

Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group

1 (800) 315-6338 (MEET) Code: 58756# (KUSKO)

ADF&G Bethel toll free: 1 (855) 933-2433

May 27, 2026

Meeting called to order at 10:07 a.m. on Wednesday, May 27th, 2026 and adjourned at 1:00 p.m. Meeting time was approximately 2 hours and 46 minutes. Eight full voting members were present and a quorum was established. Barbara Carlson chaired the meeting. This meeting was the second Working Group meeting of the season. Primary themes were centered around the front end closure, fish opportunity, and the AG response to Area M regulations.

AGENDA ITEMS:

PEOPLE TO BE HEARD: *Audio for this update begins at – Meeting Audio – 5/27/26*

CONTINUING BUSINESS:

A. SUBSISTENCE REPORTS:

B. 2025 ASSESSMENT

C. Intercept fishery

D. MANAGEMENT DISCUSSIONS:

Subsistence sections 1-3 updates: USFWS/KRITFC

Sections 4-5: Alaska Department of Fish and Game (ADF&G)

E. MOTIONS FOR DISCUSSION AND ACTION

WORKING GROUP BUSINESS:

WORKING GROUP ACTION ITEMS:

WORKING GROUP MOTIONS:

1. Approve the agenda.
 - a. Mike Williams, Sr amends agenda to include discussion on the Attorney General decision. Added to new business.
2. To extend the meeting to 13:00.
3. To draft a Letter of Support for the George River Weir.

PEOPLE TO BE HEARD: *Audio for this update begins at 13:03 – Meeting Audio – 5/27/26*

Joe Spaeder provided comment on the State of Alaska Attorney General decision.

KRITFC/USFWS UPDATE:

ADF&G MANAGEMENT ACTIONS UNDER CONSIDERATION:

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SUBSISTENCE REPORTS:

CONTINUING BUSINESS:

1. *Subsistence Reports*

- a. Lowest River: Tad Lindley commented on river conditions and fish species moving through the river. *Audio for this update begins at 21:23 – Meeting Audio – 5/27/26*
- b. Lower River: Alissa Rogers provided comment on river breakup. Mike Williams, Sr also provided comments on breakup and his success with setnetting.
- c. Middle River: James Nicori commented on breakup.
- d. Upper River: Barb Carlson commented on how fish are coming in and not a lot of fishers are on the water yet.
- e. Headwaters: Kevin Whitworth and Dan Essai commented on ice movement and flooding in McGrath.

2. *Overview of Kuskokwim River Salmon run assessment Projects:*

- a. ADF&G: *Audio for this update begins at 34:48 – Meeting Audio – 5/27/26*
- b. NVN: *Audio for this update begins at 40:54 – Meeting Audio – 5/27/26*
- c. USFWS: *Audio for this update begins at 36:46 – Meeting Audio – 5/27/26*
- d. ONC:
- e. KRITEFC: *Audio for this update begins at 48:41 – Meeting Audio – 5/27/26*

3. *Intercept Fishery Report:* Kevin Whitworth provided an update on the intercept fishery. *Audio for this update begins at 51:50 – Meeting Audio – 5/27/26*

4. *YDNWR Management Update:* Spencer Rearden provided an update on the temporary special action taken by the USFWS, addressing Chinook and chum salmon. Mr. Rearden also discussed upcoming fishing opportunities. *Audio for this update begins at 55:35 – Meeting Audio – 5/27/26*

5. *Discussion of ADF&G Management considerations and discussion of possible alternatives:* Sam Decker discusses the regulatory front end closure within the state waters and asks for feedback from the Working Group members. *Audio for this update begins at 1:23:39 – Meeting Audio – 5/27/26*

OLD BUSINESS:

1. ***Elections:*** Fritz Charles nominated Charles Guest, neither individual were present for the meeting. *Audio for this update begins at 2:21:17 – Meeting Audio – 5/27/26*

NEW BUSINESS:

1. ***Letter of Support: George River Weir:*** Sam Decker presented a draft Letter of Support for the George River weir. Members of the Working Group reviewed the letter and

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provided amended language. *Audio for this update begins at 2:29:45 – Meeting Audio – 5/27/26*

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2. ***Attorney General decision:*** This business item was post-poned to the next meeting due to the length of the meeting. Added to Old Business for June 3rd meeting. *Audio for this update begins at 2:48:40 – Meeting Audio – 5/27/26*

WORKING GROUP MOTIONS:

1. **Approve the agenda**
2. **Adjourn** Meeting adjourned 1:00 p.m.

COMMENTS FROM THE WORKING GROUP:

Mike Williams, Sr provided comment on his feelings on the Attorney General's decisions and his support on tabling the topic until next meeting.

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WORKING GROUP ATTENDANCE:

MEMBER SEAT:	NAME:
DOWNRIVER ELDER	Absent
UPRIVER ELDER	Absent
LOWER RIVER SUBSISTENCE	Mike Williams, Sr
MIDDLE RIVER SUBSISTENCE	Absent
UPRIVER SUBSISTENCE	Barb Carlson
HEADWATERS SUBSISTENCE	Daniel Essai
MEMBER AT LARGE	Avery Hoffman
WESTERN INTERIOR RAC	<i>Vacant</i>
YK DELTA RAC	Alissa Rogers
COMMERCIAL FISHING	Tad Lindley
SPORT FISHING	<i>Vacant</i>
PROCESSOR	<i>Vacant</i>
KRITFC	James Nicori
ADF&G	Sam Decker
CHAIR	Barb Carlson

Other Participants:		
ADF&G Comm Fish: Aaron Tiernan, Madison Hardwig, Zach Liller, John Linderman		
Sport Fish: John Chythlook		
Subsistence: Jane Litvin		
USFWS: Spencer Rearden, Nate Akers, Brian Daniels, Aaron Moses		
OSM: Brooke McDavid		
KRITFC: Bill Bechtol, Justin Leon, Joe Spaeder, Essie Bean, Errel Moraty, Terese Vicente	NVN: Dan Gillikin, Mary Kaleela AVCP: Gabe Canfield, Tanya King ONC: Max, Evert, Isabella, Jacob Wade	Media: WG Alternates:

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS:

Alaska Department of Fish and Game (**ADF&G, department, State**), Orutsararmiut Traditional Native Council (**OTNC**), Association of Village Council Presidents (**AVCP**), Georgetown Traditional Council (**GTC**), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (**USFWS**), Bethel Test Fishery project (**BTF**), Catch Per Unit Effort (**CPUE**), Coastal Village Seafoods (**CVS**), ADF&G Commercial Fisheries Division (**CF**), ADF&G Sport Fisheries Division (**SF**), Regional Advisory Council (**RAC**), Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (**KRSMWG, Working Group, or WG**), Sustainable Escapement Goal (**SEG**), Biological Escapement Goal (**BEG**), Management Objective (**MO**), Amounts Reasonably Necessary for Subsistence (**ANS**), Emergency Order (**EO**), Bering Sea Fishermen's Association (**BSFA**), Law Enforcement (**LE**), Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (**KRITFC**), Native Village of Napaimute (**NVN**), Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation (**YKHC**), Alaska State Troopers (**AST**), University of Alaska Fairbanks (**UAF**)

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