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2015/2016 Draft Salmon Southern BC Integrated Fisheries Management Plan

March 2015

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Overview – Key Issues/Changes

- Regional
- Southern IFMP

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Regional Updates

- IFMP Process and Timelines
- Catch Monitoring
- Test Fishery Planning
- Demonstration Fisheries
- Southern BC Chinook Initiative
- SEP Production Plan
- Commercial Salmon Allocation Framework

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2015/2016 IFMP Process

- The Department solicited feedback from First Nations and stakeholders on key priority proposals for the draft Salmon IFMPs.
 - Intended to improve transparency and clearly identify proposed changes for discussion.
 - All submissions received were shared with established advisory groups for review and discussion.
- Key DFO changes in draft IFMP have been shaded for discussion.

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Salmon IFMP Timelines

Milestones	Purpose	Date
Pre-Season Planning		
IFMP Key Priority Issues Deadline		Jan 26th
SC IHPC Sub-committee Meeting	To review and discuss the key priority issues received in consideration of the SC Salmon IFMP	Feb 4th
Draft IFMP circulated	Release of draft IFMP that includes the proposed changes and considerations for 2015 fishing season.	Mar 5th
SC IHPC Sub-committee Meeting	Pre-Season Planning and discussion of draft IFMP	Mar 11th
Deadline for public comments	30 days for external feedback	April 13th
Full IHPC Meeting	DFO responses to IFMP proposals to key IFMP feedback	April 30-May 1st
Approvals		
Target Public Release	Finalized IFMP	Early June

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Catch Monitoring

- **Commercial**
 - Pilot programs initiated 2013 are planned to continue in order to address the minimum catch monitoring requirements identified by DFO and CSAB Catch Monitoring Working Group.
- **Recreational** initiatives continue:
 - Condition of Tidal Waters Sport Fishing (TWSF) licence to report info and catch to DFO
 - Creel survey, phone survey and new internet survey since 2012 "irec"
- **First Nations**
 - development of integrated and coordinated data management and data entry systems within DFO and FN Band offices.

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Catch Monitoring

Electronic Logbooks:

- National priority to build a national electronic logbook system
- DFO working on standards with Canadian General Standards Board
- Existing pilot E-Log projects can be continued until a national system is developed; however, DFO no longer supporting software development. Harvesters can continue to use their E-logs at own cost.
- If using current e-logs must ensure information meets licence conditions.

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Importance of the Salmon Test Fishing Program

- Test fisheries are central to understanding the biology and status of salmon populations on the Pacific Coast.
- A wide range of critical data are extracted from test fishing platforms that support analysis or estimation of key population parameters such as:
 - In-season and post-season run size run estimation
 - Stock composition in fisheries (from CWT, DNA, Scale Sampling programs)
 - Migration timing
 - Age, length, weight distribution
 - Fish condition and disease observations
- The above information is crucial in the determination of annual allowable harvest levels and to inform a robust, long-term sustainable management regime.
- Test fisheries can also serve as platforms for special research projects (e.g. post-release mortality studies, contaminants studies).

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Past Salmon Test Fishery Administrative Arrangements

- Pre-2006:
 - Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC) secretariat → Fraser panel-water test fisheries (Fr. sockeye / pink)
 - DFO → non-panel water (Fr. Sockeye / pink) and other domestic test fisheries
- 2007 to 2012 (post-Larocque era)
 - PSC secretariat → administered all Panel-approved test fisheries (Fr. sockeye / pink), Skeena (all species), Albion (Fraser chinook and chum) under Joint Project Agreement (JPA) with DFO
- 2013 and 2014 (s. 10: Use of Fish, Track 1)
 - DFO – PSC secretariat JPA → administered same test fisheries as in the post-Larocque era plus Qualark sockeye/pink and Johnstone Strait chum (via JPA)

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Salmon Test Fisheries - 2015

- For 2015, the current plan is to have the PSC secretariat take on the administration of all Fraser sockeye and pink test fisheries (Panel approved) only.
- For a short (2-month) transitional period in the spring of 2015 PSC will continue providing administration for the Albion Test Fishery.
- Arrangements for alternative proponents to administer JS Chum, Albion & Skeena are under development.
- Standards for collection of scientific information from test fisheries will not be altered with any change in administrative arrangements.

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2015 considerations

- DFO has been working with the PSC Secretariat and has identified some immediate areas for process efficiencies for 2015. More fundamental changes in program design would require a longer time-frame to implement.
- In years of low abundance, decisions have been made to alter the operation of test fisheries to reduce the likelihood of test fishing operations having an impact on FSC allocations. Examples:
 - In 2013, marine test fisheries (seine) stopped retaining sockeye after major downgrade in available TAC.
 - For 2015, a delay in the onset of test fisheries is being planned in consideration of the weak anticipated returns of Early Stuart Sockeye.
- DFO recognizes that further discussions and evaluation of salmon test fishing operations are required with implementation of the Use of Fish Policy.
- DFO seeks your feedback on these arrangements now, but will also engage further during the 2015 post-season.



Commercial Demonstration Fisheries

- First Nations and commercial demonstration plans identified in plans. New proposals for:
 - First Nations demonstration fisheries outlined in Appendix 5
 - Commercial demonstration fisheries outlined in Appendix 7
- Discussions planned on 2015 T'aaq-wiihak Salmon Fishery

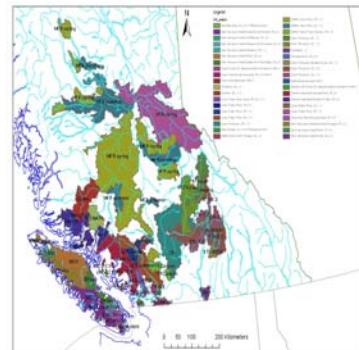


Southern BC Chinook Initiative

Progress Update:

- Plan to develop a comprehensive Strategic Plan to address the decline in Southern B.C. Chinook salmon.
- Current work focussed on translating broad strategic directions into more specific / operational activities and actions.
- Work planned this spring to identify available tools/models to assess potential actions for consideration in draft Strategic Plan
- Timeline for preparing draft Strategic Plan is 2015/16.

Southern British Columbia Chinook Conservation Units



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2015 SEP Production

- No significant departmental production changes proposed for 2015
 - Draft 2015 production plan is posted online – link in draft IFMP
- Items of interest
 - Southern BC coho production - Georgia Strait
 - As per 2014 plan, production targets for harvest aim to align production with required adult return to support terminal fishery (freshwater and terminal marine), and are based on fishery benefits, rack returns, and fresh water carrying capacity
 - Production targets largely same as 2014 plan – no substantial changes
 - Chilko Chinook - Implementation of an enhancement feasibility project at Chilko River in 2014 to produce a coded-wire tag group for improved stock assessment information
 - Successful broodstock collection partnering with Science Stock Assessment mark-recapture program, Fisheries Management, and Tsilhqot'in National Government
 - 150K eggs successfully transported to Spius hatchery by helicopter & truck (96% survival to eyed stage, no difference between transport methods)
 - Bacterial Kidney Disease (BKD) testing completed: 2 females tested low positive, remaining 43 were negative
 - Next Steps:
 - Incubation at Spius hatchery near Merritt until fry emergence in Spring 2015
 - Transport juveniles to Chehalis hatchery in the lower Fraser for secondary rearing
 - Transport coded-wire tagged juveniles back to Chilko for release in Spring 2016
 - Plan for 2015 is unconfirmed, since 2014 was the final year of funding for the Chilko mark-recapture project

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Work to Update the Commercial Salmon Allocation Framework

- Current CSAF arrangements share total value of the annual **commercial salmon harvest** to achieve coast-wide gear shares, without accounting for First Nations' fisheries (does not include FSC or recreational).
- Concerns raised to DFO with existing CSAF process as is complex and cumbersome. Includes an annual negotiation among CSAB participants and is difficult to balance to coast-wide gear shares most years.
- To address concerns raised and requests from industry, the Department announced \$1 million to update the CSAF as part of the \$30 million Pacific Salmon Treaty (PST) Mitigation Program in 2009.
- Work initiated in Sept 2013 and completed January 2015. Focused discussions with CSAB and SCC members.

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Proposed changes

Advice received from CSAB and FN SCC on potential changes in 3 areas:

1. **Stabilizing Shares:** recommendations include: fixing shares for all commercial fisheries (including licences set aside for First Nations) at the fleet, species and production-area level for a 5 year period; and, eliminate annual adjustments using sockeye equivalents.
2. **Flexibility and Collaborative Process:** provide all commercial fishery participants, including First Nations economic fisheries, with greater flexibility to make fishery plans to harvest allocations; subject to consistent and transparent operational standards and considerations (DFO evaluation framework would be required); and, Develop a terms of reference for a collaborative advisory process which incorporates First Nations to address commercial fishery management and planning.
3. **Outstanding Items:** Requires additional analysis/discussion; mainly bilateral issues. Suggested that these be worked on over time; not for immediate consideration.

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Proposed changes in draft IFMP

- Changes outlined in draft IFMP:
 - **Appendix 7 - Section 7.4** includes proposed commercial shares by species, fleet and fishery production areas.
 - **Appendix 10** provides a synopsis of the process and recommendations received.
- Additional input sought from First Nations and stakeholders
- Final IFMP will include the commercial allocation plan and may identify potential principles/guidelines to inform future commercial fishery planning

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Southern IFMP

- Key Issues:
 - Fraser Sockeye
 - Fraser Pink
 - Fraser Chum/Steelhead
 - Fraser Chinook
 - Interior Fraser Coho

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Fraser River Sockeye

- 2015 Escapement Strategy - 2 proposed options. Key differences between options:
- Option 1: 60% TAM cap for all management groups Since 2006, this TAM cap has been implemented in all years, except 2014.
 - **Summer run** lower fishery reference point of **1 million** (similar to 2013, to account for concerns about low forecasts for Summer run populations)
- Option 2: 65% TAM Cap increase in the TAM cap for Early Summer, Summer and Late Run sockeye compared to Option 1 (this was implemented in 2014 in anticipation of higher run sizes); and,
 - **Summer run** lower fishery reference point of **540K** . This was used in brood year (2011).
- Outcomes same for E. Stuart under both options; for other management units, Option 2 has lower overall escapements and higher allowable harvest
- Final escapement plan may be different from the two options described here based on input received.

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Fraser River Sockeye

Additional considerations:

- **Early Stuart** – window closure outlined in management plan. 10% low abundance exploitation rate (LAER) will permit some incidental impacts in fisheries.
- **Early Summer** – Early Stuart window closure dates extended to provide some additional coverage to weaker early timed populations. Majority of fisheries impacts expected during Summer run fisheries; 10% LAER.
- **Summer** – comprises approx. 70% expected return (p50). Directed harvest expected subject to constraints of Early Summer / Late TAC and stocks of concern. 10% LAER.
- **Late Run** – likely to be constrained by MA to LAER of 20% ER for run sizes at or below p50; 30% for larger run sizes.

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Fraser Sockeye – Cultus Management

- Cultus Management
 - Based on Cultus Lake sockeye recovery objectives and assessment of in-season information for the Late Run sockeye.
 - Due to low numbers, abundance and exploitation rate for Cultus Lake sockeye based on similar timed Late Run stocks caught seaward of the confluence of the Fraser and the Vedder Rivers.
 - Potential exploitation rates for Cultus sockeye in relation to abundance, MA and pre-spawn mortality.

Table 7-22. A range of maximum exploitation rates for Cultus Sockeye that would meet minimum recovery objectives, assuming a pre-spawn mortality rate of approximately 40% for Option 2 Escapement Plan. See Table 7-21 for Option 1.

pMA	run size		
	p25	p50	p75
0.80	20%	37%	37%
1.00	20%	30%	30%
1.14	20%	25%	30%
1.20	20%	23%	30%
1.30	20%	20%	30%

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Fraser Pink

- 2015 Forecast (section 7.19): 14.455 million; Range: 7.66 million (p10) to 27.78 million (p90)
 - Preseason fishing plans are developed based on the 50% probability level forecast. In-season run size estimates form the basis for management once estimates are available.
- Opportunities to harvest pink salmon will likely be constrained by objectives for stocks of concern, including:
 - Cultus/Late run sockeye escapement objectives
 - Interior Fraser River coho salmon
- Opportunities for selective fisheries.

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Fraser Chum

- Measures to reduce impacts to Interior Fraser coho (IFR coho) include gear and area restrictions from early Sept to mid-October in the Fraser River main stem below Mission (IFR coho window closure).
- If initial Fraser River terminal run-size assessment in mid-October indicates that abundances are:
 - $>1.05M$ – consideration may be given for Area B fisheries to precede Lower Fraser gill net fisheries
 - $<1.05M$ – consideration will be given for Area B to access commercial allocation remaining after Lower Fraser gill net fisheries have concluded.

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Fraser Chum/Steelhead

- Commercial gill net opportunities within the Fraser will continue to be delayed to avoid the majority of the Interior Fraser steelhead migration period.
 - possible implementation of additional precautionary measures in gillnet fisheries to protect Interior Fraser River steelhead, will be taken into account in determining the specific timing of fisheries.
- The Department will continue to engage with the Province on the strategy for addressing steelhead impacts in fisheries.

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Fraser River Spring 5₂ and Summer 5₂ Chinook

- DFO plans to begin season with management actions based on returns in lowest abundance level
 - (i.e. Zone 1 - <45K to Fraser River).
 - This approach is likely to be in place until brood year escapements and/or the recruitment rates substantially improve.
- An in-season re-assessment of management zone may be made based on estimated abundance at the Albion test fishery in mid-June (or earlier if possible).
- NEW – proposed changes to management approach for recreational fisheries in Juan de Fuca and Strait of Georgia (Areas 18, 19, 20 and 29). See Appendix 6 –Section 6.1.1.

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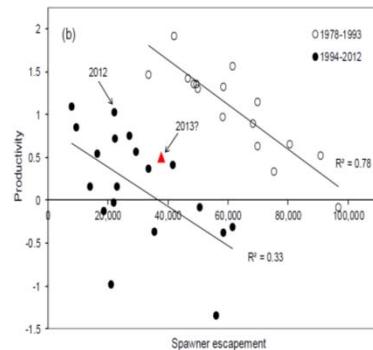
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Interior Fraser Coho

- Draft IFMP identifies management objective for Interior Fraser coho (see section 5.1.5)
 - *The objective for Interior Fraser River coho (including Thompson River coho) is to manage Canadian fisheries to an exploitation rate of 10% or less.*
- This objective is consistent with *low status* under the Pacific Salmon Treaty; US permitted 10% ER.



2014 spawner abundance of 20K below expectations; highlights continuing uncertainties about stock productivity and/or fisheries impacts.

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Interior Fraser Coho

- Post-season review document being developed to estimate IFR coho exploitation rate in 2014:
 - Information on all southern BC fishery coho retention and release mortalities; DNA samples; and IFR escapement information to assess IFR coho fishery impacts.
- Discussion paper being prepared with additional information to inform development of fishing plans
 - First Nations and stakeholder input sought on specific fishery management measures that should be considered for 2015 fisheries.
- See separate presentation with additional details.

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Discussion

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Additional References on CSAF

- *Current commercial allocation arrangements can be found in An Allocation Policy for Pacific Salmon:* <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Library/240366.pdf>
- Summary Report: DFO Integrated Advisory Group on Mitigation under Chapter 3 (Chinook) of the Pacific Salmon Treaty; outlines some deficiencies with current allocation arrangements: <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-qp/species-especes/salmon-saumon/pol/pst-tsp/docs/sumreport-rapportsomm-eng.pdf>
- Minister's announcement on Mitigation Program: <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/media/npress-communique/2011/np-pr10-eng.htm>
- For background information including the Terms of Reference on the CSAF work go to: <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/consultation/smon/saf-crs/index-eng.html>.
- Summaries of each phase of this work, including submissions from the SCC and CSAB on proposed updates, are contained in reports completed by an independent facilitator:
 - Phase 1 report: <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Library/353131.pdf>.
 - Phase 2 report: <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Library/354370.pdf>
 - Phase 3 report (under development) : includes final recommendations from SCC and CSAB.
- Mitigating concerns matrix: clarifying common understandings of the "middle ground proposals" for changing the commercial salmon allocation framework: <http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/Library/354370.pdf> (See appendix F)