# 2018 Draft IFMP – Key Changes

- Steelhead Window Closure -

First Nations Forum: March 27-29, 2018 Kamloops, BC



# Interior Fraser Steelhead - Background

- Spawning escapement of Interior Fraser Steelhead has been on a downward trend for many years, with recent years' escapements reaching the lowest on record.
- February 13, 2018 COSEWIC's Emergency Assessment Subcommittee assessed both the Thompson River and Chilcotin River Steelhead Trout (Oncorhynchus mykiss) as Endangered (background information at: https://www.sararegistry.gc.ca/document/default\_e.cfm?documentID=3290
- Emergency listing process is underway to determine whether or not to list the DUs under SARA on an emergency basis
- Threats to steelhead include:
  - poor ocean survival
  - bycatch release from fisheries targeting Pacific salmon
  - predation on juveniles
  - declines in freshwater habitat quality
  - release mortalities from other fisheries





# Interior Fraser Steelhead – 2018 Proposal

- For 2018, Department proposes implementation of rolling window closure for times/areas where IFR steelhead likely to be present (similar to that used for Early Stuart sockeye and Interior Fraser River coho)
- Assuming average run timing and migration speed for the IFR steelhead return, the length of the closure required to protect a 90% of the steelhead migration is approximately four weeks with the peak at around Oct 11th at Albion
- In implementing a rolling window closure, the Department will consider:
  - Salmon allocation priorities
  - Previously demonstrated selectivity of gear with regard to steelhead
- Fisheries which have higher allocation priority or with demonstrated high degree of selectivity may be provided allowances for a shorter closure period.



### Interior Fraser Steelhead – Ideal Dates

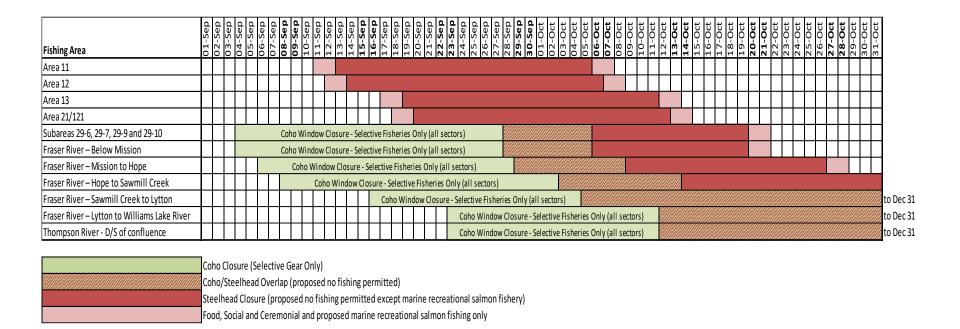
Idealized window closure dates to protect 90% of the IFR steelhead migration given average peak timing, spread of the run, and migration speed

Fishery Location	Start Date	End Date
Area 11	Sep/11	Oct/07
Area 12	Sep/12	Oct/08
Area 13	Sep/17	Oct/13
Area 21/121	Sep/18	Oct/14
Subareas 29-6, 29-7, 29-9 and 29-10	Sep/28	Oct/24
Fraser River – Below Mission	Sep/28	Oct/24
Fraser River – Mission to Hope	Sep/29	Oct/29
Fraser River – Hope to Sawmill Creek	Oct/03	Oct/31
Fraser River – Sawmill Creek to Lytton	Oct/05	Dec/31
Fraser River – Lytton to Williams Lake River	Oct/12	Dec/31
Thompson River – D/S of the confluence of the North and South Thompson Rivers	Oct/12	Dec/31

Idealized dates are based on statistical properties of the run timing distribution and may be adjusted to reflect operational considerations and feedback from consultations.

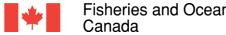


# Proposed operational plan



See supporting document (<u>Proposed 2018 Fisheries Management Measures</u> to Support Recovery of Interior Fraser River Steelhead, 22-March-2018) that provides further information





## Interior Fraser Steelhead - Questions

#### **Questions to Consider:**

- Does the proposed plan provide the appropriate level of protection for Interior Fraser River Steelhead?
- Should selective fishing for salmon be permitted during the steelhead window closure? If so, what fisheries / gears should be considered?
- Are there additional measures that should be considered?





### Southern Chum

Due to significant overlap in migration timing of IFR steelhead with chum salmon, a rolling window closure designed to protect IFR steelhead will have considerable impacts on all fisheries targeting chum in 2018.

**Johnstone Strait** – Outlook is *near target*. Abundance appears below average in most systems surveyed in 2017. Link to poor ocean conditions in 2014 entry year? Chum returns remain highly variable.

<u>Strait of Georgia</u> - Outlook is *near target*. For 2018, returns expected to improve for some stocks in southern SoG, such as Cowichan, but decrease for others, such as Jervis Inlet stocks. Mid-Island stocks and Nanaimo River are expected to decrease based on below average brood year escapement in 2014.

- Management plan based on 20% exploitation rate in mixed-stock Johnstone Strait fishery.
- In other areas, harvest opportunities primarily in terminal areas based on decision rules and escapement targets.

### **Fraser Chum**

- <u>Fraser chum</u> Outlook is for an *abundant* return. However, warm ocean "Blob" persisted through spring 2015, when fry from 2014 escapement entered marine environment. Impact of these environmental conditions on Fraser Chum productivity and returns in 2018 is unknown.
- Expectation for returns that can support fisheries for all groups
- In-season of run size using information from Albion test fishery:
  - 800,000 escapement target for the Fraser River chum

