

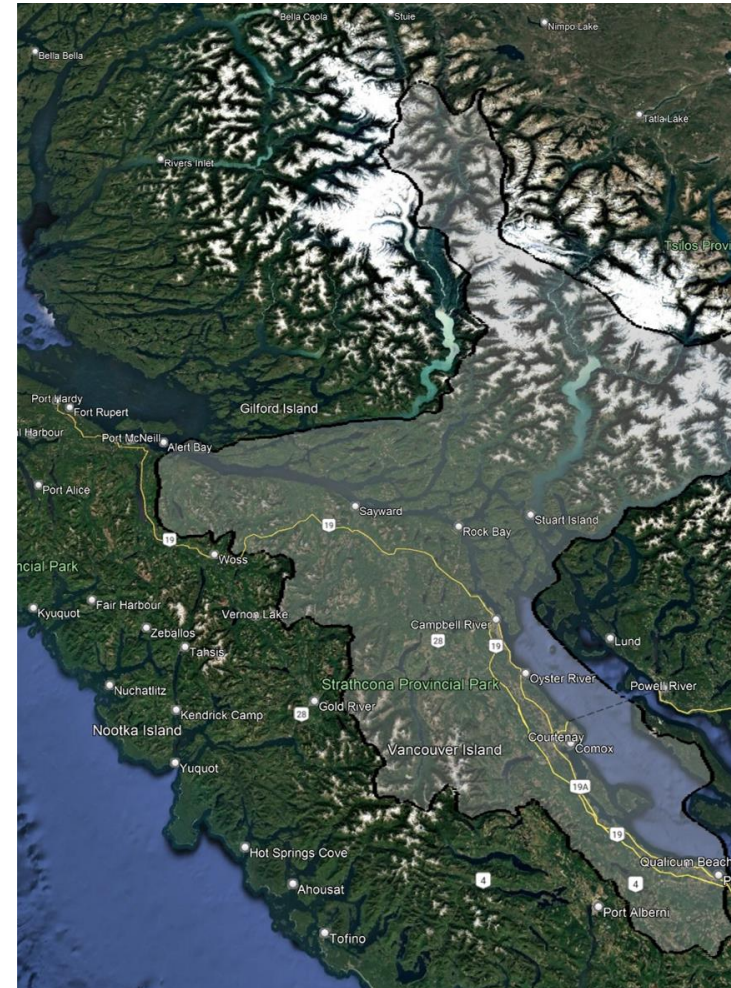


A-Tlegay Fisheries Society
Fisheries Monitoring
FSC Catch Monitoring
November 27, 2024

Presented by Kyle Milburn, Fisheries Biologist

Who is A-Tlegay Fisheries Society?

- A-Tlegay Fisheries Society is a non-profit fisheries organization composed of 5 Nations:
 - K'omoks First Nation
 - Kwiakah First Nation
 - Tlowitsis First Nation
 - We Wai Kai First Nation
 - Wei Wai Kum First Nation
 - Total members = 3,051 members
- A-Tlegay Fisheries contributes to data collection which contributes to stock status and fisheries opportunities/conservation concern in two main areas:
 - 1) Stock assessment through field surveys
 - Fresh water - escapement estimates
 - Marine test fisheries
 - Monitor commercial fisheries
 - 2) FSC catch permitting/monitoring (catch estimates/exploitation rate)
 - Primarily occurs in marine areas
 - Not just limited to salmon
 - (permits can include multi species, gear types, and area)



A-Tlegay Capacity

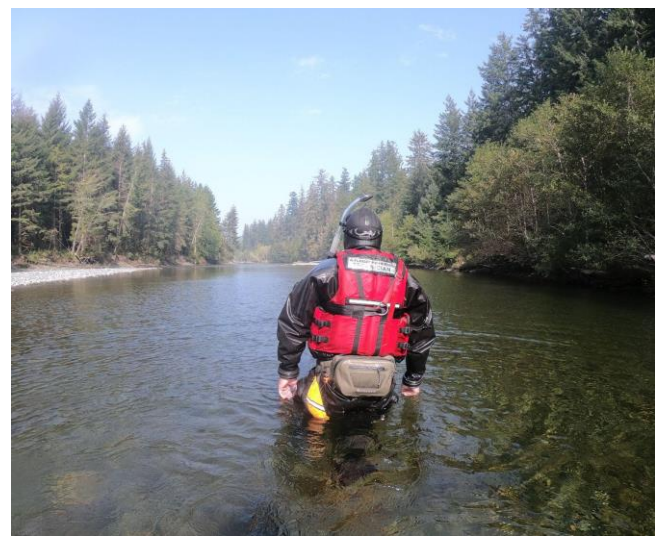
16 Full time A-Tlegay Fisheries Staff:

- 8 technicians - from Nations, includes 1 commercial diver
- 4 multi-disciplinary biologists - help with policy/field programs
- 4 office staff
 - administrator
 - reception/FSC permits,
 - commercial licensing,
 - data entry/analysis

Seasonally can grow to 20 with part time/summer students

Equipment/gear:

- 2 crew boats, 1 landing craft, 2 small vessels



Nation Member Guardian Programs

Wei Wai Kum Guardians - ~9 guardians

Example: Heydon Creek - Sockeye counting fence, restoration and rebuilding

We Wai Kai Guardians - ~3-4 guardians

Example: Forestry focussed, Quadra Island stream restoration

K'omoks Guardians - ~4-5 guardians

Example: Puntledge River - estuary restoration

Tlowitsis Guardians - ~3-4 guardians

Example: Fulmore River - Sockeye counting fence, restoration and rebuilding

Kwiakah Guardians - Fisheries manager

Why did we start?

- Nations have an inherent responsibility to be stewards of the resource
- Nations felt a need to have a voice
- To assist and facilitate the preservation and exercise of aboriginal fishing rights
- A-Tlegay agreed to pilot a FSC catch monitoring program (2000)
 - In collaboration with DFO
 - At that time it was to document total FSC catch
 - Since then it has become so much more!




How do we monitor FSC:

Nation members receive permits through A-Tlegay

Permits include; Duration, Area, Species, Gear/Count, Effort, Location, Distribution

Members return catch report
-(office communication with harvesters)

Catch is entered into AHMS database
-stored for further use and
-can be exported to DFO

		A-Tlegay Fisheries Society Communal Fisheries Permit 1441A Old Island Hwy, Campbell River, BC Tel: 250-287-8868 Fax: 250-287-8414		2024 Licence XFSC 26 2024 Permit ATLY24-0542			
Permit Not Used Use Of Fish First Nation End Date Area List Maximum Catch Who Issued Area Exceptions List Provisions List Comment	False FSC - Food, Social & Ceremonial A-Tlegay Fisheries Society 30-Nov-24 Area 13 Spratt, Ashley	Permit Holder A-Tlegay, Fisheries Society Vessel Speed Boat Start Date 01-Nov-24 Species List Salmon (without Sockeye) Gear List Rod & Reel Trap Limit Band Permit Number					
CATCH REPORT							
Date Caught	Species	Number (salmon, crabs, cod)	Weight(lbs) (clams, prawns, shrimp, halibut)	Gear / Count	Effort (hrs)	Location Caught	Distribution
Signature of Permit Holder				Signature of Fisheries Authority		Date Issued 01/Nov/2024	
ISSUED BY: Spratt, Ashley PRINTED ON: 01/Nov/2024				Data Source:		Page 1 of 2	

Why is it important to monitor FSC?

For DFO:

Contributes to:

- Calculation of exploitation rate
- Total allowable catch / allocations



Why is it important to monitor FSC?

For A-Tlegay:

- Nations own the data
- A-Tlegay stays in touch with harvesters (which is ultimately who we work for)
- Communication as to what is actually happening on the water/ landscape
- Through A-Tlegay permits additional information can be asked for and collected (Where, When, Depths etc)
- A-Tlegay has the ability to maintain the privacy of the harvesters
- Has become so much more and has allowed for broader application of how Nations use the data internally
- Allows for informed data driven decision making



Why is it important to monitor FSC?

For A-Tlegay:

Nations can evaluate/analyze the data on multiple layers

- Allows for informed data driven decision making
 - Pre-season and postseason planning (example not a sockeye year?)
 - Catch information across species: Total protein Vs Chum TAC.
 - FSC distribution monitoring
 - Where did the fish end up?
 - Direct from A-Tlegay or dock side validation
 - Have the ability to work with harvesters to mitigate the risk of overharvesting
 - Permits can support managing: number of harvesters, catch, duration, gear
 - Database of relative abundance and interest from members



How has the FSC monitoring program evolved?

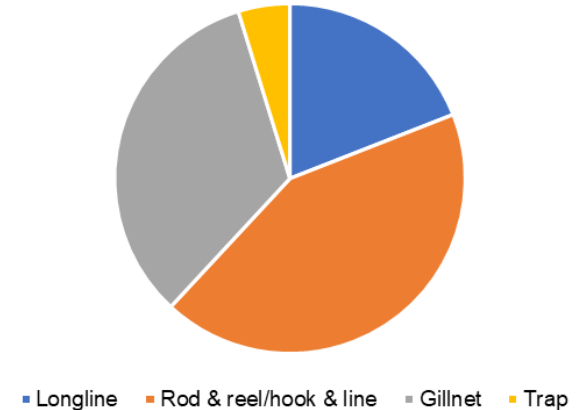
Fundamentally information collected is the same

- DFO currently manages FSC database
- Database continues to evolve (internally by DFO)
- A-Tlegay collects supplementary data within permits
 - (Ex. Releases, more specific area info)

A-Tlegay has found many ways that the data has been useful across a broad spectrum of objectives

Example: Age demographic of harvesters, Distribution, more specific area data, gear breakdowns

Gear Breakdown K'omoks 2022



Barriers to FSC Monitoring

Past:

- Nation-individual buy-in (concern data may restrict access)
- Uncertainty in data
 - self reported
 - no specific on the water catch monitoring

Present: Still largely the same, but improving

- Nation-individual buy-in (high percentage of self reporting)
 - Helping harvesters understand data use
- Database challenges
 - lack of alinement Nations needs vs DFO needs



What are the success indicators?

- Willingness to report on permits
 - High percentage of reporting/completion
 - Harvesters understanding data use
- Ability of Nations to use data
 - Broader application of data
 - Age demographic, protein comparison
- Steps toward Co-management
 - Data sharing
 - DFO and Nation collaboration
 - Inseason management decisions



Gaps and opportunities moving forward

Gap:

- Caveats of data
 - Largely self-reporting

Opportunity:

- Some level of on-water monitoring
- Relationship with enforcement and fishers

Gap:

- Stock composition of harvest (Data deficient)
- Currently no DNA collection through FSC
 - Where to get funding?

Opportunity:

- Development of genetic monitoring baselines for management
- Continuation of voluntary sampling surveys and provide nation member training



Continuing to move forward...

FSC monitoring is:

- Continuing to assist in the preservation and exercise of aboriginal fishing rights.
- Helping Nations having a voice in the management within their territories.
- Helping to provide DFO and Nations a better understanding of the big picture when it comes to salmon resources.
- Evidence of steps towards co-management.

Questions?

