

Fishery Management Report No. 05-25

**Activities of the Kuskokwim River Salmon
Management Working Group, 2003 through 2004**

**Final Report for Study 01-116
USFWS Office of Subsistence Management
Fishery Information Services Division**

by

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and

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April 2005

Alaska Department of Fish and Game

Divisions of Sport Fish and Commercial Fisheries



Symbols and Abbreviations

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Weights and measures (metric)		General		Measures (fisheries)	
centimeter	cm	Alaska Administrative		fork length	FL
deciliter	dL	Code	AAC	mid-eye-to-fork	MEF
gram	g	all commonly accepted		mid-eye-to-tail-fork	METF
hectare	ha	abbreviations	e.g., Mr., Mrs., AM, PM, etc.	standard length	SL
kilogram	kg			total length	TL
kilometer	km	all commonly accepted			
liter	L	professional titles	e.g., Dr., Ph.D., R.N., etc.		
meter	m	at	@	Mathematics, statistics	
milliliter	mL	compass directions:		<i>all standard mathematical</i>	
millimeter	mm	east	E	<i>signs, symbols and</i>	
		north	N	<i>abbreviations</i>	
		south	S	alternate hypothesis	H _A
		west	W	base of natural logarithm	<i>e</i>
		copyright	©	catch per unit effort	CPUE
		corporate suffixes:		coefficient of variation	CV
		Company	Co.	common test statistics	(F, t, χ^2 , etc.)
		Corporation	Corp.	confidence interval	CI
		Incorporated	Inc.	correlation coefficient	
		Limited	Ltd.	(multiple)	R
		District of Columbia	D.C.	correlation coefficient	
		et alii (and others)	et al.	(simple)	r
		et cetera (and so forth)	etc.	covariance	cov
		exempli gratia		degree (angular)	°
		(for example)	e.g.	degrees of freedom	df
		Federal Information		expected value	<i>E</i>
		Code	FIC	greater than	>
		id est (that is)	i.e.	greater than or equal to	≥
		latitude or longitude	lat. or long.	harvest per unit effort	HPUE
		monetary symbols		less than	<
		(U.S.)	\$, ¢	less than or equal to	≤
		months (tables and		logarithm (natural)	ln
		figures): first three		logarithm (base 10)	log
		letters	Jan, ..., Dec	logarithm (specify base)	log ₂ , etc.
		registered trademark	®	minute (angular)	'
		trademark	™	not significant	NS
		United States		null hypothesis	H ₀
		(adjective)	U.S.	percent	%
		United States of		probability	P
		America (noun)	USA	probability of a type I error	
		U.S.C.	United States	(rejection of the null	
			Code	hypothesis when true)	α
			use two-letter	probability of a type II error	
			abbreviations	(acceptance of the null	
			(e.g., AK, WA)	hypothesis when false)	β
				second (angular)	"
				standard deviation	SD
				standard error	SE
				variance	
				population	Var
				sample	var

Weights and measures (English)

cubic feet per second	ft ³ /s
foot	ft
gallon	gal
inch	in
mile	mi
nautical mile	nmi
ounce	oz
pound	lb
quart	qt
yard	yd

Time and temperature

day	d
degrees Celsius	°C
degrees Fahrenheit	°F
degrees kelvin	K
hour	h
minute	min
second	s

Physics and chemistry

all atomic symbols	
alternating current	AC
ampere	A
calorie	cal
direct current	DC
hertz	Hz
horsepower	hp
hydrogen ion activity	pH
(negative log of)	
parts per million	ppm
parts per thousand	ppt, ‰
volts	V
watts	W

FISHERY MANAGEMENT REPORT NO. 05-25

**ACTIVITIES OF THE KUSKOKWIM RIVER SALMON MANAGEMENT
WORKING GROUP, 2003 THROUGH 2004**

by

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ABSTRACT

The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (Working Group) was formed in 1988 by the Alaska Board of Fisheries in response to requests from stakeholders in the Kuskokwim River drainage seeking a more active role in the management of salmon fishery resources. Since then, the Working Group has become increasingly active in the preseason, inseason, and postseason management of the Kuskokwim River drainage subsistence, commercial, and sport salmon fisheries. In 2001, the Working Group modified its charter in order to more effectively address the needs of the Federal Subsistence Management Program by including members of the Coordinating Fisheries Committee of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and Western Interior Regional Advisory Councils. The Working Group now serves as a public forum for Federal and State fisheries managers to meet with local users of the salmon resource to review run assessment information and reach a consensus on how to proceed with management of Kuskokwim River salmon fisheries. The Working Group met 11 times in 2003 and 18 times in 2004. The first meeting of the year was in March of 2003 and April 2004 with intensive and frequent meetings during June, July, and August; and summary and review session in November 2003 and September 2004. Working Group meetings provide the forum for area fishers, user representatives, community representatives, Regional Advisory Council representatives, Fish and Game Advisory Committee members, and State and Federal managers to come together to discuss issues relevant to sustained yield fishery management and providing for the subsistence use priority.

Key words: Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group, subsistence fishing, commercial fishing, recreational fishing, salmon fishery management, Bethel, Kuskokwim River, Chinook, chum, sockeye, coho, salmon

INTRODUCTION

The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (Working Group) was formed in 1988 by the Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) in response to requests from stakeholders in the Kuskokwim Area that sought a more active role in the management of salmon fishery resources (Francisco et. al. 1989). The Working Group Process has become the forum through which inseason management decisions are made regarding Kuskokwim River drainage subsistence, commercial, and sport salmon fisheries (Figure 1). Pre- and post-season participation in the management process by the Working Group provides the ability to influence those Boards that establish fishery management policies and regulations. In 2001, the Working Group modified their by-laws in order to more effectively address the needs of Federal Subsistence Management by including seats for member representatives from the Kuskokwim River Coordinating Fisheries Committee of the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta and Western Interior Regional Advisory Councils (RAC).

The Working Group typically meets first in March or April each calendar year; has intensive and frequent meetings during June, July, and August; with a wrap-up session in September or October. Working Group member representatives, through funding provided United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Office of Subsistence Management (OSM) in support of project FIS 01-116, have had the opportunity to testify at Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) and Federal Subsistence Board (FSB) meetings, participate in Kuskokwim Area Interagency and other associated meetings representing the Working Group.

The Kuskokwim River salmon fisheries are managed according to the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Rebuilding Plan (5 AAC 07.365) adopted by the BOF in January 2001 (Burkey et al. 2000; Ward et al. 2003) and amended in January 2004 (Bergstrom and Whitmore 2004). This management plan provides guidelines for the rebuilding and management of the Kuskokwim River salmon fishery that will result in the sustained yield of salmon stocks large enough to meet

escapement goals, provide fishers with a reasonable opportunity to harvest amounts necessary for subsistence, and to provide for other fisheries. The management plan provides direction for establishing a subsistence fishing schedule allowing salmon net and fish wheel fisheries to be open for 4 consecutive days per week in June and July as announced by emergency order. The schedule is implemented in a step wise progression up the river consistent with salmon run timing and may be altered based on run strength to achieve escapement goals. Once escapement goals are assured for Chinook and chum salmon, subsistence fishing can be allowed 7 days per week. Implementation of the subsistence fishing schedule has provided reasonable opportunity for fishers to harvest Chinook and chum salmon for their subsistence use, spread the subsistence harvest out across the run and moved fish through the lower river to spread subsistence fishing opportunity out to fishers in the upper river.

The Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act (ANILCA) of 1980 mandates that rural subsistence users have a priority over other users to take fish and wildlife on Federal public lands and waters and required the creation of Regional Advisory Councils to enable rural residents to have a meaningful role in Federal Subsistence Management. On October 1, 1999, the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture published regulations to expand Federal Management of subsistence fisheries to Alaskan rivers and lakes and limited marine waters within and adjacent to Federal public lands. The Secretary of Interior and the Secretary of Agriculture delegated their authority in Alaska to the Federal Subsistence Board to manage fish and wildlife resources for subsistence uses on Federal public land, including waters running through or next to these lands. Federal subsistence fishing regulations are adopted by the Federal Subsistence Board (FSB). The Regional Advisory Councils provide recommendations and information to the FSB, review policies and management plans, provide a public forum and deal with other matters relating to subsistence uses. The FSB may close fishing for other uses in these waters to a priority for Federally qualified rural subsistence users if it is determined that there are subsistence or conservation concerns.

For the past two decades, ongoing efforts to expand coverage and apply technology have been employed to improve monitoring salmon run timing and run strength through comparison of current year information with historic information. This annual monitoring program includes the evaluation of subsistence fishery information, test fish project catch rates, and commercial harvest catch rates. In addition, as fish begin reaching clear water tributary streams, weir passage, sonar passage and aerial spawning ground surveys assists fisheries managers to evaluate the strength of the returning salmon runs.

Although evaluation of inseason subsistence fishery information has always been a component of this process, it has only been since 2001 that a project has been in place to monitor the subsistence fishery through inseason interviews (Whitmore et al. 2004; Martz and Whitmore *in prep*). The Kuskokwim Area total subsistence salmon harvest is estimated through postseason surveys and the information is typically not available until the spring of the following year (ADF&G, Division of Subsistence 2003).

From July 2002 through October 2004, funding was available for support of the Working Group process through the USFWS OSM Working Group Support project FIS 01-116. Working Group expenditures during 2003 and 2004 included funding for a program coordinator during the 2003 season to support the meeting process which was replaced by partial funding for a Fishery Biologist during the 2004 season to support the meeting process and to summarize and distribute information to and from Working Group members. Additional funding covered the cost for

Working Group member travel and communications between agencies and Working Group members by teleconference, FAX, and phone.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the Working Group process are:

1. To provide local fishers and other users with an avenue for being directly involved in the management of the Kuskokwim fishery.
2. To work towards the development of a comprehensive management plan, for all Kuskokwim River salmon stocks.
3. Provide a forum for all parties with interest in Kuskokwim River fisheries to work together to reach a consensus on management of the fisheries.
4. Utilize funding from FIS project 01-116 to strengthen the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group process.

The objective of project FIS 01-116 is to strengthen the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group process by providing funding to support:

1. A Coordinator position that will keep Working Group members, federal staff, RAC members, and the public informed as well as arrange meeting logistics and record meeting decisions, actions, and recommendations.
2. Travel for the Working Group to meet in-person 4 times per year.
3. Travel for a Working Group representative to attend BOF, FSB, state and federal advisory committee meetings, and other meetings dealing with local salmon fisheries issues.
4. Communications through teleconference, email, FAX, phone, and mail.

PROCESS

The Working Group process is governed by the By-Laws of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group as amended June 1, 2001 (Appendix A). The By-Laws describe the Working Group process purpose, rules of conduct, representation, and officers. The Working Group typically first meets in March or April each calendar year; has intensive and frequent meetings during June, July, and August; and has a wrap-up session in September or October. Meetings are generally conducted by teleconference with efforts made to conduct 4 meetings per year where all members are able to attend in person. The Working Group is made up of 12 member organizations or constituencies (Appendix B). These members represent: 2 elders (Upriver, Downriver), 3 subsistence fishers (Lower River, Middle River, and Upper River), one processor representative, one commercial fisher, one sport fisher, one fisher from the Kuskokwim Fisherman's Co-op (which is now the Member-at-Large seat), 2 Federal Subsistence RAC members (Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, Western Interior), and the Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G). An alternate is assigned for each designated Working Group member in the event the representative is unable to attend a meeting.

Working Group meetings are conducted according to Roberts Rules of Order following a standard agenda that provides for a full and complete discussion of area and related salmon fisheries. Working Group motions are passed by consensus, unlike other institutions or committees, and ADF&G has no voting status on motions concerning the scheduling of commercial fishery openings. The Working Group makes recommendations to ADF&G concerning Kuskokwim River salmon fishery management decisions after subsistence and commercial catch, test fishery, weir, tower and sonar reports and other information is provided to the group. Final fishery management decisions are the responsibility of ADF&G through emergency order authority. Additionally, the Working Group passes resolutions in an effort to make their voice heard to agencies, organizations and the public, and appoints representatives to represent them at BOF, FSB, Fish and Game Advisory Committee meetings, RAC meetings, and other public meetings dealing with relevant salmon issues.

In support of Working Group meetings, ADF&G:

1. Informs Working Group members about scheduled meetings and meeting agendas through phone, mail, email, and FAX,
2. Assembles, copies, and distributes materials including meeting announcements, agendas, informational packet (Appendix C), action statements, meeting summaries (Appendix D), news releases and newspaper articles,
3. Initiates Working Group meeting teleconferences,
4. Organizes and provides travel logistics for member travel,
5. Assists with recruitment of members to fill Working Group vacancies,
6. Drafts an annual report of Working Group meetings and actions, and
7. Posts meeting informational packets and meeting summaries on the ADF&G Kuskokwim Area Web Site.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Management of the Kuskokwim River salmon fisheries benefit through Working Group Support process because the forum provides an opportunity for stakeholders in the Kuskokwim Area to take an active role in making recommendations influencing policies, regulations, and management actions. The process ensures ADF&G and USFWS (Agencies) keep the public informed of fishery issues, distributes timely fishery run status information and maintains an open dialogue with area fishers. In addition to interactions with Working Group members, the process encourages and supports participation by a number of tribal organizations and federal agencies including the Kuskokwim Native Association (KNA), the Orutsararmiut Native Council (ONC), the McGrath Native Council (MNVC), the Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP), Bering Sea Fisherman's Association (BSFA), the USFWS Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta National Wildlife Refuge, and the USFWS OSM. Participation in this process by such a broad spectrum of area users and user representatives has resulted in an informed public, which can have a positive influence in the management of the Kuskokwim River salmon fishery.

Kuskokwim River salmon management was successfully conducted during the 2003 and 2004 seasons as the majority of salmon escapement goals were achieved, opportunity was provided for

subsistence fishers to harvest salmon to meet their subsistence needs, and a portion of the harvestable surpluses were utilized by commercial and sport fisheries (Whitmore et al. *in prep* a; b).

Inseason meetings were held to allow an opportunity for “Public Comment”, discussions of issues among Agency staff, Working Group members and other interested individuals, and review of fishery run status information. Inseason indicators of salmon run strength include the Bethel Test Fish (BTF) project (Bue 2005), subsistence harvest reports from ONC (funded by FIS 01-132), KNA (funded by FIS 01-225), and MNVC (funded by FIS 01-023) during 2003 and ONC during 2004 (funded by FIS 04-353), tributary escapement monitoring projects, and Kalskag tagging project fishwheel catch rates (funded by FIS 04-308). Cooperative efforts were made to interview subsistence fishers from the lower, middle and upper sections of the drainage in 2003 and the Bethel Area during 2004 to monitor the subsistence salmon fishery as a tool to help gauge salmon run timing, abundance, and obtain general fishery insight. Salmon escapements were assessed by weir projects operated in the Kwethluk, Tuluksak, George, Kogrukuk, Tatlawiksuk, and Takotna Rivers and by a sonar project on the Aniak River. In addition, tagging and radio telemetry studies were conducted on the main stem of the Kuskokwim River near Kalskag.

2003 SEASON

The Working Group met 11 times in calendar year 2003 to support management of Kuskokwim River subsistence, commercial, and recreational salmon fisheries (Appendix E). One meeting each was held in March, May, September, and November, 2 in June and July, and 3 in August. Prior to each meeting an agenda and information packet was assembled and distributed to Working Group members and other interested parties (see Appendix C for an example). The following chronology provides highlights of accomplishments and significant events:

- 1) The first meeting of the year was held in March to discuss the 2003 Kuskokwim River Salmon Outlook and Management Strategy, a BOF proposal to modify the subsistence fishing schedule and membership composition of the Working Group. However, the discussion of the BOF proposal took up the entire meeting and other issues were deferred until the May 6 meeting.
- 2) During the May 6 meeting the 2003 Kuskokwim River Salmon Season Outlook and Management Strategy was discussed and presentations were made to the Working Group describing 2002 postseason subsistence harvest survey results and the Kuskokwim Fisheries Research Coalition (KFRC) strategic fisheries research plan. It was decided that there was no immediate need to modify the makeup of the Working Group membership.
- 3) The Working Group Coordinator, Nora Horn resigned her position in May. Bobbi Fisher, ADF&G Program Technician, provided meeting logistics and contacted Working Group members prior to each meeting by phone, FAX, or email to see if the member was available to attend in person or by teleconference.
- 4) Only 3 meetings were held during the time when the majority of the Chinook, chum and sockeye salmon runs pass through the lower river. Meeting dates were June 17, June 26 and July 2.
 - a) Information to judge run strength for the first 2 meetings was limited to summaries of information from interviewed subsistence fishers and the Bethel test fish project as few

salmon had reached the Kalskag tagging fish wheels, weir or sonar sites during this time period.

- b) Available indices indicated a strong Chinook salmon run, an average to below average chum salmon run, and an above average sockeye salmon run.
 - c) A consensus was reached by the Working Group members and Agencies at the June 17 and June 26 meetings to continue the subsistence fishing schedule.
 - d) Information summarized from interviewed subsistence fishers by ONC and from the Bethel test fish project, presented at the July 2 meeting, verified a strong Chinook salmon return, an above average sockeye salmon return, and a below average chum salmon return.
 - e) Most fishers had not started fishing for chum salmon. Although half of the 25 subsistence fishing families interviewed through the inseason subsistence monitoring program during the week ending June 28 reported chum catches as poor, only 4 fishing families reported using gillnets with 6 inch mesh size or less that target chum salmon (Whitmore et al. 2004).
 - f) The 4 fishing families using gillnets with mesh size of 6 inches or less reported chum salmon fishing as good.
 - g) Bethel test fishery chum salmon catches were noted to have increased significantly beginning June 27 (Bue 2005).
 - h) Daily weir and sonar passage projects had only been operational for a few days and the information was not an adequate index of abundance at that early stage in the return.
 - i) Since the strength of the chum salmon run was not apparent, the Agencies recommended continuing the subsistence fishing schedule to assure achievement of escapement goals. However, the Working Group recommended allowing 7 day per week subsistence fishing.
 - j) It was pointed out by the Working Group that chum salmon harvest rates would be low because few fishers would be fishing over the Fourth of July holiday. It was also noted that many subsistence fishers had met their sockeye salmon subsistence needs and, during most years, anecdotally, 75% of the chum salmon harvest has been completed by this date.
 - k) Overall, fishing effort was anticipated to drop off since the majority of interviewed subsistence fishers had achieved their Chinook salmon harvests goals. In addition, the point was made that there would be no commercial fishery directed toward chum salmon.
 - l) In response to the Working Group recommendation, the subsistence fishing schedule was liberalized, and 7 day per week subsistence fishing was implemented. As the season progressed, chum and Chinook salmon run strength proved liberalization of the subsistence fishing schedule was the correct management action.
- 5) Four Working Group meetings were conducted during late July and early August when the majority of the coho salmon run had reached the lower Kuskokwim River.

- a) Subsistence interview report summaries presented during the July 28 meeting indicted Chinook salmon fishing had dropped off, chum salmon fishing was continuing at a low level and coho salmon fishing was good.
 - b) BTF coho salmon catches were reported to be the second highest on record since initiation of the program. Additionally coho salmon were being caught at a high rate by the Kalskag mark-recapture project and making a strong, early showing at the weir sites.
 - c) The Working Group and ADF&G reached a consensus to establish the first commercial fishing period in Subdistrict 1-A for 2 hours in duration and to schedule a Subdistrict 1-B commercial fishing period from 2 to 4 hours in duration depending on fish processor availability and catch rates during the first commercial period. The next meeting was scheduled for August 2.
- 6) There was no new information from the inseason subsistence monitoring program at the August 2 meeting as information from the July 28 meeting was still current, but subsistence fishers participating in the meeting reported that subsistence coho salmon catches were still strong.
- a) Test fish catches continued to indicate a strong early showing of coho salmon maintaining the second highest index of abundance since the program was initiated in 1984.
 - b) The first commercial fishing periods in both of the subdistricts went well, although fishing effort was very low. It was noted that a schedule of 4 commercial fishing periods per week in District 1 (2 periods in each subdistrict) was too restrictive for subsistence fishery opportunity. The requirement for subsistence fishery closures was 16 hours before, during and 6 hours after commercial fishing periods.
 - c) A consensus was reached between ADF&G and the Working Group to establish fishing periods of 4 hours in duration in Subdistricts 1-A and 1-B and reduce the hours closed to subsistence gillnet fishing to 6 hours before, during and 6 hours after commercial fishing periods.
 - d) It was noted that the aerial surveys of Chinook salmon spawning stream index areas indicated that, in general, Chinook salmon were well distributed and of high abundance. However, there were some tributaries in the upper portion of the drainage in which Chinook salmon abundance was lower than preferred.
 - e) It was also noted during the meeting that chum salmon passage was picking up at the weirs and the Aniak River chum salmon escapement goal of 250,000 fish had been exceeded by over 100,000 fish.
- 7) During the August 6 meeting, the ONC lower river inseason subsistence survey report indicated that 18 of the 20 fishing families in the lower river reported coho fishing was very good.
- a) The KNA middle river inseason subsistence survey report indicated that few fishers were fishing because a high water event had placed a lot of debris in the river fouling nets. The US Geological Survey hydrological station at Crooked Creek recorded record high water levels during the prior week.

- b) The Bethel test fish project was showing continued strong coho salmon catches. Coho salmon passage rates at weirs on tributary streams were at or near record levels.
 - c) Sport fish representatives reported that coho salmon fishing was good throughout the drainage.
 - d) Based on this information a consensus was reached to set up a commercial fishing schedule with periods in Subdistrict 1-A on Mondays and Thursdays and periods in Subdistrict 1-B on Tuesday and Fridays with a duration of 4 to 6 hours based on processor capacity and catch rates. The next meeting was scheduled at the call of the co-chairs.
- 8) The next meeting occurred on August 20 and reports indicated a continued strong return of coho salmon. A consensus was reached to maintain the established commercial fishing schedule and to begin full District 1 periods (Subdistricts 1-A and 1-B combined) when fishing effort and reduced fish abundance warranted.
- a) Upper River Working Group representative Nixie Mellick died August 7, after the last Working Group meeting. Several Working Group members expressed their condolences to his family and several comments were made regarding his unselfish contribution of time and knowledge to the Working Group.
 - b) Other business that was conducted at the August 20 meeting was modification of the Working Group membership (Appendix B), a discussion of three Agenda Change Requests (ACR) to the BOF (Appendix F), and a presentation and discussion of the Kuskokwim Area Strategic Planning Process.
- 9) A Working Group meeting took place in Bethel on September 26 and 27 and the majority of Working Group members participated in person including Frank Charles, Oscar Larson, Lamont Albertson, Charlie Brown, James Charles, Peter Joseph, and Evelyn Thomas.
- a) During the first day of the meeting, the Working Group took positions on FSB and BOF regulatory proposals and Working Group members were selected to testify at these regulatory meetings.
 - b) Additionally, Working Group members were selected to participate in other fishery meetings relevant to the Kuskokwim River fisheries.
 - c) On the second day of the meeting, the Working Group participated in the National Research Council (NRC) meeting. The NRC had appointed a committee of 12 experts to study the status of declined Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim (AYK) salmon stocks and assist in the development of the "Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim Research and Restoration Plan" a high-quality, long-range salmon science plan for the region.
 - d) Staff and the Working Group provided presentations to the committee and each Working Group member that was present had an opportunity to provide testimony to the Council in regard to Kuskokwim River fisheries.
 - e) Working Group members Frank Charles and James Charles were selected by the Working Group to participate in the Coordinated Fisheries Committee and Tri-Council meetings in Anchorage and Wasilla.

- f) Additionally, Frank Charles and James Charles were selected by the Working Group to participate in the AYK Sustainable Salmon Initiative meeting in Anchorage. Oscar Larson was selected by the Working Group to participate in the Kuskokwim Area Interagency Fishery meeting in Anchorage.

2004 SEASON

The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group met 18 times in calendar year 2004 regarding management of Kuskokwim River subsistence, commercial and recreational salmon fisheries (Appendix G). One meeting was held in April, May, and September, 4 in June, 5 in July, and 6 in August. Prior to each meeting an agenda and information packet was assembled and distributed to Working Group members and other interested parties (see Appendix C for an example). The following are highlights of these meetings:

- 1) A pre-season meeting was conducted April 22 during which Working Group membership positions were filled, and presentations and discussions occurred regarding the 2004 Kuskokwim River Salmon Outlook and Management Strategy, summary of BOF actions, escapement goals, the "Contaminates in Alaska" study, a review of status of the Kuskokwim Research Plan, and a summary of the Spring 2004 Kuskokwim River Interagency meeting.
- 2) The next meeting was not anticipated until June, however, a meeting was held May 17 to hear fishers concerns regarding the BOF action liberalizing the Area M fisheries and to discuss a potential boycott of the Kuskokwim River subsistence fishing schedule.
- 3) Although all Working Group members were frustrated by the BOF action toward Area M, members continued to support maintaining the Kuskokwim River subsistence fishing schedule and did not support protest of BOF action through a planned boycott.
- 4) There were 6 Working Group meetings from June 8 to July 13.
- 5) The June 8 meeting focused on salmon run status. Reports from the ONC subsistence fishery monitoring project and BTF project indicated promising salmon runs, although it was too early in the run to make any definitive judgment.
 - a) Mike Williams of Akiak was appointed to the Lower Kuskokwim subsistence fisher seat, which had recently become vacant. There was a discussion on the Area M fishery, the potential boycott of the Kuskokwim River subsistence fishing schedule, and the AVCP press release calling for postponement of civil disobedience (Appendix H).
 - b) There was a consensus by ADF&G and the Working Group to maintain the subsistence fishing schedule.
- 6) During the June 18 meeting, a consensus was reached to liberalize the Kuskokwim River subsistence fishing schedule and go to a 7 days per week subsistence fishing schedule.
 - a) It was noted that the BTF index for Chinook salmon was the highest on record and reports from the inseason subsistence monitoring program indicated that Chinook salmon catches were good and chum salmon catches were average for this time of year.
 - b) During the time period the subsistence fishing schedule was in effect, there were 6 days when subsistence fishing was closed downstream of Bogus Creek and 3 days subsistence fishing was closed between Bogus Creek and Chuathbaluk. Subsistence fishing occurred 7 days per week without interruption upstream of Chuathbaluk.

- 7) Information presented at the June 25 Working Group meeting indicated that Chinook, chum and sockeye runs continued to be average to above average based on interviews conducted by the ONC inseason subsistence monitoring project, BTF project findings and other run abundance monitoring programs. The processor representative expressed interest in initiating a commercial fishery as early as June 29.
- 8) During the June 29 meeting a consensus was achieved to have a 2 hour commercial fishing period in Subdistrict 1-B on June 30 and leave the scheduling of additional commercial fishing periods to the discretion of ADF&G until the next Working Group meeting.
 - a) It was noted during the meeting that the BTF index for Chinook salmon continued to be the highest on record and the chum salmon index was the third highest on record (Bue *in prep*).
 - b) Lower river subsistence fishers reported that the Chinook salmon run was still strong and middle river subsistence fishers reported that fishing was steady and that most fishers would have their subsistence needs met by the end of the week.
- 9) At the July 13 Working Group meeting the subsistence fisher representatives reported most fishers in their areas had completed their harvest needs for Chinook, chum and sockeye salmon.
 - a) The BTF project indicated the Chinook salmon index was the highest on record and the chum and sockeye salmon index was about average.
 - b) Salmon passage at the weir projects indicated salmon passage to be average to above average and the report from the Aniak River sonar project was that a strong chum salmon run was in progress.
 - c) The status of the commercial fishery was discussed and it became apparent that there was some miscommunication between ADF&G and some of the Working Group members that thought the Working Group should have been consulted prior to announcing the fishing periods.
 - d) ADF&G staff agreed to consult Working Group co-chairs prior to announcing commercial fishing periods between Working Group meetings. There was a consensus to allow ADF&G to schedule additional commercial fishing periods based on fish passage, escapements, and processor capacity and meet again on July 13.
- 10) The Working Group meeting on July 13 verified an above average return of Chinook salmon, an average run of chum salmon with mixed reports regarding the strength of the sockeye salmon return.
 - a) The Bethel Test fish index for sockeye salmon was above average; however, some interviewed subsistence fishers reported the run to be poor.
 - b) The report from the Lower River ONC inseason subsistence monitoring program indicated that 31 of 44 fishing families contacted had attained their subsistence harvest goals for Chinook, chum and sockeye salmon.
 - c) The Western Interior RAC Working Group representative reported that a few fishers were still fishing in the upper river, and the summer salmon subsistence harvest had been good but not outstanding.

- d) The Working Group processor representative reported that buying operations ended after the July 7 commercial fishing period and would not resume until the coho season. There had been no commercial fishing during June and July in the Kuskokwim River from 2001-2003 (Whitmore and Bergstrom 2003).
- 11) Nine Working Group meetings occurred between July 23 and August 31 focused primarily around management of the coho subsistence and commercial salmon fisheries.
 - 12) At each meeting, reports were provided on the stock status of all salmon species and issues relevant to the Working Group process were discussed such as preparation for the post season "Fish Summit Meeting" and submission of an ACR to the BOF for consideration to modify the subsistence salmon fishing schedule.
 - 13) Early in the coho salmon run there was debate regarding run abundance and timing. The ONC inseason subsistence harvest monitoring and BTF projects indicated a strong coho salmon run. A consensus was reached to begin the coho salmon fishery July 28.
 - 14) Middle river and upper river Working Group representatives would have preferred to postpone the start of the coho salmon directed commercial fishing season to establish a broader distribution of coho salmon before initiation of the fishery. There were also opinions expressed by some Working Group members that restrictions on subsistence fishing prior to, during, and after commercial fishing periods were not providing adequate opportunity for fishers to fulfill their subsistence harvest needs.
 - 15) By the August 4 meeting, it was reported that middle river subsistence fishers were catching coho salmon in good numbers and it was apparent that opportunity was being provided for fishers to achieve their subsistence harvest needs. The 2004 coho salmon return was strong. Consensus was achieved each meeting toward establishing commercial fishing periods.
 - 16) Issues discussed in association with the commercial fishery during these meetings included: value, icing and bleeding fish during harvest, hours to be open to fishing, and the number and location of tenders during commercial fishing periods.

KUSKOKWIM FISH SUMMIT MEETING

The Working Group held a postseason "Fish Summit Meeting" in Bethel on September 30 and October 1, 2004. There was a presentation and discussion of highlights and controversies of the 2004 subsistence, commercial, and sport fishing seasons, as well as a summary of the Area M fishery. Highlights from this meeting follow:

- 1) The primary agenda topic was the interaction of subsistence, sport, and commercial fisheries, including suggestions and recommendations on how to develop and direct fisheries in the future.
- 2) The Working Group took positions on relevant Federal subsistence fishery proposals. They supported an ACR to the BOF submitted by ONC to modify the subsistence fishing schedule (Appendix I). Additionally, several resolutions were discussed.
- 3) The Working Group endorsed resolutions supporting continuation of funding for the Working Group process and the ONC inseason subsistence monitoring program (FIS 04-353). Additionally, they supported a resolution for appointment of a Working Group member to the Salmon Industry Restructuring Panel (Appendix J).

- 4) The majority of Working Group members participated in the “Fish Summit Meeting” in person, including: Lamont Albertson, Bev Hoffman, Mike Williams, James Charles, Peter Joseph, Steven White, Greg Roczicka and Nathan Underwood.

Working Group Members participated in several additional meetings associated with policy, regulations, information and management of Kuskokwim River fisheries.

1. Bev Hoffman, James Charles, and Vince Goddard participated in the January AYK BOF meeting in Fairbanks.
2. Bev Hoffman participated in Spring Kuskokwim Interagency meeting in Anchorage.
3. Bev Hoffman, James Charles and Bob Aloysius and his alternate Mary Gregory participated in the Yukon-Kuskokwim RAC meeting in Bethel.
4. James Charles, Vince Goddard, Bob Aloysius, and Ray Collins participated in the Fall Kuskokwim Area Interagency meeting in Anchorage.

OSM paid the travel for Yukon-Kuskokwim RAC and Western Interior RAC Working Group members to attend this meeting. Plans were made for James Charles to travel to the BOF Work Session in Anchorage; however, poor weather prohibited him from traveling.

DISCUSSION

Residents of the Kuskokwim Area want to be directly involved in management of the salmon fishery resource, therefore, the Working Group Process has been an annual event since inception by the BOF in 1988. This process has occurred annually and continues to remain successful in bringing together fishers to express the views of the groups represented toward management of fishery resources.

Working Group representatives are from locations throughout the drainage and represent a broad range of interests. In general, Working Group members and fishers agree on the basic principles of conservation and use. There is agreement among all Working Group members that achieving escapement goals has the highest fisheries management priority followed by providing opportunity to fishers to achieve amounts necessary for subsistence. Additionally, it is recognized by fishers that lower river fishers have access to a greater number of fish since the runs arrive later up river, and run size is diminished as fish migrate up river and travel out of the mainstem Kuskokwim River to their respective spawning streams.

There is a general agreement that the subsistence fishing schedule has many positive benefits. The schedule allows passage of salmon during subsistence fishery closures, provides opportunity for fishers to harvest subsistence salmon, spreads the subsistence harvest out across the run, and allows passage of fish through the lower river giving those fishers in the upper river greater opportunity to meet their subsistence harvest needs.

Although there is a great deal of agreement, there is still disagreement between fishers and ADF&G regarding interpretations of the run status information and there is not total acceptance of policies and regulations. There is agreement by Working Group members that the Area M fishery is harvesting a significant number of chum salmon bound for the Kuskokwim River. The changes made to the Kuskokwim escapement goals presented at the January 2004 BOF meeting was interpreted by Working Group members as a method to reallocate Kuskokwim Area

subsistence salmon to the Area M commercial fishery based on the action of the BOF at the February meeting liberalizing Area M commercial fishing regulations. That sequence of events has created some mistrust between the Working Group members and ADF&G.

There was controversy and disagreement among meeting participants as to whether established escapement goals are appropriate and if there is adequate opportunity provided to subsistence fishers relative to other uses. At least one Working Group member has expressed that the taking of Chinook salmon should be limited exclusively to the subsistence fishery. Not all fishers approve of the subsistence fishing schedule and they report that the subsistence fishing closures breaks the rhythm of their subsistence harvest and disrupts fish camp activities. With the majority of subsistence fishers and the greatest access to fish in the lower river, some upper river fishers feel the subsistence fishing schedule should only be in effect in the lower river area.

Low salmon prices during recent years concern some Working Group members. Some members believe the value of the commercial fishery is less than the value of an increase in nutrient input to the ecosystem by allowing an increased number of fish to reach the spawning streams. They further argue that the cost to commercial fishers to participate in the fishery is greater than the value of the catch. Commercial fishers counter their need to participate in the commercial fishery to be able to afford a subsistence lifestyle and that it should be left to the individual fishers to determine if it is in their best interest to participate in the commercial fishery.

There was discussion among Working Group members regarding economic benefits and potential economic benefits of the area's fishery resource. There was total agreement that the greatest economic benefit of the fishery resource is as a protein source to the area subsistence fishers. Other economic benefits were discussed as well. Some maintain that participation of area residents as commercial operators providing services to recreational users such as sight seeing and sport fishing has considerable potential economic benefits. It was noted that it would be better for the area if residents develop the commercial operator industry rather than non-local residents, as they may be more sensitive to the needs of area residents. Although sport fishing is viewed by many area residents as being disrespectful to the resource, such as the concept of playing with their food, there appears to be an increase in local participation in the subsistence rod and reel fishery. The concept of increasing the value of the commercial fishery through marketing of quality or specialty products and to reestablish local processing facilities to provide local employment opportunities was discussed in detail.

In response to the poor salmon returns during 1997-2001 and classification of Kuskokwim River Chinook and chum salmon as stocks of yield concern, there has been significant improvement in the number and quality of fishery assessment projects implemented during the last few years. The Chinook salmon radio telemetry project provides an estimate of Chinook salmon that pass upstream of the Aniak River. The Chinook salmon aerial survey program has been improved to assist in determining Chinook salmon distribution and abundance with escapement goals established from this information. Additionally, improvements have been made in Chinook salmon genetic stock identification, which will eventually be useful to identify the stock of origin of harvested Chinook salmon. There are now 7 weirs and the Aniak River sonar to evaluate salmon escapements. The weirs evaluate the passage of all salmon species and the sonar project estimates chum salmon passage. These projects are distributed strategically in tributary streams in lower, middle and upper portions of the Kuskokwim River drainage to allow evaluation of spatial distribution. The mainstem chum, sockeye and coho salmon mark-recapture project at

Kalskag has provided valuable new information on salmon run size and migration timing to specific tributary streams for each of the 3 species.

Unfortunately, information from these projects becomes available after the fisheries have occurred, and no fishery action can be taken to increase escapement levels or harvest surplus abundance. However, the ONC inseason subsistence harvest monitoring program in the lower river near Bethel provides run timing and relative abundance information allowing project findings to be incorporated into the management process. This information, in conjunction with the BTF project and commercial harvest catch rate information, provides the best available index of salmon abundance and run timing as fish pass through the lower river. The inseason subsistence monitoring process also provides an avenue for local user input in determining salmon run abundance and corresponding management strategies. Plans are underway to improve existing programs and establish new programs. The project of greatest significance that will be initiated during the 2005 season is a pilot program to evaluate sockeye salmon run timing and spawning distribution.

Mundy (1995) provided an independent evaluation of Kuskokwim River salmon research and monitoring titled "Recommendations for Strengthening the Cooperative Management Process of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group". He made 3 recommendations. Recommendation 1) Develop detailed agreements and understandings on procedures to be followed during the season, and on the needs of the user groups, prior to each harvest season. Communicate the agreements and understandings by mailing to the villages and harvesters and other concerned parties. Recommendation 2) Commission an annual post-season audit of how well the management program achieved the agreed upon objectives, including an analysis of how to improve attainment of the objectives in the next season. Recommendation 3) Continue and accelerate the process of improving the quality of information and the rigor of the assumptions on which fishery management decisions are based. Improvements have been made toward strengthening the cooperative management process of the Kuskokwim Salmon Management Working Group through incorporation of these recommendations.

CONCLUSIONS

Continued discussion through the Working Group Process, between fishers from throughout the drainage and State and Federal agency representatives, has kept fishers informed of assessment project findings and agency personnel informed of fishers interpretation of project findings and fishing success. Through this process, agency and Working Group members reached consensus in fishery management actions during the 2003 and 2004 seasons.

Participation in the Working Group process requires a great deal of time from Working Group members and agency staff. Funding provided by FIS 01-116 was an essential part of enhancing the Working Group process. The funding provided by OSM allowed ADF&G staff to more effectively prepare for meetings by better, more frequent distribution of updated fishery status information in a standardized format. The funding also provided travel for Working Group members to participate in fishery meetings relevant to issues concerning the Kuskokwim River fishery such as the postseason meetings in Bethel. This allowed for a postseason audit on the success of fishery management strategies aimed towards achieving salmon escapement goals and providing an opportunity for fishers to meet their subsistence harvest needs.

Participation by representatives in meetings located outside the drainage allowed for an exchange of information between Working Group representatives and fishery assessment project leaders and research planners and provided an opportunity for Working Group representatives to testify at regulatory meetings in support of Working Group positions. The relationship between Working Group members, project leaders, research planners, and policy makers needs to be fostered, as the interactions are critical to the Working Group process. This relationship insures that local fishers remain familiar with new information to maintain their direct involvement in the management of the fishery.

Agreements and understanding of the fishery management procedures are dictated by the policies and regulations that guide the management of the Kuskokwim River salmon fishery. To meet Dr. Mundy's recommendation of communicating this information with fishers, the information is distributed pre-season as the annual outlook and management strategy. Information from the outlook and management strategy is included in articles submitted to local newspapers and during some years, ads have been included in local newspapers to further inform fishers of fishery management strategies. During the 2004 season, agency staff and Working Group members participated in radio call in shows discussing management strategies, run assessment methodology, project findings and fielding questions and hearing concerns of area fishers.

Many of the recommendations made by Dr. Mundy have been acted upon to improve the quality of the information and the rigor of the assumptions that fishery management decisions are based upon. The test fish program has been further standardized (Bue 2005), a stock identification program has been initiated, a sockeye salmon assessment program will be implemented in the coming season, escapement objectives have been established for coho salmon and an in-season subsistence monitoring program has been developed to assist in harvest management decision process. Additionally, many cooperative fishery assessment projects have been established between agencies and local organizations such as ONC, AVCP, KNA and the MNVC. These cooperative programs have gone a long way toward gaining local fisher acceptance for program support and project findings.

Although progress has been made toward strengthening the cooperative management process, it is an ongoing process that will require the continued unselfish participation by area fishers. It will be essential to maintain the interaction of Working Group members with fishery managers, researchers, and policy makers. The task of strengthening the Working Group process and elevating it to its current status was made possible by funding provided by OSM for staff support, member travel, and communications through teleconference, FAX, and phone. Unfortunately, this funding source is no longer available so other accommodations need to be provided to continue strengthening the cooperative management process of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Working Group process should continue and be supported. Local residents want to be informed of area fishery status and issues and want to be involved in the management process. This intense interest comes from their dependence on fisheries resources for their sustenance, spiritual well being and in some cases income to afford participation in their subsistence life style. We recommend that the current process be maintained and the following actions be pursued:

1. The Working Group by-laws need to be updated with the appropriate change made in seat designation.
2. The preseason meeting can be conducted by teleconference but every effort should be made to get Working Group members together in person post season to review the season, audit the process and discuss relevant issues.
3. ADF&G staff and Working Group efforts should be maintained in informing area fishers of fishery status and management strategies through discussion, news releases, newspaper articles and radio talk shows of fishery management strategies.
4. The current method of distributing pre-meeting information packet to Working Group members and interested parties by FAX or email should be maintained. The summary of the most recent meeting should be distributed with the information packet of the next meeting.
5. Means should be established to provide Working Group members with travel funds for participation in regulatory and policy meeting with the Boards. Their involvement in this process is essential in developing and reaching agreement in fishery performance measures to be used during the management season.
6. Travel funds should additionally be made available for Working Group member participation in other fishery related meetings associated with the Kuskokwim Area to allow them to contribute and stay informed of research planning, research programs and associated project findings.
7. Efforts need to be continued to select and maintain informed alternates for each Working Group seat. Currently the upper river seat representatives have no alternates. The Western Interior RAC representative consistently provides information from the area around McGrath, however, when he is not available to participate, little information is available from fishers upstream of Chuathbaluk.

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Improvements have been made toward strengthening the cooperative management process of the Kuskokwim Salmon Management Working Group through funding provided by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of Subsistence Management in support of project FIS 01-116. The funding provided by OSM allowed Alaska Department of Fish and Game staff and Working Group members to more effectively keep area fishers informed of run abundance, fishery status, and management strategies through discussion, news releases, newspaper articles and radio talk shows. The funding allowed dedicated staff to more effectively prepare for

meetings by providing complete and frequent distribution of updated fishery status information in a standardized format. The funding also allowed travel for Working Group members to participate in fishery meetings located outside the drainage. Although progress has been made toward strengthening cooperative management, it is an ongoing process that will require the continued unselfish participation by area fishers and basic funding for material preparation, communication and travel to maintain the interaction of Working Group members with fishery managers, fishery project leaders, research planners, and policy makers.

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TABLES AND FIGURES

Table 1.–Executive Summary of Working Group and ADF&G actions, 2003.

Date	Comment
12 March	<p>The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (Working Group) met from 12:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Wednesday, March 12, 2003 at the United States Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) conference room in Bethel. Representatives from seven of the twelve Working Group organizations were present. The Group reviewed Proposal 462 to the BOF. A motion was made to have co-chair Frank Charles write a letter on behalf of the Working Group to state their opposition to Proposal 462. The discussion of the 2003 Kuskokwim Area Preliminary Outlook and Management Strategy and nomination of vacant seats were tabled until the next meeting.</p>
06 May	<p>The Working Group met at 10:15 a.m. on Tuesday May 6, 2003, at the USFWS conference room in Bethel. The Group adjourned at 12:07 p.m. Representatives from six of the twelve Working Group organizations were present. ADF&G presented the 2003 Kuskokwim River Outlook, the Kuskokwim River Salmon Rebuilding Management Plan, and 2002 subsistence salmon harvest data for the Kuskokwim Area. The US Fish and Wildlife Fisheries Information Service provided information regarding the Fishery Resource Monitoring Program. Erin Hebert, newly hired Fisheries Partners Biologist for the Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP), was introduced. AVCP and ADF&G staff provided a description of the Kuskokwim Fisheries Research Coalition (KFRC) strategic research plan for the Kuskokwim Area.</p> <p><u>Request of Working Group Committee:</u> A request was made by the co-chair of the Working Group for Kuskokwim Area fishers to continue to support responsible harvest of fish with the intent of allowing more fish access to their spawning grounds.</p>
17 June	<p>The Working Group was called to order at 10:50 a.m. on Tuesday June 17, 2003, at the USF&WS conference room in Bethel. The Group adjourned at 12:45 p.m. Representatives from seven of the twelve Working Group organizations were present. The Working Group heard reports from subsistence fishers, the Orutsararmiut Native Council (ONC), the USFWS, ADF&G regarding in-season indicators of salmon run strength, and a presentation on the strategic research plan for Kuskokwim River Salmon by Joe Spaeder from Arctic Yukon Kuskokwim (AYK)-Sustainable Salmon Initiative (SSI). The goals of the AYK-SSI report are to: (a.) foster expanded fishery research in order to help understand the causes of decline of Kuskokwim salmon stocks, and (b.) support sustainable salmon management in the Kuskokwim drainage area. The subsistence harvest reports indicated that lower river fishers have or nearly have reached their Chinook harvest goals and they are starting to target chum and sockeye salmon. Only one Chinook salmon was reported to have been caught in the upper river, as fish were just beginning to arrive in the area.</p> <p><u>Meeting Action Announcement:</u> The Working Group arrived at the decision to retain the subsistence-fishing schedule.</p>

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Date	Comment
26 June	<p>The Working Group was called to order at 10:17 a.m. on Thursday June 26, 2003, at the USF&WS conference room in Bethel. The Group adjourned at 12:50 p.m. Representatives from six of the twelve Working Group organizations were present. Subsistence reports indicate subsistence harvests of chinook, sockeye, and chum salmon in the lower Kuskokwim River are good while the ADF&G Bethel Test Fishery (BTF) report was of record Chinook salmon entry, below average chum salmon, entry and average sockeye salmon entry. Lower river subsistence fishers are just starting to fish for chum salmon. Meeting Action Announcement: The Working Group arrived at the decision to retain the subsistence-fishing schedule.</p>
02 July	<p>The Working Group was called to order at 10:02 a.m. on Wednesday July 2, 2003, at the USF&WS conference room in Bethel. The Group adjourned at 1:55 p.m. Representatives from seven of the twelve Working Group organizations were present. Points of discussion focused around new management conservation measures such as the absence of a commercial fishery and subsistence fishing schedules implemented in 2003 that were not implemented in years with similar run strength. Chinook salmon fishing was reported to be good by most fishers in upper, middle and lower river. Subsistence fishing for chum salmon was reported to be normal or good by fishers in the lower river using six-inch or less mesh size and poor by fishers using mesh size larger than six-inches. Reports from the middle and upper river was of poor chum salmon fishing. BTF chum salmon catches have improved over the last five days.</p> <p><u>Meeting Action Announcement:</u> Establish a seven-day per week subsistence fishing schedule.</p> <p><u>Request of Working Group Committee:</u> The Working Group made a request to fishers to continue to make an effort to conserve both Chinook and chum salmon and to harvest only what is necessary.</p>
28 July	<p>The Working Group was called to order at 10:08 a.m. on Monday, July 28, 2003, at the USF&WS conference room in Bethel. The Group adjourned at 12:54 p.m. Representatives from ten of the twelve Working Group organizations were present. The Working Group heard reports from commercial fish processing representatives, subsistence fishers, elders with traditional Yup'ik knowledge, ONC, KNA, and the Department concerning the status of the Kuskokwim River subsistence fishery and salmon runs. There was a discussion on opening the Kuskokwim River to commercial fishing provided adequate processing capacity. Subsistence fishers reported coho salmon fishing to be good. BTF index indicated this to be the second strongest chum salmon run on record.</p> <p><u>Meeting Action Announcement:</u> Open the Kuskokwim River to commercial fishing with a two-hour period in District W1-A (upstream of Bethel) from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, July 30, 2003. Additionally, a commercial salmon fishing period will be announced Thursday, July 31, 2003 for District W1-B</p>

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Date	Comment
02 August	<p>(downstream of Bethel). The District W1-B commercial period will end 7:00 p.m. Friday, August 1. It is anticipated that this commercial fishing period will be two to four hours in duration depending on fish processor availability.</p> <p>The Working Group was called to order at 12:05 p.m. on Saturday, August 2, 2003, at the USF&WS conference room in Bethel. The Group adjourned at 12:54 p.m. Representatives from six of the twelve Working Group organizations were present. The combined fishing effort for the July 30 & July 31 commercial periods was very low for this time of year. It was pointed out that opportunity for subsistence fishing was reduced significantly with the restrictions associated with commercial fishing periods. There was a discussion toward providing more subsistence fishing opportunity. There was no new information presented in association with subsistence fishing. BTF continued to indicate an early strong showing of coho salmon.</p> <p><u>Meeting Action Announcement:</u> Establish Kuskokwim River commercial fishery periods in District 1. Subdistrict 1-A (upstream of Bethel) will open to commercial fishing from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Monday, August 4, 2003. Subdistrict 1-B will open to commercial fishing from 3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Tuesday, August 5, 2003. Additionally, the hours closed to subsistence gillnet fishing adjacent to commercial periods will be reduced to six hours before, during and three hours after commercial fishing periods.</p>
06 August	<p>The Working Group was called to order at 12:05 p.m. on Wednesday, August 7, 2003, at the USF&WS conference room in Bethel. The Group adjourned at 1:35 p.m. Representatives from seven of the twelve Working Group organizations were present. Frank Charles chaired the meeting. A request was made to prepare and submit an Agenda Change Request (ACR) that reduces the time period between transferring commercial fishing permits between Subdistrict 1A and 1B at the January 2004 BOF meeting. Subsistence fishing reports from the lower river indicated average to good catches. It was noted that few middle river subsistence fishers were fishing because of the high water event. There was no information provided from up river subsistence fishers. BTF catches still indicate a strong showing of coho salmon.</p> <p><u>Meeting Action Announcement:</u> Establish Kuskokwim River commercial fishery periods in District 1. Subdistrict 1-A (upstream of Bethel) will open to commercial fishing from 1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Thursday, August 7, 2003. Subdistrict 1-B will open from 1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Friday, August 8, 2003. If coho salmon abundance remains sufficient, commercial salmon fishing periods in Subdistrict 1A will continue on Mondays and Thursdays and Subdistrict 1-B on Tuesdays and Fridays. The commercial salmon fishing periods scheduled after August 7 will be four to six hours, depending on processor availability, ending at 7:00 p.m.</p>

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Table 1.–Page 4 of 5.

Date	Comment
20 August	<p>The Working Group was called to order at 12:15 p.m. on Wednesday August 20, 2003, at the BNC conference room in Bethel. The Group adjourned at 2:00 p.m. Representatives from six of the twelve Working Group organizations were present. The Working Group acknowledged the untimely death of Nixie Mellick. Action was taken by the Working Group to transfer Evelyn Thomas from the Sport Fisher Working Group seat to the Upper River Subsistence seat. Further action established Lamont Albertson as the primary Sport Fisher representative on the Working Group. Evelyn Thomas will serve as an alternate representative for the Sport Fish seat along with Beverly Hoffman. Three ACRs that provide proposals for regulation changes for the January 2004 Alaska Board of Fisheries meeting were discussed. Oscar Larson submitted an ACR for the Working Group that reduces the time commercial fishermen must wait when they transfer between Subdistricts 1-A and 1-B. Vince Goddard submitted two ACRs, one that liberalizes or eliminates subsistence fishing closures prior to, during, and following commercial fishing periods. The second establishes a Kuskokwim commercial fishery in June and July with a cap (quota) on the number of Chinook salmon that can be harvested. There was no formal presentation on subsistence fishing, though subsistence fishers reported getting all that they need. BTF continued to show a near record catch rate on coho salmon. A report regarding the weir projects indicated a strong showing of coho salmon. Rod and reel fishing for coho salmon was reported to be good throughout the drainage. Doug Molyneaux briefly described the Kuskokwim Area strategic planning process, Rich Cannon provided additional information about other regional planning processes and how the Kuskokwim plan will fit within these broader plans for Western Alaska and the Bering Sea.</p> <p><u>Meeting Action Announcement:</u> Maintain the current schedule of fishing periods to achieve a harvest that can be purchased by the processor without creating waste. The period for Thursday, August 21 (Subdistrict 1-A) will be six hours in duration from 11:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The period on Friday, August 22 (Subdistrict 1-B) will be six hours in duration if there is adequate processor capacity, and, if catch rates and processor capacity allow, District 1 fishing periods (Subdistrict 1-A and 1-B combined) will be scheduled for the week August 25-August 29. If catch rates remain high Subdistrict fishing periods will be scheduled that week as necessary to meet processor capacity and avoid wanton waste. The last commercial fishing period of the season will be Friday, August 29.</p>
26 September	<p>The Working Group was called to order at 10:23 a.m. on Friday, September 26 at the USFWS conference room in Bethel. The Group adjourned at 5:00 p.m. Representatives from seven of the twelve Working Group organizations were physically present thanks to the OSM funding available for Working Group members' travel. Positions were taken on selected Federal subsistence proposals and selected Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) proposals. The Working group</p>

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Table 1.–Page 5 of 5.

Date	Comment
	<p>operated towards a consensus on proposals, and were in support, opposed, or had no consensus on FSB Proposals: F2004-04K, F2004-12K, F2004-13K, and proposals: 130-133, 135 & 136 to the BOF. The BOF did not accept the ACRs, as they did not meet the appropriate criteria. Frank Charles was selected by the Working Group to attend a Tri-Council meeting between the Eastern, Western, and Yukon-Kuskokwim Region Advisory Councils in Wasilla to provide information to the council regarding Working Group recommendations toward FSB Proposals. Oscar Larson was selected by the Working Group members to attend the post season Kuskokwim Area Interagency fishery meeting to take place in Anchorage at the Fish and Game office on November 25 and 26. Frank Charles was selected by Working Group members to attend the Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim BOF meeting to take place in Fairbanks January 12-19. Ben Greene of Bering Sea Fisherman's Association made a presentation regarding the status of the Kuskokwim Research Restoration Plan.</p>
28 September	<p>The Working Group participated in the National Research Council meeting held in Bethel by making presentations and participating in discussions toward Development of the "Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim Research and Restoration Pan" a high-quality, long range science plan for the region.</p>
10 November	<p>The Working Group was called to order at 11:07 a.m. on Monday, November 10, 2003 at the USFWS conference room in Bethel. The Group adjourned at 3:26 p.m. Representatives from seven of the twelve Working Group organizations were present in person or by teleconference, which qualified the meeting as an executive session. Dave Cannon, the KNA partner, introduced Dwayne Hoffman as the new Natural Resource Director for KNA. It was noted that Wayne Morgan would remain a co-chair on the Working Group unless he takes action to relinquish the seat and position. The primary focus of the meeting was discussion of fishery proposals that will be addressed by the BOF during the January 12-19, 2004 meetings scheduled to occur in Fairbanks. At a prior Working Group meeting Frank Charles was selected to attend, however, Evelyn Thomas, Peter Miller and Ray Collins were additionally selected to attend portions of the BOF meetings. There was a discussion regarding action taken toward proposals presented at the last meeting. All proposals were discussed and a decision was made to revisit proposals 133 and 136 submitted to the BOF. The Department is recommending to the BOF that Kuskokwim River Chinook and chum salmon remain a yield concern. Craig Whitmore explained that in accordance with the Policy for the Management of Sustainable Salmon Fisheries an action plan has to be prepared for the BOF because of the yield concern classification. The action plan will describe how a fishery may be implemented that will result in the sustained yield of salmon stocks large enough to meet escapement goals and Amounts Necessary for Subsistence in accordance to the Kuskokwim River Salmon Rebuilding Management Plan.</p>

Table 2.–Executive Summary of Working Group and ADF&G actions, 2004.

Date	Comment
22 April	<p>The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (Working Group) met at 10:15 a.m. on Tuesday, April 20, at the US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) conference room in Bethel. Seven of twelve Working Group Members were present establishing a quorum was established. The Working Group adjourned at 2:25 p.m. LaMont Albertson was elected as the Sport Fish representative and Beverly Hoffman was elected as alternate. Alexie A. Alexie was introduced as the Lower River subsistence representative and Greg Roczicka as alternate. James Charles was selected as the Member at Large representative. Matt Nemeth of LGL provided a summary of the status of the Kuskokwim River research plan. Angela Matz a contaminates specialist with the USFWS and Lori Verbrugge of the Division of Public Health made a presentation and answered questions regarding the "Contaminants in Salmon" study that was conducted on salmon captured in the Kuskokwim River near Bethel, and the Yukon River near the Rapids and Beaver. A brief summary was provided of changes to the Kuskokwim commercial and subsistence fishing regulations at the 2004 Alaska Board of Fisheries (BOF) Arctic-Yukon-Kuskokwim (AYK) meeting. A discussion took place regarding the new Kuskokwim River escapement goals and the controversy surrounding the goals as it was discussed at the BOF meeting. The 2004 Kuskokwim River salmon fishery outlook and management strategy was presented along with a summary of the April 2004 interagency meeting. The Kuskokwim Interagency meeting is an opportunity for project leaders, investigators, managers, and interested parties to get together and discuss the coming field season and provide updates on last season's projects.</p>
18 May	<p>The Working Group met at 10:10 a.m. on Tuesday, May 18 at the Fish and Game conference room in Bethel. Seven of twelve Working Group Members were present establishing a quorum. The Group adjourned at 1:10 p.m. The focus of the discussion was the action by the BOF liberalizing the Area M fishery and the potential of fishers boycotting the Kuskokwim subsistence-fishing schedule in protest. Several people spoke about the merits of boycotting the schedule. Points of discussion included: (1) The primary reason that Kuskokwim Area Fishers were willing to abide by a subsistence-fishing schedule during 2001-2003 was because of the conservation actions taken by the BOF in 2001 regarding the Area M fishery, which harvests Western Alaska chum salmon. (2) Since conservation measures were eliminated in the Area M fisheries during the 2004 BOF meeting, some Kuskokwim fishers feel they should not be held to the subsistence-fishing schedule. (3) Everyone should be held responsible for the conservation of chum salmon to protect the subsistence way of life. Several people spoke to the merits of maintaining the subsistence schedule regardless of the action taken to liberalize the Area M fishery. Points of discussion included:</p>

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Date	Comment
	<p>(1) That boycotting the schedule has the potential to hurt current and future king salmon runs. (2) A boycott would result in upriver fishers having a more difficult time harvesting the fish they need for subsistence. (3) The Area M fishery harvests few Chinook salmon. (4) The subsistence schedule spreads the Chinook salmon harvest across the run instead of disproportionately harvesting the early portion of the run. State and Federal enforcement staff informed the group that if the subsistence fishing schedule is boycotted, the action would be well documented in a respectful manner and citations would be issued. The working group previously supported the schedule and no motions were made to change that position.</p>
08 June	<p>The Working Group met for four hours Tuesday, June 8 and discussed the status of the Kuskokwim salmon run. Although it was too early in the season to make definitive statements about the return of Kuskokwim salmon, Bethel Test Fish (BTF) and subsistence harvest reports indicate that run strength look promising. Mike Williams from Akiak was appointed to the vacant Lower River subsistence representative seat. There was a great deal of discussion regarding the Area M fishery which harvests chum salmon bound for western Alaska, including those bound for the Kuskokwim. Working Group members indicated that they felt the action by the BOF provided a priority to Area M commercial fishermen over western Alaska subsistence fishermen. There was a discussion about boycotting the Kuskokwim subsistence schedule in protest of the action by the BOF. A press release by the Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP): Alaska Native Tribes and Tribal Nonprofit called for a postponing of any civil disobedience subsistence salmon fishing prior to June 19. The request by AVCP and tribal representatives, who attended a recent meeting in Akiak, came in consideration of the first Chinook that enter the Kuskokwim and are not intercepted in the Area M fishery while chum salmon are. <u>Meeting Action Announcement</u>: Maintain the subsistence-fishing schedule with the next closed period to occur Sunday, June 13 to Tuesday, June 15.</p>
18 June	<p>The Working Group met for three hours on Friday, June 18 and discussed the status of Kuskokwim River salmon returns. All meeting participants agreed that the available information indicates Chinook salmon escapement goals will be reached and that there is plenty of opportunity for fishers to harvest amounts necessary for subsistence. Reports from lower river subsistence fishers indicate that chum salmon fishing was good and the BTF index was good for chum salmon. After evaluation of the available information there was consensus to lift the Kuskokwim River subsistence-fishing schedule and allow seven-day per week schedule subsistence fishing. The Working Group fish processor representative expressed interest in a commercial fishery as early as June 28 if it appears</p>

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Table 2.–Page 3 of 13.

Date	Comment
	escapement goals will be achieved and fishers have the opportunity to fulfill their subsistence needs. A brief update regarding the Area M fishery was provided. The harvest in Area M through June 16, 2004 is reported at 703,000 sockeye salmon, 240,400 chum salmon, 138,000 pink salmon, and two coho salmon. Fishing effort was reported as similar to the last two seasons. <u>Meeting Action Announcement</u> : Establish a seven day per week subsistence fishing schedule.
25 June	The Working Group met Friday, June 25 and discussed the status of Kuskokwim River salmon returns and the potential for commercial salmon fishing on the Kuskokwim River. Four of twelve members were in attendance a quorum was not established. Meeting participants agreed that the available information indicates Chinook salmon escapement goals will be reached and that the available information is encouraging for good returns of chum and sockeye salmon. Reports from lower river participants and the subsistence-monitoring program indicate the majority of subsistence fishers in their area have achieved their harvest needs for Chinook salmon. Middle river participants indicated that elders are reporting good subsistence catches indicative of average or normal salmon runs. The Working Group fish processor representative and another local processor expressed interest in a chum and sockeye salmon directed commercial fishery as early as June 29 with a combined total capacity of approximately 150,000 pounds. Other Working Group members expressed concern about a chum directed commercial salmon fishery citing limited processor capacity, ice availability, and limited transportation of the catch to market. <u>Meeting Action Announcement</u> : Meet again Monday June 28.
28 June	The Working Group met Monday, June 28 a quorum was established with nine of twelve members in attendance. BTF index for Chinook salmon was reported to be the highest on record and the chum salmon index was the third highest on record. Lower and middle river subsistence fishers reported salmon catches going well. There was no report from the upper river. The processor report indicated that two companies were on the grounds and prepared to purchase fish beginning this week. One Working Group member expressed that he felt there was a greater value in putting fish on the spawning grounds to nourish the land and furbearers rather than have a commercial fishery. It was noted that the Division of Sport Fisheries restored bag and possession limits for Chinook and chum salmon in the Kuskokwim River drainage, effective 12:01 A.M. Monday, June 28, 2004. With this emergency order, the bag and possession limit for king salmon was restored to three fish, of which only two may be over 28 inches in length. The bag and possession limit for chum salmon was restored to five fish, with no size limit. There was discussion that indicated that the Working Group felt that the Division of Sport Fish should have discussed this issue with them before taking the action.

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Date	Comment
	<p><u>ADF&G Recommendation:</u> Have a two-hour commercial fishery opening in Subdistrict 1-A on Tuesday, June 29 and a two-hour commercial fishing period in Subdistrict 1-B on Wednesday, June 30. <u>Working Group Recommendation:</u> A motion was made by the Working Group to have a two-hour commercial fishing period in Subdistrict 1-B on Wednesday, June 30, leave the scheduling of additional commercial fishing periods to the Department until the next Working Group meeting scheduled for Tuesday, July 6 at 10:00 a.m. Discussion of the motion clarified that before additional fishing periods were scheduled the Department would evaluate run strength to be reasonably sure escapement goals would be met and that there was adequate processor capacity. <u>Meeting Action Announcement:</u> Have a two-hour commercial fishing period in Subdistrict 1-B on Wednesday, June 30 and leave the scheduling of additional commercial fishing periods to the Department until the next Working Group meeting on Tuesday, July 6 at 10:00 a.m.</p>
06 July	<p>The Working Group met Tuesday, July 6th for two hours. Representatives from seven of the twelve Working Group positions were present establishing a quorum. The report from subsistence fishers was that most fishers had completed the majority of their Chinook, chum and sockeye salmon harvest. The report from the BTF project was that the Chinook index was the highest on record and that the chum salmon and sockeye salmon index were average. Chum passage was noted to be average to above average at the weir projects with the Aniak sonar recording high chum salmon passage. In total, four commercial fishing periods had been announced. Some members of the Working Group expressed concern that the Department was being too aggressive in the fishery by initiating additional commercial fishing periods without adequate consultation with the Working Group. Other Working Group members were supportive of the action taken by the Department in consideration of buyer limitations and the anticipated low effort. Through discussion it was apparent that there was a misunderstanding from the previous meeting on the direction provided by the Working Group to the Department in management of the fishery. Department staff agreed to contact the Working Group chairs prior to announcing additional fishing periods. Both processors indicated they would like commercial fisheries to pick up ice prior to the period so the catch could be put on ice immediately. It was noted that fishers would like to see an increase in price for bled and iced fish as it requires more work. <u>Meeting Action Announcement:</u> Allow scheduling of additional commercial fishing periods by the Department based on fish passage, escapements and processor capacity and meet again on again Tuesday, July 13.</p>

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Table 2.–Page 5 of 13.

Date	Comment
13 July	The Working Group met Tuesday, July 13 for one hour and fifteen minutes. A quorum was established with eight of twelve Working Group representatives being present. To date, four commercial fishing periods have been announced for District 1 totaling twelve hours of fishing time. The Working Group fish processor representative indicated that both Inlet Fish Producers and Coastal Villages Seafood had discontinued operations after the July 7 opening. There was a brief discussion on Working Group representative alternates. It was agreed that all representatives should have an informed alternate to replace them if they are unable to attend a Working Group Meeting. <u>Meeting Action Announcement:</u> Meet again on again Friday, July 23 at 10:00 a.m. at the Bethel Fish and Game office.
23 July	The Working Group met Friday, July 23 for two hours. A quorum was established with seven of twelve Working Group representatives being present. The lower Kuskokwim River subsistence representative reported that the coho salmon run has shown up early and their numbers appear to be increasing daily. The middle Kuskokwim River representative reported that most fishermen are waiting for coho salmon to appear in their area to resume fishing. The sport fishing representative reported that a trip on the Kiseralik River was performed and indicated that a good number of Chinook and sockeye were seen pooling in the upper Kiseralik River area. It was reported that both processors are prepared for a coho salmon commercial fishing season in the Kuskokwim area. Both representatives agreed that they would be able to begin processing around July 28 and could possibly continue through the first week of September. There was a discussion on Working Group representative alternates with an agreement reached that all representatives should have an informed alternate to replace them if they are unable to attend a Working Group Meeting. <u>Meeting Action Announcement:</u> Meet again on again Monday, July 26 at 1:00 p.m. at the Bethel Fish and Game office.
26 July	The Working Group was called to order at 1:08 p.m. on Monday, July 26, 2004, at the Fish and Game conference room in Bethel. The Group adjourned at 2:17 p.m. Representatives from nine of the twelve Working Group organizations were present. Lower river subsistence fishers reported good catches of coho salmon with middle river fishers reporting that coho salmon are just arriving in that section of the river. The BTF report was that the index was tracking the 2003 season during which 284,000 coho salmon were commercially harvested and the Kogrukluk weir passage was 74,700 coho salmon, approximately triple the escapement goal. There was a discussion regarding implementation of the commercial fishery directed toward coho salmon. One recommendation was: not to initiate the commercial fishery until August 30 to allow coho salmon to become distributed throughout the drainage. The point was made that fishing effort is

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Date	Comment
31 July	<p>down compared to historic levels. The commercial fisher representative stated that fishers would like to see a fishing schedule implemented similar to the 2003 season. <u>Meeting Action Announcement:</u> Establish Kuskokwim River commercial salmon fishing periods in Kuskokwim River Subdistrict 1-A (upstream of Bethel) and Subdistrict 1-B (downstream of Bethel). Subdistrict 1-A will open to commercial salmon fishing from 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m. Wednesday, July 28, 2004. Subdistrict 1-B will open to commercial salmon fishing from 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m. Friday July 30, 2004. These are four-hour commercial fishing periods.</p> <p>The Working Group was called to order at 3:12 p.m. on Saturday, July 31, 2004, at the Fish and Game conference room in Bethel. The Group adjourned at 5:31 p.m. Seven of twelve Working Group representatives were present establishing a quorum. Indices of coho salmon run strength continue to indicate a strong run. There was a discussion regarding implementation of a coho salmon directed commercial fisheries period. One recommendation was to close the river to commercial fishing no later than 7:00 p.m., which would allow all boats adequate time to transit home during hours of daylight.</p> <p><u>ADF&G Recommendation:</u> The Department recommended that two Kuskokwim River commercial salmon fishing periods be established on the Kuskokwim River in Subdistrict 1-A (upstream of Bethel) and Subdistrict 1-B (downstream of Bethel). Specifically, the recommendation was for a Subdistrict 1-A opening from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday, August 2, 2004, and a Subdistrict 1-B opening from 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, August 3, 2004, with the flexibility to announce further openings for Thursday and Friday, August 5 and 6, provided coho salmon run strength continues towards achieving escapement goals.</p> <p><u>Working Group Motions:</u> The Working Group made a motion, which failed by one vote, to adopt the Department’s recommendation regarding the openings on August 2 and August 3. A lengthy discussion took place regarding the restrictions on subsistence fishing associated with the commercial fishery. There are strong opinions within the group that indicate having restrictions on subsistence fishing prior to, during, and after commercial fishing periods are not providing adequate opportunity to fulfill subsistence needs. It was suggested that a method be employed to place a burden on commercial fishers that assures that no subsistence caught fish enter the commercial fishery. It was also suggested that the time periods closed to subsistence fishing prior to and after commercial fishing periods be reduced and that the size of the buffer zones adjacent to the Subdistrict open to commercial fishing be reduced. Another motion was made for a Subdistrict 1-A opening from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Monday, August 2, 2004, and a Subdistrict 1-B opening from 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m. Tuesday, August 3, 2004 and for the Working Group to meet again at 10:00 a.m. Wednesday, August 4. The motion passed unanimously. The Department concurred with the Working Group</p>

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Date	Comment
	<p>recommendation. <u>Meeting Action Announcement</u>: Establish commercial salmon fishing periods on the Kuskokwim River in Subdistrict 1-A (upstream of Bethel) and Subdistrict 1-B (downstream of Bethel). Subdistrict 1-A will open to Commercial salmon fishing for six hours on Monday, August 2, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Subdistrict 1-B will open to commercial salmon fishing for six hours on Tuesday, August 3, from 12:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.</p>
04 August	<p>The Working Group was called to order at 3:12 p.m. on Wednesday, August 4, 2004, at the Fish and Game conference room in Bethel. The Group adjourned at 5:00 p.m. Eight of twelve Working Group representatives were present establishing a quorum. Subsistence harvest reports, BTF and weir projects indicate a good coho salmon return. One elder reported that he completed his winter coho salmon harvest in one night using a whitefish set net. One lower river subsistence fisher did come in to the Fish and Game office to express that the commercial fishing schedule was making it difficult for him to achieve his families subsistence harvest needs.</p> <p><u>ADF&G recommendation</u>: The Department recommended that two Kuskokwim River commercial salmon fishing periods be established on the Kuskokwim River in Subdistrict 1-A (upstream of Bethel) and Subdistrict 1-B (downstream of Bethel). Specifically, the recommendation was for a Subdistrict 1-A opening from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Thursday, August 5, 2004, and a Subdistrict 1-B opening from 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m. Friday, August 6, 2004 and to have the next Working Group meeting on Saturday, August 7.</p> <p><u>Other</u>: There was a brief discussion of the post season Working Group ‘Fish Summit’ meeting, to be scheduled in early October. A suggestion was made to form a committee to draft an agenda for the Working Group’s approval. Committee members identified to draft an agenda include: Mike Williams, Nathan Underwood and James Charles.</p> <p><u>Meeting Action Announcement</u>: Establish commercial salmon fishing periods for the Kuskokwim River in Subdistrict 1-A (upstream of Bethel) and Subdistrict 1-B (downstream of Bethel). Subdistrict 1-A will open to commercial salmon fishing for six hours on Thursday, August 5, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Subdistrict 1-B will open to commercial salmon fishing for six hours on Friday, August 6, from 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m. Meet again at 10:00 a.m. Saturday, August 7.</p>
07 August	<p>The Working Group was called to order at 10:05 a.m. on Saturday, August 7, 2004, at the Fish and Game conference room in Bethel. The Group adjourned at 10:55 a.m. Five of twelve Working Group representatives were present; a quorum was not established. The Lower Kuskokwim subsistence representative commented that most of <u>those</u> people subsistence fishing use drift gillnets just to</p>

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Date	Comment
	<p>catch dinner and end up catching more than they want and that freezers are filling up with coho salmon. The Yukon-Kuskokwim RAC member reported that most subsistence fishers near Kalskag do not spend as much effort fishing for, or harvest as many, coho salmon as they do earlier running salmon. He also commented that those people who don't depend on subsistence caught salmon as a livelihood are harvesting more than they need. There was a general consensus that this year's coho salmon run is strong enough to sustain a twice-weekly commercial fishing schedule of six hour's duration in both sub-districts.</p> <p><u>Meeting Action Announcement:</u> The Department recommended that two Kuskokwim River commercial salmon fishing periods be established for the Kuskokwim River in Subdistrict 1-A (upstream of Bethel) and Subdistrict 1-B (downstream of Bethel). Specifically, the recommendation was for a Subdistrict 1-A opening Monday, August 9, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and a Subdistrict 1-B opening Tuesday, August 10, from 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m. and to have the next Working Group meeting at 10:00 a.m. Wednesday, August 11.</p>
11 August	<p>The Working Group was called to order at 10:03 a.m. on Saturday, August 11, 2004, at the Fish and Game conference room in Bethel. The Working Group adjourned at 11:34 a.m. Seven of eleven Working Group representatives were present establishing a quorum. There was a general consensus that this year's coho salmon run is strong enough to sustain an alternating Subdistrict weekly commercial fishing schedule of twice weekly periods of six hour's duration.</p> <p>There was a discussion regarding the hours open to commercial fishing in each Subdistrict. There was a general consensus between commercial fishing representatives and fish processors that the schedule of opening the Kuskokwim River for commercial fishing at 10:00 a.m. in Subdistrict 1-A and 12:00 noon in Subdistrict 1-B is working well for both parties. <u>Meeting Action Announcement:</u> Open the Kuskokwim River to commercial salmon fishing periods in Subdistrict 1-A (upstream of Bethel) and Subdistrict 1-B (downstream of Bethel) on August 13 and 14, with the flexibility to announce further openings for Monday and Tuesday, August 16 and 17, provided coho salmon run strength maintains towards achieving escapements and processing capacities are capable of handling anticipated commercial harvests. Subdistrict 1-A will open to commercial salmon fishing for six hours on Thursday, August 12, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Subdistrict 1-B will open to commercial salmon fishing for six hours on Friday, August 13, from 12:00 noon to 6:00 p.m. <u>Working Group Motions:</u> The Working Group made a motion which passed to accept Kelly Welch as the Working Group fish processor representative alternate. <u>Other:</u> A brief summary of the preparatory meeting for the Working Group 'Fish Summit' conference in</p>

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Date	Comment
18 August	<p>October was provided. It was mentioned that several preliminary concepts were laid out for the October meeting. A lengthy discussion took place regarding the Agenda Change Request (ACR) submission deadline to the BOF. It was also commented that the BOF might consider ACR's dealing with subsistence issues if more user groups submitted individual ACR's that address similar concerns. A draft ACR will be written and submitted to the Working Group for their approval.</p> <p>The Working Group was called to order at 10:05 a.m. on Wednesday, August 18, 2004, at the Fish and Game conference room in Bethel. The Working Group adjourned at 11:34 a.m. Seven of twelve Working Group representatives were present. The Working Group was called to order at 10:03 a.m. on Saturday, August 11, 2004, at the Fish and Game conference room in Bethel. The Working Group adjourned at 11:34 a.m. Seven of eleven Working Group representatives were present establishing a quorum. There was a general consensus that this year's coho salmon run is strong enough to sustain an alternating Subdistrict weekly commercial fishing schedule of twice weekly periods of six hour's duration.</p> <p>Group representatives were present establishing a quorum. It was mentioned that many commercial fishermen have reported that most fish were caught near the lead line of their drift gillnet for the August 16 & 17 openings. Temperatures were very warm for these two openings, as a result, coho salmon may have been traveling at a greater depth, decreasing their chances of being caught in a drift gillnet. Both buyers were able to handle all fish delivered from the previous openings without incident and expect no problems handling fish for future commercial fishing periods. There was some concern expressed about the recent warm weather as it may cause heat damage to commercially caught salmon. A detailed discussion on the forecast was for continued warm weather. A discussion took place regarding the commercial fishery. A question was asked if ADF&G has any concerns that district wide commercial fishing would have any effect achieving escapement objectives. It was reported that the commercial fishing effort has decreased in recent years resulting in a relatively low exploitation rate. Terry Reeve, the Marine Advisory Program extension agent for the University of Alaska was introduced. He was appointed by a sea grant through the School of Fisheries and Ocean Sciences for the University of Alaska Fairbanks. There was a discussion regarding the proposed ACR to modify the subsistence-fishing schedule. <u>Working Group Motion</u>: Made and passed a motion to submitted the drafted ACR to the BOF. <u>Meeting Action Announcement</u>: Establish commercial salmon fishing periods on the Kuskokwim River in Subdistrict 1-A (upstream of Bethel) and Subdistrict 1-B (downstream of Bethel) on August 19 and 20, with</p>

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Date	Comment
25 August	<p>the flexibility to announce further openings for the following week on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday, August 23, 24, 26, and 27, provided coho salmon run strength continues towards achieving escapements, fisher participation is adequate, and processors are capable and interested in handling anticipated commercial harvests. Subdistrict 1-A will open to commercial salmon fishing for six hours on Thursday, August 19, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Subdistrict 1-B will open to commercial fishing for six hours on Friday, August 20, from 12 noon to 6:00 p.m.</p> <p>The Working Group was called to order at 10:06 a.m. on Wednesday, August 25, 2004, at the Fish and Game conference room in Bethel. The Working Group adjourned at 12:07 a.m. Six of twelve Working Group representatives were present; a quorum was not established. The Lower River Subsistence representative reported that the coho salmon run has picked up again after a brief period of decline. It was also mentioned that people are pleased with their harvest and that coho harvest activities are nearly completed. The Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta RAC member reported that not much has changed since last week and most people are looking forward to catching whitefish as they make their way upstream. A question was asked regarding what types of whitefish people are catching and it was requested that people could report any tagged whitefish numbers to the ADF&G and USFWS offices in Bethel. The Western Interior RAC reported that in the upper river subsistence fishing is proceeding well and that people are catching coho salmon both by net and by rod and reel. The BTF cumulative catch index is the highest on record since the project was initiated in 1984. Buyers were able to handle all fish delivered and expect no problems handling fish for the remainder of the season. Several alternatives were discussed regarding the commercial fishing schedule. The Working Group entered a discussion about the proposed “Fish Summit” meeting and it was mentioned that the most accommodating dates for such a meeting would be Thursday and Friday, September 30 and October 01, in Bethel. This would allow the Working Group three days time to make any detailed changes to the draft ACR form before it must be submitted to the BOF (given that they accept the original) for their first meeting of the year on October 5 and 6. It was reported that the focus of the meeting would be to discuss ways to elevate the Kuskokwim commercial fishery, and bring State, Federal, and Tribal governments together to discuss Kuskokwim fishery management issues. <u>Meeting Action Announcement:</u> District-1 of the lower Kuskokwim River will open to commercial fishing on Friday, August 27 and Monday, August 30. Both periods will be 8 hours in duration starting at 10:00 a.m. and ending at 6:00 p.m. Both periods will be full district openings (i.e., Subdistrict 1-A and Subdistrict 1-B). In addition, it is anticipated that commercial fishing periods will be announced through the early part of September provided</p>

-continued-

Date	Comment
31 August	<p>coho salmon escapement continues to be adequate, and continued processors interest.</p> <p>The Working Group was called to order at 10:09 a.m. on Wednesday, August 25, 2004, at the Fish and Game conference room in Bethel. The Working Group adjourned at 12:19 p. m. Six of twelve Working Group representatives were present; a quorum was not established. The Lower River Subsistence representative reported that people are filling up their freezers with coho salmon and that most people are satisfied with their coho salmon harvest. The Upper-Kuskokwim Subsistence representative reported that fish abundance has dropped off sharply, but most people have generally harvested what the need for subsistence. The apparent decline in coho salmon abundance seemed to have dropped off more quickly than usual for this time of year. The Western Interior RAC reported that subsistence fishers are using nets to catch chum and coho salmon but are not catching them in large numbers. It was reported that people have harvested what they need but are not seeing large numbers of coho salmon.</p> <p><u>Other:</u> It was suggested by the Western Interior RAC that they would like to see a cap on the commercial harvests. It was argued by the Working Group fish processor representative that such a cap is not feasible since there appears to be no correlation between escapements and future salmon returns. The Member at Large reported that during past commercial fishing seasons the coho salmon fishery was open until there was not enough coho salmon or a lack of fish buyers on the Kuskokwim.</p> <p><u>ADF&G recommendation:</u> The ADF&G recommendation was to open District W1 (Subdistrict 1-A and Subdistrict 1-B) for commercial salmon fishing for eight hours on Thursday, September 2, from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and an intention of announcing further openings in early September, provided adequate coho salmon abundance and processors continue to be available. Following a discussion with the Working Group, ADF&G revised the recommendation to: open District W1 (Subdistrict 1-A and Subdistrict 1-B) to commercial salmon fishing for six hours on Thursday, September 2, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., and an intention of announcing further opening(s) in early September, provided an increase in coho salmon escapement and processor availability. It was reported that any decision to open the Kuskokwim after Thursday, September 2 would be announced at least 24 hours prior to any commercial opening.</p> <p><u>Working Group Discussion:</u> Although a quorum was not established, Working Group members in attendance entered a discussion about the ADF&G’s first recommendation. Several Working Group representatives mentioned that they would like to see the length of the commercial opening is reduced from eight to six hours and that attention is paid to coho salmon escapements at the Kuskokwim River weir projects. It was mentioned that there is a 70% chance that Inlet</p>

-continued-

Date	Comment
	<p>Salmon would be able to contract a fish tender to cover the lower Kuskokwim River for any openings after Thursday, September 2 and that they would be interested in maintaining operations for commercial catches of at least three to four thousand coho salmon.</p> <p><u>Meeting Action Announcement:</u> District-1 of the lower Kuskokwim River will open to commercial fishing on Thursday, September 2, for 6 hours starting at 10:00 a.m. and ending at 4:00 p.m. This will be full-district opening (i.e., Subdistrict 1-A and Subdistrict 1-B). In addition, it is anticipated that commercial fishing periods will be announced for the week of September 6, provided coho salmon escapement increases, continued processor interest, and fisher participation.</p>
30 September	<p>The Working Group ‘Fish Summit’ meeting began at 9:00 a.m. in the Pacifica Guest House conference room in Bethel. Twelve Working Group representatives were present along with ADF&G staff, USFWS staff, and representatives from the AVCP, ONC, Kuskokwim Native Association, University of Alaska Fairbanks, Costal Villages Regional Fund and Inlet Fish processors, the local media, and the general public. End of season fisheries summaries were presented regarding: (1) The Division of Subsistence Kuskokwim Area Post Season survey. (2) District W1, W4, & W5 commercial fishery summaries. (3) The Area M commercial fishery. (4) The Kuskokwim Area sport fisheries. (5) Kuskokwim Area escapement monitoring projects. Group discussions took place regarding subsistence, commercial and sport fisheries with the final group discussion focused on the future development of the area fisheries.</p> <p><u>Meeting Action Items:</u> (1) The Working Group endorsed ONC’s ACR proposal that asks the BOF to change its regulation so that a graduated subsistence-fishing schedule be put in place only during the first three weeks in June. The Department would still maintain the ability to end the schedule early or prolong it after evaluations of salmon escapements are made. (2) A resolution was passed requesting the BOF include a Working Group representative on the Salmon Industry Restructuring Panel. A Working Group member (LaMont Albertson) was chosen to represent the Working Group before the Salmon Industry Restructuring Panel, a subcommittee of the Board. (3) The Working Group expressed interest in conducting a statewide ‘Fish Summit’ meeting with salmon user groups from the AYK Region to discuss interactions between the controversial Area M commercial fishery and fisheries in Western Alaska. (4) The Working Group passed a resolution in support of continued funding for the ONC in-season subsistence survey program and the Working Group operational budget. (5) The Rainbow trout, Customary and Traditional use proposal was presented and discussed at the ‘Fish Summit’ meeting. (6) AVCP presented a resolution (04-04-01) “supporting salmon conservation and subsistence, but</p>

-continued-

Table 2.–Page 13 of 13.

Date	Comment
	opposing any subsistence fishing schedules when the Alaska Board of Fisheries is expanding the Area M commercial fishery.” (7) The Working Group supported the AVCP Federal proposal FP2005-06 to establish a subsistence fishing schedule regulation similar to the State regulation included in the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan. (8) The Working Group passed a resolution to seek full funding for the Subsistence Division post-season subsistence harvest-monitoring program.

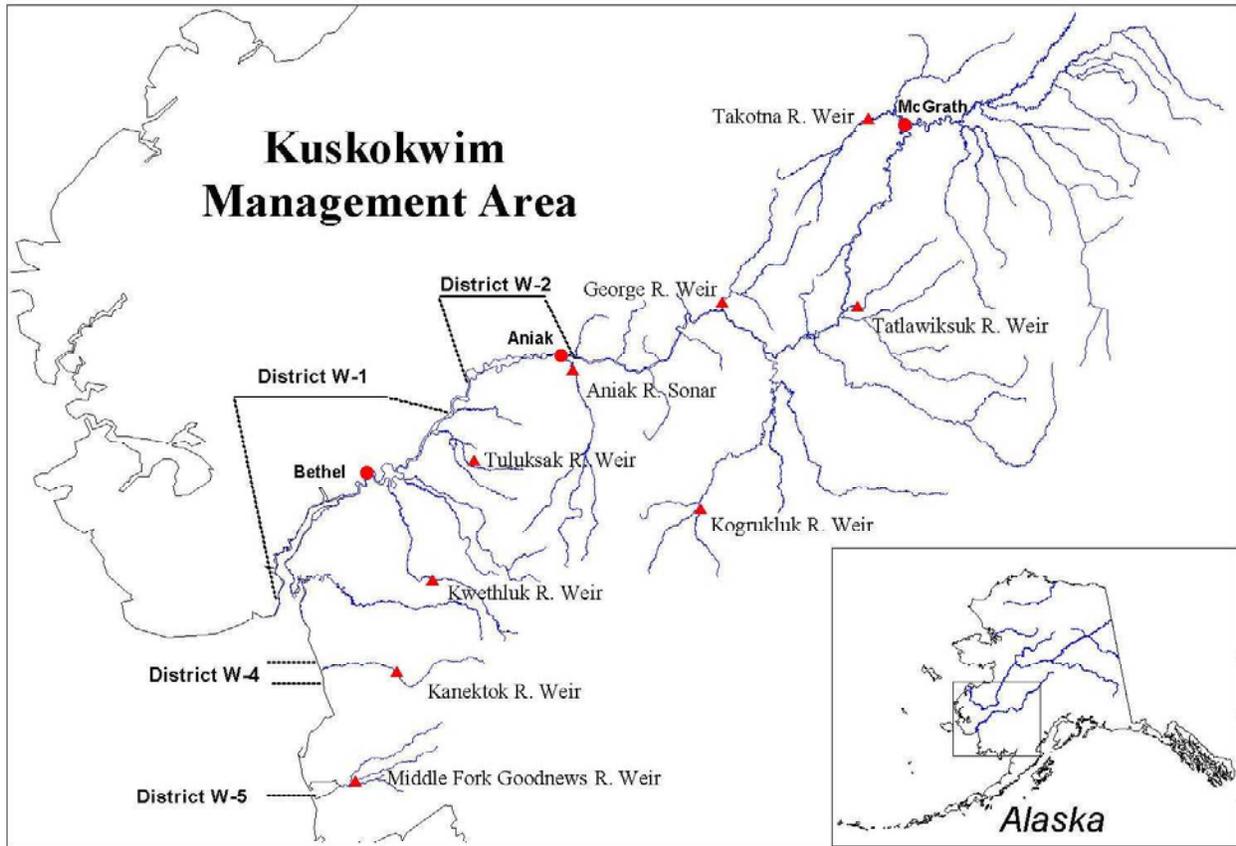


Figure 1.—Kuskokwim Management Area.

APPENDIX A

BY-LAWS OF
THE KUSKOKWIM RIVER SALMON MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP
(as amended in 2001)

PURPOSE

To provide local fishers and other users with an avenue for being directly involved 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. Approval of Minutes
- V. Approval of Agenda
- VI. People to be heard
- VII. Continuing Business
 - A. Reports
 - 1. False Pass Fishery
 - 2. Processor Report
 - 3. Traditional Native Fishery Knowledge
 - 4. Subsistence Reports
 - 5. Test Fisheries
 - 6. Commercial Catch
 - 7. Escapement Projects
(sonars, towers, weirs)
 - 8. Aerial Surveys
 - 9. Weather

-continued-

B. Recommendation

C. Motion for Discussion and Action

VIII. Old Business

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)

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. A simple majority vote of the members is not sufficient to pass a motion. For the purposes of the Group all motions must pass by a consensus of the members present at the meeting. If 7 (seven) or less 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. Note that the Alaska Department of Fish and Game does not have voting status on motions concerning the setting of commercial openings.

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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 460 Ridgecrest Drive, Suite 215.

ARTICLE II, MEMBERS

Section 1. Members: The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group shall have 12 member organizations or constituencies. These members represent: Elders (Upriver, Downriver) (2), Subsistence Fishermen (Lower River, Middle River, and Upriver) (3), Processors (1), Commercial Fishermen (1), Sport Fishers (1), Kuskokwim Fisherman's Co-op (KFC) (1), Federal Subsistence Regional Advisory Committees (Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta, Western Interior) (2), and the Department of Fish & Game (1). Each member of the Working Group will designate a representative and an alternate 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.

Section 2. Annual Meeting:

An annual meeting of the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group may be held in Bethel during the month of March at the call of the Co-Chairs. 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 & 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 30 days in advance.

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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 12 member constituencies must be represented.

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; KFC, Processors, Commercial Fisherman, and any two representatives of the following member groups; Lower, Middle and Upriver Subsistence, Federal RAC, Sport Fisher.

ARTICLE III. REPRESENTATIVES

Section 1. Working Group:

The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group shall be comprised of 12 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 & 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 Rights:

Each Working Group member shall be entitled to one vote. Alternates designated by the member in writing shall also be entitled to one vote in the absence of that member's representative. Members may abstain from voting on any motion.

The Elder member shall designate any respected Elder to serve as their alternate.

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

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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 for a hearing before 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.

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Section 2. Terms of Office:

Each representative of the Working Group shall be elected or appointed every 2 years. 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.

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. Representative. Person designated by a Working Group member organization or constituency to represent that member organization or constituency at Working Group meetings.
3. 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.
4. 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.
5. Elder. Any respected Elder that resides within the Kuskokwim Area.

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6. Upriver Subsistence. Representatives that are active subsistence users in the Kuskokwim River drainage above Chuathbaluk.
7. Middle River Subsistence. Representatives that are active subsistence users in the Kuskokwim River drainage from Lower Kalskag to Chuathbaluk within District W-2.
8. Lower River Subsistence. Representatives that are active subsistence users in the Kuskokwim River drainage from Eek to Tuluksak within District W-1.
9. Processor. Representatives that own or operate commercial salmon buying and/or processing businesses within District W-1 and W-2.
10. Kuskokwim Fisherman’s Co-op. Representatives that are current members of the Kuskokwim Fishermen’s Cooperative.
11. 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.
12. 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.
13. Sport Fisher. Representatives that actively participate in sports fishing within the Kuskokwim River drainage.
14. Alaska Department of Fish and Game. Representatives that are presently employed with ADF&G in Bethel. This position is an associate member and has no voting powers but has the authority to veto recommendations for commercial fishing periods from the Working Group. Final emergency order authority continues to rest with the ADF&G.

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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.

APPENDIX B

Appendix B.–Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group Membership.

March 12, 2003–August 19, 2003		
Organization	Member	Alternate
Down River Elder	Peter Joseph Sr.	Peter Miller
Upriver Elder	Iyana Gusty	
Lower R. Subsistence	Oscar Larson	Ilarion Nicolai
Middle R. Subsistence	Wayne Morgan	Nathan Underwood
Upper R. Subsistence	Nixie Mellick	
Processor	Vince Goddard	
Kusko Fish Coop	Frank Charles	
Y K Delta RAC	Robert Nick	
Commercial Fisher	Charlie Brown	Steven White
Western Interior RAC	Ray Collins	Carl Morgan
Sport Fishing	Evelyn Thomas	Bev Hoffman

August 20, 2003–April 21, 2004		
Organization	Member	Alternate
Down River Elder	Peter Joseph Sr.	Peter Miller
Upriver Elder	Iyana Gusty	
Lower R. Subsistence	Oscar Larson	Ilarion Nicolai
Middle R. Subsistence	Wayne Morgan	Nathan Underwood
Upper R. Subsistence	Evelyn Thomas	
Processor	Vince Goddard	
Kusko Fish Coop	Frank Charles	
Y K Delta RAC	Robert Nick	
Commercial Fisher	Charlie Brown	Steven White
Western Interior RAC	Ray Collins	Carl Morgan
Sport Fishing	Lamont Albertson	Bev Hoffman

August 22, 2004–June 7, 2004		
Organization	Member	Alternate
Down River Elder	Peter Joseph Sr.	Peter Miller
Upriver Elder	Iyana Gusty	
Lower R. Subsistence	Alexie A. Alexie	Greg Roczicka
Middle R. Subsistence	Wayne Morgan	Nathan Underwood
Upper R. Subsistence	Evelyn Thomas	
Processor	Vince Goddard	
Member at Larger	James Charles	
Y K Delta RAC	Bob Aloysius	Mary Gregory
Commercial Fisher	Charlie Brown	Steven White
Western Interior RAC	Ray Collins	Carl Morgan
Sport Fishing	Lamont Albertson	Bev Hoffman

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Appendix B.–Page 2 of 2.

June 8, 2004–August 10, 2004		
Organization	Member	Alternate
Down River Elder	Peter Joseph Sr.	Peter Miller
Upriver Elder	Iyana Gusty	
Lower R. Subsistence	Mike Williams	Greg Roczicka
Middle R. Subsistence	Wayne Morgan	Nathan Underwood
Upper R. Subsistence	Evelyn Thomas	
Processor	Vince Goddard	
Member at Larger	James Charles	Fritz Charles
Y K Delta RAC	Bob Aloysius	Mary Gregory
Commercial Fisher	Charlie Brown	Steven White
Western Interior RAC	Ray Collins	Carl Morgan
Sport Fishing	Lamont Albertson	Bev Hoffman

August 11, 2004–September 29, 2004		
Organization	Member	Alternate
Down River Elder	Peter Joseph Sr.	Peter Miller
Upriver Elder	Iyana Gusty	
Lower R. Subsistence	Mike Williams	Greg Roczicka
Middle R. Subsistence	Wayne Morgan	Nathan Underwood
Upper R. Subsistence	Evelyn Thomas	
Processor	Vince Goddard	Kelly Welch
Member at Larger	James Charles	Fritz Charles
Y K Delta RAC	Bob Aloysius	Mary Gregory
Commercial Fisher	Charlie Brown	Steven White
Western Interior RAC	Ray Collins	Carl Morgan
Sport Fishing	Lamont Albertson	Bev Hoffman

Current effective September 29, 2004		
Organization	Member	Alternate
Down River Elder	Peter Joseph Sr.	Peter Miller
Upriver Elder	Iyana Gusty	
Lower R. Subsistence	Mike Williams	Greg Roczicka
Middle R. Subsistence	Nathan Underwood	Dwayne Hoffman
Upper R. Subsistence	Evelyn Thomas	
Processor	Vince Goddard	Kelly Welch
Member at Larger	James Charles	Fritz Charles
Y K Delta RAC	Bob Aloysius	Mary Gregory
Commercial Fisher	Charlie Brown	Steven White
Western Interior RAC	Ray Collins	
Sport Fishing	Lamont Albertson	Bev Hoffman

APPENDIX C

Appendix C.—Example of a Working Group agenda and information packet.

Teleconference Operator 1-800-235-0684

Date: 07-13-04 Time: 10:00 a.m. Meeting Place: F&G conference room

CALL TO ORDER Greg Roczicka **1006am**
Chairperson Time

ROLL CALL:

Upriver Elder: Iyana Gusty	Processor: Vince Goddard
Downriver Elder: Peter Miller	Member at Large:
Commercial Fisher: Steven White	Sport Fisher: Lamont Albertson
Lower River Subsistence: Mike Williams	Western Interior RAC: Ray Collins
Middle River Subsistence: Nathan Underwood	Y-K Delta RAC:
Upper River Subsistence:	ADF&G:

INVOCATION: Lamont Albertson

APPROVAL OF AGENDA: Mike Williams

PEOPLE TO BE HEARD: Carl Berger (End of Mtg.)

CONTINUING BUSINESS:

1. Subsistence Reports: _____
 - a. Lower River: _____
 - b. Middle River: _____
 - c. Upper River: _____
 2. Bethel Test Fish Report: _____
 3. Kalskag Mark Recapture Report: _____
 4. Weirs, Sonar, & Aerial Surveys Reports: _____
 5. Sport Fish Report: _____
 6. Area M Report: _____
 7. Kuskokwim River Commercial Harvest Report: _____
 8. Processor Report: _____
 9. Other: _____
 10. ADF&G Recommendation: _____
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11. Working Group Motions: _____

12. ADF&G Response: _____

OTHER BUSINESS:

Discussion on representative alternates. _____

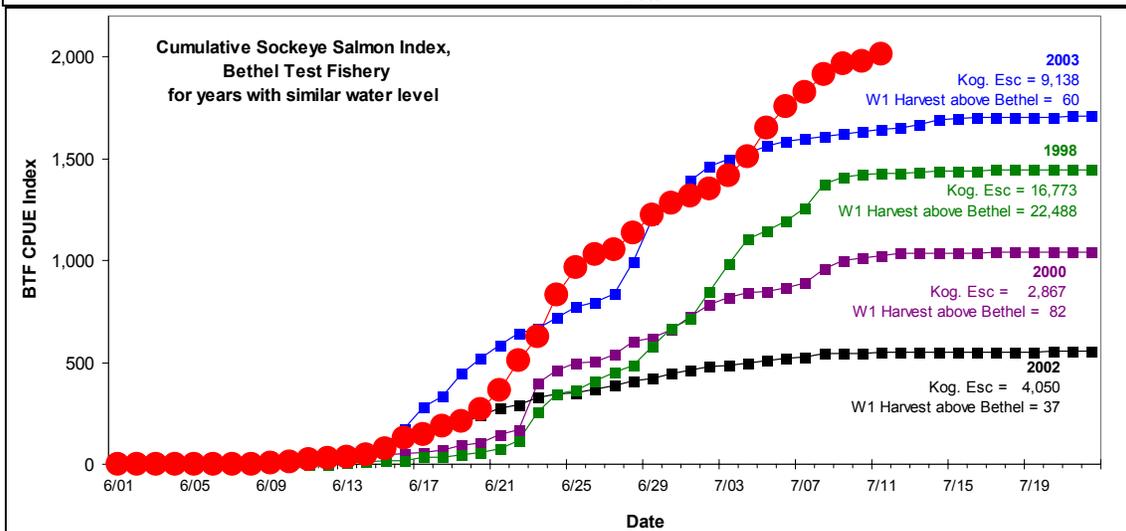
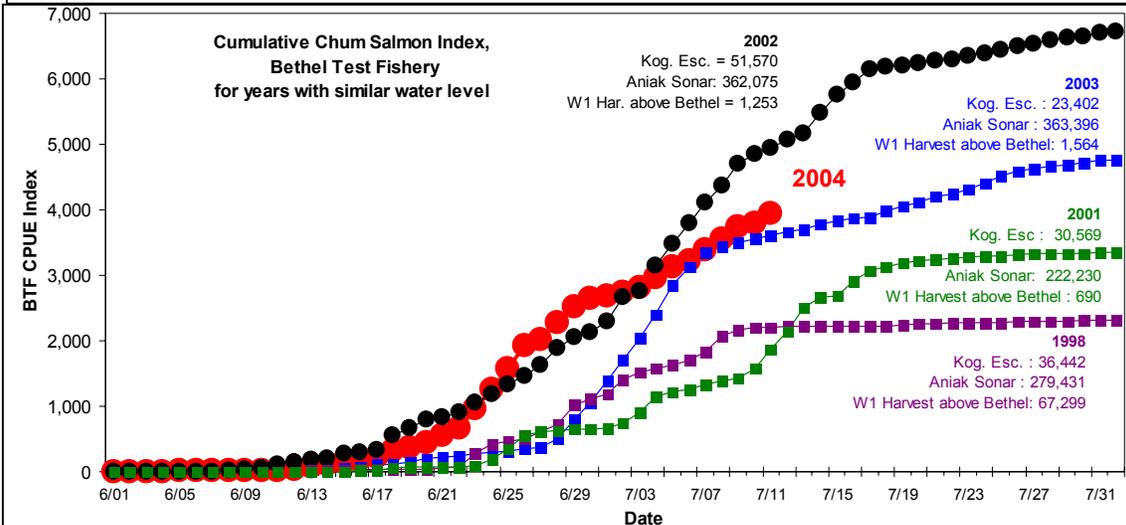
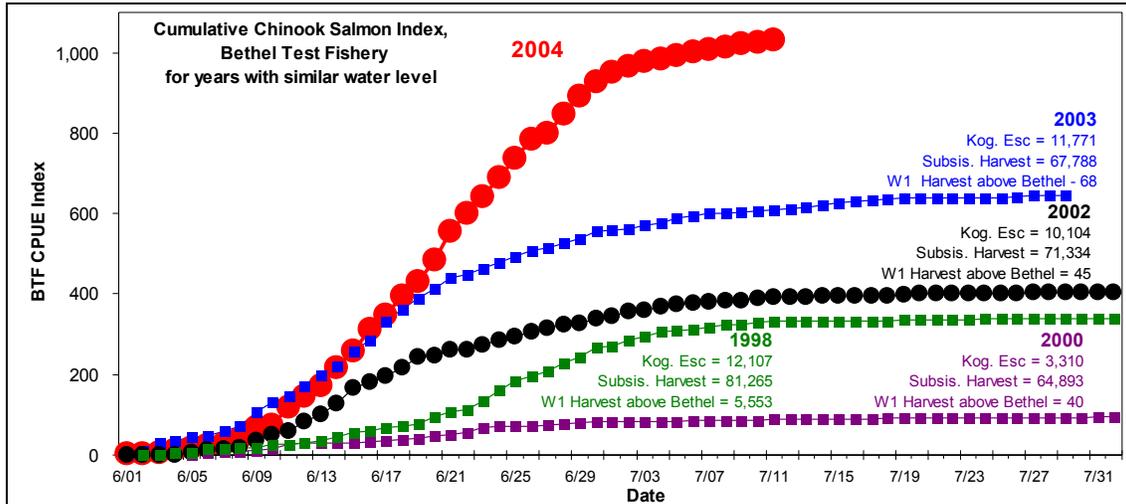
MEETING ACTION ANNOUNCEMENT: _____

TIME, DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING: Friday 23 July 2004, 1000am

ADJOURNMENT TIME: 1121am

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Bethel Test Fish



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Kuskokwim River In-Season Subsistence Survey Report

Orutsararmiut Native Council

Date: July 12, 2004, 2004

Fishing ending the week of July 10.

44 families were contacted this week.

7 families were unavailable for contact.

31 families reported not fishing this week.

13 families reported fishing this week.

10 families reported using driftnets.

No families reported using setnets.

3 families reported using rod and reel.

No families reported using gillnets with mesh that was larger than 6” mesh.

10 families reported using gillnets with a 6” or smaller mesh.

57

Kings			Chums			Sockeye			Coho		
Very Good	Normal	Poor	Very Good	Normal	Poor	Very Good	Normal	Poor	Very Good	Normal	Poor
0	10	0	8	2	0	0	4	6	N/A	N/A	N/A

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King Salmon

No families reported fishing as very good for this time of year. 10 families reported fishing as normal. No families reported catches as poor. Out of the fishermen interviewed, all reported being finished with kings also saying that the run was very good and plentiful this year and are happy with their harvests. 3 families reported rod & reeling this week and were very excited about the amount of kings up the Kwethluk River.

Chum salmon

8 families reported fishing as very good for this time of year. 2 families reported fishing as normal. No families reported catches as poor. The chum run overall this season is very good and still running strong. There are still a few people that will be fishing for chums after they are done berry picking.

Sockeye salmon

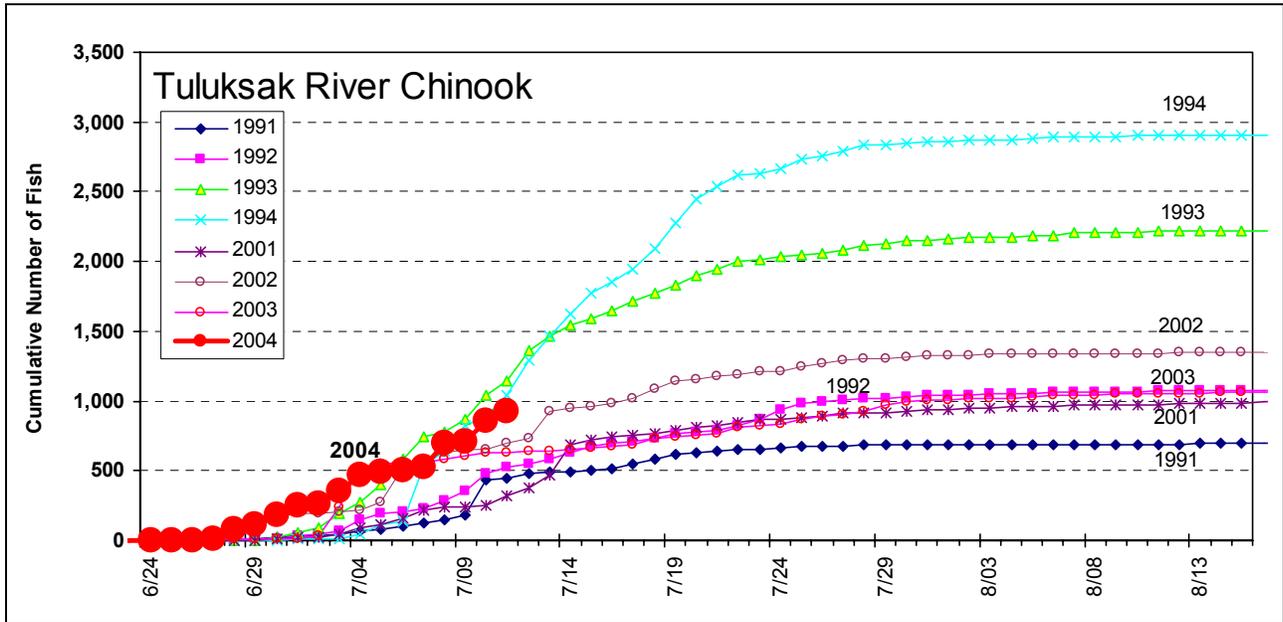
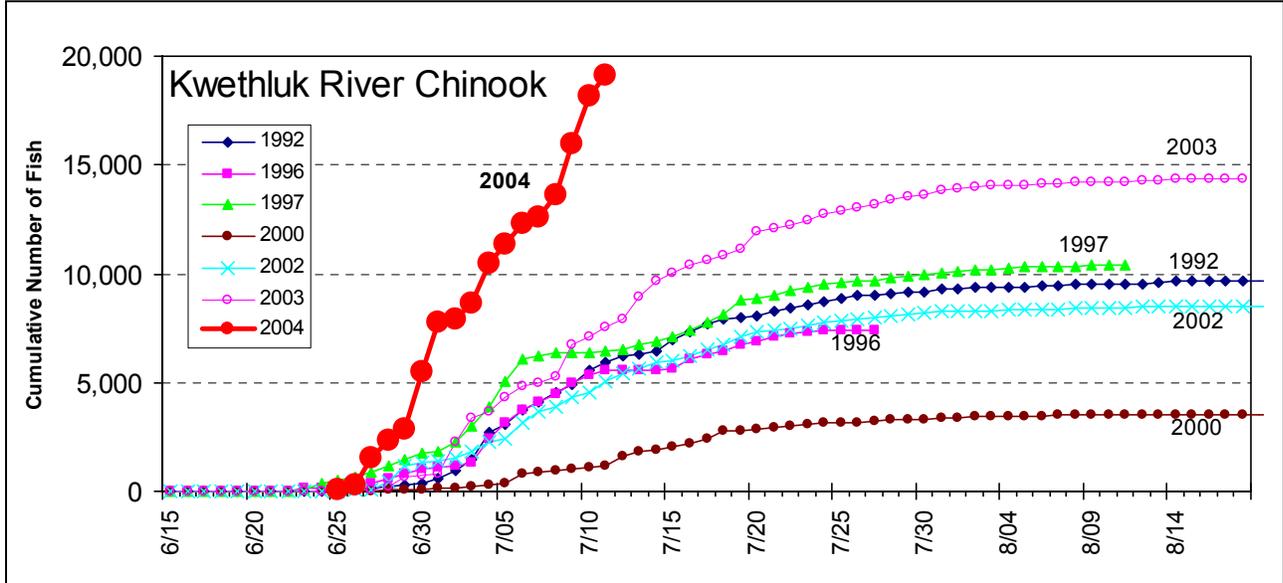
No families reported fishing as very good for this time of year. 4 families reported fishing as normal. 6 families reported catches as poor. The Sockeye run overall was ok this year as families reached their harvest goals and are pleased with what they caught.

Comments

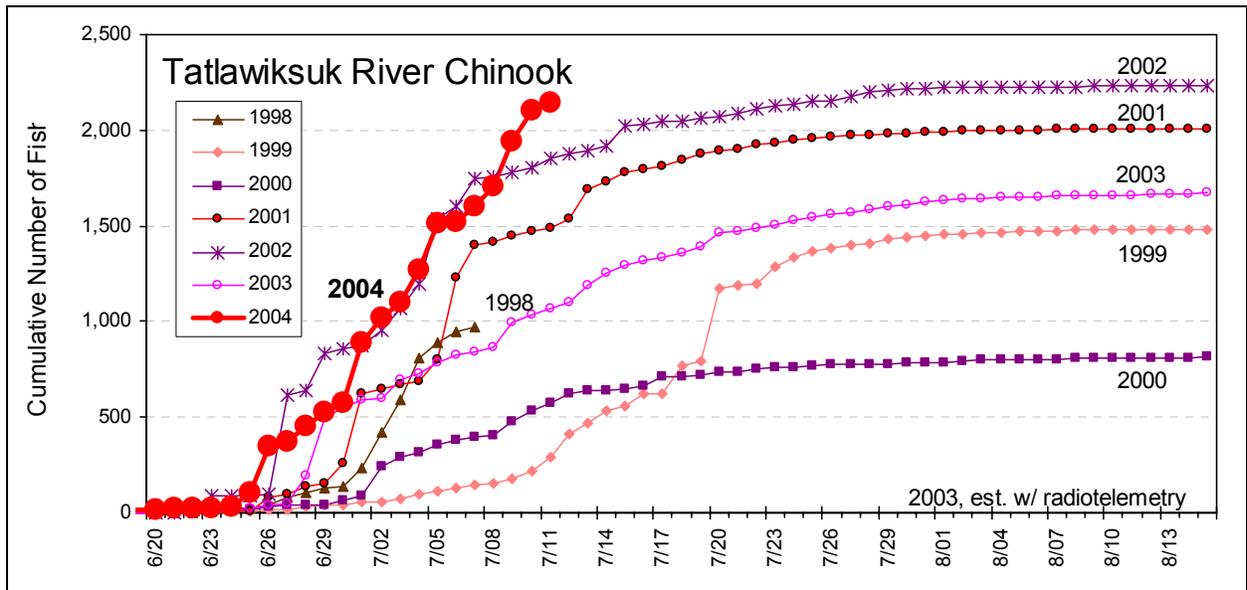
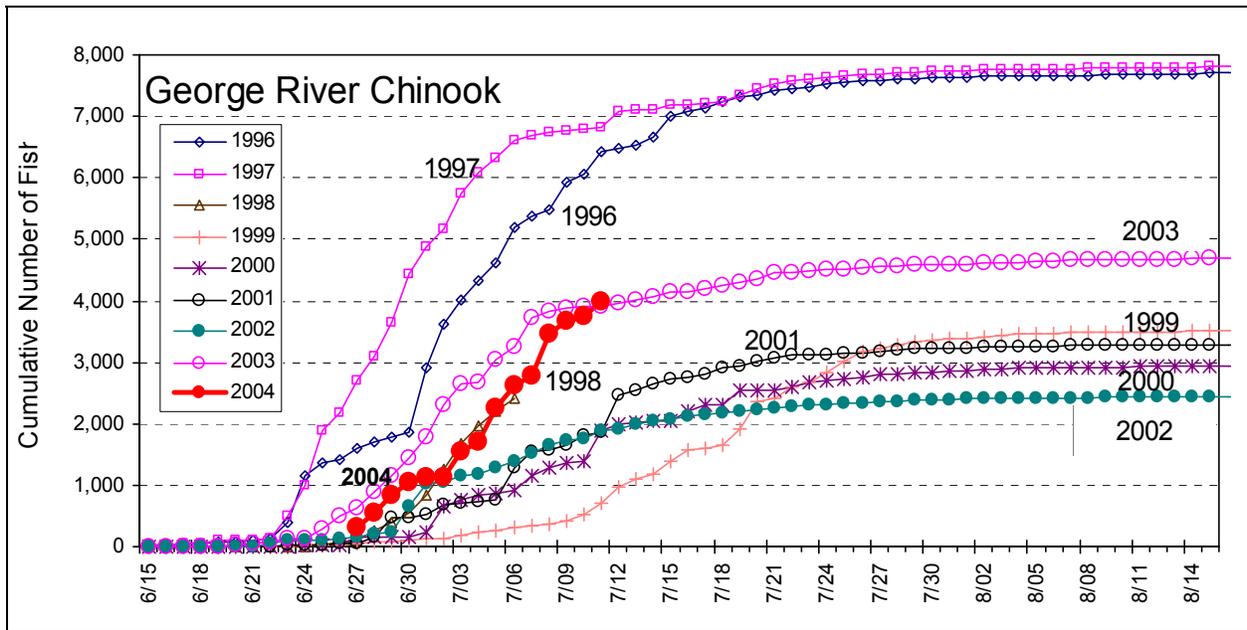
Altogether fishermen report, all are finished with their king harvests and are pleased with their catches and sizes of fish this year. For Chums and Sockeye, the majority of fishermen reached their harvest goals and concentrate on putting their finished smoked fish away. For the next couple of weeks most families will be focusing on berry picking while they wait for the silvers to come.

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Chinook Salmon

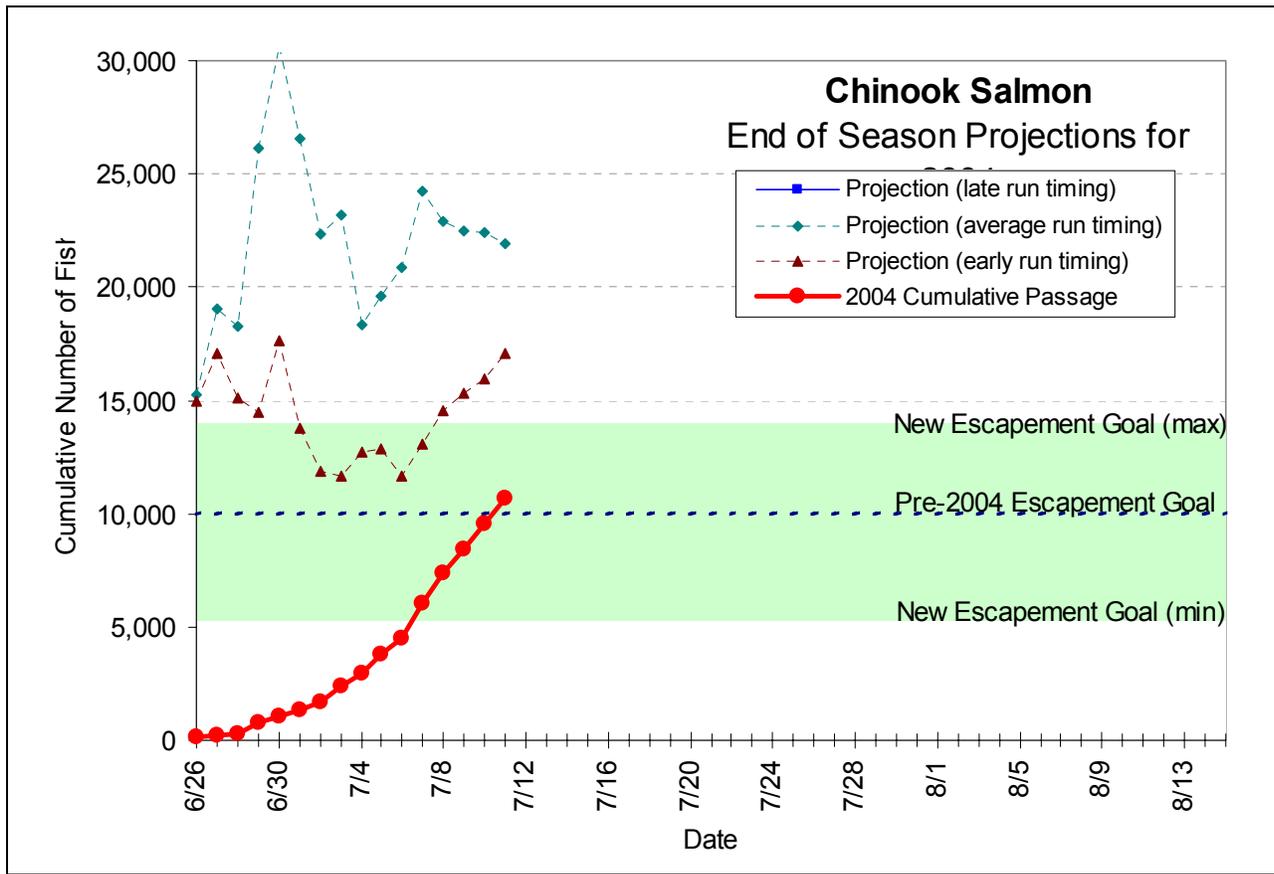


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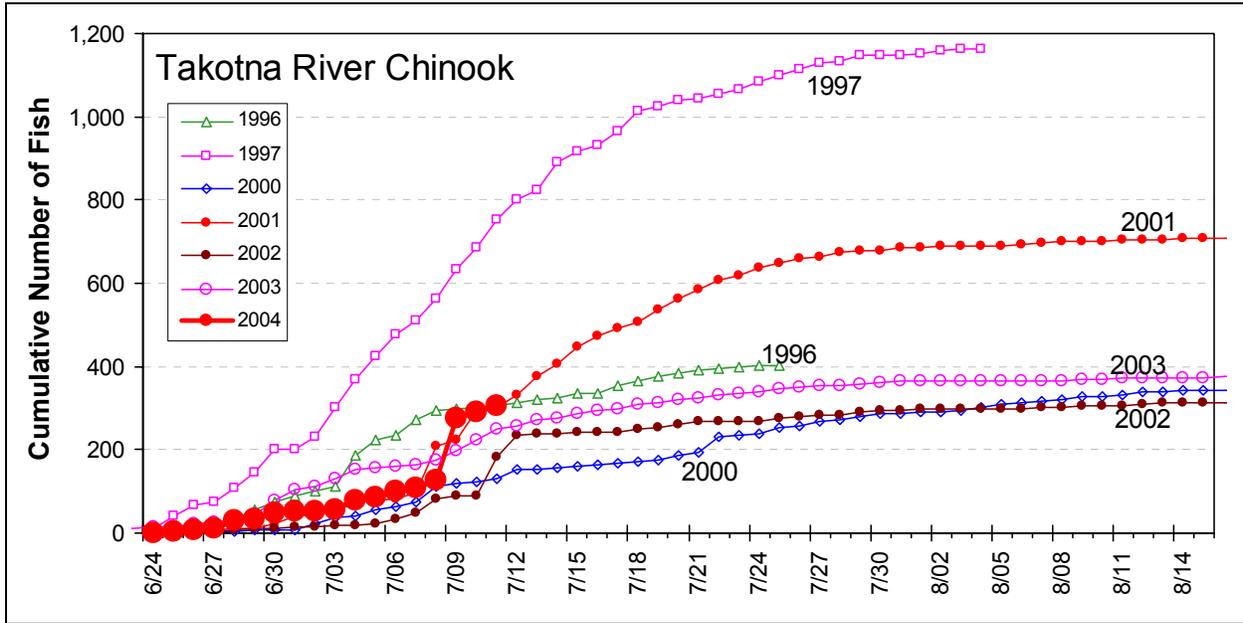


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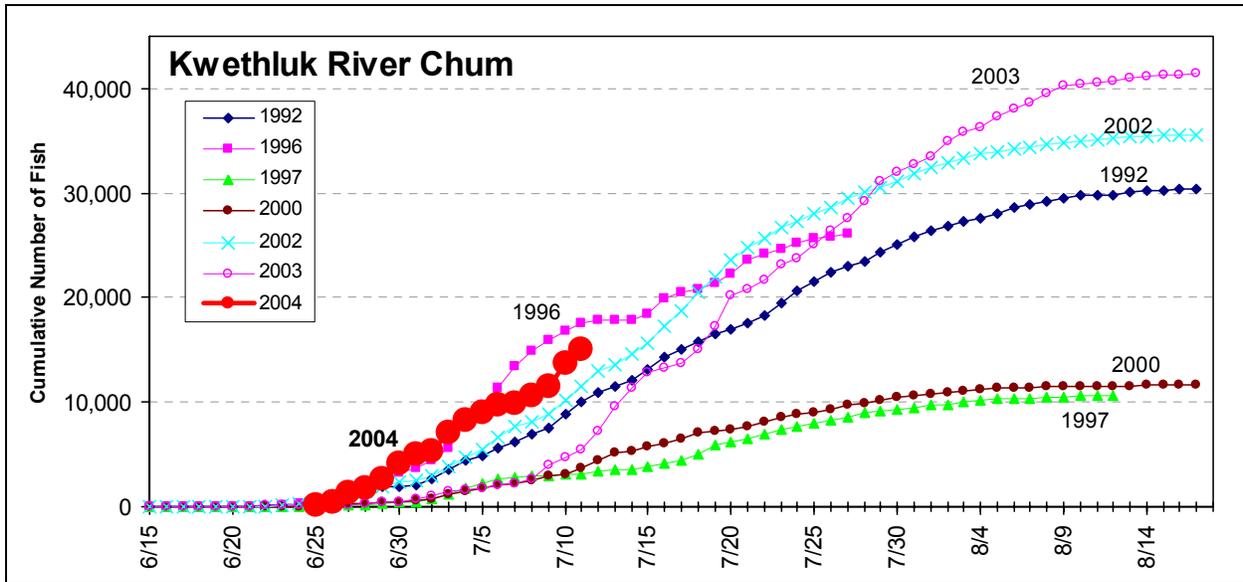
Kogrukluk River weir began in 1976, so there are far too many years to show on a “cumulative line graph” as is done for the other projects. Instead, what I have chosen to do is show just the current year, plus some “projections” as to what the “end-of-season” passage might be under early, average, and late run timing scenarios. The projection is based on the cumulative passage to date. Projections jump around a bit depending on the most recent daily passage number.



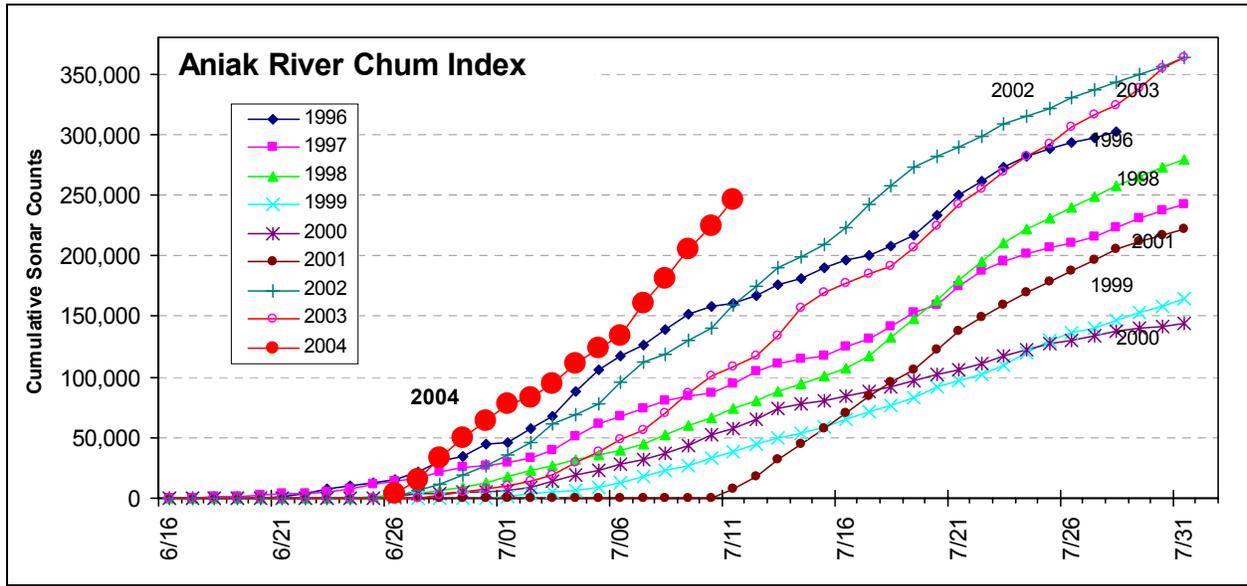
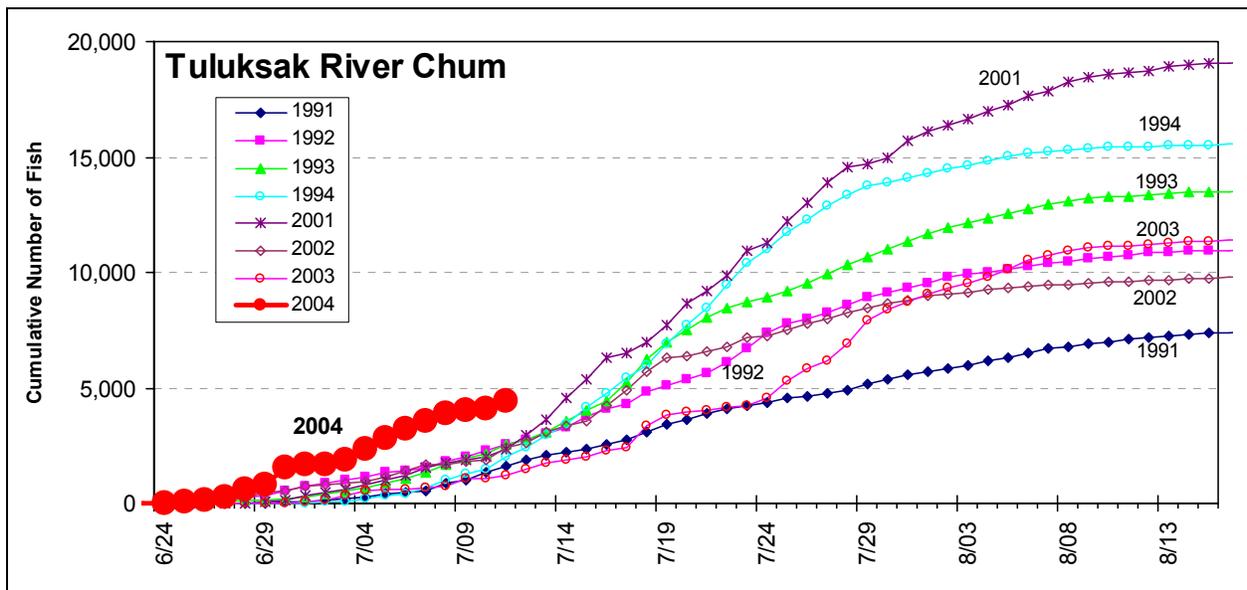
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Chum Salmon



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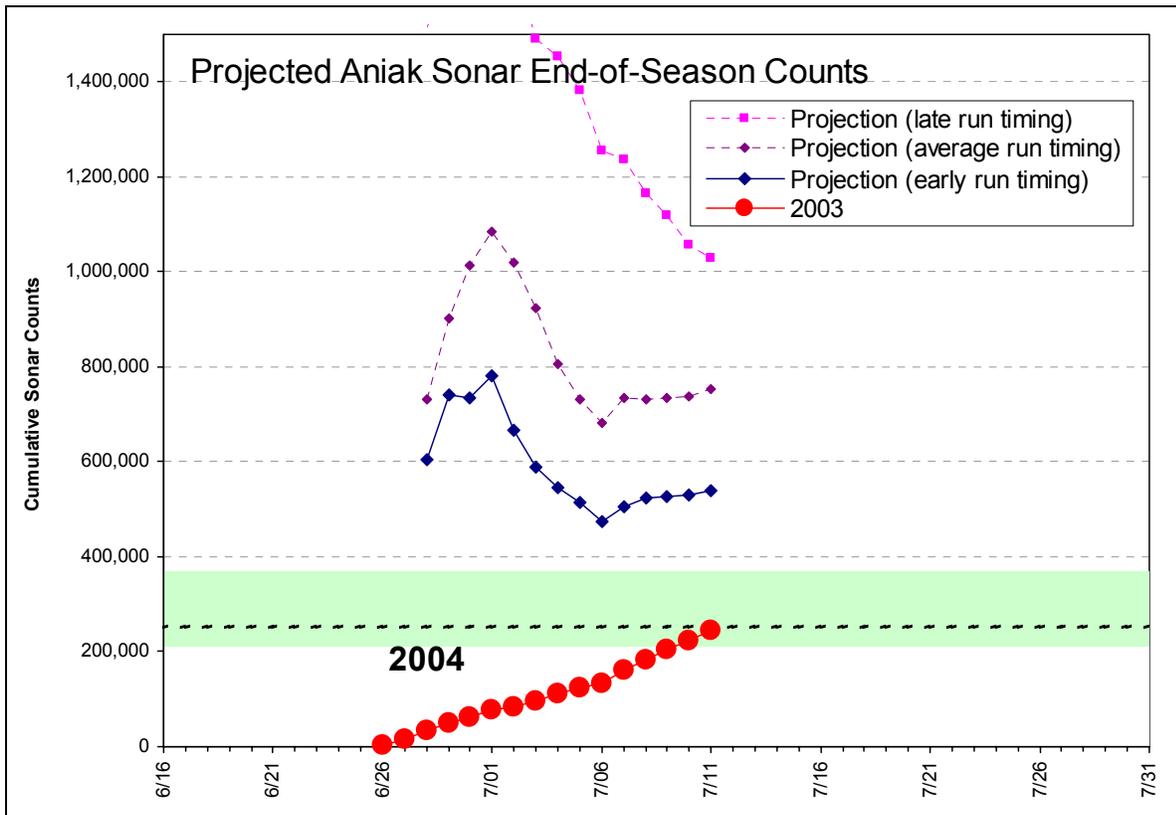
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Year 2004 Aniak River beach seine results from efforts to collect chum salmon age data and to recover tags

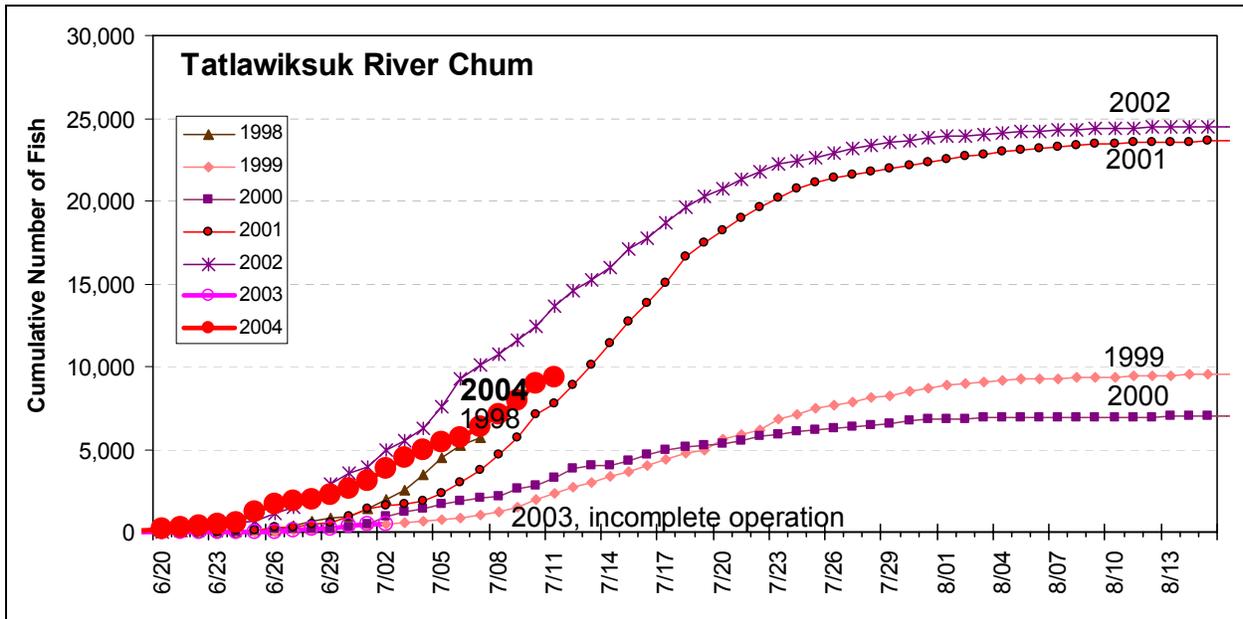
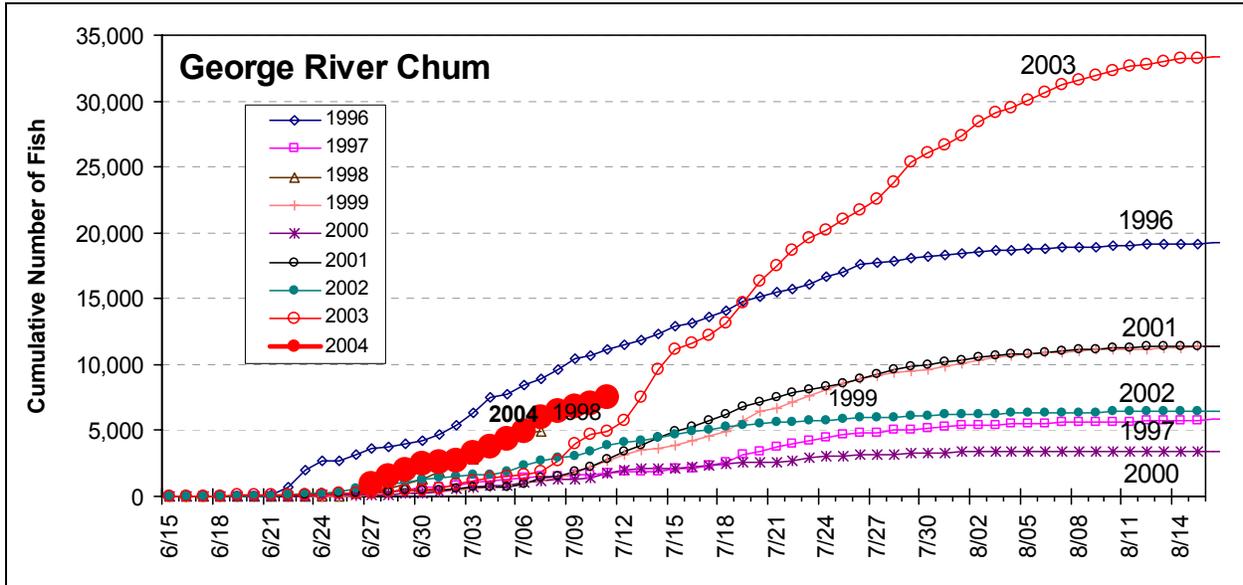
Date	Species								
	Chums	Chinook	Sockeye	Pink	Coho	Whitefish	Suckers	Trout	Pike
28-Jun	46	9	0	1	0	1	7	0	0
29-Jun	99	16	0	1	0	0	27	1	0
30-Jun	60	7	3	1	0	0	3	0	0
4-Jul	109	11	2	0	0	1	6	0	0
5-Jul	150	12	2	6	0	0	4	0	0
10-Jul	156	1	9	0	0	1	6	1	0
Total	620	56	16	9	0	3	53	2	0

NOTE 1: These beach seining results, though indicative of gross trends in fish composition, are inadequate for use in apportioning the species composition of the sonar counts.

NOTE 2: The chinook salmon count includes large and small fish. I don't have information on that. The purpose of the beach seining is to collect age-sex-length information from chum salmon and to do tag recoveries for chum and sockeye salmon.

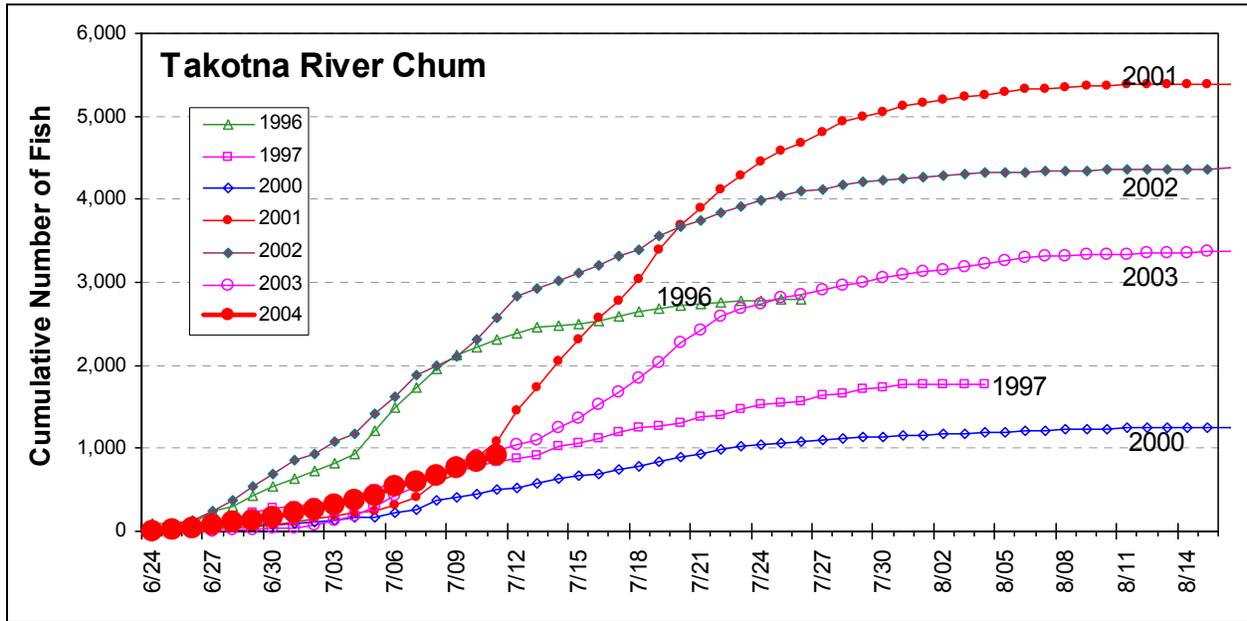
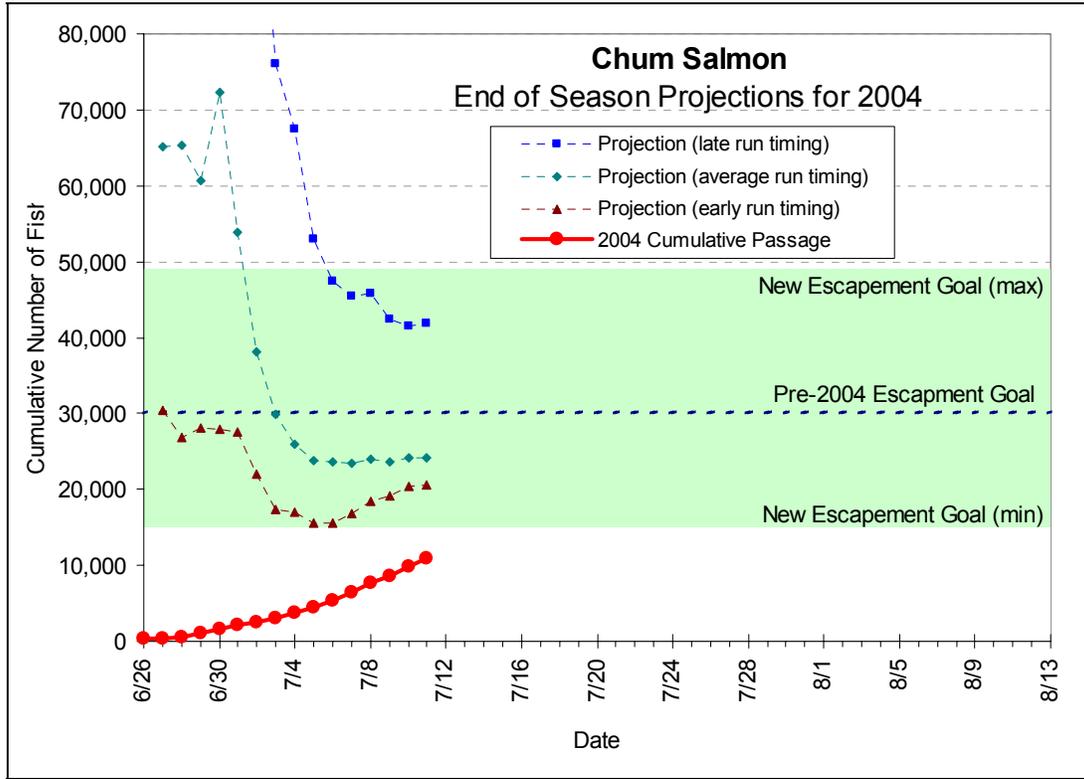


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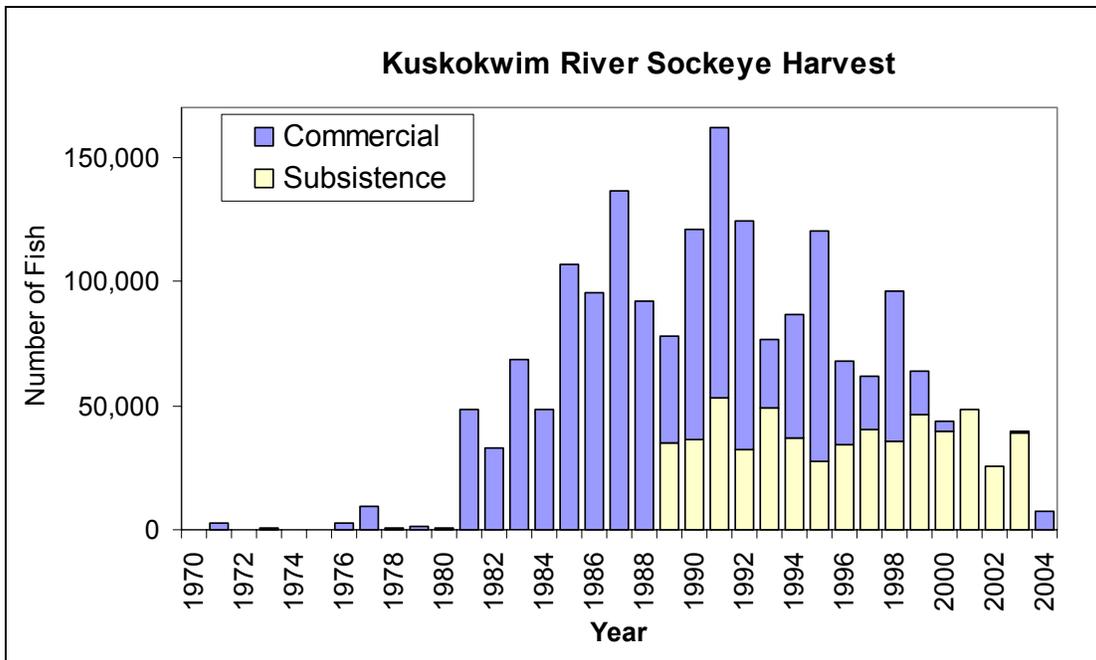
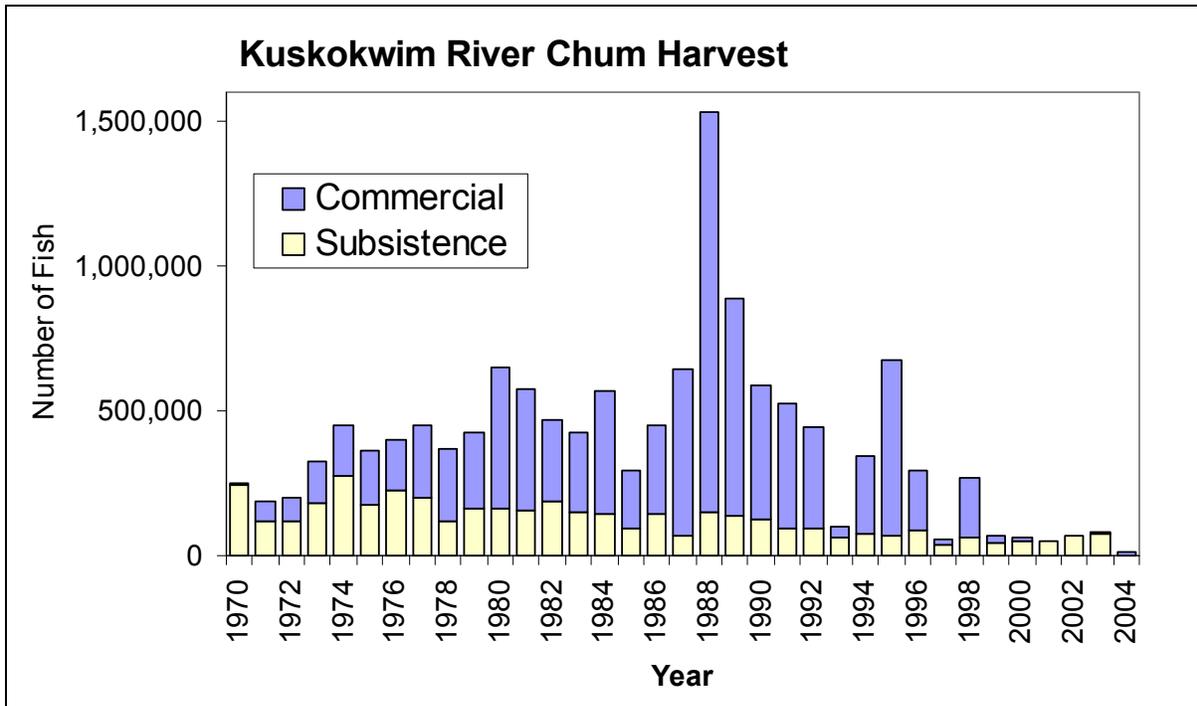


-continued-

Kogrukluk River Chum



-continued-



-continued-

Kuskokwim Tagging Projects, 2004 (*=Fish Wheel Only)

To Date	Chinook Salmon		Chum Salmon*		Sockeye Salmon*	
	Catch	Tagged	Catch	Tagged	Catch	Tagged
June 26			302	272	331	296
June 30	943	268	419	384	622	583
July 10	1022	311	674	611	861	818

-continued-

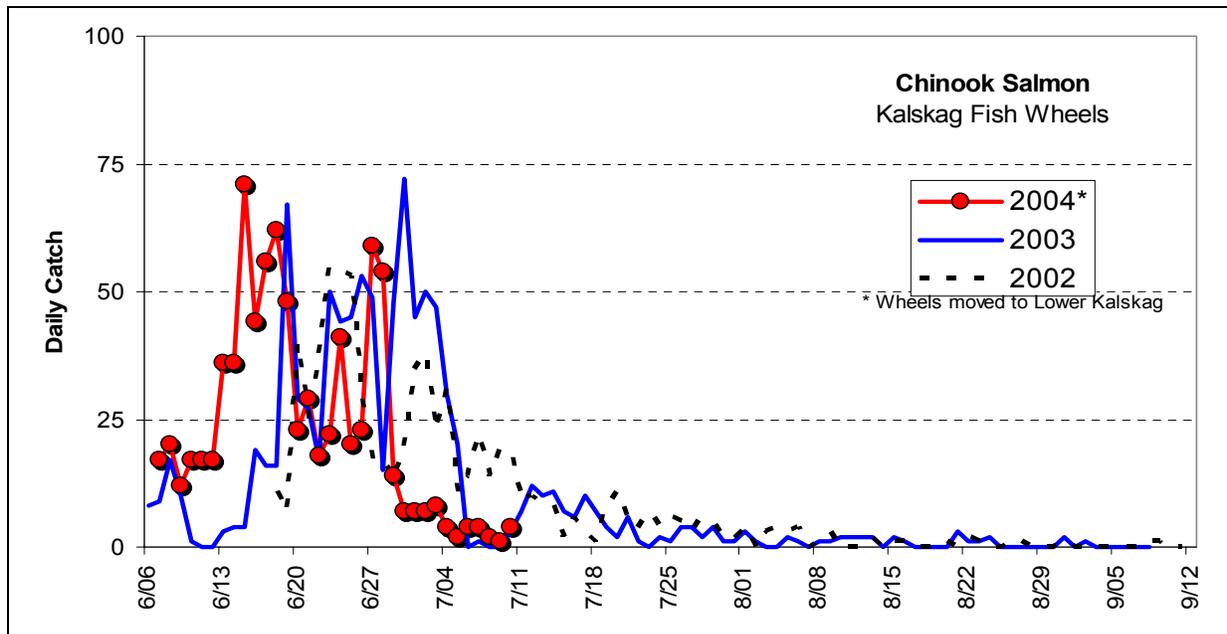
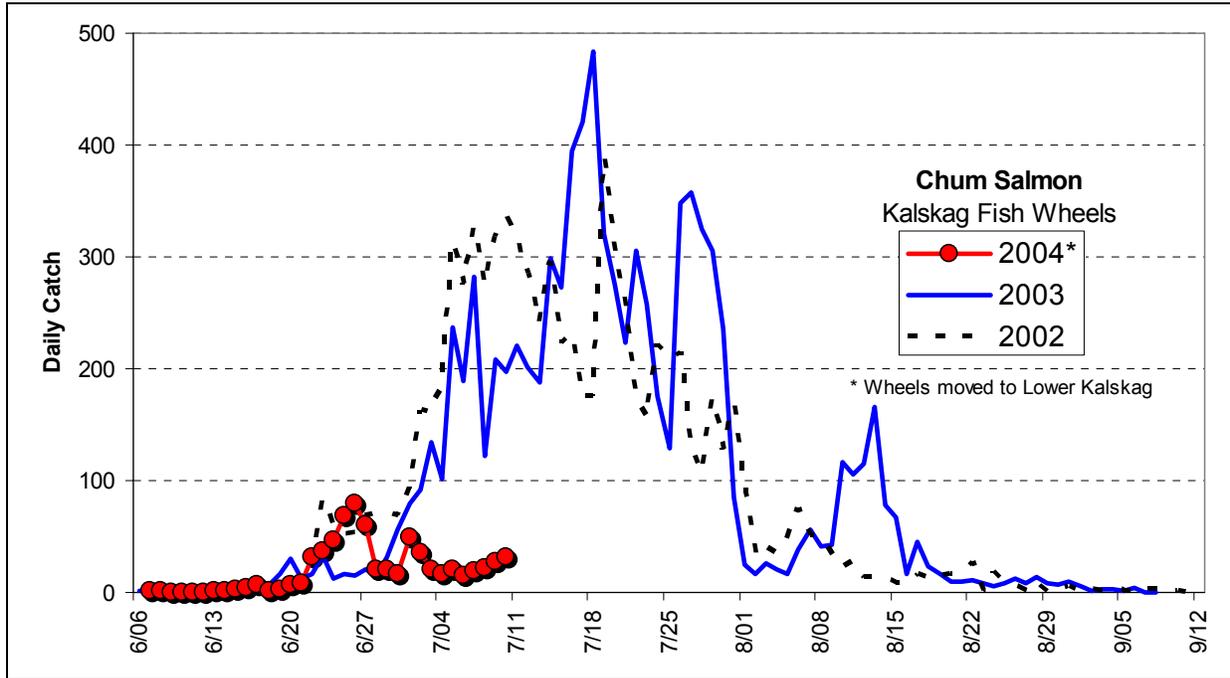


Figure 1.–Kalskag Fish Wheels Daily Catch, 2002–July 10, 2004

-continued-

Alaska Peninsula salmon harvest summary, July, 9

	Kings	Reds	Cohos	Pinks	Chums
North Peninsula					
daily	10	106,711	2	204	76
cumulative to date	9,557	1,713,726	3	1,562	1,638
South Peninsula					
daily	54	36,263	1,964	3,534	1,601
cumulative to date	5,068	1,529,234	11,668	399,887	503,974
Alaska Peninsula					
daily	64	142,974	1,966	3,738	1,677
cumulative to date	14,625	3,242,960	11,671	401,449	505,612

South Peninsula June salmon fishery. The controversial Area M June salmon fishery concluded at 10 p.m. on June 29. Harvests this year are approximately 1,347,000 sockeye salmon and 482,000 chum salmon for the South Unimak and Shumagin Islands combined. The average June fishery harvests for the years 2002 and 2003 were approximately 522,000 sockeye salmon and 331,000 chum salmon. Thus, with the increase of fishing time from 144 hours to 416 hours, the Area M fleets were successful in increasing their sockeye salmon harvests by somewhat more than a factor of two (actually about 2.6), but their chum salmon harvests increased only by a factor of 1.5 (actually 1.46).

-continued-

District 1 commercial harvest by Subdistrict, 2004.

Date	Subdist	Hours	Deliveries	Chinook	lbs.	CPUE	Sockeye	lbs.	CPUE	Chum	lbs.	CPUE	Coho	lbs.
30-Jun	1B	2	52	492	5,049	4.7	1,781	12,176	17.1	2,798	19,345	26.9	0	0
2-Jul	1A	3	45	488	5,304	3.6	1,962	12,667	14.5	2,381	15,828	17.6	0	0
6-Jul	1A	3	38	238	2,827	2.1	1,832	11,698	16.1	1,967	12,931	17.3	3	24
7-Jul	1B	4	49	384	4,582	2.0	1,880	11,692	9.6	5,086	32,613	25.9	16	100
TOTAL		12		1602	17762		7455	48233		12232	80717		19	124

-continued-

Meeting Attendance July 13th

<u>NAME</u>	<u>Company</u>
Jennifer Hooper	AVCP
John Ciaderin	ADFG
Craig Whitman	ADFG
Tracie Krauthweber	ADFG
Doug Bue	ADFG
Ang Royde	OMC
Doug Malynaux	ADFG/CF
Sara Girk	ADFG/CF
Tim Roettiger	USEFS - Bethel
Robert Sundrum	USEFS - Bethel
Jim Schwarber	ADFG
Frank L. Charles	Calista
Michael Martz	ADFG/CF
Ray Collins	Matt Namath
Tanya Gusty	Vince Goddard
Nathan Underwood	Mike Williams
Deane Hoffmann	John Burr - ADFG SF
Duane Morgan	Rudy Tsukata - CVRF
Lamont Albertson	Bobbi Fisher - ADFG
Peter Miller	Richard Cannon - OSM
Steven White	
Carl Berger LKEDC 5967	

APPENDIX D

Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group

P.O. Box 1467 • Bethel, AK 99559 • 907-543-2433 • 907-543-2021 fax

July 13, 2004

The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group met Tuesday, July 13th for one hour and fifteen minutes. Working Group members, the public, and staff discussed the status of Kuskokwim River subsistence harvests, salmon returns, and sport and commercial fisheries. A quorum was established with eight of ten Working Group representatives being present.

Subsistence Reports

Working Group representatives from the lower, middle, and upper Kuskokwim River areas reported that most people within their areas have completed their summer Chinook, chum, and sockeye salmon subsistence harvest and many have begun to shift their attention to picking berries. Subsistence representatives from the middle and lower Kuskokwim River areas described this season as good and successful while the Western Interior RAC member indicated that some nets were still in the river and the summer salmon subsistence harvest season could be described as good but not outstanding.

The ONC in-season subsistence monitoring program surveyed 44 families during the past week, 31 of which are not fishing anymore. Of the fishermen who have completed their summer Chinook subsistence harvest, all were reported as being content with the run and described the run as being very good and plentiful. Chum salmon subsistence was reported as being normal or good for this time of year. A few fishermen have reported sockeye fishing as being normal while most have reported sockeye fishing as being poor. The majority of fishermen surveyed have reached their harvest goals for chum and sockeye salmon. It was noted that ONC has collected 1,438 Chinook ASL samples, 62 shy of their pre-season goal of 1,500 samples.

-continued-

Department Project Summaries

The Bethel Test Fishery reported that all catches have dropped since the last meeting but maintains a very strong cumulative Chinook index. The sockeye salmon index is above average when compared with recent years. Test Fishery chum salmon catches have leveled off recently but the cumulative index is above average with only four seasons displaying stronger catch numbers. The cumulative coho salmon index in the Bethel Test Fishery has remained at sixteen for the past three days, but the returns look promising compared to previous years.

The Kalskag Fish Wheel salmon tagging project reported low daily catches which is likely attributable to a lack of good fish wheel locations. Chinook salmon cumulative escapement numbers remain very strong at the Kwethluk and Tatlawiksuk River weirs and average to above average cumulative numbers are reported at the Tuluksak and George River weirs. Chinook escapement at the Kogruklu River weir has surpassed the old escapement goal and is tracking toward the upper end of the new escapement goal range. Chum salmon escapement numbers are average to above average at the George, Kwethluk, Tatlawiksuk, and Tuluksak River weirs. The Aniak River is experiencing a strong salmon return as documented by the sonar. All projection models for the Aniak River place the end of season passage well above the upper end of the escapement goal range and cumulative sonar counts have already exceeded the old escapement goal of 250,000 fish. The Kogruklu River chum salmon passage to date is above all years except one when the old escapement goal of 30,000 fish was not achieved. Review of the projection model that uses weir passage to date as an estimation of total passage, indicates that the chum salmon run will fall within the new escapement range but may fall below the old escapement goal. It was also noted that water levels at all escapement monitoring projects are low and water temperatures are warm which could have a considerable effect on fish passage numbers.

Sport Fish Report

The sport fish report indicated that fishing has been good, anglers are satisfied and the fisheries are going very well. It was noted that anglers appear to be catching a large number of small male kings. Division of Sport Fish staff indicated that all the reports they have received are positive and that they had received no negative angler comments. The Division staff had also mentioned that the Bethel sport fish biologist position should be filled by the end of the summer or early fall.

Area M Report

The Area M harvest through July 9th was reported at 505,612 chums, 3,242,960 sockeye, 14,625 Chinook and 401,449 pink salmon. It was noted that it is the post-June fishery that is being conducted at this time.

-continued-

Kuskokwim River Commercial Fishery Report

To date, four commercial fishing periods have been announced for District 1 totaling twelve hours of fishing time. Two periods have occurred in Sub-district 1A and two have occurred in Sub-district 1B. The harvest numbers for the four commercial periods in District 1 totaled 1,602 Chinook, 7,455 sockeye, 12,232 chum, and 19 coho salmon. Although subsistence harvest numbers will not be made available until the post-season subsistence surveys have been compiled, this year's chum and sockeye commercial harvest appears to be very modest in comparison with past years.

Processor Report

The Working Group fish processor representative indicated that both Inlet Fish Producers and Coastal Village Seafood had discontinued operations after the July 7th opening. It was also reported that both processors are prepared for a coho salmon commercial fishing season in the Kuskokwim with an estimated combined processing capacity of 150,000 pounds. The processor representative for Inlet Fish Producers estimated their individual processing capacity at 75,000 to 100,000 pounds and reported that there would likely be two cranes operating at Bethel and suggested that he is looking into having a tender positioned within the Kuskokwim River during commercial fishing periods. The Coastal Village Seafood representative estimated their individual processing capacity at 45,000 to 50,000 pounds and noted that a tender will be available to collect catches near the village of Eek during commercial openings.

There was a brief discussion on Working Group representative alternates. It was agreed that all representatives should have an informed alternate to replace them if they are unable to attend a Working Group Meeting. The manner of choosing alternates will be discussed in greater detail at the next Working Group meeting.

Meeting Action Announcement:

The action statement of the Working Group was to meet again on again Friday, July 23 at 10:00 a.m. at the Bethel Fish and Game office.

The meeting is open to the public. Fishers outside of Bethel that want to join the meeting by teleconference can dial in at 1-800-235-0684.

APPENDIX E

AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST FORM
ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES

The Board of Fisheries will accept an agenda change request only:

- 1) for a fishery conservation purpose or reason; or
- 2) to correct an error in regulation; or
- 3) to correct an effect on a fishery that was unforeseen when a regulation was adopted.

The board will not accept an agenda change request that is predominantly allocative in nature in the absence of new information found by the board to be compelling (5 AAC39.999).

Proposed by:

Vincent Goddard

Inlet Fish Producers, Inc.

PO Box 1209, Kenai AK 99611

Telephone: 907-283-4706 email: vingod@att.net

1) STATE IN DETAIL THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM. *Address only one issue. State the problem clearly and concisely. The board will reject multiple or confusing issues.*

The new management regime of limited area, limited fleet, and limited time has been a success on the Kuskokwim for the 2003 coho season this year. Based on the success of this management model, and the fact that the June/ July chum fishery appears to have recovered to the extent that some amount of commercial fishing may be possible during the early season in 2004, new management tools need to be considered for the June/ July Kuskokwim commercial fishery.

The August coho fishery is very simple by comparison: There is essentially only one species (coho), and there is very little subsistence demand on the coho fishery. The June/ July period is much more complicated: three major species (kings, sockeye and chum), and there is a much larger for these fish.

The Department commercial managers need additional management tools to make a commercial fishery a success in the early June/ July season. Based on current markets, and likely limited quantities available for commercial exploitation, the most likely successful model for commercial fishing would be a series of small, short and limited openings. This would protect quality and allow Department managers to constantly assess the viability of the fishery.

-continued-

ACR: Kuskokwim June / July ADF&G Management Tools August 16, 2003–Page 2

What are some of the tools that could be used by the department that do not exist currently?

(1) Commercial King Quota

There will be great reluctance on the part of the department to allow a commercial fishery, even of limited impact, during June. Based on abundance, the Department could set a maximum commercial king harvest quota for June. For instance, a quota of 10,000 fish would allow for a significant commercial fishery, but the impact on the king resource would be strictly capped. As soon as the king harvest reaches the 10,000 fish quota limit, there would be no further commercial openings until July.

The Department could modify this approach further by starting with an even more limiting quota such as 5,000 kings. Based on abundance, and as the fishery progresses, the Department could gradually expand the quota, or simply leave it in place, essentially shutting down commercial activity until July.

(2) Experimental Fishing Gear

Dipnetting by personal use fishers on the Kenai River has proved to be a productive and efficient means to catch fish entering the Kenai River. This experience could be used to some degree of success on the Kuskokwim. In a year in which king salmon are not plentiful, dipnetting would allow the catch and release of kings (with virtually zero mortality) and the harvesting of sockeye and chums. The Department should be authorized to allow an experimental dipnet fishery, and then, in years in which one of the three June/ July species is weak, could limit commercial' fishing of that species while allowing commercial harvest of the other two species.

(3) Combination Commercial/Subsistence Fishing

In years in which kings are judged to be moderately abundant, but not quite abundant enough for commercial exploitation, the Department could require that all commercial fishers selling sockeye and chums would be required to use all kings harvested during a commercial opening for subsistence purposes. This would require them to either use the kings themselves or have other subsistence users to whom the kings would be given. Local processing of kings for charity subsistence could be organized to appropriately use the kings harvested during such a commercial opening.

-continued-

ACR: Kuskokwim June/July ADF&G Management Tools August 16, 2003–Page 3

2) STATE IN DETAIL HOW YOUR AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST MEETS THE CRITERIA STATED ABOVE. *If anyone or more of the criteria set forth above is not applicable, state that it is not applicable.*

1) Fishery conservation purpose or reason:

All three management tools described above would allow the Department to conserve king salmon while allowing the commercial exploitation of chum and sockeye salmon.

or

2) Correct an error in regulation: (not applicable)

or

3) Correct an unforeseen effect of a regulation:

Commercial fishing on the Kuskokwim must be adjusted to the current market and conservation realities. Current regulations do not allow enough creative latitude for the department to exploit surplus fish during the June/ July period while protecting other species in weak years.

3) STATE WHY YOUR AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST IS NOT PREDOMINANTLY ALLOCATIVE.

This proposal is not allocative. It merely suggests new management tools so that the commercial fishery can harvest fish that are already allocated to it.

4) IF YOUR REQUEST IS ALLOCATIVE, STATE THE NEW INFORMATION THAT COMPELS THE BOARD TO CONSIDER AN ALLOCATIVE PROPOSAL OUTSIDE THE REGULAR CYCLE.

Not applicable, as this proposal is not allocative in nature.

5) CITE THE REGULATION(S) THAT WILL BE CHANGED IF THIS REQUEST IS HEARD.

Each new management tool suggested above will require some regulatory change.

-continued-

ACR: Kuskokwim June/ July ADF&G Management Tools August 6, 2003-Page 4

6) STATE IN DETAIL THE REASON(S) WHY THIS MATTER CANNOT BE HEARD IN THE REGULAR CYCLE.

This ACR, if accepted by the Board, will actually be heard during the regular cycle for the Kuskokwim. This proposal should have been submitted in early April of this year. However, the potential for a new type of limited and low impact commercial fishery on the Kuskokwim did not become apparent until the August coho season experience in the summer of 2003.

Waiting for the next Kuskokwim cycle year (2007) would be much too long to wait to create new means for fostering and protecting a small commercial industry on the Kuskokwim.

7) STATE YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE FISHERY THAT IS THE SUBJECT OF YOUR AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST.

The proponent of this ACR owns a fish processing company situated in Kenai, Alaska and has participated as a commercial buyer of salmon on the Kuskokwim since 1987.

8) STATE WHETHER THIS AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST HAS BEEN CONSIDERED BEFORE, EITHER AS A PROPOSAL OR AN AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST AND, IF SO, DURING WHICH BOARD OF FISHERIES MEETING.

I am not aware of any prior consideration of this ACR, either as a proposal or an ACR.

DATE: August 16, 2003
SIGNATURE: Vincent L. Jordan

-continued-

AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST FORM
ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES

The Board of Fisheries will accept an agenda change request only:

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- 2) to correct an error in regulation; or
- 3) to correct an effect on a fishery that was unforeseen when a regulation was adopted.

The board will not accept an agenda change request that is predominantly allocative in nature in the absence of new information found by the board to be compelling (5 AAC39.999).

Proposed by:

Vincent Goddard

Inlet Fish Producers, Inc.

PO Box 1209, Kenai AK 99611 Telephone: 907-283-4706 email: vingod@att.net

1) STATE IN DETAIL THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM. *Address only one issue. State the problem clearly and concisely. The board will reject multiple or confusing issues.*

Current state law requires that subsistence fishing on the Kuskokwim River be closed before, during and after each commercial fishing period. Even when only a portion of District 1 is open for commercial fishing (either District 1 A above Bethel or District 1 B below Bethel), current regulation requires that the entire District 1 be closed to subsistence fishing. Currently this closure is for 6 hours prior to the period, during the period, and 3 hours after the period.

The enforcement of the current regulation creates an absurd situation: When District 1 B (above Bethel) is open for commercial fishing, subsistence fishermen at Eek at the mouth of the Kuskokwim are required to pull their nets.

In the past, commercial openings were generally for the entire Kuskokwim River and usually only occurred twice per week. For many years it was almost a set schedule -every Monday and Thursday. The current management regime calls for a large number of openings, but in limited areas and for short duration. In such a management regime for commercial fishing, the requirement to shut down subsistence fishing in the entire District 1 on the Kuskokwim River is an unfair burden on subsistence fishers.

-continued-

Agenda Change Request (Kuskokwim) Submitted by Vincent Goddard

August 18, 2003–Page 2

Times have changed. The restriction on subsistence fishing was put in effect to keep fishermen from cheating with their subsistence catches - catching subsistence fish either just before or after the opening, and somehow adding it to the commercial deliveries of a commercial fisherman. When fish prices were high, there may have been an economic incentive to cheat. With average fish prices now at 20 cents per pound and so few people participating in the commercial fishery, there is no discernible reason why anyone would want to cheat.

The requirement that subsistence fishing be shut down before, during and after commercial openings is a remnant of an earlier era and is no longer necessary. It assumes that the economic incentive of selling subsistence caught fish will cause many otherwise law-abiding citizens to break the law by selling their subsistence catch to commercial buyers. First, there is very little economic incentive to break the law at current market prices. Second, the current regulation is overly patronizing and does not respect the fact that the Kuskokwim fishers, both commercial and subsistence, are very respectful of the law if the understand it and it makes sense to them. Closing down subsistence fishing in Eek when commercial fishers are fishing in Kwethluk does not make sense and it is not fair.

It is interesting to note that there is no such patronizing oversight in the Cook Inlet fishery, for instance. Personal use fishermen (dipnetters) and sports fishermen are not required to cease their fishing during commercial openings. It is simply expected that all participants-personal use, sports, and commercial - will simply obey the law as it applies to each

fishery. Why cannot the same respect and accord be given to fishers on the Kuskokwim?

This proposal, at a minimum, suggests that subsistence closures only be in effect in the actual district(s) in which a commercial opening is occurring. For example, if District 1 A is open, subsistence fishing could continue in District 1 B, but would be restricted in District 1 A.

A further liberalization of this policy is the ultimate goal of this ACR. It is hard to find any good reason why subsistence fishing should be closed on the Kuskokwim during the few brief commercial openings each year. There is no evidence on the Kuskokwim that illegal fishing and illegal selling of subsistence fish to commercial buyers is a problem.

-continued-

Agenda Change Request (Kuskokwim) Submitted by Vincent Goddard August 18, 2003–Page 3

2) STATE IN DETAIL HOW YOUR AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST MEETS THE CRITERIA STATED ABOVE. If anyone or more of the criteria set forth above is not applicable, state that it is not applicable.

or

1) Fishery conservation purpose or reason: (not applicable)

or

2) Correct an error in regulation (not applicable)

3) Correct an unforeseen effect of a regulation:

The current commercial management regime calls for many openings of limited area, limited fleet, and limited duration. If subsistence fishing must be closed for each such opening, it will have a very negative effect on subsistence fishers, especially during the primary subsistence months of June and July. This extremely negative effect was not foreseen when the split district registration system was created for the Kuskokwim.

3) STATE WHY YOUR AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST IS NOT PREDOMINANTLY ALLOCATIVE.

This proposal is not allocative. By suggesting that both subsistence and commercial fishing can coexist and operate at the same time, we will actually avoid future allocation conflicts. (The allocation conflicts would not be so much competition for allocation of the fish, but competition for allocation of the time to be able to fish.)

4) IF YOUR REQUEST IS ALLOCATIVE, STATE THE NEW INFORMATION THAT COMPELS THE BOARD TO CONSIDER AN ALLOCATIVE PROPOSAL OUTSIDE THE REGULAR CYCLE.

Not applicable, as this proposal is not allocative in nature.

-continued-

The regulations which, require, that subsistence fishing be closed before, during and after commercial fishing periods.

Waiting for the next Kuskokwim cycle year (2007) would be much too long to wait to resolve this potential (and unnecessary) conflict.

I am not aware of any prior consideration of this ACR, either as a proposal or an ACR.

8) STATE WHETHER THIS AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST HAS BEEN CONSIDERED BEFORE, EITHER AS A PROPOSAL OR AN AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST AND, IF SO, DURING WHICH BOARD OF FISHERIES MEETING.

Agenda Change Request (Kuskokwim) Submitted by Vincent Goddard August 8, 2003 -Page 4

5) CITE THE REGULATION(S) THAT WILL BE CHANGED IF THIS REQUEST IS HEARD.

6) STATE IN DETAIL THE REASON(S) WHY THIS MATTER CANNOT BE HEARD IN THE REGULAR CYCLE.

This ACR, if accepted by the Board, will actually be heard during the regular cycle for the Kuskokwim. This proposal should have been submitted in early April of this year. However, this potential conflict between subsistence fishing opportunity and a large number of limited time and limited area commercial openings only became apparent as a result of our experience this year in the Kuskokwim coho salmon season.

7) STATE YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE FISHERY THAT IS THE SUBJECT OF YOUR AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST.

The proponent of this ACR owns a fish processing company situated in Kenai, Alaska and has participated as a commercial buyer of salmon on the Kuskokwim since 1987.

DATE:

18, 2003
Goddard

-continued-

AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST FORM
ALASKA BOARD OF FISHERIES

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- 2) to correct an error in regulation; or
- 3) to correct an effect on a fishery that was unforeseen when a regulation was adopted.

The board will not accept an agenda change request that is predominantly allocative in nature in the absence of new information found by the board to be compelling (5 AAC 39.999).

NAME: Oscar Larson

ADDRESS: Box 34, City: Kwethluk State: Alaska Zip 99621

TELEPHONE: (907) 757-6522 (907) 757-6522

DAY

EVENING

EMAIL ADDRESS: oscar_larson@yahoo.com

- 1) STATE IN DETAIL THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM. Address only one issue. State the problem clearly and concisely. The board will reject multiple or confusing issues.

During the October 2000 Board of Fisheries meeting a regulation was adopted that split the Lower Kuskokwim River (District 1) into two subdistricts. The regulation requires that fishermen only fish in one Subdistrict or the other with an opportunity to transfer once in July and once in August. The time period during which fishermen may not fish after they announce their intent to transfer is between Subdistrict 1-A and Subdistrict 1-B is 48 hours.

- 2) STATE IN DETAIL HOW YOUR AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST MEETS THE CRITERIA STATE ABOVE. If any one or more of the three criteria set forth above is not applicable, state that it is not applicable.

1) Fishery conservation purpose or reason: Not applicable.

or 2) Correct an error in regulation: Not applicable.

or 3) Correct an unforeseen effect of a regulation: An unforeseen effect of the regulation on the fishery is the difficulty for fishermen to transfer between subdistricts without missing fishing opportunity. When the regulation was adopted, there was no way to know how frequently the fishing periods would be scheduled to maximize harvest since run size and processor capacity was not known.

-continued-

3) STATE WHY YOUR AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST IS NOT PREDOMINANTLY ALLOCATIVE.

This agenda change request is not allocative in that it deals exclusively with the commercial fishery and provides each commercial fisherman the same opportunity.

4) IF YOUR REQUEST IS ALLOCATIVE, STATE THE NEW INFORMATION THAT COMPELS THE BOARD TO CONSIDER AN ALLOCATIVE PROPOSAL OUTSIDE OF THE REGULAR CYCLE.

5) CITE THE REGULATION(S) THAT WILL BE CHANGED IF THIS REQUEST IS HEARD.

5 AAC 07.370 Registration and reregistration requirements for District 1 of the Kuskokwim Area. The request is to reduce the time from 48 hours to 12 hours during which a permit holder may not take salmon in any Subdistrict following reregistration.

6) STATE IN DETAIL THE REASON(S) WHY THIS MATTER CANNOT BE HEARD IN THE REGULAR CYCLE.

This matter can be heard in January of 2004, the regular cycle, if so scheduled by the Board. A proposal was not submitted by the April 10, 2003 proposal deadline. This is the first season the impact of this regulation has been understood since adoption of the regulation. During previous years, because of low fish abundance, District 1 (Subdistrict 1-A and 1-B combined) opening were implemented which precluded understanding the true effect of the regulation to fishermen. During the 2003 season a Subdistrict 1A and Subdistrict 1-B schedule has been established and adhered to.

7) STATE YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE FISHERY THAT IS THE SUBJECT OF YOUR AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST (e.g., commercial fisherman, subsistence user, sport fisherman, etc.).

My involvement in the fishery is that of Kuskokwim River Working Group Member, subsistence fisher and commercial fisher.

8) STATE WHETHER THIS AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST HAS BEEN CONSIDERED BEFORE, EITHER AS A PROPOSAL OR AN AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST AND, IF SO, DURING WHICH BOARD OF FISHERIES MEETING.

This agenda change request has not been considered before, either as a proposal or an agenda change request, since 5 AAC 07.370 Registration and reregistration requirements for District 1 of the Kuskokwim Area has been put into effect.

DATE: _____ SIGNATURE: _____

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APPENDIX F

Appendix F.—AVCP News Release calling for Postponement of Civil Disobedience until after June 19, 2004.

Association of Village Council Presidents

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release: June 4, 2004

Contacts:

Mike Williams, Akiak Native Community: (907) 765-7426

Tim Andrew, Association of Village Council Presidents: (907) 543-7340

ALASKA NATIVE TRIBES AND TRIBAL NONPROFUS CALL FOR
POSTPONEMENT OF ANY CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE
SUBSISTENCE SALMON FISHING UNTIL AFTER JUNE 19, 2004

Alaska Native tribes and a tribal nonprofit organization called yesterday for a postponement of any civil disobedience subsistence salmon fishing until after June 19th.

Representatives of six Yup'ik Eskimo tribes and the Association of Village Council Presidents met yesterday in Akiak, a Native village located on the Kuskokwim River in western Alaska. Representatives of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game were also in attendance for part of the meeting. The meeting was held to discuss issues and concerns that have been raised because Yup'ik subsistence fishermen in Kuskokwim River villages intend to engage in civil disobedience salmon fishing this summer.

Salmon is the most important subsistence resource for traditional Yup'ik villages on the Kuskokwim River. Yup'ik people have relied on both king and chum salmon for thousands of years for their cultural and physical survival. Yup'ik people have always followed traditional conservation values when subsistence fishing, and have only taken those salmon their families need to get through the winter. As was explained by George Billy, elder and traditional chief from Napakiak, the Yup'ik tradition is to let early- arriving salmon pass through, while harvesting salmon only from those that come later.

In 2001, the Alaska Board of Fisheries created subsistence fishing "schedules" under which subsistence fishing on the Kuskokwim is closed for three days each week. These schedules conflict with customary and traditional practice, under which Yup'ik people fished when weather and fishing conditions were right, and not under regulatory schedules. People in Kuskokwim villages cooperated with the schedules, however, in a good faith effort to ensure conservation of salmon and upriver subsistence needs. But then, in early 2004, the Alaska Board of Fisheries nearly *tripled* commercial fishing time in the " Area M" False Pass fishery - a mixed stock fishery on the south side of the Alaska Peninsula that targets sockeye salmon but intercepts hundreds of thousands of chum salmon, many of which would otherwise return to rivers in western Alaska, like the Kuskokwim, where subsistence is on schedules or other restrictions. Customary and traditional subsistence fishing is *supposed* to take priority over commercial fishing, under both state and federal law, but while the Board of Fisheries nearly tripled Area M commercial fishing time, it has kept all of the 2001 restrictions on subsistence in place, *on the very same chum salmon stocks*.

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In short, the Alaska Board of Fisheries is restricting Alaska Native subsistence in order to expand a high dollar commercial fishery in which many of the participants are not even Alaskans at all, but well-to-do out-of-state commercial fishermen instead. In typical fashion, the Board has followed the money, and put Alaska's Native people last.

In response to this injustice, many Yup'ik fishermen in the villages along the lower Kuskokwim said they would follow the subsistence fishing schedules no longer, but would engage in civil disobedience subsistence fishing on the closed days instead. Tribal governments, as well as their regional tribal nonprofit, the Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP), then resolved to support such fishermen to the fullest extent consistent with the law, should they exercise their conscience in this manner.

However, at yesterday's meeting in Akiak, two concerns were raised, which led AVCP and the tribal representatives in attendance to request that if subsistence fishermen *do* decide to engage in civil disobedience fishing on the Kuskokwim, that they not take any such action until after June 19th.

First, the salmon that pass through the lower Kuskokwim prior to June 19th tend to be those salmon that are headed the farthest upriver, where other Native villages –both Yup'ik Eskimo and Athabascan Indian - depend on these salmon for *their* subsistence as well. As Mike Williams of the Akiak Native Community stated: "This is not an upriver downriver dispute. We support the subsistence rights of all of our Native peoples, and if some people upriver are concerned that not following the schedules down here will make it harder for people up there to meet their subsistence needs, people in our villages should respect their concerns." Mr. Williams added, however, that the regulatory subsistence fishing schedules are completely inconsistent with custom and tradition, and that upriver and downriver villages need to meet in the future, to discuss more culturally appropriate ways of ensuring both upriver and downriver subsistence needs, as well as conservation.

Second, the Area M commercial fishery intercepts chum salmon, not king salmon. The chum salmon typically do not start running in the Kuskokwim in good numbers until sometime around June 20th - the date on which Kuskokwim River fisheries historically changed over from king-based to chum-based management. As Greg Roczicka from the Orutsaramiut Traditional Council] observed: "The problem is that commercial fishing in Area M may well be taking three times as many chum salmon away from subsistence now. Civil disobedience fishing before June 20th would not have a direct association with their interception of our chum salmon".

Tim Andrew with AVCP explained that AVCP is neither calling for nor discouraging civil disobedience by fishermen this summer: "If people in our villages decide to fish in violation of the schedules, AVCP will do all we can lawfully do to support them, as we have been directed by our member tribes to do, by resolution. It's something for individual fishermen and villages to decide, in their own conscience, but we do ask that people at least hold off until after June 19th, if they do decide to do civil disobedience fishing."

APPENDIX G

ACR # 18

STATE IN DETAIL THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM: Address only one issue. State the problem clearly and concisely. The board will reject multiple or confusing issues. The Kuskokwim fishermen have the subsistence priority under ANILCA and we have not taken more than we need. We need all the opportunity for our native people on the Kuskokwim River to get their salmon for survival. We respected the first kings to go through the lower portion of the river.

STATE IN DETAIL HOW YOUR AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST MEETS THE CRITERIA STATE ABOVE. If any one or more of the three criteria set forth above is not applicable, state that it is not applicable.

1) Fishery conservation purpose or reason: We have traditionally taken just what we needed. Therefore, we do not want subsistence restricted in any way since we do not impact the resource.

or 2) Correct an error in regulation:

or 3) correct an unforeseen effect of a regulation: It has a significant affect on the timing of drying the fish and it forces people to try hard before closures. Elders and widows.

STATE WHY YOUR AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST IS NOT PREDOMINANTLY ALLOCATIVE. Because we are not taking much from the resource. We just take what we need.

IF YOUR REQUEST IS ALLOCATIVE, STATE THE NEW INFORMATION THAT COMPELS THE BOARD TO CONSIDER AN ALLOCATIVE PROPOSAL OUTSIDE OF THE REGULAR CYCLE. Not applicable.

CITE THE REGULATION(S) THAT WILL BE CHANGED IF THIS REQUEST IS HEARD. We need to lift the current limits.

STATE IN DETAIL THE REASON(S) WHY THIS MATTER CANNOT BE HEARD IN THE REGULAR CYCLE. It must be changed immediately.

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STATE YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE FISHERY THAT IS THE SUBJECT OF YOUR AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST (e.g., commercial fisherman, subsistence user, sport fisherman, etc.). Akiak Native Community.

STATE WHETHER THIS AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST HAS BEEN CONSIDERED BEFORE, EITHER AS A PROPOSAL OR AN AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST AND, IF SO, DURING WHICH BOARD OF FISHERIES MEETING. None

Submitted By: Akiak Native Community

ACR # 19

STATE IN DETAIL THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM: Address only one issue. State the problem clearly and concisely. The board will reject multiple or confusing issues. The Kuskokwim River Salmon Rebuilding Plan needs to be modified to provide subsistence fishers in the drainage greater opportunity to harvest amounts necessary for salmon. Kuskokwim River salmon returns during the 2003 and 2004 seasons showed continued improvement with 2004 survey indices at an all time high and chum salmon escapement goals achieved. The subsistence fishing restrictions should be modified to reflect these changes in the salmon returns and ease the burdens which were made effective when runs were observed to be failing. It is highly noteworthy, and the board should take heed, that the record high returns being seen in these recent years stems directly from the disastrous returns and failed escapements of the 1998 – 2000 parent years that prompted the creation of the rebuilding plan and the substantial subsistence restrictions that it subsequently imposed. There remains recognizable need to afford some protection to the early portion of the king salmon run which travels furthest up the Kuskokwim River drainage and supports the highest rate of exploitation.

STATE IN DETAIL HOW YOUR AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST MEETS THE CRITERIA STATE ABOVE. If any one or more of the three criteria set forth above is not applicable, state that it is not applicable.

1) Fishery conservation purpose or reason: The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan (5 AAC 07.365) needs to be modified to provide for conservation of the resource while being less restrictive to allow subsistence fishers appropriate opportunity to harvest amounts necessary for subsistence. There has also been the conservation concern expressed for the need to encourage harvest effort to be spread more evenly throughout all tributary stock components of the king run.

or 2) Correct an error in regulation: The existing regulation has been applied through information whose cause and effect presumption or interpretations are now subject to significant

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question and could well be in error. It does not take into account information showing they are excessive at best, or the distant possibility that they are no longer necessary.

or 3) correct an unforeseen effect of a regulation: Unforeseen data results (record returns from parent years with disastrously low returns or escapements) have created an unforeseen effect of retaining a regulation that may have served a timely good and purpose, being the only “controllable” factor of sufficient magnitude at the time, but has now become outdated. Absent coccolithofor (sp) blooms or other stochastic events affecting salmon ocean survival, current information strongly indicates that subsistence fishing activities do not have as significant an impact on sustained or improved yield as ascertained by the board from information available and utilized at that time, or when they were reinstated in 2004.

STATE WHY YOUR AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST IS NOT PREDOMINANTLY ALLOCATIVE. No other fishery is affected. Boards have consistently dismissed any concerns of effects from other associated (sport/commercial) fisheries of Kuskokwim salmon as inconsequential, and have either left them alone or substantially expanded their opportunity. Escapement goals can be achieved through relaxation, modification or (history has shown), without any schedule or restriction of subsistence fishing.

IF YOUR REQUEST IS ALLOCATIVE, STATE THE NEW INFORMATION THAT COMPELS THE BOARD TO CONSIDER AN ALLOCATIVE PROPOSAL OUTSIDE OF THE REGULAR CYCLE. Not applicable.

CITE THE REGULATION(S) THAT WILL BE CHANGED IF THIS REQUEST IS HEARD. 5 AAC 07.364. Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan. (2003-2004 edition of Fish and Game laws/regulations annotated). (c) In the subsistence salmon net and fishwheel fishery, in the Kuskokwim River drainage...

Option 1: the subsistence salmon net and fish wheel fisheries will be open for four consecutive days per week from June 1 through June 20...

Option 2: ...from June 1-June 20 between Napaskiak Slough and Strait Slough...

Option 3: ...from June 1-June 20 between the mouths of the Johnson and Queek rivers...

STATE IN DETAIL THE REASON(S) WHY THIS MATTER CANNOT BE HEARD IN THE REGULAR CYCLE. The cycle for Kuskokwim River fishery issues is not until the 2006-2007 cycle. Subsistence fishermen and families will continue to suffer needless hardship and being excessively denied subsistence fishing opportunity to obtain amounts necessary.

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STATE YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE FISHERY THAT IS THE SUBJECT OF YOUR AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST (e.g., commercial fisherman, subsistence user, sport fisherman, etc.). Subsistence fishers.

STATE WHETHER THIS AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST HAS BEEN CONSIDERED BEFORE, EITHER AS A PROPOSAL OR AN AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST AND, IF SO, DURING WHICH BOARD OF FISHERIES MEETING. The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Rebuilding Plan was adopted by the Board of Fisheries during the 2000 Board of Fisheries meeting and was amended during the 2004 Board of Fisheries meeting.

Submitted By: Orutsarmiut Native Council (ONC)

ACR # 8

STATE IN DETAIL THE NATURE OF THE PROBLEM: Address only one issue. State the problem clearly and concisely. The board will reject multiple or confusing issues. The Kuskokwim River Salmon Rebuilding Management Plan needs to be modified to provide subsistence fishers in portions of the river greater opportunity to harvest amounts necessary of salmon. Kuskokwim River salmon returns during the 2004 season showed continued improvement with the king salmon aerial survey index at an all time high and with chum salmon escapement goals achieved. Implementation of the subsistence fishing schedule should be conducted in a more limited portion of the river to allow increased fishing opportunity where catch rates are low. There continues to be a need to afford some protection to the early portion of the king salmon run which travels furthest up the Kuskokwim River drainage and supports the highest exploitation.

STATE IN DETAIL HOW YOUR AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST MEETS THE CRITERIA STATE ABOVE. If any one or more of the three criteria set forth above is not applicable, state that it is not applicable.

1. Fishery conservation purpose or reason: The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan (5 AAC 07.365) needs to be modified to provide for conservation of the resource while being less restrictive to allow subsistence fishers opportunity to harvest amounts necessary.

or 2) Correct an error in regulation: Not applicable.

or 3) correct an unforeseen effect of a regulation: The current subsistence fishing schedule in effect for the Kuskokwim River has had the unforeseen effect of making it difficult for some subsistence fishers to achieve amounts necessary. An increase in subsistence fishing opportunity

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in areas of the river where catch rates are low would have no significant impact to achievement of salmon escapement goals.

STATE WHY YOUR AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST IS NOT PREDOMINANTLY ALLOCATIVE. The agenda change request is not predominantly allocative in nature since the purpose of the plan is to result in the sustained yield of salmon stocks large enough to meet the escapements goals, amount necessary for subsistence, and for non-subsistence fisheries. Escapement goals can be achieved with modification of the subsistence fishing schedule to provide increased opportunity for subsistence fishers to achieve amounts necessary.

IF YOUR REQUEST IS ALLOCATIVE, STATE THE NEW INFORMATION THAT COMPELS THE BOARD TO CONSIDER AN ALLOCATIVE PROPOSAL OUTSIDE OF THE REGULAR CYCLE. The request is not allocative.

CITE THE REGULATION(S) THAT WILL BE CHANGED IF THIS REQUEST IS HEARD. 5 AAC 07.365. Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Plan. (c) In the subsistence fishery, in the Kuskokwim River drainage, [IN THE WATERS OF THE MAINSTEM OF THE RIVER AND OTHER SALMON SPAWNING TRIBUTARIES]...:

Option 1: **downstream of Bogus Creek** (68 river miles above Bethel)

Option 2: **downstream of Johnson River** (20 river miles below Bethel), or

Option 3: **between Johnson River and Bogus Creek.**

(1) the subsistence salmon net and fish wheel fisheries will be open for four consecutive days, per week in June [AND JULY].....

(2) during subsistence closures of three consecutive days per week in June [AND JULY]...

STATE IN DETAIL THE REASON(S) WHY THIS MATTER CANNOT BE HEARD IN THE REGULAR CYCLE. The cycle for Kuskokwim River fishery issues is not until the 2006/2007 meeting series. In the interval Kuskokwim Area subsistence fishers may be denied the opportunity to achieve amounts necessary of salmon.

STATE YOUR INVOLVEMENT IN THE FISHERY THAT IS THE SUBJECT OF YOUR AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST (e.g., commercial fisherman, subsistence user, sport fisherman, etc.). The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (Working Group) was formed in 1988 by the Board of Fisheries in response to requests from stakeholders

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in the Kuskokwim Area who wanted to take a more active role in the management of their salmon fishery resources. Since then the Working Group has become increasingly active in the preseason, inseason, and postseason management of the Kuskokwim River drainage subsistence, commercial, and sport salmon fisheries. In 2001, the Working Group modified its charter in order to more effectively address the needs of federal subsistence management and the Coordinating Fisheries Committee of Yukon Kuskokwim Delta and Western Interior Regional Advisory Councils. The Working Group now serves as a public forum for federal and state fisheries managers to meet with local users of the salmon resource to review run assessment information and reach a consensus on how to proceed with management of Kuskokwim River salmon fisheries.

STATE WHETHER THIS AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST HAS BEEN CONSIDERED BEFORE, EITHER AS A PROPOSAL OR AN AGENDA CHANGE REQUEST AND, IF SO, DURING WHICH BOARD OF FISHERIES MEETING. The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Rebuilding Plan was adopted by the Board of Fisheries during the 2000 Board of Fisheries meeting and was amended during the 2004 Board of Fisheries meeting.

Submitted By: Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group

APPENDIX H

Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group

Fish Summit

September 30-October 1, 2004

RESOLUTION 04-01

TITLE: SUPPORTING THE APPOINTMENT OF LAMONT ALBERTSON (Kuskokwim Region) TO THE SALMON INDUSTRY RESTRUCTURING PANEL.

WHEREAS The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (KRSMWG) is an organization which is charged with the responsibility of managing the Kuskokwim River Salmon resources; and

WHEREAS The KRSMWG membership consists of subsistence fishermen, commercial fishermen, sport fishermen, all from lower, middle and upper river communities, processors and the Alaska Department of Fish & Game; and

WHEREAS The KRSMWG has a vested interest in the development and utilization of the salmon resources for subsistence, commercial, and sport uses in the Kuskokwim River; and

WHEREAS The restructuring of the salmon industry on the Kuskokwim River affects the management of our resources and has broad implications on subsistence, commercial, and sport fisheries.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE KUSKOKWIM RIVER SALMON MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP FISH SUMMIT forward the name of Lamont Albertson of Aniak as the Kuskokwim River representative to the Salmon Industry Restructuring Panel of the State Alaska Board of Fisheries.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT this resolution remains in effect until it is rescinded or another representative is selected.

Adopted this 1st day of October 2004, at the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group's Fish Summit in Bethel, Alaska, at which a duly constituted quorum of delegates was present.

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Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group

Fisheries Summit, September 30-October 1, 2004

RESOLUTION #04-02

- WHEREAS, The Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (KRSMWG), formed in 1988, is an organization which is charged with the responsibility of managing Kuskokwim River Salmon resources that in its 16 years of existence has become an integral component of seasonal management structure; and,
- WHEREAS, the In-Season subsistence harvest monitoring project conducted over the last 4 years in cooperation between Orutsararmiut Native Council (ONC) and state managers in the Bethel area has had its scope and recommended funding significantly reduced by a review committee that states concerns over "scientific rigor" of the project; and,
- WHEREAS, the information gathered through this project provides area managers with scientific and local knowledge that is not cost effectively available through any other means, has never been obtained before, and will be lost for establishing further baseline data that maintains a sufficient level of scientific credibility; and,
- WHEREAS, critics should work with the partners in this project to enhance the goals and intent of the significant capacity building potential that is directly associated with this project, rather than summarily dismiss or lose the TEK and scientific data from this project's proven capabilities; and,
- WHEREAS, information gathered through this project is considered highly beneficial to federal and state managers in making comprehensive decisions regarding salmon harvest in the Kuskokwim drainage that comprises almost half of the subsistence salmon harvest statewide.

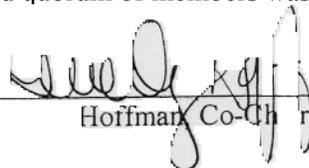
TITLE: SUPPORTING CONTINUED FUNDING OF ONC IN-SEASON SUBSISTENCE SURVEY PROJECT.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT to fulfill its many associated responsibilities for subsistence management in the Kuskokwim drainage, the OSM should continue to fully fund this important project to provide for the future in-season management of Kuskokwim subsistence salmon fisheries.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the OSM staff of concern should work with ONC and local area management staff to address their expressed concerns of enhancing scientific rigor of the project, along with expanding its capabilities in furthering the stated agency policy of increased capacity building.

Adopted this 1st Day of October 2004, at the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group's Fish Summit in Bethel, Alaska, at which established quorum of members was present.


Lamont


Hoffman Co-Chair

-continued-

Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group

Fisheries Summit

September 30-October 1, 2004

RESOLUTION #04-03

TITLE: PROVIDING CONTINUED SUPPORT FUNDING FOR THE KUSKOKWIM RIVER SALMON MANAGEMENT WORKING GROUP.

WHEREAS, the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group (KRSMWG), formed in 1988, is an organization which is charged with the responsibility of managing Kuskokwim River Salmon resources that in its 16 years of existence has become an integral component of seasonal management structure; and,

WHEREAS, the KRSMWG is comprised of the full gamut of diverse user groups throughout the Kuskokwim drainage that provides advice to state and federal managers in making well-informed comprehensive decisions regarding all aspects of salmon harvest for the region, considered by many to be practically essential; and,

WHEREAS, in the past year the Office of Subsistence Management provided support funding that covered such things as teleconference and paperwork costs to ensure all members were kept fully informed for weekly, or sometimes more frequent meetings ; and,

WHEREAS, the KRSMWG is frequently cited as an exemplary model of how management decisions should be made that incorporates all users groups provides an ongoing forum for public involvement, and area managers with the best comprehensive information available in making what are at times, highly controversial management decisions.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Office of Subsistence Management continue to provide support funding through whatever dedicated or discretionary means available for the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group to continue fulfilling its important role for the benefit of all individuals and entities affected.

ADOPTED this 1st day of October, 2004, at the Kuskokwim River Salmon Management Working Group's Fish Summit in Bethel, Alaska, at which a duly constituted quorum of members was present.

Lamont Albertson, Co-Chair

Beverly Hoffman, Co-Chair