



WATERSHED TALK

NEWSLETTER

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Chinook Strategic Planning Initiative: A Major Step Forward

The south coast Chinook Strategic Planning Initiative (CSPI) took a major step forward with its Science Workshop on May 22-23, 2013 in Richmond.

A science panel, led by **Dr. Brian Riddell**, sat throughout the presentations over the two days. The role of the panel was to assess and understand each presentation, then to meet by themselves on the third day to review their notes, impressions, and the presentation materials and evaluate the available evidence as provided through each presentation. They will then synthesize the results into a report that will be a comprehensive and current status report on south coast Chinook and the likely influences on recent productivity.

Each presentation generated questions from both the science panel and the audience at large, resulting in productive interaction of ideas and knowledge. The topics examined through the presentations were: status and trends; harvest; freshwater habitat; marine habitat; hatcheries; pathogens; future climate change; and refining relative importance of stressors.

In his verbal report on the workshop to the FRAFS Executive Committee, **Mike Staley** noted that two major issues emerged that will require strategic management choices and decisions to be made in the future:

- the role and effect of hatcheries on wild populations of Chinook (e.g. Vancouver Island stocks) and the potential impact of the provisions of the Wild Salmon Policy; and
- the unknown potential for disease affecting wild populations, which may require monitoring of an unknown (at this time) number of those populations.

He also observed that this workshop process was probably the most effective and efficient way of pulling together into one place the current knowledge base on such a wide array of Chinook life histories and the potential stressors and limiting factors that are affecting them.

It is expected that the Panel will produce its report by July 31.

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Fraser Salmon Management Agreement: the Roadmap Process.

Attention LOU Signatories (and all those interested):

Things have been quiet since our very successful meeting on March 22 as we've been waiting for approval of the new FRAFS agreement. This is now in the works and there is a budget allocation for the Main Table to carry out some preparation work for the next phase of the process. One of the pieces of work is an application to DFO for PICFI funding so we can get everybody back together again starting in the fall months. That application is currently being reviewed.

In the meantime, the Main Table will be starting on some tasks as outlined on March 22. Further updates and reports on progress will be coming your way, by direct email and/or fax, between now and September.

If you have any comments or questions at any time, please contact the Main Table representatives for your area – or the Main Table Coordinator, Neil Todd: Tel.: 250-378-4235 / Fax: 250-378-9119 / Email: neil.todd@nwsfa.org

Forum on Conservation and Harvest Planning

The final Forum meeting for the 2013 fishing year was held May 7 – 9 in Lillooet. The format was similar to that of the previous meetings this year: start at 1 p.m. on the first day with a bilateral session, and continue with the bilateral session the morning of the second day. The afternoon of the second day and the morning of the third day were for First Nations only.

The basic intent of the Forum is for DFO to provide information on species and stocks and potential fishing management and/or conservation plans that will be put in place for this season through the Integrated Fisheries Management Plan (south coast salmon). Opportunity is provided to First Nations to discuss the information in a group setting, aided by technical support staff and contractors. DFO requests that First Nations, following their deliberations, provide a response in writing to DFO's information.

As noted by the Facilitator in his summary report to the Forum Planning Committee and the FRAFS Executive Committee, this "program" is becoming problematic. Topics are sometimes put on the agenda that are not directly connected to fishery management plans for the current year. Exchanges of correspondence (response by DFO to the written comments by First Nations coming out of a previous Forum meeting) are sometimes not well received, and valuable time can be taken up by dialogue that does not result in any solutions. First Nations, in an attempt to accommodate DFO's request, discuss approaches to fisheries management plans but there is insufficient time to grapple with differences of opinion.

Report continues on the following page.



Forum (continued)

The May 7-9 Forum ended with the First Nations attendees understanding these challenges. In general, they agreed that:

- DFO time (the bilateral portion of the Forum) should be reduced and/or tightly focused on the fishery management topics at hand for the year;
- First Nations would benefit from more First Nations time only, with their technical support advisors; and
- there were benefits to be had from continuing with the Forum process if it is “fine-tuned” per above.

On May 22, the First Nation attendees’ summary report from their Forum discussions was sent to DFO and distributed throughout the Watershed through the FRAFS listserv.



Aimee hands over the files to Walter.

Communications @ FRAFS

Hello everyone, my name is Walter Quinlan and I'm your new FRAFS Communications Coordinator.

For the past 3 ½ years, I've worked in First Nations communications and I really enjoy it. My professional experience includes writing about topics such as the effect of temperature stress on interior Fraser juvenile Coho and conservation of Early Run Fraser Chinook. I've also had the pleasure of covering cultural events such as the Sturgeon Gathering on the Columbia River at Revelstoke.

There are great stories on the river and vital issues too. I look forward to meeting and working with you on a subject that is of great importance to many people: Fraser River salmon.

Walter



A Message from Aimee

Hello everyone, Aimee here, your friendly neighbourhood FRAFS Communications Coordinator. It is with mixed emotions that I must announce the end of my time with FRAFS, after six great years of learning about First Nations fisheries on BC's mighty Fraser River.

Since 2008, my time has been shared between FRAFS and the FNFC, providing communications services to both groups part time. But with the incredible growth and development of these two organizations over the last few years, it's now reached the point where there's enough work for two people. And so, on March 31, I moved over to the FNFC full time. Leaving FRAFS was a difficult decision, but I feel much better about it knowing that this work will be left in the capable hands of incoming Communications Coordinator, Walter Quinlan. I'm also looking forward to the challenge of building and executing a new communications plan for the FNFC, being a full-time member of their strong and brilliant team, and playing a role in strategic outreach at the province-wide level.

Just to let you all know, this isn't goodbye – in fact, it's an opportunity to invite you to share your expertise with me as I develop the new plan of attack for communications at the FNFC. I'll be contacting some of the regional First Nations fisheries organizations in the coming weeks to find out what structures we already have in place, what gaps need to be addressed, and how we can improve our network for information sharing.

I would like to say thank you to the FRAFS Executive Committee members past and present, the FRAFS technical staff, our colleagues at the Nicola Tribal Association (FRAFS' host organization), and all of the participants in the various processes, committees, and working groups that are supported by FRAFS. I would especially like to thank Neil Todd for being a wonderful manager, mentor, and friend. You all welcomed this east coast girl into your home in the west, which has meant a lot to me, and to my family.

I came of age professionally as part of the FRAFS team, and I'll be forever grateful for the opportunities, lessons, and friendships I found here. Thanks again to everyone, and I look forward to our continued relationships in the field of First Nations fisheries!

Aimee

Thanks to Neil Todd, Operations Manager, FRAFS for his reports on the Roadmap, CSPI and the Forum.