

Annual Report for 1975
For the Terrace-Lakelse, Sub-District, Terrace B.C.

Indian Food Fishery

A number of changes in the administration of the Indian Food Fishery that were implemented in 1974 were continued in 1975, namely;

Permits were issued to Band Councils, rather than individuals, as in the past. These Band Permits authorized members of the Band to fish on the historical fishing grounds of that particular band. An Indian wanting to fish in an area not covered by the permit held by his band council, was required to obtain an individual permit.

As in 1974, all restrictions (Fishing times, method, place, amount of gear) were arrived at by consulting with the Band Councils. The following is a resume of the arrangements with the various bands in this Sub-District concerning their food fishery.

Kalum Band

A permit was issued to this Band covering the Skeena River from Terrace downstream to the tidal boundary. Band members were authorized to fish from 6:00 P.M. Friday till 6:00 P.M. Tuesday. Non Band members were authorized to fish from 6:00 P.M. Tuesday till 6:00 P.M. Friday.

Kitselas Band

A permit was issued to this Band covering the Skeena River from Terrace upstream to Legate Creek. Fishing times for both Band Members and Non Band Members were the same as for the Kalum Band.

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Kitwanga Band

This Band was issued a permit covering the Skeena River from Legate Creek to Andimaul Creek. Band members were authorized to fish 7 days per week. Non-band members were restricted to 4 days per week, 6:00 P.M. Sunday till 6:00 P.M. Thursday.

Kitseguecla Band

This Band was issued a permit covering the Skeena River from Andimaul Creek upstream to Burdick Creek. Fishing was permitted 7 days per week.

Hazelton-Glen Vowel

These bands were issued permits covering the Skeena River from Burdick Creek upstream to the Babine River. Fishing was permitted 7 days per week.

Haswilget Band

This band was issued a permit covering the Bulkley River and the Skeena River upstream from Burdick Creek. Fishing was permitted 7 days per week.

Kispiox Band

In 1974 the Council for this band refused to take a permit on the grounds they would not accept territorial restrictions where domestic fishing was concerned. Consequently permits were issued to individuals.

In 1975 the Kispiox Band Council accepted a permit covering the Skeena River from Burdick Creek upstream to the Babine River. The permit authorized a 7 day per week fishery.

The following is the only restriction placed on the Food Fishery by Public Notice (Section 4B, B.C. Regs) during 1975.

Effective 6:00 P.M. August 1st until 6:00 P.M. August 24th net fishing was restricted to the weekly period, 6:00 P.M. Friday till 6:00 P.M. Tuesday.

This closure was requested by the Kalum and Kitselas Band Councils. ~~The purpose being to conserve pink and chum salmon. These species~~ are not normally utilized by the local Indians for domestic purposes.

The following is a resume of the catch figures for the Terrace-Lakelse Sub-District for the period 1971-75.

<u>Year</u>	<u>Sockeye</u>	<u>Cohoe</u>	<u>Pinks</u>	<u>Chums</u>	<u>Springs</u>	<u>Steelhead</u>
1971	42,550	4,450	11,800	800	2,260	350
1972	19,175	1,050	4,900	400	900	725
1973	35,000	1,100	4,000	300	1,500	600
1974	40,000	1,500	2,500	300	1,500	1,000
1975	60,000	4,500	5,000	400	2,500	1,000

In 1975 permits were issued to 3 Bands. In addition permits were issued 74 individuals (Non-Band Members). All permits issued to individuals were for the Terrace Area. During the past two or three years there has been a considerable increase in the number of Indians who have moved in from other areas, applying for permits to take salmon on the Skeena River.

The changes in the administration of the Indian Food Fishery, implemented over the past two years, have resulted in an improvement in relations between the Fisheries Service and the Skeena River Indians. To date there has not been any serious complaints concerning this matter. During the past year at least one meeting was held with each band to discuss their food fishery, and related problems.

Sockeye

The total estimated escapement of this species to the tributaries of the lower Skeena of approximately 3,000 was down 50% from a main brood year return of 15,000 to 12,000 spawners.

The return of all sockeye producing tributaries on the lower Skeena was below the main cycle year.

The return of sockeye to all producing stream show a steady decline despite the late opening of the commercial net fishery on the Skeena Estuary. Most Sockeye bound for these streams pass through the estuary prior to the commercial fishery.

Coho

The total escapement of this species to the tributaries of the lower Skeena is an estimated 20,000 to 25,000. This is down approximately 55% from the brood year cycle of 50,00 to 55,000. Returns to the Gitnadoix, Kasiks, Kalum, and Axtew rivers were comparable to the brood year escapements. A marked decline was observed in the Lakelse river, Copper River, Kispiox River, and Kitwanga River.

heavy sport fishing pressure on the Lakelse River could be a contributing factor to the decline on this system.

Pinks

The total escapement of this species to the tributaries of the lower Main Stem Skeena was well above the expected return.

The following is a resume of the escapement to the main Pink producing streams of the lower Skeena:

Lakelse River 750,000	Kitwanga River 200,000
Kispiox River 200,000	main Stream Skeena 200,000
Others 11,000	

Chums

The escapement of this species to the lower Main Stem Skeena and the tributaries of the lower Skeena is an estimated 4,000 spawners, approximately the same as the main cycle return of 4-5,000 fish.

Springs.

The estimated escapement of this species to the tributaries of the lower Skeena and the lower Main Stem Skeena was slightly higher, 11,000 - 12,000 fish, approximately 10% more than the main cycle return of 10,000 - 11,000.

The following is a resume of the escapement to the major spring producing tributaries of the lower Skeena:

Kispiox 2,500 Kalua 6,000
Lakelse 500 Main Stem Skeena 1,000
Others 2,000

Steelhead

The catch per unit of effort in both the Indian food fishery and Sports fishery during August indicated a good return of this species to the upper section of the Skeena River system.

The angling success in the lower Skeena tributaries during October and November indicated above average catches. Water levels during this time remained reasonably stable which was a contributing factor. Sports fishing pressure for this species shows a steady increase annually, especially on the Copper and Lakelse river systems.

General

Generally favorable water levels and weather conditions prevailed from the start of the spawning season in late August to March 1976.

Water levels in all tributaries and Main Stem Skeena remained stable with very little fluctuation indicating good seeding of the spawning beds with very little loss due to receding water levels.

Favorable weather conditions throughout the winter and spring, and an adequate snow cover should reflect a good fry crop in the spring of 1976.

	<u>Snowfall</u>	<u>Precipitation</u>	<u>Temperature</u>		
			<u>High</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Mean</u>
January	67.6	6.93	41	-11	23.4
February	41.3	6.00	41	-8	20.5
March	6.5	1.45	46	17	32.5
April	4.1	1.24	63	26	40.8
May		2.50	79	30	48.9
June		1.92	80	41	54
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July		2.67	30.0	6.9	16.6
August		2.23	28.3	5.2	13.6
September		60.9 mm..	24.2	3.2	12.7
October	4.8 mm..	141.9 mm..	17.7	-2.7	6.4
November	77.1 mm..	208.2 mm..	5.9	-14.6	-1.1
December	97.0 mm..	170.9 mm..	5.9	-12.4	-1.5

Enforcement

During 1975 a total of 23 prosecutions were carried out for violation of the British Columbia Fishery Regulations and Fishery Act. These actions resulted in 23 convictions.

A total of \$2040. in fines were levied by the court for the offences listed above. In addition the following items were confiscated by the courts: 30 pieces of salmon, 1 gill net.

Fry Salvage

No fry salvage carried out in the Terrace - Lakelse Sub-district in 1975.

Herring

Not applicable in this Sub-district.

Environment - Multiple Water Use

The following is a resume of the various industries and human activities in this Sub-district, outlining their relationship to water resources and pollution:

Logging and Lumbering

Pollution attributing to this industry is not a serious problem in this Sub-district.

In 1975, 73 logging referrals were handled through this Sub-district. Due to increased liasson between logging company's and the various governmental agencies, many environmental problems were averted before logging activities commenced. In potential problem areas an inter - resource inspection was set up on a cost sharing basis and each agency had an opportunity to make recommendations to the problem.

Agriculture and Ranching

Farming and ranching in the Skeena Valley is limit-

ed to a small amount of arable land suitable for these purposes. These activities are confined to the Kalum and Kispiox Valleys and the Skeena Valley between Terrace and Hazelton. Farming is confined mainly to raising fodder crops for cattle and does not require irrigation.

Water Licences

During 1975 one water licence was processed for domestic purposes.

Obstructions and Stream Diversions

Beaver dams are a recurring problem in the Sub-district. Most of these problems occur in the Kispiox Valley and occasionally on the tributaries of the Gitnadox, Kalum and Lakelse Rivers. Coho and to a smaller extent sockeye are affected by these dams.

Predators

Sea Lions

Not applicable to the Sub-district.

Seals

Hair seals enter the Skeena River Estuary in May and June to have their pups. While on occasions, strays go as far inland as Sabine Lake. Large concentrations are seldom seen upstream from the Khyex River. While it is impossible to accurately estimate the extent of predation on the Skeena River salmon it is no doubt considerable. A steady increase in the seal population is noticeable which no doubt will compound the situation.

Bears (Grizzly and Black)

Although the black Bear population seems to be on the increase in the Sub-district there is no evidence to show that either of these species are a problem in this area.

Grayfish

Not applicable to this area.

Killer Whales

Not applicable to this area.

Mergansers

The merganser population seems to be increasing in the area. Large concentrations are observed on the Lakelse River during the late fall and early spring. While it is impossible to accurately estimate the extent of predation, it is no doubt considerable to both eggs and fry.

Administration

Staff

Fishery officers - Morris Bogart - permanent duty in Terrace sub-district

Peter Woloshyn - Transferred to Terrace in June for permanent duty as a Fishery Officer.

Guardians

B. Bolton - July 2 to Sept. 5

H. Segelken - July 5 to Aug. 30

A. Barr - July 2 to Aug. 30

D. Hollands - May 5 to Sept. 6

D. MacDonald - July 6 to Sept. 13

J. Hipp - July 2 to Nov. 15

Equipment

Vehicles

Two vehicles are on assignment in the Terrace - Lakelse Sub-district:

- 1970 4 x 4 International travelal
- 1974 Dodge van

Replacement has been requested for the 1970 4 x 4 International as this vehicle is almost unusable.

Boats

In addition to the 13 foot Valco, a 14 foot Smokercraft and trailer is occasionally used for patrols and escapement counts.

Motors

As to date our inventory of outboard motors are as follows:

- one 15 H.P. Johnson
- one 65 H.P. Mercury
- one 20 H.P. Mercury

Sport Fishing

Springs

During the 1975 season approximately 1000 adult springs and 1500 jack springs were taken by anglers from the Main Stem Skeena and it's tributaries, between Kwinitza and Kispiox. Of this total approximately 150 springs were taken in the April-May run of springs to the Kitsumkalum River - Mud Lake waters.

The decrease in April - May was due to extremely unfavourable water conditions (high - turbid), while the water conditions during June, July, and early August were conducive to productive fishing in the Main Stem Skeena and its tributaries.

Favourable water conditions coupled with a particularly high fishing pressure by both residents and non-residents attributed to an above normal catch.

Cohoe

The majority of the angling was concentrated around the Lakelse, Zymoetz (Copper), Gitnadoix Rivers and to some extent the Kasiks and Zymogotiz (Zimacord) Rivers.

Approximately 2000 coho were taken from the Main Stem Skeena and its tributaries between Kwinitza and Kispiox. An estimated 600 of the total being taken from the Lakelse River with the Gitnadoix nearly as productive.

Steelhead

Good catches of steelhead were reported from the Zymoetz (Copper), Kitsuakium, and Lakelse Rivers.