

## **A Rolling Dialogue among Sport Fishing Interests and First Nations in the Lower Fraser River**

*(draft 2 – October 27, 2009)*

**This meeting:** September 24. 2PM – 5 PM. Mission Chamber of Commerce, 34033 Lougheed Hwy.

**Purpose:** To review the outcomes from small working group discussions.

A rolling dialogue was initiated late in the summer of 2009 by sport fishing representatives and First Nations in the lower Fraser River for the purpose of finding workable solutions to conflicts on the River. The initiative for this dialogue was led by the BC Wildlife Federation, the Pacific Salmon Foundation, and the Sto:lo Tribal Council, and then the Chehalis Band, the Fraser Valley Angling Guides Association, the BC Federation of Drift-fishers, the Fraser Valley Salmon Society, and others have contributed significantly (both directly and indirectly) to the understandings that have begun to emerge.

A small working group was tasked with generating ideas for broader review. This is a summary of the review of the small working group deliberations in a broader forum. A table is provided in Appendix 1 with a synopsis of “hot button issues” and potential solutions; organized by theme, ranked and prioritized.

**Next meeting:** November 4. 2PM – 5 PM. Abbotsford Ramada Plaza, Valley Room.

### **This Meeting Participants**

Dave Moore, Fraser River Salmon Table Executive Director – Facilitator/notes

Frank Kwak, Fraser River Salmon Table Sport Fishing File Manager<sup>1</sup>

Ed George, BC Wildlife Federation

Gary Biggar, Regional Board, BCWF

Patti MacAhonic, BC Wildlife Federation, Executive Director

Martha Fredette, Sto:lo Tribal Council

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<sup>1</sup> *The Fraser River Salmon Table Society (FRST) File Managers (Sport Fisheries, First Nations, Conservation and Commercial interests) have been assigned as focal points for ensuring that representation from each interest is informed and involved in management developments that affect them and to report to the Board.*

*Summary Notes Prepared by the Fraser River Salmon Table for September 24, 2009 – Please direct comments to [davemoore08@xplornet.com](mailto:davemoore08@xplornet.com)*

Robert Reyerse, Fraser Valley Angling Guides Association

Rod Clapton, BC Federation of Driftfishers

Chief Willie Charlie, Chehalis Indian Band

Terry Tebb, Pacific Salmon Foundation

Andrew Stegman, Fraser Salmon and Watersheds Program

Robert Reyerse, Fraser Valley Angling Guides Association

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## **Process Checkpoint**

Participants acknowledged the relationships and good-will generated between First Nations and sport fishing groups in this process to date. Learning has gone both ways, and trust is building. The scope of participation in this process from various sport fishing interests/organizations is appropriate in the context of the lower Fraser River gravel reach salmon fishery (tidal influence to Canyon), with local and broader interests represented. The Pacific Salmon Foundation, local RCMP, and local media were also present at the initial meetings. The Fraser River Salmon Table has provided organization, facilitation and summary notes to the process.

The attendance of First Nations to date is a matter of some concern from sport fishing representatives present – the First Nation participation in small working group deliberations has involved primarily Chehalis and Sto:lo Tribal Council. In part, this is described as a measure of the implementation challenges ahead, involving sub-sets of First Nations who share specific fishing sites. To be broadly successful, this work may eventually need to involve several area First Nations and two area Tribal councils (Sto:lo Tribal Council and Sto:lo Nation). Chehalis described their ongoing presence as an indication of their motivation to proceed with ideas that will help Band members feel safe on the river. The Sto:lo Tribal Council committed to review the outcomes of this work with their Board at an upcoming meeting.

## **Common Goal**

The goal of participants remains to find ways for the two fisheries to get along on the river. Although a general consensus was held by those in attendance to move forward with some of the solutions presented, the mechanism for taking the next step as a group needed further discussion. Some suggestions included a memorandum of understanding (MOU), an Accord, or simply proceeding with a small project to build a small success in one location with interested First Nations. A particular sensitivity around the use of protocols has been expressed as a concern by the BCWF and has been replaced with “understandings”.

## **Implementation**

Everyone in attendance agreed that there was a need to take the outcomes from this work back to their constituents for further direction, and were committed to a follow-up meeting to focus on implementation.

## Review of Key Issues and Ideas

Participants reinforced the focus of this group is to find ways to deal with the conflicts on the river. The working group ranked the need for etiquette and to deal with immediate crowding issues highest over-all, but felt that developed landing sites and joint monitoring would make the greatest contribution towards common agreement on catch accounting. Other priorities discussed addressed public information, education and more effective communications between the two fisheries. All issues and ideas are appended so nothing is lost, but high ranking ideas have been listed below (no particular order) to isolate those with the greatest chance of success.

## Monitoring and Enforcement

The small working group identified the lack of developed access points to the Fraser river and separate monitoring programs in this area as a significant inhibitor to effective monitoring and reporting in the areas salmon fisheries.

**i) Developed landing facilities** could be used as mandatory landing sites for both economic and sport fisheries. Mandatory landing sites are currently part of the Lower Fraser economic sockeye fishery, although they are not required in the pink or chum economic fishery or FSC fisheries. They may be acceptable to a large number of the sport fishers. There are few developed boat launches, parking spaces, washrooms and campsites along the Fraser between Mission and Hope. These are limited to Kilby (Harrison River Access), Island 22 (Chilliwack side - open year-round but only supervised seasonally and economic fisheries are excluded), and Hope (no public washrooms and no river boat launch). While some FSC and pack-in sport fisheries may not necessarily ever be observed in developed landing sites, the secure parking and boat launching facilities would attract use by most sports fishers and economic fisheries, and would facilitate a more orderly salmon fishery over-all, as well as curb a growing pollution problem. The idea of jointly developing this infrastructure with First Nations was raised as a mechanism to provide access to sport fishing economy to the area First Nations, while providing much desired facilities for the public;

**ii) Joint monitoring of both fisheries** was considered an effective strategy to generate common standards in the monitoring of the areas salmon fishery and could be key to building trust. A joint monitoring program was piloted in the 1990's by the lower Fraser Fisheries Authority, since Aboriginal Fisheries monitors were on the water for pilot sales, but was discontinued by DFO to focus on the Aboriginal fishery numbers – that project demonstrated that joint monitoring is a practical idea that could be supported.

## Crowding

A growing crowding problem on the areas Fraser salmon fishery is acknowledged as a serious challenge for the future.

**i) Night time fishing preferred by some First Nations** was considered the most effective strategy to deal with crowding issues between the fisheries. Although numerous models and examples from elsewhere were considered that could reduce crowding between sport and aboriginal fisheries on popular salmon fishing sites (i.e. alternating sides, days, or restricting some sites or drift-netting). It was decided that the one suggestion that seemed to have some potential for significant success was if First Nations would be allowed to fish at night time. This is being suggested as an option for some fishers to reduce day-time fishing, not a community edict restricting fishers from daylight fishing. The approach and expectations in implementing this option requires further discussion. It was proposed that a community may wish to volunteer to a pilot that would demonstrate safety and effective catch accounting, while not inhibiting the manageability of the fishery.

## Conflict

There is a need for acknowledgement and etiquette to be developed between sport and Aboriginal fisheries. This was rated as the most significant and immediate issue and received highest priority over-all by the working group.

**i) Teaching or modeling appropriate behavior** (manners/etiquette) for fishers when the gears/fisheries intersect was identified as the highest priority over-all by the working group. A video reenactment (*Youtube* targeted) of the incident on the river was proposed, including a demonstration of the right way to interact.<sup>2</sup>;

**ii) Avoiding media wars** was identified as an important step in building a relationship between the two fisheries, because the fishers respond to both negative and positive messaging.

**iii) Creating a buffer zone between sport and Aboriginal fishing gears** on the water was advanced as an idea that could enjoy similar success as the marine mammal regulation, prohibiting interactions at close quarters that may lead to conflict. It was felt that this

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<sup>2</sup> Chehalis has since prepared a proposal with the help of the Salmon Table that was submitted to the Fraser Salmon and Watershed's Program (Appendix 2)

may enjoy greater success as part of the etiquette-building idea, rather than a regulation. Miss-understandings due to lack of knowledge may have led to gear entanglements in the past.

## Education

Although this category received the greatest number of ideas, over-all they ranked lower than some of the others. The need for education between the fisheries covered local conflicts as well as area-wide information sharing, and would work towards common messaging and policy direction.

- i) Mapping high-use areas** was considered important particularly for new anglers. A function of close proximity to the lower mainland, the “green” angler may inadvertently trigger a conflict if they are unaware of the location of high-use areas;
- ii) Common messaging and policy direction** was considered an important contribution to solutions that can be made by members of this working group (see avoiding media wars above);
- iii) Video/code of conduct** (see teaching/modeling appropriate behavior above);
- iv) Publishing of the timing of openings** was considered useful for sport fishers to plan their trips. It was noted that DFO does this when it can, though it was noted that many of the FSC fisheries are not planned in advance (i.e. for funerals). Not all participants had knowledge of where to find this information on the DFO web-site, while others visit the site and share information regularly.

## Stewardship

Although stewardship and other activities not directly related to the conflict are an important part of ongoing efforts to building healthy relationships, the outcomes from this meeting should focus on getting along on the river. Participants acknowledged that projects like the Chehalis angler access trail and enhancement projects like those led by BCWF members are excellent opportunities for working together.

# Appendix 1:

A record of  
Small Working Group Ideas  
and their Ranking as Presented

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## **Some “hot button” Issues identified in discussion *(no priority assigned/not necessarily exhaustive)***

- Peoples are concerned about the lack of transparency in the development of fishing agreements in the Fraser River
- More effective monitoring and enforcement is considered necessary to account for unregulated catches in both fisheries (no magnitude or blame intended)
- The methodology used in monitoring the sport catch and assessing release mortality is considered partially responsible for eroding trust in catch accounting
- Growth of both fisheries in recent years has led to crowding and conflict between and within each fishery
- There have been reports of “chasing” and purposeful intimidation (random and specific sites)
- Some fishers from both sides are accused of interfering with each other’s fishery – some practices are perhaps being misinterpreted as interference (i.e. casting at passing drift-nets could be anglers not familiar with the extent of the net bunt, and some drifting over angling areas may be because long nets cannot be easily turned once a drift has commenced)
- In some cases it appears that First Nations and sport anglers in the heat of the fishery do not know how to communicate to avoid each other’s gear
- Conflicts arising between individuals involving sport and First Nations fishers are not condoned by organized anglers or First Nations, and appear to reflect a lack of manners/common courtesy, and in some isolated cases very poor behavior
- There is a lack of boat launch/landing sites that can provide services for recreational anglers and a source of local economy, as well as a base for monitoring (perhaps mandatory landing sites?)
- There is a need for more enhancement and stewardship
- DFO is not effectively managing the fishery



- Confusion between rights and priorities in the fishery
- Both First Nations and sport fishers have expressed that they are intimidated by aggregations of other fishers – some First Nations have been observed aggregating in other First Nations sites, compounding the crowding problem, and increasing the likelihood of conflict
- There are no DFO agreements with some First Nations – sport fishers are confused and concerned when they see unregulated and apparently unmonitored fishing
- Unmonitored landing sites are considered to be a catch accounting problem in both fisheries
- Unregulated First Nations night fishing is perceived as a weakness in the monitoring problem
- There is a need to work together to manage media wars
- The sport fishing economic benefits are not always seen to benefit the community as a whole
- Poor understanding of each other's fishing cultures is common place and leads to conflict

## Generating ideas for solutions – a starting place

Key Issues	Ideas	Summary Discussion	Ranking <sup>3</sup>
<b>Monitoring and Enforcement</b>	Better designation controls and mandatory landing	May have utility for both fisheries. Concern about limiting access. Enhance boat launch, camping and parking.	M
	Develop more landing, parking, camping, and toilets	The number of developed landing sites are limited in area. Well developed sites would attract the use of anglers and perhaps First Nations to make monitoring easier	H
	Joint monitoring	Piloted with some success in 1990's. Good for relationship building. DFO discontinued to focus on First Nations catch.	H
	Independent monitoring	Utilized in some other fisheries.	M
	A different model for sport catch enumeration	Continue C&R studies. Consider alternative monitoring models that generates catch estimates supported by First Nations and sport fishers	M
<b>Crowding</b>	First Nations allowed to fish at night time	Preferred by many FN's, but some enforcement issues (DFO) and safety issues (need younger people trained)	H
	Site designations for one or other fishery	Often (not always) share priority bars and fishing sites, though angling more flexible. Good model for some areas/not others	M
	Set nets instead of drift-nets	Limited set net sites, seals stealing catch, higher drift-net catch	L
	Limit drift nets to mid river	The best success for both fisheries is along river margins	L
	Alternating sides	May isolate some First Nations from key fishing areas. May work in some areas. Tough to regulate river-center.	L

<sup>3</sup> High (H), Medium (M), Low (L)

	Alternating days or week-ends (various models)	May work with some First Nations. Would severely impede guided fishery. Angling public have adapted in other areas. Weekends reserved for FSC	L
<b>Conflict</b>	Respectful etiquette for fisheries should be developed	Parties need to define appropriate communications understandings for fishers when gear/effort intersect (joint video “how to”)	H
	Avoid media wars	Both groups see the need to work out solutions directly	H
	Create a buffer Zone	Both fisheries need to taught how to avoid conflict by staying a respectful distance	H
<b>Education</b>	Map high use areas	Rank site use. Include at landing kiosks, internet etc.	H
	Messaging and policy conflicts	Continue dialogue/ attend each other’s meetings. Kiosk at outdoor show. Joint press releases. Work together on etiquette	H
	Video/code of conduct development	See etiquette – the exercise of creating a video on codes of conduct will engage joint-exercise without fishing pressure	H
	Publish timing of openings	Available on Internet – need kiosks at landing sites	H
<b>Economics</b>	Train native guides	Some limited capacity now – mutual benefit	M
<b>Stewardship</b>	Joint projects	Projects like Chehalis trail, beaver dam control, habitat	H

Key Issues	Ideas	Summary Discussion	RC	EG	FK	MF	RR	WC	Score	Group Ranking
<b>Monitoring and Enforcement</b>	Develop more landing, parking, camping, and toilets	The number of developed landing sites is limited in the area. Well developed sites would attract the use of anglers and perhaps First Nations fishers to make monitoring easier	2	2	8	7	6	11	36	5
	Joint monitoring	Piloted with some success in 1990's. Good for relationship building. DFO discontinued to focus on First Nations catch.	11	4	2	1	4	1	23	3
<b>Crowding</b>	First Nations allowed to fish at night time	Preferred by many First Nations, but some enforcement issues (DFO) and safety issues (need younger people trained)	1	3	1	5	2	5	17	2
<b>Conflict</b>	Respectful etiquette for fisheries should be developed	Parties need to define appropriate communications etiquette for fishers when gear/effort intersect	3	1	7	2	1	1	15	1
	Avoid media wars	Both groups see the need to work out solutions directly	11	8	5	6	3	11	44	7
	Create a buffer Zone	Both fisheries need to be taught how to avoid conflict by staying a respectful distance	11	11	10	3	1	11	47	8
<b>Education</b>	Map high use areas	Rank site use. Include at landing kiosks, internet etc.	4	7	9	10	7	2	39	6
	Messaging and policy conflicts	Continue dialogue/ attend each other's meetings. Kiosk at outdoor show. Joint press releases. Work together on etiquette	11	6	6	4	5	3	35	4
	Video/code of conduct development	See etiquette – the exercise of creating a video on codes of conduct will engage joint-exercise without fishing pressure	11	10	3	11	8	1	44	7
	Publish timing of openings	Available on Internet – use kiosks at landing sites	11	7	11	8	9	11	57	9
<b>Stewardship</b>	Joint projects	Projects like Chehalis trail, beaver dam control, habitat	5	5	4	9	10	3	36	5

## **Appendix 2:**

# ***River Manners – Public etiquette for a growing fishery***

**A Joint Chehalis/Fraser River Salmon Table**

**Proposal to the**

**Fraser Salmon and Watershed's Program**

*(corrected with the removal of reference to “protocols”)*

# 2010/11 CONCEPTUAL PROPOSAL

1. Project Information					
1.1. Proponent's Legal Name					
Chehalis Indian Band					
1.2. Mailing Address					
4690 Salish Way, Agassiz, BC V0M 1A1					
1.3. Project Title:		River Manners – Public etiquette for a growing fishery			
1.4. Are you a federally registered Charity, Non-profit organization or Business? (Yes/No):					First Nation
If yes, please indicate which one.		Charity:		Non-profit:	
		Business:			
Registration Number:	First Nation		GST Number:		
Are you a registered Society? (Yes/No):	No	Society Registration Number:			
1.5. Project Location (See <a href="http://www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/regions/">http://www.fraserbasin.bc.ca/regions/</a> for list of regions)					
Which region is your project in? (If the project applies to whole Fraser basin, then write "basin wide").			Within the region indicated, please more specifically indicate where the project is located (if applicable).		
Lower Fraser – Gravel reach			Adjacent to the Harrison River confluence		
1.6. Contact for this proposal					

Name: Dave Moore	Phone: (250) 372-9472	Email: <a href="mailto:davemoore08@xplornet.com">davemoore08@xplornet.com</a>
<b>1.7. Has this proposal been submitted previously to this or other funders? If so, which ones?</b>		
No		
<b>1.8. Is this a multi-year proposal? If yes, please explain what year the project will be in this year (e.g. first year, second year, etc.). Also note, multi-year projects approved for 2010/11 funding are not guaranteed funding in future years.</b>		
No		

## 2. Project description

### 2.1. Provide a brief overview of the project including its goals.

The Chehalis Indian Band and the Fraser River Salmon Table Society have partnered to work with a small group of sport fishing and First Nations representatives to produce a video to promote peaceful approaches to interactions between the sport anglers and Aboriginal drift-net fishers who both fish for salmon in the lower Fraser River, British Columbia.

The resulting understandings for gear/people interactions are considered a highly beneficial and educational in an area of growing popularity for the sport fishery and with a long history of fishing by First Nations.

### 2.2. Describe the specific deliverables of this project (what will be produced).

1. **Understandings** to serve as a guide for sports anglers and First Nations drift-net fishers to follow when their fisheries engage each other;
2. **A 5 minute video** illustrating the preferred method of hailing, avoiding, and communicating between sport anglers and First Nation drift-net fishers in the lower Fraser River to help the two fisheries visualize ways to “get along”;
3. **A constructive relationship** on the water between local First Nations fishers and sports anglers who will interact with increasing frequency in the future.

**2.3. Briefly describe how you will achieve each deliverable listed in section 2.2**

The development of the video will be a joint effort between sports anglers and First Nations that have been party to a rolling dialogue in the lower Fraser River aimed at getting along on the River – the proposed video production was one of several ideas aimed at finding solutions to their conflicts on the water, and a gesture of finding out how to get along. An RFP circulated by the Fraser River Salmon Table has been responded to by 4 separate companies. The participants in the dialogue will choose the company, agree on the content and nature of the video, participate in the acting, and work together in distribution. The video production will be designed for short TV clips and You Tube.

**3. Project Alignment with FSWP**

3.1. From the list below, select the FSWP Desired Outcome(s) to which your project will contribute (mark an “X” in the left column).

*Program Area: Education and Engagement Desired Outcomes*

	1.1 People and communities take a leadership role in raising the profile of salmon and watershed sustainability.
X	1.2 People and communities have an awareness of their connection to ecosystems.
	1.3 People and communities share information, knowledge and opportunities related to watershed sustainability.
	1.4 People and communities have the capacity to take action for watershed sustainability.

*Program Area: Habitat and Water Restoration & Stewardship Desired Outcomes*



	2.1 Habitat integrity works and ecosystem management are efficient and effective through coordinated, integrated and informed processes.
	2.2 Habitat integrity works and ecosystem management contributes to resilient and resistant ecosystems.
	2.3 Diverse and representative sectors and levels of society are engaged in habitat integrity works and ecosystem management, contributing to participatory and integrated ecosystem management processes.
<i>Program Area: Planning and Governance Desired Outcomes</i>	
x	3.1 People convene in collaborative processes and develop common visions of sustainable governance in both salmon and watershed management. These processes occur among and/or between First Nations, different levels of government, and other interested parties.
	3.2 Planning and governance tools and techniques are used to support regionally specific and/or province-wide collaborative decision-making processes.
<i>Program Area: Sustainable Integrated Fisheries Management Desired Outcomes</i>	
	4.1 Diverse and representative sectors and levels of society are engaged in collaborative science initiatives addressing threats to salmon and watershed sustainability.
	4.2 Tools and information necessary to support a common understanding of science that addresses threats to salmon and watershed sustainability exist.
<i>Program Wide Desired Outcome</i>	
x	5.1 First Nations are engaged in all areas and stages of FSWP projects. See Aboriginal Engagement Guidelines at: <a href="http://www.thinksalmon.com/fswp_notice/item/guidelines_for_first_nations_engagement_reposted/">http://www.thinksalmon.com/fswp_notice/item/guidelines_for_first_nations_engagement_reposted/</a>
<b>3.2. Describe how your project contributes to each Desired Outcome marked with an “X” in section 3.1. If more than two outcomes are marked, then only describe two outcomes.</b>	
<p><b>Common vision in sustainable governance</b></p> <p>The video project will assist the fishers of both groups to build patterns of behavior that will assist the two interests in their effort to get along on the River. More-over, the experience of building the video will provide an opportunity for the Parties to model behaviors that they feel will best avoid conflict in the future.</p> <p><b>Program –wide Desired Outcome</b></p> <p>This project is lead by the Chehalis Indian Band who experienced the conflict first hand in the summer of 2009 when one of their drift-fishers</p>	

collided with a sport angling boat and gear entangled. Chief Willie Charlie led the dialogue with sport fishers and has endorsed this project with the purpose of ensuring First Nations fishing rights are considered as the local sport fishery grows, and so that First Nations can see ways that the two fisheries can get along.

**3.3. Does your project involve partnership or leveraging with other organizations? If yes, please briefly describe with who, and how.**

The BC Wildlife Federation, Fraser Valley Angling Guides Association, the BC Federation of Drift-fishers and the Fraser Valley Salmon Society (and others) have collaborated in the dialogue for solutions around the conflict between the two fisheries. The video project was widely supported, and ranked high among their list of possible solutions to conflicts encountered on the river between the two fisheries.

**3.4. Does your project involve communication activities, such as sharing and/or exchanging information, experiences etc? If so, please briefly describe with who, and how.**

Yes. The activity of production the video and the understandings being developed will be widely discussed, and the resulting video will be widely displayed publically.

#### 4. Preliminary Budget

Include a preliminary budget that identifies for the 2010/11 funding year only: (i) the total amount requested from the FSWP, (ii) total in-kind funding (listed by partner), and (iii) the total value of the project (including additional sources of funding).

Activity	A: Fees	B: Room/Refresh/Travel/Other	In-kind
1. Planning and organization of sport/First Nation working group with producer	\$ 1,500	\$500	\$ 2,000
2. Field production	\$ 8,000	-	-
3. Boat/operator costs		\$1,000	-
4. Post production	\$ 8,000	-	-
5. Copy and distribution	\$ 1,000	-	-
GST	\$925		
Total Requested	\$19,425	\$ 1,500	\$2,000
<b>Total A &amp; B</b>	<b>\$20,925</b>		<b>\$2,000</b>