



**VUNTUT GWITCHIN GOVERNMENT**  
**Government of Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation**

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**CHIEF AND COUNCIL**

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**VUNTUT GWITCHIN FIRST NATION**  
**COUNCIL RESOLUTION 06-22-2023 – #35**

**RE: 2023 Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Porcupine River Chinook Salmon Fishery**

**WHEREAS:**

- A. VGFN has the right to self-determination, including:
- (1) the inherent right to self-government;
  - (2) the right to be secure in our enjoyment of our means of subsistence and development;
  - (3) the right to maintain and strengthen our distinct physical, spiritual, cultural and economic relationship to the Traditional Territory, and to uphold our responsibilities to future generations in this regard;
  - (4) the right to the conservation and protection of the environment and the productive capacity of the Traditional Territory; and
  - (5) the right to the recognition, observance and enforcement of VGFN's inherent and treaty rights and responsibilities recognized and protected under the Final Agreement and Self-Government Agreement.
- B. VGFN's inherent and treaty rights and responsibilities include:
- (1) VGFN's inherent self-government authority recognized under Article 13 of the Self-Government Agreement in relation the protection of fish, including Porcupine River Chinook salmon; and
  - (2) VGFN's treaty right to harvest salmon and co-manage the salmon fishery in the Porcupine River watershed basin recognized under Chapter 16 of the Final Agreement including an exclusive needs-based allocation for Porcupine River Chinook salmon with priority over all other fisheries.
- C. The 2023 Chinook salmon run forecast is worse than 2022, when only 349 Chinook passed Old Crow. Early counts at Pilot Station as of June 16 support this forecast.
- D. Over the last two seasons VGFN fishers were asked to voluntarily avoid taking Chinook.

- E. Over the last two seasons, Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO)'s Communal Fishing Licence to VGFN was for 0 Chinook and it is likely that the 2023 licence will be the same.
- F. In the State of Alaska, the salmon subsistence fishery on the Yukon will be closed unless counts improve and 4-inch mesh nets, up to 50 foot in length, for freshwater fish, will be allowed.
- G. The Constitution provides that the fundamental objectives of VGFN include:
  - (1) to have authority in respect of communities and lands of VGFN;
  - (2) to promote and enhance the general welfare of VGFN;
  - (3) to promote, enhance and protect the history, culture, values, traditions and rights of VGFN;
  - (4) to promote respect for the ancestral homeland of VGFN including the natural resources; and
  - (5) to use, manage, administer and regulate the lands of VGFN including the natural resources.
- H. Council has the duty and power under the Constitution to do such things as may be necessary to fulfill the fundamental objectives of the VGFN.
- I. The Gwich'in Niintsyaa 2022 Resolution to Protect the Relationship between Gwich'in and Łùk Choo and The Ni'inlii Declaration, proclaimed by the Gwich'in Nation at the 2022 and 2016 Gwich'in Gatherings respectively, call on Gwich'in from Alaska, Yukon and Northwest Territories to stand in solidarity and ensure the restoration and conservation of the salmon in the Yukon River watershed.
- J. VGFN must take all measures necessary for future generations of VGFN citizens:
  - (1) to protect and uphold VGFN's inherent and treaty rights and responsibilities in relation to Porcupine River Chinook salmon; and
  - (2) to maintain and strengthen VGFN's distinct physical, spiritual, cultural and economic relationship to the Porcupine River Chinook salmon.
- K. Council has carefully considered the potential risks, costs and benefits of establishing VGFN measures to regulate the 2023 VGFN Porcupine River Chinook salmon fishery, including past VGFN practices.

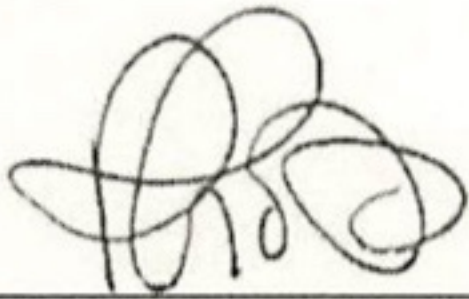
**THEREFORE, THE COUNCIL OF THE VUNTUT GWITCHIN FIRST NATION RESOLVES THAT:**

- 1. The Porcupine River and its tributaries within the VGFN Traditional Territory are closed to all gill net fishing.
- 2. No VGFN Citizen shall harvest Chinook salmon in the Porcupine River watershed.
- 3. VGFN Citizens may only fish for freshwater fish in the lakes of the VGFN Traditional Territory



4. Any Chinook salmon incidentally caught in the Porcupine River watershed by a VGFN Citizen must be released immediately, or, if already dead and unable to be revived then released, reported as bycatch to the VGG NR Department and distributed among the community.
5. These measures shall come into effect June 30, 2023 at 12:01AM and remain in effect until July 31, 2023 at 11:59 PM. They shall be reviewed weekly by NR staff as in-season information becomes available.
6. The NR Department will bring forward any recommended changes to the measures, based on in-season information, for immediate consideration by Council.
7. VGG shall provide salmon and dog food to VGFN families to reduce the hardship of this closure.

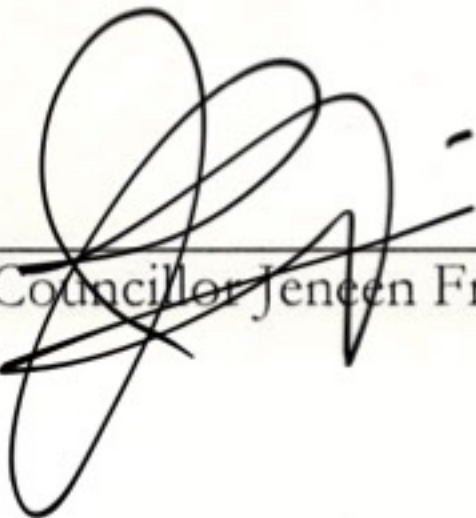
**THIS RESOLUTION** being duly approved by a quorum of the Council at a meeting duly convened on June 22, 2023 at Old Crow, Yukon.



Chief Pauline Frost



Deputy Chief Debra-Leigh Reti



Councillor Jeneen Frei Njootli