

Forum on Conservation and Harvest Planning for Fraser Salmon

January 28-30 • Richmond •
Facilitators Feedback on the Process

Forum Planning Committee: (Ken Malloway, Andrew Meshue, Tony Roberts Jr., Dean Allan, Adrian Wall, Ernie Victor)

The Forum Planning Committee developed an agenda based on three key areas with sub-objectives for each, they were as follows:

Technical Updates

1. Update from the Fraser Watershed Joint Technical Working Group (JTWG) on the work completed in 2013 and priorities for 2014.
2. High level 2013 post season review for all species.
3. 2014 Salmon Outlook

Operational Management

1. 2013 FN fishery review by area FN reps
2. Review of 2013 Chinook, sockeye, and Coho management challenges
3. Update and discussion on potential changes to Interior Fraser Coho Exploitation rate.

FN & DFO Collaborative Processes

1. Update on key initiatives, i.e. Southern BC chinook, Use of Fish, Fraser Road map Process

PAST FORUM AGENDAS ANALYSIS

It is worth noting that this Forum meeting had **over 70 delegates in attendance**, the most ever recorded. To begin with the forum planning committee requested the facilitator prepare and analysis of the past Forum meetings. The analysis was to focus on the amount of time spent talking about different aspects of the agenda dating back to 2009, just after Paul Kariya's analysis of the process.

The report was well received and has led to more questions about the process, but were beyond the scope of the report. The key result can be viewed on the FRAFS web site or in the report attached. In summary the key results were as follows:

- Generally more tier 1 time than tier 2 time is needed
- The agendas dedicate an increasing amount of "process discussions", i.e. updating and discussing the myriad of processes dealing with Fraser Salmon issues in one way or another. It is interesting to note that the Forum was developed to specifically to talk about "operations" of the fishery. Each time the discussion moves to process issues, time is taken away from the operational aspects.
- IFMP issues are slowly taking up more time since 2011.

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- Post season discussions are slowly going down. It seems people really want to get on with the upcoming season and not so much on the post season analysis.
- Development of options and recommendations is by far the most important aspect of the agenda and is increasing at a steep slope. This is encouraging and seems to suggest the process is working; at least as far as content goes, outputs and outcomes may not be as encouraging especially from an FSC point of view.
- The group was reminded that Dave Levy has done an analysis of the recommendations for IFMP input/recommendations put forth by FN, based on outcomes. This exercise is done on an annual basis.

STRUCTURE

Day 1 - Tier 1 discussions: For the first meeting of the year it was decided to do a regional update from watershed and approach areas. Prior to the engagement the facilitator identified spokes persons, from each region, i.e. 2 from the upper Fraser, 4 from the mid-Fraser, 2 from the lower Fraser, and 3 from the Island. This was well received by the participants and further solidified inter-tribal relations and put specific faces to specific regions.

Utilizing this technique was effective to talk about the last year's fishery, just not sure how to incorporate this technique for further progress. It may be interesting to consider using this approach when the regions have developed their regional fishing plans and the respective rationale, a spokesperson may be called upon to talk about the plan. This could potentially lay the foundations for further negotiations as the season moves closer. The goal would be to seek consensus on an approach to salmon fisheries for any given year.

The FN members of the FWJTWG did an excellent job summarizing their deliberations and boiling down the issues into bit sized chunks. The objectives of working collaboratively and sharing technical information as it relates to salmon management continues. The technical relationship between FN and DFO is working well.

Day 2 – Tier 2: The first part of the agenda was about other process updates, Southern BC Chinook Strategic Planning Initiative and the Fraser Roadmap Process. FN and DFO are developing a closer working relationship on these important initiatives which is necessary in the spirit of the Roadmap MOU. The Southern BC Chinook Planning Initiative will need time on the agenda in moving forward since it is a crucial issue for so many FN and linked to this process. As noted in earlier reports, the Chinook management measures response has taken up an inordinate amount of time at each of the Forum meetings and will likely require more time for discussions in the future.

The remainder of the Tier 2 agenda was dedicated to 2013 post season analysis and potential implications to 2014 fisheries. The 2014 Outlook discussions were framed within the tight turn

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over time scheduled for the IFMP feedback. DFO will only draft 1 IFMP in 2014 which is cause for concern to FN who feel that this is a step backward in terms of “what is consultation”.

Day 3 - Tier 1: During the Tier 1 discussions on day 3, First Nations Participants continued to express concerns about the quick turn over on IFMP, the prosed lifting of the 3% ER on Coho salmon and the potential for increased ER on productive stocks in 2014, i.e. late run sockeye.

At this time FN propose that the FWJTWG continue to meet and work on the technical aspects, taking more time if needed, e.g. 1.5 or 2 days, prior to the Tier 1 or 2 processes. Many of the Fraser and Approach FN have technical representatives at the FWJTWG and the process has demonstrated a high level of functionality to both parties.

Salmon Coordinating Committee (SCC)

The members of the SCC drafted a Terms of Reference on February 22, 2012 which stipulates the terms of the committee (FNFC Website). The SCC will comprise up to 14 members from the geographical regions of the FNFC. Therefore, this will align well with the FNFC objective of “structural Alignment” It’s purpose is focused on the development of an SCC and the design and ratification of a Tier 1, 2 and 3 process. It is a BC wide process unlike the Forum which is regionally focused.

Responsibilities include arranging meetings, preparing agendas, developing required materials, and reporting to the FNFC. Technical, policy, administrative and planning support to the SCC will be provided by the FNFC, or by outside contractors, as stipulated in the work plan or agreed to by the SCC. The SCC is accountable to, and will report regularly to the FNFC and First Nations, and provincial First Nation organizations. It is responsible for providing regular briefings to FNFC on a quarterly basis and will produce an overview report of its progress against work plan deliverables.

Although First Nations were not in a position to complete a province-wide FN Salmon Management Plan, it was important to synthesize First Nations’ responses to the North and South salmon IFMPs in order to identify strategic First Nations’ priorities and to be able to advance them to DFO. Dr. Dave Levy has been responsible for reviewing IFMPs to identify:

1. problematic concepts and language in the IFMP that restrict First Nations’ ability to meet our Section 35 (1) needs;
2. language in the IFMP and provide alternatives approaches for Coastal First Nations to access demonstration fisheries and/or provide guidance for increased access in-season; and
3. key themes and priorities of First Nations on the North and South Coasts;

Responses from First Nations were organized into 10 priorities encapsulating problematic issues common to both north and south plans. Recommendations for addressing the issues were also

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brought forward. In addition to these general level recommendations, the FNFC and its member organizations commented extensively on details of the north and south IFMPs. Fundamental issues with the IFMP & IHPC processes is that it infringes on FN Title & Rights by limiting access to Section 35.1 FSC harvests and economic opportunities. All along FN have maintained dissatisfaction with the Tier3 IHPC & IFMP processes:

- limited First Nations representation at the salmon IHPC (4 South Coast and 4 North Coast)
- communication and reporting from the IHPC
- DFO process to appoint First Nations representatives
- how input and advice from First Nations is considered by DFO in the development of 29 IFMPs
- the prioritization of Tier 3 planning processes in the absence of effective and functioning Tier 1 and 2 processes
- the potential impact or infringement on Section 35 (1) fisheries resulting from the development and implementation of management decision rules

Outcomes of these meetings included agreement to design a process for appointing First Nations representatives to a Tier 1 Salmon Coordinating Committee (SCC) and to stay engaged in the design and ratification of a Tier 1, 2 and 3 harvest planning process. The SCC was tasked with developing a new First Nations Integrated Salmon Harvest planning process by:

- Defining key themes and priorities of First Nations' on the North and South Coasts;
- Developing an outline and scoping key portions of a First Nations' Management Plan for the 2013-2014 salmon Food, Social and Ceremonial fishery;
- Synthesizing First Nations' responses to the 2013-14 North and South salmon IFMPs in order to identify strategic First Nations' priorities and advance them in a face-to-face Tier 2 meeting.

Next steps:

- Fraser FN continue to meet to work on sockeye recommendations and provide DFO with directions.
- The Forum planning committee plan to meet to begin planning the next steps.
- FN to draft letter to DFO.
- Meeting to be held sometime in new-year.
- SCC continue to update and share information with the Forum process seeking possible points of convergence.
- Roadmap continue to update the Forum process in order to seek efficiencies and reduce redundancy whole planning for an overall convergence.
- The Southern BC Chinook planning process continue to update the Forum process.