

Fernandes, Ruth FLNR:EX

From: Purdy, Sandra FLNR:EX
Sent: Thursday, November 16, 2017 9:57 AM
To: Donaldson, Doug FLNR:EX
Cc: Renneberg, Tim FLNR:EX; Jones, Tristan FLNR:EX; McLaren, Kenn FLNR:EX
Subject: Letter from Adam Olsen, MLA
Attachments: Adam Olsen - Applications for Private Moorage Projects.pdf

Hello,

Please see attached letter FYI.

Thanks



Sandra Purdy

Administrative Assistant to the

Honourable Doug Donaldson

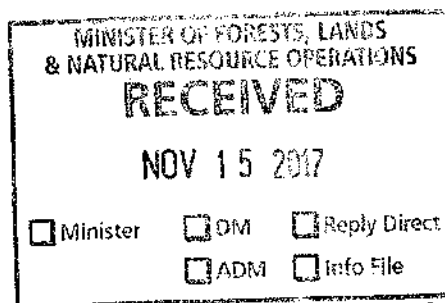
Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

t 250.387-6240 f 250.387.1040

The contents of this e-mail message and any attachments are confidential and are intended solely for addressee. The information may also be legally privileged. This transmission is sent in trust, for the sole purpose of delivery to the intended recipient. If you have received this transmission in error, any use, reproduction or dissemination of this transmission is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please immediately notify the sender by reply e-mail or phone and delete this message and its attachments, if any.



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY of BRITISH COLUMBIA



Adam Olsen MLA

Saanich North and the Islands

November 10, 2017

Hon. Minister Doug Donaldson
Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

Dear Minister Donaldson,

I am writing you to raise a concern that has been ongoing for one of my constituents for many years. My constituent, s.21,s.22
s.21,s.22

His business relies on the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development to approve or reject applications for private moorage projects.

In the past, s.21,s.22 would file these applications and usually 120 days later the process was completed with either a permit from the ministry allowing his company to build or a rejection of that application. Either way, the process was working and was relatively timely. However, beginning in 2008 he had to reach out to his MLA as the permitting process was taking over eight months to reach a decision and s.21,s.22 as they awaited the ministry's response. In 2011, the same issue was raised as applications were now taking over a year to get processed. In 2014, the issue was still unresolved and the 13 applications under review s.21,s.22 Obviously, the company was struggling to schedule projects and operate effectively with this sort of permitting uncertainty. In March 2014, my predecessor, Gary Holman, wrote to the Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations once again highlighting the issue that some of s.21,s.22 applications had been waiting for a permitting decision for over two years. In 2016 s.21,s.22 had 32 open applications filed with FLNRO – with some dating back to 2012, which represented s.21,s.22 s.21,s.22

According to s.21,s.22 in recent years it can take six to eight months to even get an acknowledgment that his application has been filed. An actual decision can take much longer. Currently his company is awaiting a decision on 29 applications, several from 2015 and one of which dates back to 2012! These significant delays mean his company is left without the ability to move on projects and the company's finances are held up waiting for the ministry to process his applications.

Meanwhile, there is a concern that competing businesses are operating illegally and finding ways around the rules to avoid dealing with the ministry's process.

Constituency Office

215 – 2506 Beacon Avenue
Sidney, BC V8L 4T9
T 250-655-5600
F 250-655-7398

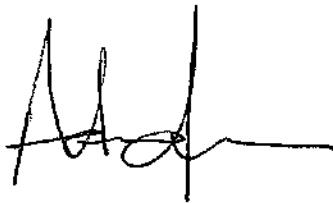
Legislative Office

Room 028 Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4
T 250-387-8347
Adam.Olsen.MLA@leg.bc.ca

I have great respect for the need for a clear and comprehensive process for approvals. I am concerned that in this case the process is not meeting the standard needed to support local businesses and industry.

I request that your Ministry look into the status of ^{s.21,s.22} applications to ensure they are receiving consideration in a timely manner. I am also requesting that your ministry rework the permitting process so this problem does not continue to arise moving forward.

HÍ SW KE,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Adam Olsen', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Adam Olsen

MLA for Saanich North and the Islands

Fernandes, Ruth FLNR:EX

From: Purdy, Sandra FLNR:EX
Sent: Thursday, November 23, 2017 9:08 AM
To: Donaldson, Doug FLNR:EX
Cc: Renneberg, Tim FLNR:EX; McLaren, Kenn FLNR:EX; Jones, Tristan FLNR:EX
Subject: Letter from MLA Adam Olsen
Attachments: MLA Adam Olsen - Gardom Pond.pdf

Hello Minister,

See attached for your information.

Thanks



Sandra Purdy

Administrative Assistant to the

Honourable Doug Donaldson

Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

t 250.387-6240 f 250.387.1040

The contents of this e-mail message and any attachments are confidential and are intended solely for addressee. The information may also be legally privileged. This transmission is sent in trust, for the sole purpose of delivery to the intended recipient. If you have received this transmission in error, any use, reproduction or dissemination of this transmission is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please immediately notify the sender by reply e-mail or phone and delete this message and its attachments, if any.



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

of BRITISH COLUMBIA

MINISTER OF FORESTS, LANDS
& NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS

RECEIVED

NOV 22 2017

☐ Minister ☐ DM ☐ Reply Direct
☐ ADM ☐ Info File



Adam Olsen MLA

Saanich North and the Islands

Nov 22, 2017

Hon. Doug Donaldson

Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

Dear Minister Donaldson,

I write on behalf of my constituents who are facing large financial repercussions due to the errors of the BC Government dating back 25 years. At issue is the management of Gardom Pond.

My predecessor Gary Holman, wrote two letters to the previous minister on this issue in which he highlighted the unjust nature of what was occurring and also highlighted that the proposed solution (of draining the pond) incurs increased risk for local fire management in an area that is deemed to be high-risk. Official letters are attached.

I write to add my support that from the information presented to me it appears that a historical wrong has been done to the property owners and water license holders of Gardom Pond that they are now being forced to deal with through no fault of their own.

HÍ SW_KE,

Adam Olsen

MLA for Saanich North and the Islands

Constituency Office

215 - 2506 Beacon Avenue
Sidney, BC V8L 4T9
T 250-655-5600
F 250-655-7398

Legislative Office

Room 028 Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4
T 250-387-8347
Adam.Olsen.MLA@leg.bc.ca

Fernandes, Ruth FLNR:EX

From: Gibson, Eleni FLNR:EX on behalf of Minister, FLNR FLNR:EX
Sent: Friday, December 15, 2017 1:47 PM
To: Olsen.MLA, Adam LASS:EX
Cc: Engels, Simone FLNR:EX
Subject: RE: Private Moorage applications in the Southern Gulf Islands (Ref: 234191)
Attachments: 234191 - response.pdf

Dear Adam Olsen:

Attached is the response to your letter addressed to Honourable Doug Donaldson, Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development. Please note, a hardcopy will not follow in the mail.

Thank you.



Reference: 234191

December 15, 2017

VIA EMAIL: adam.olsen.MLA@leg.bc.ca

Adam Olsen, MLA
Saanich North and the Islands
Room 028 Parliament Buildings
Victoria, British Columbia
V8V 1X4

Dear Adam Olsen:

Thank you for your letter of November 10, 2017, outlining your constituent's concerns over delays in the review of private moorage applications in the Southern Gulf Islands.

The review of Crown land applications by the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development is guided by the Crown Land Allocation Principles (https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/farming-natural-resources-and-industry/natural-resource-use/land-water-use/crown-land/allocation_principles.pdf). Accordingly, staff and decision makers seek to ensure that economic, environmental, social and First Nations interests are recognized and supported, and that decisions are timely and durable.

The ministry recognizes that companies such as ^{s.21,s.22} which ^{s.21,s.22} represents, rely on government permits to conduct their business. At the same time, the ministry has increasingly become aware of concerns over the impacts of private moorage development in the Southern Gulf Islands. These concerns relate to impacts on the environment and First Nations' interests, and have been expressed in the context of individual applications at the site level, as well as cumulatively for the area as a whole.

In response to these concerns, the ministry is currently deeply engaged with the local First Nations on all private moorage applications in the Southern Gulf Islands, including ^{s.21,s.22} This is required in order for the Province of British Columbia to discharge its legal duty to consult, and is also a prerequisite for robust, defensible decisions. These efforts include the identification and assessment of potential mitigation and accommodation measures to offset negative impacts on First Nations interests that could result from the approval of these applications.

Page 1 of 2

Adam Olsen

The ministry encourages proponents to get involved in information sharing with First Nations and to potentially take on certain procedural aspects of First Nations consultation.

s.21,s.22 has been very receptive and collaborative in this regard, and ministry staff have been and will continue to work very closely with s.21,s.22

On January 17, 2017, the ministry released changes to the provincial private moorage policy that are assisting in streamlining administration in certain areas. While these changes do not apply to the Southern Gulf Islands area, it is anticipated that efficiencies gained through these streamlining measures and other related initiatives will result in more resources being available for the review of existing applications, including those of s.21,s.22

If you have any further questions on the specific applications referenced in your email, please contact Simone Engels, Section Head of Crown Lands and Resources, by phone at 250 751-7271 or by email at Simone.engels@gov.bc.ca.

Again, thank you for taking the time to contact me.

Sincerely,



Doug Donaldson
Minister

pc: Simone Engels, Section Head, Crown Lands and Resources, West Coast
Natural Resource Region

Fernandes, Ruth FLNR:EX

From: Purdy, Sandra FLNR:EX
Sent: Thursday, November 23, 2017 9:52 AM
To: Donaldson, Doug FLNR:EX
Cc: Renneberg, Tim FLNR:EX; McLaren, Kenn FLNR:EX; Jones, Tristan FLNR:EX
Subject: Letter from MLA Adam Olsen
Attachments: MLA Adam Olsen - Pressing Issues.pdf

Hello,

See attached for your information.

Thanks



Sandra Purdy

Administrative Assistant to the

Honourable Doug Donaldson

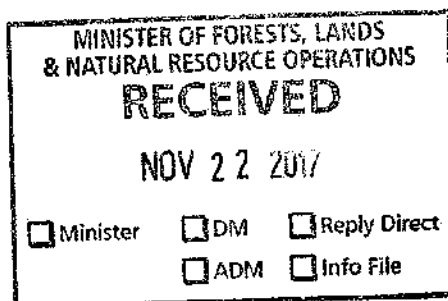
Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

t 250.387-6240 f 250.387.1040

The contents of this e-mail message and any attachments are confidential and are intended solely for addressee. The information may also be legally privileged. This transmission is sent in trust, for the sole purpose of delivery to the intended recipient. If you have received this transmission in error, any use, reproduction or dissemination of this transmission is strictly prohibited. If you are not the intended recipient, please immediately notify the sender by reply e-mail or phone and delete this message and its attachments, if any.



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY of BRITISH COLUMBIA



Adam Olsen M.L.A.

Saanich North and the Islands

Nov 22, 2017

Hon. Doug Donaldson

Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development

Dear Minister Donaldson,

There are a number of issues in my riding that directly relate to your ministry. This letter is to inform you of some of the most pressing issues affecting Saanich North and the Islands and seek your assistance in finding solutions

Wildfire Risk and Prevention Strategies

Many concerned groups and local leaders have brought to my attention the risk and vulnerabilities on the Gulf Islands and on the Saanich Peninsula due to wildfires. The entire area is serviced by volunteer fire departments with limited resources. In North Saanich alone, approximately 40% of the land base was assessed with a "high to extreme" fire hazard rating during the dry summer months. The islands have very little ability to fight a fire locally if one were to start, not to mention the increased safety risks involved in evacuation of one of the islands. Indeed, there is a growing concern in my community regarding a lack of wildfire preparedness. In addition, we have many federal, provincial, and regional parks that do not have effective strategies for managing the natural debris (i.e. fuel for wildfires), and after checking with the Ministry of the Environment staff, there is no funding set aside for wildfire fuel management in BC parks.

My staff has been in contact with your ministry about new funding with regards to the FireSmart Program and the Strategic Wildfire Prevention Initiative. While I understand your ministry will be conducting several broad reviews of wildfire activities, I wanted to inform you that there is a desire to work collaboratively in my riding across municipal and First Nation boundaries. Perhaps there is a possibility of developing a regional collaborative model for wildfire prevention. My office would be happy to spearhead such a possibility - potentially through the Forest Enhancement Society.

Permitting Delays

I have written you a separate letter on this issue where a specific company has been frustrated by a permitting process that takes over two years - specifically in relation to marine docks and structures. However, I also wanted to highlight a concern I have heard repeatedly - that ministry staff are blaming the delay on adequate consultation with First Nations. It was quite clear to me that the proponents working with the ministry saw this as scapegoating and not addressing the real issue which is a lack of human resources to get through the applications in a timely manner. My constituent has waited a year only to be told their application is accepted for review (no decision - just an acknowledgement that it is in the works). In my view, this is unacceptable. Either more people need to be hired or the process has to change - otherwise you are going to encourage illegal activity.

Constituency Office

215 - 2506 Beacon Avenue
Sidney, BC V8L 4T9
T 250-655-5600
F 250-655-7398

Legislative Office

Room 028 Parliament Buildings
Victoria, BC V8V 1X4
T 250-387-8347
Adam.Olsen.MLA@leg.bc.ca

Gardom Pond

Gardom Pond on Pender was damned a few decades ago. Water licenses were issued and it appears that there was misinformation and a mishandling of the situation on the part of the province at that time. My predecessor, Gary Holman, wrote in support of their claim and now I am writing to inform you that I do believe a historical wrong has been done by the province to the owners of the properties surrounding Gardom Pond in making them liable (through asking them to obtain water licenses) for the dam structure (presumably for fire protection at the time) and now the costs associated with its decommissioning. The ministry has also not responded to the questions of my constituents about why they are being made to bear substantial costs from what appears to be a mistake made from two decades ago.

*The
sludge*

Offshore Anchorages

There has been a substantial increase in major carriers and tankers, anchoring offshore of the Southern Gulf Islands. The ships are often there for weeks at a time as they wait for Port Metro Vancouver. This has been an ongoing issue for constituents and local government officials in my riding. They have raised concern about this influx of heavy traffic in the local waterways. While I recognize this is largely a federal issue, the anchorages do touch the sea floor and I believe there is a potential role for the province in being able to enforce where anchorages can be located, and how often they can be used. This issue was raised by our colleague Doug Routley in a statement and I would be happy to work with you to see what options are available for the province to assist in this matter.

Galiano Forest Management

In 2004 the Private Managed Forest Land Act passed in the legislature replacing the Forest Land Reserve. As I understand it, the Forest Land Reserve was designed to ensure that forest lands were not lost, among other things, to uncontrolled urbanization. Furthermore, under the Forest Land Reserve, the recommendations of local governments were required before landowners could opt-in or opt-out of the Forest Land Reserve category. Moving to the PMFL model landowners now apply directly to the Private Managed Forest Land Council without any involvement of local government. This is troubling because the legislation bars any new local government bylaw from directly or indirectly affecting any activity related to the growing or harvesting of products of the forest.

This is particularly troubling for one area in my riding - Galiano Island. There are 1324 hectares of private managed forest land on Galiano and there are bylaws in place that which mean that the pre-2004 bylaws still exist, but no amendments or new bylaws can come into place to control logging. The only thing that can be done on this land, as it stands, is to log it. This is a substantial issue on Galiano that is very divisive and apparently without an easy solution. I am seeking the assistance of your ministry and asking if you intend to look at the PMFL model and revise it. If so, I would be very interested in being a part of that process.

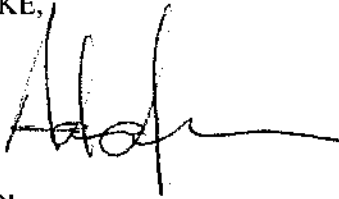
Old Growth Forests and Grizzly Bears

While this is not a local constituency issue I want to raise the fact that I have many constituents who are very concerned about the state of our old growth forests in BC and on the grizzly bear hunt and that I share their concern. I would be happy to meet with you and discuss my concerns at your convenience.

Derelict Boats

With the announcement of federal funding for the clean-up of derelict vessels, my constituents have identified a gap where the province could play a helpful role. Namely, the creation of a way for citizens to help catalog derelict vessels in our province. While the federal funding and process for cleaning up the boats is a great start, there is no overall sense of where derelict boats are and in what state of disrepair they are in. Creating an online system where the public can send in photos, coordinates, and the state of the vessels would then help to improve the process for addressing the issue. It would assist the people/organizations that are applying for federal funds as they could potentially deal with multiple boats at once. I believe that the ministry could set up such a system that would be of benefit to all.

HÍ SW KE,



Adam Olsen

MLA for Saanich North and the Islands

Fernandes, Ruth FLNR:EX

From: Silverio, Lisa FLNR:EX
Sent: Thursday, November 9, 2017 8:57 AM
To: McLaren, Kenn FLNR:EX
Subject: 233824 FW: PROPOSED RESPONSE FOR ENV MO REQUEST: MLA Olsen letter e-copy
Attachments: Olsen Letter to FLNRO MOE MA MIRR.PDF; 233786 Thompson Chilcotin Steelhead Update_jp.docx

Importance: High

From: Frampton, Caelie ENV:EX
Sent: Tuesday, October 31, 2017 12:32 PM
To: Salkus, Beverley ENV:EX; Smith, Curtis ENV:EX
Subject: FW: MLA Olsen letter e-copy

Hi Bev and Curtis,

We just received this piece of correspondence from the Greens.

Is it possible to get a few bullet points related to a response on this? (I'm not sure yet if this will be a coordinated letter response or not.)

Thanks,
Caelie

From: Hume, Claire [<mailto:Claire.Hume@leg.bc.ca>]
Sent: Tuesday, October 31, 2017 11:12 AM
To: Renneberg, Tim FLNR:EX
Cc: Frampton, Caelie ENV:EX; Sas, Jonathan IRR:EX; will.beale@gov.bc.ca
Subject: MLA Olsen letter e-copy

Please see attached for an e-copy of the letter MLA Olsen sent to your office this morning.

Best wishes,
Claire

Claire Hume
Senior Policy Advisor
Green Caucus
Legislative Assembly, Room 028
Tel: 250-387-8323
Email: Claire.Hume@leg.bc.ca



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
of BRITISH COLUMBIA

Hon. Doug Donaldson
Minister of Forests, Lands,
Natural Resource Operations, and
Rural Development,
Parliament Buildings, Room 248
Victoria, BC
V8V 1X4



Adam Olsen MLA
Saanich North and the Islands

Cc:

Hon. Lana Popham
Minister of Agriculture
Parliament Buildings, Room 325

Hon. George Heyman
Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
Parliament Buildings, Room 112

Hon. Scott Fraser
Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation
Parliament Buildings, Room 323

Dear Minister Donaldson,

As you are likely well aware, the Thompson River steelhead are in crisis. With a return this year of 254 fish, I am gravely concerned about the future of the interior Fraser steelhead stocks. I would like to learn more about the jurisdictional boundaries and overlapping responsibilities on this file so I can better engage with the work being done.

As I understand it, in addition to DFO federally, provincially the Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations, and Rural Development, the Ministry of Agriculture, the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, and the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy should all play a role in addressing this crisis.

Can you please clarify what is currently being done within the B.C. government to address this urgent issue and where the responsibilities lie between the ministries listed above?

With kind regards,

Adam Olsen
MLA Saanich North and the Islands

Constituency Office

215-2506 Beacon Ave
Sydney BC V8L 1X7
Adam.Olsen.mla@leg.bc.ca

Legislative Office

Room 027 Parliament Buildings
Victoria BC V8V 1X4
T 250-387-8347
Adam.Olsen.mla@leg.bc.ca



Reference: 233824

January 31, 2018

VIA EMAIL: Adam.Olsen.mla@leg.bc.ca

Adam Olsen, MLA
Saanich North and the Islands

Dear Adam Olsen:

Thank you for your letter of October 31, 2017, requesting an update on the status of steelhead in the Thompson River watershed.

The Ministry of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development is working closely with other provincial ministries, as well as Fisheries and Oceans Canada and local First Nations, to address the historical lows in estimated spawning abundance of these iconic fish in the Thompson/Chilcotin watersheds. Please review the below details regarding the current management situation of the Interior Fraser steelhead stocks.

The Interior Fraser steelhead population has been near or within conservation concern for most of the past decade, currently at record lows, and are in the process of being assessed by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. Threats to the health of steelhead include interception by salmon fisheries managed by Fisheries and Oceans Canada and losses to freshwater habitat.

The province, federal and First Nation governments have a role in managing steelhead. Currently, accountabilities for fisheries and ocean-related issues and initiatives are distributed across the provincial government. Several provincial agencies play lead roles in delivering key aspects of this work, including the ministries of:

- Forests, Lands, Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development, for example: integrated marine planning, issuance of coastal tenures, freshwater fisheries regulations and fish habitat protection decisions under the federal *Fisheries Act*, and the provincial suite of tools including the *Forest and Range Practices Act*, the *Oil and Gas Activities Act*, and the *Water Sustainability Act*;
- Agriculture, for example: seafood sector development, aquaculture policy;

Page 1 of 2

- Environment and Climate Change Strategy, for example: fisheries science, aquatic invasive species science and policy expertise, species at risk (science, legislation, regulation and policy development), compliance and enforcement of the federal *Fisheries Act*, *Water Sustainability Act* (legislation, regulation and policy development); and,
- Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation, for example: First Nation engagement and treaty negotiations;
- And other ministries, such as Transportation and Infrastructure, and Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources, also have interests in fisheries and ocean-related work.

In terms of provincial action, the recreational freshwater fishery is already limited to a short time window and is catch and release. Furthermore, additional conservation measures are being considered by the province, and proposals for Fisheries Sensitive Watersheds and Temperature Sensitive Streams are currently being developed in the Interior as part of habitat protection measures. Such habitat protection and restoration measures can influence the productive capacity of freshwater habitats to produce juvenile steelhead where habitat is limited, degraded or fragmented.

Ultimately, significant mortality factors that strongly influence steelhead numbers are not under provincial management authority; they reside within areas of federal jurisdictional authority and influence.

I will be reaching out to Fisheries and Oceans Canada on the integrated fisheries management plan and the necessary discussion for the proactive management for the survival of steelhead.

Again, thank you for writing.

Sincerely,



Doug Donaldson
Minister

pc: Honourable Scott Fraser, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation
Honourable George Heyman, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy
Honourable Lana Popham, Minister of Agriculture

**MINISTRY OF FORESTS, LANDS AND NATURAL RESOURCE OPERATIONS
INFORMATION NOTE**

Date: Oct 27, 2017

File: 280-20

CLIFF: 233786

PREPARED FOR: Tim Sheldon Deputy Minister, Ministry of Forests Lands and Natural Resource Operations

ISSUE: Thompson/Chilcotin Steelhead-update

BACKGROUND:

Steelheads are an iconic fish species of significant economic, social and ecological importance and thus are of high priority to the province. This species is extremely valuable to recreational angling communities, businesses that support these communities and to First Nations for food, social and ceremonial purposes within BC.

Interior Fraser steelhead or Thompson/Chilcotin stock aggregate has been near or within conservation concern for most of the past decade. Threats to the health of steelhead include interception by salmon fisheries managed by Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) and losses to freshwater habitat.

Impacts to steelhead from salmon fisheries can be significant with some bycatch mortality estimates of 20-30% of the total run. Non-selective commercial chum salmon fisheries in the Lower Fraser River present the most immediate impact to the current status of Thompson/Chilcotin aggregate due to the overlap in spawning migration arrival and timing into the lower river.

Despite the impacts of the lower river commercial fisheries to steelhead, chum salmon continues to be certified by the Marine Stewardship Council (MSC). MSC is a non-profit eco-labelling organization that certifies fisheries that demonstrate that they are well managed and sustainable using science-based criteria, ultimately making the product marketable worldwide.

Fisheries and Ocean Canada (DFO), the Ministry of Agriculture, and the Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development (FLNRORD) have discussed MSC certification of various salmon fisheries that intercept Thompson/Chilcotin steelhead. Specifically, FLNRORD has been engaged in discussing "Condition 14" of the MSC certification process that evaluates the impact of the commercial salmon fishery under review has on Thompson/Chilcotin steelhead (see attachment 1).

CURRENT STATUS

Catches to date of steelhead in test fisheries continue to suggest that Fraser River late-run summer steelhead stocks are at extremely low levels of abundance and in a state of extreme conservation concern. Interior Fraser 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 7 out of these 10 spawning stocks.

The current abundance estimate of Thompson and Chilcotin Steelhead, prior to fishing mortalities, is 290. Twenty percent (20%) is expected to be lost from fishing mortality effects in the fall of 2017.

The current spawning population forecast for the Thompson watershed is 175 and the current spawning population forecast for the Chilcotin watershed is 55 (Attachment 2 for Figures). These forecasts represent record low spawning abundances for Thompson and Chilcotin steelhead over monitoring time frames of 41 and 47 years, respectively.

DISCUSSION:

The Thompson/Chilcotin stock aggregate is in extreme conservation concern and has been declining for the last two decades. It is well recognized by user groups that the Province has limited management options in stemming the decline of the aggregate stock. Without substantial intervention, it is highly probable that the Thompson/Chilcotin aggregate could be eliminated within ten years.

Due to the low abundance the Province has closed the recreational fishery on the Thompson and Chilcotin systems, eliminating any potential mortality from recreational fishing. In addition, First Nations including the Cook's Ferry Band and T'sisquotin National Government have reduced or eliminated steelhead harvest for food and ceremonial purposes to conserve steelhead.

While reductions in fishing mortality have occurred over the time period, DFO continues to allow non-selective commercial openings on the lower river that are still impacting steelhead and causing further stock decline. Despite the imminent threat to the aggregate stock, certification standards by MSC continues to facilitate commercial openings and economic fisheries for chum, potentially removing the last remnants of steelhead returning to spawn in the Thompson/Chilcotin watersheds.

While the province is committed to provide access and opportunity to all British Columbians who rely on these fish for First Nations use, enjoyment and livelihoods, there are limited options to stem the decline of these once prolific runs unless drastic action is undertaken.

Developing joint fisheries management plans with DFO is critical if declining trends in steelhead abundance are to be reversed in populations incurring significant mortality from salmon fisheries (e.g. Thompson stocks). The plan would assist with implementation with the objective of increasing the abundance of interior Fraser steelhead to the routine management zone, while maintaining or increasing the genetic diversity, adaptive potential, and productivity of the steelhead.

NEXT STEPS:

- November 20th Management meeting with BC and DFO to confirm work plan for technical working group and actions assigned to meet year 1 MSC condition 14.
- November 20th Meeting with DFO Area Director to debrief this year's chum fishery and identify improvements and priorities for next year.
- December TBD technical meeting between BC and DFO to confirm model approach.
- January thru March – BC and DFO build agreement on conservation and management objectives for interior Fraser steelhead and other salmon stocks where salmon harvesting may have impacts on interior Fraser steelhead, including a fishing plan evaluation framework to support assessing impacts of alternative fisheries management approaches.
- March TBD – depending on outcome of the above noted steps, explore need for executive or Minister-level support to elevate steelhead considerations in DFO management decisions and expedite changes in management approaches.

Attachment 1: Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) Condition 14 for Commercial Chum Salmon Fishery

Attachment 2: Historical estimated spawning abundance of Thompson and Chilcotin Steelhead.

Reviewed by	Initials	Date
DM		
ADM		
Ex Dir		
Dir	JP	
PRGM.	MR	Oct 27/17

Contact:

Jen Psyllakis:

Director Fish and Wildlife, Victoria:

Phone: 250-387-5657

Alternate Contact:

Mike Ramsay:

Associate Director Fish and Wildlife, Victoria:

Phone: 250-389-4546

Prepared by:

Name: Greg Andrusak

Fish and Wildlife Branch, Victoria

Phone: 250-953-4763

Action Plan

Year 1: DFO and the Province of BC will form a technical working group to review the key inputs, parameters and assumptions of the existing steelhead impact assessment model to improve the understanding of key fisheries, assumptions and parameters that influence projected Interior Fraser (IF) steelhead exposure or impacts in salmon fisheries. TWG may recommend refinements to model as required. This work will include development of fishery profiles that overlay fishing effort and IF steelhead run timing in the various fisheries to evaluate where steelhead impacts are most likely to occur. This could include a retrospective analysis of past years and a sensitivity analysis of key uncertainties and assumptions to provide insight into where most effective measure can be put in place to reduce impacts on steelhead stocks of concern. Incorporation of information from additional studies or analyses that would improve understanding of key model uncertainties will be considered.

DFO and the province will work towards agreement on conservation and management objectives for IF steelhead and other salmon stocks where salmon harvesting may have impacts on IF steelhead. A fishing plan evaluation framework for assessing impacts of alternative fisheries management approaches will be explored.

The potential set of fishery management actions will be consistent with the precautionary approach to management.

Management strategy evaluation via simulation will be used to assess the efficacy of different salmon harvesting approaches on IF steelhead stock recovery and rebuilding.

Year 2: DFO and the Province will complete a technical and social and economic analysis of proposed management approaches using the agreed-to fishing plan evaluation framework. This evaluation would include consultation with affected parties through existing fisheries advisory and consultative processes. Based on the results of the analysis and feedback from consultations, a plan will be developed that identifies appropriate management objectives and measures to address IF steelhead conservation risk. The plan will include pre-agreed indicators to evaluate, post-season, the performance of annual management actions relative to plan objectives.

The technical working group will identify research and / or data collection initiatives that could assist in addressing key uncertainties in the emerging management framework.

Year 3: Report on implementation of the management measures developed in year 2 using defined performance indicators. Consider further refinements to the management measures and fishery timing / closures / methods as required to ensure that performance targets are achieved.

Year 4: Final report on implementation of the management plan and annual reporting on performance indicators.

Attachment 2. Historical estimated spawning abundance of Thompson and Chilcotin Steelhead.

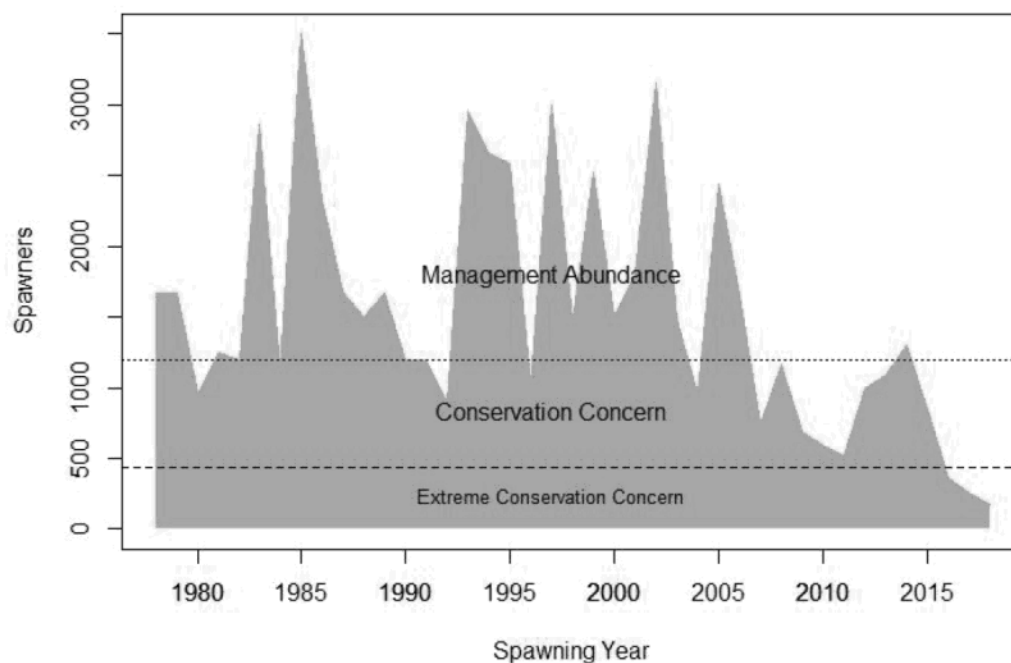


Figure 1. The estimated spawning abundances of Thompson River steelhead in relation to conservation reference points. The last data point illustrates the expected spawner abundance for this season's return which will spawn in the spring of 2018.

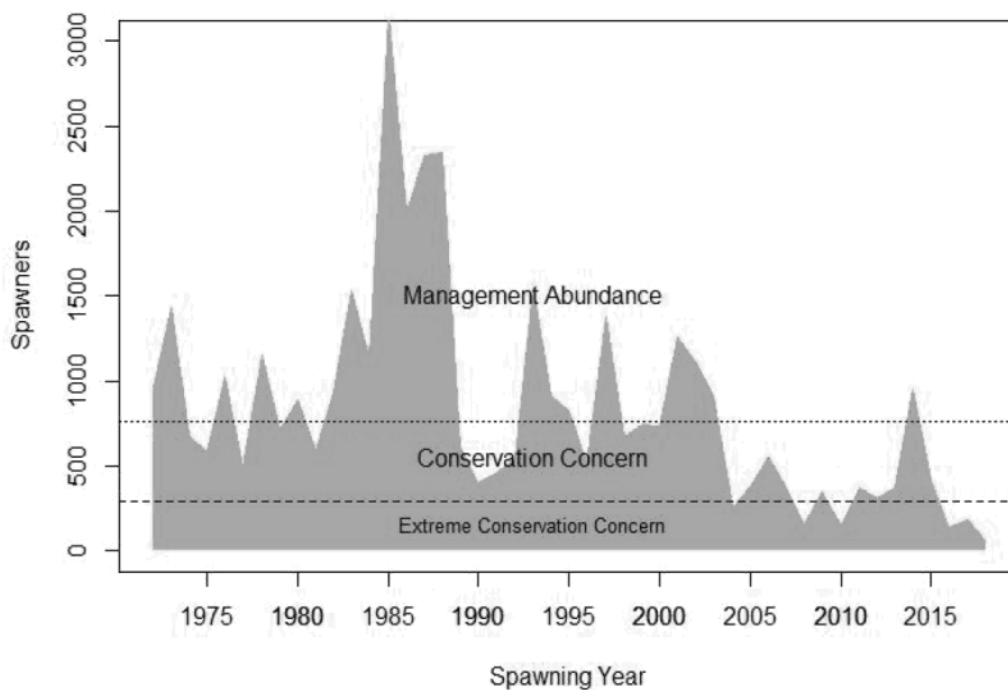


Figure 2. The estimated spawning abundances of Chilcotin River steelhead in relation to conservation reference points. The last data point illustrates the expected spawner abundance for this season's return which will spawn in the spring of 2018.