



Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee  
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PRESS RELEASE

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**Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee Meeting with Alaskans at Yukon River  
Panel Meetings in Whitehorse**

The Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee (YSSC) and a delegation of Yukon First Nation Governments, Renewable Resources Councils (RRCs), and fishers are meeting with Alaskans this week at the Yukon River Panel meeting in Whitehorse at the Kwanlin Dun Cultural Centre.

In 2014 it was a year of unprecedented restrictions, voluntary closures, and overall sacrifices, on both sides of border. As a result, the number of Yukon River Chinook salmon stocks met and exceeded border and spawning escapement goals as set bi-laterally by the Yukon River Panel.

The pre-season projection for Canadian-origin Yukon River Chinook in 2015 continues to be poor and well below historical averages with an estimated range of 59,000 to 70,000 fish. In addition there are concerns around the Porcupine River Fall Chum, with the pre-season forecast below the spawning escapement target. "These poor projections for Yukon River Chinook and Porcupine River Fall Chum coupled with issues around the size and quality of these fish and their overall productivity makes it clear this year will be like the last, with extreme conservation required by both countries" states YSSC Chair Pauline Frost.

The Yukon River Panel meeting this week will revisit the 2014 season, confirm the 2015 projections, finalize Restoration and Enhancement Fund project commitments, and identify the proposed management efforts in Alaska and Yukon.

The YSSC will be meeting with Alaskans to impress upon them the continued need for conservation, extensive in-season management and to confirm the desire for continued voluntary restrictions demonstrated in Canada by Yukon First Nations. The YSSC will also highlight the importance of maintaining a "salmon culture" by promoting cultural fisheries during these times of conservation.

Frank Thomas, Vice-Chair of the YSSC states, "living at the headwaters of the Yukon River system in Teslin, we have seen the decline for over a decade. There are fish camps sitting empty and a whole

generation of kids that have not been out fishing for Chinook. We need to keep things up and get as many fish to the spawning grounds as possible”.

As a follow-up to this meeting the YSSC will be traveling throughout Yukon engaging with Yukon First Nation Governments, RRCs and communities on the proposed management regime and continue discussions on stock restoration.

Background:

The management of salmon stocks originating from the Yukon River in Canada is the joint responsibility of American and Canadian governments. To facilitate international co-operation, the Yukon River Panel (established pursuant to Chapter 8 of the Pacific Salmon Treaty) is responsible for making recommendations to management entities concerning the conservation and coordinated management of Canadian-origin salmon stocks in the Yukon.

The panel meeting takes place April 12<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup>, 2015 in Whitehorse and alternates between Whitehorse and Anchorage, Alaska. The agenda is listed here: [http://yukonriverpanel.com/salmon/wp-content/uploads/2009/03/yrp\\_agenda\\_april\\_2015\\_fin2.pdf](http://yukonriverpanel.com/salmon/wp-content/uploads/2009/03/yrp_agenda_april_2015_fin2.pdf).

Approximately fifty-per cent of the Yukon River Chinook salmon stocks that enter into the river system spawn in Canada.

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.

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