



July 15, 2022

To: Distribution

Re: Status Update for Interior Fraser Steelhead

Preliminary spawning population estimates for the 2021/22 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 abundances in the Thompson and Chilcotin watersheds which combined have comprised the majority of Interior Fraser Steelhead since monitoring began in the 1970's. Other watersheds that also support populations of Interior Fraser Steelhead include the Bridge, Seton, Stein and Nahatlatch River watersheds, however there are no continuous annual estimates of spawner abundance the Seton, Stein and Nahatlatch and estimates the Bridge River Steelhead abundance are intermittent and limited to more recent years.

Preliminary estimates of Thompson River Steelhead, spawning in the spring of 2022, sum to a total of 104. This is the lowest spawning population estimate of Thompson River Steelhead since monitoring began in 1978 and higher than the test-fishery-based forecast of 68 reported last fall on December 1, 2021. 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). Preliminary estimates by tributary watersheds are as follows: Deadman 20, Bonaparte 20, and Nicola 64.

The population estimate for Steelhead spawning in the Chilcotin watershed in spring 2022 is 19. This estimate and the estimate from 2021, also 19, are the lowest estimates since monitoring began in 1972. The 2022 estimate is lower than the test-fishery-based forecast of 32 reported last fall on December 1, 2021. 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 2021, for the 2021/22 Interior Fraser Steelhead run.

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Fisheries Stock Assessment Biologist

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.

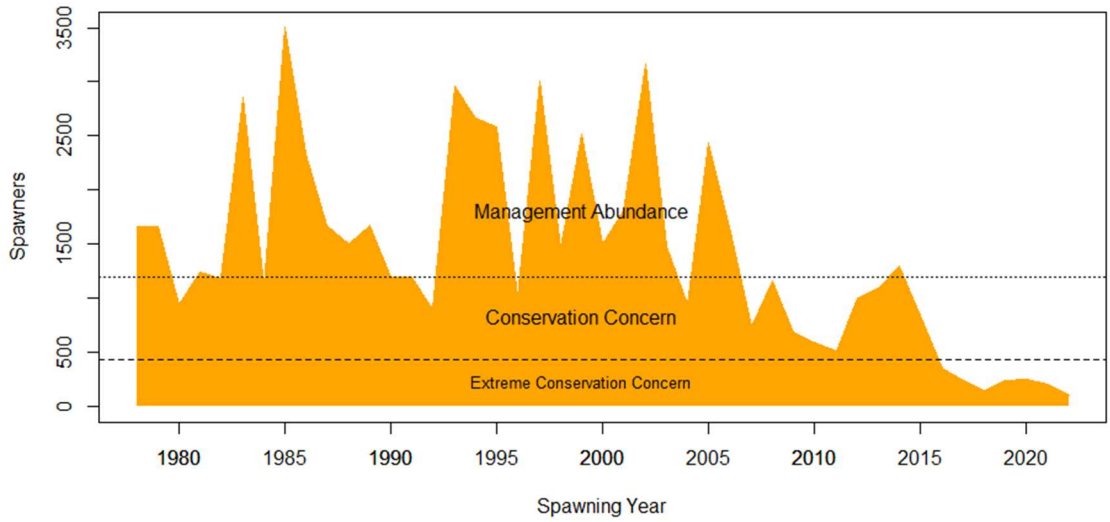


Figure 1. The estimated spawning abundances of Thompson River steelhead in relation to conservation reference points.

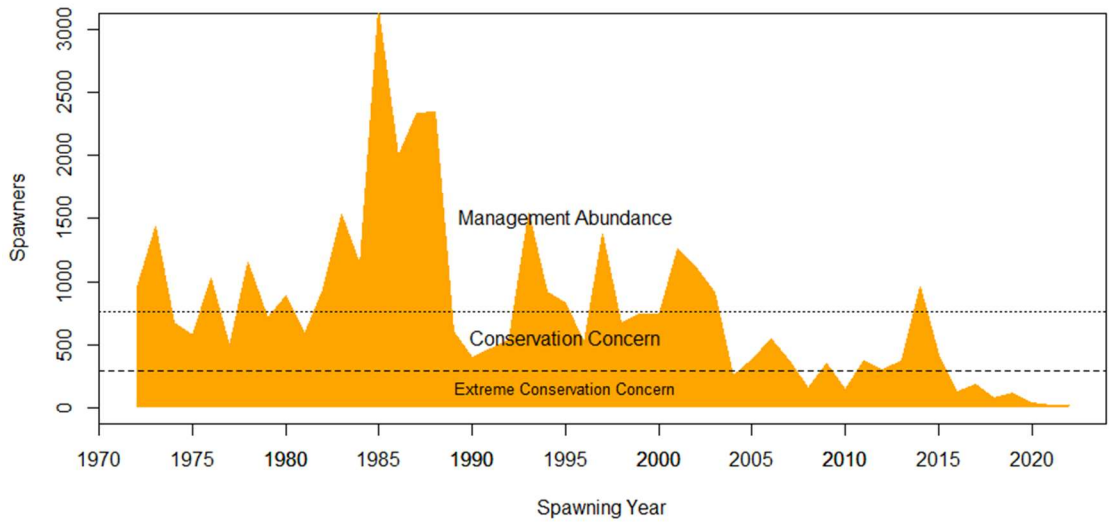


Figure 2. The estimated spawning abundances of Chilcotin River steelhead in relation to conservation reference points.