

Wetzel, Kimberly

From: John and Marty Runkle <runkleinak@hotmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 05, 2013 6:42 PM
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Subject: FW: windy fork chum salmon

Forgive my previous typing mistakes. here is I hope, a corrected version and a bit more information in the p.s.
john runkle

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Subject: windy fork chum salmon
Date: Fri, 5 Apr 2013 10:14:09 -0800

We are adding this information to the comment Marty and I have compiled thus far regarding the impact of a pipeline proposed by Donlin Creek Mine.

A unique and one of a kind in the world genetic strain of chum salmon make their way up the Kuskokwim every year. They are specifically heading toward the upper regions of the Windy Fork of the Middle Fork of the Kuskokwim River. They spawn immediately below the proposed gravel site on the Windy just below Rick Halfords homestead on the east side and they spawn on the west side about 1/2 mile below the proposed site, near the Windy BLM cabin. there are also silver salmon that spawn there, or commonly called by Nikolai people red salmon. though they are not the true green headed red salmon.

Jack Whitman past McGrath based Fish and Game biologist investigated the area referred to above by helicopter after I reported this info to him in the 80's. He captured fish during the spawn. He sent samples in

and found that the chums spawning on the Windy are a completely unique strain of salmon found nowhere else on the planet. Their nearest cousins are found on the east side of the Alaska Range identified on a river near the inlet. They do not spawn anywhere else but the Windy and no other strain of chums spawn on the Windy.

Interesting. For over 10 years I personally provided Jack Whitman with a yearly report at the end of fall hunting season I had compiled with all the fish and animal and bird species found in the Alaska Range along the area between Windy and Middle Fork. He entered all the info every year into Fish and Game records. He confirmed that the information I had provided him that included but was not limited to Rock ptarmigan, pika, marmots, squirrels, eagles, hawks and more in the higher elevations, to the lower lying regions including every living creature I personally observed every day during spring, fall and winter while trapping there. Just a number of other reasons to oppose a pipeline or any major construction or mining venture in the Alaska Range. Unspoiled wilderness is the way it should stay.

respectfully,

John and Marty Runkle

p.s. additional. Jack Whitman also sent in samples of fish we catch yearly on a very limited basis, out of the Khuchaynik Creek and several smaller streams towards Middle Fork. We thought they were a type of trout but it turns out that they are unique strain of Arctic Char. The interesting thing is that these streams run dry a few miles downstream and go underground. No one knows where these fish came from. They mature to about 10-12 " males and about 6-8" females. Average size is 6". They too are unique to this area alone, according to what Jack Whitman could find out. This region of the Alaska Range is also home to coyote and wolverine in limited numbers. Please look up and read the Donlin Creek Mine website and look for their own statement of Facilities construction and pipeline construction. It is a serious eye opener to anyone who cares about the future of this beautiful untouched area in the Last Frontier in America.