



WATERSHED TALK

NEWSLETTER

Produced by the Fraser River Aboriginal Fisheries Secretariat

2018 FRASER SALMON UPDATE

By: *FRAFS Communications Coordinator and Operations Manager*

The Forums

The Forums on Conservation and Harvest Planning wrapped at the end of March. FRAFS is grateful to everyone that took time to attend. The objective of these forums is for First Nations to be informed by and provide advice to DFO on fisheries management plans. The feedback is provided in writing after the forums via letters to the Regional Director General who responds with a letter in return. DFO responses are available on the FRAFS website (www.frafs.ca). The FRAFS EC will be meeting with the RDG in late June with an agenda to focus on fisheries management concerns and additionally the policy issues which are outside the scope of the Forum process.

Upcoming Tier 2 Engagement and Consultation Sessions

DFO is holding regional sessions on both the Pacific Salmon Treaty Chapter 4 Renewal and the Species at Risk Act for Fraser River White Sturgeon. FRAFS will be co-facilitating the engagement sessions with DFO in the following locations.

- **Tzeachten Community Centre, 45855 Promontory Rd in Chilliwack, BC:**
 - Pacific Salmon Treaty Chapter 4 renewal: 9:00 am to 4:00 pm on **May 28, 2018**
 - Lower Fraser River White Sturgeon: 9:00 am to 1:00 pm on **May 29, 2018**
- **Anchor Inn & Suites, 261 Island Hwy in Campbell River, BC:**
 - Pacific Salmon Treaty Chapter 4 renewal: 9:00 am to 4:00 pm on **May 31, 2018**
- **Hotel 540, 540 Victoria St in Kamloops, BC:**
 - Upper Fraser River White Sturgeon: 1:00 pm to 5:00 pm on **June 4, 2018**
 - Pacific Salmon Treaty Chapter 4 renewal: 9:00 am to 4:00 pm on **June 5, 2018**
- **Coast Inn of the North, 770 Brunswick St in Prince George, BC:**
 - Pacific Salmon Treaty Chapter 4 renewal: 9:00 am to 4:00 pm on **June 18, 2018**
 - Upper Fraser River White Sturgeon: 9:00 am to 1:00 pm on **June 19, 2018**

Please inform Melissa Warnock (Melissa.Warnock@dfo-mpo.gc.ca, 604-666-5295) if you will be attending one or both sessions and whether you will require travel reimbursement.

White Sturgeon Species at Risk Act Listing Process Background

Fisheries and Oceans Canada's (DFO) will be holding engagement and consultation sessions on the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) listing process for the Lower Fraser River and Upper Fraser River White Sturgeon. The Lower Fraser River White Sturgeon designable unit extends from the mouth of the Fraser River to Hell's Gate. The Upper Fraser River White Sturgeon designable unit extends from Hell's Gate to McBride in the Fraser River and from the confluence with the Fraser River to Fraser and Trembleur lakes in the Nechako River.

In November 2012, the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC) assessed Lower Fraser River White Sturgeon as "Threatened" and Upper Fraser River White Sturgeon as "Endangered." The species are undergoing consideration for listing under SARA. For aquatic species assessed as Threatened and Endangered, DFO is required to follow a standard process to support a SARA listing recommendation. The decision whether or not to list these populations under SARA will ultimately be made by the Governor in Council.

As the lead agency for aquatic species, DFO is developing information to support the Governor in Council's decision. The first element was to develop peer-reviewed science advice in the form of a recovery potential assessment (RPA). The RPA for Upper Fraser River White Sturgeon was published in 2016 and the RPA for Lower Fraser River White Sturgeon will be published in 2018. The documents include technical input from First Nations representatives. Management scenarios informed by the RPA are being developed for the List and Do Not List under SARA options. Management scenarios identify possible management measures that DFO and others can take in support of conservation of Lower Fraser River and Upper Fraser River White Sturgeon, whether or not the populations are listed under SARA.

A Socio-Economic Analysis will be developed based on the content of the final management scenarios. DFO's Policy Branch will complete an economic Cost-Benefit Analysis (CBA). DFO recognizes that White Sturgeon holds cultural and social significance to many First Nations. In addition to the CBA, DFO is also interested in receiving submissions from potentially impacted First Nations and Indigenous organizations on the cultural significance of White Sturgeon. Formal consultations on whether to list, or not list the species under SARA are tentatively planned for October through December of 2018.

These consultations will be informed by information developed previously, including the recovery potential assessments, the management scenarios and the cost-benefit analysis. Both online and in-person engagement sessions will be available upon request. Detailed plans and schedules for meetings webinars, and other consultation processes will be provided in late summer.

If representatives from your organization would like to participate in a Food, Social and Ceremonial(FSC) management measures session, arrange bilateral discussions, provide statements on the cultural significance of White Sturgeon, or provide input on the FSC management scenarios for Lower Fraser River and Upper Fraser River White Sturgeon SARA listing process please contact Herb Klassen (DFO) at (604-666-9909 or Herbert.Klassen@dfo-mpo.gc.ca).

Pacific Salmon Treaty, Chapter 4 (Fraser River Sockeye and Pink Salmon) Renewal Background

Canadian representatives on the Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC) are entering into discussions with the United States (U.S.) regarding renewal of Chapter 4 (Fraser River Sockeye and Pink Salmon) in Annex IV of the Pacific Salmon Treaty (PST).

The PST commits Canada and the U.S. to cooperate bilaterally on matters pertaining to the conservation, management and harvest of Pacific salmon stocks subject to the Treaty. Annex IV of the Treaty includes eight "fishing chapters" which focus on specific geographic areas or salmon species of bilateral interest. Five of the eight fishing chapters expire on December 31, 2018 and are currently being finalized for renewal after months of consultations and

negotiations. Chapter 4 expires on December 31, 2019, and preliminary discussions with the United States are now underway.

Canadian and U.S. representatives within the PSC (including the Fraser Panel) have started their respective domestic reviews of Chapter 4 and began bilateral discussions as part of the regular PSC meeting cycle this past winter. Bilateral negotiations are being led by the Fraser Panel with overall direction and guidance provided by the Commission. As such, Fraser Panel and Technical Committee members will be meeting throughout 2018 to discuss, develop and review proposals for any potential amendments to the chapter. This process is expected to conclude and a recommendation provided by December 2018 to give both Parties sufficient time to ratify an agreement by January 1, 2020.

To inform the upcoming negotiations, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) has been working with First Nations Caucus members of the Fraser Panel, as well as the Fraser River Aboriginal Fisheries Secretariat (FRAFS) on a plan to consult and engage with First Nations in the Fraser Watershed and marine approach areas. The aim of these consultations will be to support the development of Canadian proposals related to Chapter 4, as well as respond to issues identified by the U.S. A range of formats will be used, including, in-person meetings, WebEx, conference calls and letters. DFO is also working collaboratively with FRAFS to deliver a series of Tier 1 and Tier 2 discussions aimed at providing Canadian Fraser Panel members and Commissioners with key points for negotiations. A first series of sessions are scheduled for this Spring/Summer and will provide an overview of Chapter 4, as well as identify and discuss additional issues Canada may raise as part of the negotiations (including a review of key issues and input received from First Nations during the last round of renewal for the Fraser River Chapter in 2014).

Invitations for engagement sessions have been sent and further opportunities will be planned throughout the renewal process to provide input and feedback and receive updates on the progress of the negotiations.

If you or your organization would like to participate in these meetings, arrange bilateral discussions and/or submit comments on the Chapter 4 renewal process, please contact Melissa Warnock (DFO) at (604-666-7013 or Melissa.Warnock@dfo-mpo.gc.ca).