. Headwaters:
 2. Overview of Kuskokwim River Salmon Run Assessment Projects
 - a. Bethel Test Fish
 - b. Weir/Mark–Recapture/Aerial Surveys/Other:
 3. Commercial Catch Report:
 4. Processor Report:
 5. Sport Fish Report:
 6. Intercept Fishery Report: *Optional*
 7. Weather Forecast:
 8. Recommendation:
- VIII. Old Business

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- IX. New Business
- X. Meeting Action Announcement
- XI. Date, Time, and Place of next meeting
- XII. Adjournment

(This sequence may be changed at the discretion of the Group)

People to Be Heard and Continuing Business reports may not exceed 3 minutes in length, excluding questions and answers.

Under the ‘People to be heard’ agenda item the public would be provided an opportunity to discuss only topics or items which are **not** already listed as specific agenda items. A member of the public may also ask the Group to place an issue on the agenda.

Unlike other institutions or committees, the Working Group operates on a consensus basis. When discussing fisheries management issues, a simple majority vote of the members is not sufficient to pass a motion. For the purposes of the Group all fisheries management related motions must pass by a consensus of the members present at the meeting. If 7 (seven) or fewer of the members are present, then consensus is defined as a situation wherein either all voting members vote “yea” or all voting members vote “yea” except for 1 “nay” vote. If 8 (eight) or more of the members are present, then consensus is defined as a situation wherein either all voting members vote “yea” or all voting members vote “yea” except for 2 “nay” votes.

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game does not have voting status on motions concerning the setting of commercial openings.

When voting on motions not related to fisheries management or seat elections, a consensus vote is not required.

ARTICLE I, OFFICE

The principal office of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (Working Group) shall be located in the City of Bethel, Alaska 99559.

The current address of the principal office is, P.O. Box 1467, Bethel, Alaska 99559. The physical address is 570 4th Avenue.

ARTICLE II, MEMBERS

Section 1. Members: The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group shall have 13 member organizations or constituencies. These members represent: Elders (Upriver, Downriver) (2), Subsistence Fishermen (Lower River, Middle River, Upriver, and Headwaters) (4), Processors (1), Commercial Fishermen (1), Sport Fishers (1), Member at Large (1), Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Committees (Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, Western Interior) (2), and the Department of Fish and Game (1). Each member of the Working Group will designate a representative and an alternate or alternates in the event the representative is unable to attend a meeting. In the case where more than 1 person is nominated to represent a member organization or constituency, the Working Group will appoint 1 of the nominees to represent the member organization or constituency.

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Section 2. Annual Meeting:

An annual meeting of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group may be held in Bethel or Anchorage during the month of March to coincide with the Kuskokwim Salmon Interagency Meeting. The purpose of the meeting will be to conduct any unfinished administrative functions that the Working Group needs to complete for the following year.

Section 3. Special Meetings:

Special meetings of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group may be called by the Co-Chairs.

Section 4. Notice of Meetings:

The Department of Fish and Game will be responsible for informing the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group members of the time, place and date of any meetings. Notification of meetings to the Working Group will be not less than 48 hours (when possible) or more than 45 days in advance.

Section 5. Quorum:

In order for a meeting of the Working Group to be held and for actions taken at a meeting to be legitimate, it is necessary for there to be a quorum at a meeting, that is at least 7 of the 13 member constituencies must be represented.

For Fisheries management meetings, there must be 7 members plus the department representative.

For executive sessions, the quorum may be 7 members including the department representative; however, this meeting cannot entertain motions regarding fishery decisions.

If a quorum of the full committee is not present, business may be conducted in executive session. The executive committee is composed of at least 5 representatives: 1 Co-Chair, any 2 representatives of the following member groups; Member at Large, Processors, Commercial Fisherman, and any 2 representatives of the following member groups; Lower, Middle, Upriver and Headwaters Subsistence, Federal RAC, Sport Fisherman.

ARTICLE III. REPRESENTATIVES

Section 1. Working Group:

The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group shall be comprised of 13 representatives from the areas described in Article II, Section 1.

Section 2. General Powers:

The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group shall make recommendations to the Department of Fish and Game for the purposes of managing the salmon fisheries on the Kuskokwim River after subsistence and commercial catch, test fishery, weir, tower and sonar reports and other information are provided to the group.

Section 3. Voting Membership:

Each Working Group member shall be entitled to 1 vote. One alternate designated by the member shall be entitled to one vote in the absence of that member. Members may abstain from voting on any motion. The Department of Fish and Game may vote on motions unrelated to fisheries management decisions only.

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Working Group members must hear all the Continuing Business reports to vote on a motion to set commercial openings.

Section 4. Resignation:

Any member or representative may resign by submitting a letter of resignation to a Co-Chair of the Working Group. The resignation must give the Working Group at least 4 weeks notification so that a new member or representative may be appointed.

Section 5. Vacancies:

A vacancy on the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group because of death, resignation, removal, disqualification, forfeiture or otherwise, may be filled by the Working Group from nominations by member groups for the remainder of the term.

Section 6. Forfeit, participation or removal:

- A. FORFEIT. The Working Group will give written notification, by certified mail, to any member organization, their representative and alternate whose seat has not been represented for 2 consecutive meetings that their membership in the Working Group will be forfeited if the seat is not represented by the following meeting. Whereas, a member's failure to be represented at a meeting is excused by the Working Group, as appropriate, such failure shall not be considered an absence within this section.
- B. PARTICIPATION. No representative will be allowed to participate in a Working Group meeting who is deemed to be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.
- C. REMOVAL. A representative may be removed from their seat on the Working Group for cause and must be provided the opportunity appeal this removal at a subsequent meeting of the Working Group. A representative may be removed for cause for any reason allowed, including but not limited to, conviction of a felony, gross misconduct, violation of their trust to the Working Group as a representative, or harassment of any kind to the other representatives of the Working Group.

ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS OF THE WORKING GROUP

Section 1. Officers:

The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group shall elect Co-Chairs for the purpose of conducting meetings. The Co-Chairs will be elected annually at the first meeting occurring after March 1st. The Working Group shall elect or appoint other officers as deemed necessary. An officer of the Working Group may not hold more than one position. The Co-Chairs must be official representatives of the Working Group.

Section 2. Terms of Office:

Each representative of the Working Group shall be elected or appointed. A representative shall hold their position until their successor has been duly elected or appointed and has been qualified

Section 3. Co-Chair:

A Co-Chair of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group shall preside at all meetings of the Working Group. If a pre-designated co-chair is not present, those present may elect a temporary chair to preside for that meeting.

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Section 4. Other Committees:

The Co-Chairs shall have the authority to appoint representatives to serve on committees as deemed necessary. Any representative appointed to a committee may be removed in the best interest of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group.

ARTICLE V. DEFINITIONS

1. **Member.** The member organizations or constituencies of the Working Group as listed in Article II, Section 1.
2. **Alternate.** An individual designated to act in the place of a member or representative unable to attend a meeting.
3. **Representative.** Person designated by a Working Group member organization or constituency to represent that member organization or constituency at Working Group meetings.
4. **District W-1.** The Lower Kuskokwim River consists of the Kuskokwim River from a line between Apokak Slough and Popokamiut, upstream to a line between ADF&G regulatory markers located about 8 miles above the Tuluksak River.
5. **District W-2.** The middle Kuskokwim River consists of the Kuskokwim River from ADF&G regulatory markers located at the upstream entrance to the second slough on the west bank downstream from Kalskag to the regulatory markers at Chuathbaluk.
6. **Elder.** Any respected Elder that resides within the Kuskokwim Area.
7. **Headwaters Subsistence.** Representatives that are active subsistence users in the Kuskokwim River drainage from McGrath upstream to the headwaters of the Kuskokwim River.
8. **Upriver Subsistence.** Representatives that are active subsistence users in the Kuskokwim River drainage above Chuathbaluk and below McGrath.
9. **Middle River Subsistence.** Representatives that are active subsistence users in the Kuskokwim River drainage from Lower Kalskag to Chuathbaluk within District W-2.
10. **Lower River Subsistence.** Representatives that are active subsistence users in the Kuskokwim River drainage from Eek to Tuluksak within District W-1.
11. **Processor.** Representatives that own or operate commercial salmon buying and/or processing businesses within District W-1 and W-2.
12. **Member at Large.** Representatives that are Area residents selected by the Working Group for their knowledge of, appreciation for, and experience with Kuskokwim River fisheries.
13. **Federal Regional Advisory Council.** Representatives that are current members of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and Western Interior Advisory Councils and reside in the Kuskokwim Area.
14. **Commercial Fishermen.** Kuskokwim commercial fishing permit holder or crew member, supported by commercial fishing permit holders who fish primarily within Districts W-1 and W-2.
15. **Sport Fisherman.** Representatives that actively participate in sports fishing within the Kuskokwim River drainage.
16. **Alaska Department of Fish and Game.** Representatives that are presently employed with ADF&G in Bethel. This position is an associate member and may only vote on decisions not directly related to fisheries management. Final emergency order authority continues to rest with the ADF&G.

ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENT TO BY-LAWS

These by-laws may be altered, amended or repealed and new by-laws may be adopted by consensus of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group representatives present at any regular or special meeting, if at least thirty (30) days written notice is given by certified mail, phone call, or intention to alter, amend or appeal or to adopt new by-laws at such meeting.
