



YUKON DELTA FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

Representing the Alaskan Communities of:
ALAKANUK • EMMONAK • GRAYLING • KOTLIK • MOUNTAIN VILLAGE • NUNAM IQUA

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March 17, 2026

Marit Carlson-Van Dort, Chair
Alaska Board of Fisheries
Alaska Department of Fish and Game
P.O. Box 115526
Juneau, Alaska 99811-5526

Chair Carlson-Van Dort and Members of the Board,

My name is Ragnar Alstrom, and I am the Executive Director of the Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association (YDFDA), a Community Development Quota group representing six communities at the mouth of the Yukon River.

YDFDA opposes Proposal 175.

This proposal would eliminate a traditional method of catching salmon in the Yukon River Delta subsistence fishery.

There are several different methods currently used with dip nets in the subsistence salmon fishery. These include:

1. Traditional Dip Netting

This method involves dipping a net into the water and pulling it downriver faster than the current so the webbing remains open. This method is physically demanding and difficult to sustain because of the energy required to repeatedly dip and pull a five-foot diameter net through the water. After about a dozen attempts, most people are too tired to continue.

2. Tidal Dip Netting

This method occurs at the coast during a flooding tide. The incoming tide holds the net webbing upstream while a person waits for salmon to strike the net. The disadvantages include:

- The river mouth during tidal flood is very wide—approximately three miles from Flat Island to the mainland at Chris Point.
- Weather and high surf can make this method unsafe or impractical.
- There is no guarantee salmon will enter the river during that specific tidal flood.

3. River Eddy Dip Netting

This method takes place in natural river eddies within the river. The dip net is held in place while



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the eddy creates an upriver current, allowing salmon to be harvested when they strike the webbing.

Eddies on the Yukon Delta are created during spring ice breakup when ice jams form. Water forced around these jams erodes the riverbank, creating indentations that later form eddies. In recent years, ice breakup has been less dynamic, resulting in fewer ice jams and therefore fewer eddies. This has led to overcrowding among subsistence fishermen competing for the remaining eddy locations.

4. Powered Skiff Dip Netting

In this method, a skiff is idled downriver at a speed slightly greater than the current to keep the dip net open. The net is typically secured to the boat using an oarlock or similar device. When salmon strike the net, they are either brought on board or released by flipping the net.

Disadvantages of this method include:

- Continuous gasoline use while the motor is running
- Risk of hitting underwater snags that can destroy or cause loss of the dip net
- The need for a larger crew, including a boat operator and deckhands
- The requirement for long beaches or sandbars to idle along

5. River Channel Dipping

In this method, the dip net handle is attached to a length of rope and dragged along the river bottom while the river current pulls both the skiff and the net downstream.

This method has several advantages:

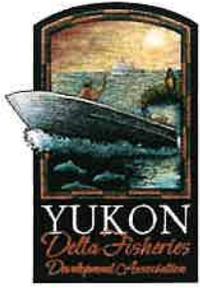
- Very little gasoline is used because the current moves the skiff and net
- A single person can operate the gear without additional crew
- Fishermen can move up and down the river channel in search of salmon if none are present in a particular location

Proposal 175 seeks to prohibit this river channel dipping method.

Because of its low cost, efficiency, and flexibility in searching for salmon, this method is widely used by subsistence fishermen. Its use becomes even more prevalent farther upriver, particularly in Yukon District 2.

YDFDA believes that further restricting subsistence fishing tools will make it more difficult for rural residents to harvest salmon for food.

For these reasons, YDFDA opposes Proposal 175.



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Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ragnar Alstrom

Executive Director
Yukon Delta Fisheries Development Association (YDFDA)