

CHRONOLOGY

Cultus Lake Sockeye Recovery

- 1999-2001** A conservation issue was identified by local staff; two actions were implemented: hatchery brood stock was collected in 2000 and 2001; and the decaying enumeration fence was replaced jointly by DFO and the Sto:lo FN in spring 2001. A 30-May-2001 e-mail from Don MacKinlay to Dale Patterson summarized the *ad hoc* enhancement and recommended a recovery planning process.
- 14-Nov-01** DFO and the Soowahlie FN jointly sponsored a public meeting (attended by a large spectrum of stakeholders: FN, government, recreational and commercial fishers, FBC, PFRCC, PSC) that recommended a work group to produce an action plan for 2002.
- 07-Dec-01** A briefing note to the Lower Fraser Area Director recommended a three tier recovery planning process: three technical work groups (stock assessment/fisheries management (SAFM), habitat, enhancement), each to produce a summary report; a technical coordinating committee to review the WG reports and prepare a recovery plan; and steering committee oversee the technical process and deliver the plan to the regional executive. The process was approved by the RDG (John Davis) on 9-Jan-2002.
- Spring 2002** The Enhancement Work Group recommended the immediate implementation of a captive breeding project, beginning with the fish taken from the 2000-01 brood years and continuing for at least four years.
- 24-Jul-02:** The SAFM Work Group released its report. The report was subsequently incorporated into a PSARC research document that was reviewed on 23-Oct-02.
- 09-Sep-02** A letter to COSEWIC from Ken Wilson and Chief Doug Kelly requested an emergency assessment of Cultus sockeye, based in part on the SAFM Work Group report.
- 23-Oct-02** The three work group reports were amalgamated into a PSARC (CSAP) document that was reviewed and accepted by the Salmon Sub-Committee.
- It concluded: Cultus is a distinct population; the population collapse was caused by 1) overharvest in most years between 1952 and 1995, 2) low recruitment in 1991-96 brood years, and 3) high PSM since 1995; and the population's prognosis was critical.
- Its recommendations: form an intersectoral work group to develop a risk framework that would evaluate the costs/benefits of different fishery and recovery options in terms of cultural, ecological, economic and social values; use precaution in fishery planning to minimize ERs and reduce the near term probability of extinction; develop a recovery plan to integrate all recovery options; and the implement a suite of new and ongoing assessment projects.
- 24-Oct-02** A COSEWIC press release announced the emergency designation of Cultus as *Endangered*.
- Mar-May-03** Schubert provided precautionary advice in the development of the IFMP.
- May 2003** The COSEWIC review of the assessment and status report resulted in the confirmation of the *Endangered* status of the Cultus population.
- 27-May-03** The RDG approved the formation of the Salmon Recovery Steering Committee, beginning the pre-SARA recovery planning processes for Cultus, Sakinaw and Interior Fraser Coho. The steering committee was authorized to: form recovery teams for each

of the 3 COSEWIC-listed salmon species; conduct stakeholder reviews of the draft recovery strategies; and develop consultation plans and peer reviews for each strategy.

- 02-Jul-03** DFO and the Soowahlie FN jointly sponsored a second public meeting at Cultus Lake.
- Nov 2003** Discussions regarding the appropriate make-up of the teams, the number from each sector, and sector feedback regarding team membership.
- 25-Nov-03** The inaugural meeting of the Cultus Sockeye Recovery Team (CSRT) at a joint meeting of the three teams, the steering committee and invited international experts.
- The team's terms of reference required: the development of a recovery strategy that set goals and objectives consistent with the *SARA*; membership with scientific, aboriginal or community knowledge of the species; non-interest-based, technically focused deliberations; consensus-based decision making; and a DFO chair reporting to the RDG.
- 18-Feb-04** At the team's third meeting, a negative interaction between two members with FN and commercial fishing backgrounds violated the team's terms of reference and code of conduct. At the next meeting, the Chair reemphasized the technical noninterest-based nature of the team, and the role of all team members in enforcing the code of conduct.
- 2004** The CSRT met 13 times and produced a draft recovery strategy.
- Summer 2004** CSAS reviewed and approved the team's draft recovery objectives.
- 27-Sep-04** In a conference call, John Davis agreed to provide the results of a socio-economic analysis of Cultus sockeye recovery to the DFO members of the SAFM Work Group.
- 07-Oct-04** DFO members of the SAFM Work Group met to discuss the socio-economic analysis and to write a review document. They identified concerns related to: assumptions that listing equated to complete fishery closures; the failure to consider cycle-specific issues; the linking of the impacts from a Sakinaw listing with a Cultus listing; the failure to consider benefits beyond a 4-year time period; and the failure to consider non-traditional fishing options.
- 08-Oct-04** The DFO members of the SAFM Work Group met with policy and fisheries managers (Wright, Hobbs, Ryall) to discuss concerns with a socio-economic analysis. The concerns were forwarded to John Davis, and were reiterated in a second e-mail a few days later. The work group emphasized that an important decision was being made based on flawed information.
- 23-Oct-04** The Minister of the Environment posted an order on the *Canada Gazette* proposing that Cultus sockeye not be listed under Schedule 1 of *SARA*.
- 15-Nov-04** The CSRT met to discuss the listing proposal. Dr. John Davis addressed the team, and the team reviewed a critique of the socio-economic analysis that formed the basis of the Minister's recommendation to not list the population.
- 19-Nov-04** As agreed at the 15-Nov meeting, the CSRT reached a consensus decision and delivered a letter to the A/RDG (Paul MacGillvray) criticizing the socio-economic analysis.
- 21-Jan-05** The Minister announced the decision not to list Cultus sockeye.
- 25-Jan-05** A response letter was written by the RD of FM (Radford) in which he: agreed to improve the socio-economic process; committed to fund recovery at levels similar to the last two

years; disbanded the team after completion of the strategy; and agreed to implement a new regional process.

- 11-Apr-05** Radford had his administrator send notification to the three area directors that the three recovery teams (Cultus, Sakinaw, Interior Coho) were disbanded once the recovery strategies were completed. The areas were to lead subsequent recovery which was to be achieved through the Integrated Fisheries Management Plan process; each area would develop a process and appoint a coordinator.
- 27-Apr-05** In a letter to the RDG, the Commercial Salmon Advisory Board requested an increase in the allowable exploitation rate from 10-12% to up to 30% in exchange for predator control and increased enhancement.
- Schubert criticized the process by noting that, in the absence of the CSRT and the group proposed to replace it, managers were being forced to respond piece-meal to requests from interest groups without reference to a recovery plan.
- The ENGO's strongly opposed the proposal. The SAFM Work Group presentation at a 30-May meeting with FM advised that an ER increase would reduce the status of the population and its ability to recover. Subsequently, target ER's remained at 10-12%, and FM funded a contractor to improve the Cultus model.
- 11-Oct-05** The recovery strategies for Cultus and Sakinaw were approved by Pacific Region for posting on the Environment Canada RENEW website. The strategies were never actually posted on that site.
- 31-Oct-05** Attempts were made to implement a new process to guide Cultus recovery; they were thwarted at the Lower Fraser AD level.
- April 2006** A series of preseason meetings occurred, focusing on updating of the model by Korman and Grout to facilitate its use in Fisheries Management's structured decision making process. The model and process would be used for planning in subsequent years.
- 19-Apr-06** Letter from the Pacific Marine Conservation Caucus to the Integrated Harvest Planning Committee expressing concern about a new CSAB proposal to increase exploitation rates in the absence of a planning process such as the recovery team.
- 14-Jun-06** Creation of the "Salmon Table" through a memorandum of understanding between Fraser First Nations (Sto:lo, Chehalis, Katzie) and the Commercial Salmon Advisory Board. Area E gill netters began a pikeminnow project funded by the SEF.
- 02-Oct-06** DFO and Soowahlie FN jointly sponsored a third public meeting at Cultus Lake.
- Spring 2007** Advice was provided to the preseason planning process by a small *ad hoc* group involved in Cultus recovery. It was again noted that the process was not based on a long term plan that integrates all available recovery approaches.
- Fall 2007** The issue of the need to form a group to replace the CSRT was raised in an e-mail from Riddell to Richards.
- In October, Schubert received SARACEP funding for recovery planning and coordination and requested the resolution of three issues: to which sector should the team report; identification of team leader; and whether membership should be internal or include external members.

A briefing note was written that recommended an internal team reporting to the RD of Policy. Because no response was forthcoming from the regional executive, Riddell authorized the formation of the team provisionally reporting to Policy.

The team's inaugural meeting was on 22-Nov 2007. Ultimately, after no response was received from Policy, the team reverted to reporting to the Director of SAFE. The team's terms of reference required it to: report on population status; develop WSP-based indicators and benchmarks; establish a timeframe for recovery; evaluate recovery actions; develop budgets; and consult with stakeholders.

The team has subsequently met on an approximately quarterly basis, with more frequent meetings convened when issues arise that require decisions.

- 2008** Korman and Grout's population model for fisheries management and recovery planning was reviewed and approved by CSAS.
- October 2008** The Cultus Sockeye Conservation Strategy was posted on the DFO FAM website; however, it was a poorly formatted Word version rather than the team's professionally formatted one, and it was incorrectly referred to as an Environment Canada RENEW document. Riddell then agreed that the strategy would be released as a DFO technical report and posted on the library website. It was released in 2009.
- 25-Mar-09** SARACEP stopped funding recovery projects for species that are not listed on Schedule 1. Pacific Region continued to fund the recovery projects, with the exception of research attempting to identify limiting factors in the lake. Lake limnology and hydroacoustic surveys continued, however, as did the CSAB-funded predator removal project.
- May 2010** CSAP reviewed the status of Cultus Lake sockeye.
- 15-Dec-10** The CSCT adopted a new enhancement approach: 1) captive breeding was terminated because its objective to reduce the immediate probability of extinction had been achieved, PSM had moderated, genetic and disease risks remained significant, and the fitness of captive bred fish appeared to be low; 2) supplementation is to be maintained through the 2013 brood year to produce 500 adults per year as an "insurance policy" against uncertainties in survival and PSM; and 3) a 2014 review of whether further supplementation would be necessary to recover the population.
- 16-Dec-10** DFO and the Soowahlie FN jointly sponsored a fourth public meeting at Cultus Lake.