



Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee
Box 31094
Whitehorse YT, Y1A 5P7
ex.dir@yssc.ca

February 16, 2021

Honourable Bernadette Jordan, M.P.
Minister
Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard
Government of Canada
200 Kent Street
Station 15N100
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6
min@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

RE: Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee Asek River Drainage Recommendations for 2021

Dear Minister Jordan:

The Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee (YSSC) is established and mandated under Yukon First Nation Final Agreements (YFNFA) as the "main instrument of Salmon management in the Yukon". Section 16.7.12 of the YFNFA specifies that after consultation with affected Yukon First Nations (YFN), the YSSC **shall** make recommendations to the Minister on allocations of salmon to users. YSSC **may** make recommendations to the Minister on content and timing of salmon harvesting and management plans. With that in mind, please accept the following recommendation under section 16.8.4:

Recommendation #1: No allocation to the Public (Recreational) Chinook and Sockeye Angling fishery in 2021, dependent on the in-season projections.

The Asek salmon pre-season forecasts are poor for both Chinook and sockeye. Both forecasts anticipate that just enough salmon will be available to meet the management and escapement goals with no recreational harvest. As such YSSC is recommending no allocation to the recreational fisheries. This recommendation is supported by Champagne and Aishihik First Nations (CAFN), Yukon Fish and Game Association, and other Yukoners.

This closure is to respect the CAFN fishers. In recent poor salmon years, the CAFN citizens have reduced or completely eliminated their harvest. The recreational angling fishery was open to non-retention (catch and release). The CAFN finds this completely unacceptable as it makes encouraging and enforcing a closure or restriction for CAFN fishers extremely difficult. The YSSC concurs with the CAFN view in this regard.

The YSSC understands that using a condition of licence is a temporary measure, and cannot be changed in-season. As such, the YSSC is looking forward to proposed regulation changes for the whole of the Yukon as part of the Yukon Angling Strategy, which is an initiative directed by your predecessor in 2019.

Recommendation #2: Normal allocation to the Public (Recreational) coho Angling in 2021, dependent upon the in-season projections.

If the Coho in-season projections indicate that the spawning escapement goal will be met and the CAFN fishery will meet subsistence harvest expectations we will recommend leaving the angling daily and possession limits for coho at two and four respectively. This will see a reduction from last year. It is justified by concerns of the CAFN over COVID and land use issues in the principal area used by fishers.

At a later date the YSSC will submit further recommendations for the Alsek drainage. There are growing concerns related to salmon in this watershed. The YSSC intends to consider the current situation and move to reconcile the concerns.

Should you require further information or clarification please contact Elizabeth MacDonald, Executive Director of the YSSC, at 867-393-6725

Sincerely,



Al von Finster
Chair
Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee

CC: Steve Gotch, Area Director Fisheries and Oceans Canada