



2025 Fraser Forum #1

2024 What We Heard Check-in

Presentation to Forum

January 28, 2025

Introduction

- The “What We Heard” presentations were re-initiated in 2023
- The intent is to capture the discussions and key priorities identified during Forum and highlight any next steps.
- In 2023, this was led by the Department.
- In 2024, this was supported by the Department and the FSMC.
- The Forum Planning Committee will be using this as a tool to help shape Forum agendas for Forums 2 and 3.
- This will continue to evolve. If you have ideas about how to improve this process let us know!
- The format of these summary slides is different from the standard.

Item: General Topics

Key Themes & Actions

- Nations want to see UNDRIP & DRIPA implemented.
- Nations need to be engaged early and throughout the process for all topics impacting their rights.
- Sharing discussions need to follow a traditional approach & engage everyone
- Significant concerns from Nations regarding the monitoring & enforcement in place
- The Nations view current allocation approaches, particularly for Chinook, as not meeting the Sparrow priority. FSC needs are not being met, and others are fishing in front of FSC fisheries.

Actions Taken & updates

- UNDA Action Plan is in place, the Department is working on implementation.
- Implementation of collaborative management approaches, like the FSCMA, are a step towards UNDRIP implementation
- Funding has been identified to support sharing discussions, FSMC is leading this work.
- Application of the FSC priority will continue to be a key topic, two venues where this is being worked on are:
 - Salmon Allocation Policy Discussions
 - FSMB's work on operationalizing priority

Item: Interior Fraser Coho

Key Themes & Actions

- Concern over current access:
 - Allocation of 3-5% Exploitation Rate and application of FSC priority
 - Understanding US impacts and allocations
 - Interest in targeted FSC opportunities in-river
 - Concern over outcomes from 2014 management
- Support from all participants (including DFO) that any movement off 3-5% would occur collaboratively.
 - Should be supported by tools and process
- Interest in development of a rebuilding plan.
- Suggestion for FSMB to add coho to their workplan

Actions Taken & updates

- Information was shared on current state of impacts, and details of the 2014 management approach and outcomes.
- No change made in management approach for the 2024 season.
- The FSMB has added IFC to their workplan this year, though have not been able to move the topic forward due to competing priorities.

Item: Forum & JTWG Process

Key Themes & Actions

- Some good process changes were implemented:
 - Increased Tier 1 time, interspersed with Tier 2
 - JTWG process continues to be positive and productive, need to consider how this builds.
- Forum Renewal to consider how to reflect the JTWG/Forum feedback

Actions Taken & updates

- Forum Renewal Work is on-going, with the first workshop undertaken January 7th, see presentation from today on status of this work!

Item: Steelhead

Key Themes & Actions

- DFO and the Province need to work together with First Nations on steelhead
- Fishers active in the straits reported that they have never, or rarely, caught Steelhead. Suggestion to undertake a gill net test fishery to assess encounters.

Actions Taken & updates

- Province completed the BC Activities Report; will join upcoming Forum

Item: Fraser Chinook Management

Key Themes & Actions

- Information Sharing & Process:
 - Interest in ensuring all technical advice/information developed is shared (FSMB/JTC & DFO)
 - Need to understand the process for determining the management approaches
- Engagement & Decision Making:
 - Nations must be a part of these discussions
 - Need to consider all impacts on Fraser stocks
 - Data supporting the decisions must be reviewed
 - Participants proposed a suite of actions, primarily focused on recreational management approaches.
 - The Minister needs to understand impacts.
- Identified a need for conservation objectives.
- The Nations view FSC priority as not being met (slide 3)

Actions Taken & updates

- FSMB & JTC has been working to share technical information and advice broadly
- FSMB is presenting on their process for determining management approaches
- Forum Renewal is also working to determine how the Forums can change to better support engagement.
- FSAR process was completed, work underway to finalize outputs.
- The FSMC's Chinook management letter was shared directly with the Minister

Item: Chinook MSF Discussions

Key Themes & Actions

- Nations are seeking follow-up discussions on these pilots, and funding to support work:
 - Technical discussions outstanding questions
 - Consultation session to work through remaining issues
- Work to develop operational framework should be structured to support engagement
- Concerns over the monitoring programs in place for recreational fisheries.

Actions Taken & updates

- FSMB has MSF work on workplan
- DFO hosted a technical workshop process with interested First Nations and stakeholders to discuss key topics/issues on MM/MSF and receive feedback. Feedback was used to develop MSF Implementation Framework that was included in draft 2024/25 Southern Salmon IFMP for consultation but not included in final IFMP to allow more time for DFO to consider consultation feedback.
- Current MSF pilots are subject to monitoring that includes a DFO-led Reference Fishery that collects fisher independent data including stock composition and mark-rate, in addition to creel. DFO will share results when they become available.

Item: Sockeye Management

Key Themes & Actions

- Escapement Plan Options:
 - Significant feedback, mostly seeking conservative option
 - Concerns over impacts of LAER on access for other stocks
- Window closures:
 - Mixed feedback on options presented
 - Some support for complete closures
- Lots of interest in shaping test fisheries to limit impacts while providing key information to support decisions.
- Early Stuart Rebuilding Plan identified as a need; is being considered for development in batch 2.
- Interest in considering hatchery options to support rebuilding.
- Management approaches should reflect traditional values:
 - Build from what the principles would have been.
 - Throwing back dead fish goes against these values.

Actions Taken & updates

- The FSMB recommended an escapement plan that was adopted.
- Adjustments were made to test fishing plans to address concerns over impacts.
- Early Stuart Rebuilding process is now underway in the upper watershed.