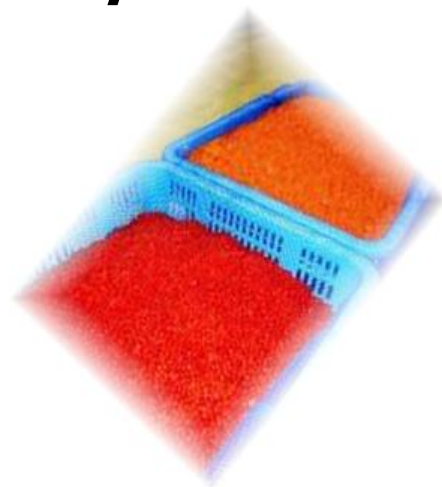
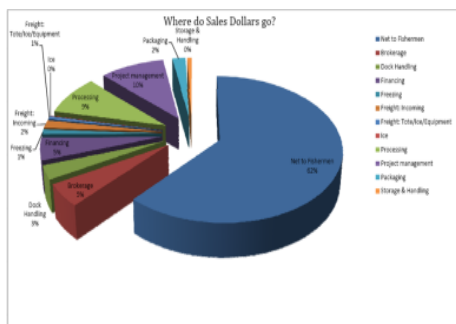


10:30 AM – 4:30 PM

***An open First Nations forum
on new in-river commercial salmon fishing enterprises***



Best Practices forum – In-river Economic Salmon Fisheries



How are we protecting our First Nations FSC fishing priorities?



What have we done to ensure that these fisheries are viable?



What are some of our biggest challenges?



Background

The following summary of experiences from the inland salmon economic fisheries arises from a series of best practices forums led by First Nations and involving regulators and academia since 2005. Today's presentations profiled projects from the Fraser, Babine (Skeena tributary) and Okanagan Rivers.

Building upon lessons learned in these developing salmon fisheries in BC's rivers, all the presentations by individual enterprises reflect the circumstances unique to each river and First Nation and the common challenges they share in the logistically complicated inland fishery.

Of significant interest to the collective interests in the changing Pacific salmon fishery are the compelling opportunities faced by these new in-river commercial fisheries to enhance the economic and social potential from these fisheries while also improving the stewardship of wild salmon and the FSC fisheries that depend upon them. Amidst the capacity building challenges required to harvest large quantities of salmon when available, all of these fisheries are learning ways to address the impracticality of dependence upon large-scale industrial harvesting amidst often cyclic or dispersed access to TAC inherent to the terminal salmon fisheries. However, despite the opportunities provided by DFO's fisheries reforms that provide for more precautionary fishing, licensed access, and capacity building, a number of key hurdles remain for these developing fisheries.

This forum has been designed specifically for the proponents of these new fisheries to report on progress and draw out the answers to these questions.

Focus Questions for presenters:

1. How are we protecting our First Nations FSC fishing priorities?
2. What have we done to ensure that these fisheries are viable?
3. What are some of our biggest challenges?

Attendance

Dale Michie	DFO BCI PICFI Coordinator, Kamloops	dale.michie@dfo-mpo.gc.ca
Dave Moore	Fraser River Salmon Table/Notes	davemoore08@xplornet.com
Tyler Collie	DFO PICFI Manager, Vancouver	tyler.collie@dfo-mpo.gc.ca
Richard Holmes	Xeni Gwetin Fisheries Manager	carenvir@wlake.com
Nancy Oppermann	Xeni Gwetin Tourism/Ec. Dev. Mgr	nancyo@shaw.ca
Marilyn Baptiste	Chief Xeni Gwetin	chief@xenigwetin.com
Brian Toth	UFFCA/Lake Babine First Nation	briantoth@shaw.ca
Chris Nowotny	Tsilhqotin National Government	Chris@tsilhqotin.ca
Mike McLean	Upper Fraser Conservation Alliance	rostanga@telus.net
Fred Sampson	Chief Siska	fred.m.sampson@gmail.com
Rhonda Leech	Secwepemc Fisheries Commission	rleach@shuswap.nation.org
Shawn Lampreau	Secwepemc Fisheries Commission	
Collette Louie	Osoyoos Indian Band	clouie@oib.ca
David Southgate	DFO BCI, Kamloops	david.southgate@dfo-mpo.gc.ca
Andrew Mesltne	Williams Lake Indian Band	Andrew.mesltne@williamslakeband.ca
Jamie Baldwin	Northern Shuswap Tribal Council	nstcfisheries02@nstq.org
Chris Narver	DFO BCI, Resource Manager Kamloops	chris.narver@dfo-mpo.gc.ca
Chandra Howlett ¹	DFO PICFI, Pacific Region	chandra.clark@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Annexed Presentations (*hotlinks in progress*)

Babine River, Babine lake – Pinkut Spawning Channel, and Fulton Spawning Channel. Donna Macintyre & Brian Toth, Lake Babine Nation

Harrison and adjacent Lower Fraser Demonstration fisheries. Kim Charlie, Harrison Salmon Producers (Sts'ailes & Scowlitz) presented by Dave Moore Chilko River Demonstration Fisheries 2011

Chilko River Demonstration Fisheries 2011. Rick Holmes & Marilyn Baptiste, Chief, Tsilhqot'in People of Xeni

Mid-Fraser/Quesnel Demonstration Fisheries. Jamie Baldwin & Andrew Mesltne, Northern Shuswap Tribal Council

Chilko & Chilcotin Rivers Demonstration Fisheries 2011. Chris Nowotny, Tsilhqotin National Government

¹ (formerly Clark)

Babine River, Babine lake – Pinkut Spawning Channel, and Fulton Spawning Channel

Donna Macintyre & Brian Toth, Lake Babine Nation



***Presentation photo's
Contrast a traditional
Babine River salmon
weir and the modern
Babine fish
enumeration***

Summary of the Lake Babine First Nation (LBN) economic fisheries

The Lake Babine Nation has a membership of approximately 2,500 members, and has 5 communities located along Babine Lake and upper Babine River. Off-reserve membership are primarily living in Smithers, Burns Lake and Prince George.

The Babine River is a major tributary of the Skeena Watershed and produces more than 90% of the annual Skeena sockeye production. LBN conducts three types of commercial fisheries for sockeye. They are all selective in methodology (dip net or beach/purse seine) and generally stock-selective in nature for Babine enhanced stocks (Fulton and Pinkut), although the dip net fishery at the fence is a “mixed-stock” fishery for both enhanced and non-enhanced Babine sockeye stocks.

Prior to contact Aboriginal Fish Harvesters here were able to maintain high levels of exploitation without causing a negative effect on the fisheries resource (Walter et.al , 2000). The LBN people were known to catch and preserve approximately 750,000 sockeye in one season (Harris, 2001) and this allowed extensive trade with other First Nations, and later with Europeans. This extensive trade evolved to include the business relationship between the HBC. This early economic fishery lasted almost one hundred years, is well documented, and would probably have carried on had regulation not prohibited the sale of salmon (Palmer, 2004).

Today, as annual run-sizes and allocations allow, commercial sockeye fisheries include a selective dip net fishery for jack sockeye at the Babine fence, a dip net fishery for adult sockeye at the Babine fence (economic opportunity and some ESSR), and beach/purse seine fisheries in front of the Fulton (and in the past Pinkut) spawning channels (ESSR).

In 2011 the dip-net fishery at Babine Fence harvested 32,848 adult sockeye during 5 days of harvesting (Aug 13 – 24) and the beach seine operated adjacent to Fulton Creek harvested 185,393 sockeye (Aug 20 – Sep 8).

How are we Protecting the FSC Fishery Priorities?

FSC fishery access is protected in a number of manners. The fence, which is becoming an increasingly important platform for supporting FSC harvesting, has a predetermined schedule for when FSC harvesting can occur (it is primarily a fish enumeration facility). In addition, the primary FSC harvesting sites (besides now the fence) aren't in locations where commercial harvesting has been contemplated - so FSC priority and access is inherently protected.

When DFO managed the fence operation for many years the ability to conduct FSC harvesting there was limited. LBN now manages the fence operation and this helps to facilitate the coordination and management of FSC and commercial harvesting at the site, while ensuring the facility's core function as a fish enumeration facility is not compromised. The community is generally accepting of the conditions placed on FSC harvesting at the fence/weir site. The other commercial harvesting locations (in front of Pinkut and Fulton) are not currently highly utilized FSC fishing locations, so no or limited "conflict" issues arise there.

The Tachet people (Fulton) usually move to Old Fort to fish more preferred sites and many simply prefer to get their fish at the fence. Also, while commercial fishing is in progress near the Fulton site, Tachet FSC fishers can get their FSC fish from the site.

What have we done to ensure the viability of the fishery?

LBN is in the process of moving from a direct-to-buyer model towards engaging a vertically integrated buyer to help them market their fish and move beyond harvesting. LBN is currently involved in PICFI, has built a business plan, and is looking to make strategic investments in infrastructure that will help them become more efficient commercial harvesters, secure their catch for branding, direct marketing and value-adding production.

The contemporary economic fishery is very conservation oriented and selective fishing plans supports long term viability of stocks and a healthy economic relationship with the local communities and fishers. Through the business plan developed with PICFI, the LBN fishery emphasizes a future fishery that is branching-out beyond existing business model to extend up and into the value chain. "Brand" recognition is being developed in collaboration with other inland salmon producers. PICFI is being used to "professionalize" the commercial fishing operation and to build efficiencies into the commercial salmon production program. LBN is also seeking additional license access (over & above ESSR) to augment the surplus fishery and create more reliable harvesting opportunities.

What are some of our biggest challenges so far?

Similar to other inland salmon economic fisheries, there are infrastructure limitations that force the economic model. This has created a need to build strategic partnerships with an industry that is built on high volumes and low prices. In practical terms this makes the investment in much needed processing infrastructure to secure the catch for value-adding difficult. PICFI has helped to provide the business case to assess this need but the program was not designed to address it.

Due to the terminal nature of the ESSR fishery, there is typically very little timing-notice prior to a fishery opportunity being declared, and the fisheries are short-duration and the employment is not conducive to building careers. Human resource capacity is limiting in skill sets beyond fence operations. Equipment has always been provided by outside buyers and must be purchased to provide local capacity to do more than just harvest the fish. Capital must be

managed from year-year to pay for the annual operational costs without having to wholesale the catch to pay for the operation of these fisheries.

Data for stock id and timing of the harvests is somewhat limited and must be improved as the in-river fisheries grow and need to be integrated in management plans. Community dynamics are always a challenge when making adjustments to the benefits stream and it takes time to effectively involve the communities in the planning process.

There continues to be some opposition from marine fisheries and river sport fisheries that see the renewal of the in-land economic fisheries as competition to their fishery's interests.



Harrison and adjacent Lower Fraser Demonstration fisheries

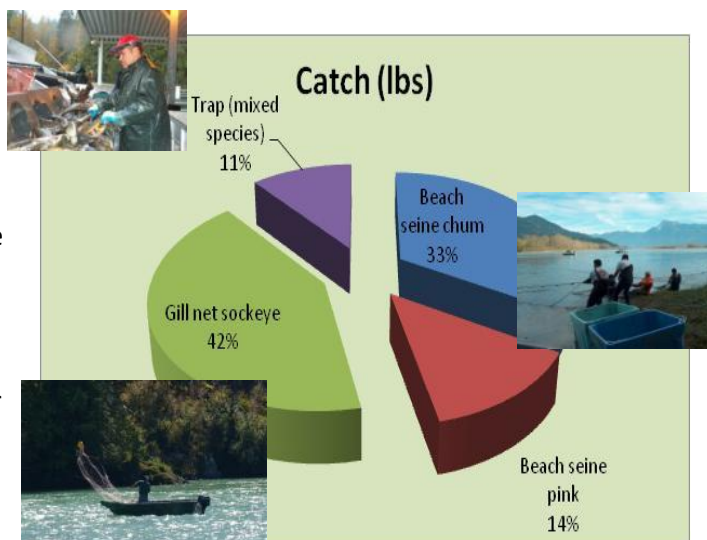
Kim Charlie, Harrison Salmon Producers (Sts'ailes & Scowlitz) presented by Dave Moore



Summary of the Sts'ailes and Harrison Salmon Producer's economic fisheries

The Communities of Sts'ailes and Scowlitz brought together the fishers and Band Councils to establish a joint fishing enterprise based on an experimental business model arising from both ESSR (terminal surplus) fisheries in operation since 1986 and demonstration fisheries since 2005. The Harrison Salmon Producers Association (HSPA) is being planned with assistance from PICFI as a joint Sts'ailes and Scowlitz community-based LLP that is designed to manage the communal commercial salmon production for member fishers, to optimize economic benefits from the fishery in the Harrison and adjacent Fraser River area.

The renewed economic Sts'ailes and Scowlitz fisheries since 1994 average nearly 1 million pounds annually and includes a mix of sockeye, pink, Chinook, and chum from EO/Demonstration fisheries. A similar mix of species is found in the ESSR fisheries with the addition of a small number of winter-run coho. These fisheries have supported a productive fishing fleet of 37 vessels (average 14'-18'), 173 nets (gill and beach seine nets averaging 100'-200'), and 98 registered commercial fishers from within the Bands' membership, and has access to river landing sites (Harrison and Harrison-Fraser confluence), and contracts a private buying station. The ESSR fishery operates from 2 traps located at Chehalis River Hatchery and Weaver Creek Spawning Channel.



In addition to the surplus salmon fisheries, access to DFO's license pool has supported quota shares equivalent up to 8.7% of the TAC from Harrison Rapids Sockeye, 4 % of Fraser Chum, and 0.4% of Fraser River Pinks and sockeye, and there is significant potential to expand this share from local production alone. The business challenge is to manage for the bi-annual production benefits from Pink salmon, the cyclic production of 4-year returns of Harrison sockeye, and currently depressed returns of chum.

The 2011 fishery was an economic success employing 200 fishers and more than 28 staff. It supported more than \$1.5 million in sales contributing nearly 900,000 to community profits, including more than \$600,000 in profits directly to fishers. Less tangible benefits include generating sufficient employment revenues to move members off the unemployment and welfare lists.

A 2011 fishery overview

Operations Summary 2011	Data
How many registered fishers were involved in EO Fisheries?	200
How many staff are employed in our fishery operations?	28 (2 full time staff)
What was the value of all fish sales?	\$1,426,693 (incomplete)
What profits went into the community from all fish sales?	\$880,335 (incomplete)*
What profit share went to fishers?	\$609,882 (69%)
How many fishers were qualified for EI from these fisheries?	47
How many earned enough to leave Social Assistance list?	23 (17%)

How are we Protecting the FSC Fishery Priorities?

The HFA places a high priority on conservation and maintenance of the FSC fisheries above that of the EO fisheries. The EO fishery is regulated to isolate illegal fishing from the market-place, and promotes sustainable fisheries through traceability & landing-site control. A Fishers Advisory Forum ensures economic fisheries do not interfere with FSC or conservation priorities - at home or upstream.



The HFA also re-introduced fishing in the Harrison River and selective beach seine fisheries for sockeye, pink and chum since 2005 to reduce pressure on upper Fraser River stocks and improve local harvest practices. Traditional sockeye and Chinook FSC fisheries have been reopened in the Harrison after being closed for generations. New generations of fishers are being re-acquainted with traditional species, locations, and methods. Communal FSC fishing events are organized by the HFA to promote traditional fisheries and ensure that there are sufficient FSC fish to the Communities elders, school children and community events like the annual First Fish Ceremony. Although open FSC fishing is not allowed at the ESSR traps, some surplus fish is distributed to elders and those in need – the policy for FSC fisheries is to maintain access to traditional stocks, locations and methodologies instead.

What have we done to ensure the viability of the fishery?

Growth of terminal sockeye and pink salmon economic opportunities has reduced pressure on upstream sockeye, spring Chinook, and chum stocks – it has also expanded our fishing season from 2 weeks to 2 months. This provides the basis for nearly sufficient revenue for careers in fishing. It is planned that with enhanced work opportunities in the value-chain beyond the fishing season that sufficient incomes will hold individuals in a career path in these communities.

The fleet is privately owned by band members and the fishery is managed by the 2 Communities through the Harrison Fisheries Authority – this model provides the necessary balance in benefit-sharing between the community and the fishers. The fishers are required by license to land, process and market their catch through the joint community

enterprise. This business model generates more profits for everyone to share and the higher value is an important incentive to keep the fishers working together under the license conditions of the HFA. Neither fishing boats nor catch is bought or owned by the enterprise. Only landing equipment and vessels are owned by the Corporation, and costs for operating the fishery are drawn from the revenues from the fishery before settling profit shares with the fishers.

The corporation provides cash-flow to secure the catch on behalf of the fishers, conducts the business with various fish companies to process the catch, and pays the fishers any profits after recovering costs. The enterprise then provides a community business incubator, generating profits for any investments – together or separately. Current efforts to brand the local salmon catch and do more value-adding of the catch and market directly to retail and restaurants aims to increase the profit margins. Work with other inland salmon producers in 2011 is focusing on refining the “River Branding” strategy with other inland salmon producers and being able to sustain market pull together over the long-term.

A portion of profits are being directed into a trust fund to support local salmon stewardship, and Sts’ailes is leading public and government partnerships in stewardship to support this effort through the Harrison River Salmon Stronghold project.²

What are some of our biggest challenges so far?

Conflicts over access and competition over limited space occurs with increasing frequency in the Fraser River. Growing sport fisheries and shared use of beach seining sites in the gravel reach needs to be co-managed with the Sto:lo. This has been working well with the formation of an in-season management committee involving local Sto:lo Fishing Authorities, the HFA and DFO.

Although often terminal TAC exceeds local licenses - there is insufficient access to commercial licenses to accommodate local terminal harvest – currently no PICFI licenses are available for Harrison terminal fisheries because it is considered part of a lower Fraser fishery that already has sufficient access. It is hoped that the terminal Harrison River Fisheries could be considered an “upriver” license allocation to accommodate the harvest of available TAC in the future.

Monitoring and administration of a large and complex set of fisheries is expensive and time consuming. The introduction and field testing of a traceability platform is reducing this burden. A large number of government forms is challenging, but the traceability platform (experimental work is funded by PICFI) generates a highly useful data-base that efficiently produces reports for the fishery, but there is a need to move to a paperless data collection system which would save significant time and money in records management - while improving traceability, custody control, and joint paper and electronic reporting from the landing site outward.

Common standards to certify landings, records, and quality management are needed to support this growing industry, and the HFA is working with other inland producers and regulators to develop a manual for fishers and landing site workers to achieve this.

² In 2010, the Harrison River was proclaimed a Canadian Salmon Stronghold through an international panel of scientists based in the Wild Salmon center in Portland Oregon.

Chilko River Demonstration Fisheries 2011

Rick Holmes & Marilyn Baptiste, Chief, Tsilhqot'in People of Xeni



Summary of the Xeni Gwetin Demonstration Fisheries

Since 1952 an average of 1,012,864 Chilko River sockeye are harvested in all fisheries including First Nation (based on data from 1952 – 2008). Total run size during this period has been as high as 4.6 million. Experimentation with economic salmon fisheries from the Chilko river was part of the recommendation of a freshwater fishery report developed by the Xeni Gwet'in First Nations Government in 2006. A letter of interest was submitted to DFO in Dec 2008, and the first Xeni Gwet'in Demonstration fishery was piloted in 2010, followed again in 2011.

One of 6 Tsilhqot'in communities, the Xeni Gwetin are in the early Stages of developing a Commercial Fishery Enterprise (CFE) in association with the UFFCA, and in collaboration with a network of other inland producers. The local demonstration fishery utilized two dip-netting locations on the Chilko River upstream from weak stocks of sockeye destined to the Taseko River. There has been a limited opportunity for employment in the Xeni Gwet'in Caretaker area due to its remote location. They envision processing and creating a value added product for the marketplace and not just being fishers and suppliers of whole sockeye. To the Xeni Gwetin, community-led commercialization of the local fishery is an integral part of establishing food security for their people, conservation of local salmon stocks and to ensure proper stewardship reflecting their cultural and traditional values in business development.

How are we Protecting the FSC Fishery Priorities?

The Xeni Gwetin demonstration fishery used two dip-netting locations identified that are some distance from the traditional sites located at Henry's Crossing. The fishery was able to experiment with harvestability and undertake training in beach seine fishing at locations that did not impact the FSC fishery. A coordinated fishery was undertaken at Lingfield Creek so as not to disrupt the DIDSON counter currently managed by DFO. Through the demonstration fisheries in 2010 and 2011 the Xeni Gwet'in have shown that their small scale selective dip-net fishery does not impact the FSC fishery. The Taseko sockeye stock is in crisis and the Quesnel stock is not far behind – by promoting selective terminal fisheries and with proper planning and strong communication plans, fisheries like these can avoid impacts on weak stocks and the FSC fisheries that depend upon them.

What have we done to ensure the viability of the fishery?

Marketing and branding of the Xeni Gwet'in dip-net fishery catch In collaboration with the Okanagan Nation Alliance has had a successful beginning providing fresh product to restaurants and generating a high rate of return. Xeni Gwet'in has worked in 2011 with an emerging network of inland salmon producers and believe that more can be accomplished in collaboration with others.

What are some of our biggest challenges so far?

The PICFI process has not provided adequate time to accommodate discussion and meaningful consultation within the Xeni Gwet'in Caretaker Area including the non First Nation residents and businesses. In this first step to develop the local demonstration fishery there has not been sufficient time to develop their fishery and more planning time is required to adequately prepare and resource development plans to be able to move forward in a confident way to ensure a sustainable fishery that meets the community objectives for economic development.

The fishery is located a very long way from the nearest processing plant which to date has been the Siska fish plant in the Fraser Canyon....7-8 hours from the fishery in the upper Chilko River. The fresh market in turn for the Xeni Gwet'in has been the Okanagan which once again is a long way from the Upper Chilko River.....through the Siska fish plant. More time is required to plan, resolve and improve project timelines, distribution and to research and implement marketing strategies. Improved facilities and living arrangements will be needed in the future for remote commercial fishing sites, and there is a need to develop more effective working collaboration with DFO's chinook and sockeye programs at the Lingfield Creek location on the Chilko River.

Mid-Fraser/Quesnel Demonstration Fisheries

Jamie Baldwin & Andrew Mesltne, Northern Shuswap Tribal Council

Summary of Northern Shuswap Tribal Council's (NSTC) Demonstration Fisheries

The Northern Shuswap Tribal Council has been studying economic opportunity fisheries since 2005. Demonstration fisheries have included 4 key sites including the Quesnel River, Quesnel Lake, Chilcotin River, and the Fraser River main-stem near Churn Creek. In 2011 NSTC tried purse seining sockeye in Quesnel lake and beach seining for pink salmon near Churn Creek on the Fraser River.



How are we Protecting the FSC Fishery Priorities?

The NSTC has made it a policy to select its target stocks, rivers, and fishing sites to avoid priority FSC fishing areas. The fisheries program has led local stock assessment programs for more than a decade and participated in various management forums, including in-river EO fishery planning workshops since 2005 to design in-river EO fisheries that are sensitive to the timing and abundance needs to meet the areas dip-net fisheries. In 2011 NSTC experimented with preferred means and areas that included terminal purse seining in Quesnel lake above the FSC fisheries, and beach seining for pink salmon after FSC fisheries for the season were complete.

What have we done to ensure the viability of the fishery?

NSTC has undertaken quality sampling of local sockeye stocks to confirm marketability, and in 2010 led a successful fresh unprocessed sockeye marketing and distribution center using e-mail to register orders and notify people of market open days. This effectively connected supply and demand to fresh catch, and attracted stable market price for fresh sockeye without large investments in transport and processing.

What are some of our biggest challenges so far?

Historic volumes of sockeye observed in Quesnel Lake and Pink salmon in the Fraser River hold promise for future endeavours, but depressed runs of sockeye in recent years have prohibited harvests of any significant commercial volume.

Chilko & Chilcotin Rivers Demonstration Fisheries 2011

Chris Nowotny, Tsilhqotin National Government



Summary of Demonstration Fisheries

The TNG experimented with its first experimental commercial sockeye dipnet fishery in 2010. The fishery is designed to selectively harvest sockeye from dip netting platforms located on throughout the lower and middle Chilcotin River and lower Chilko rivers.

The project is simultaneously addressing logistics and safety issues, building handling protocols through development of a detailed quality management plan, and marketing through both local fresh sales as well as branded retail and restaurant clients with collaboration with other inland producers.

How are we Protecting the FSC Fishery Priorities?

The TNG is working through the UFFCA and watershed management organizations to build fishing plans downstream that are sensitive to the FSC needs upstream.

Local FSC fishing is protected by formally giving recognition to the fact that FSC-fishers have priority to fish at traditional dipping sites that we are using until dedicated sites are constructed. This will be emphasized in principles that acknowledge this priority in a Dip Netting Manual being developed for the EO fisheries and thereby will become part of the training for all crew members.

Plans to construct dedicated commercial dipping stands will ensure that future economic fisheries are not crowding out preferred FSC fishing sites. Also by either avoiding those traditional FSC sites that receive heavy FSC use or by fishing those sites during periods when they are not being fished.

What have we done to ensure the viability of the fishery?

Much of the focus of the demonstration fishery to date has been on the harvest and handling, though an increasing amount of work has been going into branding and marketing plans for the future. By training fishers to ensure that everyone has the necessary knowledge and skills to operate safely, efficiently and profitably.

Through Business Planning being led by the UFFCA the TNG is taking a critical look at all the components of the fishery including aspects of marketing and selling in the future.

Local demonstration fisheries provide the basis for learning and the lessons learned lay the groundwork for building a small but local and loyal client base through:

- in-season road-side sales of fresh sockeye in the round
- Retail sales through the Cariboo Grower's Co-op
- By designing a selective and sustainable fishery

Collaboration with other First nation groups involved in commercial fishing - which is helping to develop public and buyer awareness, acceptance and even preference for inland sockeye.

What are some of our biggest challenges so far?

The logistics challenges associated with the watershed's remoteness are great – getting salmon out of the fishery and transported to staging area in Williams Lake must deal with rough terrain and gravel road travel of 2-3 hours. The getting fish from the staging area in W.L. and then onto the nearest processing facility (currently the Siska fish plant) is another 4 hours and must have sufficient volume to make the trip efficient.

Economies of scale need to be over-come as they are affected by the significant geographical separation of current dip net sites. Although these fisheries produce a high quality catch, it will take time and further experimentation to assess the balance between cost, volume and revenues.

Lack of local processing and blast-freezing capacity confines the fishery to fresh in-season fish sales, or fish must currently be transported to the coast. This is an added burden to achieving viability and may be solved in time through higher value and/or developing local primary processing infrastructure.

The regulatory framework currently prevents selling fish to the public that is processed on shore (e.g. drying and smoking) using traditional techniques and creates significant economic hurdles to overcome. Some experimentation with small volume in-situ processing holds promise to improve shelf life that will support strong in-season fresh markets.

Capacity-building begins with human resources and these fisheries need to create a long-term pool of trained fishers and support workers. It is a challenge to attracting fishers to the program, and even more importantly, returning fishers who have been trained is difficult with a small seasonal fishery.

Selective fisheries are an important underpinning of these terminal fisheries. The fishing plans are designed to conserve and rebuild local stocks, minimize interception of non-target stocks, and to harvest available commercial TAC. In this way they are able to optimize the long term sustainability of the fish, the cultural fisheries that depend upon them, and to support responsible trade. The limited availability of Taseko stock migration data can have a restricting effect on harvest plans that aim select Chilcotin sockeye, and stock assessment programs are needed to support effective selective fishing plans.

Future Directions Panel: Key accomplishments, Priorities, Next Steps?

Dave Moore, Best Practices Forum Coordinator

The best practices forum has been active since the first demonstration fisheries were introduced in 2005. Made up of new inland commercial fishing enterprises, the First Nations participants are increasingly involved in collaborations that help them advance the inland fishery to conserve and rebuild a diversity of salmon populations, protect their FSC access, achieve greater viability in their businesses. A growing focus of the inland First Nations producers is even using their new-found market presence to promote food security and responsible trade.



A number of in-river First Nations salmon harvesters are in the process of formalizing a process to align their commercial salmon catch within and between years to penetrate high-value markets and stabilize their production volumes to hold these markets. The structure and identity is still fluid but is progressing towards a cooperative model that embraces the uniqueness and identity of each fishery, emphasizing the best qualities of each, while wrapping the products in the First Nations stories much in the same way as the BC wine industry. Expect “river branding” that will capture artful First Nations logo’s, profile stories of local fisheries, and emphasize the qualities unique to each fishery. The traceability platform under development not only tackles market reticence around “Indian salmon” with smart phone tools that support consumer validation of it’s origins in a regulated fishery, it provides a powerful marketing platform that maintains the identify of the First Nation producer even when catches are highly aggregated.

The administrative host for the inland salmon producers association will be the Upper Fraser Conservation Alliance. The group has already registered its trademark, has adopted in principle a common branding vision (River to Plate – a rolling vision document begun in 2006), drafted a charter for responsible trade, and will own the copyright for a suite of branded products and manuals that deal with landing and handling procedures for participating brand. Manuals will also cover procedures for building of selective fishing plans, and for incorporating responsible trade into new inland salmon fishing enterprises. The group’s river branding strategy will assist both small and large First Nations producers with their common branded line of artisinal salmon products that ensures the identity, custody and profit-making is in line with the principles of responsible trade and will compliment any local marketing arrangements led by local First Nations producers.

The inland salmon producers association is in the process of the first pilot certifications for 5 inland sockeye EO fisheries including Harrison, Babine, Okanagan, Chilko and Chilcotin fisheries. The first certified fisheries will automatically qualify for eco-labelling partnerships (i.e. Ocean Wise) and for designating individuals who will form the inaugural board of directors for this organization. A full suite of manuals, charter, trademarks, and labelling models will be ready in the spring of 2012. Plans for broader consultations on these tools and as noted to begin training delivery are in the works for 2012/13.

PICFI Progress Report and General Questions/Answers from Forum



Tyler Collie, PICFI Manager

DFO's PICFI program has usefully built momentum over the last 5 years and is in its sunset in 2011/12 fiscal year. As most are aware there is a lot of support for a PICFI 2 or a similar program that would pick up where we have left off, but the status of that proposal is in the hands of government and DFO is on track with plans to wrap up PICFI at the end of March 2012. If there is any new programming put in place it will take some time to put the administration in place and it will not change the requirements we have to complete our work with the current PICFI program.

PICFI has successfully passed 24 CFE's involving more than 100 First Nations from around BC now through the business planning stage. These programs are now in various stages of the capacity-building elements with an investment of \$3.2 million to support formalization of business enterprises, training, capitalization and license transfers aimed at creating successful and sustainable fishing enterprises.

Chandra Howlett, PICFI Capacity Building Element Lead

With the progression of CFE's through the business planning stage there has been a flow of training funds put in place for individualized training programs that meet the requirements of Transport Canada for commercial fishing vessels and operators. Over-all PICFI, working with Fish Safe BC, has supported the certification of 90 mentors around BC (still more to come) through courses provided in Richmond, Campbell River and Prince Rupert. This has included the 4 certified mentors from BC Rivers including Chris Narver, Charlie Muldoon, Dave Southgate, and Regan Birch.

Implementation of in-river training has been as interesting and unique as the new in-river salmon fisheries. The training has been "outside of the box" usually seen in the commercial salmon industry and represented an exciting evolution of the new river economic fisheries. Participants from this group have been responsible for some of these creative training activities.

PICFI is very happy with the success of the Province-wide CFE Networking Event organized in Osoyoos late in the fall. The gathering engaged numerous participants representing all of the CFE's past the business planning stage and included experts from business development, the fishing industry, safety and certification bodies in BC. We also enjoyed an inspiring keynote presentation from Chief Clarence Louis from Osoyoos Indian Band who has received numerous business awards. We also benefited from special guest presentations that brought us insights from ACFI and the Atlantic Policy Congress on the east coast who spoke about their work in business development and a unique human and capital resource data management system. Over-all the event was able to successfully bring together a diverse cross section of CFE's in various stages of development with experts that we hope will provide a legacy of networking and partnerships that will help the CFE's prosper.

PICFI Priorities for the last quarter of FY 2011/12

#1. If the CFE's cannot spend training \$ there are other CFE's and program needs that can effectively utilize your contribution agreement slippage – prepare your final reports early or provide us with interim reports that highlight slippage or shortfalls early so that we can reconcile overages/underages before the program expires;

#2 In the final reports for PICFI, refer to the reporting schedules and get trainers to sign off on all of the trainees that have made it through the training programs as a requirement of the program – if properly completed we are able to quickly release the 25% hold-back.

Q&A for DFO from CFE's

- **Can slippage be transferred within an agreement?** There are provisions within each agreement that allows a limited amount of slippage between categories of authorized spending. Where slippage is in excess of this we encourage you to report that so that other First Nations or DFO regional program needs can be realized. For special requests, complete your interim reports and speak to your area PICFI coordinator;
- **How much was spent on in-river license acquisition?** Approximately \$3 million has been spent on license acquisition and transfer for the Fraser River;
- **Did all of the salmon licenses retired go in-river?** The majority of salmon licenses retired were moved to support selective in-river fisheries to support our objectives with First Nations and the Wild Salmon Policy. However, there was also some desire by coastal First Nations to have salmon licenses and some licenses were made available to address qualifying business plans.

Next Steps

DFO is preparing a final report on the in-river activities that will specifically outline the progress of the program in-river areas.

Participating CFE's are encouraged to watch and plan for the upcoming National Fisheries Forum scheduled in September in Campbell River. Some key areas of the agenda being looked at include work around First Nations fisheries marketing board, aquaculture developments, and progress by CFE's in the economic fisheries.

Your PICFI area coordinators will be in touch with you to work through any final reporting requirements.

Expect any news on the budgets for DFO programs like PICFI anywhere from late February through March.