

# A Rolling Dialogue among Sport Fishing and First Nations Joint Working Group in the Lower Fraser River

**Summary notes from: Wednesday December 2, 2009: Abbotsford Ramada Plaza. Valley Room.**

**Purpose:** To refine implementation of plans from group ideas to “Get along on the river”.

This is a continuation of rolling dialogue 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 lower Fraser River. A Joint Working Group (the working group) continues to meet to work out implementation plans for collaborative project ideas that have been organized and ranked by theme over the last few months. This is the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting since August. This meeting was convened by the working group to further refine implementation of these collaborative project ideas in the area.

## **Priority collaborative project themes:**

- **Mapping of high-use/potential conflict areas** – generating a map of popular fishing sites where fisheries conflict is most likely to occur
- **Night-time fishing pilot** – a proposed voluntary experiment involving willing First Nations and DFO to reduce local fishing pressures in the daytime
- **River manners/Etiquette on the River** – a behavioral first step in getting along
- **Joint (collaborative) monitoring** – collaboration in an enhanced sport fishing monitoring program to enhance First Nations monitoring program
- **River-side infrastructure** – enhancing access to sport fish landings for better accounting and a possible First Nations tool to access economy from the sport fishery

**Next scheduled meeting: Tuesday January 19, 2010. 2PM – 5 PM. Abbotsford Ramada Plaza, Valley Room.**

## **Participants List\* and Contact Information**

\*Dave Moore, Fraser River Salmon Table Executive Director – Notes

\*Dave Barrett, President, Fraser River Salmon Table - facilitator

\*Frank Kwak, Fraser River Salmon Table Sport Fishing File Manager

\*Ed George, BC Wildlife Federation

Patti MacAhonic, BCWF Executive Director

\*Murray Ned, Sumas Band

\*Kim Charlie, Chehalis Indian Band

James Leon, Chehalis Indian Band Fisheries Councillor

\*Martha Fredette, Sto:lo Tribal Council

\*Ernie Crey Sto:lo Tribal Council

\*Robert Reyerse, Angling Guides Association

\*Terry Tebb, Pacific Salmon Foundation

Andrew Stegman, Pacific Salmon Foundation

\*Rod Clapton, BC Federation of Driftfishers

\*Ken Malloway, Sto:lo Tribal Council/Fraser Salmon Table/FV Ab. Fish Society

\*Chris Gosslin, RCMP Native Liaison

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## **1. Review of proposed Metis involvement in the Joint Working Group**

Recap of discussion about Metis involvement in this Joint Working Group on First Nations and Sportfishers in the lower Fraser River. Proposal by Metis Nation to become involved. Phone follow-up was undertaken by Dave Moore on behalf of this group. Request for proposal in writing from this group has not been received. Referral to area First Nations by Working Group. Sto:lo Tribal Council reflected upon Supreme Court case law, pointing to the need for family ancestry and territorial rights to be recognized as basis for access claims, and felt requests regarding access questions should go to First Nations Directly. Concern expressed by Tribal Council about this process if Metis were involved. Acknowledged by sport fishing groups present. If any correspondence received it will be circulated to members of this group.

## **2. Collaborative Project proposals**

### **2.1 Mapping of high-use/potential conflict areas**

This proposal ranked high in the priorities for it's educational value to the public. The working group identified the utility and value of creating a map that would illustrate high-use or popular salmon fishing sites in the area, as a way to inform the public about where the two fisheries are most likely to intersect. The map should include both drift net sites and set net sites as well as popular salmon sport angling sites. The purpose of the map would be to warn sport fishers in particular, and especially new anglers of the most likely spots for interactions so that they can avoid them. Discussion about stability/changeability of set net sites but feeling is that variation is between specific sites not fishing areas. Both set nets and drift nets are relevant to this map as any of these salmon fisheries have the potential to conflict. Ernie Crey and Ken Malloway have agreed to look at the policy of mapping First Nations fishing sites in the area (whether and how) and to search for a suitable map base at the Fraser Valley Aboriginal Fisheries Society (FVAFS). Following a discussion of the idea at the next FVAS Board meeting. This working group has proposed the organization of a workshop with this group, involving a broad and informed participation to identify the "hot spots" to include on the map. This project will require financial resources for the workshop and professional mapping support for the generation of the base map, as well as a plan and funding for broader sharing of the final product.

#### **Action:**

Ken and Ernie will raise the proposal at the December 14 FVAFS Board meeting and report back.

*Prepared by the Fraser River Salmon Table – for comments or questions [davemoore08@xplornet.com](mailto:davemoore08@xplornet.com)*

## 2.2 Night-time fishing pilot

This proposal ranked among the highest of the ideas of this working group for its potential to reduce crowding on the river in popular salmon fishing areas by both First Nations and sport fishers. One of the greatest challenges of the joint working group has been to identify strategies to reduce crowding and potential for conflict during times and at sites where salmon fishing is most popular in the area for both the sport fishery and the First Nations fisheries. It was discovered that some First Nations fishers prefer to drift-net at night time, and that this was once a long standing practice, and offers greater success for those who participate. Even when better catch efficiencies are managed within allocation arrangements, the benefits to the participants includes less effort, cost and stress for the same amount of fish. Not all First Nations fishers like to fish at night, and there are policy and management issues that need to be addressed with DFO and other First Nations that won't or can't fish at night. DFO was approached by Dave Moore to participate in a discussion with the group, but no formal commitments have been made.

Key policy and management issues raised (not exhaustive):

- Catch/allocation accounting, regulatory compliance, and traceability may be more difficult in a night-time fishery, and systems are not (or cannot) be put in place to manage all First Nations fisheries in all areas at night (FVAFS already monitors some night regulated time fishing);
- Higher catch efficiency may provide a harvest advantage to those First Nations that do fish at night;
- Some believe that night time fishing closures provide a migration window for salmon so that a portion of the runs may always pass unobstructed through the lower Fraser River;

### **Action:**

Both DFO fish management, C&P, and RCMP need to be involved in this discussion with this working group. They will be asked to generate a list of issues in advance.

### **2.3 River Manners/etiquette between fisheries**

This proposal ranked high among ideas dealing with conflict between the fisheries. A proposal to the Fraser Salmon and Watershed's Program (FSWP) was prepared by the Chehalis Indian Band jointly with the Fraser Salmon Table on behalf of this group, proposing to develop a short video production suitable for "Youtube" or local TV clip. The video production to be led by both sport and First Nations participants to this process would demonstrate by example the correct way for the interaction involving Chief Willie Charlie to have unfolded, and thus modeling appropriate behaviors for when the fisheries intersect. The video would target the uninformed or unfamiliar in particular, and would enable the parties to work together to develop appropriate codes of conduct on the water in hopes of avoiding conflict in the future, and may be used beyond the video project. The model behaviors or codes of conduct could be included in sport fishing regulations, magazines, pamphlets, and on access point kiosks. Bear Video was short listed and has agreed to produce the video for the funding proposed.

The RCMP Native liaison expressed strong support for the project on behalf of the RCMP and agreed to a joint release with the RCMP crime-stoppers video production planned to be produced and released next year. The RCMP would also look for other ways to provide support, including raising this in an upcoming meeting with DFO C&P.

#### **Action:**

- Some caution was raised about protecting the copyrights of the video so that the Parties to this group can maintain control over it's use and distribution, and to ensure that there are no royalties required by Bear productions.
- Plan for a joint release next summer and need to develop a distribution and media strategy
- Ensure that the media for distribution is DVD compatible with standard video viewing software in most computers and DVD players.
- This video production could be a utilized in a sports show booth, collaboratively manned by the parties to the working group.

## 2.4 Collaborative monitoring program

The group reviewed the idea of a joint monitoring program using the areas aboriginal fisheries monitors. For clarity, the group agreed that this idea was about a collaborative monitoring effort leading to common standards and trust in catch accounting in the areas salmon fishery, not an independent monitoring program conducted by another body, and not a joint monitoring program aimed at putting sports fishers and First Nations monitors out on the water together.

Participants identified effective monitoring of the areas fishery as a key in achieving levels of monitoring and compliance that will enable the different interests in the Fraser River salmon fishery to get along. More effective catch accounting may assist in achieving Marine Stewardship Council certification and will assist the groups to embark on more sophisticated harvest management in the future.

The group reflected on the ideas around common standards leading to trust in one-another's catch accounting, arising from the Monitoring and Compliance workshop jointly held by the Fraser River Salmon Table and the Integrated Salmon Dialogue Forum on October 21 and 22. This collaborative monitoring program has the potential to build this common trust in catch accounting, and build the capacity together for the two fisheries to undertake more complex fisheries arrangements in the future.

Currently the First Nations monitors are not tasked with monitoring the sport fishery. This is done by contractors hired by DFO to monitor sport catches through interviews conducted from key landing sites, and the data is complimented by a series of periodic over-flights. The First Nations monitors are employed part time when there is an organized FSC or economic fishery. Neither the First Nations or sport fisheries groups are involved in the sport fishing creel survey at this time.

### **Action:**

- Murray Ned, Ernie Crey and Ken Malloway will lead the proposal.
- Terry Tebb has offered assistance from the PSF. He was involved in the programming when he was employed by DFO and somewhat familiar with the joint monitoring program piloted over a decade ago with the lower Fraser Fishing Authority, and may be able to provide some informed insights in the development of the proposal and assist in building partnerships.
- The concept will be raised at the December 14 FVAFS Board meeting for direction.

## 2.5 River-side Infrastructure

This project ranked high among the ideas because it offers a way of enhancing access to sport fish landings for better accounting as well as a possible First Nations tool to access economy from the sport fishery. The group has identified the lack of preferred landing sites as a limiting factor in the accounting of the areas popular salmon sport fishery. In particular, the lack of “developed” landing sites/launches, secure parking, campsites, and washrooms is a problem for the developing fisheries in the area and the existing facilities are over-subscribed. Participants agreed that developed sites would attract a large proportion of the angling public that would likely increase the coverage of creel surveys and its accuracy. The sites may also be of use to the First Nations fisheries, and organized sites may contribute as well to the ongoing work to achieve traceability and quality objectives in the First Nations economic fishery.

There are parallels between this vision and the Provinces “Experience the Fraser” Program announced by the Ministry of Tourism, Culture and Trade in April along with \$2.5 million (combined with the Fraser Valley Regional District) to begin a system of inter-regional trails, river-based infrastructure and heritage features along the lower Fraser corridor. Rod Clapton tabled a letter sent by the BC Federation of Driftfishers to the Honorable Randy Hawes, MLA Abbotsford-Mission who made the spring announcement on behalf of the MoTCA Minister Bill Bennett (Appendix 2). In this letter the Federation highlighted the accomplishments of this group and the group’s identification of river-based infrastructure development as an action point. The BCFDF has also had discussions with Doug Wilson from the Fraser Valley Regional District on this matter and are seeking a representative from MoTCA and the FVRD to come to a future meeting to discuss this initiative and possible synergies. Rod Clapton points out that in response to their letter of inquiry, they are told that Randy Hawes has been consulting with local First Nations on the “Experience the Fraser” Program.

### **Action:**

The BCFDF will invite representatives from MoTCA, FVRD and/or “Experience the Fraser” Program representatives to a future meeting of this group to discuss ideas.

### 3.0 General Discussion and next meeting

The group reflected on the positive nature of the growing relationships around this table and that there is strong interest in pursuing the action points. There is something here for each organization to lead and lots of things to work together on to improve the relationships and help get along on the river.

#### Actions:

- **Public Information booth:** The Parties to this joint working group should continue to discuss the idea of jointly operating a public information booth at the BC Outdoor Sports show – the BCFDF will look into costs and recommend ideas to this group at future meetings that can be pursued together;
- **Funding for process:** There is an increasing demand on the Fraser River Salmon Table budget for this process and there is a need for additional resources to keep it afloat – Terry Tebb will look into financial resources for the proposed video production (whether inside or outside the FSWP), and has committed to pay for the meeting room and hospitality costs (coffee service) for the next few months of this fiscal year from his own budget if there are not sufficient resources elsewhere;
- **Media Committee and Strategy:** The Parties to this group felt the need for a media strategy. A media strategy group was recommended and struck that includes: Rod Clapton, Robert Reyerse, Ernie Crey, and Dave Moore. The mantra for this group is “jointly – a commitment to action”;
- **Meeting frequency and scheduling:** There was a commitment to increase the frequency of the meetings to accommodate the significant work to move ahead with the action items of the working group. The participants agreed to meet monthly to accommodate this need. The Salmon Table will make arrangements to book the meeting rooms regularly during the third week of every month (avoid the 23 and 24<sup>th</sup> for January);
- **DFO participation in this working group:** Dave Moore will contact DFO representatives to see if someone may be available to attend the next meeting.
- **Pamphlet:** Dave Moore will prepare a mock pamphlet for sharing/distribution by the joint working group



## Appendix 1: How to Get Along on the River ~ Issues, Ideas and Summary Discussion Points

Key Issues	Ideas	Summary Discussion	RC	EG	EK	ME	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	<b>5</b>
	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	<b>3</b>
<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	<b>2</b>
<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	<b>1</b>
	Avoid media wars	Both groups see the need to work out solutions directly	11	8	5	6	3	11	44	<b>7</b>
	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	<b>8</b>
<b>Education</b>	Map high use areas	Rank site use. Include at landing kiosks, internet etc.	4	7	9	10	7	2	39	<b>6</b>
	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	<b>4</b>
	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	<b>7</b>
	Publish timing of openings	Available on Internet – use kiosks at landing sites	11	7	11	8	9	11	57	<b>9</b>
<b>Stewardship</b>	Joint projects	Projects like Chehalis trail, beaver dam control, habitat	5	5	4	9	10	3	36	<b>5</b>

Prepared by the Fraser River Salmon Table – for comments or questions [davemoore08@xplornet.com](mailto:davemoore08@xplornet.com)

**Appendix 2: Copy of letter to Honorable Randy Haws, MLA Abbotsford-Mission regarding trail plan**

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**British Columbia**

**Federation Of Drift Fishers**

Nov 25, 2009

*"Recipient of Recreational Fisheries Award."*

Hon. Randy Haws  
MLA Abbotsford-Mission

Dear Mr. Haws

I was one of the presenters at our Steelhead presentation to the Liberal caucus earlier in the year which you kindly attended. I am writing to you today not regarding steelhead, although the situation is as serious as ever. I am writing regarding an initiative you are leading relating to developing the recreational facilities and access along the Fraser River. In my recent discussions with Doug Wilson from Fraser Valley Regional District your name was mentioned as a lead in this initiative. We are currently involved in a joint 1st Nation/Recreational fisheries working group seeking solutions to conflict situations which occur on the Fraser River during the summer salmon season.

To date the meetings have been extremely cordial and significant progress has been made in developing positive relationships. An action point established is improving catch monitoring for all stakeholder fishing groups. To facilitate this monitoring, improved facilities, including secure launching areas and camping facilities would be very beneficial. With the closure of Island 22 campsite there are no camping areas on the Fraser between Mission and Hope and there are only 2 locations with any toilet facilities.

We had past discussions with Doug Wilson regarding improving facilities and the recent joint cooperative initiative with 1st Nations has rekindled the discussions. We understand your government has long term plans regarding recreational development along the Fraser and perhaps someone from your staff could attend one of our meetings and report on this initiative. I'm sure you appreciate the significance of joint initiatives between the Recreational community and 1st Nations.

I know it's short notice but our next meeting is Dec 2nd in Abbotsford.

Rod Clapton, President

*Respect The Resource -- Respect Other Anglers*