

Fraser River Chinook Background Information for Forum

Fraser River chinook encompass a diverse group of populations that exhibit a wide range of life histories and run timing. Chinook salmon enter the Fraser River from March through October. Spawning occurs throughout the Fraser from just above the tidal limit at Mission, BC to the upper tributaries of the Stuart Basin.

Chinook juveniles exhibit both stream and ocean history life types. Stream life history means the Chinook juveniles spend over one year in fresh water. Ocean life history means the Chinook juveniles go to sea after less than one year (usually 90 days) in fresh water.

Currently Fraser River Chinook are managed as five different Management Units:

- Spring 4₂ Chinook – 2 conservation units
- Spring 5₂ Chinook – 9 conservation units
- Summer 4₂ Chinook – 5 conservation units
- Summer 4₁ Chinook – 4 conservation units
- Fall 4₁ Chinook – 3 conservation units

Chinook Nomenclature

In many documents, age and life history type are expressed as a group of numbers such as 4₂ (Gilbert-Rich format) or 1.2 (European format).

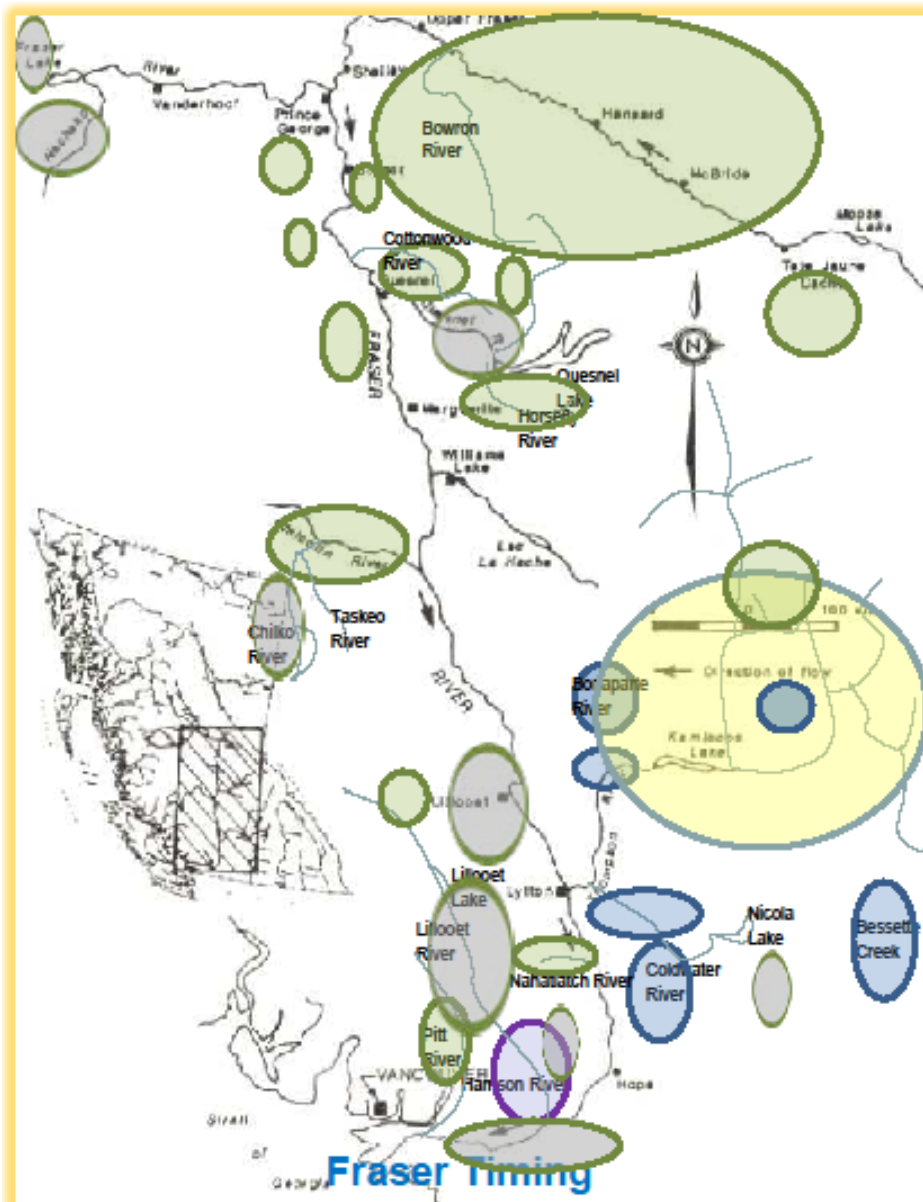
In the Gilbert-Rich (G-R) format the large number **4** represents the age of the fish on its *next birthday* or the number of winters from its deposition in the gravel as an egg to the time of sampling. The subscript number **2** represents the year in which the fish migrated to the ocean (i.e. it migrated as a one year-old in its second year of life). The subscript number can also be interpreted as the number of winters spent in freshwater from the egg stage.

An age 1.2 fish in the European format is the same as an age 4₂ fish in the G-R format. Here, the number **1** represents the total number of complete years the fish spent in freshwater (or the number of winters *since hatching* the fish spent in fresh water), and the number **2** represents the total number of complete years spent in the ocean (or the number of winters the fish spent in the ocean).

Years Spent In		U.S. (European)	Canadian (Gilbert-Rich)	Total Age
Freshwater	Saltwater			
>1 and <2*	>2	1.2	4 ₂	4
>1 and <2	>3	1.3	5 ₂	5
<1	>3	0.3	4 ₁	4
>1 and <2	>1	1.1	3 ₂	3

*This means more than one year in freshwater but less than two years in freshwater. For example: egg goes into the gravel in October 2016, fish emerges the following spring (2017), stays in the freshwater for a year and heads to sea in April 2018.

PSC Management Unit	Wild Salmon Policy Conservation Unit		COSEWIC Designatable Unit and Assessments from November 2018			Spawning Locations
			DU	Assessment	Stream	
Spring 4 ₂	CK-17	Lower Thompson SP 1.2	DU15	Assessment in 2019	Lower Thompson Stream Spring	Bonaparte, Coldwater, Deadman, Louis Creek, Nicola, Spius
	CK-16	South Thompson-Bessette Creek SU 1.2	DU14	Endangered	South Thompson Stream Summer	Bessette Creek
Spring 5 ₂	CK-04	Lower Fraser River SP 1.3	DU3	Special Concern	BC Lower Fraser River Stream Spring	Birkenhead
	CK-08	Middle Fraser Canyon SP 1.3	DU7	Endangered	BC Middle Fraser River Stream	Nahatlatch River
	CK-10	Middle Fraser River SP 1.3	DU9	Threatened	BC Middle Fraser River Stream Spring	Cariboo River – Upper, Chilako, Chilcotin, U/L Chilcotin, Cottonwood, Horsefly, Narcosli, Naver, West Road
	CK-12	Upper Fraser River SP 1.3	DU11	Endangered	Upper Fraser Stream Spring	Many watersheds N.E. of Quesnel, including: Bowron, Dome, Goat, Homes, Kenneth, etc.
	CK-18	North Thompson SP 1.3	DU16	Endangered	BC North Thompson Stream Spring	Blue, Finn, Raft
Summer 5 ₂	CK-05	L. Fraser – Upper Pitt SU 1.3	DU4	Endangered	BC Lower Fraser River Stream Summer (Pitt)	Pitt River - Upper
	CK-06	Lower Fraser River SU 1.3	DU5	Threatened	BC Lower Fraser River Stream Summer	Big Silver, Chilliwack/Vedder, Cogburn, Douglas, Green, Lillooet, Sloquet, Weaver
	CK-09	Middle Fraser River – Portage FA 1.3	DU8	Endangered	BC Middle Fraser River Stream Fall	Portage
	CK-11	Middle Fraser River SU 1.3	DU10	Threatened	BC Middle Fraser River Stream Summer	Bridge, Cariboo, Chilko, Endako, Kazchek, Kuzkwa, Nechako, Quesnel, Seton, Stellako Stuart
	CK-14	South Thompson SU 1.3	DU13	Assessment in 2019	BC South Thompson Stream Summer	Eagle, Salmon
	CK-19	North Thompson SU 1.3	DU17	Endangered	BC North Thompson Stream Summer	Barrier, Clearwater, Mahood, N. Thompson
Summer 4 ₁	CK-07	Maria Slough SU 0.3	DU6		BC Lower Fraser River Ocean Summer	Maria Slough
	CK-13	South Thompson SU 0.3	DU12	Not at Risk	BC South Thompson Ocean Summer	Adams, Little, S. Thompson, L. Thompson
	CK-15	Shuswap River SU 0.3				Shuswap Lower and Mid
Fall	CK-03	Lower Fraser River FA 0.3	DU2	Threatened	BC Lower Fraser River Ocean Fall	Harrison



Spring 4(2)

Bessette Creek
 Bonaparte & Spius Creek
 Coldwater
 Deadman
 Nicola

Early March to
 late July

Spring 5(2)

Birkenhead
 Pitt
 Nahatlatch
 Cariboo – upper
 Chilako
 Chilcotin
 Cottonwood & Swift Creek
 Horsefly
 Upper Fraser (Bowron, Fraser above Tete Juane)

Early March
 to late July

Summer 5(2)

Chilliwack
 Cogburn Creek
 Douglas Creek
 Lillooet & tributaries
 Bridge
 Chilko
 Nechako and tributaries
 Stuart River and tributaries
 Quesnel & tributaries

Late June to
 Aug.

Summer 4(1)

Thompson watershed

Mid July to
 mid-Sept.

Fraser Fall 4(1)

Harrison

Mid-Aug to
 mid-Nov.