



# Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee

## Your Voice in Salmon Management

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### Why are fishers switching to smaller mesh sizes?

Fishers have expressed concern that they are catching smaller Chinook salmon than they used to on the Yukon River (Howard et al 2010). Multiple factors may affect the size of Chinook. Specific concerns were raised regarding large mesh nets removing larger and older Chinook (mostly female) than smaller mesh nets (Howard et al 2010, JTC 2006). A concern is that harvesting the larger Chinook will result in smaller salmon spawning, which could contribute to smaller offspring. Scientists (JTC 2006) found that Chinook have slowly been getting smaller. This is concerning. Recent research (Ohlberger et al 2020) found that Chinook length has decreased 6% but that potential offspring production has decreased by about 15%.

Salmon managers took action. In 2011 Alaskan fishers were restricted to using 7.5" mesh size or smaller (JTC 2020). In Canada, First Nation fisheries are managed by First Nation Governments (IFMP 2018) and most already used smaller mesh. The Canadian Chinook commercial and domestic fisheries has not operated since 2009 (JTC 2020) and would have been restricted to 6" mesh. Since 2019 the Yukon River Panel recommended Yukoners use 6" or smaller mesh nets in the Yukon River (YRP 2019).

### How do you measure your mesh size?

The most common way of measuring mesh size, is the stretch mesh size (Redden 2019). Stretch the mesh vertically from knot to knot and measure from the centre of each knot, as shown in the figure (Redden 2019).

Image from: <https://www.redden-net.com/materials-and-measurements/>



#### References:

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