



Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee Communications Strategy

CONTEXT

The public in the Yukon and other Canadian jurisdictions should increasingly understand that there are fewer and fewer salmon returning to Yukon Rivers and that our runs may be dwindling to the point of no return. If there is a reasonable return at the Whitehorse Fish Ladder or DFO opens up sport fishing, the public may go to sleep on the issues affecting our northern stocks.

Salmon users in the Yukon (First Nations) and Alaska (subsistence) are feeling the effects but don't know what to do about the problem. In the meantime, subsistence fishing continues in Alaska and there are fewer and fewer fish for Yukon residents. In 2011, Alaskan fishery managers did manage in-season in protecting the first pulse of Chinook as well as a portion of the second pulse. This was in large part why Alaskans met their treaty obligations regarding escapement to Canada in 2011.

Fifty per cent of the Yukon River Chinook salmon run spawns in Canada, yet a disproportionate amount is being harvested in Alaska. Twenty-five per cent of the Chum salmon run comes into Canada with 5 per cent heading up the Porcupine.

While Chum salmon runs on the Upper Yukon are healthy at the moment, the Porcupine River, especially Fishing Branch Chum runs are low and have not met escapement for six years. This has significant effects for the residents of Old Crow and the bears in the area.

Many Yukoners and Yukon First Nations are beginning to lose the capacity to fish for salmon. Yukon First Nations are losing a part of their culture that has been integral for many generations. Yukon sport fishers are also no longer fishing for salmon.

The Yukon salmon crisis is complex and involves many stakeholders, international management regimes, and various environmental factors (i.e., climate change).

The broad issues involve inconsistent runs and lack of salmon; genetic changes in salmon; over-fishing; definitions of subsistence fishing; ecosystems under strain; international boundaries; ocean by-catch (esp. Pollock) and complex management regimes.

There are two drainages that are often overlooked (Porcupine and Alsek). The Porcupine is part of the Yukon River drainage; the Alsek is a different drainage with different stakeholders but facing the same overall issues.

Yukoners should not have to stop fishing. We need enough fish returning to Canada to allow for a re-building of the stocks which can then sustain, recreational, subsistence, and commercial fishing.



Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee Communications Strategy

Salmon need to be a priority and we need to be heard within Yukon, Canada and Alaska. We don't want to lose any negotiating power we might have with the U.S.

COMMUNICATIONS PROGRAMS IN PLACE

The YSSC has a functioning website, a twitter feed, and an office in Whitehorse to reach out to the community. We place ads periodically in local newspapers and host six meetings a year, with at least one dedicated consultation in each drainage area.

Other stakeholders, including YRDFA in Alaska, produce e-newsletters, paper newsletters, websites, distribution lists, and other communications materials to inform their constituents about the challenges facing our salmon-bearing streams.

CYFN works with the Yukon First Nations and their Resource Managers on salmon-related issues through meetings, phone calls, and general assemblies.

Additional stakeholder initiatives include communications materials and/or meetings led by the Yukon River Panel; the Yukon River Intertribal Watershed Council; Tanana Chiefs Council; the Pacific Salmon Commission; Wild Salmon Centre; and the trans-boundary management groups.

OBJECTIVES

- **Inform First Nations and the general Yukon public that they can have their say through the YSSC (attend meetings and drainage consultations, participate in the process of making recommendations to the Minister, etc.).**
- Provide sufficient information that people can connect the dots in terms of how important our salmon resources are to them as individuals and to our economy as a whole.
- Raise awareness within Whitehorse and the rest of Yukon of the salmon crisis.
- Deliver facts to the Yukon public and the rest of Canada about the state of salmon runs in the Yukon.
- Share facts about the salmon run and sacrifices that Yukon First Nations have been making in Canada for the betterment of the run.
- Inform Alaskans (in particular Yukon River communities) about the Canadian perspective on salmon management.



Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee Communications Strategy

KEY MESSAGES

1. Salmon are a critical part of a healthy ecosystem and an important part of our lives, culture and livelihoods.
2. There are fewer and fewer salmon in the Yukon; without change, the run is at risk.
3. Salmon are an important resource (culturally, recreationally, and economically) and must be protected. We have a responsibility to future generations to protect and conserve this resource.
4. Yukon First Nations and Yukoners are making sacrifices for the betterment of the run.

TARGET AUDIENCES

Primary:

- Yukon public in general
- Yukon First Nations (subsistence fishers, harvesters, government) and Renewable Resource Councils
 - Alaskan rural villages and communities

Secondary:

- Government of Canada (DFO), Alaska Department of Fish and Game, Fish and Wildlife Service
- Canadian public
- Commercial fishers (Yukon/Dawson)
- Tourists



Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee Communications Strategy

THE PLAN

Create a themed campaign designed to resonate within Yukon communities and with salmon users and Yukon First Nation audiences by using their stories, images, and reflections to create a sense of urgency about the Yukon Salmon crisis.

Campaign Attributes:

- Professional and accessible
- Evokes an emotional, personal response
- Realistic without being doom and gloom

Campaign Concept:

Faces, Facts, and Futures – the Yukon Salmon Story

The campaign will focus on personal stories, backed by facts regarding the current situation for Yukon Salmon. It will be built around the human faces and personal accounts of how the diminished resource is affecting those who rely on it in their daily lives.

Campaign Goals:

- Build understanding of the “upriver” Canadian realities
- Raise awareness in Yukon of salmon related issues in each drainage
- Raise awareness in Alaska of Yukoners’ issues, realities and perspectives regarding salmon
- Highlight the differences and similarities in salmon management in Yukon to increase understanding of the issues
- Share key facts about the run to dispel myths and change perceptions

Campaign Call to Action:

- **Visit yssc.ca, participate in a meeting/consultation, or contact the YSSC to have your say in Salmon Management**
- Participate in the Yukon River In-Season Management Teleconferences
- Participate in the Yukon River Panel process



Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee Communications Strategy

Campaign Tactics:

- Interview a cross-section of users and managers, e.g., First Nations Governments Resource Managers (each of the three drainages)
 - Yukon subsistence fishers
 - RRCs
 - Commercial Fishers
 - Recreational/Sport fishers
- For each group capture a testimonial, personal photo backed by some technical, scientific, or management fact.

Campaign Audience:

- Alaskan subsistence and commercial fisher people
- Rural and urban Alaska
- Yukon Communities and First Nations
- Politicians in Canada and Alaska

Campaign Tone and Voice:

- Facing reality and looking forward
- Accentuating the positives
- Personal, welcoming
- Emphasizing the need to work together and optimism that, together, we can succeed (we can do this!)
- Presenting the many faces of Yukoners who interact with the salmon resource and telling their stories

Campaign Deliverables:

- ¼ page to ½ page newspaper ads
 - Alaskan papers
 - YRDFA distribution
 - Yukon papers
- YSSC website – interactive video or slide show on homepage



Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee Communications Strategy

- Small cards – with campaign creative on front and YSSC info on the back
 - Distribution at meetings, YSSC office, mail-out to offices
 - campaign info on the backs of YSSC member business cards

Campaign Timeline:

- February, March – gathering testimonials, photographs, backgrounders
- March – ad production
- April/May – placement of print and web materials

Campaign Creative Example:

Picture of a Teslin resident looking right at the camera in town, on the river or at the office. One to two sentence testimonial about bringing flown-in Taku sockeye to their Yukon River camp in order to keep fish in their family camp and culture. A few more sentences with a fact about the TTC flying in sockeye and that this substitution of a foreign salmon species is unsatisfactory.

Example tag-line: Preserving a precious resource for generations to come: together, we can do it. Visit YSSC to have your voice heard.

Campaign Toolkit

- Government Relations
- Media Relations
- Extending our voice through partnerships with like-minded organizations
- Website – yssc.ca
- YRDFA newsletters
- Calendars
- DFO materials
- Newspaper advertisements, advertorials, and OpEds placed in B.C. and Ottawa
- Magazine ads
- Posters
- Social media – Twitter, Facebook, Youtube
- Mail-out (Yukon and Alaska)
- Presentations
- Phone survey
- Photography



Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee Communications Strategy

MEASUREMENT

- Increased website traffic
- Increased phone calls and visits to the office
- Attendance at consultations increases
- Increased interaction with DFO on management issues and Ministerial recommendations.
- Increased number of request for information
- Media inquiries
- Increased conservation measures imposed by ADFG

- **Ultimately, the preservation of salmon stocks in Yukon rivers ...**