



**Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee Regular Meeting
Meeting Minutes**

Whitehorse – Alpine Bakery Nov. 27-28, 2013

DAY 1: IN ATTENDANCE:

Sub-committee Members

Present:

Tara Christie – Chair
Frank Thomas
Wolf Riedl – Secretary –Treasurer
Paul Birckel
Wayne Jim
Stan Njootli Sr.
Pauline Frost – Co-Chair

Emmie Fairclough

Ed Long

Public Visitors:

Brian Isaac – SRRC
Jerry Alfred – SRRC
Dean Gill – SFN
Sandy Johnston
Don Toews
Al Von Finster

Absent:

Ron Chambers

Nov. 27, 2013

1. AGENDA

Chair opened the public meeting and reviewed the agenda.

A committee member suggested Strategic Planning should get added to the agenda. A discussion was to take place during members time.

Wolf Riedl – Motion to accept, Paul Birckel – seconded, approved. AIF.

2. MINUTES

Executive Director reviewed the minutes from the May 6, 7, 2013 meeting in Dawson City.

A committee member suggested that all names not relevant for identification purposes be removed.

Frank Thomas – Motion to accept, Paul Birckel – seconded, approved. AIF.

Action items were reviewed with all previous action items completed.

3. RULES AND PROCEDURES

The Chair reviewed the revised rules and procedures and the administrative by-laws around the honorarium rates. The Chair explained the rationale for the pro-rated 2% increase in honorarium rates. The ratio and formula is still the same. It was also explained that the Department of Fisheries and Oceans is responsible for the contribution agreement to the YSSC and not YTG. It was explained that DFO and YFWMB reviewed the raise and honorarium increase. All members support the by-law amendments to include the honorarium increase.

Frank Thomas – Motion to accept, Wolf Riedl – seconded, approved. AIF

4. FISHING BRANCH VIDEO

Phil Timpany from Wildman Video presented the Porcupine Chum footage to the Committee.

There was discussion from the public around the need to keep an eye on Chum salmon populations.

5. ADMIN AND FINANCIAL REVIEW

The Executive Director presented the draft budget for 2014-15 in full. There were minor grammatical revisions to the budget suggested by members.

Wolf Riedl – Motion to accept with minor grammatical revisions, Stan Njootli Sr. seconded and approved. AIF

6. INTERNATIONAL SALMON SUMMIT

There was a discussion about the upcoming International Salmon Summit facilitated through the CYFN to be held in Fairbanks. The YSSC stated they are on the steering committee. The members discussed the interest and value in an Air Charter as well as the need for some members to drive.

7. DRAINAGE UPDATES

The Chair explained the particular circumstances with two commercial Dawson fishers and how they have been affected by the low Chinook runs and the closure of the commercial fishing.

Members agreed with this and stated how important it is to recognize all uses of salmon, including commercial. We need to keep these other uses on the table.

A committee member spoke regarding the Porcupine River and the various salmon projects on that river. There was talk regarding the implications of shutting down the main stem Yukon and how this means the Porcupine gets shut down.

A discussion took place regarding the Teslin River and how there are few fish. The TTC is flying fish in every Tuesday and this year there is very little fishing because of the drowning on the lake. There was a discussion about the Teslin sonar project.

All committee members agreed that Chinook salmon were slipping away and they need to keep the salmon culture alive. There are fewer fishers and there are fewer scientists able to speak about what is happening to salmon stocks.

The public members from the Selkirk First Nation and Pelly Crossing spoke to the lack of fish camps and not seeing people out fishing. There was no fishing until the first pulse. They also spoke to the changes in the fish and the fact that they taste differently. One family only took 3 Chinook, they were soft and smelled differently.

8. TECHNICAL PRESENTATIONS (DFO)

Mary-Ellen Jarvis presented the 2013 post-season outlook for the Yukon River. The post-season numbers were preliminary and will be verified by the JTC and the Yukon River Panel.

Sean Collins from DFO presented an overview on stock restoration options for the Yukon. It was a very preliminary presentation with macro-concepts for the Yukon to consider.

Day 1 Close.

Nov. 28, 2013

Day 1 opened with a recap of the previous day's proceedings. The members spoke at length about the concept of Hatcheries for the Yukon River.

Generally, discussion revolved around:

- These should be as last effort
- Perhaps enhancement is required to help them a little
- There are many other implications of hatcheries
- The differences between restoration and enhancement need to be clarified
- It is difficult to turn around a stock once it has been mixed
- Hatchery fish introduction is permanent you can't go back
- Hatchery fish are not as robust as wild fish
- Elders don't like us messing with the fish
- Need to know more from experts on both sides of the border
- Fox Creek project is a good example
- We need to take direction from the public
- There needs to be a consideration for diseases
- We should be working with a professional to provide us advice
- JTC was asked to look at alternatives for enhancement on hatcheries
- We need to be cautious and prepared
- What does the YRSA say about hatcheries.

9. PRESENTATION – CYFN

James MacDonald from CYFN discussed the CYFN letter to the Minister of DFO regarding their concern over the lack of action from the Canadian Government. The last time the Minister met with CYFN in Yukon was 2010 and this was not acceptable. There have been past CYFN delegations that have brought their salmon concerns to Ottawa. The Government of Canada response was inadequate.

James then presented the preliminary information from the International Salmon Summit. The concept was to have two reps from each First Nation that were involved in the fishery. The Summit was going to be held in Fairbanks and was funded by the R and E fund. There was a notice of invitations and save the date going out shortly with a website up shortly after that. The steering committee had determined the venue and was working out an agenda. There was brief discussion about other potential funding sources, (i.e. climate change monies).

The YSSC agreed to support a portion of the charter flight and how they would get the word out to the RRCs.

YSSC members spoke about the need for outcomes. It was not an easy process to get the funding and had to make sure it delivers so that future funding is not jeopardized.

The Executive Director briefed the committee on the PR strategy.

10. PRESENTATION FISHERIES ACT

Maggie Wright from the YFWMB provided an update on the Fisheries Act. Don Toews supplemented with additional technical information. The YSSC thanked Maggie and Don for their work on the FA.

11. CHINOOK MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The YSSC discussed the concept of Yukon River Chinook Management. There was a general discussion around the stock rebuilding plan as identified within the YRSA. There was also discussion around the length of escapement goals. Generally thoughts were:

- The concept of biological escapement goals
- DFO is looking for resources and commitment to build biological escapement goals
- They need to look at brood year escapement and if they should look at a stock rebuilding plan
- The US maximum sustainable yield metric makes sense for individual stocks but not for mixed stocks
- The Canadian regime focussed on habitat escapement goals
- The YRP should keep pressure on the quality of escapement
- Smaller mesh size has many benefits
- What is the status of the Wild Salmon Policy?
- There has to be something else that will work and we have to face the hard facts
- Did the US bring the fish to the border and did the pulse closures help.

Motion to Adjourn.

Frank Thomas – Motion to accept, Paul Birckel – seconded, approved. AIF