

Development of a Joint DFO-First Nations Management Framework for Fraser Salmon

Supported by the Fraser River & Approach Working Group

Progress to Date:

- The Forum on Conservation and Harvest Planning for Fraser Salmon (the Forum) was created after an initial meeting between First Nations (both Fraser and marine/approach areas) and DFO in January 2008. The focus of that meeting was to address specific salmon stock conservation concerns and the FSC needs of Aboriginal communities (e.g. helping plan and share limited FSC quantities in years of low abundance).
- An *ad hoc* working group was also formed at the January 2008 meeting and was tasked with helping plan further FSC planning meetings. This group, originally called the Interim Working Group, has evolved into the Fraser River & Approach Working Group (FRAWG) and continues to provide leadership and coordination for the Forum process.
- At a recent Forum meeting in May 2009, First Nations participants and DFO agreed that a fall workshop should be held to consider options for a more formal and permanent working relationship between First Nations and DFO related to the management of Fraser River salmon stocks.
- DFO sees a strong need to work more closely and effectively with First Nations to improve the management of Fraser salmon stocks. To that end, DFO has allocated funding to support this process, which is being administered by the Nicola Tribal Association on behalf of the Fraser River Aboriginal Fisheries Secretariat (FRAFS).
- A workshop was held in Richmond on October 15-16, 2009 with Fraser River and marine/approach First Nations and DFO to consider options for moving forward and to discuss potential next steps.
- At that workshop, the participants agreed that there is a need to continue this work and that the Fraser River & Approach Working Group should plan for a second workshop on December 9-10, 2009. The objectives of this workshop will be to:
 - Broaden First Nation participation to include representation for as many Aboriginal communities as possible that have an interest in the conservation and harvest of Fraser salmon; and
 - Agree on a process for establishing a more formal agreement between First Nations and DFO on the management of Fraser salmon.

Where to from here?

Based on this progress to date, DFO and First Nations have agreed to continue working toward a more collaborative management approach for Fraser salmon. Specifically:

- Over the coming months, FRAWG will continue to facilitate discussions between DFO and First Nations regarding the development of a co-management process for Fraser salmon. This will include developing a workplan, communication

materials and bringing in a broader range of First Nations with an interest in Fraser salmon to help build this process.

- The workshop on December 9-10, 2009 will be an important next step in agreeing on a “roadmap” for building a co-management structure. As such, **First Nations with an interest in Fraser salmon are strongly encouraged to participate in this workshop and help build and inform this process.**
- In the meantime, DFO and FRAWG will continue to support the Forum process to deal with pre-season planning and in-season management issues around Fraser salmon.