

Initial Meeting in Support of *Species at Risk Act* Listing Process for Upper Fraser River White Sturgeon

Meeting with Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Upper Fraser River First Nations (Tier 2)

Date: June 4, 2018

Time: 1:00PM-4:30PM

Location: Hotel 540, 540 Victoria St., Kamloops, B.C.

Meeting Objectives:

- Outline the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA) listing recommendation process for White Sturgeon and provide progress update
- Introduce management scenario component of listing process and discuss where and how First Nations will be engaged to provide input
- Explore opportunities for incorporating further First Nations input into the SARA listing decision

Proposed Agenda:

Time	Activity
12:30 pm	Registration
1:00 pm	Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Elder Opening
	Introductions and review of meeting objectives and the agenda <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Erin Gertzen, A/Freshwater Species at Risk Team Lead, DFO ➤ Mike Staley, Facilitator, FRAFS
1:15 pm	SARA listing process for White Sturgeon – brief overview <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Erin Gertzen, A/Freshwater Species at Risk Team Lead, DFO ➤ Question and answer period
1:45 pm	Discuss White Sturgeon experiences and interests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mike Staley, Facilitator, FRAFS ➤ Group discussion
2:15 pm	Health break
2:30 pm	Management and recovery of Nechako River White Sturgeon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Christina Ciesielski, Carrier Sekani Tribal Council ➤ Question and answer period
3:00 pm	Introduction to management scenarios and review of current management measures for Upper Fraser River White Sturgeon <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Herb Klassen, Freshwater Species at Risk Recovery Planner, DFO ➤ Question and answer period
3:30 pm	Next steps: discuss engagement on management scenarios and other opportunities for input <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Herb Klassen, Freshwater Species at Risk Recovery Planner, DFO ➤ Mike Staley, Facilitator, FRAFS ➤ Group discussion
4:30 pm	Close

MEETING MINUTES

Meeting summary prepared by Ahdia Hassan (DFO) and Erin Gertzen (DFO)

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

- Opening by Elder Evelyn Camile (Tk'emlúps). Opening prayer at 1:07 pm. Brief talk on importance of salmon to indigenous peoples, and the environmental barriers/threats they face.
- The facilitator, Mike Staley (FRAFS), called the Tier 2 meeting to order at 1:13 pm and welcomed participants, and reviewed the agenda and logistics for the day
- 21 First Nation participants, 1 facilitator, and 6 DFO staff members were in attendance. See Appendix A for List of Attendees.
- Refer to the PowerPoint slides for an overview of technical information presented
- Erin Gertzen outlined the objectives of the meeting

2. SARA Listing Process for White Sturgeon – brief overviews

Erin Gertzen (DFO) presented on the topic and Mike Staley (FRAFS) facilitated the discussion. Refer to the PowerPoint presentation for overview of the topic.

Questions or discussion points on the topic:

- What is the basis of grouping the Nechako, Upper Fraser, and Middle Fraser as one combined unit?
 - *DFO response:* There is evidence of some movement and gene flow between the populations and COSEWIC considered them as one designatable unit.
- What is meant that they are threatened?
 - *DFO response:* Lower Fraser assessed as Threatened under COSEWIC but it is not currently listed under SARA
- What is being included in the socioeconomic analysis (SEA)? Our community no longer eats sturgeon so are First Nations included in the SEA?
 - *DFO response:* because the FSC fishery has been closed for a long time, there would be no change in economic cost of first nation fishery. We are interested in including cultural significance into the listing recommendation and would like input on this.
 - *Facilitator response:* though FSC fishery is closed, there is still an interest in the use of sturgeon for socio-cultural purposes. The cost-benefit analysis leaves out a lot of economic and social factors so it does not adequately capture the deep social/cultural significance, but this can be included in the recommendation for the minister.
- Concerns over dams and water alterations affecting sturgeon in the Nechako and Columbia Rivers
- How far does habitat protection extend? Sturgeon rely on salmon so do we also need to protect salmon spawning grounds? What is DFO doing to protect waters from development projects?
- UNDRIP needs to be implemented
- Why has it taken so long for DFO to return these stocks? Why has it taken so long to involve First Nations in recovery? We need to be involved.

- Indigenous consultations should be separate from general consultations. There are social and cultural ceremonies around sturgeon; our role as caretakers should not be overrun by DFO.

3. Discuss White Sturgeon experiences and interests

This topic (aimed at hearing some experiences managing White Sturgeon and any specific interests in White Sturgeon recovery) was skipped as the previous discussion sufficiently addressed this item.

4. Management and Recovery of Nechako River White Sturgeon

Christina Ciesielski (Carrier Sekani Tribal Council) presented on the topic and Mike Staley (FRAFS) facilitated the discussion. Refer to the PowerPoint presentation for overview of the topic.

Questions or discussion points on the topic:

- How are the projects funded?
 - *Christina Ciesielski response:* through many sources, including industry, AFSAR programs
- Do you hold sturgeon ceremonies?
 - *Christina Ciesielski response:* none known

5. Introduction to management scenarios and review of current management regime for Upper Fraser River White Sturgeon

Herb Klassen (DFO) presented on the topic and Mike Staley (FRAFS) facilitated the discussion. Refer to the PowerPoint presentation for overview of the topic.

Questions or discussion points on the topic:

- We would like to receive meeting materials prior to the meeting so that I could have had a chance to speak with my community.
- Is the province or DFO responsible for White Sturgeon?
 - *DFO response:* White Sturgeon is managed by the province, except in tidal waters. If listing under SARA, DFO would be the authority. Mostly the province has the scientific expertise. DFO's Species at Risk Program staff work with the province to bring all the information together for the management scenarios.
- Will the sport fishery be closed?
 - *DFO response:* Unknown; we don't have the management scenarios developed yet and are seeking input on them
- We want to see what the impacts of SARA Listing will be. With Steelhead, negative impacts have become so bad before SARA listing process happened. We don't want to list everything and have all our fish in SARA. How will this impact our fishery?

Follow up discussion:

- *DFO:* Sales of non-tidal licenses goes to Freshwater Fisheries Society. Province has a fund from licenses and guides that supports conservation. Yes, that fishery will be included in the socioeconomic analysis.
- Catch and release fishery socio-economic impacts are accounted for, but First Nations are not allowed to catch them for FSC purposes. This is an infringement on our rights. First

Nations peoples have stopped fishing sturgeon but we aren't seeing the fish come back. How long will it take before we close the recreational fishery?

- How do you account for lost opportunity?
- Consultation does not equal consent.
- We would like to see a closure of the recreational fisheries while we are fishing the waters
- Recreational fishery needs to be monitored; what are they catching? Is there enforcement?
 - *DFO response:* mandatory catch reports if requested in tidal areas; voluntary in non-tidal areas
- We would like to see a catch monitoring program in our area
- One point to take back to our councils is that a list decision may result in the closure and restriction of First Nations FSC fisheries. This will affect our fishing.
 - *DFO response:* 4 NSPs of White Sturgeon are listed. None of the salmon FSC fisheries have been closed due to White Sturgeon listing, even where they bycatch sturgeon; other measures have been put in place (e.g., boat kit program helps safely release bycaught sturgeon).
- How will we incorporate traditional knowledge and quantify it? Is there a working group that is going to quantify the concerns of the communities?
 - *DFO response:* COSEWIC should consider ATK in its assessment. DFO are trying to figure out how best incorporate ATK. These can be incorporated in the cultural significance statements.

6. Next steps: discuss engagement on management scenarios and other opportunities for input

Herb Klassen (DFO) presented on the topic. No discussion. Refer to the PowerPoint presentation for an overview of the topic.

7. Closing Comments

See section 6. The meeting adjourned at 4:19 pm.

Other discussion and parking lot items

None.

Action Items

None.

Appendix A: List of Attendees

Name	Affiliation <i>Name of Organization</i>
Mike Staley (Facilitator)	FRAFS (Facilitator)
Chief Doug McIntyre	Skuppah/NNTC
Chad Edward	Spuzzum
Cheryl Blair	Splitrock Environmental
Debbie Abbott	NNTC
Yvonne Andrew	Boston Bar

Donald Sam	NNTC
Allison James	FRAFS
Chief Lee Spahan	Coldwater
Greg Witzky	FRAFS
Richard Wimbush	NWSFA
Janice Billy	LTC
Evelyn Camile	Tk'emlúps
Chief Judy Wilson	Neskonlith
Chief Mike Campbell	Boothroyd
Oliver Peters	Douglas First Nation
Bernard John	Xaxli'p
Yvonne Scotchmen	T'il'q'et
John Haugen	NNTC
Daryn Scotchman	Splitrock Environmental/ Cayoose Creek
Christina Ciesielski	Carrier Sekani Tribal Council
Kevin Duncan	NNTC
Harold Froste	

DFO Staff

Name	DFO Branch
Erin Gertzen	Species at Risk Program
Herb Klassen	Species at Risk Program
Ahdia Hassan	Species at Risk Program
Dean Allan	Resource Management
Linda Stevens	Resource Management
Melissa Lesko	Resource Management