

The Nicola People Say ‘Thank You’

K^wuk^wscémx^w, Thank you! Two small words that mean so much for the future.

After the dismal lack of fish in 2009, I didn’t think that requesting help would get very far. Our people are so hungry, how can we ask them to not fish in 2010 for the first ones that come back after winter? To stand on the shore and watch others go out fishing for the very fish we were asking to protect.

We asked for this help for the future generations: of people, of Chinook. We showed the depressing numbers of returns for 2009: Spius Creek, 138, Coldwater River, 26 and the Nicola River, 461. Our neighbors in the Secwepemc had lower numbers than us.

We asked and the marine and lower river First Nations (including those under treaty) all agreed or supported the Moratorium that was placed during the migration timing of the Earliest Timed Chinook, also known as the 4(2).

The result of the moratorium comes in the form of the following numbers for the Nicola:

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010 (prelim)
Spius Creek	529	60	168	138	206
Coldwater River	478	107	365	26	252
Nicola River	3862	942	4450	461	5000

The return did better than brood for the Nicola River, but not for Spius Creek or Coldwater River without the moratorium it would have been devastating for those two streams.

Nicola did better than brood; does that mean we are ok? Unfortunately, no, but where do we go from here? The first goal for the Nicola system is to reach our escapement

targets: 2000 Chinook in the Spius Creek, 2000 Chinook in the Coldwater River and 6000 Chinook for the Nicola River.



Nicola River downstream of Merritt, British Columbia

In reality we need even more than that to feed the people from the marine up to the spawning grounds, more for the other 137 species that rely on the salmon (Information from Salmon Nation poster) including the Orca’s, more for the eco-system. But we can only take one step at a time.

The unity of the First Nations from the marine to the spawning grounds showed us that we could make an impact to re-build our stocks. How do we continue without impacting our own rights to fish? How do we continue to re-build without losing more of our traditional fishing timing? These are questions to be answered this winter and into 2011 spring.

Until then, our hands are held up, in honour and respect to all lower river and marine people. Thank you for showing support and unity to protect some of our many stocks of concern. We must continue to ask for this help for the next four to eight years, but with unity we will do this without impacting our own rights and will become accountable for our actions to the next seven generations.

‘K^wuk^wsteyp’

Translation: thank you for doing something for us!

Article by Tracy Sampson, Nicola Tribal Association,
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An Aboriginal fisheries newsletter for fisheries representatives and their organizations



Upper Coldwater River

Upcoming Meeting Dates

Below are some important meeting dates for scheduling considerations.

Fraser River Aboriginal Fisheries Secretariat Meetings:

- **December 21, 2010:** FRAFS Executive Committee Meeting
- **January 18, 2011:** FRAFS Executive Committee Meeting (date subject to change)
- **January 25-26, 2011:** Forum on Conservation & Harvest Planning for Fraser Salmon (Richmond)
- **February 8-9, 2011:** Roadmap: Co-Management Development (location to be determined)
- **February 15, 2011:** FRAFS Executive Committee Meeting (date subject to change)
- **February 22-23, 2011:** Forum on Conservation & Harvest Planning for Fraser Salmon (Richmond)
- **March 29-30, 2011:** Forum on Conservation & Harvest Planning for Fraser Salmon (Vancouver Island)
- **May 10-11, 2011:** Forum on Conservation & Harvest Planning for Fraser Salmon (Kamloops)

Other Meetings:

- **January 10-14, 2011:** Pacific Salmon Commission
- **January 11, 2011:** Lower Fraser Sport Fishing – First Nations Joint Working Group (Location to be Determined)
- **January 14, 2011:** *Tentative* IMAWG Post Season Meeting (Vancouver Island)
- **January 17, 2011:** Lower Fraser Fisheries Alliance Forum (Chilliwack)
- **January 18-19, 2011:** Lower Fraser Peacemaking Course (Sumas First Nation)
- **January 20, 2011:** Upper Fraser Fisheries Conservation Alliance BOD Meeting (Prince George)
- **January 21, 2011:** Upper Fraser Fisheries Conservation Alliance General Meeting (Prince George)
- **January 27-28, 2011:** Coastal Visions – Island and Marine Habitat Workshop (Tsawout First Nation)
- **March or April, 2011:** *Tentative* IMAWG Pre-Season Workshop – Island and Marine Areas

For further information about important meetings please see www.frafs.ca. The Fraser River Aboriginal Fisheries Secretariat now has a calendar that will provide up-to-date meeting information for Fraser River processes.

The Watershed Talk is also available for download at www.frafs.ca

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