

Terms of Reference

Joint Technical Working Group (JTWG)

These Terms of Reference (TOR) have been developed collaboratively and will be reviewed and renewed on an annual basis during the first calendar year meeting with the JTWG. The TOR will be approved by JTWG participants and the Forum Planning Committee.

Effective date: January 2024-January 2025

Introduction

The Joint Technical Working Group has facilitated opportunity for First Nations and Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) technical representatives to convene to collaboratively review, debate, and discuss technical data and information relevant to the management of Fraser River Salmon for many years (10+ years). The intent of the JTWG has been to provide a venue to discuss relevant subject matter that strives to enhance a collective understanding of fisheries management and conservation and in-turn further support the participants of the JTWG, their constituents and more broadly, the Forum meetings.

In 2019, the Fraser Salmon Collaborative Management Agreement (FSCMA) was signed between DFO and Signatory First Nations. With implementation of the FSCMA, a Joint Technical Committee (JTC) with DFO and First Nations representatives was established. The JTC supports the work of the Fraser Salmon Management Board (FSMB) specifically and has a defined membership and mandated workplan. While the JTC membership may engage as JTWG participants and may utilize the discussions and outcomes of the JTWG, the JTWG will, for the time being, remain an open, non-consultative venue with flexibility to engage on a variety of topics to support the technical discussions held at the Forum and between the JTWG participants and their constituents.

Following the signing of the FSCMA, the Forum Planning Committee (FPC) has been working to undertake a Forum Renewal process initiated in early 2023. The intent of this work is to renew the Forum process to better reflect the FSCMA and the evolving interests and work of the attendees and the Parties.

The renewal process is contingent on the active engagement and feedback from all participants to ensure changes meet the needs of attendees and the Parties. It is recognized that there may be a need for on-going renewal work to occur and this TOR and the participants of the JTWG will be updated accordingly should that be required.

As the evolution of the Forum Renewal process continues, work is on-going to better define the roles and responsibilities of these two bodies, and it is anticipated that additional work will be required to further clarify the path forward.



Purpose

The JTWG was formed to work collaboratively to foster greater transparency, data exchange and improved understanding between all participants with respect to technical topics encompassing Fraser River salmon fisheries management and conservation. Work conducted by the JTWG will be guided by the following key objectives:

1. In a collaborative way, seek to create and maintain an inclusive space for expression of interests, priorities, knowledge sharing and learning that promotes sustainable management of Fraser River Salmon fisheries, conservation, and recovery.
2. Work together to discuss, clarify, and assist with initial assessments, on a species and/or stock specific basis, the data, assumptions, and methodologies that were or will be used to guide and assess existing or proposed fishery plans and associated management actions, conservation concerns, and recovery plans of Fraser River Salmon.
3. Explore and discuss relevant information including western science approaches and Indigenous knowledge and principles to strengthen the overall technical process.

For greater clarity and certainty, the JTWG is a collaborative technical group that discusses/debates technical information and data on its own merits and is not, in and of itself, a consultation body. Outcomes arrived at from those discussions may be utilized to support on-going discussions around fishery management within the Forum process, or by the respective participants. Both the human and financial resources are limited for First Nations' and DFO technical staff. Often, the limits of time and capacity do not permit a complete or thorough examination of all technical aspects of the complexities related to fish management. Therefore, the JTWG can support the exchange and some level of discussion of information but may not fulfill requirements for deep and meaningful understanding on all topics and may consider many topics of focus as incomplete or on-going. The JTWG Management Tracker will document topic status.

Structure and Process

Currently, the JTWG is provisionally guided by the Forum Planning Committee. However, once a reporting structure is established through the Forum renewal work, the JTWG may receive guidance from the body responsible for directing the Forum.

The JTWG is a multilateral working group that is comprised of participants from DFO and First Nation communities. The group is interested in contributing to the technical assessments of the information under review in a meaningful way. Although all participants are welcome, it is important to understand that discussions must remain technical. Any policy-related topics should be discussed at the Forum or referred to the Forum Planning Committee.

The JTWG meetings are coordinated through a First Nations Biologist and a DFO Biologist that act as Co-Chairs of this process.



The chairing of each meeting could alternate between DFO and First Nations on a meeting-by-meeting basis or the Co-Chairs may determine how duties will be split or coordinated.

Agendas will primarily be developed by the Co-Chairs and should relate to the topics in the Forum. Suggestions from JTWG participants are welcomed and will be considered by the Co-Chairs.

During JTWG meetings, all items presented will be reviewed and discussed to the extent possible (time and resources permitting) with a goal that all participants gain a better understanding of the data, assumptions, and methodologies associated with agenda topics. After review, the JTWG may recommend next steps. Any action items originating from discussions are to be tracked and followed up on by the JTWG Co-Chairs. If any issues (within scope) cannot be addressed through the JTWG process, they may be referred to the Forum Planning Committee. This is typically done for management or policy-level discussion items that are not directly technical, or if there are any delayed or overdue action items.

A summary of information will be discussed and collated with JTWG participants at the conclusion of each meeting as time allows. The JTWG Co-Chairs will develop a presentation that reflects a summary of the meeting (outcomes and next steps) to the Forum participants both in the Tier 1 and 2 settings.

Meetings

The JTWG will determine its meeting frequency and schedule as needed to advance the Purpose of the JTWG. The JTWG will meet prior to the first day of each Forum, and then on an ad hoc basis as needed to advance the Purpose of the JTWG.

Reporting

The JTWG will disseminate information and results of its activities through the Forum Planning Committee as appropriate.

Individual participants of the JTWG are responsible to report back to their respective organizations, if channels have been identified by those organizations.

The Co-Chairs will provide the relevant meeting materials including datasets (when appropriate), presentations, and the Action Tracker Excel workbook to the JTWG participants in a timely manner prior to meetings to the best of their ability.

Information and materials shared at the JTWG should not be distributed outside of the JTWG and/or from the First Nations organizations that participate in the Fraser Forum process, without the expressed permission of the authors. It is understood by participants of the JTWG that information is often presented in draft form and is subject to revisions. These reports, information, and in some cases discussions, may not be appropriate for public distribution until they are finalized.

Funding

Each participant's attendance is funded by their own organization. The FSMC has allocated an annual budget to provide for meeting venue costs including refreshments and working lunches.



Appendix A: JTWG Support Contacts

Org.	Role	Name	Contact
FSMC	Co-Chair JTWG	Kelsey Campbell	krcampbell@telus.net
DFO	Co-Chair JTWG	Maddie Thomson	Madeline.Thomson@dfo-mpo.gc.ca
FSMC	Note recorder	Dawn Steele	dawns@telus.net
FSMC	Communications Coordinator	Kristin Hrapchack	communications@frasersalmon.ca
FSMC	Executive Director	Greg Witzky	executivedirector@frasersalmon.ca
FSMC	Forum Chairperson	Marcel Shepert	marsshepert@gmail.com
DFO	Senior Implementation Advisor	Matthew Parslow	Matthew.Parslow@dfo-mpo.gc.ca
FN Rep DFO Rep	Forum Planning Committee points of contact	Greg Witzky Matthew Parslow	executivedirector@frasersalmon.ca Matthew.Parslow@dfo-mpo.gc.ca



Appendix B: JTWG Meeting Agenda Template

Joint Technical Working Group Meeting Agenda

Co-chairs:

Date:

9:00 am – 4:30 pm

Hybrid

Location:

or

Join Zoom Meeting Link:

Time	Item	Lead
9:00 am	Introductions and Agenda Review	
9:20 am	Action Item Review	
9:45 am		
10:45 am	Break	
11:00 am		
12:00 pm	Lunch	
1:00 pm		
1:45 pm		
2:30 pm	Break	
2:45 pm		
3:45 pm		
4:30 pm	Meeting ends	

Item	Description
Introductions and Agenda Review	Participants of the JTWG will introduce themselves and the meeting agenda will be reviewed.
List agenda items here.	Provide context summary of each agenda item here.



Appendix C: Website links

Fraser Salmon Management Council: www.frasersalmon.ca

(tab – “Forums”)

