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Update on Southern BC Chinook Strategic Planning Initiative

Salmon Post-season Meetings
January 2013



Background

- Broad pattern of decline, affecting many chinook populations in a range of geographic areas (Fraser River, Strait of Georgia, WCVI) in southern B.C.; however, not all populations affected (e.g. South Thompson)
- Populations facing:
 - depressed and/or declining spawner abundance
 - reduced and variable marine (and freshwater) survival rates
 - high uncertainty about future production
 - unknown impact of hatchery activities
 - increasing uncertainty related to low return rates of Coded Wire Tags
 - Other factors may include: pressures on freshwater habitat, increased predation, ecosystem effects from climate changes...



Southern BC Chinook Strategic Plan

Purpose/Objectives:

1. Develop a comprehensive Strategic Plan to address the decline in Southern B.C. Chinook salmon.
2. The Strategic Plan will specify conservation objectives with timelines for Southern BC Chinook conservation units, as well as fisheries, enhancement and habitat actions required to achieve the conservation objectives.
3. The Strategic Plan will provide guidance to development of the annual Integrated Fisheries Management Plan.



Southern BC Chinook Strategic Plan

Current Approach:

1. Interim Steering Committee (DFO-FN co-chairs)

- DFO, First Nations, participating interest groups (CSAB, SFAB, Marine Conservation Caucus, SEHAB) and Province of BC.
- Terms of Reference for the governance structure nearly complete.
- Committee will transition to *Steering and Planning Committee* to develop strategic plan

2. Technical Working Group (DFO-FN co-chairs)

- Technical experts from DFO, First Nations and other groups.
- Co-ordinates scientific analyses to evaluate the status of Southern BC Chinook, examine causes for their decline and during strategic planning process will assess potential actions proposed to mitigate the decline.



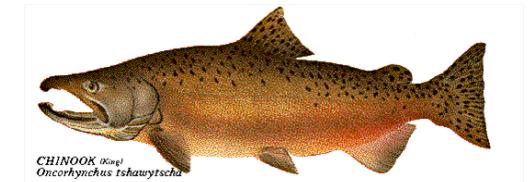
Technical Working Group Activities

TWG members:

- TWG representatives: First Nations (10), Multi-interest (1), Province of BC (1), Recreational Fishery Sector (2), DFO (13) for a total of 27 members & counting...

Data and Analysis

- Development of CU Profile to hold CU information, statistics and results of status review
 - ✓ Draft profile completed -contains CU Description, Habitat Profile, Enhancement Profile, Fishery Impacts Profile, Ecological Linkages, Significant Pressures on CU abundance, Status Metrics and Assessment
 - ✓ Development of Freshwater Habitat Status Report Card (completion this past summer)
 - ✓ Development of Marine Habitat Status Report Card (under development)





Technical Working Group Activities (cont)

Deliverables

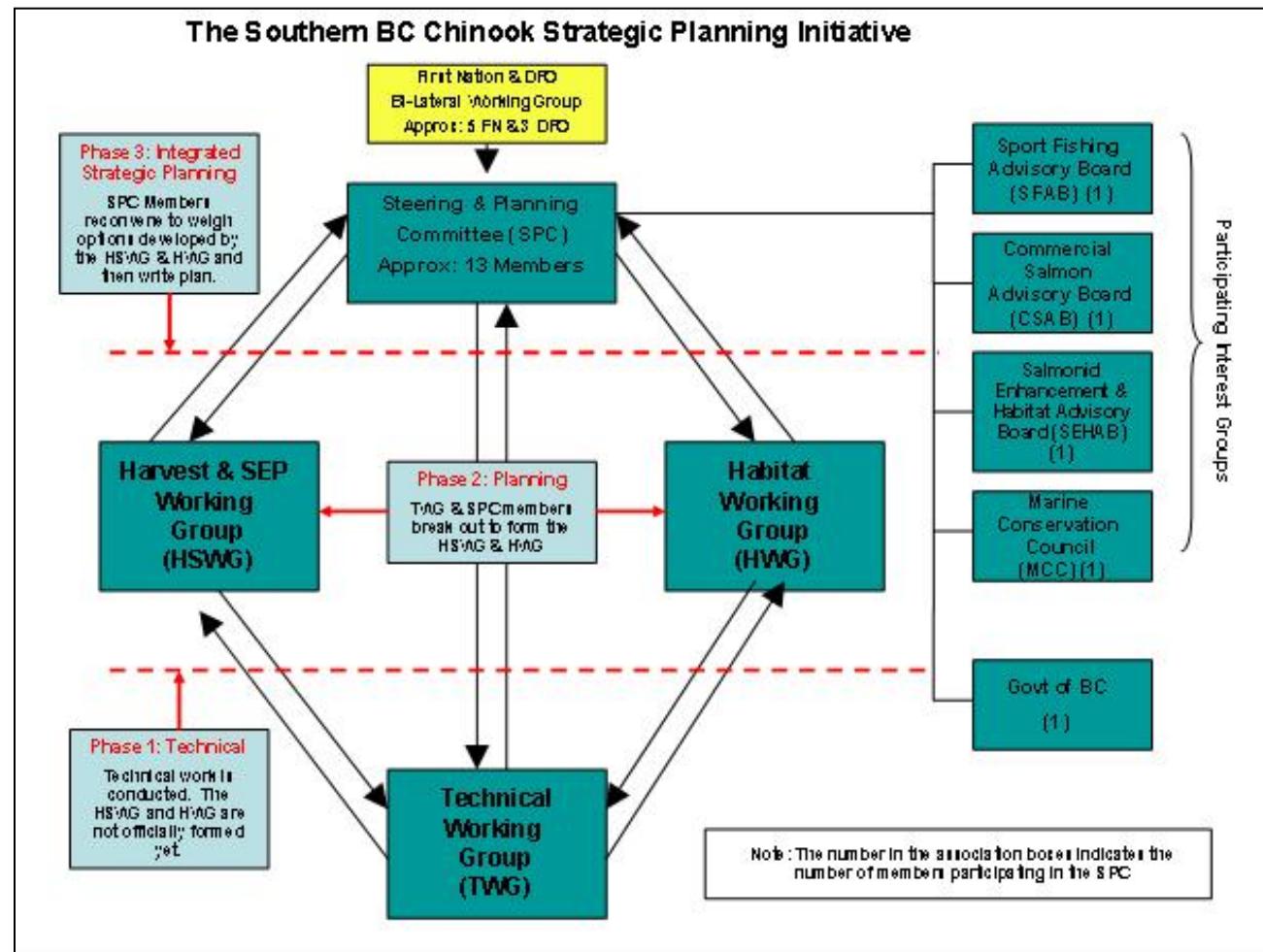
Two Science workshops:

1. pre-COSEWIC workshop (March 6-8, 2013): to present information to assess status of conservation units; and,
2. PSC-Southern Endowment Fund workshop (May 22-24 2013): to identify bottlenecks to productivity of Southern BC chinook.

- As initial status assessment work is completed, technical experts will transition to supporting the strategic planning process – e.g. develop performance indicators, conduct analyses of options



Governance Structure / Approach





Integrated Strategic Planning Process

Process will be consistent with structured 5 step planning procedure outlined in Wild Salmon Policy (see WSP Appendix 2) as follows:

1. **ID planning priorities** – informed by work of technical group on CU status and bottlenecks to productivity First Nations and stakeholders put forward priorities (e.g. rebuilding, maintaining fishery harvest levels, etc...)
2. **ID a range of possible alternative management strategies** – including fisheries management measures, habitat restoration, enhancement initiatives, etc...
3. **Establish biological, social and economic performance indicators** – First Nations and stakeholders identify indicators of importance for assessing management alternatives
4. **Assess likely impacts of management alternatives** – evaluation by appropriate technical experts
5. **Select the preferred management alternative** – reach as much consensus as possible and document differences to inform Ministers decision making.





Southern BC Chinook Strategic Planning Initiative

Proposed Timeline

	2012	2013	2014	2015
Phase 1: Technical (TWG)		Conduct Technical Scoping Phase Hold Science Workshop		
Phase 2: Evaluation & Planning (SPC,HSWG & HWG)			Workshop Results Evaluated. Strategic Planning Framework Steps 1-3 Completed	
Phase 3: Integrated Strategic Planning (SPC)			Strategic Framework Guides Development of Options (Steps 4-5) to Inform Ministerial Decision	
Implementation				Implementation is Incorporated Into DFO Business Planning



Southern BC Chinook

Next Steps

- Complete Terms of Reference for Steering and Planning Committee, including technical working group.
- Technical Working Group continues to develop CU status assessments and habitat report cards for Southern BC chinook CUs.
- Re-engagement of Steering/Planning Committee to begin integrated strategic planning with First Nations and invited participants (met January 8, 2013).



2013/14 Fishery Planning

- Management measures for chinook stocks of concern including a range of restrictions and/or closures developed and implemented recent years will continue to be required in 2013.
 - An adjustment to inseason abundance reference points for Spring 5₂ and Summer 5₂ chinook at Albion is under review.
- Specific plans will be included in draft 2013 Integrated Fisheries Management Plans (IFMPs)
- Southern BC Chinook Strategic Planning process may inform management plan development beginning in 2014 season.



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Questions?

