



# First Nations Fisheries Council COMMUNIQUÉ

JANUARY 2020



## FIRST NATIONS FISHERIES COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Northern Transboundary: **Cheri Frocklage**  
Haida Gwaii: **Shawn Cowpar**  
North Coast: **In Progress**  
Central Coast: **In Progress**  
North Vancouver Island: **John Henderson**  
South Vancouver Island: **Larry George**  
West Coast Vancouver Island: **Hugh Braker**  
Lower Mainland: **In Progress**  
Fraser Valley: **Ken Malloway**  
Mid-Fraser 1: **Dawn Machin**  
Mid-Fraser 2: **Richard Wimbush**  
Upper Fraser: **Thomas Alexis**  
Upper Skeena: **Stu Barnes**  
Transboundary Columbia: **Shayla Lawrence**

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## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

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

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

Happy New Year everyone, and welcome to a new decade – and to a new term for the FNFC Executive Council! We would first like to raise our hands in thanks and show our respect and appreciation for the hard work and dedication of our outgoing FNFC delegates, who gave of their time, expertise and wealth of information in bringing the interests of their regions to the FNFC table.

A huge thank you to those outgoing FNFC delegates:

- Howie Wright, Transboundary Columbia (Okanagan Nation Alliance)
- Tracy Wimbush, Mid Fraser (Scw'exmx Tribal Council)
- Murray Ross, Mid Fraser (Secwepemc Fisheries Commission)
- Arnold Clifton, North Coast (North Coast Skeena First Nations Stewardship Society)
- Megan Moody, Central Coast (Central Coast Indigenous Resource Alliance)

With the start of the new year, the FNFC is beginning a new term for the incoming regionally appointed Council delegates, and an orientation session was held on January 23-24, 2020 in Richmond.

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# First Nations Fisheries Council Communiqué

JANUARY 2020

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We as BC First Nations continue to find ourselves in very busy times, with a busy calendar of meetings, dialogue, and engagement on all matters that impact our fisheries. The FNFC continues to work to advance the interests of BC First Nations across national and provincial scales on the very significant issues that are before us.

- **State of Pacific Salmon** – Salmon continue to face serious decline due to climate change, ocean conditions, and various threats along their migratory routes and throughout their life cycles.
- **Big Bar Landslide Incident** – The FNFC continues to support the tripartite work of the Incident Command Team, made up of the Fraser Salmon Management Council, DFO, and the Province of BC. A short window of low water flows from January to March will see work focus on bank stabilization and improved road access to the site to allow for the contracted removal of large boulders mid-river that obstruct in-season migration for Fraser salmon.
- **Oceans Protection Plan** – The FNFC will be leading 3 streams of implementation through 3 Coordinating Committees which will act as working groups focused on 1) Marine Protection & Science, 2) Vessel Management and Shipping, and 3) Emergency Preparedness and Response. The OPP implementation strategy will be guided by an MOU with Transport Canada on behalf of the six federal departments responsible for implementing the Oceans Protection Plan.
- **Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) – Provincial Legislation** – Implementation will be guided through a recently signed MOU with the Province of BC, which will begin to look at implementation plans for fisheries and environmental matters.

Recognizing that we share work on many issues at the national, provincial, watershed, and local scales, across many areas of respective priority and governing nations (the details of which are far more complex than we can articulate on this page), I would like to express that the more we continue to collaborate and work together, the better results we will see.

As we approach our fiscal year end, I would like to thank our friends, colleagues, and partner organizations for their work over the past year, and express that we look forward to our continued work together in the next year.



Thank you,  
Jordan Point  
FNFC Executive Director

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## NEW FNFC EXECUTIVE COUNCIL TERM: 2020-2022

A new FNFC Executive Council term has begun as of January 1, 2020, with some returning Delegates as well as a few new faces. We would like to give a huge thank you to the following outgoing Delegates for their excellent work on behalf of BC First Nations to advance rights and interests in Pacific fisheries:

**Howie Wright, Transboundary Columbia • Murray Ross, Mid Fraser 1 • Tracy Wimbush, Mid Fraser 2  
Arnold Clifton, North Coast • Megan Moody, Central Coast**

At the first Council meeting of the new term on January 23-24, the new Council was confirmed and Executive/Committee positions were identified. We look forward to working with our new Council over the next 3 years!

**West Coast Vancouver Island: Hugh Braker (President)  
Fraser Valley: Ken Malloway (Vice-President)  
Mid Fraser 1: Dawn Machin (Secretary-Treasurer)**

**Northern Transboundary: Cheri Frocklage • Haida Gwaii: Shawn Cowpar • Upper Skeena: Stu Barnes**

**South Vancouver Island: Larry George • North Vancouver Island: John Henderson**

**Mid-Fraser 2: Richard Wimbush • Upper Fraser: Thomas Alexis • Transboundary Columbia: Shayla Lawrence**

Regions still in progress: North Coast, Central Coast, Lower Mainland

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## DFO'S NATIONAL FISHERIES MONITORING POLICY

Last year, DFO released their draft National Fisheries Monitoring Policy with the aim of bringing consistency in the development, delivery and evaluation of monitoring programs for all federally-managed wild capture fisheries in Canada. The draft policy was open for comment between **October 11, 2018 and January 25, 2019**. The FNFC and the Salmon Coordinating Committee provided feedback to the draft policy document, identifying the following seven key themes as priority concerns for BC First Nations:

- 1) Full recognition of BC First Nations' authority in co-managing fisheries resources in their territories and Canada's full adoption of UNDRIP;
- 2) Recognizing regional specificities in Pacific region fisheries and the need for a realistic, phased workplans developed with First Nations;
- 3) First Nations as third-party monitors for all fisheries within their territories;
- 4) Ensuring the proper management and programs to achieve stated goals of the Fisheries Monitoring Policy: Dependability of data and monitoring of the recreational fishery;
- 5) Licensing of commercial recreational operators;
- 6) New and dedicated funding to implement monitoring programs; and
- 7) Working collaboratively with First Nations and full engagement in the development of policies.

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On **January 7, 2020**, DFO released:

- a) the **National Fishery Monitoring Policy**: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reports-rapports/regs/sff-cpd/fishery-monitoring-surveillance-des-peches-eng.htm> and
- b) the **Procedural Steps for Implementing the Fishery Monitoring Policy**: <https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/reports-rapports/regs/sff-cpd/fmp-implementation-pp-mise-en-oeuvre-eng.htm>

The **National Fishery Monitoring Policy** is guided by four main principles:

- 1) Respecting Indigenous and Treaty Rights;
- 2) Monitoring requirements responding to the degree of risk and complexity of the fishery;
- 3) Designing a fishery monitoring program to achieve fishery and policy objectives while taking into account cost-effectiveness and practicality; and
- 4) shared accountability and responsibility.

The **Procedural Steps for Implementing the Fishery Monitoring Policy** introduces a six-step process for consistent national application of the *Fishery Monitoring Policy*:

- 1) Prioritizing fisheries for assessment;
- 2) Assessing the monitoring program;
- 3) Setting monitoring objectives;
- 4) Specifying monitoring requirements;
  
- 5) Operationalizing the monitoring program; and
- 6) Reviewing the fishery monitoring program against the monitoring objectives and report.

The FNFC is in the process of reviewing these documents and will be sharing more information with BC First Nations in the coming weeks. If you have any questions, please contact FNFC Operations Manager Janson Wong at [janson@fnfisheriescouncil.ca](mailto:janson@fnfisheriescouncil.ca).



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## AQUACULTURE

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 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 convened a Tier 1 discussion to recommend that the FNFC review the current aquaculture structures and processes that relate to First Nations' interests, priorities and rights. Concerns have been raised in recent ACC discussions that reflect a reactionary approach and unrealistic deliverables and expectations. The FNFC has prioritized refreshing the aquaculture process by convening an **Aquaculture Forum** that will be hosted on March 5 and 6, 2020 in Nanaimo. The intent of the Aquaculture Forum will be to provide First Nations a venue to engage and direct an approach that will improve Aquaculture management in BC. Materials and supporting documents will be circulated soon, and travel subsidies will be available.

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

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## SKEENA FIRST NATIONS TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Coordinated by the FNFC, the Skeena First Nations Technical Committee (SFNTC) was formally established in January 2016 to foster greater transparency and improved understanding between First Nations on technical issues related to the management of fish populations originating from the Skeena watershed. Membership of the committee is open to technical delegates from each First Nation that targets fish populations originating from the Skeena watershed.

A **Skeena River Salmon Assembly** was held on December 4, 2019 in Prince Rupert, BC. The event brought together over 40 individuals from surrounding First Nations communities including leadership, technical experts and community members, and provided a platform for information sharing on salmon projects in the Skeena beyond the SFNTC table. Fisheries staff from various Skeena region First Nations provided presentations on their programs and initiatives in a Tier 1 environment (First Nations only). A summary report is currently being drafted and will be circulated upon completion. Participants recommended the continuation of the Skeena River Salmon Assembly to build on the success of this event.

For more information on the FNFC's work with the SFNTC, please contact Richard Sparrow at [richard@fnfisheriescouncil.ca](mailto:richard@fnfisheriescouncil.ca) or 778-379-6470.

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## BC SALMON RESTORATION AND INNOVATION FUND

The FNFC is working with the National Indigenous Fisheries Institute (NIFI) to increase support for Indigenous-led initiatives and projects funded through the BC Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund (BC SRIF), a contribution program funded jointly by the federal and provincial governments. On January 21-23, FNFC and NIFI co-hosted a three-day workshop presenting 8 proposal concepts for BC First Nations' input and feedback. The approved concepts will be further developed into an expression of interest to be submitted to BC SRIF, and projects will be led directly by First Nations organizations and communities. FNFC and NIFI will not be leading any of the proposed concepts, as the goal of this initiative is to support AAROM organizations and First Nations communities to access funds from BC SRIF.

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## ECONOMIC COORDINATING COMMITTEE

The Economic Coordinating Committee (ECC) continues to operate as a province-wide Tier 1 advisory table focused on advancing First Nations' economic fisheries interests and priorities. An options paper is currently being developed regarding next steps in the development of an Indigenous Fishers Association, the goal of which would be to collectively support future lobbying efforts to further the interests of Indigenous fishers.

### **Economic Development Coordinator:**

The FNFC Executive Council and staff would like to sincerely thank Economic Development Coordinator Rachel Elliott for her great work with us as she moves on a new opportunity with DFO. We wish Rachel all the best in her new position!

The role of FNFC Economic Development Coordinator will now be undertaken by Derek Fiddler. Derek is originally from Saskatchewan and is a member of Waterhen Lake First Nation. He moved to Vancouver to pursue a Master of Science in Ecological Restoration where his focus was on aquatic, marine and wetland ecosystems. He has worked with several organizations throughout Western Canada to advance initiatives related to habitat and species conservation, industrial reclamation, ecosystem restoration, and water policy. Derek can be reached at [derek@fnfisheriescouncil.ca](mailto:derek@fnfisheriescouncil.ca).



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## WATER FOR FISH

### **BC First Nations Regional Freshwater Roundtables:**

The *Water for Fish* initiative has launched two Regional First Nations Freshwater Roundtables in BC, one in the Lower Fraser and the other in the Skeena. These Roundtables are intended to provide a consistent and structured space for First Nations within the same watershed to collaborate on freshwater issues and priorities. The *Water for Fish* initiative will be providing coordination support for these Roundtables. Each Roundtable will meet up to four times a year; the Lower Fraser had its first meeting in December 2019, and the Skeena Roundtable will convene to scope priorities in February 2020.

### **Update: BC Watershed Security Fund:**

As mentioned in the August 2019 Communiqué, the *Water for Fish* initiative has been building support and direction for the establishment of a Watershed Security Fund in BC. This fund would provide resources to First Nations and community partners to implement freshwater planning, governance, and management initiatives, with ongoing sustainable revenue from water license fees and rentals.

In August 2019, FNFC sent a letter regarding the fund to the BC Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy. We received a response letter from the Province in October 2019, but no clear commitment to implementation. The recommendation to establish a Watershed Security Fund was also put forward in the Report on the Budget 2020 Consultation by the Select Standing Committee on Finance and Government Services in August 2019. Link to report: <https://bit.ly/315Z2Ye>

FNFC co-authored a recent position paper on the Watershed Security Fund and put forward a resolution to the fall 2019 BCAFN AGM seeking support for the fund, which was passed (see: BCAFN's Resolution 21(e)/2019: *BC Water Sustainability Act* Engagement Framework). Following the resolution, the BCAFN Executive sent a letter to the BC Minister of Finance in support of the Fund. Link to position paper: <https://bit.ly/2qSOHB7>

Leading up to the announcement of the BC Budget 2020, *Water for Fish* staff will seek to engage a small number of First Nations leadership in different regions across BC to champion the fund with the Province, and continue to coordinate with other organizations working on this initiative.

### **Update: First Nations Engagement Framework for BC's *Water Sustainability Act***

In 2018 the BC Ministry of Environment & Climate Change Strategy (MoECCS) provided the FNFC with grant funding to advise the Province on an Engagement Framework to guide the development of the remaining *Water Sustainability Act* (WSA) regulations and policies in accordance with BC's reconciliation commitments. To assist in identifying recommendations for an Engagement Framework, FNFC organized and hosted a series of meetings (Tier 1 and 2) of a small working group comprised of ten leadership and staff from a diversity of First Nations and First Nations organizations that hold relevant expertise, experience and knowledge related to water governance in BC.

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An important milestone in this work is the final report presented by FNFC to the Province in July 2019: *“Towards a Water Sustainability Act First Nations Engagement Framework: Working Group Recommendations for Collaborative Development of Regulations and Policies*. The recommendations have the support of First Nations leadership in BC through resolution at both the UBCIC and First Nations Summit Chiefs-in-Assembly gatherings in June 2019 and the BCAFN AGM in September 2019. Link to report: <https://bit.ly/2uF8yWe>

FNFC has secured an additional \$60,000 from MoECCS to advance the work on the recommendations. As an initial step, a “Working Together on Water” forum is being planned for May or June 2020 with First Nations and staff from other BC ministries involved in WSA implementation.

With the enactment of the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* (DRIPA), the FNFC hired Mandell Pinder to draft an analysis of DRIPA and its implications for the WSA and Indigenous water governance in BC. This analysis will be completed in February/March 2020 and we will communicate it to the Province, the First Nations Leadership Council, and our First Nations Water Network.

## **Water for Fish Manager:**

*Water for Fish* Project Manager Susi Porter-Bopp is on parental leave until mid-September 2020. Rosie Simms has stepped in as Interim *Water for Fish* Project Manager. Rosie comes to FNFC via five years as a Research Lead and Project Manager with the POLIS Water Sustainability Project, where she is involved in a variety of applied research projects on water law/policy/governance in BC, and plays an active role supporting partners on strategic initiatives and engaging with governments and communities on freshwater priorities. Rosie has been well-connected to FNFC’s projects in recent years and is excited to step in and work with you all over the coming months. Rosie can be reached at [rosie@fnfisheriescouncil.ca](mailto:rosie@fnfisheriescouncil.ca).

## **Water Wednesday Webinar: Funding First Nations Freshwater Planning and Governance Projects in BC**

~~January 29, 2020~~ **POSTPONED** to February 4, 2020 at 10:00am

Register online here: <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/1417803054869267980>

In this webinar, Geneviève Layton-Cartier, FNFC *Water for Fish* Project Coordinator, will discuss existing funding opportunities for First Nations-led freshwater planning and governance projects, particularly focusing on philanthropic funding pots.

The *Water for Fish* initiative hosts regular Water Wednesday webinars/teleconference calls. We also host freshwater-related workshops and meetings.

For more information about FNFC’s Water for Fish Program, or to be added to our First Nations Water Network email list, please contact Geneviève Layton-Cartier at [genevieve@fnfisheriescouncil.ca](mailto:genevieve@fnfisheriescouncil.ca).

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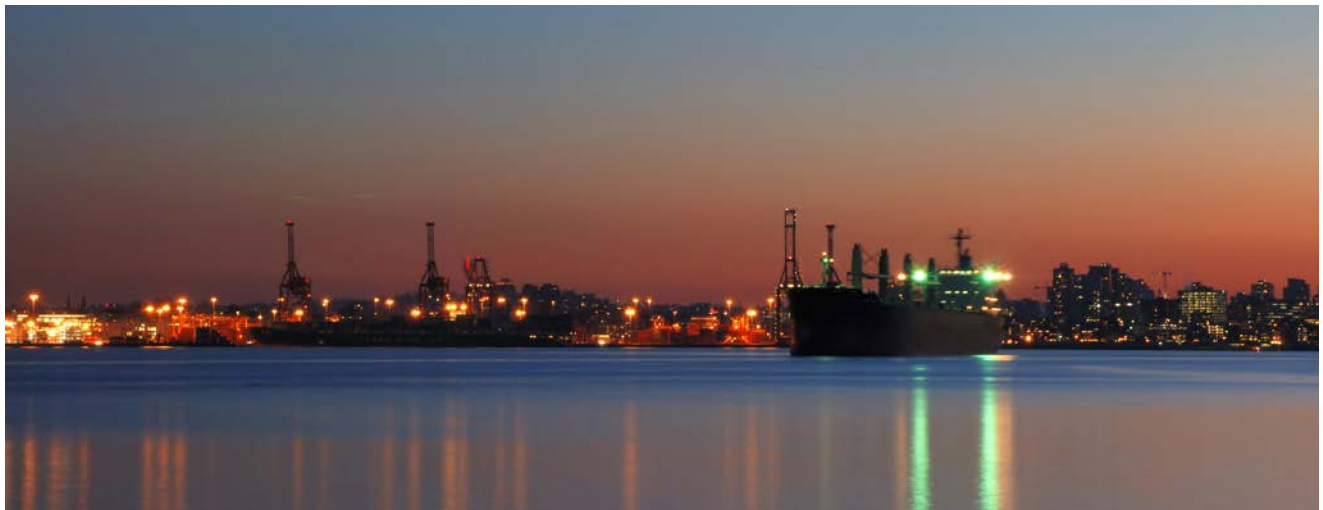
## OCEANS PROTECTION PLAN

Thank you to everyone who participated in the FNFC-OPP Launch Session on November 28, 2019 in Nanaimo! As a result of the launch Session, three Coordinating Committees were formed that will be focusing on three streams of the OPP: 1) marine protection and science, 2) ship movement and vessel management, and 3) emergency preparedness and response.

Through the collaboration of the Coordinating Committees, South Coast First Nations will provide input and influence how proposed OPP policies, programs and processes will affect South Coast First Nations communities, while also identifying best practices and structures that should be considered for developing policy solutions, and putting forward recommendations to advance First Nations' key OPP priorities.

Some possible outcomes for this multi-year OPP initiative will seek to align and coordinate participating communities to: 1) set cohesive and collaborative regional priorities, 2) inform both Crown and First Nations decision-making processes in support of the protection of marine ecosystems in the South Coast region, and 3) advance First Nations rights and interests with respect to the marine environment and aquatic resources.

If you are interested in becoming involved in one of Coordinating Committees, or if you have questions related to the fulfillment of this work and the OPP, please contact Loriena Melnick at [Lorienam@fnfisheriescouncil.ca](mailto:Lorienam@fnfisheriescouncil.ca).



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