

## **Summary of Meeting Notes from DFO Fall 2006 Consultations Wild Salmon Policy**

These notes are a point form summary of key points made by participants at meetings held from October 1, 2006 to November 30, 2007, in locations throughout British Columbia on the Wild Salmon Policy. The points are broken down into two categories:

**Main Themes** includes comments of a broad scope and nature, comments that were repeated by more than one individual, and unique comments of unusual insight.

**Action items/technical info** includes comments relevant to a specific local area, and comments that require specific follow up by DFO staff.

The comments are also broken down by geographic location and audience, as follows:

1. Prince Rupert
2. Prince George (FN)
3. Bella Coola
4. Kamloops
5. Penticton (FN)
6. Merritt (FN)
7. Nanaimo
8. Nanaimo (FN)
9. Port Alberni (FN)
10. Chilliwack (FN)
11. Vancouver

This summary is meant to supplement the final reports and allow for more thorough follow up and reporting back to participants.

### **1. Prince Rupert**

#### **Main Themes**

- More CUs mean more difficult to manage and less opportunities for fisher to fish.
- No funding for people out in the field, so won't be able to implement WSP; need funding re-established for streamkeepers.
- Make information available to others.
- Work w/ First Nations fisheries programs to get more information.
- No marine (ocean) indicators – incomplete data .
- Getting local knowledge is a two-way street – what do communities get back?
- Ecosystem and habitat indicators should be integrated.
- Need to monitor rivers along their whole length.
- DFO doesn't have resources to fulfill its mandate and people outside DFO are burnt out.
- Local area management would be more effective.

#### **Action items & technical info**

- A person (Johnny Brolong sp?) found chinook in Haida Gwaii with mud under their gills, and he figured they spawned in the ocean. I don't know if anyone knows, but on the West coast, we caught spring salmon in seine boats that were sick and had a shorter shape to them.
- Talk to Haida fisheries program, many streams on Haida Gwaii used to have salmon and no longer do.
- Need to monitor coho at the right time of year; right now timing is wrong.
- Nisga'a monitoring program a good model.
- Pilot project on the Skeena River (for WSP habitat monitoring).
- Seine boats in the mouth of the Skeena ruin eel grass, important for birds.

## 2. Prince George (FN)

### Themes

- Habitat monitoring, benchmarking and pilot projects.
- Building relationships (with other levels of government, agencies, industry and First Nations) for planning.
- Accountabilities for implementing the policy and legislation.
- "The WSP framework for habitat protection is one of the most positive things we have seen in a long time" (this isn't a theme but it's nice to hear!)
- Need both resources and partnerships to do habitat monitoring.

### Action items & technical info

- Fraser Basin initiative projects that could be applied for WSP:
  - habitat monitoring project in the Thompson.
  - create a governance model that brings LRMPs to life to deal with changes like pine beetle. BC willing to be involved.
- UFFCA interested in being pilot group for benchmarks and habitat monitoring.
- Shirley Chelsea (250 440 5860) for more information on CUs.
- Last year there were sockeye in Lac La Hache, above the Williams Creek system beyond San Jose. They weren't always there. This was new and seemed to be linked to the big run last year in the second or third week of August. Relatives in Sugarcane were catching them in the creek last year, too.
- Kokanee at 122 Mile House in October. There is less and less there now.
- All 20 parties to UFFCA have monitoring as part of programs and some have 15 year stream temperature data. It could be used for example in Stuart sockeye reviews to look at trends.
- Mountain pine beetle and water temperature are the two major issues that are at the forefront of radical habitat change. Water temperature and hydrology need indicators because of these changes.
- Large scale water storage projects in the Chilcotins a concern, also oil and gas development
- Local communities have extensive ATK to contribute to ecosystem work.
- UFFCA wants to be involved in the KPP, ecosystem work.
- Rivers Inlet, local Stuart runs good examples for role of sockeye in system.

- Carrier calendar based on harvest times.

### **3. Bella Coola**

#### **Main Themes**

- Don't make CUs so large that central coast fish get subsumed with north coast stocks.
- Hatchery budgets keep getting cut but wouldn't have Chinook or chum without them.
- Need to hear back from DFO what they are doing with input received.
- Need budgets for monitoring; need people on the ground – have been saying this but no one listens.
- All talk, no action.
- Need more integration among agencies (e.g., for mapping).
- Most groups in the area are opposed to fish farms (some First Nations communities support for jobs).
- Need to be proactive in dealing with runs in danger – can address through hatcheries and avoid closing fishery down.
- Should make timeframe a salmon's lifetime instead of a human's.
- Make sure there's flexibility built in to WSP implementation.
- Include steelhead in the WSP.
- Sportfishers get funding to participate in advisory processes while no one else does.
- Have provided input through letters and haven't received meaningful responses.
- Continue to consult with this community as a community; don't bring people to Vancouver to represent narrow interests only.

#### **Action items & technical info**

- Loss of the Central Coast Advisory Board has meant central coast issues don't get addressed (subsumed by NCAB).
- CCAB was a good place to go for technical and traditional knowledge.
- Peak of the spring salmon run is three weeks later than it used to be.
- Change Queen Charlotte Sound/Hecate Strait CU to Bella Coola Central Coast.
- Under sockeye, you have lake and ocean types, but you should also differentiate between upstream and downstream migrants. They are genetically distinct.
- Meandering rivers here not very productive.
- We know we've had steelhead in this river forever, but somebody has to point that out and do something about it.
- We're leaving the CU binder here, Kristen will have it.

### **4. Kamloops**

#### **Main Themes**

- Concern that budgets won't be forthcoming to implement the WSP.

- Establish partnerships (e.g. with local government) to address habitat protection, restoration and enhancement (don't forget the latter two, need to be proactive).
- Data collected for monitoring purposes should be accessible to other interested parties (resource users, conservation groups etc.).
- Downloading responsibility for data collection, monitoring to industry and volunteer groups isn't sustainable.
- Report back to participants on accomplishments, including establishment of funding and partnerships: "Perhaps next year you can come back with what you've achieved because this planning is wonderful but I am very suspect of a lot of things. The financing of it, how you're going to work with the province, and what is going to be accomplished are all of concern".
- Too much study, not enough action. Future meetings should be about action, what is being done.
- Water levels dangerously low in the interior for fish (taken for agriculture, ranching).
- DFO needs to take responsibility for water levels when they impact fish survival: "If the feds wants to support voluntary requirements (for water use reduction), they should realize that that might land them in legal trouble in the future, because First Nations have a right to fisheries in certain areas."
- Co-ordinate stewardship efforts between federal agencies, the province, First Nations, industry.
- Do more local education and awareness-raising about the WSP to get people involved.
- Do more advertising and outreach to let people know about these meetings – environmentalists absent from this meeting. People also need to know how this affects them or they won't get involved.
- Volunteers can't afford to spend 2 or 3 days in meetings with DFO – they are burnt out.

#### **Action items and technical info**

- Fraser Basin Sustainability Initiative for dealing w/ impact of pine beetle infestation on salmon habitat. Issue for First Nations – want to work w/DFO to protect habitat.
- Lynda Price's community taking footage of occurrences of blow-down that are having an impact on streams.
- Work through the Fraser Basin Council to bring together ecosystem planning across regions; should have forum for sport, commercial, First Nation and others.
- DFO needs to be involved at the local level on addressing impacts of pine beetle and water levels.
- Lynda Price requested information on recent fish farm studies and DFO's response.
- Report out on activities area-by-area (e.g., restoration). Thompson Fisheries Council used to do reporting from a multi-jurisdictional perspective – it would be useful to bring this kind of working group back.

- First Nations need to be involved in determining criteria for assessing habitat health, e.g., protecting spawning channels
- First Nation traditional ceremonies often occur in riparian areas.
- The concept in risk management (EPMP) that not all habitat is equally important is wrong, e.g., pinks use marginal spawning areas.
- Cottonwood riparian habitat is in decline – see Blue River area for examples of where the zone is intact
- Need ecosystem approach to restoration – that requires co-ordination between various agencies and local communities
- Concern about yellow perch being an invasive species and changing the whole ecosystem in Nanoose Lake, Skemana Lake, that could spread throughout the Shuswap area. (DFO expects to do public consultation on how to deal with).
- Lions Creek would be a good example of a next step of assessment of habitat in the WSP – need a partnership w/ CN Rail; also Lemieux Creek.
- Nicola River water levels dangerously low – need to be red-flagged.
- Forest Stewardship Plans use results-based monitoring; could be brought into the WSP process for common indicators/data monitoring.
- Impact of Merritt Music Festival on Coldwater River.
- People should have to pay for the water that they take out of the Nicola to encourage conservation.
- PFRCC meeting in Penticton positively received on water issues.
- First Nations indicators coming in the fall for ecosystem values (e.g., First Fish Ceremony in Merritt).
- Ecosystem values include abundance, culturally significant plants:  
“For example, chinook arrives when certain grasses and flowers are in bloom. Also, at the full moon in August, fish start coming into our river system (learned this through oral history) – related to certain plants in the area.”
- millenniumassessment.org a good site for more on ecosystem assessment that includes input from Aboriginal people around the world.
- Malls are a better way to reach people than open houses.

## 5. Penticton

### Themes

- Habitat integration with land use planning for no net loss
- The nature of conservation units – does CU management affect aboriginal rights?
- Relation between WSP and SARA
- Need more time for WSP

### Day Two:

- Clear analysis needed of legal issues related to ONA access to fish in relation Aboriginal title, PST and stocks migrating from the US. ONA not willing to “trade off” Okanagan Chinook for other stocks.
- WSP needs to incorporate climate change as a factor.
- WSP needs to incorporate traditional knowledge and recognize the keepers of

ATK.

- Concerns about the consultation process; First Nations want a say in decision-making. Chief Stewart Phillip, “The problem isn’t consultation , it’s accommodation”.
- Concern about water quality and quantity; interest in being involved in further studies.
- Concern about lack of enforcement to protect water/fish habitat. Need to work with the Province.
- Concern that the KPP would include interests that have caused original problems with water and fish habitat; want aboriginal voices to be equal in this panel.

Recap of Day 1 concerns and further discussion:

- Okanagan Nation’s loss of access to fish
- The need to clarify ONA’s legal rights in terms of access to fish
- Restoring fish to harvestable levels. (“We caught 2,000 pieces at McIntyre Bluff in the 60s and 70s.”)
- Access to traditional fishing and fish trading areas
- Access to/restoration of freshwater species, specifically Kokanee, which once were an important food source
- Conservation and harvesting of Columbia River salmon, which should be part of the renegotiation of the Pacific Salmon Treaty

#### **Action items/technical info**

- Develop a consultation protocol with the ONA
- Osoyoos to Oroville used to be a “big Coho fishing area.”
- Work with local leadership and community around consultation.

#### **6. Merritt**

##### **Themes**

- Socio-economic component of Strategy 4: how to handle it and pitfalls to avoid.
- Facilitating participation of First Nations in implementation, habitat preservation and information gathering.
- Frustration with process when action is required on the ground to conserve salmon.
- Need to involve the Province over water issues.

Conservation Units:

- Incorporation of TEK/ATK in gathering knowledge about conservation units
- Detailed conversations about the way conservation units work in terms of management
- Use of TEK/ATK and the appropriateness of process.

Habitat:

- Concern about costs for implementation of WSP

- Outcomes-based approach to the work

Ecosystem:

- Knowledgeable persons panel
- Involvement of the Province
- The holistic nature of ecosystem information and effects.

**Action items/technical info**

- Include Aboriginal values in tools measuring socio-economics in Strategy 4.
- Fraser sockeye planning process report by Gord Gisslasson one method, but not very strong. Marty Weinstein from Namgis also suggested.
- Need an Aboriginal researcher and methodology because putting dollars to Aboriginal values is contentious.
- DFO commitment to session on Strategy 4.
- Need central coordination of information and resources to get Aboriginal people working on the ground.
- Our proposal could be a part of the wild salmon policy. Our proposal was to look at traditional ecological knowledge innovation and practices and to draw on this expertise in order to create a set of guidelines on how TEK could be used in the implementation of the policy.
- Concern that DFO has not adequately demonstrated its ability to work with weak stocks, and that should be changed in the presentation.
- DFO picks the 50% probability abundance forecast. That should be changed (should be more conservative).
- Traditional practice and knowledge are all about ensuring that there are enough salmon to breed for sustainability. Traditional practices contain a gem of knowledge about decision-making and options development.
- Our fish wheels as Siska were providing the best data in the valley going. They need to be supported.
- Need culturally appropriate ways of collecting TEK.
- Need to explain how CUs will be translated to management units to get cooperation of TEK keepers.
- May need to fund projects to collect TEK.
- Pilot projects should be focused on conservation units not watersheds if you are to learn anything about how to run these programs in the long term.
- Question purpose of KPP: instead of aggregating data for centralized use, use resources for stewardship.
- No support for a KPP.
- If there is a need to better understand ecosystem values, do a case study on over-escapement and see the impact on ecosystems to inform people. The science is solid. A KPP would only be working at balancing conflicting values rather than seeing what is actually happening.
- Need to provide resources for Elders to participate.

**7. Nanaimo**

## **Themes**

- Concern with how to protect different populations within large CUs that have geographical barriers to straying/re-colonizing.
- Can't get traditional knowledge for nothing.
- Concern that we are wasting resources by trying to save runs that are lost.

## *Habitat*

- Water flows a concern – need to work with the Province (also on other aspects of habitat protection e.g. riparian zone protection from logging).
- Concern about impact of chemicals from fish farms on women's health – need to account for in habitat assessment.
- Need to account for dynamics of freshwater systems that naturally include wood going in and gravel coming out.
- Concern about effects of persistent pollutants - water, shellfish, the effects of herbicides, and residual effects all need to be monitored.
- Need more deterrents to habitat destruction (e.g. by logging companies).
- Compensate commercial fishers for loss of opportunity due to habitat destruction caused by logging.
- Sporties to blame for current pressure on coho stocks on the island. (Sports fishers defended themselves after the meeting to DFO staff).
- Concern about abuses of AFS licences, lack of monitoring, downloading by DFO of management responsibility to AFS groups that aren't accountable or equitable.
- Need to work nation to nation on consulting with First Nations.

## *Ecosystem context*

- Main problems are logging and lobbying (big companies take all the fish and it takes a lifetime for them to recover).
- Rather than a KPP, have a roundtable with all affected parties. Would include experts, DFO, Province, local governments, First Nations, industry, PSC. (see attached diagram). Needs independent, neutral facilitation. Free, fair, open, democratic system with expert oversight. Could be used for conservation, habitat, policing, but with solutions. Geographic tables, not by issue. Need decision-making power.
- Make protecting strong stocks a priority too, not just recovering weak stocks.
- Volunteers need to have access to the fishery to create incentive to be involved.

## **Action items/technical info**

- Jim committed to providing a paper on the socio-economic impact of listing species to someone (unidentified).

## *Habitat*

- Ability of logging companies to lock gates to cut blocks eliminates public's ability to play watchdog/whistleblower role.



- Would like to see buffer (riparian) zones go up to a quarter or half mile in active spawning sheds.
- Need to be aware that:
  - Hydrologic systems aren't static
  - Indicators (or thresholds) need to be specific to each system – need more research e.g. on instream flow needs
  - Need to account for geography and other factors (e.g. cumulative effects) when looking at causal effects suggested by indicators
  - Looking at a lot of money necessary to collect all this data
- Need to include time as a third dimension in your matrix
- No triple hooks, one salmon/week only for chum and coho for sporties.
- Limit seine fishing to 8 hours for chum.
- An indicator that might be called 'significant environment effects' seems to be missing; something to capture things like pine beetle infestation or other events connected to climate change
- Consider how does this data can contribute to harvest management planning and business planning for fishing industry

#### *Ecosystem context*

- Need to monitor plankton populations
- Need to count riparian zones and stabilize as much soil as we can in the near future (urgent), to help bring water temperatures down.
- After the meeting, the following people were suggested for a Victoria KPP:  
 President: Barry Schick (Amalgamated Conservation Society)  
 Vice President: Tom Cole  
 Christine Bos (Sport Fish Advisory Board)  
 Mike Chipps (Sooke First Nation)  
 Tom Rutherford Salmon Enhancement Program - Goldstream Hatchery)  
 Glen Varney (Salmon Enhancement Program - Sooke Salmonid Enhancement Society)

### **8. Nanaimo (FN)**

#### **Themes**

- Increase FSC allocations.
- Concern about salmon habitat: effect of road salt, agricultural run-off.
- More monitoring in the field required by DFO.
- Concern that WSP too focused on Fraser.
- Need to have Province and local governments at the table for habitat protection and salmon conservation; DFO needs representation in forestry management.
- Consider how WSP integrates with LRMPs and MRMPs (Marine management plans).
- Consider First Nations research work in WSP.
- Traditional knowledge comes with decision-making; First Nations need to be involved in decision-making where traditional knowledge is being applied. Needs

to be paid for (through capacity building).

- Concern about impact of fish farms on wild salmon (p. 31 of WSP).
- Salmon central to native culture – include as parallel to scientific explanation of WSP (CUs) (First Nations have transported fish from areas of abundance to areas of scarcity).
- Concern about trawling and effect on oceans; about krill and other food for salmon. Need more research on oceans.
- DFO needs to put more resources into monitoring water quality and quantity.
- Indicators need to account for diversity between systems, not blanket approach.

#### **Action items/technical info**

- Concern about pollution from garbage dump near Port Hardy
- Protect feeder creeks: no high elevation logging (protect snow/water temperatures) and increase buffers to >30 m.
- Nimpkish and many other rivers on the west coast of the island have been “decimated”.
- “I’ve never seen so many smolts in my life as this last season in Johnstone Strait.”
- Near Grolto Creek adult Spring salmon have a yellow mark on the operculum. They are very dark, large fish in the 50 to 80 pound range.
- Add bivalves/clams as indicator of health of estuaries.
- Concern about mine proposed in Quatsino Sound.

#### **9. Port Alberni (FN)**

##### **Themes**

- Inclusion of traditional knowledge, with same weight or greater than scientific knowledge.
- Need to build partnerships (with Province, other users and interests) for habitat and ecosystems strategies, and adequately resource these initiatives.
- The scale of change is huge and so much of it is out of our hands.
- Involvement in decision making – needs to be more inclusive to account for all interests.
- Deploying funding for the implementation of the WSP and ensuring that it is balanced to where the needs are.
- Connection between the WCVI fisheries and the Fraser River conditions. “We need to make a deep connection between those that harvest and those that enhance and take responsibility for the habitat.”
- The overwhelming challenge of immediate threats and historical damage to wild salmon and the inadequacy of DFO to respond to these challenges (habitat destruction due to logging continues).
- Ensure habitat protection before giving allocations.

##### **CUs**

- Traditional knowledge is essential to understanding these conservation units. How do we get traditional knowledge together?

- Ha-haulthee: these maps are also maps of our traditional territories. Need to incorporate traditional knowledge. Each CU comes from a set of variables and we know the conditions.

#### *Habitat and Ecosystem*

- Implementation funding

#### **Action items/technical info**

- Concern that the pilot in the Fraser represents just another bunch of money spent there that never reaches Clayoquot Sound. I'd like to see the planning procedure that did this. **DFO can find this and send this to the NTC fisheries office.**
- To obtain traditional knowledge, we have many methods including web tools, community mapping and tools that are more appropriate for individuals and groups. We can be phoned and participate in organized meetings.

#### *Habitat and Ecosystems*

- Major concern about lack of abundance in Kennedy Lake even after fishing efforts stopped for 30 years. Interest in partnering with DFO to look into cause.
- In terms of alternative approaches to monitoring, what about aerial photography to help us see the water level patterns and look at the state of eel grass beds and estuaries?
- Suggestion that we have a more intensive conversation with the council of ha-wiih.
- Logging in the Beaufort Range, Robinson Creek and wild stocks are all slowing down and now we ask questions about where our coho went. Our sockeye are protected with our numbers that escape but we have nothing for them to come back to. We're falling short in protecting those spawning beds

#### **10. Chilliwack**

- Concern with lack of funding
- Relationship to municipal plans
- Involvement of other partners, particularly BC around logging issues

#### **11. Vancouver**

#### **Themes**

- Concern about degradation of habitat and relief that integrated planning is in the works.
- Concern that large CUs will mean smaller creeks don't get the attention they deserve (e.g. Kanaka Creek).
- Concern that DFO budgets insufficient to implement WSP.
- Need to convince urbanites to support restoration and protection efforts.
- Need dialogue (among user groups, stakeholders), not "more paper from DFO".

- CUs too large to get to specific threats in specific systems.
- Concern for state of salmon food stocks: krill. Fishing for krill banned in the US but we fish it for farm feed.
- “I am not talking as a First Nations person right now, but as a people. Stop drawing lines between one another and start doing something about the down year that’s coming next year. The resource is failing us but the logging companies, and developers keep going. Who allows that? On First Nations land, we aren’t allowed between 100 and 300 feet near the river. Why can white people go within a meter of river?” – also spoke at length against fish farms.
- DFO actions conflict with policy e.g., filling in estuary at coal port.
- Go into areas with problems for pilots – so you can show some successes and leverage more funding. Go to Lower Fraser.
- Thompson River and Barkley Sound worthwhile doing as projects.
- First Nation concern for estuaries (Musqueam): siltation, airport development.
- Too many seals/sea lions; impact of fish farms. Ray suggested bringing forward the fish farms issue to next year’s consultations.
- Need habitat protection more than enhancement; enhancement efforts null if there is no habitat.

Summary of discussion from Chris, facilitator:

- Beginning – frustration over WSP. Things need to happen faster on the ground.
- Not enough money to do everything.
- CUs might be too large to address some smaller streams.
- Habitat – pilots use the CU model.
- Main question – what do you do with the data once you have it?

#### **Action items/technical info**

- I have not heard of this meeting today, only about last night. I belong to the Fraser River Estuary Coalition. The middle arm and the North arm are missing from your maps.
- Local groups have information that go to p. 6 indicators, but they’ve never been asked for it.
- Upper channel Chinook on Nechako not on the list – should be.
- The fish will be gone before this policy can be implemented.
- The up and down spawners - I know they are distinct and you should talk to Dr. Woody, and Dr. Brennan
- Alouette Lake and Coquitlam River sockeye populations can’t be included because they are residualized. They have only become Kokanee because of a manmade structure. I think if you are not going to consider Kokanee, you should consider residualized populations. Some of those Kokanee have been released, and we are waiting to see if they come back.
- Local governments doing a lot of Sensitive Habitat Inventories and Mapping (SHIM).

- Can you also include water temperatures in that grouping? We want that to be a situation rectified by the Greater Vancouver Regional District (GVRD), who is dumping sewage in the Lower Fraser estuary.
- Don't follow the FREMP model – people don't like their indicators.
- Biodiversity conservation strategy for GVRD has done a lot of land cover mapping using LandSat – talk to Brad Mason to avoid duplication.
- DFO should not continue to support RAR – it is contrary to conservation objectives.
- Community mapping network a good way to connect data for integrated management. [www.shim.bc.ca](http://www.shim.bc.ca)
- Do a production scenario, current, historical and goal, with a focus on what comes back.
- Bunch work on productivity measurement so you don't have to go back to the stream 4 or 5 times for each species. Don't do just one species.
- Work with watershed coalitions on ecosystem context: regular group that can do groundwork e.g. Fraser Valley Regional Watershed Coalition.
- Gulf trollers offered to give input on specific ecosystems: concern about seals and sea lions in areas where fish have limited mobility.
- Traditional knowledge: there are too many seals.
- Lack of herring affecting salmon populations (food source).
- Marsh plants can be used as an indicator.

Diagram from Nanaimo MS session:

#### Proposal for Salmon Roundtable

##### Unresolved Issues:

- Number of windows/seats
- Chair
- Designation of windows/seats
- Role of Roundtable within context of WSP

