



# AYK SUSTAINABLE SALMON INITIATIVE

## Project Synopsis

### YUKON RIVER WATERSHED



(Paige Drobny)

# PROJECT 811

## PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR

Mike Smith  
*Tanana Chiefs Conference*

## CONTRIBUTING ORGANIZATION

*Bering Sea Fishermen's Association*

## RESEARCH PERIOD

August 2008 -  
March 2011

## BUDGET

\$552,471.00

## WORK-IN-PROGRESS BIOLOGICAL SAMPLING OF YUKON RIVER SALMON

### A CLEARER PICTURE OF YUKON SALMON

For the past decade, the largest and most consistent component of the Yukon River Chinook salmon harvest has been the subsistence harvest. Subsistence and commercial chum salmon harvests have fluctuated greatly due to changes in commercial markets, subsistence needs (generally related to dog team use), and dramatic swings in abundance for both summer and fall chum salmon stocks. Subsistence has legal priority over other harvests. However, Yukon River subsistence salmon catch information has been limited or non-existent and several escapement monitoring projects have been recently discontinued.

### OUR OBJECTIVES

Conduct escapement surveys and collect age, sex, and length data on the Toklat River fall chum salmon and Nenana River coho salmon.

Collect age, sex, and length data and tissue for genetic analysis from the subsistence Chinook salmon harvests in the Yukon River drainage, and Chinook, chum, and coho salmon tissue samples from the Koyukuk and Tanana river drainages.

### HOW WE WILL DO IT

We will conduct aerial and foot surveys to collect fall chum data from carcasses on the Toklat River. We will also conduct aerial counts on the Nenana River and collect data from live caught coho salmon. We will

**RESEARCH FRAMEWORK:**  
SALMON LIFE CYCLE –  
PRIORITY #3

### SNAPSHOT

This project will collect subsistence salmon harvest information in the Yukon River drainage, and continue several recently vacated escapement monitoring projects, primarily in the Tanana drainage.

Age, sex, and length data and tissue for genetic analysis will be collected during the subsistence fishery and on spawned-out salmon.



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contract with participants in the Yukon River Chinook salmon subsistence fishery to collect data on sex, length, and capture method; scales for aging; and fins for genetic analysis. We will collect tissue samples from live Koyukuk and Tanana River salmon and, where practical, use locally hired technicians, as well as project staff, to collect tissue samples and age, sex, and length data from spawned-out Chinook, coho, and chum salmon in these drainages.

## REPORT COMPLETION

*May 2011*

**AYK SSI Mission:** *To collaboratively develop and implement a comprehensive research plan to understand the causes of the declines and recoveries of AYK salmon.*

### **ARCTIC-YUKON-KUSKOKWIM SUSTAINABLE SALMON INITIATIVE**

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