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Yukon River Panel Sets New Goals for Spawning Escapement into Canada.

The Yukon River Panel, established by the US/Canada Yukon River Salmon Agreement, met in Anchorage on March 30 through April 1 to review the interim escapement goals for Canadian origin Chinook salmon and for upper Yukon fall chum salmon. Based upon the 2010 preseason outlook by fisheries managers on the Yukon River, the Panel adopted an interim Canadian escapement goal range for 2010 of 42,500 to 55,000 Chinook salmon (as measured by the Eagle sonar). This is a slight change from the goal of 45,000 used the two previous years. The Panel also adopted an interim Canadian escapement goal range for 2010 of 70,000 to 104,000 upper Yukon fall chum salmon. In addition to these escapement goals, there is a commitment to pass enough Chinook and fall chum salmon across the border to meet harvest share agreements.

In addition to setting the escapement goals, the Panel allocated over \$US 1 million for salmon and habitat Restoration and Enhancement Fund projects in both Alaska and the Yukon Territory. The Panel has allocated over \$US 3 million since 2002 to community-based projects, including stewardship projects, directly supporting the management and recovery of Yukon River salmon stocks originating in Canada. In 2009, these projects included test fisheries and population monitoring projects in Marshall, Kaltag, and Ruby in Alaska; and in communities within the Yukon drainage in Yukon Territory, both along the Yukon River Mainstem and tributaries, such as the Porcupine River. These communities include Dawson, Mayo, Minto, Old Crow, Teslin and Whitehorse.

Other restoration and enhancement projects involve the application of technologies to support fishery management. These projects include advanced genetic stock identification technology and salmon run counting techniques using sonar stations at the US-Canada border and within the Canadian portion of the system. All have assisted with monitoring the escapement objectives set by the Panel.

Since signing of the Yukon Agreement in 2002, the Panel has set an example for cooperation in the sharing and management of international salmon stocks. The Panel, which operates under the umbrella of the Pacific Salmon Treaty, consists of 12 Alaska and Yukon Territory residents from throughout the Yukon River system, and is supported by regional advisors and scientists and managers from Canadian and United States agencies.

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