

AVCP

ASSOCIATION OF VILLAGE COUNCIL PRESIDENTS
P.O. BOX 219 • BETHEL, ALASKA 99559 • PHONE 543-3521

49TH ANNUAL CONVENTION
BETHEL, ALASKA OCTOBER 8-10, 2013

RECEIVED
NOV 25 2013

RESOLUTION 13-10-08

**TITLE: REDUCTION OF CHINOOK AND CHUM SALMON BYCATCH IN
 THE BERING SEA POLLOCK FISHERY**

WHEREAS The Association of Village Council Presidents, Inc. (AVCP) is the recognized tribal organization and non-profit Alaska Native regional corporation for its fifty-six member indigenous Native villages within Western Alaska and supports the endeavors of its member villages, and;

WHEREAS AVCP fully supports its member villages in all aspects of their self-determination, health and well-being, and;

WHEREAS Chinook and chum salmon provide an essential source of food, income, and culture for the people Yukon and Kuskokwim Rivers and is a critical part of providing for the basic human right of food security of tribal people as protected by the UN Declaration on Rights of Indigenous People and;

WHEREAS Subsistence harvest of Chinook salmon have been severely restricted in recent years, and no directed commercial harvests of Chinook salmon have taken place on the Yukon River or Kuskokwim Rivers and;

WHEREAS Minimum amounts necessary for subsistence have not been met on the Yukon River for last five years (2008-2012) and on the Kuskokwim for the last two years (2011-2012) and;

WHEREAS Subsistence users on the Yukon River were asked to voluntarily restrict their harvest to 25% of their average annual harvest in 2013 and;

WHEREAS Chinook salmon federal commercial fishery disasters were declared for the Yukon River for 1997, 1998, 2000-2002, and 2009-2012 and for the Kuskokwim for 2011-2012 and;

WHEREAS Despite these restrictions the Yukon River Chinook salmon Canadian escapement goal has only been met in 2 out of the last 7 years and mean run size of Canadian-origin Chinook salmon (which comprise approximately 50% of the run) declined 45% for the period 1998-2010 compared to 1982-1997 and;

RESOLUTION 13-10-08

WHEREAS The Bering Sea pollock fishery catches these same salmon as bycatch; catching over 122,000 wild Chinook salmon in 2007 and over 700,000 chum salmon in 2005 and;

WHEREAS According to the best available scientific information 73% of the Chinook salmon are taken as bycatch are of Western Alaska origin and;

WHEREAS The management measures adopted in April 2009 by the North Pacific Fishery Management Council (the Council) provide for a 47,591 bycatch level in most years, with the potential for the fleet to reach 60,000 in two out of every seven years without consequence and;

WHEREAS Although bycatch has remained well below the cap in recent years, the current management regime allows the potential for the pollock fleet to catch as many as 60,000 Chinook salmon as bycatch and;

WHEREAS In these times of severe Chinook salmon declines, all sources of mortality must be reduced and all harvesters of salmon must bear equitably in conserving Chinook salmon and;

WHEREAS There is currently no limit on chum salmon in the Bering Sea pollock fishery in place and;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Association of Village Council Presidents request that the North Pacific Fishery Management Council adopt management measures, through consultation with affected Alaska tribal governments, which will protect Alaska Chinook and chum salmon runs at a level that will ensure abundant and sustainable harvests sufficient to provide for the nutritional, cultural, and economic needs of the customary and traditional users of these salmon stocks and;

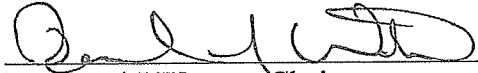
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Association of Village Council Presidents request that the North Pacific Fishery Management Council take action to further reduce Chinook salmon by-catch in the Bering Sea pollock fishery by reducing the overall cap level and placing limitations on pollock.

BET IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Association of Village Council Presidents request that the North Pacific Fishery Management Council also take action to adopt chum salmon by-catch management measures which will adequately protect Western Alaska chum salmon runs.

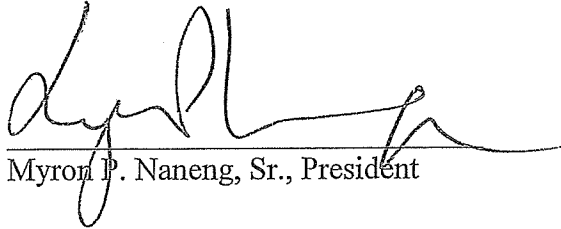
RESOLUTION 13-10-08

ADOPTED by the Association of Village Council Presidents during its forty-ninth annual convention held at Bethel, Alaska, this 9th day of October 2013 with a duly constituted quorum of delegates.

CERTIFIED:



Raymond J. Watson, Chairman



Myron P. Naneng, Sr., President

Sponsored by: The AYK Workgroup