



**Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission  
Weekly River-Wide Teleconference  
Tuesday, July 5, 2022 | 10am AKDT**

**Join by computer:** <https://zoom.us/j/5694903415>

**Join toll-free by phone:** 833-548-0282

**Meeting ID:** 569 490 3415

---

**About:**

Every week of the salmon season, the Kuskokwim River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission (KRITFC) hosts a river-wide teleconference for fishermen along the Kuskokwim River to call in and discuss fishing regulations, closures and openers, fish camp updates, Indigenous Knowledge, and management action. This call is held toll-free on Zoom and open to the public. In 2022, it will be held Tuesdays at 10am starting May 24 until the end of the season.

---

**People on this call:** 12

---

**Summary Notes:**

- Effort during the 06/29–30 and 07/03–04 set net opportunities was lower, but people caught good numbers of reds and some chum and kings.
  - KRITFC and YDNWR will be meeting this week to discuss more potential fishing opportunities.
  - Call 907-543-1008 or 907-543-3151 to report abandoned nets or regulation violations to YDNWR.
- 

**Full Notes:**

**Fishing Updates & Harvest Estimates**

- **Boyd Blihovde – YDNWR:** Fished 50-foot set net for 2 hours, got 9 reds, and 2 kings, on 06/29. My family was happy with that.
- **Terese Schomogyi – KRITFC:** I also went out and set a net. I'm not expert at this, but we ended up with 2 sockeye, which was great.
- **Paul Cleveland – Quinhagak:** Lots of reds down here, still a few kings in the river. Fishing is dying down a lot. Just see 3 boats today.
- **Emmitt Nicori – YDNWR:** Didn't go fishing, but heard some folks did well on reds.

- **Aaron Moses – YDNWR:** Have mainly been dipnetting and rod and reeling this season; haven't really fished much. Looking at the numbers, about 115,000 have passed the sonar as of yesterday. They're still coming in pretty good, but a poor run.
- **Christopher Tulik – YDNWR:** I haven't been fishing since the last drift opener. We're done fishing.
- **Jennifer Hooper – AVCP:** We haven't been fishing yet. We primarily freeze and jar, still learning how to dry and smoke. I went to fish camp growing up but never had the opportunity to learn how to do it. Just last year I discovered I am allergic to king salmon, terrible. We haven't gone out yet, we're waiting for drifting to catch reds and then silvers. Lots of pictures on Facebook that people have been able to catch lots of fish, and one organization in Bethel has been able to provide fish for the community.
- **Barbara – Bethel:** We've done good. Set the net for 5 minutes and got 12 reds, 3 kings, and 3 whitefish. We're done as well with our fish. This year was good weather for drying.
- **Tisha:** Haven't been able to get out to Bethel yet to fish, but I will later for silver salmon. My sister said they have about 60 fish with a mix of kings and reds. They were decent sized kings. They're going to fish for my uncle who needs assistance.
- **Paige Petersen – AVCP:** Haven't fished yet.
- **Terese Schomogyi – KRITFC:** Still running the data from the last set net opportunities, but seems like harvests on 06/29–30 and 07/03–04 were some kings still, few chums, and mostly reds. The red run seems to be coming in strong, which is good and we're grateful for that. Hope those numbers will be finalized and shared out soon.

### In-Season Management Meetings

- **Terese Schomogyi – KRITFC:** Our Federal-Tribal in-season management team will be meeting tomorrow to go over the data and discuss more potential openers. We hear people talking about wanting more drifting, so it just depends on what our managers think is the best decision based on the state of the chum salmon.
- **Boyd Blihovde – YDNWR:** The meeting we have tomorrow will be key. As a reminder, we're still in a cautious mode, especially for chum. I was happy with the numbers we got for 06/29–30 harvests. With chum being low, it was still a good number of chums caught, which is good; but there were a number of kings caught. We were trying to avoid chums and kings and target reds. This will help us evaluate if these set net opportunities work to avoid kings and chums. Eager to see data from 07/03–04. People still want to fish but they're also fairly happy with the set net opportunities. That will be a part of the discussion, if we can keep set netting or should drift. We'll look at numbers from Bethel Test Fish and sonar too.

### Salmon Bycatch and Intercept Updates

- **Terese Schomogyi – KRITFC:** This is a real concern for us, and it's good to keep people updated. Bering Sea bycatch numbers are posted [publicly](#), and so far this season, pollock fisheries have caught 5,395 Chinook salmon and 2,933 chum salmon as of 06/30. The pollock fishery normally catches the most chum salmon in their B-Season, which started in early June. We'll keep an eye on these numbers and try to figure out how many of these fish would have been bound for our rivers and caught by our subsistence fishermen. KRITFC is doing a lot of advocacy about bycatch with the North Pacific Fishery Management Council. We attended and testified at their June meeting about this issue, and we'll continue to engage with them at their meetings and offline. Other organizations on this call and in Western, Interior, and Bering Strait regions of Alaska are working to reduce bycatch, too. The other

area we are concerned about is Area M. I'm looking at [ADF&G's website](#) for their commercial harvest numbers, and as of July 1, there have been 531,350 chum salmon caught in their June fisheries. They've caught over 3 million sockeye and over 1 million pink salmon. KRITFC is also advocating at the Board of Fish to limit intercept in this region.

- **Christopher Tulik – YDNWR:** Do monitors in the Bering Sea document and keep record of the age, sex, and length of the Chinook salmon caught in the high seas? I've been wondering if some of those fish being caught are some of the fish that should be returning.
- **Terese Schomogyi – KRITFC:** Thank you, great question. I'm not sure but I'll do some research and email you. I know they do some age analysis and also stomach analyses to see what the fish are eating.

## Federal Law Enforcement

- **Boyd Blihovde – YDNWR:** I would like to ask everyone for help and to remind them that we are still trying to conserve salmon, and balance that with providing opportunities for fishing, especially for reds. The red numbers keep climbing, seems like a good year for them. The idea is to take advantage of the reds and protect chum and Chinook salmon. We have law enforcement out there trying to cover the whole river. We've been seeing people not setting nets right, or openly drifting regardless of regulations. We could use help getting the word out. If people drift now, they're surely going to catch more kings and chums. Also, please spread the word to tell people to check their set nets. We've found abandoned nets with 50 or 60 old fish in them, and the fish were wasted. If you see that, please report it to us.
- **Aaron Moses – YDNWR:** Our info line is 907-543-1008. That's the best way for people to hear what's going on on the river. You can leave a message if you want to, we check it almost daily.
- **Boyd Blihovde – YDNWR:** Most people seem to be wrapping up with the fishing they needed to do. Some still need a little extra fish. We're happy to help with boat and net counts. There's around 80 nets each day from the last set net opportunities, so it wasn't nearly as busy at 06/22 or the other drift opportunities. Folks around Tuluksak and Eek are taking advantage of these opportunities.
- **Barbara – Bethel (in chat):** I want to thank you for doing your best for controlling the fish catch for later on catches, I like the setnet it gives us a chance to get fish instead of waiting our turn to drift. keep up your good work.
- **Terese Schomogyi – KRITFC:** If people want to report something, should they call the Refuge information line?
  - **Boyd Blihovde – YDNWR:** Yes, or our main line at 907-543-3151.

## Escapement & Fish Counts

- **Paul Cleveland – Quinhagak:** Earlier, Aaron mentioned there were 110,000 Chinook past the sonar so far? Sounds like the midpoint escapement goal is beginning to be met.
- **Aaron Moses – YDNWR:** There were 114,000 past the sonar, but you have to remember the harvest along the river is subtracted from that.
- **Boyd Blihovde – YDNWR:** One thing we talked about this morning is that sonar is showing slightly better numbers than Bethel Test Fish, and BTF is more of an index and less a real count of the fish like sonar is. I'd like to think that sonar is more accurate and is showing better numbers. That's also something we'll be discussing with KRITFC to get consensus on those numbers.

## Closing

- **Terese Schomogyi – KRITFC:** Thanks everyone for joining this call. If you have more questions, feel free to call me at 907-545-7388. Follow along with our Facebook page, @KuskoSalmon, for fishing updates.