

Forum on Conservation and Harvest Planning for Fraser Salmon

May 20, 2010 • TIER 2 • Sheraton Vancouver Airport Hotel • Richmond BC

ATTENDANCE

Meeting Chair: Marcel Shepert	Susan Anderson Behn, Vancouver Island FRAWG
Pat Matthew, Secwepemc Fisheries Commission	Wilfred Robbins, Esketemc First Nation
James Archie, Skowkale First Nation	Chris Cook, Namgis First Nation
Kim Charlie, Chehalis Indian Band	James Leon, Chehalis Indian Band
Eddy Jules, Skeetchestn/SNTC	Dave Antoine, Bonaparte/SNTC
Wally Webber, Nuxalk First Nation	Ross Wilson, Heiltsuk First Nation
Murray Ned, Sto:lo Tribal Council	Tracy Sampson, Nicola Tribal Association
Ernie Crey, Sto:lo Tribal Council	Simon Smith Jr., Tsartlip Council
Nick Albany, Songhees Council	Joshua George, Tsleil Waututh First Nation
Chief Robert Hope, Yale First Nation	Carl Miller, Kwikwetlem First Nation
Ken Bohuin, Stz'uminus First Nation	Mike Jimmie, Sto:lo Nation
Lyle Billy, Ehattesaht First Nation	Wayne Page Jr., Cowichan Tribes
Kelsey Campbell, A-Tlegay Band	Daniel Billy, Cape Mudge Band
Tony Roberts Jr., A-Tlegay Band	Brian Waddhams, MTTCC
Jeff Thomas, Snuneymuxw First Nation	Brenda Morgan, Matsqui First Nation
Louis Julian, Matsqui First Nation	Ken Malloway, Kwaw Kwaw Apilt
Tony Malloway, FVAFS/Tzeachten	Lee Spahan, Coldwater Band
Christina Ciesielski, Carrier Sekani Tribal Council	Andrew Meshue, Williams Lake Band
Gord Sterritt, NSTC	Aaron Gillespie, Secwepemc Fisheries Commission
Neil Todd, Nicola Tribal Association	Karl English, Tsawwassen First Nation
Sharolise Baker, Stellaten First Nation	Mike Staley, FRAFS
Chief Fred Sampson, Nicola Tribal Association	Steve Carpenter, Heiltsuk First Nation/FNFC
Mike Baird, Tsawwassen First Nation	Darrel Campbell, Ahousaht First Nation
Joe Planes, T'sou-ke Nation	Grand Chief Saul Terry, St'at'imc/ITO
Margo French, Takla Lake First Nation	Bernette Laliberté, DFO LF
Les Jantz, DFO BCI	Barry Huber, DFO BCI
Barry Rosenberger, DFO BCI	Greg Thomas, DFO SC
Terri Bonnet, DFO LF	Randy Brahniuk, DFO SC
Jordan Point, DFO LF	Sheldon Evers, DFO LF
Gordon Curry, DFO SC	Barbara Mueller, DFO LF
Brigid Payne, DFO RHQ	Jeff Grout, DFO RHQ
Greg Wadhams, Namgis First Nation	Meeting recorder: Aimee Arsenaault, FRAFS

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Early Stuart:** 100% of Early Stuart are required for spawning. Recognizing that there will be some incidental and ceremonial harvest, First Nations recommended that 90% of Early Stuart should be protected by a 3 week window closure (to be modified in-season based on timing information; applies to the whole migration route from marine to the top of the river). Approximate dates based on forecast: Lower Fraser June 28-July 20; Mid-Fraser July 3-25; Chilco/Quesnel July 8-31.
- **Early Summer:** Extend the Early Stuart closure by 1 week in all areas to protect early summers. Exploitation cap of 25% on main stem fisheries (terminal fisheries on Scotch and Seymour can be negotiated by DFO and local First Nations communities). FSC fishing opportunities if possible (based on in-season assessment). No recreational/commercial openings.
- **Summer:** Harvest of the summer run aggregate must respect the FSC priority for each stock within the aggregate. Exploitation should not exceed 25% on all summers in order to protect Horsefly, Stellako, Late

Stuart, etc.; any fish taken from these runs must be for FSC only. DFO must shape the fishery to focus on the abundant Chilco fish, while protecting stocks of lower abundance.

- **Late Summer/Cultus:** Funding to maintain the Cultus recovery plan must be borne by DFO in light of the Laroque decision. First Nations want to see a copy of the Cultus recovery plan. Local terminal fisheries may be considered. A window closure must protect Cultus as they pass through coastal areas and the main stem Fraser.
- **Spring 4₂ Chinook:** Potential closure dates: closed to July 15 in the Lower Fraser; closed to July 25 in Sawmill to Lytton.
- The above recommendations apply to the 2010 fishing season only. Pre-season forecasts and fishing plans must be re-assessed on an annual basis.
- The above recommendations apply to marine and main stem river fisheries only; targeting specific stocks in terminal areas must be discussed by DFO and local First Nations communities.
- Recommendations might need to be revised based on in-season assessment.
- Recreational fisheries: area licensing; species-specific licensing; improved/mandatory monitoring; cap number of licenses/boat days/harvest.

DISCUSSION

- Window closures need to be implemented in marine areas; not just in the Fraser river.
- Monitoring and reporting for recreational fisheries were discussed at the Chiefs' meeting in North Vancouver. First Nations in the lower Fraser are willing to participate in collecting data/information in lower Fraser recreational fisheries. Funding is needed for data collection, DNA testing, etc.
- Concern was expressed about management in international waters. DFO indicated that assessments are conducted from aircraft over international waters. The North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission website contains more information (www.npafc.org).
- DFO typically uses DNA sampling to investigate unexpected results from other assessment methods. If test fisheries provide data similar to what is expected, fewer DNA samples are analyzed.
- First Nations expressed that their primary concern is protecting the fish for future generations.
- Recreational fisheries are seriously impacting fisheries resources. Measures need to be taken to DFO to protect fish from recreational fisheries. Their harvest needs to be controlled and limited. Commercialized recreational fisheries should have the same restrictions/reporting requirements as other fisheries.
- Jeff Grout indicated that DFO is working on improvements to monitoring programs. They are in the process of producing a document outlining standards that DFO is working towards in recreational fisheries, which should help to identify areas that need improvement. Also pulling together a large database of monitoring programs, noting deficiencies to help improve the overall monitoring of the fishery. Jeff will forward updates to Aimee for distribution to Forum participants.
- Recommendations from the Forum need to be considered along with recommendations from other First Nations (not all BC First Nations are represented in the Forum process). DFO shares recommendations from the Forum with other First Nations when engaging in negotiations and consultation.
- First Nations want to be involved in planning the agenda for the monitoring and compliance workshop planned for the fall. DFO indicated that the workshop will be planned jointly with First Nations.
- First Nations issues are often brought to other tables (e.g. SFAB), but their issues are not brought to First Nations. Bringing information back from the SFAB would help to improve the flow of information between sectors.
- Need to look at other natural resource sectors that affect fish habitat (mining, forestry, etc.).
- Funding is needed for First Nations to participate in fisheries management processes, legal/policy/technical analysis, etc.
- Any First Nations interested in joining the FRAWG process are welcome to contact the group.
- A full review of the Cultus recovery plan will be presented at CSAP on May 26.
- It was suggested that DNA analysis could be used to determine whether Cultus sockeye can be protected based on size restrictions; however, testing might not be feasible due to the small number of Cultus fish.
- Conservation is the first priority; First Nations rights are second only to conservation. FSC fisheries need to take priority over recreational and commercial fisheries.

- Window closures need to be included in the northern IFMP as well as the southern IFMP.
- First Nations reminded DFO that they want to receive feedback on recommendations in writing. This is an important aspect of communications and trust between First Nations and DFO.

SPRING 4₂ CHINOOK

- Interior First Nations put forward a moratorium on spring 4₂ Chinook at a meeting in Kamloops. This moratorium was supported by several First Nations communities.
- Proposed closures: Lower Fraser closed to July 15; Sawmill to Lytton closed to July 25; Thompson closed to August 10.
- The RDG has invited NTA, Secwepemc, Musqueam, Tsawwassen and Sto:lo to meet on June 1 to discuss 4₂ Chinook issues.
- An agreement has been signed for FVAFS to monitor First Nations fisheries at all major landing sites in the lower Fraser.
- First Nations sent a response to Sue Farlinger re: spring Chinook. Tracy Sampson will send the response to Aimee for circulation to First Nations.
- DFO is working to ensure that CWT sampling rates are improved in order to improve Chinook data.
- The workshop in the fall will help First Nations and DFO to gain trust in each other's numbers, trust in how information is being used, etc.
- There is currently no indicator stock for Spring 4₂; currently no active in-season process to allow for management decisions and changes.
- DFO indicated that substantial changes in recreational fisheries have been implemented this year to protect spring 4₂ Chinook.
- NTA has requested a change to size limits to protect more spring 4₂ Chinook for several years; this request has not been addressed by DFO. DFO indicated that the current slot limit protects 85% of spring 4₂s.

IN-SEASON COMMUNICATIONS

- Will have in-season technical calls on Thursday afternoons with Mike Staley.
- First Nations will be able to call in as observers on Fraser Panel conference calls.
- In-season technical Watershed Talk articles will be published and distributed regularly.
- The first bi-lateral meeting with the US (Fraser Panel) will be on June 29.
- The Roadmap Workshop scheduled for June 2-3 will be postponed until further notice.