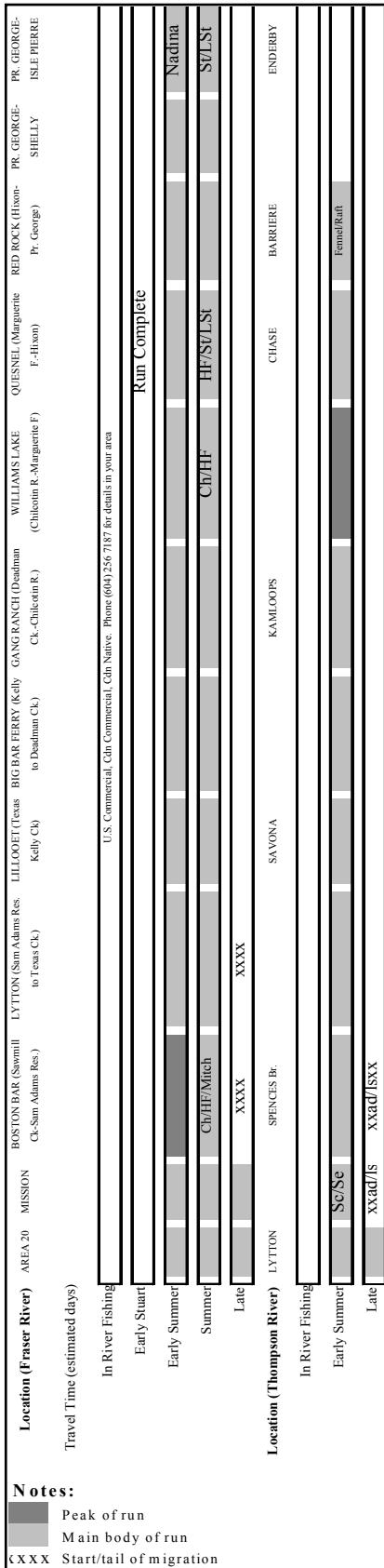


Watershed Talk

A weekly Aboriginal fisheries newsletter for
fisheries representatives and their organizations



THE FINAL SOLUTION

Calling for a reduction to catch allocations for Native bands on the Fraser River, to comply with the "new legal regime" amounts to a full frontal attack, yet again by, Mr. John Cummins." With the ink barely dry on the paper of a lower court ruling Mr. Cummins went to work right away revealing his true agenda, an agenda that goes back over a 100 years. The government of the day also saw that Aboriginals were a threat to the commercial industry, and took immediate action. The government initiated the infamous "Barricade treaties" which were designed to stop interior First Nations from erecting barricades and weirs, which competed with the commercial sector. In return for dismantling their weirs and barricades, essentially stopping a way of life, First Nations were promised farmland, farm implements, seeds, schools, and nets, most of which were never delivered. Mr. Cummins deliberately picks the weakest members of our society, knowing full well that First Nations are an easy target for him, as a member of parliament, to drum up political support for him and his party.

Mr. Cummins argues that "DFO has allowed aboriginal only food fishing on the Fraser since April, with bands catching more fish than they could possibly consume" I wonder when Mr. Cummins traveled to the interior last? It seems like he is so transfixed on his personal war with the First Nations of this province that he has forgotten that the people of the interior will not meet, yet again, their sustenance needs for the winter. I realize Mr. Cummins lives, and represents the people of Delta, but surely he could remember that the Fraser River flows for over a thousand miles from the north, beyond Hope. Many First Nations communities continue to grow and flourish and many of these communities want to maintain their practice of fishing, and many want to also enjoy the economic benefits of this resource, like they had prior to the

industrial fishery. Simply stated, the demand for fish, even for food social and ceremonial purposes is growing and will continue to grow. Even if you were to decrease the allocations, due to the pilot sales fishery, the difference would simply be shifted to groups up river.

It's interesting to note Mr. Cummins charging that "wild salmon stocks are at risk unless the federal department of fisheries and oceans stands by conservation rules and enforces existing laws in the face of illegal fishing on the Fraser River by members of Native bands" He adds " that the federal government must immediately enforce existing laws that prohibit fishing during conservation closures etc..." these comments are leveled against a few people who choose to fish during conservation closures, but what about Mr. Cummins flagrant fishing last year during a Native only food fishery? Furthermore, and most important of all, with respect to conservation closures: all conservation closures on the Fraser River are due solely to bad management practices and over fishing by the commercial sector for the past 110 years, not First Nations, when is Mr. Cummins going to acknowledge this fact instead of orchestrating a final solution to the Aboriginal fishery for his political gain. Doesn't this type of attack and the amount of attention it receives make it clear that Fraser Tribes need their own organization to counter this kind of sustained barrage?

Contact: *Marcel Shepert, Executive Director, Fraser Watershed Aboriginal Fisheries Secretariat*
Tel: (250) 562-6279
Cell: (250) 612-7393

UPCOMING MEETINGS & TELECONFERENCES

AUG. 21/03: 4:00 PM - FRAFS Technical Fraser Sockeye Update Teleconference. Chair(s): Mike Staley/Ken Wilson.