

**YUKON RIVER PANEL
2012 RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT (R&E) FUND PRIORITIES**

The Yukon River Panel has developed priorities for effective use of its Restoration and Enhancement Fund. These are described in detail in the “**Yukon River Panel R&E Fund Budget Priorities Framework 2007**” which identifies seven categories of projects required to advance the Panel’s R&E objectives involving Yukon River salmon stocks of Canadian origin. These seven categories are:

Conservation Restoration Enhancement Stewardship Communications
Viabile Fisheries Administration

The Yukon River Panel uses the 2007 Framework to derive near-term priorities each year and issues an annual Call for Project Concepts to elicit projects that will focus on the near-term priorities. This ensures that the needs identified in the Framework are addressed over time. These 2012 specific R&E Fund priorities are the current year’s refinement of the longer-term Panel priorities:

CONSERVATION

Stocks

Level Three: Run assessment

- 1. Management Need: Improve in-season and post-season resolution of genetic stock identification for chinook and chum runs.**
 - Supplement existing genetic stock identification baseline data by obtaining tissue samples from watersheds identified by the Panel’s Joint Technical Committee.
- 2. Management Need: Improve Yukon River in-season stock specific run size estimates.**
 - Conduct independent estimates of chinook numbers passing Pilot Station and compare with sonar and mark recapture estimates.
 - Evaluate current Yukon River test fishing projects as abundance indicators.
 - Test run capacity to provide in-season stock ID estimates.
- 3. Management Need: Continue in-season border passage estimates.**
 - Continue to support and run the Eagle sonar project and mark recapture project.
 - Compare and evaluate the two projects and determine the correlation between estimates from the two projects.

Level Three: Harvest

4. Management Need: Understand the impact of fishing techniques on harvest and biological characteristics of escapement.

- Refine understanding of the effects of fishing techniques and gear selectivity on the quality of chinook salmon escapement (e.g. size and sex ratio) and composition of harvest.

Note: Projects that involve handling fish may be required to obtain standard ASL data, and where appropriate girth/weight sampling, to continue to build and monitor these stocks; contact DFO (Whitehorse, STAD) or ADF&G (Anchorage) technical staff.

Level Three: Escapement Studies

5. Management Need: Obtain information on quality of escapement (age, size, sex, health).

- Collect data on the biological characteristics of chinook salmon escapements including Age, Sex, Length (ASL) information (using carcass surveys or other techniques) for areas identified by the Panel's JTC.

Note: Projects that involve handling fish may be required to obtain standard ASL data, and where appropriate girth/weight sampling, to continue to build and monitor these stocks; contact DFO (Whitehorse, STAD) or ADF&G (Anchorage) technical staff.

6. Management Need: Identify and monitor escapements to key Canadian salmon spawning streams/areas (index streams).

- Implement chinook and chum salmon stock escapement monitoring projects on selected Canadian tributaries for use in reconstructing Canadian origin runs.

Note: The tributaries to be monitored are being identified in an overall Canadian stock escapement monitoring plan being developed by Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) in consultation with the JTC. This is an evolving document. Those interested in advancing proposals under this priority should do so in consultation with DFO (Whitehorse, STAD) staff.

CONSERVATION

Habitat

Level Three: Assessment

7. Management Need: Locate and document spawning and rearing habitat.

- Collect baseline habitat data such as temperature, discharge and other spawning and rearing habitat characteristics.

Note: Chinook habitat being the priority.

Note: The Panel is particularly interested in funding community-initiated projects.

RESTORATION

Stocks

Level Three: Implementation

8. Management Need: Identify depleted stocks or limits to production and identify candidates for stock restoration.

- Continue to support stock restoration projects that are underway.
- Explore options for new restoration opportunities for candidate depleted stocks.

RESTORATION

Habitat

Level Three: Implementation

9. Management Need: Restore fish access to spawning and rearing habitat.

- Assess and document salmon spawning and rearing habitat to determine areas where salmon access should be restored and conduct restoration activities at these sites.

Note: Chinook habitat being the priority.

Note: The Panel is particularly interested in funding community-initiated projects.

ENHANCEMENT

10. Management Need: Research and investigate habitats suitable for salmon range extension in existing systems, or that would benefit from habitat enhancement to expand wild stock productivity.

- Assess opportunities to extend range or enhance habitat to expand wild salmon stock productivity.

Note: Chinook habitat being the priority.

Note: The Panel is particularly interested in funding community-initiated projects.

STEWARDSHIP

11. Management Need: Involve and educate users and non-users in communities to increase their capacity to maintain and protect salmon stocks and habitat.

- Build community capacity through community education and hands-on training with an emphasis on youth oriented projects (youth up to 18 years of age).

COMMUNICATIONS

Outreach and Information Sharing

12. Management Need: Conduct public outreach to build a more aware public constituency that is motivated to maintain and protect salmon stocks and habitat.

- Improve public awareness and foster community partnerships and relations focused on Yukon River salmon.
- Support community special events and celebrations.

VIABLE FISHERIES

No near-term Viable Fisheries priorities have been identified for 2012. The Canadian section of the Panel is considering a framework to achieve the Viable Fisheries Management Need.

ADMINISTRATION

The objectives identified in the Administration category concern the operations of the R&E Fund itself. It is intended that the fulfillment of these objectives will be accomplished internally. Administrative functions receive a set allocation each year, separate from the competitively allocated R&E Funds and are not eligible for funding by grants from the R&E Fund to third parties responding to the annual Call for Project Concepts.

YUKON RIVER PANEL

Salmon Restoration and Enhancement projects evaluation criteria.

The Yukon River Panel uses the following general criteria to evaluate project proposals for R&E funding.

Relevance and Significance

- Does the project address a near-term priority objective from the 2012 Call for Project Concepts.
- Does it advance the Panel's work towards achieving this objective.
- What is the value of the end product to the Panel.

Technical Merit

- Are there clear, achievable objectives.
- Does the proposal employ appropriate methodology designed to address each objective.
- Is the proposal technically feasibility.
- Will the time schedule work.
- Will the project take place in the best location.
- Is there evidence of background research, literature reviews.
- Where is the project in the context of other local/regional/national plans.

Key Personnel

- Are the proponents capable of successfully completing the project.
- Have the proponents demonstrated their capability with previous work achieved.
- Is the role of any partners clearly explained.
- Is there evidence of support in the community.

Cost and Cost Effectiveness

- Is the budget reasonable and priced appropriately.
- Is this the best use of funds to achieve the objectives.
- Are there any in-kind contributions and/or other funders.