

North Coast Salmon Update #3 – Tuesday, July 4, 2017

Please note that in-season updates always deal in preliminary numbers. Usually these change somewhat upon receipt and analysis of all the data.

Haida Gwaii

Area F Troll Update

Chinook

The 2017 Area F Troll chinook TAC is 108,500 pieces, and will be managed to the maximum 3.2% exploitation objective on WCVI chinook using an Effort / Harvest Relationship Management Tool. The troll fishery opened June 21st (FN0513) with 115 vessels participating in the opening. Average CPUE has increased from 25-30 chinook per vessel per day last week to 35-40 chinook per vessel per day over the weekend. While the fishery began with below average CPUE's, the mean CPUE over the past few days has increased to above the decadal average. The estimated total catch as of July 4th is 41,400 chinook which is 38% of the 2017 Area F Troll TAC. The total chinook validated to date is 8,800 pieces.

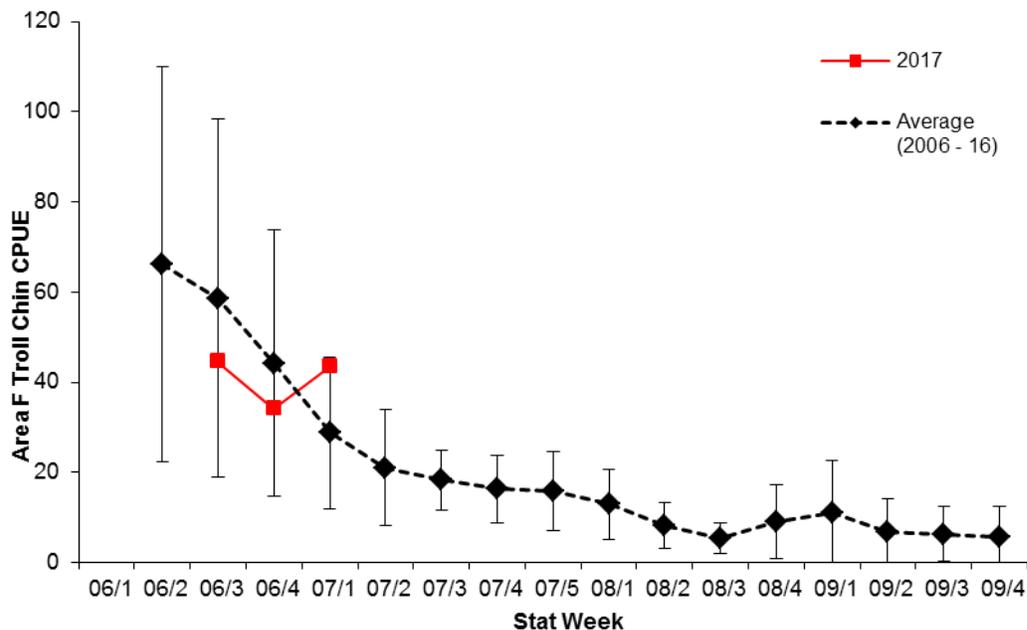


Figure 1: Area F Troll Chinook interceptions per vessel day (CPUE includes retained + releases) by week. Black diamonds represent mean weekly CPUE for last decade. Black vertical bars represent 1 S.D. Red squares represent 2017 mean values.

Coho

The A-B Line Coho retention fishery opened July 1st (FN0572) with retention of coho and pink salmon. The main Dixon Entrance targeted Coho Fishery opening is scheduled for July 10th (FN0590). The current coho catch is estimated to be 2,700 pieces with early indications of above average abundance based on CPUEs observed in the fishery over the past week.

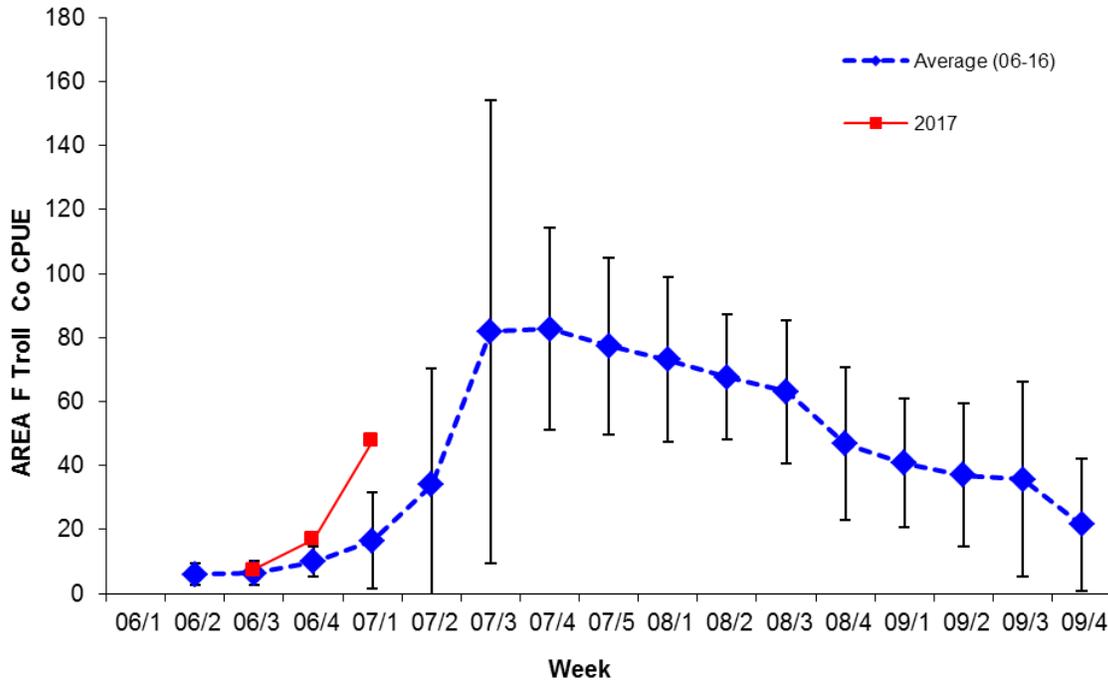


Figure 1: Area F Troll coho interceptions per vessel day (CPUE includes retained + releases) by week. Blue diamonds represent mean weekly CPUE for last decade. Black vertical bars represent 1 S.D. Red squares represent 2017 mean values.

Table 1 – Summary of Area F Troll catch and releases to date by week.

WEEK	End Date	Effort	Chinook		Coho		Pink		Sockeye		Chum	
			Kept	Rel.	Kept	Rel.	Kept	Rel.	Kept	Rel.	Kept	Rel.
25	24-Jun	532	17,296	1,682	0	3,190	98	216	0	0	0	97
26	1-Jul	659	20,582	3,448	369	12,716	217	450	0	0	0	140
27	8-Jul	224	3,537	793	2,369	2,865	661	408	0	11	0	77
	Total		41,416	5,924	2,738	18,772	976	1,074	0	11	0	314

Area 1-2 Recreational

Chinook abundance around Langara Island is about the same as last week, with a similar average size. Coho abundance has increased from the previous week, with most fish being in the 7 to 9 pound range, and the largest being 13 pounds. Some pinks are starting to show up offshore, along with a few chums.

Area 3 (Nass River)

Nass River sockeye returns are forecasted to be slightly below the 20-year average with an expected Total Return to Canada (TRTC) of 454,000 (50% probability) based on the sibling relationship model. In addition, a below average return of 24,000 (50% probability) upper Nass chinook was anticipated.

The Nass River fish wheels have been in operation since May 31st. The river level of 2.4m at the Gitwinksilkh Canyon on July 2nd is 0.4m below the mean water level, for this date, since the fish wheel program began in 1994. In addition, current water temperatures are slightly warmer than

the 1994–2016 average (9.2°C vs. 9.0°C). Sockeye and chinook catches at the fish wheels continue to be below average, while steelhead catches remain above average.

The current estimated escapement to the lower fish wheels continues to be well below average, to date, (27,914 vs. 74,000 mean) for sockeye and chinook (2,246 vs. 12,300 mean). Based on average run-timing, 11.8% of sockeye and 23.7% of Nass chinook had migrated past the lower fish wheels as of this past Sunday (June 25th).

Based on average run timing and in-season catch and escapement to date, the projected in-season TRTC estimate for Nass sockeye is 224,000, and 11,000 for upper Nass chinook. It is still too early to derive predictions for other salmon species.

Net Fisheries:

Four 2-day gillnet openings occurred in Area 3 in June, with a 1-day opening announced for Monday this week (FN0603). Boundaries have been amended to minimize impacts to Skeena sockeye. Catch estimates for the July 3 opening are not yet available, for the fleet of approximately 113 vessels.

Chum retention was not permitted for the Area 3 gillnet fleet this week, and fishing boundaries were amended to protect Skeena sockeye.

The first Area 3 seine opening is anticipated for July 5th to target Area 3 pinks. Future openings will be based on pink abundance.

Area 3 Gillnet Catch Estimates

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		
		06-Jun	61	1263	0	1	0	0	0	0	2	85	27	22	Reviewed
		07-Jun	49	440	0	0	0	0	0	4	11	22	14		
		Total for Week	110	1703	0	1	0	0	0	6	96	49	36		
		12-Jun	121	4778	0	1	3	0	0	0	13	403	117	30	Reviewed
		13-Jun	124	2118	0	11	3	0	0	32	144	76	31		
		Total for Week	245	6896	0	12	6	0	0	45	547	193	61		
		19-Jun	179	4796	0	16	4	0	0	0	139	219	90	60	Reviewed
		20-Jun	131	2599	0	16	2	0	0	0	227	39	40	24	
		Total for Week	310	7395	0	32	6	0	0	0	366	258	130	84	
		26-Jun	190	10690	0	92	1	6	1	901	162	250	124	39	Reviewed
		27-Jun	110	3301	0	175	5	41	2	3307	57	106	3	14	
		Total for Week	300	13991	0	267	6	47	3	4208	219	356	127	53	
		03-Jul	113	4458	0	299	0	691	0	0	1186	0	88	12	Preliminary
		Total for Week	113	4458	0	299	0	691	0	0	1186	0	88	12	
		Total for Management Area 3 in Period	1078	34443	0	611	18	738	3	4208	1822	1257	587	246	

The Fishery Monitoring and Catch Reporting program is currently going through a review. In the meantime, a dockside monitoring program is in place for the 2017 season for Area 3.

Nass River salmon stock assessment updates from the Nisga'a Fish and Wildlife Department will be available later this week. Periodic in-season updates are 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/>

Nass Inland Demonstration Fishery

Both the Nisga'a and the Gitanyow Nations were expected to participate in inland demonstration fisheries to fish for sockeye in the Nass watershed. This fishery will not take place until the run projection improves.

Meziadin Fishway

The Meziadin Fishway became operational on July 1st, with a total of 10 sockeye being counted as of July 3rd. Historic and 2017 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. It is typically not operational until mid-July.

Tree Point Gill Net Fishery

The Tree Point gillnet fishery in south-east Alaska opened for 4 days this week, opening Sunday, July 2nd at noon. No catch estimates are available for this week. Preliminary catch estimates for Week 26 include 1,600 sockeye, 500 coho, 600 pink, 39,000 chum and 450 chinook, for a fleet of 49 vessels.

Noyes Island Seine Fishery

The District 4 (Noyes/Dall Island) seine fishery has not yet been opened in 2017. Due to the very poor Skeena sockeye return prediction, southeast Alaskan Fishery Managers are looking at management changes to reduce impacts of this fishery on Skeena sockeye.

Area 4 (Skeena River)

The 2016 Babine Counting Fence jack sockeye count was the worst on record, at less than 0.06%. In addition, the proportion of 4 year-old sockeye in the 2016 Skeena sockeye aggregate was approximately 20%. As such, the total Skeena sockeye return is expected to be well below the minimum escapement target of 1.05M, based on the sibling regression model. The range of

probabilities for the forecasted return are from a 10% chance that the return will be 1.24 million or higher, to a 90% chance that the return will be 285,000 or higher. For management purposes, the pre-season return forecast point estimate is 595,000 (50% probability).

Net Fisheries:

There have been no commercial fisheries in Area 4 this year. The Skeena chinook-directed gillnet fishery will not take place in 2017. No sockeye-directed fisheries are anticipated on Skeena sockeye in 2017.

Recreational Fisheries:

The Area 3 and 4 creel survey began on June 1st. June results will be available in mid-July. Regular daily retention limits apply for all salmon but sockeye in Area 4 tidal waters, where retention limits for sockeye have been varied to 0.

Tyee Test Fishery:

The Tyee Test Fishery continues to operate at a discharge, temperature and turbidity normally seen at this time of year. Catches of sockeye and chinook at the test site remain well below average. An estimated 28,092 sockeye have migrated into the Skeena River, to date. Based on assumed average run-timing, approximately 6.7% of the return has migrated past the Tyee Test site. Based on estimated escapement to date, and assuming average run-timing, the current Total Return to Canada will be 419,000 sockeye.

2017 Tyee test fishery daily and cumulative sockeye escapement estimate data, along with 2017 escapement indices by species, are available here:

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

Tyee test fishery cumulative index to July 2nd:

	Sockeye	Coho	Pink	Chum	Lg Chinook	Steelhead
2017	21.94	0.00	0.00	0.00	16.23	0.00
2013	43.40	0.00	0.00	0.00	44.48	0.24
2000's Avg.	168.18	0.00	0.03	0.02	138.24	0.20
1990's Avg.	107.40	0.00	0.00	0.08	126.98	1.27
1980's Avg.	157.50	0.00	0.06	0.00	86.34	2.42

Kitwanga Weir

The Gitanyow Fisheries Authority will be operating the Kitwanga weir again this year. It is typically operational in 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, which typically becomes operational in late July.

Sustut Weir

The Province of BC will be operating the Sustut weir again this year, which typically becomes operational in early August.

Area 6

Net Fisheries:

Gill net opportunities in Area 6 will be dependent on Kitimat River Hatchery chum abundance.

The first Area 6 seine opening is anticipated for the middle of July to target pink salmon. A catch monitoring program will be in place for this fishery.

Area 7

Net Fisheries:

The first net fisheries are not anticipated until late July, depending on in-season assessments of abundance.

Recreational Fisheries:

An up-date on the status of recreational fishing in the area will not be available until mid to late July.

Area 8

Net Fisheries:

Area 8 opened yesterday for 16 hours to target chum, with chinook and pink salmon retention also being permitted (FN0601). Release of all live sockeye is requested. Catch estimates for this fishery are not available at this time for the fleet of 92 vessels.

Area 8 Gillnet Catch Estimates

Management Area 8

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	
		05-Jun	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	68	0	0	Reviewed
		Total for Week	9	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	68	0	0	
		12-Jun	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	26	0	112	0	1	Reviewed
		Total for Week	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	26	0	112	0	1	
		19-Jun	21	6	0	0	0	0	0	63	0	91	0	0	Preliminary
		Total for Week	21	6	0	0	0	0	0	63	0	91	0	0	
		26-Jun	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	997	0	308	0	0	Preliminary
		Total for Week	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	997	0	308	0	0	
		Total for Management Area 8 in Period	71	6	0	0	0	0	0	1091	0	579	0	1	

For central coast catch information, please contact Jeffrey Radford: Jeffrey.Radford@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Recreational Fisheries (Hakai Pass):

An up-date on the status of recreational fishing in the area will not be available until mid to late July.

Area 9

Recreational Fisheries:

Fishing continues to be good for chinooks in the Rivers Inlet area. Coho catches slowed for a while but have now rebounded. The first pinks of the year were caught this week, but no chums have been encountered yet. Lodge creel information should be available in the near future.

Area 10

It is unlikely that the Docee fence will be operational in 2017.

North Coast

For more information please visit the North Coast website here:
<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/northcoast-cotenord/index-eng.html>