Summary of Draft 2023 IFMP Management – Nass Salmon

|  | Sockeye | Chinook | Coho | Chum | Pink |
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| Overview/ Outlook | * Considerations for Meziadin and Kwinageese returns * Fisheries targeting Nass Sockeye are managed to meet commitments in accordance with the Nisga’a Final Agreement (NFA), to meet First Nations FSC goals, Pacific Salmon Treaty (PST) obligations and to provide ocean commercial and inland commercial fisheries harvest opportunities. | * 2023 expected to be above escapement goal, but concerns around weaker stocks * Low Kwinageese CN brood years | * Commercial net fisheries on NC will be non-retention of Coho | * Nass chum considered depressed * Directed effort commercial fisheries not permitted * Limited by-catch opportunities as by-catch in pink and sockeye directed fisheries when enhanced chum present | * Nass pinks dominant in odd years * Most Area 3 pinks mid-July run timing, outer coastal stocks August/Sept. |
| 2023  Forecast | * Below average run but TRTC above target * Sibling regression model * Good accuracy (MAA 79.3%) * 21% Alaska harvest * Total run 455,000 (320-650k 25-75th) * TRTC is 361,000 (254-516k 25-75th) | * Average run, TRTC well above target * Sibling regression model * Good accuracy (MAA 87%) * 5.7% Alaska harvest * Total run 34,000 (25-44k 25-75th) * TRTC 50% is 32,000 (24-42k 25-75th) | * Below average run but TRTC well above target * Brood year model * Good accuracy (MAA 87%) * 44% Alaska harvest * Total run 34,000 (25-44k 25-75th) * TRTC 50% is 32,000 (24-42k 25-75th) | * No formal forecast, no chum surpluses expected * Nisga’a 2022 forecast total run is 55,000 (33-92k 25-75th) | * No formal forecast * Highly uncertain, even years typically lower abundance * Nisga’a 2022 forecast total run is 454,000 (266-775k 25-75th) above average * TRTC 416k (244-710k) * Poor accuracy |
| Escapement Goals | * Minimum goal 100,000 * MEG Nass 200,000, Meziadin 160,000 | * Minimum goal 10,000 * MEG 15,000 | * Minimum goal 40,000 * MEG 60,000 | * Minimum goal 30,000 * MEG 45,000 | * Minimum goal 150,000 * MEG 225,000 |
| In-season | * In-season returns monitored by CPUE data from Areas 3 and SEAK Tree Point commercial net fisheries, Nisga’a fishwheel program, Meziadin fishway and escapement surveys to indicator systems | * In-season aggregate assessments by Nisga’a fishwheel program | * In-season returns monitored by Nisga’a fishwheel program and escapement surveys to indicator systems | * In-season returns monitored by Nisga’a fishwheel program and escapement surveys to indicator systems | * In-season returns monitored by Nisga’a fishwheel program * In-season stream escapements are used to inform fishing opportunities past early assessments |
| Management Approach | * Managed to meet MEG of 200,000 | * Precautionary management approach will continue in 2022 | * Precautionary approach to management in 2022 | * Chum stocks are managed to stream-specific escapement goals * Commercial fisheries managed to avoid wild chum stocks * No opportunities for directed harvest on wild chum * Retention of chum will be permitted as by-catch in times and areas coinciding with high abundances of enhanced chum | * Pink stocks are managed to stream-specific escapement goals. * PST Pink annex considerations. * Targeted net fisheries based on identified surpluses with consideration for stocks of concern. |
| Decision Guidelines and Management Actions | * Nass sockeye managed to meet 200k MEG, excess harvested in Nisga’a Treaty, rec and comm harvest in marine and FW * In years where Meziadin sockeye escapement expected to be below 200k, considerations to reduce impacts will influence terminal comm sockeye harvest | * A precautionary approach to management will continue for Nass Chinook in 2022 Consultation with First Nations and stakeholders is ongoing to determinate appropriate management actions. While Nass Chinook returns are anticipated to be above the escapement goal, concerns remain for some stocks within the watershed, particularly Kwinageese Chinook, due to poor returns in 2017 and low water levels in 2018 during spawning season. | * Non-retention in all NC net fisheries which may be re-evaluated in-season * Any Area 3 Coho directed Troll fishery would be dependent on in-season assessment of Coho abundance | * Commercial fisheries in Areas 3 will be managed to avoid wild Chum stocks. There will be no opportunities for directed harvest on wild Nass Chum. * Retention of chum in Area 3 permitted as by-catch in times/areas with high abundances of enhanced chum | * Weekly in-season decisions for Area 3 are made from run size projections based on: * Catch and effort data from A3 and Tree Point comm net fisheries * Nisga’a fishwheels * Stream inspections |
| Incidental harvest, by-catch and constraints | * All Nass net fisheries will normally be restricted to daylight hours * Considerations for steelhead, chum, chinook and coho in sockeye-directed net fisheries * 5.39in max mesh size in gillnets * 2022 Kwinageese sockeye Area 3 measures: 1 week closure for comm gillnets, 1 week non-retention in seine | * No mention of Nass CN considerations in IFMP | * In-river recreational Coho fisheries will be permitted in the Nass * Reduced retention limits during openings and spatial closures at Nass River mainstem and confluence of Meziadin River until Sept. 15th | * Area 3 Chum are considered a stock of concern and will require focused management planning. * CDN ERs below 10% * Commercial fisheries limited to daylight * Gillnets have a 137mm (5.39 inch) max mesh restriction * Pink fishing opportunities will be managed to conserve weak stocks in Area 3 | * Pink fishing opportunities will be managed to conserve weak stocks of A3 chum * May be additional measures to limit impacts to A3 sockeye depending on PSSI |
| First Nations Fisheries | * Guided by communal licences * Actual opportunities and catches will be dependent on, among other factors; in-season stock strength, management measures taken to ensure conservation of individual stocks, community needs of First Nations, and alternative sources of salmon if preferred species are not available locally due to low abundance. * When a conservation concern has been identified for an individual stock that is harvested by First Nations, consultations will be undertaken to adapt the fishing plan to provide the necessary protection to the weak stock. | * Guided by communal licences * Protective measures may be considered in terminal areas * Actual opportunities and catches will be dependent on, among other factors; in-season stock strength, management measures taken to ensure conservation of individual stocks, community needs of First Nations, and alternative sources of salmon if preferred species are not available locally due to low abundance | * Guided by communal licences * Actual opportunities and catches will be dependent on, among other factors; in-season stock strength, management measures taken to ensure conservation of individual stocks, community needs of First Nations, and alternative sources of salmon if preferred species are not available locally due to low abundance | * Guided by communal licences * Protective measures may be considered in terminal areas * Actual opportunities and catches will be dependent on, among other factors; in-season stock strength, management measures taken to ensure conservation of individual stocks, community needs of First Nations, and alternative sources of salmon if preferred species are not available locally due to low abundance | * Guided by communal licences * Actual opportunities and catches will be dependent on, among other factors; in-season stock strength, management measures taken to ensure conservation of individual stocks, community needs of First Nations, and alternative sources of salmon if preferred species are not available locally due to low abundance |
| Nisga’a Treaty Fisheries | * Individual sales fisheries for sockeye closed in 2021 (PSSI) * PSSI closure under discussion for 2022 * Nisga’a allocation between 4-77k. * Initial allocation for 2022 78,000 and may change depending on in-season abundance | * Individual sales fisheries for pinks closed in 2021 (PSSI) * PSSI closure under discussion for 2022 * Allocation for 2022 3,500-6,000, 4,600 initial target and may change in-season | * Individual sales fisheries for coho closed in 2021 (PSSI) * PSSI closure under discussion for 2022 * Nisga’a allocation between 4-77k. * Initial allocation for 2022 9,800 and may change depending on in-season abundance | * Initial allocation for 2022 4,000, can be changed in-season depending on in-season abundance | * Individual sales fisheries for pinks closed in 2021 (PSSI) * PSSI closure under discussion for 2022 * Nisga’a allocation between 4-77k. * Initial allocation for 2022 31,000 and may change depending on in-season abundance |
| Recreational Fisheries | * Marine and mainstem sockeye fisheries occur * In-river, min size is 30cm, with daily and possession limits * 2020 triggers for Meziadin Lake rec fishery remain in place: < 120k 0 per day, 120-160k 1 per day and > 160 2 per day. | * DFO proposal to maintain tidal total annual limit of 10 * The Department is developing a suite of management actions intended to promote rebuilding of Nass Chinook. | * Marine recreational fisheries will be permitted, with daily, possession and annual limits * Min size is 30cm * Possession 2x daily limit | * Daily limit 0 * Closed to fishing for chum salmon | * Tidal open April 1 to March 31 * Daily limit 4 per day * Mainstem open July 1 to Sept 15, minimum size 30cm, daily limit 2 fish * Possession limit 2x daily limit |
| Commercial Fisheries | * Allocations Seine A=25%, Gillnet C=75%, Troll F=0% * For 2022 DFO will maintain precautionary approach * Early season assessment opening proposed and informed by in-season Fishwheel information, will be conducted with spatial closures to avoid Nass Chinook * Later-timed fisheries will be avoided to minimize interactions with Nass chum and possibly additional measures for Nass coho * Area C Gillnet: closed 2021 (PSSI), unknown for 2022 * Area A Seine: sockeye retention in any pink seine opening will be based on PSSI discussions, pre-season consultations and in-season abundance (min bunt mesh size 2.76in) | * Nothing in IFMP for CN ISBM fisheries on Nass | * PST includes a provision for closing NC troll fisheries using a coho CPUE in SEAK may close A3. Was in place in 2019 * Allocations Seine A=12.5%, Gillnet C=6.5%, Troll F=81.0% * Area C Gillnet: has interest in developing a coho-directed fishery in A3 * Retention of coho not allowed in sockeye-directed gillnet fisheries * Area A Seine: no directed fisheries for NBC coho, non-retention in sockeye and pink-directed seine fisheries * Area F Toll: closed in 2021 (PSSI), under discussion for 2022. | * Area A and Area C (gillnet) no directed commercial opportunities * May be retention as by-catch as above * Area F (troll) non-retention of chum in Dixon Entrance and Hecate Strait to protect wild Nass chum | * Allocations Seine A=75.5%, Gillnet C=22.5%, Troll F=2.0% * Fishing opportunities may be considered if stocks appear to be returning in sufficient abundance * Typically occur mid-July to mid-August * A3 pink fishing opportunities are evaluated based on pre-season expectations * **Area A Seine: DFO is considering a 1-day Seine opening first week of July to assess A3 pink stocks for early assessment of run strength (sockeye retention may be allowed)** * Additional fishing opportunities based on CPUEs and stream escapements * Area C Gillnet: possible 1-day opening to assess sockeye with pink retention * Area F Troll: If abundances permit, targeted troll fishery may be conducted and managed to minimize by-catch of chum |
| CSAF Demo Fisheries | * Inland demo fishery if commercial fisheries proceed * Intent to continue selective gear practices * Sockeye retention (with possible pink and coho retention) * Possible consideration of Nisga’a and Gitanyow CSAF fishery proposals for 2022 | * None | * None | * None | * 2 pink directed CSAF demo fisheries in Area 3 proposed for 2022 * Lax/Met and NCSFNSS similar gear and fishery controls as Area A Seine fisheries |
| ESSR Fisheries | * Discussions around Gitanyow ESSR in Meziadin Lake continue | * No ESSR fisheries for Nass chinook | * No ESSR fisheries for Nass coho | * No ESSR fisheries for Nass chum | * No pink ESSRs at this time, but GFA in discussions with DFO |
| PSSI Consideration Fisheries | * Nisga’a Treaty Gillnet closed 2021, unknown for 2022. * Area C Gillnet closed 2021, unknown for 2022. | * Nisga’a Treaty Gillnet closed 2021, unknown for 2022 | * Nisga’a Treaty Gillnet closed 2021, unknown for 2022 | ? | ? |