

North Coast Salmon Update #1 - 24 June 2019

Please note that catch numbers and estimates are preliminary, and are subject to review.

North Coast Troll

The 2019 Area F Troll Chinook TAC is 88,400, and will be managed to the maximum 3.2% exploitation objective on WCVI Chinook using an Effort / Harvest Relationship Management Tool. Additional precautionary reductions to support conservation and promote recovery of at risk Fraser River Chinook are planned for the northern troll fishery which currently include delaying the start of the Area F Troll Chinook fishery until late in August. See FN0395 for specifics on coast wide reductions.

Area F Troll Coho fisheries are anticipated to commence in early July with the A-B Line Coho and Pink and the Directed Coho and Pink salmon fishery opening mid to late July. Additional restrictions are planned to reduce overall Coho harvest rates by approximately 20% and may include additional area closures to limit interceptions of Chinook.

Areas 1 & 2 - Haida Gwaii

Recreational:

The majority of lodges commenced fishing operations in early June. Anecdotal reports have indicated improved Chinook abundance over 2018. Detailed catch information will not be available until the 2nd week of July.

Area 3 - Nass River

Nass River Sockeye returns are forecast pre-season to be average to below average with an expected total return to Canada from 429,000 (75% probability) to 484,000 (25% probability) and a point estimate of 456,000(50% probability) based on a sibling-regression model. Nass sockeye returns will be carefully monitored to take into account increasing uncertainty and recent trends towards lower survival.

The Nass River fish wheels have been operating since early June, but it is still too early for in-season Total Return to Canada (TRTC) projections for Sockeye. Current trends in Nass Chinook escapement appear to be stronger than forecast. The first anticipated in-season Sockeye TRTC forecasts will be available in the coming weeks. Water levels at the lower fish wheels were below normal, and have continued to decline. The most recent measurements indicate record low water levels for this time of year.

Nass River salmon stock assessment updates from the Nisga'a Fish and Wildlife Department will be available here: <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/northcoast-cotenord/nass-eng.html>
Or here: <ftp://ftp.lgl.com/Nass%20Stock%20Assessment%20Updates/>

Net Fisheries:

The first Sockeye targeted gill net fisheries occurred last week on June 17, with an one day opening this week on June 25. Effort was 80 boats during the first week, increasing to 98 in the second week. The June 17 opening saw modest Sockeye catch at 1673 fish, increasing on June 25 to a preliminary total of ~3000 pieces (this number preliminary and is subject to review). The first seine opening is planned for July 9.

Fishery Operations System

Commercial SALMON GILL NET In-Season Estimated Catch-by-Area (Pieces) for Area C (North-PR) and for Period 01-Apr-2019 to 25-Jun-2019

Management Area 3

Stat Week	Week of Year	Date	Effort	Sockeye Salmon		Coho Salmon		Pink Salmon		Chum Salmon		Chinook Salmon		Steelhead	Status
				Kept	Rel	Kept	Rel	Kept	Rel	Kept	Rel	Kept	Rel	Rel	
		17-Jun	80	1673	0	0	37	8	0	11	2	0	165	14	Reviewed
		Total for Week	80	1673	0	0	37	8	0	11	2	0	165	14	
		24-Jun	89	2921	0	0	33	156	0	49	6	0	55	6	Preliminary
		Total for Week	89	2921	0	0	33	156	0	49	6	0	55	6	
		Total for Management Area 3 in Period	169	4594	0	0	70	164	0	60	8	0	220	20	

Notes:

1. Consult the applicable Fishery Manager or Biologist as to the status of particular catch estimates.

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Meziadin Fishway:

The Meziadin Fishway will be set up this weekend, and is expected to be operational by the first week of July. Historic and 2019 counts will be available here:

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/northcoast-cotenord/meziadin-eng.html>

Kwinageese Weir:

The Kwinageese Weir will be operated by the Nisga'a Fish and Wildlife department again this year. Operation will begin in mid-July.

Alaska Fisheries

District 1 Gill Net Fishery:

The District 1 gill net fishery in Alaska opened for four days of fishing commencing on June 16, 2019. Effort was below average with 30 vessels participating. With the exception of Pink and Coho, catches were well below the 10-year average. General reports indicated that fishing was slow throughout Southeast Alaska, not just in the Ketchikan area. The Tree Point fishery will be open for four days this week, beginning on June 23, 2019.

Species	District 1 Catch – Week 25	10-Year Average
Chinook	300	456
Sockeye	450	8447
Coho	500	328
Pink	600	60
Chum	900	9134
Effort	30	47
Fishing Days	4	4

District 4 Seine Fishery:

The first anticipated District 4 purse seine fishery is scheduled for July 7

Area 4 - Skeena River

The qualitative Salmon Outlook for wild Skeena Sockeye is “low” based on the strength of the brood years that went to sea in 2016 and 2017 respectively and the moderate returns of age 4 Sockeye in 2018. The Outlook for enhanced Babine Sockeye is low to modest based on the strength of sibling returns in 2018. The total Skeena Sockeye return is expected to be low to modest with a pre-season return forecast from 0.77 million (90% probability) to 3.8 million (10% probability) and a point estimate of 1.7 million (50% probability) based on the sibling model.

2019 Skeena Pre-season Forecast									
					2019 Forecasts for reference probabilities				
Species	Stock	Escapement Target	Median						
			10%	25%	50%	75%	90%		
Sockeye	Skeena	1,050,000	5 yr average	3,267,013	2,442,930	1,861,231	1,418,043	1,060,351	
			Sibling Mode	3,798,645	2,597,163	1,713,846	1,130,952	773,241	

It is too early to evaluate the pre-season forecast with current in-season data.

Net Fisheries:

Commercial fisheries are anticipated, and will be informed with in-season assessments of Sockeye returns.

Demonstration Fisheries:

In 2019, 2 ESSR fisheries and 8 CSAF Demonstration fisheries have been proposed for the Skeena and Nass watersheds. Implementation of these fisheries is subject to area approval of the respective fishing plans, and the Department is currently working with the proponents to finalize these details.

Recreational Fisheries:

Area 3 and 4 Creel Survey

For 2019, the North Coast Skeena First Nations Stewardship Society began their creel survey operations in May. They performed 370 interviews totalling 952 anglers, with a reported catch of 470 Chinook and 4 Coho. These numbers are expanded and produce a catch estimate of 2,262 Chinook and 29 Coho for the month of May. This is the first year that the creel survey has happened in May, subsequently there is no historical data with which to compare.

Tyee Test Fishery:

To date, few salmon have been encountered by the test boat. As of June 24, the estimated number of Large Sockeye past Tyee is 1,191 fish. It is too early for a reliable Skeena Sockeye TRTC estimate. Estimates should become more reliable into mid-July. The index values of Chinook encountered to date are lower than this point in 2018, and remains significantly lower to averages recorded previously.

The 2019 Tyee test fishery daily and cumulative sockeye escapement estimate data, along with 2019 daily and cumulative escapement indices by species, are available here:

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/northcoast-cotenord/skeenatyee-eng.html>

Kitwanga Weir:

The Gitanyow Fisheries Authority will be operating the Kitwanga weir again this year. It is typically operational by early July. Updates provided by the Gitanyow Fisheries Authority will be available here: <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/northcoast-cotenord/docs/kitwanga.pdf>

Slamgeesh Weir:

The Gitksan Watershed Authorities will be operating the Slamgeesh Weir again this year. It is typically operational in late July.

Sustut Weir:

The Province of BC will be operating the Sustut weir this year. It is expected to be operational by August.

Area 6

The first Area 6 seine opening is anticipated for mid-July. Gill net opportunities will be dependent on Kitimat River hatchery chum abundance.

Areas 7 to 10 - Central Coast

Net Fisheries:

Three chinook directed gillnet fisheries have occurred in Area 8, beginning the first week of June. The openings on June 3 and June 10 were 24 hours each, with the opening starting June 17 proceeded for 48 hours. The one day opening on June 24 was extended to two days. Effort was normal for these openings, starting with 15 boats in the first week, increasing to 21-27 in following openings. Catch and effort estimates to date openings are listed below. The first Area 8 Chum-directed opening will be July 1.

Area 8 Gillnet Catch Estimates:

Management Area 8

Stat Week	Week of Year	Date	Effort	Report Details by Subarea or Portion												Status
				Sockeye Kept	Sockeye Rel	Coho Kept	Coho Rel	Pink Kept	Pink Rel	Chum Kept	Chum Rel	Chinook Kept	Chinook Rel	Steelhead Kept	Steelhead Rel	
		03-Jun	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	55	0	2	Reviewed
		Total for Week	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	55	0	2	
		10-Jun	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	156	0	0	Reviewed	
		Total for Week	23	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	0	156	0	0		
		17-Jun	27	0	0	0	0	0	0	37	0	195	0	0	Preliminary	
		18-Jun	21	0	0	0	0	0	0	47	0	169	0	0	Preliminary	
		19-Jun	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	30	0	63	0	1	Preliminary	
		Total for Week	61	0	0	0	0	0	0	114	0	427	0	1		
		Total for Management Area 8 in Period	99	0	0	0	0	0	0	120	0	638	0	3		

Notes:
1. Consult the applicable Fishery Manager or Biologist as to the status of particular catch estimates.

Recreational Fisheries:

Data will be provided when available later in the season.