



First Nations Fisheries Council COMMUNIQUÉ

OCTOBER 2017



FIRST NATIONS FISHERIES COUNCIL MEMBERS:

North Coast: **Arnold Clifton**
Central Coast: **Megan Moody**
South Vancouver Island: **Larry George**
Lower Mainland: **In progress**
Upper Fraser: **Thomas Alexis**
Northern Transboundary: **Cheri Frocklage**
Haida Gwaii: **Robert Bennett**
North Vancouver Island: **John Henderson**
West Coast Vancouver Island: **Hugh Braker**
Fraser Valley: **Ken Malloway**
Mid-Fraser 1: **Murray Ross**
Mid-Fraser 2: **Tracy Wimbush**
Upper Skeena: **Stu Barnes**
Transboundary Columbia: **Howie Wright**

Contact Us:

First Nations Fisheries Council of BC
320-1200 West 73rd Ave.
Vancouver, BC V6P 6G5

Phone: 778-379-6470
Fax: 778-379-6469

Email: info@fnfisheriescouncil.ca
Website: www.fnfisheriescouncil.ca

MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

ʔi ʔə ce:p ʔəw ʔəy ʔaí, Si:yém nə Siyeyə?

Are you all well, my esteemed friends (relations),

As BC First Nations, we continue to find ourselves in very busy times, with an overwhelmingly busy calendar of meetings, dialogue and engagement on all of the matters that impact our fisheries.

With the upcoming FNFC Fall Assembly, we will be looking to hear from First Nations about the very poor year for returning stocks in 2017, with many fisheries well below historical returns. We are in a fish crisis, as our major river systems have been declining steadily over the past several decades and many cycle years.

We have agreed conceptually to begin planning a Fisheries Summit this winter or spring to discuss the development of an Action Plan for protecting and rebuilding our salmon stocks that are integral to our cultures and identities. We will be looking at various impacts including environmental factors and human activities, and developing strategies to work with DFO to build a co-governance agenda to preserve and protect priority rights-based fisheries.



“A UNITED VOICE FOR FIRST NATIONS FISHERIES”



AFN National Fisheries Committee:

The AFN's National Fisheries Committee (NFC) met on October 3- 5, 2017 at the Nipissing First Nation in Ontario. Recent priorities include:

- A National Day to recognize Aboriginal Fishing Rights and for communities to bring awareness to their fisheries and practices nationwide (Victoria Day is proposed);
- Renewed focus on creating a National Secretariat to monitor the implementation of fisheries case law decisions, (e.g. Gladstone, Sparrow, Marshall, Delgamuukw, Ahousaht, etc.);
- National Aquaculture Working Group (NAWG) was approved for \$130K in funding;
- Need to work with the incoming BCAFN Regional Chief to develop a BC Strategy to the NFC.

Indigenous Program Review / National Indigenous Fisheries Institute:

Currently there are ongoing efforts by the federal government to meet their platform promise to review laws and policies affecting Indigenous Peoples in Canada and ensure that they are consistent with case law, human rights standards including UNDRIP, and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action. This is occurring on a number of fronts both politically and operationally.

The National Indigenous Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum (NAFF) Steering Committee continues to build on their good work from the 3 NAFF forums held in 2010, 2013 and 2017 to advance the interests of First Nations in Canada on economic fisheries and programs (e.g. AFS, AAROM, PICFI, the Guardian Program, and perhaps the emerging OPP). DFO has asked the Steering Committee to work at a national scale to assist with the DFO Indigenous Program Review announced by Minister Leblanc at NAFF III in Membertou, Nova Scotia in May 2017.

A national panel/society, the National Indigenous Fisheries Institute (NIFI) has been formed to oversee and coordinate the review. The program review workshops and forums have been occurring this fall and information has been shared via the FNFC email list and on our website.

Legislative Review:

A key focus for this year has been the federal process for reviewing environmental legislation and processes including the *Fisheries Act*, the *Navigation Protection Act (NPA)*, the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA)*, and the National Energy Board process. The FNFC developed submissions to the Standing Committees and Ministers tasked with conducting reviews of the *Fisheries Act* and the NPA, working closely with regional First Nations organizations and with legal support from Mandell Pinder (*Fisheries Act*) and JFK Law (NPA). There has been a high level of engagement in the *Fisheries Act* review process in particular, as FNFC coordinated two separate series of First Nations engagement sessions throughout the province (9 meetings total, one series for each of two phases of the review) where DFO provided information to First Nations on the review (Tier 2), and First Nations worked together to discuss their interests, concerns, and priorities to inform the FNFC submissions. Brenda Gaertner of Mandell Pinder also presented directly to the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans

“A UNITED VOICE FOR FIRST NATIONS FISHERIES”



First Nations Fisheries Council Communiqué

OCTOBER 2017

on behalf of the FNFC regarding the *Fisheries Act* review. The FNFC's Fisheries Act and NPA submissions were also shared broadly with BC First Nations to support the development of their own submissions.

The submissions were also shared with the province-wide First Nations Leadership organizations in BC (BCAFN, UBCIC, FN Summit) and received formal support from the Chiefs in Assembly through resolutions passed at the meetings of each of these organizations.

FNFC Annual Fall Assembly:

The FNFC Annual Fall Assembly brings together First Nations from across BC as well as government partners to discuss matters related to First Nations fisheries in BC. This year we will be at the Songhees Wellness Centre in Victoria, BC on November 7-8, 2017. More detailed information about the Assembly is shared via the FNFC email list and the FNFC website. We very much look forward to seeing our colleagues and friends at this year's event!



Thanks,
Jordan Point
FNFC Executive Director



“A UNITED VOICE FOR FIRST NATIONS FISHERIES”



SALMON COORDINATING COMMITTEE UPDATE ON WSP IMPLEMENTATION

The First Nations Salmon Coordinating Committee (SCC) is a province-wide advisory process consisting of approximately 13 delegates from the various FNFC geographic regions. The SCC meets on a Tier 1 and 2 basis to provide strategic advice and recommendations to First Nations and DFO on province-wide Pacific salmon programs, plans, and policies.

The Wild Salmon Policy (WSP) was finalized in 2005 following 6 years of drafting and consultation. Many viewed the WSP as a transformative policy that would effectively conserve and protect Pacific salmon diversity and support sustainable salmon fisheries. However, the WSP has fallen well short of expectations due to the slow pace of implementation, absence of dedicated funding, lack of recovery actions for depressed (red-zoned) salmon populations, and ineffective engagement of First Nations. In August 2016, the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard announced a government commitment to rejuvenate the WSP starting with the preparation of an implementation plan. The draft WSP implementation plan was developed over this past summer through a working group of representatives from the SCC, the Pacific Salmon Foundation, the Province of BC, the Yukon Salmon Sub-committee, and DFO.

There are many constraints associated with DFO's current approach to implementation planning; there is no new funding or financing for future activities under existing DFO budgets, many of which are already oversubscribed. Further, no senior manager has been assigned exclusive responsibility for managing WSP implementation. A number of red-zoned CUs have been identified, but no assessments or recovery programs have been developed as required under the WSP. Nonetheless, the current political climate presents a window of opportunity for First Nations to advocate for their rights and interests. This can include assuming habitat and resource stewardship roles and implementing WSP-related activities, which many First Nations undertake in their territories to fill the void left by years of DFO funding cuts.

Consultation Sessions:

DFO is hosting a series of consultations with First Nations on the draft WSP implementation plan this fall. Consultations are planned for Kamloops (Oct 17), Penticton (Oct 19), Victoria (Oct 19), Nanaimo (Oct 24), Prince Rupert (Oct 24), Smithers (Oct 26), Campbell River (Oct 26), Prince George (Nov 2), Chilliwack (Nov 16), Port Alberni (Nov 21), and Whitehorse (Nov 30). The FNFC encourages interested First Nations to continue to attend these consultations to provide their input and feedback on the draft. FNFC has circulated briefing materials to prepare First Nations for this round of consultations and will be in attendance to provide general support. The FNFC also encourages First Nations to set up their own bilateral meetings with DFO on regionally-specific interests around the conservation and management of wild salmon, given that the implementation of the WSP has the potential to impact the rights of First Nations.

After the consultations are completed, DFO intends to engage further with the multi-partner working group and the SCC over the winter and spring to incorporate feedback received from the consultation period before the draft is finalized. The SCC maintains that it is not a decision-making body for any First Nation or group of First Nations, and that consultation with the SCC does not satisfy the requirement for bilateral consultation between

“A UNITED VOICE FOR FIRST NATIONS FISHERIES”



DFO and any First Nation. The SCC and FNFC will continue to communicate the progress and outcomes of the committee’s activities through existing FNFC communication channels, such as meetings with Charter organizations, monthly calls, communiqués, and emails updates.

For more information on the First Nations Salmon Coordinating Committee and its related activities, please contact Wanli Ou at wanli@fnfisheriescouncil.ca or 778-379-6470 (ext. 29).

.....

AQUACULTURE

Aquaculture Coordinating Committee:

First Nations in BC have diverse interests, perspectives and priorities with respect to the management of aquaculture and, as self-determining Nations, share a responsibility to manage resources in a manner that respects the interdependence they have with one another. As such, the FNFC established the Aquaculture Coordinating Committee (ACC) as a technical table with members from the various FNFC regions. The ACC aims to identify common interests and to increase First Nations involvement in the policy and management of the aquaculture industry.

The ACC has identified meeting objectives throughout the fiscal year with a focus on strategic agendas. The ACC continues to improve on a robust communication strategy between First Nations, and the development of strategies for First Nations engagement that will advance common interests and priorities in the management of aquaculture.

The ACC had a successful meeting in Nanaimo on September 20, 2017. The meeting was Tier 1, with a brief Tier 2 component with DFO to discuss the Atlantic Salmon escapement that occurred this past summer (more info below). Other agenda items included a review of communications, economic development, the Integrated Geoduck Management Framework (IGMF), work on the Strategic Plan, and preparing for Tier 2 engagement in 2017/2018.

A significant take-away from the meeting was the commitment by the ACC to come up with a robust Strategic Plan that we can all stand behind. The ACC intends to complete it for the new fiscal year to showcase to the Province, First Nations, DFO, and beyond.

We will also be engaging with DFO and the Province to develop a series of Tier 2 meetings. We will share more details about these meetings once they have been confirmed, and the FNFC will report out following the engagement.

In other news, the upcoming Shellfish Aquaculture Management Advisory Committee (AMAC) meeting is scheduled for November 2, 2017 in Courtenay, BC. The meeting is Tier 3 and will include engagement with DFO, the Province, and the BC Shellfish Growers Association.

“A UNITED VOICE FOR FIRST NATIONS FISHERIES”



Topics include:

- Update on Shellfish Aquaculture Industry Advisory Panel's Working Groups (BC Shellfish) Farm Industry Review Board (Provincial);
- National engagement on the Forward Aquaculture Agenda and the Fisheries 56 (b) and Clean Tech Funding Program (DFO);
- And a Conservation and Protection Update (DFO).

For more information the First Nations Fisheries Council's work on Aquaculture, please contact Richard Sparrow at richard@fnfisheriescouncil.ca or 778-379-6470 (ext. 28).

Atlantic Salmon Escapement:

In August we received some alarming news regarding the escape of over 305,000 Atlantic salmon from an open net pen fish farm into the Salish Sea. The FNFC and the Aquaculture Coordinating Committee (ACC) discussed the incident with DFO and put forward a recommendation that DFO provide communications to First Nations and to the general public on identifying Atlantic salmon and reporting sightings. DFO created this notice, and the FNFC and DFO each shared it through their channels. It was also posted on the DFO Fisheries Notification System.

In light of this event, the FNFC Executive Council passed a resolution to support the transition to closed containment fish farms. While the FNFC recognizes that some First Nations communities rely on agreements with fish farm operators for economic opportunities in their communities, the FNFC has heard from many nations that open net pens pose too great a risk to wild populations.

For any questions, please contact the DFO Atlantic Salmon Watch program:

Atlantic Salmon Watch Program, Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Toll free: 1-800-811-6010

Email: aswp@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Web: www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/science/aquaculture/aswp/index-eng.html



“A UNITED VOICE FOR FIRST NATIONS FISHERIES”



MARINE SAFETY / OCEANS PROTECTION PROGRAM

In January 2017, the FNFC, the Canadian Coast Guard and Transport Canada hosted an initial 2-day Marine Safety Workshop in Sidney, BC. During this workshop, participants requested additional details on engagement, initiatives, and the best path forward on responding to marine safety concerns.

In partnership with the FNFC, the Government of Canada will be hosting 2 introductory engagement sessions for South Coast BC First Nations regarding the Oceans Protection Plan (OPP). The OPP is the largest investment ever made to protect Canada's coasts and waterways. This national strategy aims to help establish a world-leading marine safety system that provides economic opportunities for Canadians and protects our coastlines.

The OPP has four main priority areas:

- 1) Increasing our capacity to prevent and improve responses to marine incidents;
- 2) Preserving and restoring marine ecosystems and habitats;
- 3) Strengthening partnerships with Indigenous and coastal communities; and
- 4) Ensuring Canada's marine safety system is built on a stronger evidence base, supported by science and local knowledge.

The upcoming engagement sessions in British Columbia will be focused on the following Oceans Protection Plan initiatives:

- Enhanced Maritime Situational Awareness
- Proactive Vessel Management and Anchorages
- Coastal Environmental Baseline Program and Assessing Impacts of Marine Shipping
- *Pilotage Act* Review

The FNFC sent out an invitation to South Coast First Nations at the end of September to attend one of the two full-day Indigenous engagement sessions (Oct 30 in Victoria, Nov 1 in Nanaimo). This will be a great opportunity for First Nations to provide input on preserving our shared aquatic resources.

If you have any questions about Marine Safety or the OPP, please contact Richard Sparrow at richard@fnfisheriescouncil.ca or 778-379-6470 (ext. 28).



“A UNITED VOICE FOR FIRST NATIONS FISHERIES”



BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT TEAM

It has been a very successful application season for Indigenous Commercial Fishing Enterprises (CFEs) across BC. Having worked diligently to meet deadlines of June 31 for the Pacific Commercial Fisheries Diversification Initiative (PCFDI) and July 30 for the Business Development Source funding (BDS), many CFEs are beginning to see their hard work pay off. A total of \$2.5 million has been allocated to 9 diversification projects across 10 CFEs, including direct to consumer sales, aquaculture, joint ventures in processing, and marketing and branding initiatives. It is fantastic to see CFEs taking full advantage of the funding available and bolstering their business models with strategic long-term projects. BDS applications are still under review by the Third Party Evaluator, but the Business Development Team (BDT) is expecting full utilization of the funding to help CFEs grow their businesses through investments in access, vessels, gear and other harvest-related activities.

This August we also saw an investment by DFO to develop a critical Fisheries Enterprise Management Training program for CFEs in BC. This program comes out of requests from CFEs for a training program to build capacity and develop staff and nation members to participate in fisheries-specific management and administration roles. The program will be designed and led by a technical working group of current CFE managers and supported by the BDT. The program will cover a variety of topics such as financial management, business planning, project management, and human resources and will be offered to all CFEs across the province. The first two courses will be developed throughout September to January and delivered in February and March 2018.

CFEs continue to focus on and respond to local training needs as well, being creative and customizing training opportunities that work for each company's fishers and employees. One CFE has customized an on-the-job training program to support members in learning to harvest a new species, while another has invested in communication and leadership training for their employees to enhance efficiency and teamwork. Both of the aforementioned initiatives have been supported through the Canada-BC Jobs grant, which provides employers with up to two-thirds of the cost of training for their current or future employees.

Looking forward, the BDT will continue to support CFEs as they implement this year's BDS and PCFDI projects, and will begin work on planning for future years as well. We will also be working on a range of other initiatives to support long-term CFE organizational capacity and business development. We are looking forward to working closely with FNFC's new Business and Economic Development Advisor, Astrid Niemman-Zajac, in her role of supporting economic development with both CFEs and non-CFE First Nations.

With PICFI now receiving consistent funding, the BDT is looking forward to engaging with CFEs over the coming months to better understand their goals and opportunities over the long-term and how we can provide support. Here's to another great fall!



“A UNITED VOICE FOR FIRST NATIONS FISHERIES”



WATER FOR FISH INITIATIVE DEVELOPS 3-YEAR PLAN

In August 2017, FNFC's *Water for Fish* (WFF) team completed a strategic planning process for "Phase II" of the program which will begin in April 2018. Supported by a Policy Development Initiative grant through the *New Relationship Trust*, the planning process consisted of a series of three roundtables hosted by the FNFC between May and July 2017:

- **Current Opportunities to Advance Aboriginal Water Rights in BC - Legal Roundtable** (Friday, May 26 in Vancouver), a ½ day session that convened leading lawyers and legal experts in Aboriginal law;
- **BC First Nations Water Governance Roundtable** (June 28 & 29 in Smithers, co-hosted with the Centre for Indigenous Environmental Resources), a 1-½ day session that convened 15 First Nations staff and leadership that are actively leading freshwater planning, management and governance activities in their territories; and
- **The FNFC & the Future of First Nations-led Water Governance** (July 18 in Vancouver), a facilitated 1-day session with FNFC staff and advisors to determine key objectives and activity areas for Water for Fish Phase II.

As part of this work, the FNFC also completed a briefing note prospectus on Sustainable Funding for BC First Nations freshwater planning and governance activities in September 2017. This prospectus contains various short, mid and long-term recommendations and options for the BC First Nations Leadership Council and Chiefs to consider bringing forward to advance funding options. The prospectus will be presented to the FNFC Executive Council in Fall 2017, and pending approval, will be shared with the First Nations Leadership Council.

WFF staff have incorporated the Roundtable outcomes and the sustainable funding prospectus into a 3-year plan for the Water for Fish program (2018-2021), and began engaging funders from the philanthropic and government sectors beginning September 2017.

Upcoming Water for Fish Events:

The *Water for Fish* initiative hosts a Water Wednesday webinar/teleconference call generally on the third Wednesday of every month. We also host freshwater-related workshops and meetings. Please contact Geneviève if you would like to be added to the Council's First Nations Water Network email list.

WEBINAR: Monthly "Water Wednesday": November 15th at 10:00 AM PT: BC Water Sustainability Act Update.
Register here: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/8923193653212585987>

WEBINAR: Monthly "Water Wednesday": December 13th at 10:00 AM PT: Getting the Attention of Chief and Council: Strategies and Discussion. Register here:
<https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/7228993569367963907>

Please contact Project Coordinator Geneviève Layton-Cartier at Genevieve@fnfisheriescouncil.ca if you have any questions.

"A UNITED VOICE FOR FIRST NATIONS FISHERIES"



FNFC UPDATE CONFERENCE CALLS (TIER 1)

The First Nations Fisheries Council hosts First Nations fisheries teleconferences on the **second Monday afternoon of every month from 1:30pm to 3:00pm**. We also hold topic-specific calls from time to time as required. The purpose of these calls is for First Nations to raise issues or concerns for discussion, and for the FNFC to provide updates and seek feedback on our priorities and activities. These calls are Tier 1, and are open to all First Nations and First Nations fisheries program staff. Dial-in information and agendas are distributed prior to each conference call via our email list.

The next monthly FNFC update conference call will be held on Monday, December 11, 2017
(November call cancelled as the Assembly is the week before)

Keep up with the FNFC on Social Media!

LIKE us on FACEBOOK at www.facebook.com/fnfcbc
FOLLOW us on TWITTER at www.twitter.com/fnfish



FNFC Annual General Assembly 2017

November 7-8, 2017 at the Songhees Wellness Centre - Victoria, BC

The Assembly brings together First Nations leaders, community members, and fisheries and natural resources staff from across the province on an annual basis to receive updates on the work of the FNFC and engage in strategic discussions on operational, policy and legislative issues related to fisheries. This year's event will include participation from both First Nations and government partners. Assembly details including registration and draft agendas are shared with BC First Nations via the Tier 1 email list.

More info online: <http://www.fnfisheriescouncil.ca/communications-2/fnfc-annual-fisheries-assembly/>

“A UNITED VOICE FOR FIRST NATIONS FISHERIES”

