



Ahtna Intertribal Resource Commission
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Copper River In-Season Salmon Teleconference Summary

– July 17, 2025, 11 AM

AITRC-

Jim Simon
Deanna Kosbruk
Dan Gorze
David Miller
Bella Ranck
Bailey Roberts

NPS-

Amber Cohen
Hope Courtney

NPS YCC

Taliylah Patrick
Judson Gallt
Kai Garcia
Tobyn Dolge
Eli Flowers
JaLisa Berrieum

Ahtna, Inc

M.Starr Knighten
Tracy Parent
Elisa Vollema
Illeana Debler
Lillian Besa
Eric Duke
Johnathan Duke
Jaysen Neeley

OSM-

Brooke McDavid

Meeting Purpose

The conference convened subsistence users, local biologists, and fisheries managers to:

- Share salmon observations
- Discuss river conditions
- Address salmon health concerns
- Review of fishery data and updates

Facilitated by Deanna Kosbruk (AITRC), the session featured reports from Amber Cohen (subsistence coordination), Dan Gorze (AITRC fisheries), and others. State fisheries managers were unavailable today to provide an update.

Key Updates

Fisheries Overview

- **Amber Cohen (NPS):**
 - 535 subsistence permits issued
 - 44 fish wheels registered

- New acting fisheries biologist in place
- Fishery activity high in early July, tapering off by mid-month
- **Dan Gorze (AITRC):**
 - Weir is “fish-tight” at 1.7 feet
 - Miles Lake sonar tracking 815,000 salmon, projected 920,000 total by season end
 - High water has slowed passage and increased difficulty in weir operations

Subsistence User Observations

- Reports of mixed fish size, erosion, and longer salmon runs
- Notable concerns about parasites in fish meat
- Color variation (e.g., blue-backed salmon)
- One reported that her grandmother caught a few lampreys, and she had notified AITRC Techs, who picked them up.
 - ADFG is conducting a study on lamprey, and AITRC can pick them up if caught in the wheel and bring them to ADFG.

Salmon Health Concerns

- High parasite prevalence discussed by multiple users
- Dan recommends freezing fish at -4°F for 7 days to eliminate parasites
- Jim Simon encourages fish samples to be shared for ongoing health assessment work by Kelsey Stanbro

Cultural & Traditional Management Themes

- Fish wheels as tools for cultural teaching and resource-sharing
- Emphasis on traditional Ahtna stewardship principles
- Need for escapement goals to ensure long-term sustainability (Chinook Salmon)
- Commercial pressure vs. subsistence needs: Copper River salmon fetch high market prices

Federal and Regional Updates

- Brooke McDavid introduced herself and her title, and mentioned upcoming Eastern Interior Regional Advisory Council meetings
- Federal proposals on hunting/trapping to be reviewed

Closing

- Emphasis on monitoring fish health, honoring subsistence traditions, and planning for long-term sustainability
- Participants were thanked for their contributions, and reminders were given about future meetings
- Weekly teleconferences, Thursdays at 11 am. AITRC/NPS's last teleconference will be held on August 28th, featuring a wrap-up of the teleconference, as well as updates from partner agencies, and an opportunity to share project wrap-ups from their season. This event will be held at the Tazlina Community Hall, starting at 11:00 a.m. with a potluck lunch.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85013942721>

Meeting ID: 850 1394 2721