



# 2024 Fraser Forum #3

## Apr 9-11, 2024

### What We Heard

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Presentation to Forum  
Greg Witzky (FSMC) & Matthew Parslow (DFO)  
April 11, 2024



# Item: Sockeye Management

## Overview

- Feedback on escapement plan options
  - Some support for Option 2, the more conservative approach.
  - Highlighted that the 2024 season represents the second year of returns impacted by Big Bar
- Feedback on window closures
  - There should be no fishery impacts occurring during this period, all fisheries should be closed.
  - Suggestion of complete closures to support rebuilding.
- Test Fishery Plans
  - Mixed feedback: some support for limited marine test fisheries, and some suggestions that marine test fisheries should not proceed to reduce mortality. In River test fisheries are still planned.
- FSC priority continues to be a concern. (additional detail included with slides on FSC Priority)
- Suggestion to build from what the ancestors would have done to set principles for management.
- Against traditional values to throw back dead fish.
- Suggestion to look at implications of the management actions to access for FSC purposes in greater detail

## Next Steps / Actions

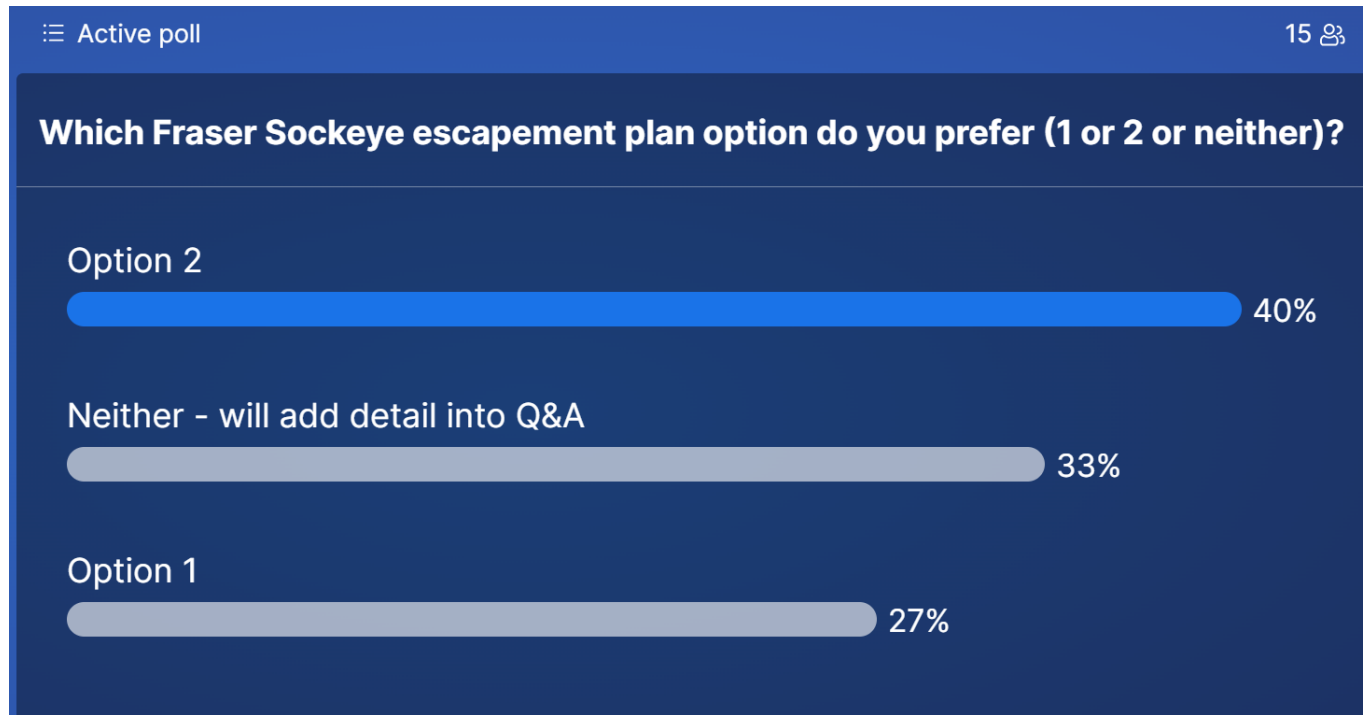
- Upcoming engagement on the pilot Early Stuart Rebuilding Process. Timelines and details to come.

## Tech Questions

- (Potential) Review ways to communicate trade-offs arising from window closures and stock specific outcomes.

## Deadlines

# Slido Questions: Sockeye Management



**Anonymous**



2 👍

Option 2 and 3, with 3 being FN fisheries getting % and zero other % are taken in order to minimize the catch on such a low number and low water year.

# Slido Questions: Sockeye Management

☰ Active poll

9 👤

**The Early Sockeye window closure is designed to reduce incidental mortality on the first returning Management Units (MU). Which length of window closure do you prefer?**

5 weeks. Focused on protecting most Early Stuart MU, and more early-timed Early Summer MU stocks. This was the measure used in 2023.

89%

None of the above. Will add detail into Q&A

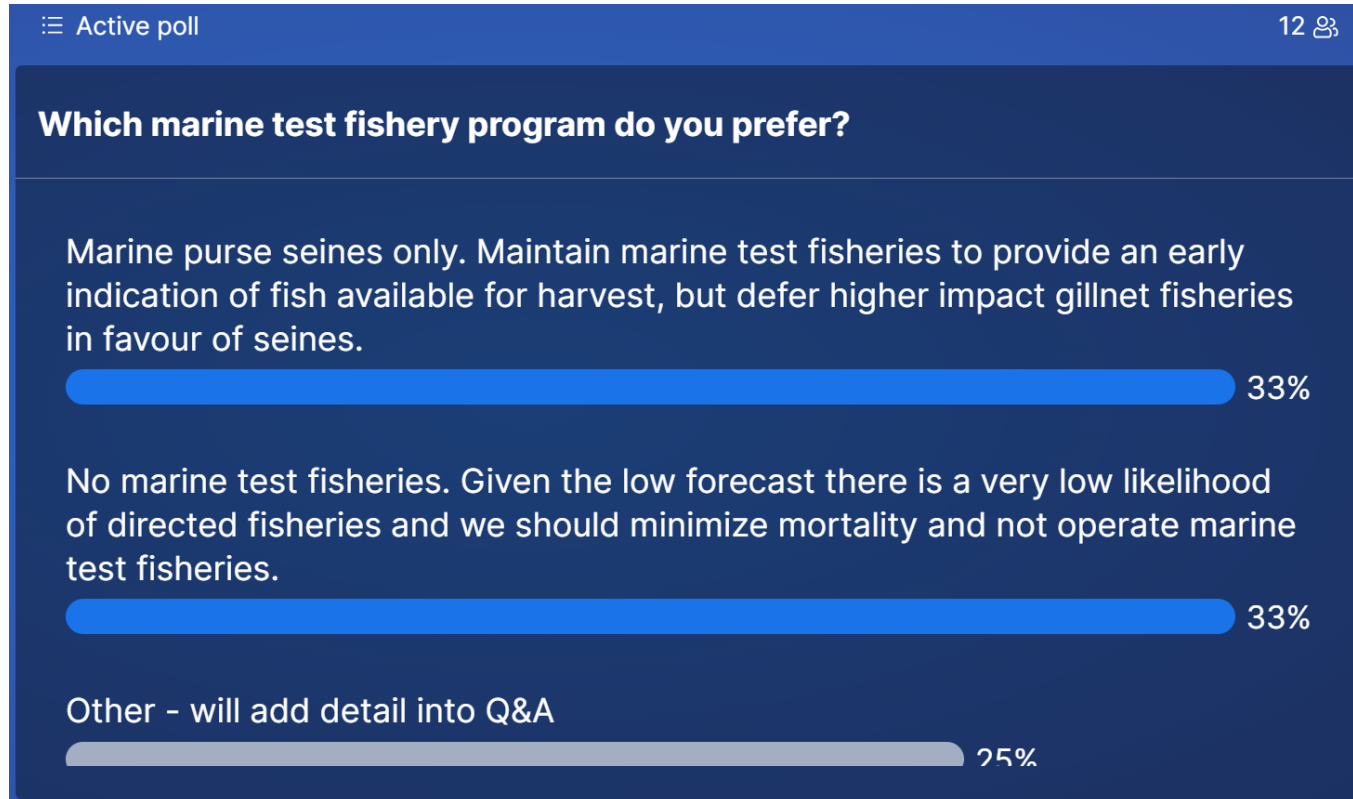
11%

3 weeks. Primarily focused on protecting Early Stuart MU.

0%

4 weeks. Focused on protecting Early Stuart MU, and some early-timed Early Summer MU stocks.

# Slido Questions: Sockeye Management



Anonymous 1

If DFO is concerned that marine test fishers won't stick around for another year why don't they provide FN the opportunity to operate all marine test fisheries?

Anonymous 1

Marine test fisheries: start much later and low impact only. Work with First Nations to complete test fishing, so they can keep salmon for community.

# Slido Questions: Sockeye Management

Active poll

7

**Given the low forecast return for Fraser Sockeye, what is an acceptable level of incidental mortality?**

5%

None

0

Zero

0

Almost needs to be answered by stock basis; you could accidentally wipe out a stock! No incidental mortality should go towards rec or comm'l. This acceptable level should be only for First Nations.

Given, the very low return we have to shut down all fisheries including the marine to ensure a maximum return. This means pain for everyone, not just upper Fraser Nations

Anonymous

1

Which other non-Indigenous salmon fisheries will impact sockeye during historically low returns like this year?

# Item: Coho Management

## Overview

- Concern identified in considering proposals (e.g. Five Nations) if we don't have the tools to assess them
- Clarity sought on whether the CSAS review of the SoG assessment program includes program design
- Suggestion that Coho management be brought forward to the FSMB for their consideration. Noted that this may require additional funding to support this work.
- Concern over moving off the current approach prior to developing the tools and process to better plan that shift. DFO confirmed that any move would be supported by a collaborative process with Nations.
- Concern that current approach is not addressing priority.
- Identification that the Salmon Allocation Policy is good, the concern is with its implementation by DFO.
- Interest expressed in accessing marked Coho in Spius Creek.

## Next Steps / Actions

- Jeff R: to confirm appropriate FN technical representation involved in the development of the SoG assessment program CSAS and include program design in scope
- FSMC/DFO to consider inclusion of Coho management as part of the FSMB workplan
- Tracy/DFO to follow up on access for marked Coho.

## Tech Questions

## Deadlines

# Item: FSC Priority Implementation (CN Focus)

## Overview

- Day 2 discussions were focused on the implementation of FSC priority, with some Chinook focus. Presentations were not reviewed.
- Nations shared the perspective that DFO's fishery management is not consistent with Sparrow and is an infringement on their FSC rights.
  - FSC needs are not being met but others (recreational) are fishing before those needs are met.
  - FMI data shows FSC has borne the brunt of Chinook conservation and priority is not being afforded.
  - Inequity in access is being observed through review of technical information.
    - LF FSC get ~2 fish/person and extremely limited openings - rec gets 2/day with access year round.
    - Marine rec fishery Chinook mortalities exceed those for FSC. Concern about very high and growing release mortalities, including for sub-legal rearing Chinook.
- Limited or no access to fish is not just an issue of access for food, this impacts communities and culture
  - Communities are unable to pass down the knowledge, culture and traditional practices
  - Inability to engage youth in traditional practices is resulting in dire consequences for troubled youth.
- Consultation and engagement
  - DFO has a duty to consult individual nations about fisheries proposed in their territory and seek free, prior and informed consent. This is not happening.
  - The Nations are concerned that their concerns are not being heard/understood in Ottawa.
  - DFO has to provide justification of the actions that are being implemented.
- Nicola tribes planning legal action to challenge impact of MSFs on their FSC rights.



# Item: FSC Priority Implementation (CN Focus)

## Overview

- DFO sought advice/clarity on immediate actions needed and longer-term collaborative work needed.
- The FSMB process is starting to make progress in collaborative management, but people are frustrated with how much time it has and continues to take. The salmon don't have the time to wait for the process.
- Discussion of work happening at the FSMB & through Salmon Allocation Policy review to consider priority.
- Identified actions/recommendations:
  - Need funding and capacity to support engagement in these discussions.
  - Implement a cap on catch and participation in the recreational fishery
  - DFO needs to justify why they don't accept First Nations management plans
  - There should be consequences when management plans do not meet expectations
  - Need to have escapement-based targets for conservation
  - MSF need to be shut down immediately because they infringe on Indigenous rights
  - Work should be undertaken to review the MSF data collaboratively and then build the MSF Framework together.
  - First Nations need to have input on recreational fisheries that are impacting their fish.
  - DFO needs to inform the First Nations about any DFO response to an injunction.
  - All threats to these stocks to be eliminated
  - Minister needs to understand the impacts of the decisions being made.

# Item: Chinook Management

## Next Steps / Actions

- *I did not see any clear actions outside of the items identified as potential solutions. I will work to review the notes and this presentation and build some actions, but wanted to get this into your hands.*

## Tech Questions

## Deadlines