



# 2025 Fraser Forum #1

## Jan 28-30

## What We Heard

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Presentation to Forum  
Greg Witzky (FSMC) & Robin Hawes (DFO)  
January 30, 2024

# Outline

- Presentation Structure
- Overarching Topics
- Forum Renewal and Process
- Fraser Chinook
- ECVI Chinook - MSF
- ECVI Salmon
- Fraser Coho and Chum
- FSMB
- Fraser Sockeye x 2
- 2025 Management x2
- State of the Salmon

# Item: Presentation Structure

## Overview

- *Each slide will be focused on a broad topic area (e.g. Fraser Chinook)*
- *This overview section will include a high level summary of the key themes raised*

## Next Steps / Actions

- *This section includes key next steps or actions identified during our discussions.*
- *In some cases, additional actions may be identified by the team preparing this presentation*

## Tech Questions

- *This will lay out any specific technical questions that arose for resolution*

## Deadlines

- *This will include key deadlines both for work to be completed and for input to be provided into processes*

# Item: Overarching Topics

## Overview

- Positive feedback on opening prayer and song
- Lack of senior DFO staff present in the room; many attended virtually
- Nations view FSC allocation priority as not being met
- Need to have Province here to discuss Steelhead, water use, recovery planning
- Interest in better understanding how environmental disasters are accounted for in fisheries planning
- Broad interest in DFO engagement in other processes and tables, e.g Nicola
- Heard confusion of roles and responsibilities of DFO staff
- Current fishery release mortality needs to be updated to reflect recent research

## Next Steps / Actions

- Seek to identify conflicting meetings; continue to prioritize Forum meetings with limited travel budget
- Salmon Allocation Policy discussions are ongoing
- Province will be joining for Forum 2 or 3 to discuss Steelhead
- DFO continue to examine all new research and update as necessary

## Tech Questions

## Deadlines

# Item: Forum Renewal & process

## Overview

- Audio was poor for online participants
- Need for funding to support Forum renewal process going forward
- Proposed agenda topics/actions to consider for future Forums: SAP review update, IFR Coho management, Chinook FSAR process, MM/MSF implementation framework
- Intent of Forum 1 needs to be re-examined

## Next Steps / Actions

- FSMC has retained A/V company for following Forums
- FPC to continue discussions for agenda's 2 and 3
- Forum renewal is ongoing

## Tech Questions

- FPC to flush out any technical questions associated with proposed agenda topics/actions

## Deadlines

- Forum 2 – A/V

# Item: Fraser Chinook

## Overview

- Major concerns about marine recreational fishery impacts – both kept and released. Want all fishers, especially recreational, to understand severity of conservation concern for many Fraser stocks
  - First Nations do not believe FSC priority is being respected
- Importance of respecting First Nations rights, values, voices, traditions and management for all fisheries in their territories.
- Request that DFO break out Okanagan Chinook impacts in reporting on the Columbia component from Area G troll catch.

## Next Steps / Actions

- FSMB/JTC are working on Summer 5<sub>2</sub> ; will be information package outlining the process and providing supporting technical information
- DFO to provide breakout of OK Chinook information by next Forum.
- Several meetings coming up where the same information will be communicated (e.g. IHPC, SFAB)

## Tech Questions

- Interest in understanding what caused the strong Summer 4<sub>1</sub> return in 2023

## Deadlines

- FSMB/JTC information package expected in early February

# Item: ECVI Chinook - MSF

## Overview

- Many questions and concerns around MSF
  - are they still pilots, process to move from pilot to permanent fishery, how each MSF is evaluated, and whether there are plans to expand them
  - Low mark rates, lack of benchmarks for mark rates, high releases of sub-legals and concern of associated release mortality
  - Pilots should not continue with a draft framework
  - Request for SC DFO Stock Assessment to attend future forums
  - The use of non-retention as a form of conservation
- Request to have fishery reference data shared, share mark rate and release rate, and stock composition; recommend Tier 2 review of the Framework

## Next Steps / Actions

- Awaiting determination on status of Evaluation Framework
- SC Stock Assessment preparing presentation and memos describing mark rate by fishery
- FPC to discuss feedback on interest for StA attendance and review of Framework

## Tech Questions

## Deadlines

# Item: ECVI Fisheries

## Overview

- First Nations not consulted about fisheries in their territories
- Update maps to show the Mamalilikulla Indigenous Protected and Conserved Area (IPCA) where no fishing is permitted
- Concern that the 3-5% Canadian Exploitation Rate for Interior Fraser Coho could be exceeded
- Request for 5 year average for catch

## Next Steps / Actions

- DFO to follow up request to show boundaries on fisheries maps for the Mamalilikulla IPCA where no fishing is permitted.
- DFO to follow up on request for 5 year average for catch

## Tech Questions

## Deadlines



# Item: Fraser Coho & Chum

## Overview

- IFMP language of “normal” is misleading; Chum fisheries are very different now than even 5 years ago (require net attendance, daylight only, IFR Steelhead window closure)
- Discussion about restrictions in chum fisheries (Steelhead)

## Next Steps / Actions

- Clarify IFMP language in Fraser Chum management table

## Tech Questions

## Deadlines

- Correct IFMP language for the 2025/26 draft

# Item: FSMB

## Overview

- Informative presentation
- Chinook framework development needs to incorporate being responsive in-season
- Concerns related to international political context and PST
- Engagement request (before March 31) for FSMB to discuss chinook management
- Important to communicate JTC information broadly
- Concern for response time and transparency of FSMB Dispute Resolution process
- Need to be transparent about data timelines; Lag in receiving FMI data
- Frustration at lack of movement related to UNDA implementation
- Following FSMB decisions, DFO still needs to consult Nations about fisheries planned in their territories
- Frustration at pace to implement things, desire to see Process succeed
- Acknowledgement of collaborative efforts of the FSMB to implement in-season sockeye salmon management approaches to increase opportunities (2023) and to focus on conservation (2024).

## Next Steps / Actions

- FSMB discuss engagement request at next Board meeting (Feb 4)

## Tech Questions

## Deadlines

# Item: Fraser Sockeye

## Overview

- Questions around unauthorized catch & lack of noticeable action from DFO
- Not just about access to the fish, but the practice of harvesting, not all fish are equal
- Acknowledgement of collaborative efforts of the FSMB to implement in-season sockeye salmon management approaches to increase sockeye FSC opportunities (2023) or to focus on conservation (2024). In 2024 the FSMB wrote to First Nations requesting that "fisheries targeting other species must ensure that all efforts are undertaken to release Sockeye salmon alive and unharmed"
- Abundance currently not sufficient to meet needs. While rebuilding efforts will help to set out the right conditions to support fisheries, poor environmental conditions (e.g. climate change, landslides) will mean that not all stocks are guaranteed to be rebuilt. Need to adapt to a new reality of fish abundance
  - Happy to see DFO considering the Chilcotin context and considering implications for 2025

# Item: Fraser Sockeye Cont.

## Next Steps / Actions

- Continue FSMB's collaborative management to define escapement targets
- Continue FSMB's communication regarding measures designed to achieve escapement targets.

## Tech Questions

## Deadlines

# Item: 2025 Management Approach

## Overview

- **IFMP reform** - Dissatisfaction with IFMP process; Concern current structures constrain DFO to a status quo that excludes First Nation values, traditional knowledge, priorities and rights in management decisions.
  - Acknowledgement that some change is happening, but pace is too slow to respond to Nations' increasingly urgent concerns.
- **Coho** - Stressed opportunity to build a new management approach & that DFO must involve Nations from the outset in any work to update Coho management. DFO commitment that any increase in harvest will go to First Nations.
- **Coho** - Interest in First Nation participation in collaborative development of Coho fishery planning tool; concern related to movement off 3-5% ER, but noted that should not be confused for no interest in increased FSC harvest
- **SRKW** - Interest in understanding SRKW management actions, interest in recognition of the emergency listing proposal and current consultations
- **Steelhead** – desire for strong DFO role with BC to ensure water needs for fish, support Steelhead recovery.
- **Chum** – discussion about order of openings; noted constraints related to co-migrating stocks

# Item: 2025 Management Approach

## Next Steps / Actions

- Share SRKW management actions to FSMC for distribution
- Propose FPC to consider adding discussion on Drought process to upcoming Forum agenda

## Tech Questions

# Item: State of Salmon

## Overview

- Need to ensure environmental information presented gets translated into policy and incorporated into Fishery mgmt. decision-making
- Concern for low genetic diversity impacting ability to adapt to climate change
- Climate change is outside our direct control; Recognition for what is within our control to support conservation
- Use of environmental data from First Nations to support in-season management
- Concern for outputs resulting from enhancement and competition with wild stocks
- Interest in this deck being shared in other processes as well

## Next Steps / Actions

- Commitment to provide relevant literature to FSMC for distribution
- DFO to deliver presentation at other requested engagements where possible

## Tech Questions

## Deadlines



Questions?  
Comments?

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