



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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Fisheries Stock Assessment Biologist
Fish & Wildlife Branch

For your information, the following data are attached:

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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% |

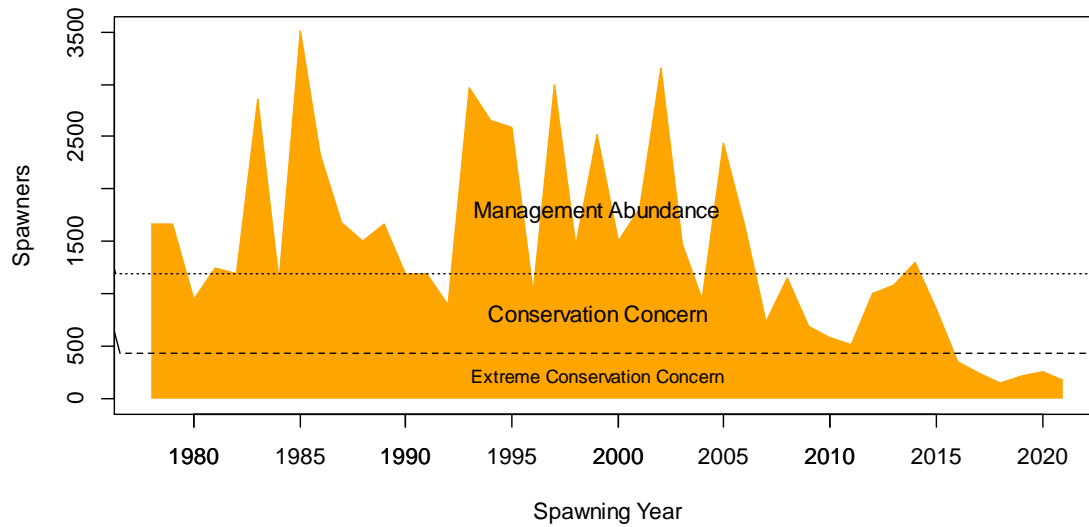


Figure 1. The estimated spawning abundances of Thompson River steelhead in relation to conservation reference points. The last data point illustrates the expected spawner abundance for this season’s return which will spawn in the spring of 2021.

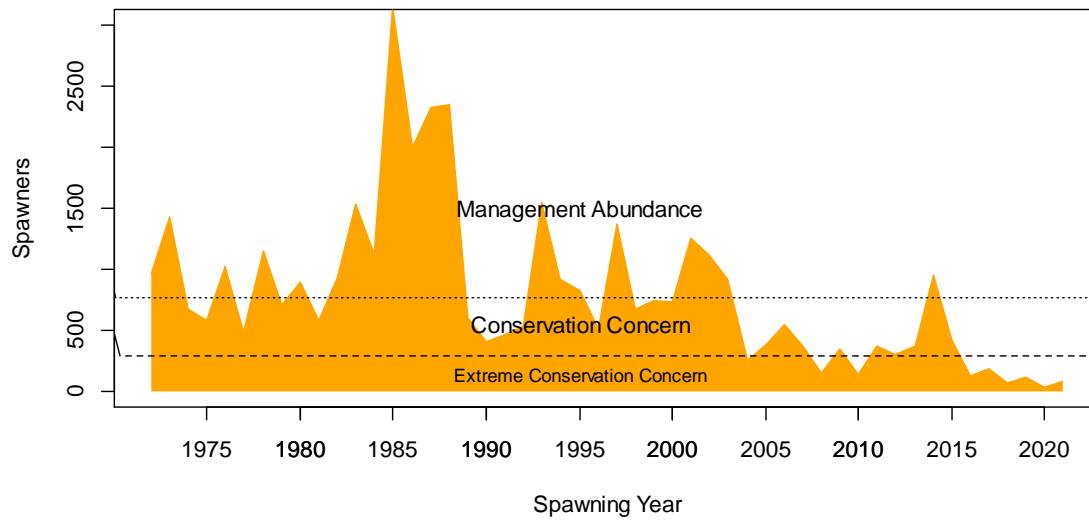


Figure 2. The estimated spawning abundances of Chilcotin River steelhead in relation to conservation reference points. The last data point illustrates the expected spawner abundance for this season’s return which will spawn in the spring of 2021.

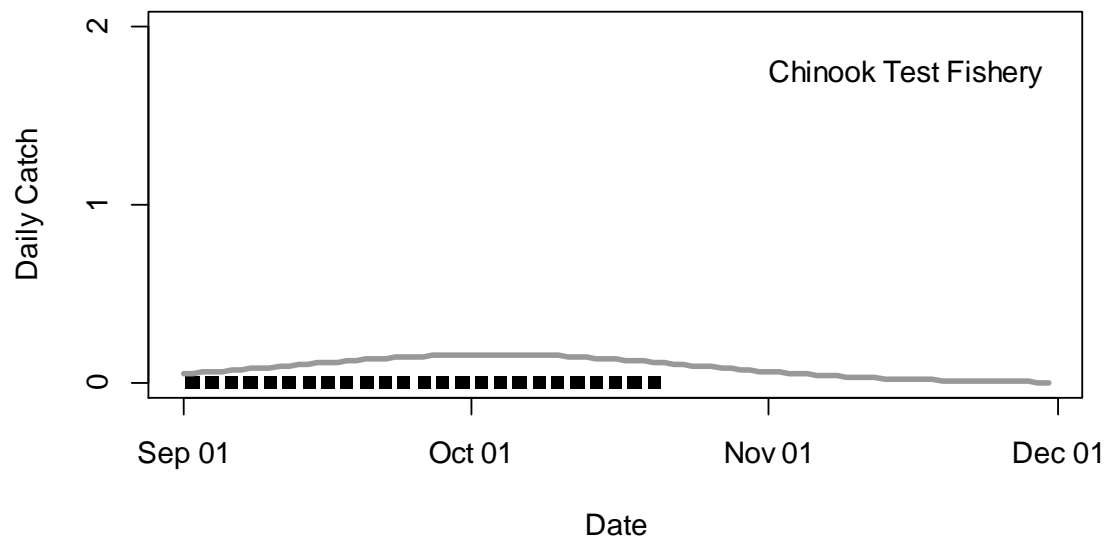
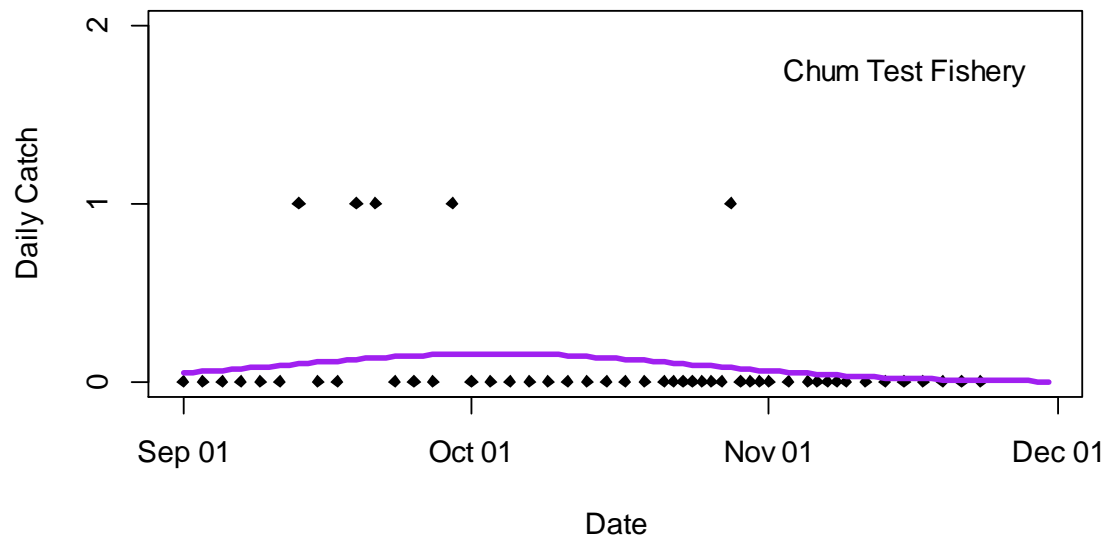


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