

APPROVAL OF APPROACH TO PLANNING FOR PRIORITY CONSERVATION UNITS

Background

- The Wild Salmon Policy (WSP) recognized that the implementation of Strategic Planning for Conservation Units (CU's) would need to take place using a phased approach.
- The policy calls for the development of an interim planning process that utilizes RESPONSE TEAMS to conduct strategic planning for PRIORITY CUs.
- Priority CUs are to be identified as those determined to be in the Red zone (at risk) and/or those that could significantly limit fishing or other activities.
- The New Initiatives Steering Committee (now the Operations Committee) directed the WSP Working Group to provide a more detailed rationale for identifying Priority CU's and the phased approach.
- The Committee further noted that given internal capacity issues and the need to ensure the planning is successful, that it anticipates the Department to be able to support 2-4 planning tables (Response teams) annually.

Analysis

Identification of Priority CUs

- The process of defining CUs is nearing completion and the development of benchmarks for CUs will be completed during 07/08.
- The Stock of Concern designation provided in the DFO 2007 OUTLOOK was used as a proxy to delimit the RED ZONE and identify Priority CUs.
- The criteria for Stock of Concern is one that is (or is forecast to be) less than 25% of target or is declining rapidly. Fishery consequences are that directed fisheries are unlikely and there may be a requirement to avoid indirect catch of the stock.
- Appendix Table 1 attached lists the twenty Stocks of Concern/Priority CUs.
- It is important to reiterate that this is an interim approach and will be refined as benchmarks are developed and status reports for CUs become available

Development of a Strategic Planning Timetable for CUs

- The WSP states that strategic plans will be developed for Priority CUs that:
 - Specify long-term biological targets that ensure conservation and sustainable use
 - Identify recommended resource management actions to protect or restore Wild Pacific salmon, their habitats and ecosystems to achieve the targets.
 - Establish timeframes and priorities for actions.
- Plans will be developed by Response teams that bring together First Nations and

salmon interests using existing advisory processes.

- While the Department does not have the information and capacity to immediately form Response teams and develop plans for all Priority CUs, the Department must begin to take action.
- Integrated Fisheries Management Plans must continue to specify short term measures to be taken to protect Stocks of Concern/Priority CUs.
- The WSP Implementation Team used a two-step approach to developing a timetable for Strategic Planning for the twenty Priority CUs.
- The first step was to rank the Priority CUs based on an equal weighting of Habitat Status, Profile (Importance) and Planning Capacity. Specifically:
 - **Habitat Status:** Was assessed as Good, Fair or Poor based on previously published assessments.
 - **Profile:** DFO resource managers/Implementation team members ranked the importance of the CU with respect to Commercial, First Nations Commercial, First Nations FSC, and Recreational fisheries as well as the impact from SARA , FN treaty and US/Canada treaty, DFO Area, DFO Regional and DFO National perspectives.
 - **Planning Capacity:** The Implementation Team subjectively assessed the following aspects of capacity: Response team availability (internal and external), availability of summarized habitat and detailed fish data, ability to support existing processes and whether planning was currently underway.

Appendix Table 1 provides a list of the Priority CUs with rankings of Habitat status, Profile and Planning Capacity. The list is in order based on a combined rating based on and equal weighting of habitat status, profile and planning capacity.

- The second step was to determine the level of effort to be applied in 07/08 to each Priority CU based on the following:
 - Overall highly or moderately ranked CUs and CUs with high or moderate Capacity rankings were considered for *Initiating a planning process in 07/08*.
 - The CUs would not simply be chosen based on the ranking but upon consideration of funding available in 07/08 and balancing the CUs chosen across different DFO Areas, species, habitats and levels of data richness to maximize the scope of lessons learned
 - The remainder of the CUs will be the subject of an internal workshop to develop a strategy and timetable for subsequent years.

- It is noted in the WSP that planning may be conducted for individual CUs or for groups of CUs that are subject to common threats. The approach of bringing groups of CUs together into a planning table is supported by pilot work conducted over the past two fiscal years to develop a plan for all Fraser sockeye CUs together.
- The table below describes the proposed planning tables, their component Priority CUs, activities recommended for 07/08, funding status, and responsibility centre. It is assumed that planning for Sakinaw sockeye, Okanagan Lake Chinook and Interior Fraser Coho would be directed and funded through SARA with assistance from the WSP team to ensure consistency in approach..

Planning Table	Priority CU	Activity 07/08	WSP Funded	Resp.	Comments
Fraser River	Cultus/Early Stuart	Complete Plan	Yes	RHQ BCI LF	This pilot planning process was initiated in 05/06 and will be completed in 07/08.
Strait of Georgia	Lower Georgia Strait Fall Chinook	Initiate Plan	Yes	SC	Need to address decline recognized as urgent.
WCVI	Somass and Henderson sockeye	Initiate Plan	Yes	SC	Strong external capacity and interest with First Nations and WCAMB. Initial scoping meeting with technical working group held in January 07.
Central Coast	Rivers-Smith sockeye	Initiate Plan	Yes	NC	Strong external capacity and interest. Preliminary planning workshop scheduled.
Skeena	Skeena sockeye-Lakelse	Initiate Plan	Yes	NC	Potential partnership with Moore Foundation.
Fraser	Chinook Early spring Upper MidFraser N. Thompson Chinook Spring Lower Thompson	Initiate Plan	No	BCI	WSP funding unavailable.

Implications of Proposed Approach and Issues for Discussion

- Some First Nations and other salmon interests who have capacity and conservation concerns will complain that their CU/area was not chosen for planning work. It is important to note in these cases that it does not mean DFO will not be taking action.
- The approach to planning for CUs in the SARA process but not listed needs to be clarified.
- An internal challenge will be the effective integration of OHEB and FAM.
- The development of benchmarks is in the early stages which could frustrate the planning processes.
- Incorporation of social and economic considerations into the planning represents a challenge for the Department.
- Lack of visible progress on a governance model for watershed planning that draws in the Province and industries will be viewed as problematic.
- Consider process for engaging Moore Foundation in the Skeena.

Recommendations / Next Steps

- A phased approach to conducting strategic planning for the twenty priority CUs is recommended
- In 07/08 it is recommended that
 - Fraser sockeye planning be completed
 - four planning tables be initiated.
 - A workshop be held to develop a strategy and timetable for the remaining Priority CUs.

Table 1. Table of Priority Conservation Units

Species/Stock	Component Cu(s)	Habitat Status	Profile									Percent of Total	Profile Rank	Planning Capacity						Percent of Total	Planning Capacity Rank	Combined Rating	Combined Rank	Action 07/08	Action 08/09	Responsibility	
		Habitat Status	Comm Fish Impact	FN FSC Impact	FN Comm Impact	Rec Fish Impact	SARA Standing	Can/US Treaty Impact	FN Treaty Impact	National/Regional profile	Area Profile			Resp. Team internal capacity	Resp. Team External Capacity	Summarized Detailed Habitat data available	Detailed fish data available	Plan to feed existing process eg SARA	Planning in progress								
		Good/Fair/Poor 1/2/3	L/M/H 1/2/3	L/M/H 1/2/3	L/M/H 1/2/3	L/M/H 1/2/3	0/PC-CA 1/2/3	L/M/H 1/2/3	L/M/H 1/2/3	L/M/H 1/2/3	L/M/H 1/2/3			N/Y 0/1	N/Y 0/1	N/Y 0/1	N/Y 0/1	N/Y 0/1	N/Y 0/1								
Sockeye- Late-Cultus	Lake-Fraser L-Cultus	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	3	3	3	96	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	100	1	99	1	Complete Plan		RHQ	
Coho-Thompson	Coho-North Thompson-South Thompson-Lower Thompson	3	2	3	2	3	1	2	3	3	3	81	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	100	2	94	2	SARA Process		BCI	
Coho-Lower Fraser	Coho-Lower Fraser-Lillooet	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	78	5	1	1	1	0	1		83	5	87	3	Internal Mtg re Next Steps		LF	
Chinook-Fall-Georgia Strait	Chinook-EVanIsle	3	2	3	1	3	2	3	3	1	3	78	6	1	1	1	1	1	1	100	8	93	4	Initiate Planning Process	Complete Plan	SC	
Sockeye-Sakinaw	Lake-SouthCoast-Sakinaw	2	3	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	85	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	100	3	84	5	SARA process		SC	
Coho-Mid/Upper Fraser	Coho-MiddleFraser-UpperFraser	2	2	3	2	3	1	2	3	3	3	81	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	100	4	83	6	SARA Process		BCI	
Coho-Lower Georgia Strait	Coho-Boundary Bay-South Coast- SEVanIsland	3	1	3	1	3	2	2	3	1	3	70	11	1	1	1	0	0		67	9	79	7	Internal Mtg re Next Steps		SC	
Chinook-Spring-Lower Thompson	Spring-Lower Thompson	3	1	3	1	3	2	2	3	1	3	70	12	1	1	0	1	0	0	50	13	73	8	Internal Mtg re Next Steps		BCI	
Sockeye-SkeenaWild	Lake-Skeena-LakeIsle-Morice	2	3	3	3	2	1	1	3	1	3	74	8	1	1	1	0	0		67	10	69	9	Initiate Planning process and develop draft plan	Complete Plan	NC	
Chinook-EarlySpring-UpperFraser-MidFraser-NThompson	Spring-UpperFraser-MiddleFraser-NorthThompson	2	2	3	2	3	1	2	3	1	3	74	9	1	1	1	0	0		67	11	69	10	Internal Mtg re Next Steps		BCI	
Sockeye-Henderson	Lake-SWVI-Henderson	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	3	1	2	56	13	1	1	1	0	0		67	16	63	11	Initiate Planning Process	Complete Plan	SC	
Chum-Yukon	Taku-Porcupine	1	3	3	3	1	1	2	3	1	3	74	10	1	1	0	1	0	1	67	12	58	12	Internal Mtg re Next Steps		YU	
Sockeye-Somass	Lake-SWVI-Somass	0	3	3	3	3	1	1	3	1	3	78	7	1	1	1	1	0	1	83	6	54	13	Initiate Planning Process	Complete Plan	SC	
Rivers-Smith Sockeye	Rivers-Smith Sockeye	0	3	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	3	56	14	1	1	1	1	0	1	83	7	46	14	Initiate Planning Process	Complete Plan	NC	
Chum-Skeena-Nass	Chum-Nass-Skeena-SkeenaNassEstuary	2	2	3	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	52	16	1						17	17	45	15	Internal Mtg re Next Steps		NC	
Sockeye- Early Stuart	Lake-Fraser-ESTU-Trembleur-Stuart-Takla	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	3	1	3	56	15	1	0	0	1	0	0	17	14	41	16	Complete Plan		RHQ	
Chum-Coastal Areas 5/6	TBD	2	2	3	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	52	17	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	18	40	17	Internal Mtg re Next Steps		NC	
Okanagan Chinook	Okanagan Chinook	0	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	52	18	1	1	0	0	0	0	17	15	28	18	SARA process		SC	
Sockeye-Area 11-13	Lake-NEVanIsle-MainlandInlets-VillageBay	0	1	3	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	44	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	19	15	19	Internal Mtg re Next Steps		SC	
Sockeye-WCVI-Other	Lake-WCVI-Kennedy-Jantzen	0	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	44	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	20	14	20	Internal Mtg re Next Steps		SC	

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