

Day of Peaceful Protest

For the Survival of the Salmon on the Yukon River

Action Toolkit

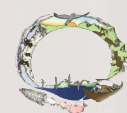


WHY AN ACTION

The people of the Yukon River and Tanana River and their tributaries have depended on salmon and other fish species since time immemorial. Current state and federal management systems have failed and continue to fail to protect fish resources. A prime example of this is the trawling industry, which is allowed to continue fishing and targets the salmon bound for the Yukon and Tanana Rivers. Failure to manage the salmon sustainably has led to multi-year closures of subsistence fishing along the Yukon River watershed and fishing disasters for the Yukon River Salmon Fisheries have been declared in 2020, 2021, and 2022. These closures have caused hardship, loss of culture, and nutritional deficiencies for our people who have depended on these salmon for generations. Years and years of advocacy by the individuals who live along these water systems have led to no substantial actions to restore the salmon and trawling in the ocean environment has continued. The subsistence users on the Yukon and Tanana River watersheds have borne 100% of the conservation burden despite making up only 1% of the salmon user group. Tribes and tribal advocates have asked for years for the industrial commercial fishing industry to share the burden of conservation to no avail. We are now asking all allies to stand with the people of the Yukon and fight for the protection of the Yukon River Salmon.

WHY WE'RE PROTESTING - AT A GLANCE

- Salmon runs along the Yukon and Tanana Rivers have collapsed — and Alaska Native people who have relied on the salmon since time immemorial have not been allowed to fish for subsistence, while industrial trawlers continue to operate offshore intercepting salmon bound for the Yukon River watershed.
- State and federal management systems have failed to protect Yukon River salmon. Despite repeated warnings, data, and pleas from Tribes, no effective measures have been taken to reduce bycatch or restore salmon runs.
- Tribes have carried 100% of the conservation burden while making up only 1% of the user group.
- These decisions have resulted in cultural loss, food insecurity, mental and physical health impacts, and spiritual grief across generations.
- Years of advocacy from Alaska Native Tribal leaders, Tribal advocates, families, and youth have been ignored. It is time for a unified, peaceful protest to lift each other up, demand change and accountability, for the future of our salmon and our people.



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WORDS OF OUR ELDERS ON SALMON AND THE YUKON

“We are the people of the river; we cannot fade away. The Yukon is our lifeline for subsistence and survival.” -William Silas from Eagle, quote from April 1988 to the Northland News.

“My elders told me when I was little to not bother the salmon or else they won’t come back. If you touch them, you stress them out and they forget. That’s what’s been happening for decades, people won’t stop bothering them and they’re not returning” -Benedict Jones, Koyukuk Elder and lifelong salmon advocate, from an interview with TRS staff May 2025.

CALL TO ACTION

Join the 42 Tribal Communities of the Tanana Chiefs Conference region in holding a Day of Peaceful Protest to show solidarity with all the communities along the Yukon and Tanana Rivers and their tributaries in the fight for our Salmon and raise state, national & global awareness to these issues so that people understand what is occurring in our river systems and can stand in allyship with the People of the Yukon.

What is the action:

- Communities along the Yukon River and tributaries will gather at the banks of the Yukon or tributary rivers with signs carrying messages to protect the Yukon River salmon. Prayers will be said at the riverbank to call for the return and for the health of the land and waters.
- Simultaneous events will be held in Fairbanks and potentially Anchorage focusing on uplifting the Tribal voices along the Yukon.
- These actions of community members gathered by the bank of the Yukon River and tributaries will be documented through pictures and videos, shared on social media and distributed to news outlets.
- A press statement with calls to action will be made by the Tribes and partner organizations.
- Optional: Communities can host a community dinner/gathering after they gather at the bank to share a meal and say another prayer for the salmon.
- An “Every Salmon Counts” gathering will be held in Fairbanks at the Chief David Salmon Tribal Hall on June 20 to gather urban-residing Tribal members and allies to rally in support of our frontline relatives who are living the Yukon River salmon crisis every day.

Support that Tribal Resource Stewardship Division Can Provide to TCC Tribes:

- Can send sign making kits to villages (poster paper and markers). Specify how to request supplies (email/contact form/deadline).
- Can send an outlined banner for communities to paint together with painting supplies
- Can provide suggested messaging & images for signs
- Will provide a social media toolkit that outlines how to post videos & pictures from the art build & protest
- Include a FAQ for support questions/messaging
- Make a visual timeline or checklist to help the Tribes plan

HOW TO HOLD A DAY OF PEACEFUL PROTEST

Step 1: Create & Share Protest Information

Include in your outreach information on:

- Why we are gathering in protest
- When the community will gather (date and time)
- Where the community will gather

You can create a flyer or use one of the optional template flyers made available at this link: www.link.link.com/link

Step 2: Let People Know

Ways to let people in your community know:

- Post the flyer on your community Facebook page if you have one
- Print the flyer and post around your community
- Announce it on your local radio station if you have one
- If you have an upcoming community event, make an announcement there
- Door knocking to hand out flyers
- Call around to your community leaders and Elders

Step 3: Host an Art Night in Your Community Before the Day of Peaceful Protest

Art nights are a great way for the community to come together and create art around your messaging. You can create signs to hold up while you are gathered at the riverbank to amplify your community's message on why Yukon River Salmon need to be protected.

How to Host an Art Build:

- Create an event flyer or use one of the templates provided
- Distribute event flyer around town (see suggestions under "How to Let the Community Know" above)
- Open a community space for people to come together to work on art
- Can provide food if your Tribe has funding that allows for this, or suggest that people bring a dish to share at the event

Step 4: Gather on June 20 as a Community

Gather at the River (or another central location):

- Choose a meaningful place - ideally the banks of your river or a public space that reflects the importance of salmon
- Invite the Elders to offer an opening prayer or speak about the significance of salmon to your community. *(Reminder: This is a peaceful protest grounded in care for the land, water, salmon, and each other.)*
- Encourage families and youth to participate - this is a space for intergenerational learning and visibility
- Provide a blessing/offering to the river
- Moment of silence

Bring Your Art and Messaging:

Display your signs, banners, and salmon art from the Community Art Night

Uplift Your Message on Social Media:

- Post a live during the event or upload and tag TCC afterward
- Post pictures and short videos using shared hashtags

Community Gathering After with Meal/Snacks

- Host a meal or snacks/refreshments, coffee/tea afterwards
- Ask an Elder or Healer in your community to provide blessing/prayer for healing (peaceful protests can still be very emotional)
- Include singing of traditional songs, drumming, dancing, tell fishing stories, ask Elders and Tribal leadership to make comments, etc.

NOTES & BRAINSTORMING

Use this page to record your notes about how your community can participate in the Day of Peaceful Protest for the Survival of Salmon on the Yukon. Ideas to think about:

- Which leaders in your community you'd like to have speak at your event
- The location of your event, and any post-event meals or talking circles you'd like to host
- Your community's Art Night event , if you're hosting one(location, food, materials, etc)
- Think about asking for a volunteer to film your Day of Peaceful Protest event
- Questions you may have for TRSP

For help or questions about your Day of Peaceful Protest for the Survival of Salmon event, reach out to Tribal Resource Stewardship at trsp@tananachiefs.org.

Day of Peaceful Protest

For the Survival of the Salmon on the Yukon River

Social Media Toolkit



IN THIS TOOLKIT

1. **Images & video suggestions to capture on the day of protest**
 - a. Example photos to capture
 - b. Example videos to capture
 - c. Suggested questions for interview videos
2. **How to post images & videos of your action**
 - a. Hashtags to use for social media posts
 - b. Example captions for posts
 - c. Public Social Media accounts to tag in your post
3. **Example messaging for signs & banners**

Images & Video Suggestions to Capture from your Day of Peaceful Protest:

Capturing images and videos from your day of peaceful protest will be a key component to getting your community's message out to the state, nation & world. There are several different impactful images you can take and post from around your community on this day. Videos of elders, youth and tribal members sharing about what salmon means to them and why it's important for us to fight for them is also a great way to share multiple perspectives from your community. These images and videos don't have to be fancy, pictures and videos from your phones are perfect, just be sure to take photos and videos in the landscape orientation.

Example Images to capture:

- Standing together by the bank with signs
- Kids holding posters
- Elders and kids holding signs by smokehouses
- Holding signs and empty nets by boats
- If you have fish boats pulled out of the river, take photos holding signs by them

Example videos to capture:

- A video of everyone standing by the bank saying “Stand with us and defend the Yukon River Salmon”
- A video of an elder or community leader saying a prayer to the river for the health of the salmon
- A video of an elder, community leader, or kids talking about why salmon is important to them, this could be by the river, by a smoke house, by a boat, by a fish net, ect. see example question prompts below.

Example prompt questions for videos:

- How important was salmon to you when you were growing up?
- Have you been able to keep up your smoke house?
- Have you ever caught a fish and what was that experience like for you?
- Can you remember the first time you caught a fish? What was that experience like?
- How has your diet changed since we’ve had fishing closures
- Have you noticed any changes in your health
- Ask kids - Do you know what’s going on with the fish?
- Ask parents – are there ways in which you’re still working to teach your kids how to process fish? If so what are they?

How to Post Images & Videos of Your Community Protest:

- Go onto Facebook or Instagram, this can be on your personal account, or if your tribe has a social media account use that.
- Make sure the post is public so that everyone can see it & share it
- Upload key photos & videos from your community’s protest
- Use example wording for the caption or create your own, be sure to include the name of your Tribe
- Use one or more of the shared hashtags below

If you would like, please also email images & videos to TRSP@tananachiefs.org , we will be working with a video editor to create a region wide video of images and clips from all the actions along the Yukon.

Hash tags to use:

#protectwildsalmon

#defendthesacred

#yukonriver

Example wording for captions:

“We are river people, we’ve depended on salmon for generations, we will always stand up for the protection of our salmon relatives.”

“Stand with the People of the Yukon and fight to protect some of the last remaining wild salmon runs in the country.”

“Every salmon counts, defend the Yukon River Salmon”

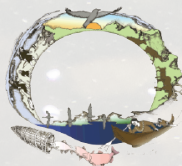
“Every salmon counts, state and federal managers do your part”

“Every salmon counts, stop bottom trawling!”

“Salmon are sacred, stop over fishing our oceans”

Suggested messaging for signs:

- Every Salmon Counts
- Every Egg Counts
- Salmon Are Life
- Save the Yukon River Salmon
- Our salmon can’t feed the world
- Protect the Yukon River – Protect the Salmon
- Us and the salmon have nothing left to give
- We’re not losing our salmon they’re being taken!
- Federal and State Management Has Failed Us
- The Yukon Once Teemed with Life – Now It’s Silent
- Share the burden of conservation with us
- We’re Not Just Feeding People – We’re Feeding the Land
- Our Ancestors Fished These Waters – Will Our Children?
- Stop Bottom Trawling
- This Is Native Land – These Are Native Waters
- A Prayer for the Salmon Is a Prayer for Us All
- Stand With The People of the Yukon – Stand With the Salmon



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