



# YUKON DRIFTER

# SUMMER

is coming!



## YOUR CDQ COMPANY!

Yukon Delta Fisheries Association is the parent company of many small business intended to keep the economy of our region thriving. You might recognize some of them.

- Kwik'pak - Fish Buying/Marketing/Sales
- Yukon Marine Manufacturing - Boat Building
- Yukon River Towing - Towing/Cargo
- Fur Buying
- Logging/Sawmill/Construction
- Education

## YUKON DELTA FISHERIES ASSOC.

YDFDA is committed to providing development, innovation and opportunity to the people of our region.

By investing in YOU, we in turn invests into the sustainable future of our village economy—ensuring the longevity of cultural values and practices.

YDFDA would like to keep YOU better informed of activities, events and opportunities. Please look over this newsletter and contact us if you see something that applies to you or your family or interests you. We want to hear from you!

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1016 West Sixth Ave, Suite 301  
Anchorage, AK 99501  
Phone 907-644-0326

YDFDA Emmonak Office  
P.O. Box 210 Emmonak, AK 99581  
Phone 907-949-1202



## COMMERCIAL FISHING OUTLOOK

In just a few weeks the ice will move out, and within days our king salmon will start running. Fishing really isn't far off.

Although ADF&G is projecting a "below average to average" king run for 2010, there are some signs that could possibly allow a limited fishery. The parent brood years for the coming season both had good to above average border passage escapements into Canada. At the same time, treaty border passage has been set for 2010 at 42,500 fish, which is a few thousand less fish than what was mandated last season. At the same time it is hoped that the commercial fleet switches over to seven and one-half inch nets, which should give the Department some comfort as to what size fish the fleet would be targeting. Another



Another positive aspect is the employment of a side scan sonar unit at Pilot Station. The addition of another counting device at Pilot should provide the Department with more data to consider in estimating run strength. Likewise, the test fishery at Mountain Village is another tool the Department will be able to utilize to judge the size of the king run.

Regardless of what happens with the King fishery, we are anticipating that ADF&G will permit summer and fall chum commercial fisheries. Brood years for both summer and fall chums had exceptional escapements that should provide for healthy returns. Another positive aspect of the chum fisheries, is that through Board of Fish action, the trigger points to permit commercial openings have been lowered for both fall and summer chum openings. This will allow us to fish sooner, and provide the opportunity for bigger harvests overall.

Market conditions for all salmon species are strong. Kwikpak will be paying 50 cents per pound for summer chums, 75 cents for fall chums, coho will be paid at a dollar per pound. Kings will fetch at \$5.00 per pound. In the event that the fishery produces volume, prices paid out to fishermen will increase.

## KING NET CHANGOVER PROGRAM

As most fishermen know, the Board of Fisheries adopted a new regulation at their January meeting in Fairbanks that restricts mesh size to seven and half inches for king salmon. Some staff members with The Department of Fish and Game strongly felt reducing mesh size would fix the perceived problem of small king salmon that Upper Yukon fishermen have been complaining about for several years. It is certainly arguable what has caused a decline in fish size, but with the urging of ADF&G staff, this new regulation was passed.

Regardless of how we all feel about it, changing our nets is something we have to do. Although the regulation is not mandatory until 2011, Kwikpak Fisheries is urging our commercial fishermen to change over this coming season. We feel that it would be in the best interest of the fishery to make this net change over as soon as possible. At the same, we are certainly encouraged that ADF&G feels that this will solve the problem. Their data suggested 7.5 inch nets would catch fewer large female king salmon, thereby putting more a better selection of fish on the spawning grounds. We want to support their efforts in anticipation that this new net size will allow more commercial fishing opportunities.

The company has gone forward with their support in sponsoring this program and has ordered enough webbing to re-gear the commercial fleet on the Lower Yukon. The new nets will arrive at Emmonak in early June. We are providing the webbing to commercial fishermen at no cost. So far, we are encouraged by the number of fishing families who have already signed up to replace their old gear. If you are interested and willing to get this change underway for the upcoming season, please contact us as soon as possible. Just call into either the Emmonak or Anchorage office and we will get you on list for new webbing.

## YUKON FISHERIES DISASTER DECLARATION UPDATE

On January 15 of this year, U.S. Commerce Secretary Gary Locke declared a commercial fishing disaster for Yukon River king salmon. However, the declaration, requested by Governor Sean Parnell and others, does not automatically send money to villages impacted by the loss of king salmon to eat and sell.

In the past, Federal disaster declarations have meant Federal dollars for fishermen, cannery workers, research projects and infrastructure. The key to bringing financial aid to those most affected by the loss of the fishery is convincing Congress to approve and fund emergency relief to the region.

Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association, working in conjunction with the Association of Village Council Presidents, have been meeting and working in earnest with State and Federal officials to procure financial support from Congress for the disaster declaration. Most recently – part of the joint request for disaster aid – included 5.4 million dollars as direct payments to Lower Yukon fishermen and crew members. Additionally, the request addressed the loss in wages to local processing workers. Response from Congress is anticipated within the next 60 days.

YDFDA & AVCP will continue working with our Congressional delegation and other officials to secure the funding needed for area residents affected by the low king salmon runs. If you need any further information, please contact our office.

## NEW TEST FISHERY

YDFDA in cooperation with Ascarsarmiut Tribal Council of Mountain Village and ADF&G will conduct a Chinook salmon test fishery project near Mountain Village on the main stem Yukon River. This project is strategically located between two ADF&G assessment projects that are separated by over 100 river miles and 3 fish travel days. Data from this project, in conjunction with the Lower Yukon test net information and the Pilot Station Sonar counts, will allow a comparative assessment of King salmon rub strength and run timing among these three projects.

This project will also provide additional insight into the Chinook run strength at the Pilot Station Sonar site.

YDFDA sponsors several fishery projects on the Lower Yukon. The company is committed to improving our fisheries and in working jointly with agencies responsible for the management of Yukon fisheries.

Anyone from Mountain Village interested in working on this project should contact Bibiana Sage, the Kwikpak Manager.

## BREAK UP CONDITIONS

### THICK ICE & LACK OF SNOW

After last years record flooding and the havoc it caused, agencies have begun monitoring pre-break up conditions on the Yukon. As of March 31, the ice on the Tanana River at Nenana measured 51.25 inches, which is considerable thicker than normal. Based on the Ice Classic records, ice this thick normally translates into a later break up at Nenana and will likely occur between April 26 and April 29. Roughly, four weeks after Nenana goes out, we have our break up. Also delaying this years break up, is the lack of snow in the western and eastern interior. Reports of snow cover detail a below average year for snow through out Alaska and western Canada. Less snow melt usually causes ice to hold longer. Most upriver interior villages have recorded less than 24" of snow this winter. Lack of snow is more than likely good news for Lower Yukon villagers. There should be considerable less water coming down river this year as compared to last when there were record snow falls through out the Yukon drainage.



## KWIK'PAK FISHERIES

### KWIK'PAK FISHERIES IS A COMMUNITY-BASED BUSINESS.

We are working to build the regional economy by offering employment, training, and educational opportunities to area residents and their families. In addition to work tied directly to our fishing and buying operations, Kwik'pak has helped other small businesses in the villages along the river.

Subsistence fishing has been the mainstay of the Yupik people for generations. Today, income derived from commercial fishing helps them to preserve their long-standing traditions. Before each commercial season begins, Yupik families travel to "fish camps" to catch, dry, and store the fish that will sustain them through the winter.



## FUR BUSINESS

In hopes of supporting economic growth in the winter months and bringing back a traditional economy for our region, for the first time Kwikpak Fisheries started purchasing furs from trappers in the Lower Yukon region.

### KEEPING A TRADITION ALIVE,

Jeff Sutters, an experienced trapper who resides in Mountain Village, is our regional fur buyer. Jeff has held workshops in Kotlik, Emmonak, Alakanuk and Mountain Village teaching and guiding people on proper technique of trapping, skinning and stretching fur. As of today, we have had 69 deliveries of different furs such as Lynx, Mink, Otter, Fox, Beaver and Martin from 28 trappers whom Kwikpak has paid a total of \$16,755.00. At this time of the year, the trapping season is only for Beaver, Muskrat and Wolf, which Jeff thinks will go into late May. We anticipate the trapping business to grow in the coming years.

Next season we will be sponsoring workshops in the high schools to get more youth involved in this tradition. This is something anyone can do to earn some extra cash during tight times in the winter. Furs are bought based on quality and trapping supplies are being sold out of Emmonak, Kotlik and Mountain Village. We will also be tanning some of these locally caught furs and they will be sold in the village stores and in the Fisherman's Store at Emmonak. Trapping reps are Marvin Okitkun in Kotlik, Max Agayar in Alakanuk, Phillip Kameroff in Emmonak and Jeff Sutter in Mountain Village and St. Mary's. You may contact any of them for more detailed information.



## NEW COMPANY LAUNCHED, YUKON RIVER TOWING

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### PROVIDE MORE JOBS, BETTER SERVICE

At the YDFDA Board of Directors meeting held in January, the Directors unanimously voted to create a new business entity which will enable the company to enter into the barging and lightering business on the Lower Yukon . Based on the Board resolution, YUKON RIVER TOWING was formed. A substantial amount of asset procurement was also approved by the Directors in order to have the new company fully functional for the 2010 barging and construction season. Among those assets, is the pusher vessel Sunshine 3, purchased from the Bodey family. Additionally, several pieces of heavy equipment have also been purchased. With the acquisition of these assets, the company will be capable of delivering container freight, excavation, road building, and gravel hauling among others.

For the first year, Yukon River Towing will concentrate on working with the City of Emmonak in connection with their construction projects and gravel hauling needs. YRT will also be offering lightering services on the Lower River to the ocean carriers, piloting services, and freight and construction support for the Lower Yukon villages. It will be the lead company in logging and log house building.

The new company will open up more job opportunities for local workers. Operating at full capacity and utilizing its assets, YRT will have over 30 positions to fill. Heavy equipment operators, barge and tow boat deckhands and crews, construction workers, loggers, and support staff will all be needed during the upcoming season. YRT will be head quartered at Kwikpak Fisheries in Emmonak. The new company is in the process of contacting local tribal entities and village corporations to let them know that they now have the option to work with a local company to support village projects such as road improvements, construction projects, and gravel needs. The company is fully certified and is licensed to perform Federal, State, City, and Tribal contracts.



## YUKON MARINE MANUFACTURING

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Yukon Marine Manufacturing, an Emmonak skiff building facility, opened its doors in 1999. The company sells approximately 20-24ft boats from October through May and repairs boats for people in the surrounding villages, in preparation for the salmon season.

Typical repairs are for cracks and fabrication per the owner's specifications. Construction of 18 new skiffs were completed in 2008, employing 10 Yukon Delta residents. A total of 123 skiffs have been built and sold since the beginning of the program in 1999.



## TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Resident in the Yukon Delta area, have the opportunity to go training, if they are interested. YDEF Scholarship can be used for training programs from AVTEC to Career Academy. Or where ever they choose to go. In the past, YDEF has funded students that are interested in going to get their CDL, or go to a flight school. YDEF scholarship can be used for transportation, room & board, fees, books, tuition, or living expenses. Students are encouraged to apply for other funding, like Association of Village Councils of Presidents (AVCP), Calista, United Utilities, INC. (UUI) , Alaska Village Electric Company (AVEC), the local Tribal or Native Corporation.

## LOGO CONTEST

Yukon River Towing, LLC., a subsidiary of Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association is looking for a logo for their company. All students from grades 7 through 12 in the villages of Alakanuk, Emmonak, Grayling, Mountain Village, Kotlik and Nunam Iqua can submit one logo.

All entries must have the following:

1. The Lower Yukon Delta Region or River area
2. An LCM pushing/pulling a barge
3. Using only the colors; Black, White, Blue, and Yellow. You can use any shade of these colors but there must be no more than four colors in the logo.
4. Please do not write your name on the logo. Attach your name and address by paperclip to your entry. All entries must be submitted on a white 8\_ x 11 sheet of paper. Entries must be postmarked by April 30th.

Please mail all entries to:  
YDFDA

1016 West 6th Avenue, Suite 301  
Anchorage, Alaska 99501  
Attn: Judi Murdock

**A CASH PRIZE OF UP TO \$500 WILL  
BE AWARDED THE WINNER**

## EDUCATION AND KIDS

YDFDA has several **SCHOLARSHIPS** that residents can apply for. The first is the **YUKON DELTA EDUCATION FUND (YDEF)**, this scholarship can be used for going to college/universities, or any training program. If going to college or to a university, the student must maintain there GPA and number of credits that they applied for, from the previous semester. Applications can be obtained by the YDFDA Website, or by calling **1-877-985-6625**.

The second resident's scholarship is through the University of Alaska Foundation. YDFDA and Golden Alaska contribute to the Foundation, for Yukon Delta residents to use. The UA Foundation application can be found on the UA Foundation Website. If residents are applying for a UAA, UAF, UAS or any other school affiliated with the UA Foundation is encouraged to fill the application out. Resident from the Yukon Delta area, can apply for one of the scholarships, not both.

## CONSTRUCTION DEVELOPMENTS

During the coming months, the company will begin construction of a log house model home. This will be the company's first log house built to show case its ability to provide low cost housing for area residents. The house is designed to be compatible with the life style of the region and feature both oil and wood heat as well as an arctic entry way and full utility room.

The primary purpose for entry into house building is to provide not just affordable housing, but also offer a considerable number of job opportunities. Loggers, carpenters, electricians, plumbers, and equipment operators will all be needed for our construction enterprise. We intend to have the sawmill operating throughout the year as this venture grows. Job training will be available to those interested in leaning a trade.

Additionally this season, the City of Emmonak will be in the middle of several of its' construction projects. Our company will work jointly to supply the city with gravel needed for road improvements, the land fill project, as well as other requirements they may have.

## LOGGING THIS SPRING

As an additional financially viable opportunity for many local residents, the company will be buying drift log this season. The purpose of this venture is to provide a likely source of cash income for those in our communities who have the ability to gather logs.

The company needs the raw logs to mill into house logs, which will in turn provide the primary building materials for it's log housing program. The log housing program will like wise make available employment opportunities along with affordable housing for our villages.

The company decided to carry out the program in this manner, so that it would provide economic benefits to wide range of residents of the Lower Yukon. Log buying stations will be set up in the villages of Alakanuk, Emmonak, Kotlik and Mountain Village. Buying will commence shortly after the ice goes out. As it gets closer to logging season we will be providing up dates.

This logging program should be noted for its integration throughout the actual business model. From gathering raw logs, to milling the logs, to building good, solid housing designed to local specifications and needs, local workers will be utilized and appreciated to the fullest extent of any project. Employment opportunities will be realized and decent, affordable housing will be available.

Again, we will keep you posted as logging season gets closer!

## EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

YDFDA and its subsidiaries adheres to a strict policy which provides for a preference for local or in region hiring. The companies are committed to this policy. Past employment data show that 98% of our employees are regional residents. The company is committed to providing employment opportunities to our residents and we wanted to keep everyone informed as to what can be expected this coming season.

Kwikpak Fisheries will start taking applications for employment on May 15th. If you need an application sent to you, please call the Emmonak or Anchorage office. We can mail, email or FAX applications. We will be taking applications for all positions including our high school program which allows 14-15 year olds to work in the office doing clerical, retail and janitorial work and 16-17 year olds to work in the roe processing room. Employees 18 and older are allowed to work at all positions. Again this season Kwikpak will be providing shuttle service for workers from Alakanuk. For those workers from other villages, we will be operating the bunkhouse which comes with three meals a day and a room that sleeps 4-6 employees. The season at Kwikpak is expected to run from June first through October.

Full time students currently enrolled at a college or vocational training program are eligible for a paid internship with Kwikpak Fisheries in Emmonak and Anchorage. There are several positions for internships available and we encourage interested students to contact the Anchorage office to learn more about these openings. Information will be sent to qualified students with more details.



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Kwikpak Fisheries  
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Emmonak 949-1120 or toll free 1-877-985-6625

(Continued from pg 7...)Drug testing is a YDFDA policy and is mandatory prior to being hired. Random testing will also be done throughout the season.

There will be a wide variety of jobs available, and we look forward to seeing all our past employees and we hope that we will see many new ones this summer.

## CONTACT US

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Rural Development Specialist  
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Anchorage 644-0326

Thomas Link, Yukon River Towing Manager  
907-444-8996

Yukon Marine Manufacturing  
Robert Andrews, General Manager  
robert@ydfda.org Emmonak 949-1204

## YOUR BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Alakanuk: Max Agayar  
Frank Alstrom, Jr., Chairman

Emmonak: Dominic Hunt  
Matilda "Tillie" Oktoyuk, Secretary

Grayling: Carl Walker  
Margie Walker

Kotlik: Benjamin Kamkoff  
Emmanuel Keyes

Mountain Village:  
Simon Andrews, Vice Chairman  
Alexie Walters, Sr.

Nunam Iqua: Dominica Strongheart