



July 10, 2019

To: Distribution

Re: Status Update for Interior Fraser Steelhead

Preliminary spawning population estimates for the 2018/19 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 population abundance in the Thompson and Chilcotin watersheds which combined comprise the majority of Interior Fraser Steelhead. Other watersheds that also support populations of Interior Fraser Steelhead include the Bridge, Seton, Stein and Nahatlatch River watersheds.

Spring-time spawning population estimates for 2019 are consistent with test-fishery-based forecasts reported last October and November in which near-record-low spawning populations were predicted.

Estimates of Thompson River Steelhead, spawning in the spring of 2019, sum to a total of 216. This is the second lowest spawning population estimate of Thompson River Steelhead since monitoring began in 1978. The lowest estimate of 150 occurred last spring (2018). The Thompson River Steelhead population aggregate is classified as an Extreme Conservation Concern if the spawning population fails to exceed 430. The stock is classified as a Conservation Concern if the spawning population is between 430 and

1200 (Figure 1). Estimates by tributary watersheds are as follows: Deadman 43, Bonaparte 37, Coldwater 74, Spius 50, and Lower Nicola (including tributary creeks) 12.

The population estimate for Steelhead spawning in the Chilcotin watershed in spring 2019 is 120. The majority is expected to have spawned in the Chilko River (~80%) and a minority in the Taseko watershed. This estimate of 120 spawners for Chilcotin River Steelhead is the also the second lowest observed since monitoring began in 1972. The Chilcotin River Steelhead population aggregate is classified as an Extreme Conservation Concern if the spawning population fails to exceed 300. The stock is classified as a Conservation Concern if the spawning population is between 300 and 760 (Figure 2).

This update concludes a series of status monitoring reports, beginning in October 2018, for the 2018/19 Interior Fraser Steelhead run.

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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.

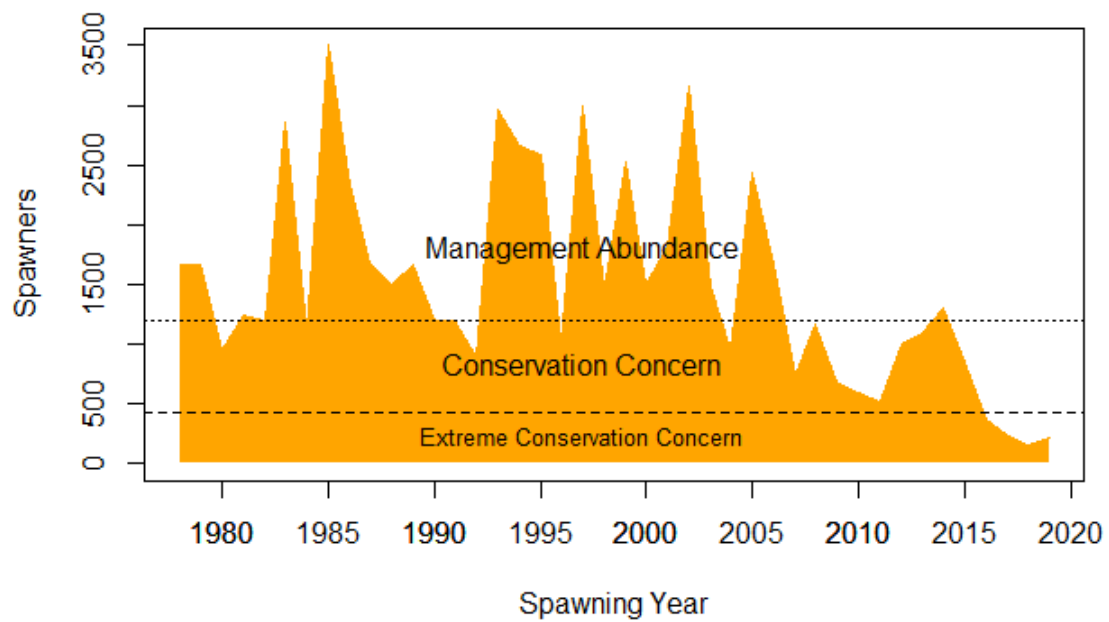


Figure 1. The estimated spawning abundances of Thompson River steelhead in relation to conservation reference points.

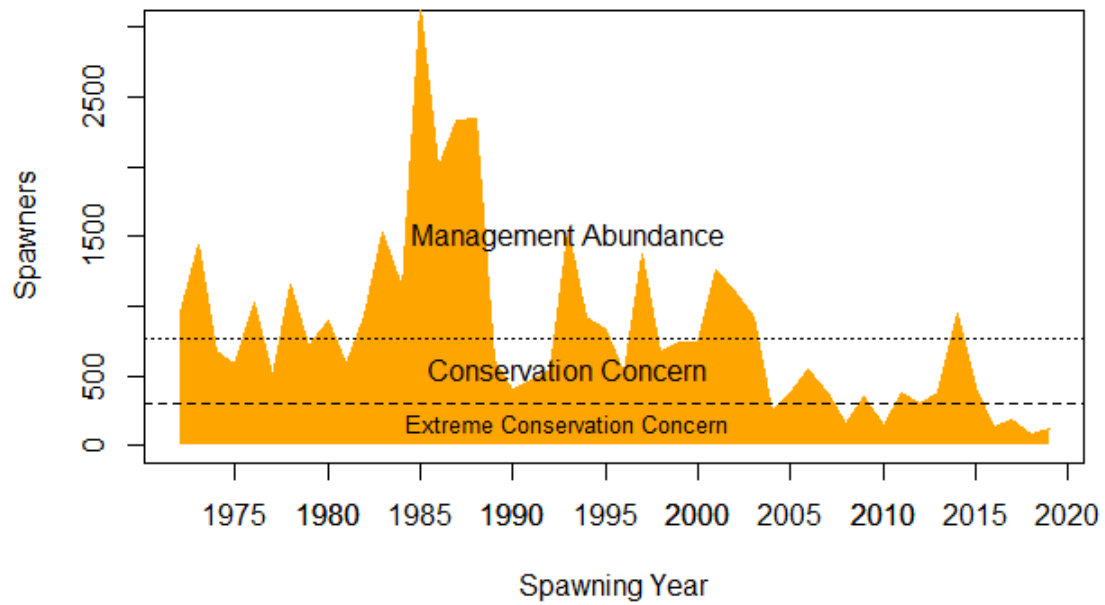


Figure 2. The estimated spawning abundances of Chilcotin River steelhead in relation to conservation reference points.