

Association of Village Council Presidents Press Release



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Alaska Native Leaders Demand Change to End Salmon Crisis

Anchorage, Alaska- The Association of Village Council Presidents (AVCP) leadership, is testifying at the Alaska State Board of Fisheries’ “Fish Area M” meeting to halt the ongoing salmon crisis facing Western Alaska. The Board’s meeting to consider new regulations in Area M began today in Anchorage.

The people of Alaska, especially the Tribes are being severely impacted by overfishing, bycatch, and salmon intercept in Area M by commercial fishermen. 2021 saw a decrease of Yukon River summer and fall chum escapements of almost 90 percent.

AVCP is supporting Proposal 140 to ensure the rights of all Alaskans are protected and salmon is no longer over harvested by a select few. Proposal 140 will reduce excessive harvest of migrating discrete stocks of concerns in the Cook Inlet, Bristol Bay and AYK area.

AVCP is supporting Proposal 140 which is viewed as a way of supporting the subsistence needs of Native communities while also fulfilling the needs of the commercial fishing industry.

Thaddeus Tikiun Jr, AVCP, Executive Board Chairperson- “AVCP’s voice will be heard this week and the Board here in Anchorage will hear the story of our region’s suffering. This is a matter of feast or famine. The Board must protect all Alaskans and support efforts to responsibly regulate the fishery. Simply put, the salmon must be allowed to make their way to our rivers and streams.”

Vivian Korthuis, AVCP Chief Executive Officer- “The voices of our Tribes must be heard as we push for ways to end the salmon disaster. Our food security, culture and way of life have been damaged by salmon bycatch, climate change and outdated policies at both the federal and state levels.”

Jennifer Hooper, AVCP Natural Resources Manager- “We are asking for reasonable sideboards. Every fish counts, and we need to get salmon back into our rivers to meet the subsistence needs of our Tribal communities.”

Alaska Department of Fish and Game Commissioner Doug Vincent-Lang told the large audience in attendance that this week's discussion will be "complex and difficult". AVCP leadership expects the Board's consideration of Proposal 140 to be fair and respectful of the centuries-old needs of Native communities.

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AVCP is a regional nonprofit tribal consortium comprised of the 56 federally recognized tribes of the YK Delta. The geographic boundaries of AVCP extend from the Yukon River Village of Russian Mission downstream to the Bering Sea coast, north up through Kotlik and south along the coastline to Platinum and then extending up the Kuskokwim River to Stony River, including Lime Village on the Stony River tributary. The area encompasses approximately 6.5 million acres, or 55,000 square miles, in Western Alaska.