

Fraser River Salmon Joint Technical Working Group Update

Forum on Harvest and Conservation Planning
March 7, 2017



**Fraser River
Aboriginal Fisheries
Secretariat**



Presentation Outline

- Recap of February 27th and March 6th JTWG Meetings
- Key Technical Materials and Discussion
- Forum Presentations
- Key Management Issues
- Next Steps



Recap of Meeting

- Honoured to have Tzeachten First Nation host us: great room, friendly staff and fantastic food!
- Introduced the new FN Co-Chair and member of FRAFS Team: Aidan Neill
- 22 Participants: 18 FN and 4 DFO
- Continued discussion and Action Points from February 27th Webinar



Key Technical Materials and Discussion

- Fraser River Run Reconstruction: Updated and complete for 2015 and 2016
Terminal Return of Spring and Summer 52 Chinook in 2016 was ~34,000 (Albion ~43,000)
- South Coast DFO DNA Inventory: 2014 – 2016
Next steps to think about process to deal with current and future analysis or sampling
- Chinook Tech Committee Canadian Chinook Exploitation Rate Analysis (Total Mortality Distribution)
2015 exploitation rate for Spring 42 Chinook was 15.8%. Preliminary 2016 estimates expected early April.
- 2015 PSC Coho Tech Committee ER Analysis
FRAM IFC estimate was a 17.8% exp rate. Some interest to explore mngrt actions from specific fisheries to inform recommendations for 2017



Forum Presentations

2017 Fraser Sockeye/Pink Forecast

- Presented at bilateral Fraser River Panel meeting
- Chilko forecast is highly uncertain because there was no standard smolt assessment in 2015, therefore forecast model used is 2nd best performing
- Chilko forecast makes up a very large proportion of the forecast (48% of total at P50)
- Science info highlights high uncertainty and based on 2015/2016 returns (poor ocean conditions – BLOB) science opinion is leaning towards using the P25 forecast for Summer Run sockeye

2017 Fraser Sockeye Total Mortality Rule Options

- 2 options: Option 1 is identical to 2013, and Option 2 is identical except for Summer Run
- If actual return is at the P25 the allowable harvest is below 1M (400,000-700,000) sockeye depending on the option



Forum Presentations cont'd

Fraser Chum

- Identified uncertainties and possible ways to improve accuracy of the in-season Fraser River run size estimate and peak migration date in the Fraser Chum model (Albion)
- Listed current and upcoming research for improvements to chum assessment (SEF projects)
 1. Canadian/US Marine DNA sampling and analysis (stock composition)
 2. JDF DNA and timing to help inform diversion rates
 3. Chilliwack M&R and use as marker for basin wide chum escapement estimate

Steelhead

- Verbal update: uncertainty in next steps (with Province and DFO) **but** Federal fisheries ultimately responsible for conservation of salmon



Forum Presentations cont'd

Chinook

- Fraser Spring 42, Spring 52 and Summer 52: similar approach to past years given poor brood years for these groups.
- Brood year for Spring and Summer 52 Chinook is less than the brood year in the 2016 return (Zone 1)
- Spring 52 and Summer 52: start season in Zone 1 (Conservation mode)
- Albion test fishery starting late April
- In-season update 3rd Monday in June to determine Zone
- Summer 41 Chinook have Outlook Near Target (3)
- Harrison coming off a low brood year. Forecast expected in late March.



Key Management Issues & Next Steps

- **DNA:** Need Central and North Coast DNA inventory: Then have discussion on prioritization of analysis and sampling needs (technical group in 5 year review?)
- **Chinook:** Harrison Chinook has been identified as a stock of concern by CTC: What does this mean in terms of domestic management actions?
- **Chinook:** 2017 FN interest to harvest 41 Chinook to offset possible sockeye deficit
- **Steelhead:** How has fisheries management changed (or will it change) to reflect extreme conservation concern?
- **Steelhead:** Need to include Lower Fraser steelhead in management conversation
- **Pink:** How will the sox LAER be managed with commercial fisheries? 2013 1% rule for example: Bycatch mortalities allocated?



Next Steps

- Review draft IFMP
- Chinook Coded Wire Tag Total Mortality Distribution (Detailed Canadian Mortality) in April meeting
- Provide context and caveats for DNA inventory

