

**YUKON SALMON SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING  
FEBRUARY 22, 23, 2021 MINUTES  
VIRTUAL AND AT YUKON INN**

**DAY 1: Monday, February 22, 2021**

---

**PRESENT** Al von Finster – YSSC Chair (VGG Nominee), Roger Alfred – YSSC Member (CYFN Nominee), Stanley Njootli Sr. – YSSC Member (VGG Nominee), Carl Sidney – YSSC Vice Chair (YFWMB Appointee), Ron Chambers – YSSC Member (CAFN Nominee)

**ONLINE/  
PHONE** Tim Gerberding – YSSC Member (Federal Nominee), Jason Jim – YSSC 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair (CAFN Nominee)

**GUESTS  
ONLINE** Steve Smith (DFO), Joseph O'Brien (CRRC), Vera Charlie (CRRC), Allen Skookum (CRRC), Martin Slama Lake (Laberge RRC), Don Toews (CTRRC), Sebastian Jones (YCS/YFWMB), Lewis Rifkind (YCS), Louise Naylor (DFO)

**SUPPORT** Elizabeth MacDonald (Executive Director)

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

---

**OPENING PRAYER** Carl Sidney

---

**CALL TO ORDER AND AGENDA REVIEW/APPROVAL**

Al von Finster asked for additions, changes or amendments.

Elizabeth MacDonald advised that there will be changes to the agenda and it will be posted on the internet later today.

<p><b>Motion 1</b> – That the YSSC accept the February 22, 23, 2021 agenda as amended. <b>Moved by:</b> Carl Sidney <b>Seconded by:</b> Ron Chambers <b>Passed by:</b> Consensus</p>
--

---

**ROUNDTABLE INTRODUCTIONS & COMMENTS**

The YSSC members, those present in the room and those online, introduced themselves for the record. Guests also introduced themselves.

**REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MINUTES & SUMMARY MINUTES**

Carl reviewed and commented on the action items listed in the minutes.

Elizabeth advised that the action items will be discussed during the Report Card Review.

**Motion 2** – That the YSSC accept the October 14 - 16, 2020 minutes.

**Moved by:** Al von Finster

**Seconded by:** Carl Sidney

**Passed by:** Consensus

---

## ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL UPDATE

### Procedure Update

Elizabeth reviewed the procedures provided in the meeting kits and virtually.

### Comments/Discussion

- One concern that was raised was the payment process for the Yukon River Panel (YRP). Members could not be paid for the December meeting until January. Elizabeth discussed this with the Executive and they made a slight change. If they continue to have difficulties, they will fully review the procedure and make necessary changes.
- Members reviewed the payment of honorariums and they discussed the YSSC top up of the DFO honorarium amount so that it reflects the YSSC's daily rate.
- Members agreed that the YRP honorarium rate for the chair will be at the same rate as a member. There is no extra responsibility for the chair to attend meetings.
- Members discussed the increase of the honorarium and whether or not increases are allowed. As the funding flows through YG, from DFO, they set the rate of the honorarium.
- Elizabeth provided an overview of the implementation review from 2005 and the present practice for increasing honorariums. She proposed an automatic increase every year going forward. It would be based on the recommended amount from 2005 and it would increase each year in alignment with the increase in the contribution agreement. Every year it goes up a little bit, because of cost inflation. The government uses a formula to determine the increase each year.
- Tim Gerberding was part of the 2005 implementation review. Elizabeth's description is accurate. Each year, the YSSC's contribution increases by the federal measure of inflation. He was in favour of the proposal.

**Motion 2** – That the YSSC accept the procedure update.

**Moved by:** Ron Chambers

**Seconded by:** Stan Njootli

**Passed by:** Consensus

Elizabeth will finalize the changes and provide a copy to each member. Travel rates are included in the operating procedures. Any changes to the rates would need to be reflected in the procedures.

### **DFO Evaluation**

Al von Finster provided a background and summary on the DFO Evaluation. The overall evaluation is that they have raised concerns with the lack of funding to carry out some subcommittee tasks. Part of this is due to the move from DFO to YFWMB. YSSC has an office there and pays rent, insurance, and all the regular office expenses. There was an understanding that DFO was to provide extra funding to YSSC to carry out the same type of work that they did when they were housed within DFO. The funding has not come. YSSC raised this concern through letters to the Minister, and the Minister's response was to request an evaluation on YSSC activities. YSSC met with the project team, which included several consultants. Since the meeting, nothing has happened.

Elizabeth MacDonald provided additional information. There was a little bit of follow up from YSSC on which documents they wanted to review. Work on a logic model may be underway, however Elizabeth has not heard any news.

Tim Gerberding is part of the group and attended the meeting. There was a logic model. YSSC's view was that the logic model didn't accurately describe what needed to be done. It didn't explore all the duties and activities of the YSSC as prescribed by the Umbrella Final Agreement. Reviewing chapter 16 of the UFA, there are a number of things that the Chair and YSSC are directed to do and is beyond specific salmon management measures. Their duties relate to habitat and participation in different public initiatives such as the mineral development strategy, land use planning, et cetera. This was identified during a series of calls. YSSC also produced a document to detail all of the activities that the YSSC has to fulfill pursuant to the Umbrella Final Agreement, which was completed in early January. An exact date for follow up was not identified.

Steve Smith from DFO was not too involved in this process. He agreed with Tim's recollection of where they are with the process.

### **Action Item #1: Follow up with DFO regarding the status of the evaluation process**

### **Budget**

Current Budget Status (2020-2021)

Elizabeth reviewed the current budget status provided in the meeting material. After review, there are funds available for projects that could be done before the end of the fiscal year.

### **Comments/Discussion**

- Tim Gerberding asked about the amount of funding that could be carried over to the next year. When things get back to normal, there would be opportunities to take on projects. He suggested not rushing into projects just to spend the funding.
- Elizabeth MacDonald advised that, according to DFO, they can carry over any amount of the contribution agreement with DFO. They have, as a practice, tried to keep it to 15 percent but they can carry over any amount. The YSSC needs to ensure they have a plan to spend the money.
- Al von Finster supported the idea. YSSC should be planning the activities for next summer, such as field work. This is the time to plan. Waiting until May or June will be too late as everyone will be busy. He suggested developing good projects now to fill needs, particularly with respect to communication.
- Stanley Njootli asked if there was any kind of education support with Yukon University.
- Elizabeth MacDonald did not think so. YFWMB has a bursary in Alex Van Bibbers name. If YSSC felt strongly about a bursaries or scholarships, it is possible to provide support in the amount of \$500 or \$2,000 a year. Organizations receive student applications annually and then select the prospective students.
- Stanley Njootli also suggested setting up a panel at the University. The YSSC could attend and answer students' questions about salmon. It would be good to gauge the interest.
- Ron Chambers discussed opportunities with Yukon University. Universities study situations. We need to bring more focus to homegrown solutions. We have one of the biggest problems in North America and we have a university in our backyard. We need better answers than we're getting. People come to the Yukon with their degree, but they lack the history. That plays a big role. Our on-the-land part is merely a backdrop.
- Carl Sidney raised the issue of traditional knowledge. It is still a mystery as to why we can't get recognized, especially within DFO and the Joint Technical Committee (JTC). Following the review of the Fisheries Act, there was supposed to be millions of dollars of work on traditional knowledge, but nothing is happening. So many Boards and Committees are working on traditional knowledge. At some point there will be a gathering with Boards and Committees on incorporating traditional knowledge. That could be a good use of funding. His recommendation is to give half of the money for traditional knowledge and half to education.
- Joseph O'Brien talked about the need to do more regarding traditional knowledge. The ones who know about traditional knowledge are the elders in the different Yukon First Nations. Those ones are now getting old, and soon they will be gone. He would support having more education now while they are still here to teach about the moose, salmon, caribou, and other wildlife. They could teach respect and about how First Nations people don't practice catch and release or trophy hunt.

- Elizabeth MacDonald said she needed to have \$235,000 rolled over to the new year for operating costs as the new year's money from DFO does not come in for about a month into the new year.

**Motion 4** – That the YSSC approve spending \$5,000 on education and \$5,000 on Traditional Knowledge workshop next fiscal.

**Moved by:** Carl Sidney

**Seconded by:** Roger Alfred

**Passed by:** Consensus

## **R&E Projects**

### **Ed Exchange Funding Update**

Elizabeth MacDonald advised that the Education Exchange was funded. They will start the planning process and will work on the date, invitation list, and workplan. This will be a virtual exchange due to COVID (no international travel). They have to work on providing people with the means to electronically communicate.

There will be virtual meetings throughout this summer season, allowing Alaskans and Yukoners an opportunity to meet together on both sides of the border, to share ideas, get to know one another, and develop relationships.

### **Comments/Discussion**

- Tim requested a broad discussion with the YSSC about invasive projects (freeze core and incubation projects). He is concerned about using invasive techniques on what is already a very depressed stock. It is his understanding that the JTC has indicated broad concerns about these types of projects as well in their comments. At some point, he'd like to have a discussion with respect to whether or not these types of projects are something the YSSC is prepared to support going forward. He has concerns.
- Al provided an overview of his experience with these projects during his career at DFO. These projects are categorized as "intrusive" rather than "invasive". He explained the process of artificial propagation. Al had photographs to share.
- These techniques are experimental. It might be better to let nature take its course and we can limit fishing, remove beaver dams, and improve habitat. It would be good to have a workshop about these methods.
- Steve Smith provided an overview of JTC concerns. They would like to see proof of viability and would like more information. Proponents need to fully provide information about the restoration projects in the application process.

- Carl Sidney said this would be something that traditional knowledge could probably do cheaper and faster. Those with traditional knowledge know exactly where the fish used to be, as this information came from someone that had the knowledge.
- This discussion will continue during the incamera session time.

### **Update on Faro mine work (Don Toews) (Moved from February 23, 2021)**

Don Toews reviewed his presentation “Faro Mine Remediation Project” and “Faro EC Presentation” provided in the meeting materials and on the website. The presentation focus was on Faro Mine background and history, quartz mining 101, and SFN/YESAB EC Workshop project scope presentation.

### **Comments/Discussion**

- Ron Chambers asked if there’s any idea what the previous contamination was before with the mine? He would assume something must be coming out of the ground. He was thinking the same idea for Windy Crag where there was leaching.
- Don Toews said they defer to traditional knowledge and historical knowledge to determine what the situation was like. They also look at parallel systems. There are controlled systems in the Pelly River drainage that we can look at to see the condition of the drainage. Blind Creek would probably be one of them. Blind Creek is pretty well unimpacted. There is quite a bit of data monitoring, both in terms of spawning and juvenile utilization. We need to monitor those control systems over the next decades to see how the changes in Faro are reflected in the control systems. Observing control systems is one of the recommendations that they’ve made. Don provided an overview of the research projects he is working on with SFN.
- Stanley Njootli thinks they should be looking at the cumulative effects of historical projects at Faro as they’re going to do the reclamation work there. He asked if there is documentation to say that they’re not looking at cumulative effects.
- Licensing will occur over the next 25 years, which will allow for YSSC involvement through YESAB.
- Al said we should look at the broader Faro complex, which is a huge area. There is a long time series of data back to the 70’s.

### **Yukon River Salmon Agreement Implementation (YSSC Discussion)**

- Limitations/re-negotiating YRSA

Al provided some background and history of the Yukon River Salmon Agreement (YRSA). This was a discussion on the limitation and renegotiations of the YRSA.

Tim added the YRSA is an annex to the Pacific Salmon Treaty. It includes a clause which basically says that it can be amended through a written agreement. It would require the government of the United States to agree.

Elizabeth added that this was discussed at the Executive Committee. There was a lot of discussion around options to renegotiate, limitations, and potential gains. The Executive wanted us to bring it to the YSSC for discussion. Some people support renegotiating and others say it is not the time to renegotiate.

- We could gain an increase in spawning escapement goal, including penalties for not meeting the border obligation and increasing the RE fund. The RE fund has not increased with inflation.

This discussion was moved incamera.

---

## **CORRESPONDENCE & NEWS**

Elizabeth MacDonald reviewed the correspondence included in the agenda attachment.

### **DFO Minister:**

- Yukon River Recommendations sent to DFO Minister
  - The Minister did respond. This was done while Elizabeth was off on medical leave.
- Followed up on 15% carryover to Minister
  - If there is any further response or questions, they can follow up with Steve Smith.
- Arctic Region, request correct map
  - The correction was made.
- Alsek Recommendation for 2021
  - Recommendations are confidential until the Minister responds. Elizabeth will send a copy on the next email update.

### **Habitat:**

- YESAB Comments on Aishihik Power Plant
  - Make sure they consider salmon because in the next 25 years, when that water license gets renewed, there's a chance that salmon will be able to make it up through Turnback Canyon and we could potentially have salmon spawning in that area.
- YESAB comments on Wellgreen's closure and reclamation
  - They're doing some reclamation work. We want to make sure that they know salmon are spawning right below there, and they have to watch the water quality.
- Comments to DRLUPC to include more salmon considerations
  - Sent comments including more salmon considerations in December and just recently.
- Comments on Final Draft Mineral Development Strategy

- In December, they released the final draft mineral development strategy. The Committee sent additional comments reiterating the first recommendation.

#### **News:**

- Few connections with media
- CBC article on YRP and 30,000 missing Chinook
- Fish ladder research

#### **Letters/Misc.:**

- Congratulations to Chief Chairman Simon (TCC)
- Appointed Chair and Vice Chair to the YRDFA Board
- Short piece for DKRRC Dec Newsletter

#### **Website**

- Tim, Jason, and Ron need photos.
- Get group photo if possible.

### **MEETING UPDATES**

Elizabeth reported on the following meetings included in the agenda attachment.

#### **Yukon River/Yukon River Panel/Ed Ex:**

- JTC in Nov (Elizabeth)
- YRP Communications planned virtual Ed Ex 2021 (Carl, Dennis, Elizabeth)
- YSSC RE Discussion Dec (Carl, Roger, Al, Tim, Dennis, Elizabeth)
- YRP Canadian RE Discussion Dec (Al, Carl, Tim, Dennis, Michelle)
- YRP Prep & Bilateral meetings Jan (Tim, Dennis, Michelle, Carl, Stan, Roger, Al, Elizabeth)

#### **Transboundary Panel & ADWG:**

- Postseason Prep & Bilateral Meeting Jan (Jason, Elizabeth)
- Preseason Prep & Bilateral Meeting Feb (Ron, Michelle, Al, Elizabeth)

#### **YR Salmon Summit Steering Committee:**

- Initial Meeting Dec (Elizabeth, Stan, Dennis)
- Second Meeting Feb 8 (Stan, Dennis, Elizabeth)

#### **Misc. Meetings**

- Met Steve Gotch & Smith & Executive Nov (Al, Elizabeth)
- Executive w Sean Smith Nov (Carl, Jason, Al, Elizabeth)
- DFO/FN/YSSC Postseason Meeting Nov (Dennis, Al, Carl, Jason, Elizabeth)
- DRLUP Dec (Tim)
- YRDFA's Annual meeting in Dec (Al)



- TRTFN introduction to YSSC (Elizabeth)

**Upcoming Meetings**

JTC March 10 to 12, 2021.

Meeting Adjourned at 3:55 PM

**YUKON SALMON SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING  
FEBRUARY 22, 23, 2021 MINUTES  
VIRTUAL AND AT YUKON INN**

**DAY 2: Tuesday, February 23, 2021**

---

**PRESENT** Al von Finster – YSSC Chair (VGG Nominee), Roger Alfred – YSSC Member (CYFN Nominee), Stanley Njootli Sr. – YSSC Member (VGG Nominee), Carl Sidney – YSSC Vice Chair (YFWMB Appointee), Ron Chambers – YSSC Member (CAFN Nominee)

**ONLINE PHONE** Tim Gerberding – YSSC Member (Federal Nominee), Jason Jim – YSSC 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Chair (CAFN Nominee), Dennis Zimmermann – YSSC Member (Federal Nominee)

**GUESTS ONLINE** Joseph O’Brien (CRRRC), Vera Charlie (CRRRC), Allen Skookum (CRRRC), Karlie Knight (TH), Martin Slama (LRRRC), Sebastian Jones (YCS/YFWMB), William Twardek (Carleton Univeristy), Steve Smith (DFO), Bill Waugh (DFO), Jerry Kruse (SRRC)

**SUPPORT** Elizabeth MacDonald (Executive Director)

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

---

**CALL TO ORDER**

---

Al von Finster and Elizabeth MacDonald reviewed the agenda for the second day.

Joseph O’Brien acknowledged the passing of Darius Elias and there was a moment of silence.

**Chinook Acoustic Tagging Project (William Twardek –PhD Candidate, Carleton University)**

Karlie Knight introduced William Twardek to the YSSC. William reviewed his presentation “Assessing the Fate of Returning Upper Yukon River Chinook Salmon” this was available in the meeting material and on the website.

**Comments/Discussion**

- Q: What causes fish to move considerable distances upstream and then go back downstream? Is there a higher percentage of males? If the males aren’t finding females to spawn with, could that cause them to turnaround and go back downstream? A: *More males than females were tagged. Of the males that passed the hydro power plan, 15 percent went upstream and then came back down. Fallback behaviour is more common in the male fish. The salmon are*

*turning around in areas that aren't considered spawning areas. It is like they're not getting the cue to enter the McClintock River or Michi Creek. We're not sure why.*

- Karlie Knight provided an overview of the aspects of traditional knowledge research including: methodology; guidelines of respect, reciprocity, and relationships; carcass surveys; community participation; First Nation involvement; Southern Lakes salmon observations; dam viewing chamber delays; and hang time at the bottom of the fish ladder and relicensing.
- Q: Over the next few years the discussion about the dam and the fish ladder will be huge and political. He highlighted the relicensing in 2025 and the enhancement storage project in 2025 as big issues to focus on. When do we start talking about reconstruction and what will it cost? That dam was not meant to be a long-term solution. A: *That should come from the YSSC. If it takes reconstruction to bring those numbers up then it should be looked at. The cost would be substantial, possibly multiple millions. There are short-term things that should be done right away like changing the way the viewing chamber operates. We should look at the fish ladder on the Columbia River and adopt their method.*
- We need to look at the big picture. In the four years this research has been ongoing, there were 1,600 salmon the first year, 700 the second year, and then 200 the last two years. In the interim, we can address short-term solutions such as having the gate in the viewing chamber open over night. With respect to the First Nation salmon plans, laying out cultural identity, values, and traditional knowledge will better inform the value of the fish and the need of respect.
- The dam wasn't designed to preserve salmon. The First Nations had no input about the dam. Now our people are dealing with the fallout. We need to pressure the governments to do it right. Every salmon has value. This dam is a colonial dam. Governments would probably be quite happy to redesign some things. We spend millions on other things. As First Nations, we need to get behind this.
- Travis Ritchie is the Environmental liaison for Yukon Energy. Yukon Energy is talking about improving the fishway. It would be beneficial to share this study with YEC. Also, he heard that 10 years ago, dams were removed from Columbia River. The United States is also removing dams all the way down to California. The one salmon spent 564 hours trying to find home. That's three weeks. It takes others 12 weeks to travel from the mouth of the river to Teslin. Every fish has a disease (ich). Stress makes it worse. It's surprising the fish made it that far.
- The fishway we currently have was temporary in 1958. It was supposed to be replaced. Parts were replaced. Is there solar gain in the ladder? The water in the ladder isn't from the main flow of the river. Schwatka Lake sits on top of the river and it tends to be warmer.
- If you want to look at existence of spawning salmon in the upper lakes, don't look for the adults. Look for juvenile fish in the tributaries. If you get large numbers of juvenile fish, that is a good indication of spawning there. You have to use a sampling method that works, such as traps baited with wild salmon roe.

- If you're getting solar gain, put sheeting over it to reflect sun away from the ladder. Also, look at the time of day and the heat. In summer, the water is warmest around midnight and coldest late in the morning. Put data loggers at three points in the ladder, one at the top, middle, and bottom to show whether the water is warming up.
- We're trying to bring back the natural state of the salmon. Natural overpasses have been built for animals.
- With a higher population density and resulting activity around Whitehorse, it would be unsurprising if that extra activity affects salmon compared to the Teslin River. The comparison of egg retention between these two systems may not be valid.

---

## REPORT CARD UPDATE

Elizabeth reviewed the report card updating and removing completed items.

YSSC Meeting Action Items 2019-20

Meeting	Action Item	Description	Completed
Dec 1 2020	-	Discuss the YRSA and the implementation of the YRSA at our next meeting to determine if there are limitations that could be addressed by re-negotiating the YRSA.	✓
Oct 14 2020	1	Have Sharon edit recordings for storage	✓
Oct 14 2020	2	Include note in agenda that meeting is being recorded and may be shared	✓
Oct 14 2020	3	Nominate Chair and Vice-Chair to YRDLA. Pursue funding from DFO/YRP	✓
Oct 14 2020	4	Letter of Congratulations to TTC President CC YRP Co-Chairs, YRDLA, YRITFC	✓
Oct 14 2020	5	Create a Habitat Working Group (Al, Tim, Jason, Stan), to create systems map around habitat using TK & western science	✓
Oct 14 2020	6	Letter reminding Minister YR Recommendations have not been commented on	NA
Oct 14 2020	7	Finalize and send CIRNA letter	✓
Oct 14 2020	8	Finalize and send 15% letter	✓
Oct 14 2020	9	Letter to parties requesting funds to accompany acceptance of recommendations	
Oct 14 2020	10	Resend edited Arctic Region letter out for comment and finalization	✓
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	Postponed
Oct 14 2020	12	Email to Serena to thank for the in-season calls	✓
Oct 14 2020	13	Record the Working Groups on our Report Card	✓

Oct 14 2020	14	Update subsistence definition on website	✓
Oct 14 2020	15	Tim and Al will develop a submission for Land Use Planning for Dawson, it will be used as a template for future Land Use Planning	
August 10 2020	1	Tim to draft letter RE YRP Honoraria rates stating not solely DFO's responsibility to CIRNA Minister CC DFO & IRS Ministers, finalize at next meeting	✓
August 10 2020	2	Respond to Minister RE letter saying no 15% carryover between CAs, finalize at the next meeting	See Oct 14 2020
August 10 2020	3	Letter to all Parties requesting funding increase as their recommendations were accepted, finalize at the next meeting	See Oct 14 2020
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	
May 2019	Draft Strat Plan	<b>Write letter to RDG requesting a seat on the TBR Panel</b>	

#### **WORKING GROUP UPDATES:**

- Habitat Working Group Update
- TK Working Group Update
- Alsek Drainage Working Group
- Alsek recommendation

#### **YRSA Implementation**

- Limitations/Re-Negotiating YRSA

#### **Habitat Working Group/Habitat:**

- HWG Nov (Al, Tim, Stan, Jason)
- FFHPP Implementation of FA (YFWMB, Al, Elizabeth)
- 2 webinars on Implementation of FA <codes practice, habitat banking, cumulative effects, & works near water regulations> (Al, Tim, Elizabeth)
- Met with YFWMB to discuss how the two HWG could work together
- Webinar to cover current Placer process & FFHPP review Feb (Al, Tim, Elizabeth, YFWMB-Carl)

#### **Comments/Discussion:**

- The YSSC submission to the Dawson Regional Land Use Planning Commission (DRLUPC) said we need better information on salmon habitat, particularly for Chinook, on rearing and overwintering areas. A lot of information is based on digital modeling. We need to do a lot more work in Yukon. DFO is trying to develop standards to apply generally to any

situation. The success of this approach depends on having good baseline information on habitat. That information is not readily available in the North.

- In Yukon and farther north, we're seeing rapidly changing landscape, landslides, permafrost melt. We need to look at this as a process by which information can always be collected. As part of development, the people doing the development need to collect information. All data that is collected will be out of date in 15 to 20 years. Information gathering has to be constant.
- Elizabeth provided information about the Pacific Salmon Explorer through the Pacific Salmon Foundation. They were interested in considering Yukon and they are incorporating more species than salmon. There is no dedicated resource person, so it may become stale after a few years if no one takes the lead to update it.

#### **Traditional Knowledge Working Group:**

- Identified more contacts to get additional advice from and to build partnerships (Roger, Carl, Al, Stan, Michelle, and Elizabeth). There are plans to get together and host a workshop. Elizabeth will reach out to First Nation governments, the Heritage and Lands and Resource Board and make a recommendation to the Yukon River Panel or the DFO minister. YSSC partnered with the YFWMB to determine how to ask for TK to use it in decision-making properly and respectfully. Everything was paused due to COVID. The group will work on developing partnerships.
- Land Use Planning Council might host a Traditional Knowledge workshop in the summer.

#### **Alsek Drainage Working Group:**

- Met with CAFN and decided on an informal ADWG with just CAFN and YSSC currently.
  - There is a brief Terms of Reference. There will be four meetings per year.
- Initial ADWG meeting (Al, Elizabeth)
- ADWG met with CAFN's Salmon Standing Committee to discuss Alsek Recommendations to the Minister (Al, Michelle, Ron, Elizabeth).
- There haven't been a lot of information on the lower Tatshenshini. We need more eyes on the land. Many villages that used to exist are no longer there. Ron provided an overview of the impact of beaver dams, the history of the villages, and CAFN trapping concessions in the area. We need a complete picture of the river and spawning areas. We need information to make decisions.
- Regarding restoration with the Alsek Working Group, we are beginning to communicate with each other. In time, we will move toward stock and habitat restoration. We will get the fantastic salmon rearing and spawning areas back again.

---

#### **CLOSING COMMENTS FROM GUESTS**

- Bill Waugh asked about the Alsek recommendations to the minister. The YSSC sent a letter to the minister, but it is confidential until the process is completed and we can't discuss it in a public setting.

- Joseph O'Brien — It is good to hear about the TK working group and the Alsek Draining Working Group. We need a balance throughout the Yukon and we have to think about other areas. When we talked about the dam built in 1950, they never thought about the salmon, fish, First Nations, or culture. Salmon have to wait at the gate of the fish ladder. They are already stressed. That has to change. The slightest change in temperature of the water will prevent the salmon from going to their spawning area. There is climate change. Salmon adapt and may go to new spawning areas. We need to take a look at the whole Yukon. We never had a say about the borders. Who is speaking for the animals who know no borders. We need to look at the decades-old treaty again.
- Who regulates salmon fishing on open waters and we don't hear anything about bycatch. It would be interesting to know if they have been involved in escapement and harvest limits. AI provided an overview of off-shore processors and the sampling to determine genetically where fish are from. The JTC should have records of the bycatch published in their annual report. The North Pacific Fisheries Management Council manage fisheries on the Bering Sea. There is an information sheet is on the YSSC website and it does not appear to be the problem it was previously.
- Steve Smith — There were a lot of good points brought up about Chinook and their behaviour. He provided an overview of weir/fishladder effects. Anywhere DFO has a weir, they have added cameras to keep weirs open and to ensure the free passage of salmon. This was done in response to concerns from First Nations. There are trade-offs. The weir sites are an opportunity to collect biological samples/information about the run, but we forgo that where the video cameras are installed.

## **INCAMERA SESSION**

The incamera session was closed to the public. No minutes were recorded.

The following action items were identified during the incamera session:

**Action Item #2: AI will draft a recommendation to the Minister regarding Faro Mine complex management and reclamation**

**Action Item #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.**

**Action Item #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.**

**Action Item #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.**