

North Coast Salmon Update #1 - 23 June 2020

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

North Coast Troll

Area F Troll Coho fisheries are anticipated to commence in early July with the A-B Line Pink Salmon opening (with Coho retention) on July 1st.

The main Coho directed fishery will open August 1st. The opening date was delayed due to ongoing concerns regarding North Coast Coho abundance and productivity and is anticipated to reduce overall Coho harvest by approximately 50%.

The 2020 Area F Troll Chinook TAC is 92,600, and will be managed to the maximum 3.2% exploitation objective on WCVI Chinook. The 2020 Chinook IVQ will be 427 Chinook based on 217 licences.

Chinook salmon retention in Area F has been delayed until August 15th to support conservation and recovery of at-risk (Stream-type) Fraser River Chinook and to allow passage of not-at-risk (Summer 4-1) Fraser Chinook. See FN0565 for specifics on coast wide reductions.

Areas 1 & 2 - Haida Gwaii

Recreational:

In response to COVID-19 related health and safety concerns, recreational fishing lodges in Areas 1 and 2W have delayed opening dates in 2020. At the time of this report no Haida Gwaii lodges are operating and start dates are uncertain.

Recreational effort by Haida Gwaii residents, which typically accounts for less than 15% of annual catches, is expected to be similar to most years. Effort by Island residents is primarily focused in Cartwright Sound (Area 2W) as well as Areas 1-5 and 1-3 near Masset.

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 258,000 (75% probability) to 583,000 (25% probability) and a point estimate of 386,000 (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 and Sockeye are lower than average. The first anticipated in-season Sockeye TRTC forecasts will be available in the coming weeks. Water levels were within normal levels and then increased dramatically over the weekend. Fish wheel operations were suspended on July 20th due to the high water conditions. Fish wheel operations will resume once the water levels are within appropriate ranges. At the time of this update, water levels were falling.

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 Area C gill net fishery opening for Area 3, tentatively planned for June 29, 2020 will be delayed. As of June 19, the in-season cumulative total escapement past Gitwinksihlkw is 643 Sockeye, compared to a 25-year average escapement of 12,400 Sockeye to that date.

Escapements will continue to be monitored closely, and an update will be provided by Fishery Notice on Friday, June 26.

The first Pink targeted seine opening is anticipated for July 6.

Meziadin Fishway:

The Meziadin Fishway is expected to be operational by the first week of July. Historic and 2020 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 21, 2020.

District 4 Seine Fishery:

The first anticipated District 4 purse seine fishery is scheduled for July 5.

Area 4 - Skeena River

The total Skeena Sockeye return is expected to be low to modest with a pre-season return forecast from 0.41 million (90% probability) to 1.9 million (10% probability) and a point estimate of 0.88 million (50% probability) based on the sibling model.

2020 Skeena Pre-season Forecast

Species	Stock	Escapement Target		2020 Forecasts for reference probabilities				
				10%	25%	Median 50%	75%	90%
Sockeye	Skeena	1,050,000	5 yr average	2,659,571	1,861,530	1,333,232	954,864	668,344
			Sibling Model	1,865,952	1,300,213	875,990	590,180	411,243

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

Net Fisheries:

Commercial fishery opportunities will be informed with in-season assessments of Sockeye returns.

Demonstration Fisheries:

In 2020, 2 ESSR fisheries and 8 CSAF Demonstration fisheries have been approved through the IFMP process 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 2020, the North Coast Skeena First Nations Stewardship Society began their creel survey operations in May. They performed 379 interviews totalling 924 anglers, with a reported catch of 399 Chinook. These numbers are expanded and produce a catch estimate of 1,256 Chinook for the month of May.

Tyee Test Fishery:

To date, few salmon have been encountered by the test boat. As of June 23, the estimated number of Large Sockeye past Tyee is 276 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 2019, and remains significantly lower to averages recorded previously.

The 2020 Tyee test fishery daily and cumulative sockeye escapement estimate data, along with 2020 daily and cumulative escapement indices by species, are available here:

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

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, but will be informed by in-season assessments. Gill net opportunities will be dependent on Kitimat River hatchery chum abundance.

Areas 7 to 10 - Central Coast**Net Fisheries:**

There was one 24 hour chinook directed gillnet fishery in Area 8 on June 16. There were 26 vessels participating in the opening, with 22 vessels reporting a catch of 103 Chinook and 41

Chum Salmon. Fisheries for the week of June 22 were delayed in order to facilitate the development of additional fishery protocols in consideration of the safety concerns of the residents of the Bella Coola valley and for the safe operation of the Area 8 fishery.

Area 8 Gillnet Catch Estimates:

Fishery Operations System

**Commercial SALMON GILL NET In-Season Estimated Catch-by-Area (Pieces)
for Area C (Central) and
for Period 01-Apr-2020 to 23-Jun-2020**

Management Area 8

[Report Details by Subarea or Portion](#)

Stat Week	Week of Year	Date	Effort	Sockeye Salmon		Coho Salmon		Pink Salmon		Chum Salmon		Chinook Salmon	
				Kept	Rel	Kept	Rel	Kept	Rel	Kept	Rel	Kept	Rel
		15-Jun	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	41	1	103	0
		Total for Week	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	41	1	103	0
		Total for Management Area 8 in Period	22	0	0	0	0	0	0	41	1	103	0

Notes:

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

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Recreational Fisheries:

Data will be provided when available later in the season.