

# **NASS WATERSHED TECHNICAL COMMITTEE**

## **TERMS OF REFERENCE**

### **1. Background**

The Nass Watershed Technical Committee (TC) provides a forum for discussion of the technical issues of fisheries management and salmon biology by Nass First Nations and Fisheries and Oceans, Canada (DFO), with participation by British Columbia when appropriate from time to time. The TC is meant to complement other existing fisheries processes and is not intended to replace or duplicate other bodies.

### **2. Purpose**

The purpose of the TC is to:

- (a) provide a forum for discussion of technical issues of fisheries management and salmon biology;
- (b) serve as a problem solving think-tank around the subjects listed in (a);
- (c) foster collegiality among its participants and provide for their on-going learning and the exchange of ideas and information as it relates to fisheries in the Nass Watershed.

The TC is not intended for:

- (a) negotiation of allocation to fisheries; or
- (b) resolution of conflicts between First Nations nor between First Nations and government agencies, over land claim areas or fisheries allocations.

### **3. Aboriginal Rights and Title**

The TC is not a forum to discuss issues regarding aboriginal rights and title, and it is expressly not intended to fulfill or replace the legal obligation of Canada or British Columbia to consult First Nations on a government-to-government basis when contemplating activities which might impact on Aboriginal rights and title.

### **4. Functions of the TC**

The primary purpose of the TC is to deal with technical aspects of salmon fisheries and fisheries management, including:

- (a) Technical aspects of stock assessment such as:
  - collection of fisheries monitoring information;
  - collection of biological information;

recommending stock assessment coverage and procedures;  
assigning responsibilities for stock assessment coverage;  
arranging to maximize cooperation in stock assessment activities;

- (b) Studies of the biology of salmonids and other species;
- (c) Nass freshwater habitat evaluation and protection;
- (d) Cooperation on joint funding applications for projects to be carried out by Nass member First Nations and DFO;
- (e) Participation in regional and provincial planning activities;
- (f) Sponsoring of events of general interest to the BC fisheries community;
- (g) Sponsoring training sessions and field schools; and
- (h) Sponsoring professional activities for members.

## 5. Membership & Chair

The TC membership is open to representatives of the member Nations of the Nass Watershed, which may include members of the Gitksan, Gitanyow, Nisga'a, Tsimshian, and representatives of the DFO.

Provincial Agencies, while not included in the formal TC membership, may be invited to participate when relevant.

TC members will exhibit professional behaviour and comportment at meetings, and will work together with fairness, courtesy and good faith.

The TC Chair will be revolving between participating members and appointed by consensus in consultation with the DFO.

## 6. Member Responsibilities

The overall responsibility of TC members is to their constituents, and each member of the TC is required to:

- (a) Attend TC meetings;
- (b) Review minutes of meetings for accuracy and completeness, and to inform themselves of discussions at meetings that are unavoidably missed;
- (c) Inform his or her constituents of technical issues brought forward at TC meetings;
- (d) Bring to the attention of the Chair technical issues for discussion; and
- (e) Refrain from making public statements on behalf of the TC.

7. The Chair is responsible for:

- (a) Calling meetings, and arranging speakers and facilities for meetings;
- (b) Inviting observers or participants to attend meetings as agreed to by consensus of the TC.
- (c) Arranging for the preparation of meeting minutes, circulating the draft minutes to the members, and overseeing the preparation of approved minutes for final distribution;
- (d) Distribute technical reports and papers of TC interest;
- (e) Keeping an archive of the full record of all meetings, including approved minutes, technical items, and any other items presented at a meeting;
- (f) Meeting agendas will be determined by the committee members at the previous meeting subject to changes and additions. The TC Chair is responsible for finalizing the agenda in the event of any disagreement.
- (g) Distributing the agenda and technical information in advance of meetings
- (h) Direct meeting discussions as provided by the agenda and keeping discussions relevant and on track in the limited to available time;

8. Meetings and Meeting Minutes

The TC will endeavour to meet at least twice a year in the pre-season and post-season or as often as necessary to address important technical issues as they arise.

The Chair will arrange for non-verbatim minutes of the meetings to be recorded. The minutes will be presented at the following meeting in draft form for approval by the TC members, and only approved minutes may be circulated as a record of the meetings. All meeting participants are encouraged to make their own meeting record.

9. Expenses

Expenses of the TC and its members are the responsibility of member groups, or with prior agreement, of the DFO. However, the TC will seek out longterm funding to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of the TC.

10. Alterations to the Terms of Reference.

The Terms of Reference may be amended from time to time as necessary by consensus of the TC, provided that the potential action is announced/discussed in an earlier meeting and listed in the agenda distributed before the meeting.