



2026 Fraser Forum #3

What We Heard



Photo credit: Secwepemc Fisheries Commission

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April 2, 2026



What We Heard

- Provides an **objective & neutral** summarized record of the **key points** DFO heard from Forum participants during Tier 2 and highlight any next steps.
- Action Items are shared with relevant DFO staff and responses are shared in the Forum tracker located on the FSMC website
- Feedback and advice provided at Forums form part of the IFMP feedback. Feedback and advice provided that extends beyond the IFMP is shared with relevant DFO staff for further follow up
- Tool to inform subsequent Forum agendas.
- Continue to evolve with feedback

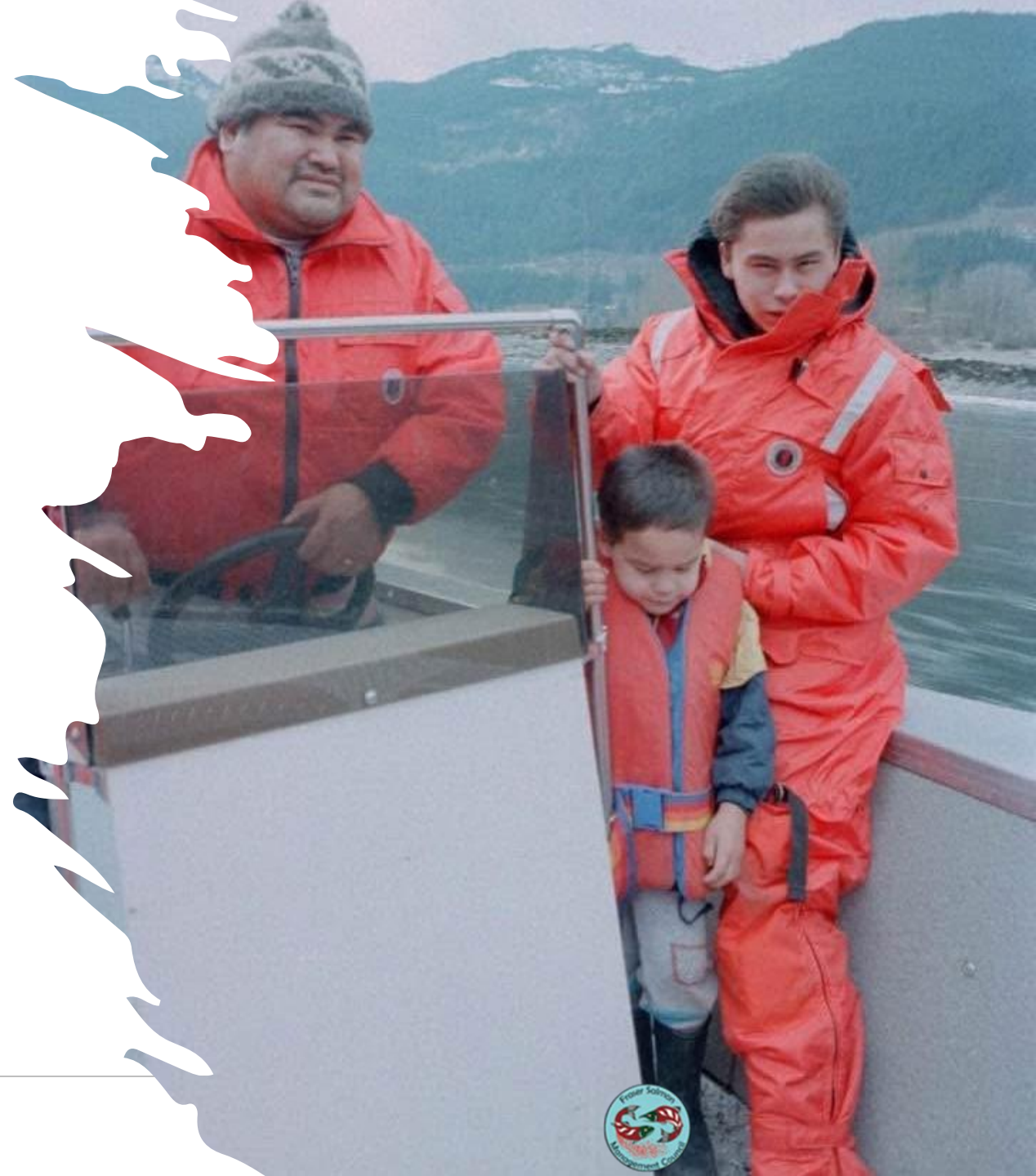


Tone of Meeting

- Views expressed with passion and urgency, especially around the pace of change, and recreational fishery impacts, stressing the need for reductions in this fishery
- Overall, the dialogue was respectful, constructive, collaborative, solution-oriented
- What We Heard presentation covers key points objectively, using neutral language.
- For Fraser Forum records of consultation, participants will have access to meeting summaries and AI generated record of minutes produced from the full transcription produced and provided by FSMC.

Outline

- Steelhead
- Southern B.C. Chum
- Southern B.C. Coho
- Fraser Chinook
- Fraser Sockeye
- Pacific Salmon Treaty
- Other



Item: Steelhead

Overview

- TNG leading steelhead recovery work in their territory and voluntarily closed their steelhead fishery for the last decade due to conservation concerns, despite importance of this fishery to T̂silhqot'in people.
- TNG requests continued protective measures; TNG remains committed to the recovery and future of Chilcotin Steelhead.
- Many voiced the rarity of encountering a steelhead of any origin. Steelhead window closure severely impacts fisheries; Interest in more information on steelhead migration route & timing to support improved fishery planning
- Raised importance of including traditional knowledge to pair with western science studies
- Interest being raised to Pacific Salmon Commission Canadian Commissioners in elevating importance of Steelhead in Pacific Salmon Treaty. Call for Canada to have domestic discussions in effort to prepare for discussions at bi-lateral table with US
- Concern for impact on Steelhead in recreational fisheries
- Interest in having Province participating in Forum

Next Steps / Actions

- DFO to share available data informing migration route for IFR Steelhead, specifically near Nitinaht Lake
- DFO to share CSAS TWG participant list for steelhead exposure model work & Science Advice Report when available

Item: Southern BC Chum

Overview

- Concern Ditidaht CSAF fishery proposal being shared that has not been finalized & approved by Nation
- Concerned marine recreational fisheries start open when in-season test fishery information is available to inform fisheries
- Concern for in-river recreational fishery impacts on chum, including released chum and timing of fishery ahead of in-river FSC fisheries
- Concerns raised for impacts on Vancouver Island stocks (e.g. Johnstone Strait recreational chum fishery impacts on mainland inlet stocks)
 - Seeking clarity on venue to have these consultative discussions

Next Steps / Actions

- DFO remove CSAF fishery proposal for Nitinaht Lake (*complete – removed & updated presentation*)
- DFO to follow up with Wei Wai Kum First Nation on chum concerns (*in progress*)

Deadlines

2026/27 Southern B.C. Salmon IFMP feedback deadline: April 10



Item: Southern BC Coho (1/2)

Overview

- Concern there is a lack of data on Strait of Georgia and Lower Fraser coho stocks to support increasing the ER on IFC due to correlation ER between these stocks, coupled with growing recreational fishery & distribution changes
- Lack of support for joining IHPC sub-committee to discuss coho Option 2; Recommended process sequence: government-government coho sharing discussions at Nation scale, then with DFO & province, and IHPC as advisors after this
- Interest in maintaining conservation focus/support for Option 1 (maintain 3-5% Canadian ER)
 - Focus on creating a long-term buffer that protects the fishery into the future.
 - Should there be an increase in the ER, recommend this be set aside for First Nations rights-based fisheries to choose when, where, and how they will fish
- Concern for magnitude of marine and in-river recreational fisheries – both kept and released
- Call for FSC priority to be respected when executing fisheries in-season
- Propose reduction in recreational fishery impacts on coho to achieve greater First Nations rights-based fishery access, rather than increasing domestic exploitation rate on IFC

Next Steps / Actions

Deadlines

- *2026/27 Southern B.C. Salmon IFMP feedback deadline: April 10*



Item: Southern BC Coho (2/2)

Overview

- Support First Nations self-determination by providing the space for Nations to decide when, where, and how access is appropriate, now or in the future.
 - Recognize Indigenous fisheries as temporal and adaptive, not aligned with maximizing access in a single year.
 - Lack of fishing plan should not be equated with lack of interest
- Interest in understanding if FSC and recreational catch is grouped together in FRAM model. If so, there is concern for ability to evaluate whether the objectives of the options are being met.
- While Option 2 isn't specifically looking to increase recreational impact on IFC, DFO's proposal to turn SoG coho assessment fishery into a recreational fishery opportunity will result in impacts to IFC
 - Not supportive of this recreational fishery

Next Steps / Actions

- Confirm if FSC and recreational catch are grouped together in FRAM model

Deadlines

- *2026/27 Southern B.C. Salmon IFMP feedback deadline: April 10*



Item: Fraser Chinook (1/2)

Overview

- Not supportive of Fraser Summer 5(2) management Scenario A being considered as an option that can achieve Aboriginal Priority
 - Consideration of how sector interests and economic factors may influence decision-making when maintaining the status quo is an option
- First Nations food needs are not being met - *Sparrow* must be honoured; brunt of conservation should be shared primarily by recreational and commercial fishers
- Interest in understanding how Southern Resident Killer Whale (SRKW) measures being proposed in 2026 compare to or overlap with those proposed under Fraser Chinook Summer 5(2) management Scenario B

Next Steps / Actions

- Provide side-by-side comparison of proposed actions under Scenario B and SRKW & then follow up once decisions on management scenarios made
- Provide side-by-side comparison of DFO-proposed management actions under Scenario B with JTC-proposed actions with explanation of why the DFO-proposed actions were chosen over JTC-proposed actions

Deadlines

- 2026/27 Southern B.C. Salmon IFMP feedback deadline: April 10



Item: Fraser Chinook (2/2)

Overview

- Propose JTC-developed management actions for Scenarios C and D be considered in 2026 management
- Support for proposed recreational fishery changes that are expected to increase release survival, noting these are best practices and not to be viewed as a credit towards fish savings in release mortality evaluations
- Interest in updates being made to release mortality rates based on research and application
- Need for consideration of impacts on Vancouver Island stocks from recreational fisheries & seeking clarity on where to engage in these discussions

Next Steps / Actions

- Follow up to determine if there will be CSAS advice provided on Fishery Related Incidental Mortality work

Deadlines

- *2026/27 Southern B.C. Salmon IFMP feedback deadline: April 10*



Item: Pacific Salmon Treaty (PST) (1/2)

Overview

- Concern for international impacts on domestic wild stocks (WCVI Chinook)
- Interest in where possible Canada better utilizing US-bound coho in domestic fisheries
- Interest raised by several in additional resourcing to further support and increase First Nations participation in treaty discussions and supporting programs stemming from PST (e.g. Coded Wire Tag, DNA sampling, stock assessment and gathering environmental information)
- Interest in additional indicator stocks being established for southern BC chinook & increased fisheries monitoring domestically and internationally as a result of negotiations
 - Interest in increased participation of First Nations in these programs
- The Sockeye aggregates in Chapter 4 constrain Canada's ability to manage stock selective fisheries. Consider how the treaty language can be changed to better enable stock selective fisheries, or can stock selective fisheries be enabled through modifications to the current escapement planning process?

Deadlines



Item: Pacific Salmon Treaty (PST) (2/2)

Overview

- Continue to have time set aside during Fraser River Panel meetings for First Nations and tribes to caucus
- Suggest addition of treaty language to enable discussions around southern boundary salmon stocks (i.e. Okanagan Sockeye)
- Call for Canada to work with Five Nations on tools to improve data that would support their ability to harvest available US coho.
- Suggest a detailed review of treaty language to determine if it aligns with Five Nations with Ahousaht and other court decisions
- Suggest seeking opportunities where treaty chapters could create space for and provide enabling language for Canadas domestic obligations under UNDRIP.
- Interest in treaty language that is conservation focused and enables flexible decision-making for in-season processes.
- Propose treaty include development of robust dispute resolution process
- Interest in additional bilateral meetings to further discuss PST



Item: Fraser Sockeye (1/2)

Overview

- Concern for weaker stocks co-migrating with more abundant stocks and ability to respond in-season domestically, and protect from international interception
- Interest in presentation including implications of escapement plan options using a range of migratory conditions
 - In-season management decisions account for these conditions via Management Adjustments, based on real-time environmental data.

Next Steps / Actions

- Future escapement planning presentations may include Management Adjustments to account for migration conditions

Deadlines

- *2026/27 Southern B.C. Salmon IFMP feedback deadline: April 10*



Item: Fraser Sockeye (2/2)

Overview

- There was appreciation that evaluation approaches are evolving, but concern that emphasis on aggregate harvest and escapement does not adequately reflect First Nations' focus on individual stocks and stock-specific outcomes. Also consider metrics other than harvest and escapement (e.g. report anticipated escapement vs S_{gen})
- The escapement plan options presented provide the sandbox, and the final plan could take aspects of each, suggest being open-minded in review
- Growing interest in Option 3, individual Nations will provide their preferences through written IFMP feedback, as well, the FSMC Maintable will deliberate and provide direction to FSMC-FSMB members



Item: Other

Overview

- Continue to implement UNDRIP in a fisheries context
- Call for DFO to engage Nations about fisheries in their territories and seek consent
- Calls for resourcing to meet Indigenous capacity to collect and analyze information (e.g. biological, environmental)
- Call for fisheries decision-maker to go to territories and speak with Chief.
- Proposed recreational fishery regulations to limit impacts (e.g. prohibit use of downriggers)
- Interest in greater transparency for how IFMP input influences decisions

Next Steps / Actions

- Share this what we heard presentation within Department

Deadlines



Forum Planning Committee

- Greg Witzky (FSMC co-chair)
- Matthew Parslow (DFO co-chair)
- Sonora Morin-Thompson (IMAWG)
- Aidan Fisher (FSMC, JTC)
- Ken Malloway (FSMC)
- Chief Victor Isaac (FSMC)
- Tony Roberts Jr. (FSMB)
- Pete Erickson (FSMC)
- Kelsey Campbell (First Nations JTWG co-chair)
- Colin S (DFO JTWG co-chair)
- Brittany Jenewein (DFO, JTC)
- Andrea Goruk (DFO)
- Jeff Radford (DFO)
- Marcel Shepert (Facilitator)

Please reach out to any of us to provide feedback on Forum



Questions? Comments?

Huy ch q'u Thank you

