

North Coast Salmon Update #4 – 14 July 2020

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

North Coast Troll

CHINOOK - The 2020 Area F Troll Chinook TAC is 92,600 and Chinook retention will be delayed until August 15th. Time restrictions in July are aimed at protecting at risk Fraser River stream type Chinook, to allow passage of Fraser River not at risk Chinook for FSC purposes, and to avoid Skeena Chinook. Time restrictions in the first half of August are also in place to limit exploitation of WCVI Chinook to a maximum 3.2% exploitation objective.

COHO - Area F Troll opened at the A-B Line for Pink and Coho retention July 1st (FN0568). There are currently 9 vessels hailed into the fishery with a cumulative effort of 83 vessel-days to date. Preliminary data to July 13th indicate catches of approximately 4,100 Coho and 19,000 Pink Salmon.

The directed Coho and Pink salmon fishery is anticipated to open on August 1. Additional area closures are planned to limit interceptions of Chinook. A Fishery Notice with fishery specifics is expected by next week.

Areas 1 & 2 - Haida Gwaii

Recreational:

At the time of reporting there is one Haida Gwaii lodge operating with guests in Area 1 with a second lodge operations yet to be confirmed. Based on information to date, total recreational effort in Areas 1 and 2 is expected to be less than half of that in recent years.

The Haida Fisheries Program recreational creel began in June and is continuing to monitor activity by anglers landing in local communities. Creel estimates for June will not be available until later in July.

Area 3 - Nass River

The Nass River fish wheels have been operating since early June. Current trends in Nass Chinook and Sockeye are lower than average. As of July 12, 58,988 Sockeye have been estimated to have passed through the Gitwinksihlkw Fishwheels, compared to the 20-year average of 112,500. Similarly, 7,194 Chinook are estimated to have passed through the Gitwinksihlkw Fishwheels compared to the 20-year average of 16,910. Water levels have been within normal ranges.

As of July 13, the projected TRTC using in-season to final regression are as follows:

- Sockeye TRTC is estimated at **256,000** (range 162,000 to 350,000) 46% of the run past with normal timing
- Chinook TRTC is estimated at **18,000** (range 16,000 to 20,000) 85% of the run past with normal timing.

In response to low returns to date, Nisga’a Fisheries and Wildlife Department (NFWD) closed all fishing for Chinook salmon for the remainder of the season. NFWD have also closed their Sockeye fisheries for one week starting midnight July 12, and will reopen Monday July 20 at 06:00hrs for a trial period.

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/>

Gill Net Fisheries:

Area C gill net fisheries in Area 3, initially planned for late June, have been delayed due to poor escapements observed past the fish wheels. Escapements will continue to be monitored closely, and an updates will be provided by Fishery Notice.

Seine Fisheries:

The first Pink targeted seine opening occurred on July 6 (FN0605), with a hailed effort of 13 boats. Catch information has been updated from last week. A total of 1,816 Pink and 1,751 Chum were retained. Further opportunities for seine fisheries will be provided by Fishery Notice.

Fishery Operations System
Commercial SALMON SEINE In-Season Estimated Catch-by-Area (Pieces)
 for Period 01-Apr-2020 to 14-Jul-2020

Management Area 3		Report Details by Subarea or Portion												
Stat Week	Week of Year	Effort	Sockeye Salmon		Coho Salmon		Pink Salmon		Chum Salmon		Chinook Salmon		Steelhead	
			Kept	Ret	Kept	Ret	Kept	Ret	Kept	Ret	Kept	Ret	Kept	Ret
07/2	28		0	212	0	94	1816	0	1751	0	0	161	0	0
Total for Week		13												
Total for Management Area 3 in Period		13	0	212	0	94	1816	0	1751	0	0	161	0	0

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

Recreational Fisheries:

In season estimates have suggested returns of Nass Chinook are much lower than the pre-season forecast. In response, the Department will be closing recreational fishing for Chinook on the Nass River as of July 15. Nisga’a Fisheries and Wildlife Department have also closed their Food, Social, and Ceremonial (FSC) fishery for Chinook. More information will be provided as it becomes available.

Meziadin Fishway:

The Meziadin Fishway commenced operations on July 1. As of July 13, 10 Sockeye have passed through the fishway. The historic cumulative count for adult Sockeye returns to July 13 is 13,266. Meziadin River water levels and temperature were 1.32m and 14.5°c respectively. Water levels are near mean values and temperatures are slightly lower than mean values for this date. The Meziadin in-season forecast will be presented when available.

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 July 5, 2020. Effort was below average with 27 vessels participating, and catches of all species, except Chinook, was below the 10-Year average. The Tree Point fishery opened again this week for four days, starting July 12.

Species	District 1 Catch – Week 28 (CPUE)	10-Year Average (CPUE)
Chinook	300	175
Sockeye	500 (5)	5,000 (25)
Coho	800	1,247
Pink	6,000	32,500
Chum	12,000 (111)	42,500 (217)
Effort	27	49
Fishing Days	4	4

Preliminary catches and 10-year averages provided courtesy of Alaska Department of Fish and Game. More information on Southeast Alaskan fisheries is available here:

<http://www.adfg.alaska.gov/index.cfm?adfg=fishing.main>

District 4 Seine Fishery:

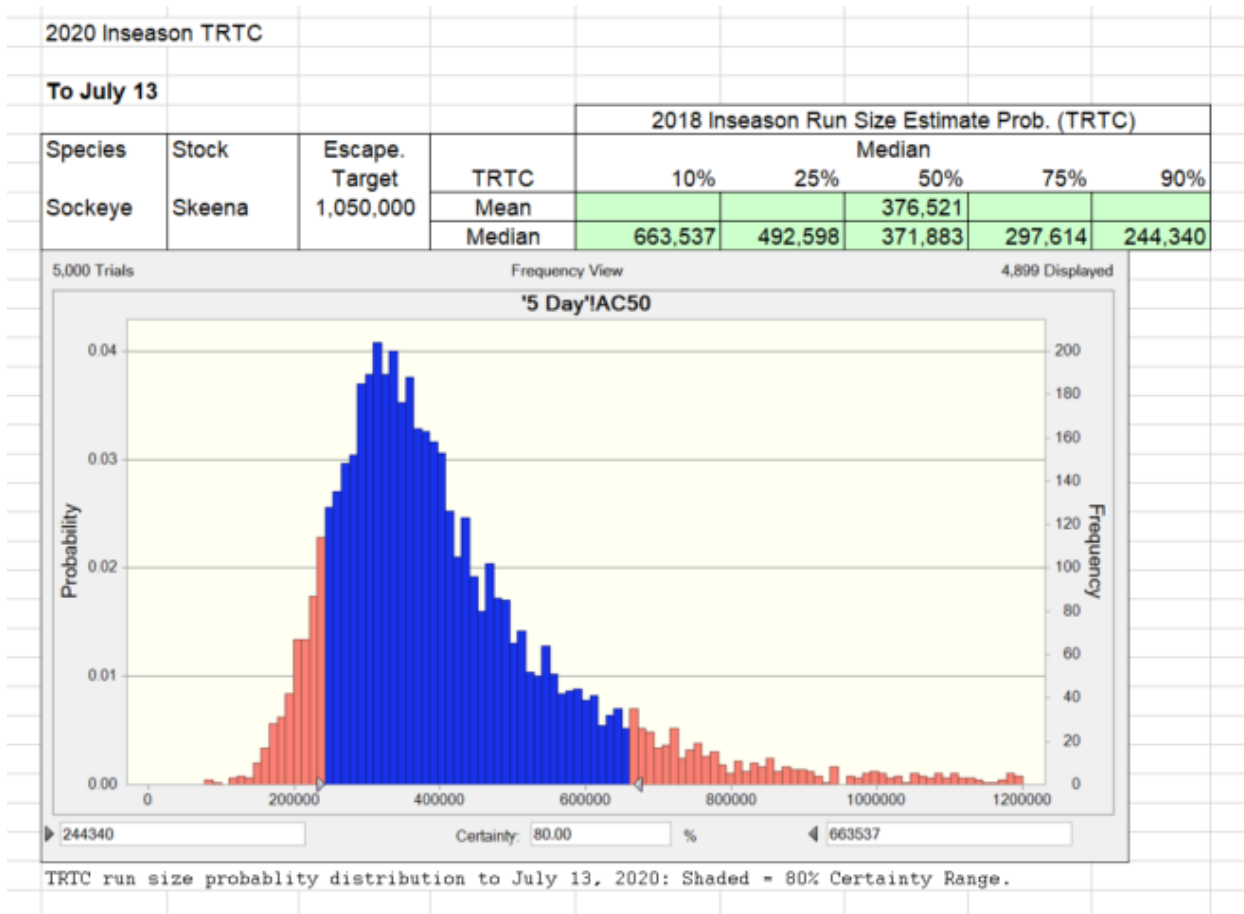
The District 4 purse seine fishery has not yet occurred.

Southeast Alaska Troll Fishery:

The Southeast Alaska troll fishery completed their first Chinook retention period of the season on July 6 after six days of fishing. CPUE was relatively good with low effort. The fleet switched to targeting Coho shortly after the Chinook directed fishery. A summary of Coho catch data is anticipated to be available for next week's update.

Area 4 - Skeena River

Based on results from the Tyee test fishery to July 13, the current run size estimates range from 244k – 663k Skeena Sockeye (80% certainty), with a mean (point) estimate of 376,521. With average run timing, 21% of the run is estimated to have passed Tyee as of July 13.



Tyee Test Fishery:

As of July 13, the estimated number of Large Sockeye past Tyee is 79,379 fish. Escapements improved over the weekend, however this trend must continue in order for the average run timing estimate to exceed the conservation target of 400k. The index values of Chinook encountered to date are higher than this point in 2019, 2017, and 2016, yet remain lower than the decadal average.

Tyee Test Fishery Cumulative Index to July 13:

	Sockeye	Coho	Pink (even)	Chum	Lg. Chinook	Steelhead
2020	74.96	0	0.21	0.15	50.76	1.64
2019	48.15	0.26	N/A	0	44.61	0.83
2018	154.88	0	0.20	0.48	65.07	21.47
2017	109.32	0.19	N/A	0.21	36.01	2.66
2016	302.75	0	0	1.09	45.19	12.14
2010-2019 Avg.	295.68	0.19	0.25	0.28	65.61	5.84

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.

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 A and C fishery openings and area approval of the respective fishing plans. The Department is currently working with the proponents to finalize these details.

Recreational Fisheries:**Area 3 and 4 Creel Survey**

The North Coast Skeena First Nations Stewardship Society continued their creel survey operations in June. They performed 541 interviews totalling 1,602 anglers, with a reported catch of 638 Chinook and 226 Coho. These numbers are expanded and produce a catch estimate of 2,583 Chinook and 993 Coho for the month of June. For comparison, estimated expanded catches for in June 2019 were 5,689 Chinook and 1,521 Coho.

Area 6

The first Area 6 seine opening will be informed by in-season assessments. Early indications suggest Pink abundance may be better than recent years and Charter Patrol are actively surveying the area. Opportunities for seine fisheries will be provided by Fishery Notice.

Gill net opportunities will be dependent on Kitimat River hatchery chum abundance. Preliminary information suggests Chum returns are low to date.

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

There will be no Area 8 commercial fishery the week of July 12-18 in order to let stocks build in Fisher Fitz Hugh and Bella Coola Gill Net Area. The next possible opening is July 20, 2020. This will be confirmed by Fishery Notice on July 16.

Catch for Stat week 27 was 2,669 Chum, 2013-2019 average catch is 7,350 Chum for week 27. Catch for Stat week 28 was 1,544 Chum, 2013-2019 average catch is 16,700 Chum for week 28.

The Nuxalk Nation CSAF Demonstration Fishery did not take place last week.

Area 8 Gillnet Catch Estimates:

Fishery Operations System

Commercial SALMON GILL NET In-Season Estimated Catch-by-Area (Pieces) for Period 01-Apr-2020 to 13-Jul-2020

Management Area 8

[Report Details by Subarea or Portion](#)

Stat Week	Week of Year	Effort	Sockeye Salmon		Coho Salmon		Pink Salmon		Chum Salmon		Chinook Salmon		Steelhead	
			Kept	Rel	Kept	Rel	Kept	Rel	Kept	Rel	Kept	Rel	Kept	Rel
06/3	25	Total for Week	24	0	0	0	0	0	42	1	111	0	0	0
07/1	27	Total for Week	107	69	10	0	32	454	1	2669	0	968	3	0
07/2	28	Total for Week	133	71	6	0	64	458	8	1544	0	722	2	0
Total for Management Area 8 in Period			264	140	16	0	96	912	9	4255	1	1801	5	0

Notes:

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

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Recreational Fisheries:

A number of lodges and charter operators have indicated they will not operate in the 2020 season. More information will be included in the update when it becomes available.