

August 4, 2017

To: Distribution

Re: Status Update for Interior Fraser Steelhead

Preliminary spawning population estimates for the 2016/17 run of Interior Fraser Steelhead were recently completed. Results indicate that these populations remain in a state of **Extreme Conservation Concern**.

The status assessment is based on the assessment of steelhead population abundance in the Thompson and Chilcotin watersheds which comprise the majority of Interior Fraser Steelhead.

Estimates of Thompson River Steelhead, spawning in the spring of 2017, sum to a total of 254. The estimated uncertainty, expressed as the 95% credible interval, is 170-450. Estimates by tributary watershed areas are as follows: Deadman 47, Bonaparte 57, Coldwater 22, Spius 54, Lower Nicola (including tributary creeks) 74. These are the lowest spawning population estimates of Thompson River Steelhead ever observed since monitoring began in 1978. The Thompson River Steelhead population aggregate is classed as a Conservation Concern if the spawning population is between 430 and 1200. The stock is considered to be in a state of Extreme Conservation Concern if the spawning population fails to exceed 430.

The estimate for steelhead in the Chilcotin watershed is 180, the vast majority of which is expected to have spawned in the Chilko River (~90%) and the minority expected to have spawned in the Taseko and Little Chilcotin watersheds. This estimate of 180 spawners is

the 4th lowest ever observed since monitoring began in 1972. The lowest estimate of 134 was observed in the spring of 2016. The Chilcotin River Steelhead population aggregate is classed as a Conservation Concern if the spawning population is between 300 and 760. The stock is considered to be in a state of Extreme Conservation Concern if the spawning population fails to exceed 300.

This update concludes a series of status monitoring reports for the 2016/17 Interior Fraser Steelhead run which began in October, 2016. A new series of status updates will begin in October, 2017 for the 2017/18 run.

Robert Bison
Fisheries Stock Assessment Biologist
Fish & Wildlife Branch

For your information, the following data are attached:

List of Figures:

Figure 1. The estimated spawning abundances of Thompson River steelhead in relation to conservation reference points.

Figure 2. The estimated spawning abundances of Chilcotin River steelhead in relation to conservation reference points.

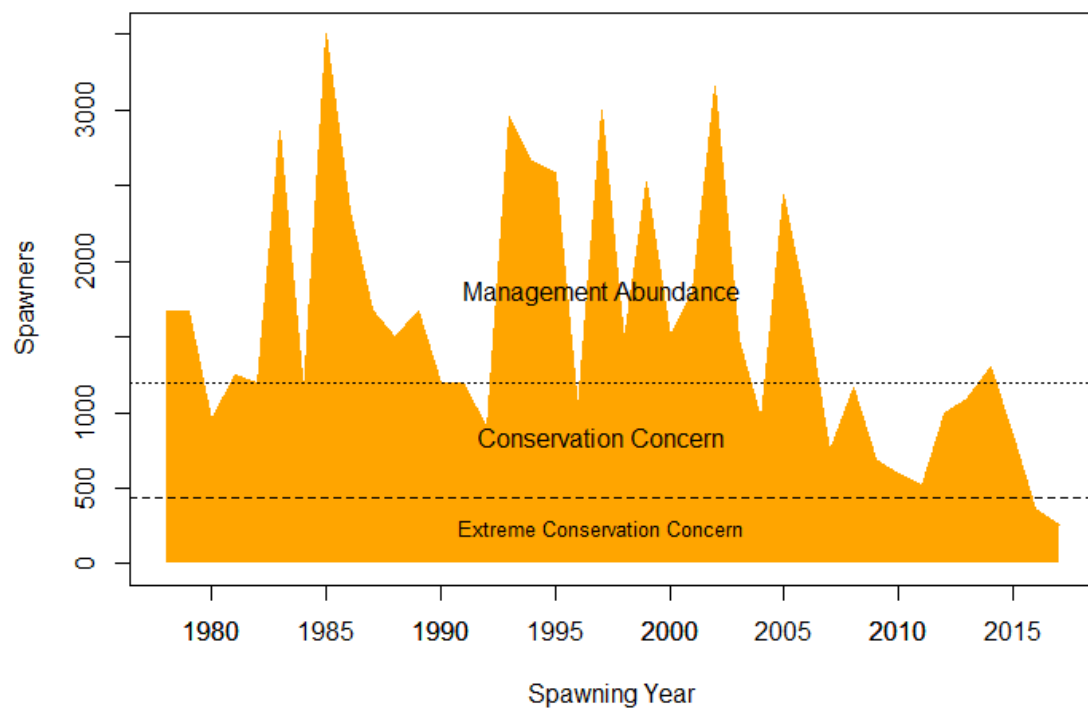


Figure 1. The estimated spawning abundances of Thompson River steelhead in relation to conservation reference points.

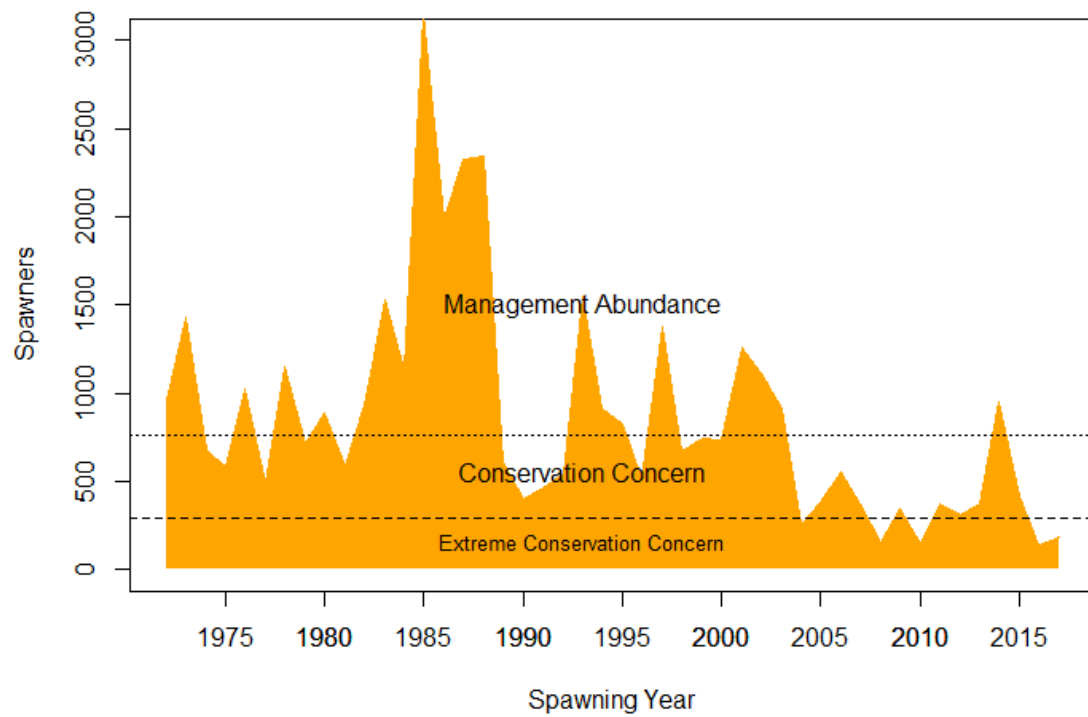


Figure 2. The estimated spawning abundances of Chilcotin River steelhead in relation to conservation reference points.