



Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee
Box 31094 Whitehorse, YT Y1A 5P7 (867)-393-6725
www.yssc.ca

PRESS RELEASE

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**Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee Recommends a Precautionary Closure of Canadian-origin
Yukon River Chinook Salmon**

The Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee (YSSC) is recommending a precautionary closure of Canadian-origin Yukon River Chinook salmon in advance of their entrance to Canada. The requirement of a pre-season recommendation to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) is made pursuant to Yukon First Nation Self-Government Agreements sections 16.7.17.12 and subsequently section 16.10.2.

Specifically, the YSSC recommends that the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for Yukon River Chinook salmon in Canada be varied to zero (0) in advance of the arrival of adult salmon at the international border. The YSSC maintains the priority allocation for Yukon River Chinook salmon should be for conservation purposes to support the Interim Management Escapement Goal (IMEG). The IMEG is the agreed upon number by the International Yukon River Panel and is set at 42,500. The IMEG, also referred to as border escapement has not been met by Alaska in five of the last seven years. The YSSC will monitor the run as it passes the Eagle sonar assessment program to determine if any further in-season recommendations to the Minister are required.

Pauline Frost Chair of the YSSC states that “given the long-term decline, low productivity issues and the very poor pre-season forecast, we need to do what we can to get as many Yukon River Chinook to the Canadian spawning grounds as possible. To date, the Alaskan Department of Fish and Game have instituted an unprecedented closure of any directed Chinook fishery. This year, it appears everyone is sharing the burden and the sacrifice to try and meet the spawning escapement goals.”

The YSSC makes these recommendations yearly to DFO as part of an iterative process that involves public meetings, committee meetings, presentations, consultation, and correspondence with Yukon First Nation Governments, Renewable Resources Councils, commercial fishers and the Yukon public. Pauline Frost states “the YSSC doesn’t take this responsibility lightly and understands the sacrifices and hardship that comes from not being able to harvest Yukon River Chinook salmon. We have heard from Yukon First Nations how difficult this will be for the elders and the youth that won’t have Chinook salmon hanging in their fish camps. We know that a number of Yukon First Nations have already been conserving and

voluntarily restricting their fisheries for some time now. We hope this closure will in the long term ultimately result in a return of Chinook salmon to the levels that we have seen in the past”.

The YSSC encourages all Yukon salmon stakeholders to participate in the weekly Yukon River Fisheries In-season Management teleconferences in order to monitor the progress of the Yukon River Chinook Run. The teleconference occurs every Tuesday from June through August, call number 1-800-315-6338, participant code: YUKON# (98566#).

Background:

The YSSC was established under Chapter 16 of the Umbrella Final Agreement (UFA) to act as “the main instrument of salmon management in the Yukon”. The YSSC makes up the majority of the Canadian portion of the Yukon River Panel. The Yukon River Panel develops and implements agreed upon research and management programs, makes recommendations to management agencies, sets and adjusts spawning escapement objectives, and oversees the use and administration of the Restoration and Enhancement Fund.

The YSSC works throughout the year to gather information and priorities through numerous regular committee meetings, community visits and outreach activities. This information and the associated priorities are then shared and utilized where appropriate by the Canadian contingent of the Yukon River Panel.

CONTACT: Dennis Zimmermann, Executive Director – 867-336-3474 executivedirector@yssc.ca

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