

Initial FN Feedback on Chinook Evaluations

February 26 MS Teams Meeting to review evaluations of recreational and commercial Chinook proposals

What DFO has heard from First Nations so far:

- Review of proposals will take significant time which will impact on time available for technical staff to complete work plans and plan FSC fisheries.
- Concern about amount of staff time DFO spent on evaluations instead of higher priorities, including developing Chinook recovery plans and FSC fishing plans.
- Consultation needs to occur on strategic plan / policy around use of Mark Selective Fisheries (MSF) and Mass Marking prior to implementation of MSF fisheries or mass marking of hatchery production. (Note: recreational proposals include MSF regulations but mass marking is not part of consideration in these evaluations)
- Precautionary approach is required where stocks are data deficient (e.g. Mainland Inlets); stock status assessment required prior to planning fisheries in local areas. Data deficient stocks in the Mainland Inlets are not included in the DNA baseline and limited CWT data (e.g. Phillips).
- Potential increase in recreational fishing effort and release mortality of wild fish are a significant conservation concern and inconsistent with FN FSC priority. Current low effort observed in some areas as a result of COVID-19 is likely temporary and shouldn't be relied upon for planning.

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Summary (cont):

- Need to consider total fisheries impacts from all of these proposals, as well as, other salmon and non-salmon fisheries (e.g. groundfish trawl by-catch)
- Need to consider potential impacts on non-Fraser Chinook, many of which have been assessed by COSEWIC as at risk or data deficient.
- Any fishery impacts available must be provided to First Nations FSC fisheries after conservation consistent with Sparrow decision and allocation priority. If FSC needs are not being met then other fisheries should be closed.
- Priority harvest opportunities for Summer 4₁ Chinook should be provided for FN FSC fisheries given challenges to achieve Chinook allocations and concerns about poor Fraser sockeye access for FSC.
- Concern about potential high costs to support fishery monitoring and stock assessments of these proposals given available DFO resources.
- Concerns about C+P capacity to support enforcement and compliance
- Additional stock assessment resources should be directed towards informing planning of river and terminal FSC fisheries; First Nations should be involved in the work and have access to funding.
- Requests for bilateral discussions to support further discussion of concerns for stocks returning to local areas.

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Additional feedback can be provided in writing by March 19, 2021 to:
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Presentation and technical information:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/kesf7jgfdpl8myw/AADvVLiLqy2fJhPNISui01-0a?dl=0>

Recording of February 26 webinar:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/9ziwfw7t60305a/AACAZJvhNjptrXjmJs6URQkqa?dl=0>