

**YUKON SALMON SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING
MAY 26, 27, 2021 MINUTES
VIRTUAL AND AT DAWSON CITY**

DAY 1: Wednesday, May 26, 2021

PRESENT Carl Sidney – YSSC Vice Chair (YFWMB Appointee) (Chair of the meeting), Al von Finster – YSSC Member (VGG Nominee), Roger Alfred – YSSC Member (CYFN Nominee), Stanley Njootli Sr. – YSSC Member (VGG Nominee), Ron Chambers – YSSC Member (CAFN Nominee), Tim Gerberding – YSSC Member (Government of Canada Nominee), Dennis Zimmermann – YSSC Member (Government of Canada Nominee), Jason Jim – YSSC Second Vice Chair (CAFN Nominee)

ONLINE Michelle Dawson-Beattie – YSSC Member (YFWMB Appointee), James MacDonald – YSSC Chair (CYFN Nominee),

GUESTS Steve Smith (DFO), Martin Slama (Lake Laberge RRC), Hannah Turner (TTC),
ONLINE Larry Joe (Aisek RRC), Melina Hougen (CAFN), Allan Skookum (Carmacks RRC), Gord Zealand (Yukon Fish and Game Association), Bill Waugh (DFO) Jessie Trerice (DFO)

GUEST Sebastian Jones (commercial fisher and YCS)

SUPPORT Elizabeth MacDonald (Executive Director)

MINUTE Sharon Kerr (CAH Services)
TAKER

OPENING PRAYER Roger Alfred

CALL TO ORDER AND AGENDA REVIEW/APPROVAL

Carl Sidney reviewed the agenda and asked for additions, changes, or amendments.

Additional agenda items added to the closed session of the meeting.

Motion 1 – That YSSC accept the May 26, 27, 2021 agenda as amended.

Moved by: Dennis Zimmermann

Seconded by: Tim Gerberding

Passed by: Consensus

ROUNDTABLE INTRODUCTIONS & OPENING COMMENTS

The YSSC members introduced themselves and provided opening comments.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES & SUMMARY MINUTES

No comments or discussion.

Motion 2 – That YSSC accept February 22, 23, 2021 minutes.

Moved by: Dennis Zimmermann

Seconded by: Al von Finster

Passed by: Consensus

ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL UPDATE

Current Budget Status (2021-2022) & Planned Activities

Elizabeth MacDonald reviewed the status of the current budget and the planned activities. Copies were provided in the meeting kit and electronically.

Projects (ED)

Virtual Ed Ex

Elizabeth MacDonald provided an update on the progress of the virtual Ed Exchange. The first planning meeting will be next week. They each have two participants on both sides of the border. The plan is to videotape activities during the season, even if there is no fishing. One of the Yukon participants is from Pelly Crossing, and she will go to the fish camps in Pelly during the season. The other participant is from Whitehorse. She has not traditionally fished for salmon, but her grandfather did. This participant wanted to be more involved in activities and she comes with a good background. Once the last fishing for the season has ended, they will have a virtual meeting and make plans to edit the videos and develop a presentation to share between Alaska and Canada to be used to create awareness.

Chum Angling Project partnering with YFGA

Elizabeth MacDonald provided an update on the Chum Angling project. They are partnering with Yukon Fish and Game Association. This project is through the R&E fund that was applied for last year. There will be some events involving videos and clips. They are looking at doing a short video on cooking chum and having some tasting events.

Yukon River Salmon Summit

Elizabeth MacDonald provided an update of the Yukon River Salmon Summit. The main outcome, would hopefully be a resolution from Yukoners and Alaskans along the river for everyone to sign. The steering committee includes Alaskans, First Nations, Yukon Conservation Society and YSSC. Currently we are drafting a proposal for funding. The summit is tentatively planned for the Fall of 2022. The summit would like to open with some stories from elders and introductions to get to know people. The next day would be about looking forward to what we can do to change and building relationships.

Chinook Life Cycle Game /Chinook Life Cycle Design

Elizabeth MacDonald reviewed the Chinook Life Cycle Game and Design. The game was played with some of the students at Whitehorse Elementary School. They loved the game. They need to continue to work on some aspects of the game so it will not be ready for this school year. It is hoped it will roll out next school year.

Preseason engagement – What we heard

Elizabeth reviewed the *What we heard – YSSC 2020/2021 Engagement* that was provided in the meeting kit.

Comments/Discussion

Carl Sidney discussed what they have just recently heard from some of the First Nations. It was too early to make a recommendation. The numbers that are presented were just a prediction. They suggested we make a recommendation to the Minister to extend the deadline which is currently the beginning of June. They are requesting that the government review the placer legislation because they've done other reviews of the Fisheries Act and the Mineral Development Strategy.

We have to educate the Americans. We have to build allies and have some allies work for us, especially with our governments — both federal and territorial.

Ron Chambers raised the Jay Treaty Canada has with the US and asked if that would somehow work to their benefit. It may be used as part of an argument for them to recognize our needs. He knows of other First Nations in the south who travel back and forth across the border with no real difficulties.

DFO Evaluation of YSSC's Activities (Arlene Yeulet and Mark Lang)

Carl Sidney introduced YSSC members and welcomed Arlene Yeulet and Mark Lang to the meeting.

Arlene Yeulet and Mark Lang reviewed the *YSSC Evaluation of Activities and Outcomes* PowerPoint presentation made available in the meeting kit and electronically.

Comments/Discussion

Tim Gerberding raised a concern regarding tracking the activities related to the contribution agreements. The contribution agreements do not begin to describe or comprehend the full mandate of the salmon subcommittee, as described in the UFA. If they are tracking what we do, according to the contribution agreement, they are not getting the full picture of what it is that the Yukon Salmon Subcommittee is supposed to be doing. The evaluation provided some good recommendation and input, but they didn't really get to the issue which is whether YSSC is fulfilling their responsibilities under the Umbrella Final Agreement or if our current funding was adequate.

Dennis Zimmermann understands that this is an evaluation of their reporting and there is room for improvement. This report doesn't address the funding inadequacy. Do the evaluators and DFO think this is the end product? What's the next step? It's not addressing their needs.

Tim Gerberding said this issue will be addressed as part of the UFA review. The UFA funding is scheduled to be renewed in 2024 and this review takes place in 2022. That would put new funding at least three years away. Given the state of salmon and YSSC's inability to fulfill their mandate, this is not an acceptable outcome. In the 2014 review, boards, committees, and First Nations didn't have much, if any, input. It was between CYFN and the Government of Canada and Government of Yukon. The earlier reviews in 2003 and 2007 came out with extensive recommendations. The subcommittee made presentations to the implementation review group. There was a very weighty report and there was consensus on the recommendation by all the parties. The recommendation was for a very significant funding increase for the salmon subcommittee. As a result of those recommendations, the subcommittee hired its own executive director and relocated away from DFO offices to achieve greater independence. Those changes came at a cost and those costs have never been addressed.

Dennis Zimmermann said that, from his experience, he has seen a lot of different boards and committees go sideways and he wants to be careful how the YSSC moves forward. There is a lot of the friction that keeps you away from doing your core business. That time is spent on negotiating the contribution agreement and the funding through YG. The strategic plan is a really good step that should alleviate some issues. He agrees with Tim and doesn't have a problem with the recommendations in the evaluation.

Steve Smith provided input on what DFO is looking to accomplish with this evaluation. YSSC is generally accomplishing what it sets out to do. There are some challenges in linking this together — funding, mandate, and the results and outcomes. It's hard to decipher the challenges, where you're short of funding, and the reasons for the shortage. For DFO, the next step is for the YSSC to review the recommendations and consider implementing them. The next the opportunity to talk about increased funding, or to review the funding, is 2024.

Carl Sidney thought if they had the extra funding that they pay to the Executive Director it may help them to accomplish some of the recommendations.

Alsek Salmon Preseason Forecast and Management (Bill Waugh)

Bill Waugh presented the PowerPoint presentation *Alsek River 2021 Salmon Outlooks and Preseason Fishery Management Plans* provided in the meeting kit and electronically.

Comments/Discussion

Dennis Zimmermann asked if catch and release is prohibited or not and whether people were allowed to fish for grayling.

Bill Waugh said that they can fish for non-salmon species. The salmon angling prohibition is a condition of license for the Yukon salmon catch card.

Dennis Zimmermann asked if he was able to share the number of anglers and the number of Coho caught through rec fishing.

Bill Waugh said there has probably been no more than 20 to 30 anglers over the last couple of years. The harvests have been low at 10 for Coho the last couple of seasons.

Ron Chambers and Al von Finster provided some historical information on the Alsek River and the concerns with fishing habitat along the river.

Yukon Salmon Preseason Forecast and Management (Steve Smith)

Steve Smith presented the PowerPoint presentation *2021 Yukon and Porcupine River Salmon Outlooks and Management* this was available for the meeting kit and electronically.

Comments/Discussion

Roger Alfred asked if the June 24 date was the midpoint of the run.

Steve Smith said that it is around that time when the fish reach the point at Pilot Station.

Jessie Trerice said the Alaska Fish and Game released their first fishery announcement about a week or so ago. In the fishery announcement, they get to talk about the forecast. They also provided a preview of management strategies they are implementing. As the salmon enter the coastal areas and are moving up the river the fishery will be closed. The closure may be weeks long until the midpoint of the salmon run at Pilot Station. In-season assessment indicates a run closer to the lower end of the pre-season forecast.

Roger Alfred asked if the mid-run restriction at Pilot Station will be in effect in Canada.

Steve Smith said he and Jessie also wondered and asked for clarification. The reply was that it was specific to the midpoint at Pilot Station because it is giving us grief in terms of the estimates that it's providing. When they have that information from Pilot, they will manage to the bottom of that range. We want to be sure we are reaching the escapement goals.

Rogers Alfred is concerned that if we don't restrict fishing to the mid run here in Canada and we just opened up the fishery then the primary spawners and the ones that are headed to the end of the river will be targeted.

Steve Smith said the reality is that, by the midpoint of the run, there may be fish that are coming to Canada. They typically don't see fish at Eagle until the first week of July. They will have a fairly good idea of what's happening on the US side and what management actions they will take. There is a commitment to work collaboratively on management and we will have those discussions.

Members concluded the day with a general discussion on the *Pre-Season Engagement — What we heard* discussion.

Meeting adjourned at 4:00 PM

**YUKON SALMON SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING
MAY 26, 27, 2021 MINUTES
VIRTUAL AND DAWSON CITY**

DAY 2: Thursday, May 27, 2021

PRESENT Carl Sidney – YSSC Vice Chair (YFWMB Appointee) (Chair of the meeting), Al von Finster – YSSC Member (VGG Nominee), Roger Alfred – YSSC Member (CYFN Nominee), Stanley Njootli Sr. – YSSC Member (VGG Nominee), Ron Chambers – YSSC Member (CAFN Nominee), Tim Gerberding – YSSC Member (Government of Canada Nominee), Dennis Zimmermann – YSSC Member (Government of Canada Nominee), Jason Jim – YSSC Second Vice Chair (CAFN Nominee)

ONLINE Michelle Dawson-Beattie – YSSC Member (YFWMB), James MacDonald – YSSC Chair (CYFN Nominee),

GUESTS Steve Smith (DFO), Martin Slama (Lake Laberge RRC), Hannah Turner (TTC),
ONLINE Larry Joe (Alek RRC), Melina Hougen (CAFN), Allen Skookum (Carmacks RRC), Gord Zealand (Yukon Fish and Game Association), Brandy Mayes (KDFN), Deborah Donnelly

GUEST Sebastian Jones (commercial fisher & YCS)

SUPPORT Elizabeth MacDonald (Executive Director)

**MINUTE
TAKER** Sharon Kerr (CAH Services)

CALL TO ORDER

Carl Sidney welcomed the members and guests to Day 2 of the YSSC meeting and reviewed the agenda.

AAROM/Yukon First Nation Salmon Stewardship Alliance Update (Dennis Zimmermann)

Dennis Zimmermann provided a verbal update to the YSSC. He provided an overview of AAROM, the participants involved, meetings, and background. CYFN is a supporter of the AAROM group in Yukon and provides arm's length administrative support. They are discussing whether this arrangement will remain in place or if they will become a standalone organization. They have nine to 12 First Nation participants at their monthly meeting and they are working on a five-year strategic plan. The five-year strategic plan is a mandatory application to DFO. The draft plan has been completed and reviewed by the parties and there will be some revisions. There will be

meetings in the near future to finalize the edits and revisions. Restoration is a priority and technical research. There is a real interest in working on traditional knowledge and cultural programming. He provided an overview of the office administration and setup. Initially, funding will run through CYFN. They will be advertising for an ED soon. There is always space for First Nations who want to join this group. They can be full members or observers — however they want to participate. They will continue to update YSSC on progress and changes as they move forward.

Comments/Discussion:

Elizabeth MacDonald asked when the draft strategic plan will be completed.

Dennis Zimmermann said that, unless something goes sideways, they should have a strategic plan finalized by the middle of June.

Ron Chambers talked about the importance of including culture and the importance of understanding what fish and wildlife mean as part of First Nations culture.

Sebastian Jones asked how the non-salmon watersheds are covered, particularly the Liard or Mackenzie watersheds.

Dennis Zimmermann said that they need to discuss the governance question. The second point is to ensure that aquatic resources are covered. At this time, we're the only salmon organization and our focus is on the salmon. This ties into what Ron said: you have to bring the two together. When we talk about salmon and Yukon, it includes the bears, the water quality, the trees, and everything else. We have heard feedback that we do need to expand it beyond salmon to cover all aspect. Every First Nation is invited to participate and bring to the table the specific things that they would like to see included in this. He is not familiar with what DFO does and doesn't cover, but fitting freshwater fish into this is a good idea.

Working Group updates

Elizabeth Macdonald reviewed and provided and updates for the following meetings:

- Habitat Working Group/Habitat (Al, Tim, Stan, Jason):
 - FA Implementation Codes of Practice Survey, webinars (codes of practice, prescribed works, regulations, cumulative effects);
 - DRLUPC, Tim attended their regular meetings;
 - Edits to DRLUPC draft report (salmon section);
 - Letter to DFO on the Faro Mine Complex; and
 - YSSC's comments on the implementation of changes to the Fisheries Act.
- Traditional Knowledge Working Group (Roger, Carl, Al, Stan, Elizabeth):
 - Identified more contacts from which to obtain additional advice and to build partnerships.
- Alsek Drainage Working Group (Jason, Ron, Michelle, Al):

- Need to plan the preseason meeting (3rd of the year).

Correspondence & News

See agenda attachment

Meeting Updates

Elizabeth MacDonald provided a brief update on the meetings included in the agenda attachment.

Report card update

Elizabeth MacDonald reviewed the report card.

YSSC Meeting Action Items 2019-20

Meeting	Action Item	Description	Completed
February 23 2021	1	Follow up with DFO regarding the status of the evaluation process	✓
February 23 2021	2	AI will draft a recommendation to the Minister regarding Faro Mine complex management and reclamation	✓
February 23 2021	3	Write a letter to YFNs to see if they would support a YRSA renegotiation and ask for their suggestions. After YSSC will reach out to other Yukoners to gauge their support.	
February 23 2021	4	AI will gather information related to the relicensing of the Whitehorse dam in 2025. After, we will reach out to KDFN, C/TFN, and TKC. We will then write to the Minister requesting that the responsible DFO personnel contact YSSC regarding the relicensing.	underway
February 23 2021	5	Dennis and Elizabeth will set up a meeting with AI, KDFN, C/TFN and TKC to discuss the fish ladder passage issues and relicensing of the Whitehorse dam.	
Oct 14 2020	5	Create a Habitat Working Group (AI, Tim, Jason, Stan), to create systems map around habitat using TK & western science	✓
Oct 14 2020	9	Letter to parties requesting funds to accompany acceptance of recommendations	
Oct 14 2020	11	Letter to JTC Co-Chairs reminder YRP AI to include TK on both sides of the border (pressure to incorporate TK) before next JTC meeting, CC YFN C&C, CYFN	
Oct 14 2020	15	Tim and AI will develop a submission for Land Use Planning for Dawson, it will be used as a template for future Land Use Planning	Submission done

May 2019	SP #1	Create and update reference material for Members, public, and stakeholders	
May 2019	SP #2	Develop a communication and engagement strategy. Will involve YFN, Yukoners, governments, RRCs, and Alaskans	
May 2019	SP #3	Create Alsek Drainage Working Group- develop goals, including restoration	created
May 2019	Draft Strat Plan	Write letter to RDG requesting a seat on the TBR Panel	

Thoughts on Messaging to Alaskans Regarding Yukon Habitat/Mining and the Whitehorse Dam

Carl Sidney opened the discussion and asked for comments on messaging to Alaskans regarding Yukon habitat and mining.

Carl Sidney asked Elizabeth about a local named David who was producing a couple of videos. He has seen a little bit and there may be an opportunity for discussion.

Elizabeth MacDonald said she can reach out and see if he would be willing to share a video or let the subcommittee know what the video will be involved in. They also talked about ideas and what would make it better for commercial fishers.

Jason Jim discussed the idea of asking *APTN Investigates* to do an investigative report on the whole salmon issue from the headwaters right down to the bottom.

Dennis Zimmermann said that talking to Alaskans is obviously incredibly important. They need to be very careful about what they say. A lot of science and strategy goes into communicating and changing behavior. There are different groups of Alaskans; some are better than others. It's a question of trying to understand the audience we are speaking to and getting them the right message in order to change their behavior. Mining initiatives are incredible, but they don't do anything if they are not being presented to the right audience in the right way. We really have to think about which audience we need to influence to change their behavior, otherwise we're creating these tools, but we don't have the proper vehicle in which to present it in order to change their behavior.

Al Von Finster agreed with Dennis. Defining your audience and speaking to your audience in a way that the audience can understand is important.

Elizabeth MacDonald asked if it is worthwhile to start a communication working group. We can start with a communication piece on education with Alaska. Supported by Carl and Jason. James says it can bust the myths.

Note: Internet difficulties associated with power outage.

Action Item #1: Create a Communication Working Group

Members: Al, Dennis, James and Elizabeth

Opportunity for Guests to Provide Advice to YSSC

Carl Sidney opened the floor to those who wanted to express their thoughts and recommendations to those who came to the meeting.

(Gord Zealand) thanked the YSSC for being invited to the meeting. He was impressed with the number of participants who were involved with the meeting. Based on some of the agenda items, now would be a great time to invite the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans to come to the Yukon. Larry Bagnell may be able to assist in terms of getting the Minister here. In terms of playing politics, he thinks now is the time if you want a chance at increasing YSSC funding.

Larry Joe suggested that, because of the First Nations nomadic lifestyle we lived, the YSSC should go back, re-evaluate, and investigate historic salmon bearing waters. Rivers that come to mind are Nordenskiöld, Takhini, and the Aishihik river systems. He suggested looking at the removal and location of beaver dams to make the waterways clear from obstructions. He suggested that a working group go down the Alsek and the Tatshenshini rivers to remove obstructions. He also suggested that there is too much repetition in the meetings, talking about the same concerns, and rehashing them over and over.

Sebastian Jones thanked the YSSC for taking the time and holding the meeting in Dawson. There is a need to take an ecosystems-health approach. If you look after the environment as a whole rather than focusing on numbers of fish spawning, we'd more likely to set up conditions where we can have sustained, healthy harvests in the long run. For the Yukon Salmon Sub-committee, that could be, not just how we look at the salmon management on the Yukon River, but also what happens outside of the Yukon River. We always deal with issues like the bycatch in the Bering — millions of tons of life is taken out of the sea every year without any real consideration of what it means to all of the other life. You can't just keep doing that year after year after year without the big sound effects. For the Yukon Salmon Sub-Committee, that would mean advocating for a position in some of the management bodies that look at some of these other places.

Jason Jim said the Champagne Aishihik ran into the same problem on the Alsek. They never met the treaty obligation on escapement for four or five years in a row. They had to stop fishing for one year and the salmon came back. They opened up the next year and the salmon crashed again. It's obvious they're taking way too much. Maybe this is where we kick it up to the Chiefs to get political on this.

Sebastian Jones agreed. They need areas that get long term breaks in the ocean like a marine protected area. People who harvest from the land know that there are areas that need to be left alone so that they can rebuild the harvest. The same needs to be done on the oceans.

Ron Chambers said he thought the problem with North America is that we're still dealing with the frontier image and idea. Alaska definitely has that image for themselves. It's hard to tell people with the frontier idea that they can't do something because that's the whole reason they went there.

Karlie Knight thanked the YSSC for traveling to Dawson and meeting with leadership and the community. This was very valuable and she learns so much while attending the meetings. Tr'ondek Hwech'in First Nations have a lot of salmon activities planned for the summer. The Klondike River sonar is operating for a second year. They're doing instream incubation. Depending on the returns and the elders direction, they'll see if it's feasible to actually take broodstock. They're also looking at the feasibility of having an incubation facility here, and many other things with education, salmon in the schools, and the Stream of Dreams. There are plans to have a fish camp this year based on the salmon projections. It might be teaching what it takes to set up a fish camp and talking about fish if there is no harvest. There might be a cultural harvest of a couple of fish and taking the kids out on the boat. There hasn't been a lot of internal discussion yet. Once the details are finalized, she will pass on the information and see if anyone is interested in attending.

Carl Sidney thanked the members and the participants for coming to the meeting and they moved to the closed session.

Closed Session – In-camera

No minutes were recorded.

YUKON SALMON SUB-COMMITTEE FALL MEETING

May 26, 27, 2021

Action Items

ACTION ITEM 1 – Create a Communication Working Group (Al, Dennis, James, Elizabeth)

ACTION ITEM 2 – Invite the Minister to visit the Yukon to discuss our funding issue/recommendation, address issue of Alaska failing to meet their treaty obligations and as interveners in Aishihik/Faro (need money to support participating in these)

ACTION ITEM 3 – Draft letter using the recommendations agreed to. Circulate the draft to the Member for comment. Letter to be sent by June 4

ACTION ITEM 4 – Elizabeth and Dennis talk with Peter about his video project to see if it would be worth proposing to the YRP Communication Subcommittee.

ACTION ITEM 5 – Al and Elizabeth draft a summary of issues and history of restoration projects (including number of transfers to date) and create a draft guidance document for YSSC and restoration. Check with Natasha/Gillian/Ben for details of their current projects and discuss potential issues.

ACTION ITEM 6 – Nominate Ron Chambers to TBP as recreational seat.

ACTION ITEM 7 – Ask Minister to provide similar funds to Yukon enhancement as was done for BC.