

Regional Information Report No. 14-04

Activities of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group, 2013

**Annual Report for Study 10-353
USFWS Office of Subsistence Management
Fisheries Resource Monitoring Program**

by

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and

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August 2014

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Division of Commercial Fisheries



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Weights and measures (metric)		General		Mathematics, statistics	
centimeter	cm	Alaska Administrative Code	AAC	<i>all standard mathematical signs, symbols and abbreviations</i>	
deciliter	dL	all commonly accepted abbreviations	e.g., Mr., Mrs., AM, PM, etc.	alternate hypothesis	H_A
gram	g			base of natural logarithm	e
hectare	ha			catch per unit effort	CPUE
kilogram	kg	all commonly accepted professional titles	e.g., Dr., Ph.D., R.N., etc.	coefficient of variation	CV
kilometer	km			common test statistics	(F, t, χ^2 , etc.)
liter	L	at	@	confidence interval	CI
meter	m	compass directions:		correlation coefficient	
milliliter	mL	east	E	(multiple)	R
millimeter	mm	north	N	correlation coefficient	
		south	S	(simple)	r
Weights and measures (English)		west	W	covariance	cov
cubic feet per second	ft ³ /s	copyright	©	degree (angular)	°
foot	ft	corporate suffixes:		degrees of freedom	df
gallon	gal	Company	Co.	expected value	E
inch	in	Corporation	Corp.	greater than	>
mile	mi	Incorporated	Inc.	greater than or equal to	≥
nautical mile	nmi	Limited	Ltd.	harvest per unit effort	HPUE
ounce	oz	District of Columbia	D.C.	less than	<
pound	lb	et alii (and others)	et al.	less than or equal to	≤
quart	qt	et cetera (and so forth)	etc.	logarithm (natural)	ln
yard	yd	exempli gratia		logarithm (base 10)	log
		(for example)	e.g.	logarithm (specify base)	log ₂ , etc.
Time and temperature		Federal Information Code	FIC	minute (angular)	'
day	d	id est (that is)	i.e.	not significant	NS
degrees Celsius	°C	latitude or longitude	lat. or long.	null hypothesis	H_0
degrees Fahrenheit	°F	monetary symbols		percent	%
degrees kelvin	K	(U.S.)	\$, ¢	probability	P
hour	h	months (tables and figures): first three letters	Jan, ..., Dec	probability of a type I error (rejection of the null hypothesis when true)	α
minute	min	registered trademark	®	probability of a type II error (acceptance of the null hypothesis when false)	β
second	s	trademark	™	second (angular)	"
		United States (adjective)	U.S.	standard deviation	SD
Physics and chemistry		United States of America (noun)	USA	standard error	SE
all atomic symbols		U.S.C.	United States Code	variance	
alternating current	AC	U.S. state	use two-letter abbreviations (e.g., AK, WA)	population sample	Var var
ampere	A				
calorie	cal				
direct current	DC				
hertz	Hz				
horsepower	hp				
hydrogen ion activity (negative log of)	pH				
parts per million	ppm				
parts per thousand	ppt, ‰				
volts	V				
watts	W				

REGIONAL INFORMATION REPORT NO. 14-04

**ACTIVITIES OF THE KUSKOKWIM RIVER SALMON MANAGEMENT
WORKING GROUP, 2013**

by
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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 Kuskokwim River salmon populations. The Working Group met 12 times in 2013 to discuss salmon resource management in the Kuskokwim River. A total of 13 informational packets were distributed to the Working Group and interested parties and 12 meeting summaries were produced. Informational packets, summaries, and meeting audio recordings were published to the web 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 document serves to record the 2013 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#/2013>).

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. 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. In 2012 and 2013, 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 FIS 10-353, effective 2010–2013) was essential to the Working Group process in 2013. This funding provides for Working Group member travel to Working Group 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 one 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 influence and affect management decisions; though 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 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 (Appendix C1–C20), action statements, meeting summaries (Appendix D1–D17), 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;
6. Secures funding for the Working Group process.

2013 SEASON

WORKING GROUP MEETINGS

The Working Group met 12 times during the 2013 calendar year. The first 2013 meeting was held in conjunction with the ADF&G Kuskokwim Area Interagency Meeting in Anchorage at the William Jackson Hernandez Sport Fish Hatchery conference room; 10 meetings occurred at the ADF&G conference room in Bethel; and 1 meeting was held at the USFWS office in Bethel. The Working Group chairs also called several committee meetings between the end of August and December 2013 to work on possible management strategy alternatives to discuss with agency managers in preparation for the 2014 season. A total of 13 information packets were distributed 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, Orutsarmiut 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 into packets incorporated 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 11 of 12 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#/2013>

MARCH 21, 2013

The first Working Group meeting of 2013 was held at the William Jackson Hernandez Sport Fish Hatchery conference room in Anchorage following the March 19–20 Kuskokwim River Interagency Meeting. The focus of the meeting was review of the 2013 Chinook Salmon Management Plan for the Kuskokwim River and possible ADF&G management approaches. Managers had planned to wait until the 2013 Chinook Forecast was finalized before announcing any firm management strategies, but some management discussion still occurred. Meeting discussion included improving public outreach regarding conservation; the possible effects of different gillnet mesh sizes in the subsistence salmon fishery, acknowledging that the sacrifices made by subsistence fishermen in 2012 helped achieve Chinook escapement, the concept behind the “Elder’s Fishery” management tool, and the possibility of engaging in a full management strategy evaluation (MSE) process for Kuskokwim River Chinook salmon within the near future. ADF&G restated its’ commitment to keeping the Working Group informed by requesting meetings to consult members before major fisheries related decisions.

MAY 10, 2013

ADF&G presented the 2013 Chinook salmon forecast of 160,000 to 240,000 fish, which could have provided a surplus above escapement needs for an average subsistence harvest. On this basis, ADF&G projected an escapement of 76,000 to 156,000 fish, but assumed the range would be at the lower end of the forecast (76,000 to 116,000 fish) due to recent years of low abundance, and planned to manage conservatively.

JUNE 11, 2013

Members unanimously accepted ADF&G's recommendation to leave the mainstem Kuskokwim River open to unrestricted salmon fishing until/unless inseason run assessment information indicated a problem. They also accepted the recommendation to maintain closures on tributaries, including the Aniak, Tuluksak, Kisaralik, Kasigluk, and Kwethluk Rivers as well as in Kuskokuak and Old Kuskokuak Sloughs. Subsistence reports indicated good Chinook salmon catches on the lower river despite the late breakup. The first chum and sockeye salmon catches of the season were reported. Members discussed and made amendments to the Working Group bylaws (Appendix B).

JUNE 19, 2013

Subsistence reports indicated that many people on the lower river had met their subsistence needs. The ONC subsistence survey in the Bethel area indicated very good catch rates for Chinook salmon and that most people were halfway to meeting their subsistence harvest goals. Upriver subsistence fishermen had begun to catch Chinook salmon early and some fishermen reported catching fish over 30 pounds. Some members voiced concern that the Chinook run could not sustain current harvest levels and advised 6-inch mesh restrictions for the lower river. Managers explained that ADF&G could not enact restrictions unless there was a concern for conservation. Even after unrestricted subsistence fishing, the BTF was indicating a 90% chance of meeting the lower bound of the escapement goal.

JUNE 26, 2013

Members remained concerned about the sustainability of the Chinook salmon run because of heavy harvest in the lower river. The Working Group unanimously accepted ADF&G's recommendation to restrict subsistence salmon fishing to 6-inch or less gillnet size from the mouth to Tuluksak for 6 days, then Tuluksak to Chuathbaluk for 4 days. Subsistence reports from the middle river indicated that many families were halfway to meeting their subsistence harvest goals. Fishermen farther upriver were anticipating the arrival of the main Chinook run.

JULY 2, 2013

Members requested this emergency meeting out of concern for BTF Chinook salmon CPUE numbers. KNA subsistence reports included suggested that Chinook salmon numbers were low, but better than the previous year in middle river communities. Many subsistence fishermen joined the teleconference to give fishing reports and to ask ADF&G to maintain restrictions on the lower river in order to improve Chinook salmon fishing upriver.

ADF&G reported that BTF CPUE was currently tracking lower than 2012, which indicated that meeting 2013 escapement goals would be close. Therefore, the department planned to maintain conservative management, and recommended extending existing 6-inch mesh restrictions until 90% of the Chinook salmon run had passed the main fishing areas. After much discussion, the Working Group accepted ADF&G's recommendation. ADF&G staff said that there was no concern for chum escapement and that the sockeye salmon run was building well. One member commented that she was impressed by how many people had tried to conserve Chinook salmon in 2013 by shifting effort towards harvesting more chum and sockeye salmon.

JULY 15, 2013

This meeting was called by the Chair because of concerns about Chinook salmon numbers seen at BTF and escapement projects. ADF&G explained that BTF indices were indicating that the lower bound of the drainagewide escapement goal of 65,000 fish would likely be achieved, but that they were uncomfortable with the low numbers. According to BTF daily CPUE induces, the Chinook salmon run was virtually over in the lower river. Because of the abundance of chum salmon available for harvest, the department recommended the first commercial opening in 2013 on the lower river. The department reassured the Working Group that the number of Chinook salmon caught incidentally in commercial chum fisheries would be extremely low at this point of the season. When the processor agreed to not purchase Chinook salmon, the Working Group supported the recommendation.

JULY 24, 2013

Lower and Middle River subsistence reports, as well as an upriver report from Sleetmute, indicated that most people had finished most of their subsistence salmon fishing. Discussions continued about the “alarmingly low” Chinook salmon escapement. ADF&G explained that the relationship between BTF and escapement projects was not exact and predicting the end of the run was difficult, but that the 2013 Chinook run had abated sooner than expected. Relative to past years, Chinook salmon escapement at weir projects was low, based on late run timing models. Regarding Kwethluk River weir, the department commented that it was unusual for all salmon species to have extremely low numbers simultaneously, with no indication from other weirs that this should be so, and suggested there may have been some problem with underestimating salmon counts.

Many Working Group members stated that everyone was responsible for the low Chinook escapement. Most members agreed that the season should have not started with unrestricted subsistence fishing, but that management actions made sense at the time. There was agreement that there had not been enough Chinook salmon for all the Lower River communities to take what they needed; and that it was important for the Working Group and agency staff to work together over the winter to prepare for 2014 Chinook salmon management.

JULY 30, 2013

This meeting did not have a quorum because it was concurrent with a commercial opening in which some members were actively participating. Lower River subsistence reports indicated that Bethel residents were catching coho salmon to freeze without any trouble, and that Middle and Upriver communities were waiting for the coho salmon run to arrive. Daily CPUEs from the BTF indicated that the coho salmon run was steadily building. Weir projects had observed 85–95% of expected Chinook salmon passage and 75% of expected chum salmon passage, and were starting to see coho salmon. ADF&G did not provide a recommendation at the time, choosing to wait for harvest numbers from the July 30 commercial fishing period.

Members asked USFWS to comment on Kwethluk River weir operations because Chinook salmon passage remained the lowest on record. USFWS replied that the crew had been using live video and motion detection to count salmon passage and staff had been diligent about repairing holes in the weir. There was frustration over the scheduling of the commercial opening.

AUGUST 7, 2013

The last inseason meeting saw disagreement between the Working Group and ADF&G regarding commercial fishing openings. Subsistence reports from the lower, middle, and upper river indicated that coho salmon were plentiful, and that the run seemed to be increasing. USFWS and ADF&G agreed that Chinook salmon escapement on all tributaries weir had been poor. The Working Group did not support continued coho salmon fishing, citing a need among upriver subsistence users that had not had an opportunity to catch Chinook salmon. The department chose to support continued commercial fishing for coho salmon, citing its responsibility to provide opportunity for salmon species with an identified surplus.

AUGUST 27, 2013

The Working Group met postseason to regroup after what they termed “management failures” of 2013, referring to the fact that Chinook salmon escapement goals were not met. The Working Group expressed intent to plan for its own future and for Chinook salmon management in 2014. The Working Group discussed the possibility of drafting a mission statement, of assembling a list of management strategy options and exploring their feasibility, and of collaborating directly with communities to try to control Chinook salmon harvest voluntarily. The Working Group asked for members to send suggestions on management strategy that would then be compiled by the co-chairs. Co-chairs would hold a series of committee meetings to discuss the feasibility of each option and explore how it might be used.

The group also resolved to write letters to villages located near prominent fishing “choke points.” Choke points were defined as areas where the river is narrow and fish are easily intercepted in large numbers. The Working Group would ask these communities for help in controlling the level of harvest that occurs at choke points. The Working Group also prepared the summary documents for this meeting.

DECEMBER 17, 2013

The Working Group met to hear reports from Working Group committee members and agency staff on progress to date regarding plans for the 2014 fishing season. Preliminary 2013 data were presented and discussed; 2013 management was discussed and evaluated. In addition, management recommendations from communities and public input were presented, and management discussions continued.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Activities of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group are supported by the USFWS OSM through the Federal Fisheries Resource Management Program in the form of project FIS 10-353, *Inseason Support for Cooperative Management of the Kuskokwim River Subsistence Fishery* under OSM Agreement Number 70181AJ032; with matching funds from the State of Alaska.

We wish to thank each of the Working Group members, ADF&G Kuskokwim Area and Regional fishery staff, USFWS Yukon–Kuskokwim Delta Refuge staff and OSM staff, RAC members, and those individuals and groups that have participated in this open and voluntary collaborative process. Thanks to KYUK radio in Bethel for facilitating talk shows with Working Group members and ADF&G staff, and for broadcasting clear and accurate fisheries announcements and summaries of inseason meetings. Thanks to the ADF&G Federal Subsistence Liaison, Jennifer Yuhas, for funding and facilitating the After Action Review in August 2013. Special thanks also to staff at OSM, Anthropology Division, and USFWS for review of this document.

The co-author wishes to thank Alice Bailey for her hard work as the ADF&G Fish and Wildlife Technician III coordinating the Working Group process. Alice will be leaving her post as Working Group coordinator and we wish her success in her next career.

Thanks to Jan Conitz, Regional Research Coordinator, and Shannon Royse, ADF&G Publication Specialist, for review and publication of this report, and Scott Crass and William Byford, ADF&G Internet Specialists, for making the Working Group documents available to the public via the ADF&G website at:

<http://webdev.dfg.alaska.local/index.cfm?adfg=commercialbyareakuskokwim.salmon#/management>

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TABLES AND FIGURES

Kuskokwim River Ground Based Weir Projects

10

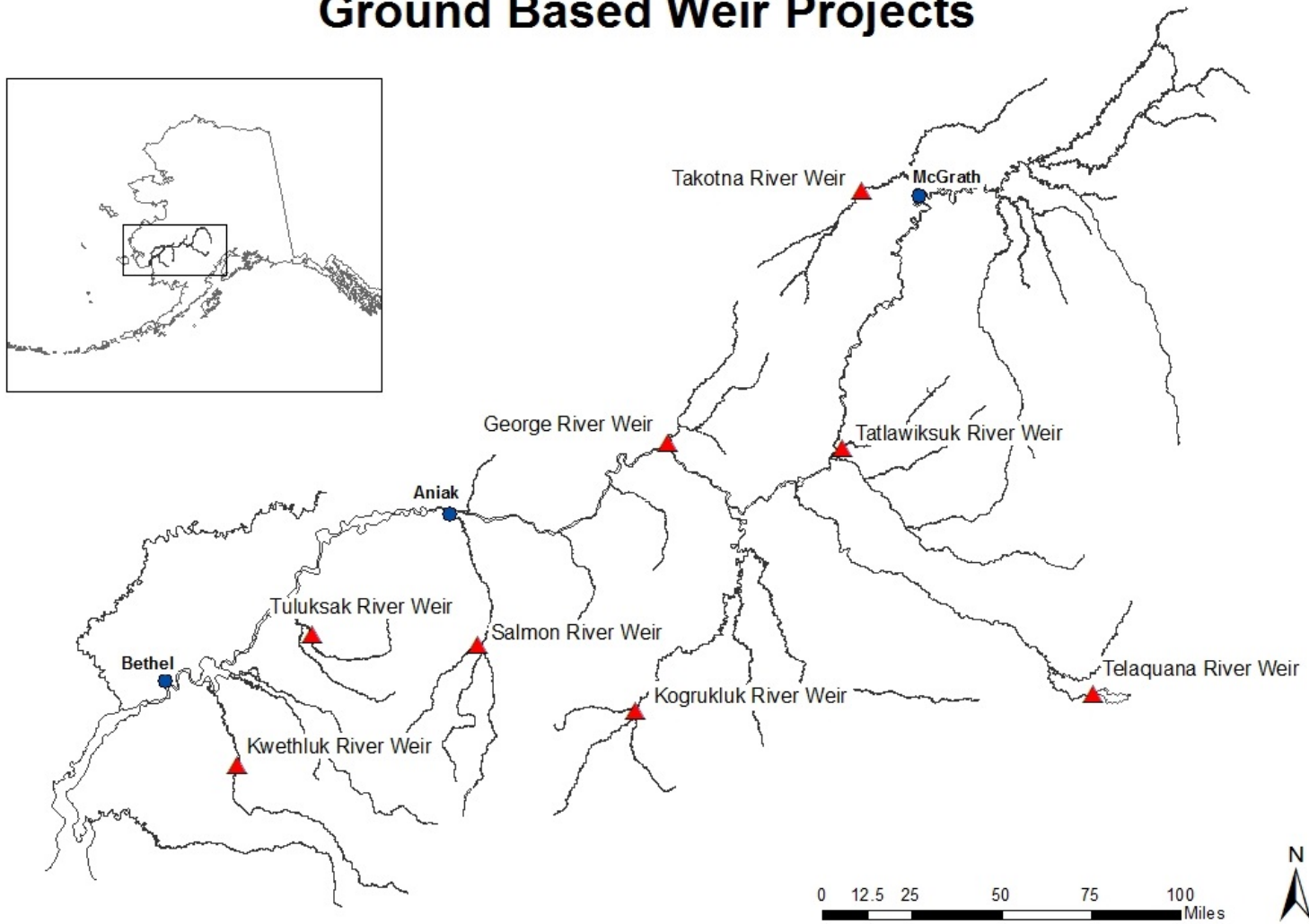


Figure 1.—Map of Kuskokwim management area including 2013 escapement projects.

Table 1.–Kuskokwim River salmon management Working Group representation, 2013.

Member seat	Primary	Alternate	Alternate	Alternate	Alternate
Downriver Elder	James Charles, Tuntatuliak	Chuck Chaliak, Nunapitchuk	John Andrew, Kwethluk		
Upriver Elder	<i>vacant</i>				
Lower River Subsistence	Mike Williams, Akiak	Greg Roczicka, Bethel	Casie Stockdale, Bethel		
Middle River Subsistence	Gerald Simeon, Aniak	Dave Cannon, Aniak	Angela Morgan, Aniak	Wayne Morgan, Aniak	
Upriver Subsistence	Mark Leary, Napaimute	Barbara Carlson, Sleetmute	Evelyn Thomas, Crooked Creek	Pete Mellick, Sleetmute	Sophie Gregory, Sleetmute
Headwaters Subsistence	Daniel Esai, Nikolai	Nick Petruska, Nikolai			
Processor	Stuart Curry, Kuskokwim Seafoods	Nick Souza, Coastal Villages Seafoods			
Member at Large	Henry Lupie, Tuntatuliak	Fritz Charles, Bethel	George Alexie, Eek	Ron Simon, Tuntatuliak	
YK Delta RAC	Bob Aloysius, Kalskag				
Commercial Fisher	Charlie Brown, Eek	George Alexie, Eek	Sam Alexie, Eek		
Western Interior RAC	Ray Collins, McGrath	Carl Morgan, Aniak			
Sport Fishing	LaMont Albertson, Aniak	Beverly Hoffman, Bethel			
ADF&G	Travis Elision, Area Manager				
CO CHAIRS	Lamont Albertson, Beverly Hoffman, Fritz Charles, Mark Leary, Casie Stockdale				

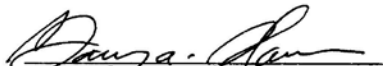
**APPENDIX A: JOINT STATEMENT ON THE
MANAGEMENT OF THE KUSKOKWIM RIVER FISHERY**

87- 117 -FB

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 one "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 two "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 one person is nominated to represent a member organization or constituency, the Working Group will appoint one 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: one Co-Chair, any two representatives of the following member groups; Member at Large, Processors, Commercial Fisherman, and any two representatives of the following member groups; Lower, Middle, Upriver and Headwaters Subsistence, Federal RAC, Sport Fisher.

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 one 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 eight 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. Appendix A1.–Page 7 of 8.
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 Fisher.** 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.
