



November 30, 2020

To: Distribution

Re: Status Update for Fraser River Late-Run Summer Steelhead

Catches of steelhead in test fisheries suggest that Fraser River late-run summer steelhead stocks are at extremely low levels of abundance and in a state of **Extreme Conservation Concern**.

There is presently an **88%** chance that the status will be classified as an Extreme Conservation Concern. Conservation classifications are described in the Provincial Framework for Steelhead Management in BC (2016) and supporting technical documents.

Fraser River late-run summer steelhead is a group of stocks comprised of 10 spatially discrete spawning stocks distributed in the Fraser watershed upstream of Hell's Gate. The aggregate commonly referred to as "Thompson and Chilcotin Steelhead" comprises 6 out of these 10 spawning stocks. The current spawning population forecast for the **Thompson** watershed is **180** and the current spawning population forecast for the **Chilcotin** watershed is **81**. The forecast for the Thompson represents the second lowest observed over a 44-year monitoring time frame. The forecast for the Chilcotin represents the third lowest over a 50-year monitoring time frame.

The aggregate run of Thompson, Chilcotin and other Fraser River, late-run, summer steelhead stocks occurs over about a 12-week period and normally peaks in the Johnston

Straits and in Juan de Fuca Strait in late September. In the lower Fraser test fishing area near Fort Langley, the run normally begins in late August and continues into the latter half of November, peaking around October 10. As of today, more than **99%** of the run is expected to have passed the test fishing area (Table 1).

This report concludes a series of 5 reports issued over the course of October and November on the status of Fraser River Late-Run Summer Steelhead. An update will be provided in the summer of 2021 following the completion of population abundance assessments in the spawning areas.

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Fish & Wildlife Branch

For your information, the following data are attached:

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Figure 3. Observed catches of steelhead in the Albion chum and chinook test fisheries to date, illustrated by the diamonds and squares, respectively. The lines illustrate the "average" pattern expected for the balance of the season, given the observed catches to date, the historical data on run timing and the historical data on the steelhead catching efficiency of the two gillnets.

Table 1. The expected proportion of the run that has migrated passed the test fishing site on a given date.

Date	Proportion of Run
22-Oct	72%
23-Oct	73%
24-Oct	75%
25-Oct	76%
26-Oct	78%
27-Oct	79%
28-Oct	80%
29-Oct	82%
30-Oct	83%
31-Oct	84%
01-Nov	85%
02-Nov	86%
03-Nov	87%
04-Nov	88%
05-Nov	89%
06-Nov	90%
07-Nov	91%
08-Nov	92%
09-Nov	92%
10-Nov	93%
11-Nov	94%
12-Nov	94%
13-Nov	95%
14-Nov	95%
15-Nov	96%
16-Nov	96%
17-Nov	96%
18-Nov	97%
19-Nov	97%
20-Nov	97%
21-Nov	98%
22-Nov	98%
23-Nov	98%
24-Nov	98%
25-Nov	99%
26-Nov	99%
27-Nov	99%
28-Nov	99%
29-Nov	99%
30-Nov	99%

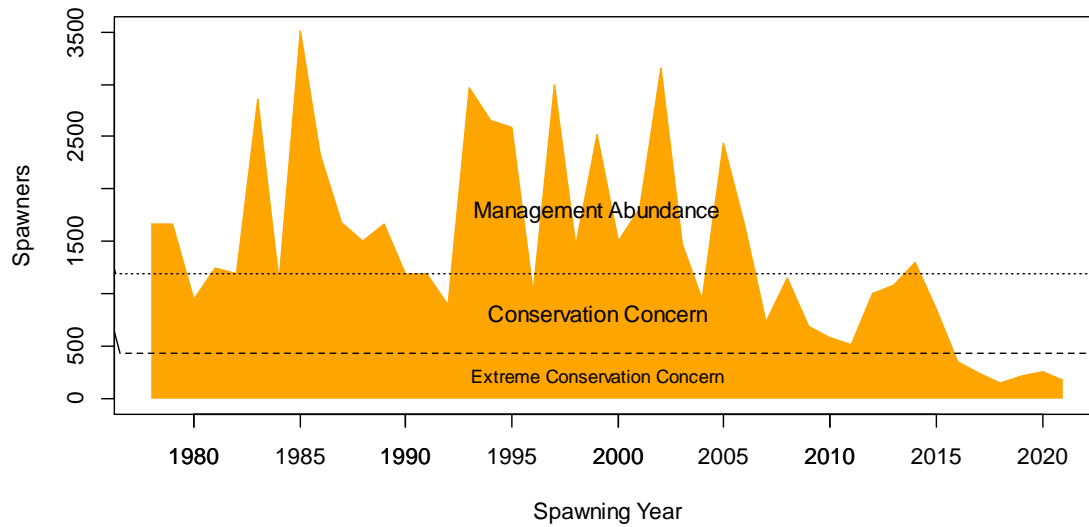


Figure 1. The estimated spawning abundances of Thompson River steelhead in relation to conservation reference points. The last data point illustrates the expected spawner abundance for this season’s return which will spawn in the spring of 2021.

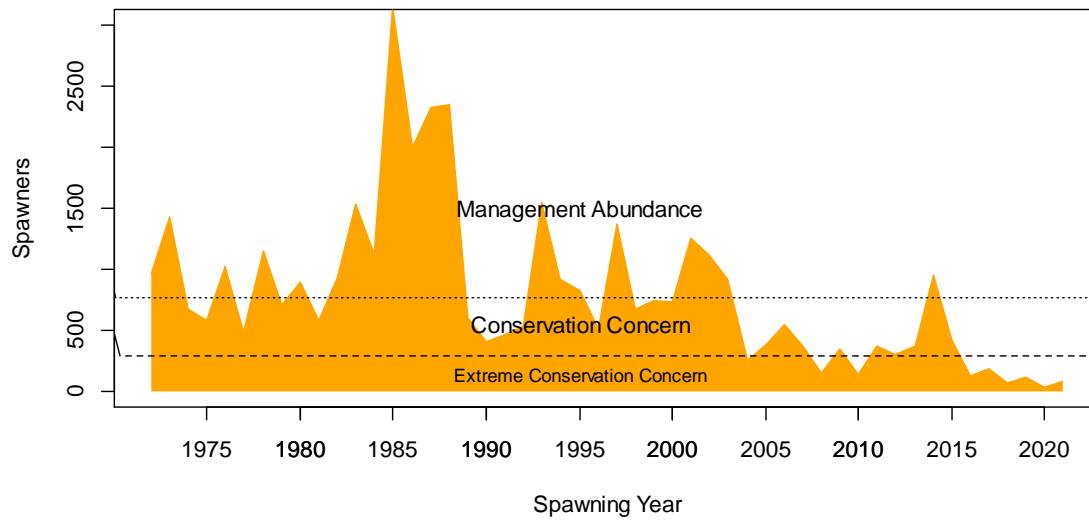


Figure 2. The estimated spawning abundances of Chilcotin River steelhead in relation to conservation reference points. The last data point illustrates the expected spawner abundance for this season’s return which will spawn in the spring of 2021.

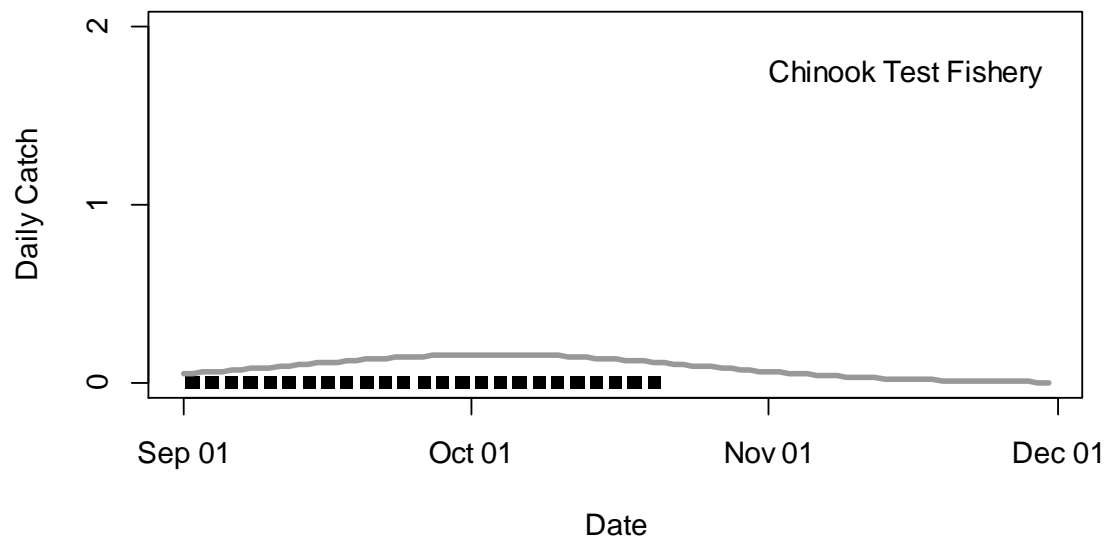
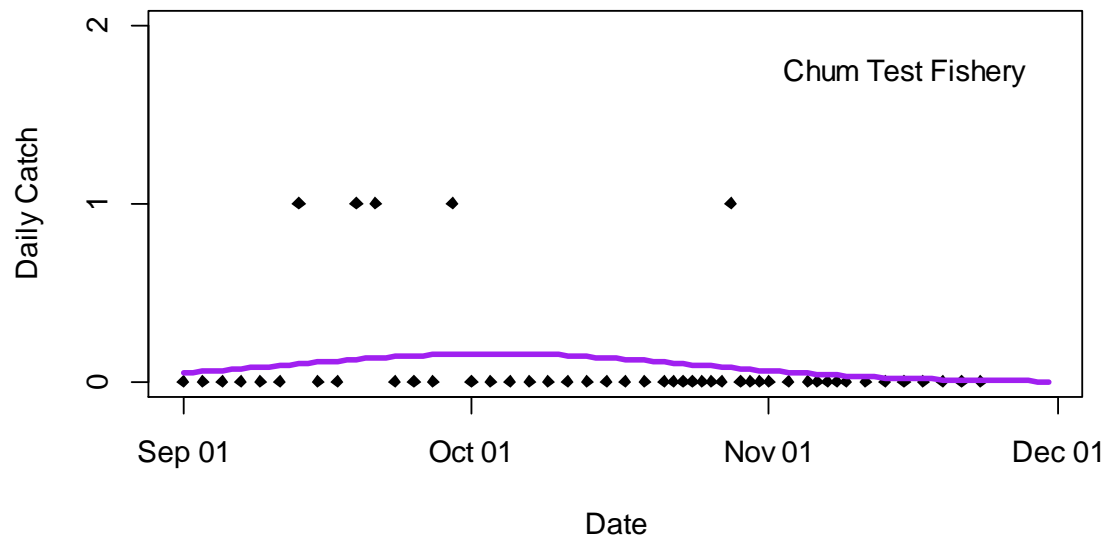


Figure 3. Observed catches of steelhead in the Albion chum and chinook test fisheries to date, illustrated by the diamonds and squares, respectively. The lines illustrate the “average” pattern expected for the balance of the season, given the observed catches to date, the historical data on run timing and the historical data on the steelhead catching efficiency of the two gillnets.