

Minutes
Stony Holitna Fish & Game Advisory Committee
Teleconference
December 16, 2014 / 11 a.m.

BOF issues take up most of these minutes –

BOG issues are highlighted in Blue & Comments listed in the Template following the Minutes

Boxed portions of minutes are germane to the BOF Kuskokwim Subsistence Salmon Panel Jan.15 &16, 2014

Call to Order

The chairman, Doug Carney, called the meeting to order at 11:15 a.m.

Roll Call & Quorum

SHAC members present were

Rick Breckheimer & Fred Bobby - Lime Village

David Bobby – Stony River

Doug Carney & Susan Hubbard - Sleetmute

Barb Carlson & John Zeller – Red Devil

Absent was

Charlie Gusty from Stony River.

Others Attending -

Holly Carroll, Boards Support

Doug Molineaux, Fisheries Biologist

Aaron Tiernan, ADF&G Region V assist. Area fisheries Biologist

Jim Simon, ADF&G Subsistence Division

Hiroko Ikuta, AD&FG Subsistence Division

Members' Concerns

- Lime Village fishermen were prevented from fishing for sockeyes, due to the restrictions on fishing Chinook. Lime Village has a very negligible chinook run, and that species is in poor condition by the time they reach Lime, so are neither targeted or desirable.
Rick said that when he has had a net set, and caught Chinook, he moves the net.

- BOF & BOG Proposals for 2016 will have to be put in before May 1, so we will need to have a regular meeting after the planned moose count in March,

Approval of Agenda –

The agenda was approved unanimously

The reading & approval of minutes from SHAC Jan. 15, 2014 meeting was deferred till the next SHAC meeting.

SHAC Chair, Doug Carney

BOG proposals that concern us are -

- BOG cycle change from 2-years to 3 years.
- Proposal 139 – the reauthorization of tag fee exemption for brown bear in GMU 19, and other units

- Most of the meeting will deal with fisheries issues, so Barb will handle the majority of the rest of things today.

Vice Chair, Barb Carlson

- Gave an overview of the 2014 preliminary Kuskokwim Salmon Season Summary for Chinook.
- Problem to address – Upriver villages a 63% lower harvest than in most years – much higher loss than downriver villages.

- For a possibly needed SHAC proposal she gave a synopsis of probable components to include. This proposal would have the aim of providing a reasonable opportunity for harvest of chinook in the upper river Kusko villages, at times when there is a harvestable surplus available.
Components discussed were –1 -a nested ANS for sections of the river /
2 -an in-river run goal, (this includes escapement, ANS, & sufficient fish to provide a reasonable opportunity for success.)
3 – Some sort of permit system, (household, community, Tier II)

Doug Molineaux Presentation & Discussion – SHAC members all had hard copies of Doug’s presentation. There are graphs and explanations that Doug explained and answered questions about. Included were -

- Graphs were used to illustrate the problem - that in the last 5 years, villages above Bethel had a larger decrease in harvest compared to Bethel and villages below Bethel.
- **Defined what ANS, “reasonable opportunity”, & in river goals mean in this context.**
- Defined a **“Nested ANS”** as being part of a larger ANS that already exists, (on the Kusko River)
- How nested ANS would aid upriver village chinook harvest – provides a defined number & a measureable outcome at season’s end, to judge the success of management tools that had been used
- **In- river goal** provides an “in-season guide” to judge management decisions/ how to set that goal. (escapement/ANS/enough fish to ensure a reasonable opportunity for success)

Discussion, Questions & Answers

- Rick/Doug M. - Reasonable Opportunity is set by BOF
- John/Doug M. -There is no long term/5-year forecast – only one issued in the spring - for the coming summer.
- Federal control was from Aniak to the mouth of the Kusko.

- Fred/Aaron -(Down river has larger villages & boats, and cheaper fuel) Why doesn’t the ADF&G limit net size? Ans. -If approved, proposal 272 will allow limits to be put on the length of any net.
- **Fred -Lime Villagers are prevented from fishing for reds – don’t fish for kings.** Reds are the important runs for human use in Lime. Kings are in poor condition & not wanted. I caught 50% less reds in 2014, due to restrictions – not the Red run health.
- The Red run was early, overlapped with King run, so restrictions affected Red fishing ability more than in a normal year.
- Rick – When I set a net, if I’m catching kings – I move it. I don’t want them – are poor quality.

Doug Molineaux – on Escapement

- The entire escapement goal range is below the median King escapement from 1976 thru 2013.
- Due to the low escapement goal - a directed commercial chum fishery is more likely to be opened & will result in a higher incidental King catch. (No directed chum opening in 2014)

This will cause a lower King escapement and lowering the abundance of Kings passing above the commercial fishing districts below Bethel

Lower abundance = Less reasonable opportunity for subsistence Chinook harvest above Bethel – and a minimum effect on subsistence King catch opportunity below Bethel, (which occurs prior to a commercial Chum opening.)

OPEN COMMERCIAL CHUM = POOR SUBSISTENCE KING

More discussion, questions & answers / RE: Doug's talk, potential SHAC proposal, Lime Village fishery

DRAFT BOF Proposal for nested ANS with in-river goals for Chinook. (2015-16/due April 10)

Barb – How to arrive at nested ANS #s, and what areas in which to apply them must be determined by user input, and interaction between ADF&G subsistence division and BOF

Options for arriving at an in-river goal –

- Combining escapement/ANS/enough fish to ensure a reasonable opportunity for success)
- Use the historical average King salmon escapement +/- 30% + ANS range

Options for monitoring the in-river goal –

- Bethel test fishery
- Upriver test fishery above the Aniak. (The subsistence Chinook fishery below Aniak is under federal control.)
-

Possible types of permits to limit Chinook catch in times of shortage – (household, community, Tier II)

- Under state regs – household & community permits can be used at the same time / in same community.
- Can have household with no community permits
- Tier II

Discussion & preferences –

David – household

Rick & Fred support a SHAC proposal and getting rid of unreasonable regs affecting Lime fishing

Susan – household

Barb – Hard to believe it, but many people don't realize the effect on the Lime Red harvest.

Fred Lime is only 70 miles from Stony, and Stony gets good Kings. As late as 1970s -Kings used to go up creek in Lime

Doug M. - a pocket of Kings spawn on the Stony in tributaries just below Two Lakes.

Read/ Discuss / Vote on support of –

- Proposal to change BOG cycle from 2 to 3 years (2015/due Dec.26) - **Opposed Unanimously**
- **Proposal 139 – Support Unanimously** -Reauthorize no Brn Bear tag requirement for GMU 19 & others.(Due Jan.30,2015 –Central/Southwest Region BOG meeting)

Comments on proposals 271 & 272 for March, 2015 BOF/statewide meeting/ACR (due March 3)

Proposal 271 — Supported Unanimously / 4” mesh must be used for set nets – not drifting
Closes the loophole in State regs - that allowed people to drift with, target, & catch Kings

This is not allowed below Aniak, which is operating under federal regulation

Proposal 272 – Supported Unanimously / Lists gear types and methods of operation to be used in Kusko King fisheries (A good list of tools & would provide ADF&G ability to limit length of any net at its discretion.)

There is unanimous SHAC member Support -

for a potential SHAC proposal, authored by Barb Carlson, which was discussed previously– in this meeting. Whether or not this proposal has life will be dependent on whether or not the **Kusko Salmon Panel, (a BOF subcommittee),** generates a proposal that meets the needs of SHAC villages.

Adjourn at 1 p.m

BOG or BOF	Proposal Number	Proposal Description	
Supports or Opposes?	Number Support	Number Oppose	Comments/Discussion (list Pros and Cons)/Amendments to Proposal
BOG			BOG CYCLE CHANGE
OPPOSE	0	7- Unan.	SHAC doesn't want to see public input reduced /If a proposal is not approved, SHAC doesn't want to wait 3 years rather than 2, for another chance to remedy issue.
BOG	139		Reauthorize the current resident tag exemptions for brown bear in Unit 19 and others.
SUPPORT	7- Unan.	0	Brown bear are targets of opportunity & SHAC area folks want to help reduce hunting competition due to Brn. Bear predation

BOG or BOF	Proposal Number	Proposal Description	
Supports or Opposes?	Number Support	Number Oppose	Comments/Discussion (list Pros and Cons)/Amendments to Proposal
BOF	271		4inch mesh gear not allowed for Drifting – only set nets to be allowed
SUPPORT	7-Unan.	0	Closes the loophole in State regs - that allowed people to drift with, target, & catch Kings This is <u>not</u> allowed below Aniak, which is operating under federal regulation.

BOG or BOF	Proposal Number	Proposal Description	
Supports or Opposes?	Number Support	Number Oppose	Comments/Discussion (list Pros and Cons)/Amendments to Proposal
			It would be best to have the same regs both above & below, to discourage possible abuse / targeting of Kings.
BOF	272		List of Gear types & methods of operation for Kusko Chinook fishery
SUPPORT	7- Unan.	0	This is a good list of tools & would provide ADF&G the ability to limit length of any net at its discretion. Down river has larger villages & boats, and cheaper fuel Why doesn't the ADF&G limit net size? If approved, proposal 272 will allow limits to be put on the length of any net.

To be attached to Stony Holitna A.C. (SHAC) Minutes & Comments / Dec. 16 Teleconference

And directed to BOF meetings:

- Jan. 15 & 16, 2015 **BOF** Kuskokwim Subsistence Salmon Panel meeting in Bethel
- March 17 – 20, 2015 **BOF** Statewide Meeting in Anchorage

In regard to 2014 Chinook salmon fishing closures on the Kuskokwim River and its tributaries –

In the minutes from the Dec.16 SHAC Teleconference, there was much discussion about the poor quality of Chinook by the time they reach Lime Village, on the Stony River.

Also made clear is that local residents fish for Sockeye, and do not target or take Chinook due to their poor condition.

What was not written in the minutes, but is well known to folks in that part of the state is that **there is no store, post office, scheduled air service, or school in Lime Village.**

The people of Lime depend heavily on their ability to take Sockeye salmon, as a primary source of protein.

Lime is one Village that should no longer be prevented from fishing for Sockeye, as they were in 2014 - only because they might inadvertently catch one of the few Chinook that are in poor shape, and unwanted.

Submitted by Doug Carney, Chairman
Stony Holitna F & G Advisory Committee