

TR-D

Indian Food Fishery Skeena River Area

During the past year a number of changes in the administration of the Indian Food Fishery on the Skeena River were introduced. The major change, for the first time Indian Band Councils were given a say in how this fishery was administered. Namely, meetings were held with all the band councils on the Skeena River for the purpose of arriving at a mutual agreement as to how their food fishery would be conducted on their traditional fishing grounds. On the Skeena River, as in most other areas, each band has traditional fishing grounds, fishing sites that have been passed on to band members from one generation to another.

Previously Indian Permits under Section 32 of the B.C. Regs were issued to individuals. Generally fishing was restricted to four days each week.

Starting in 1974 Indian Permits were issued to Band Councils, and authorized members of a Band to fish on the traditional fishing grounds of that particular band. All restrictions as to fishing times, method, gear restrictions, closures for conservation were arrived at by consulting with the Band Council.

The following is a resume of the arrangements worked out with the various Skeena River Bands;

Kitsumkalum

This group was issued a permit covering the Skeena River from Terrace downstream to the tidal boundary. Band Members were authorized to fish for four days each week (6:00 P.M. Friday till 6:00 P.M. Tuesday). Non Band members who fished in this area were issued individual permits authorizing fishing for three days each week (6:00 P.M. Tuesday till 6:00 P.M. Friday).

On August 1st the Skeena River downstream from the B.C. Hydro Power Line at Remo was closed to net fishing under Indian Permit for the remainder of the year, because this section of the river is a spawning area for pink and chum salmon.

In the remainder of the Kitsumkalum Area fishing was restricted to one day each week (6:00 P.M. Saturday till 6:00 P.M. Sunday). The object being conservation of migrating pink salmon stocks.

Kitselas Band

The Kitselas Band was issued a permit covering the Skeena River from Terrace to Legate Creek. Band Members were authorized to fish for four day each week (6:00 P.M. Friday till 6:00 P.M. Tuesday).

Non Band Members who fished in this area were issued individual permits authorizing fishing for three days each week (6:00 P.M. Tuesday till 6:00 P.M. Friday).

During the month of August fishing was restricted to one day per week (6:00 P.M. Saturday till 6:00 P.M. Sunday). Here again the object being conservation of migrating pink salmon stocks.

Kitwanga Band

The Kitwanga Band was issued a permit covering the Skeena River from Legate Creek to Andimaul Creek.

Both Band Members and Non Band Members were authorized to for four days each week (6:00 P.M. Sunday till 6:00 P.M. Thursday). Non Band members were required to obtain individual permits. All restrictions as to time, place, method originated with the Band Council.

During the period August 20th till September 1st fishing was restricted to two days each week (6:00 P.M. Sunday till 6:00 P.M. Tuesday). This action was taken in the interest of conservation of migrating pink salmon stocks.

Kitseguecla Band

The Kitseguecla Band was issued a permit for the section of the Skeena River from Andimaul Creek to Burdick Creek.

With the exception of one ten day period (August 20th till Sept. 1st) fishing was permitted for seven days per week. During this period fishing was restricted to two days per week. (6:00 P.M. Sunday till 6:00 P.M. Tuesday).

Hazelton, Glen Vowel, Hagwilget Bands

These Bands were issued Band Permits covering the Skeena River upstream from Burdick Creek. With the exception of one ten day period, August 20th till Sept. 1st, fishing was permitted throughout the week. During this period fishing was restricted to 2 days each week (6:00 P.M. Sunday till 6:00 P.M. Tuesday).

Kispiox Band

The Band Council at Kispiox was offered a permit covering that section of the Skeena River upstream from Burdick Creek. They refused to accept a permit on the grounds that they would not submit to any restriction either on or of their traditional fishing grounds. As it appeared to be impossible to arrive at an agreement with the Council representing this Band, permits were issued to individuals.

Fishing times and restrictions were the same as those for the Hazelton and Glen Vowel Bands.

Generally speaking these changes in the administration of the Indian Food Fishery have resulted in a much more satisfactory situation than existed previously. To date there has not been any serious complaints concerning this matter.

At the present time I do not see any need for change in the regulations directly or indirectly concerning the Indian Food Fishery.

The following is a list of meetings held with various Indian Bands in the Skeena Area for the purpose of discussing administration of the Food Fishery;

May 16th - Kitsumkalum, Kitselas Bands.

May 22nd - District Band Council for Hazelton-Morice town Area.

May 27th - Kiwanga Band Council.

May 29th - Kitwanga Band Council.

July 2nd - Hazelton-Hagwilget- Glen Vowel Band Councils.

July 13th- Chief Councilor Kispiox Band.

July 27th- Hagwilget Band Council.

July 31st- Kispiox Council member (Joe Foster)

August 4th-Kispiox Band Council member (Joe Foster).

August 15th-Kispiox Band Manger.

June 29th- Kitsequecla Band Council

August-15th- Kitsequecla Band Council.

*Morris E. Bogart*

Morris E. Bogart  
Fishery Officer

November 21st 1974

Fisheries

Indian Food Fishery

There are approximately 2,500 Registered Indians living in the Municipalities of Terrace and Hazelton, and the nine reservations in this Sub-District.

During 1974 several important changes were implemented in the administration of the Indian Food Fishery on the Skeena River namely:

Indian 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.

All restrictions (Fishing times, place, method, 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 water 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 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.

Kitwanga Band

This band was issued a permit covering the Skeena River from Legate Creek to Andimaul Creek. Both Band Members and Non-Band Members were authorized to fish from 6:00 P.M. Sunday till 6:00 P.M. Wednesday, ( 4 days per week).

Kitseguecla Band

A permit covering the Skeena River from Andimaul Creek upstream to Burdick Creek was issued to this band. Fishing was permitted for 7 days per week.

Hazelton, Glen Vowel, [REDACTED] Bands

These bands were each issued a permit covering the Skeena River from Purdick Creek upstream to the Babine River. Fishing was permitted 7 days per week.

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Hagwilget 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

The Band Council at Kispiox was offered a permit covering that section of the Skeena River upstream from Burdick Creek. They refused to accept a permit on the grounds they would not submit to any restriction either on or off their traditional fishing grounds. As it appeared to be impossible to arrive at an agreement with the Council representing this band, permits were issued to individuals.

The following is a resume of restrictions on the Indian Food Fishery brought into effect by Public Notice (Section 4B, B.C. Regs.). These restrictions were designed to protect migrating and spawning pink and chum salmon.

- (1) Effective August 2nd 1974 until further notice the waters of the Skeena River from the PCH & PA line 2 miles west of Terrace to Kwinitsa was closed to net fishing.
- (2) Effective August 4th until August 30th 1974 net fishing in the waters of the Skeena River from the BCH & PA line 2 mile west of Terrace upstream to Legate Creek was restricted to the weekly period 6:00 P.M. Saturday till 6:00 P.M. Sunday.
- (3) Effective August 20th until September 1st 1974 net fishing in the waters of the Skeena River from Legate Creek upstream to the Babine River was restricted to the weekly period 6:00 P.M. Sunday till 6:00 P.M. Tuesday.

Generally speaking these changes in the administration of the Indian Food Fishery have resulted in an improvement in relations between the Fisheries Service and the Indians. To date there has not been any serious complaints concerning this matter.

The following is a list of meetings held with various Indian Bands in the Skeena Area for the purpose of discussing administration of the Food Fishery.

May 16th- Kitsumkalum, Kitselas Band Councils.  
 May 2nd- District Band Council for Hazelton- Moricetown Area.  
 May 27th- Kitwanga Band Council.  
 May 29th- Kitwanga Band Council.  
 July 2nd -Hazelton, Hagwilget, Glen Vowel Band Councils.  
 July 13th- Chief Councilor Kispiox Band.  
 July 27th- Hagwilget Band Council.  
 July 31st- Kispiox Council Member (Joe Foster).  
 August 4th- Kispiox Band Council Member (Joe Foster)  
 August 15th- Kispiox Band Manager.  
 June 29th- Kitseguecla Band Council.  
 August 15th- Kitseguecla Band Council.

The following is a resume of the catch figures for the Terrace-Lakese, Sub-District for the 5 year period 1970-74.

Year	Sockeye	Coho	Pinks	Chums	Springs	Steelhead
1970	25,100	1,700	21,000	300	2,425	700
1971	42,550	4,450	11,800	800	2,260	850
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

## Spawning Summary

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Sockeye- The total estimated escapement of this species to the secondary tributaries of the Lower Skeena 9-10,000 fish, was down approximately 45% from the main brood year return of 16-17,000 spawners.

The return to all the sockeye producing tributaries on the Lower Skeena/ Kalum, Gitnadoix, Lakelse, Kispiox, Zymoetz/ was below the main cycle year return.

The decline in the sockeye return to these streams has been evident for the past five years, and continued during 1974 despite the late opening (June 29th) of the commercial net fishery on the Skeena Estuary. Most of the sockeye bound for these streams pass through the Estuary prior to this date.

Cohoe- The total escapement of this species to the tributaries of the Lower Skeena an estimated 25-30,000 was down approximately 50% from the cycle year return of 50-55,000.

Returns to the Gitnadoix, Kasiks and Exstew were comparable to the Brood year escapements. Escapements to the Kispiox, Lakelse and Kalum Systems continue to decline.

Pinks - The escapement of this species to both the Lower Main Stem Skeena and the tributaries of the Lower Skeena was well below the expected return.

The following is a resume of the escapements to the main Pink producing streams on the Lower Skeena .

Lakelse River-	250,000	Kitwanga River -	20,000	Kispiox River-	5,000
Others-	5,000	Main Stem Skeena	10,000		

Chums- The escapement of this species to the Lower Main Stem Skeena and the tributaries of the Lower Skeena an estimated 8-9,000 spawners was approximately double the main cycle year return of 4-5,000 fish.

Springs - The escapement of this species to the tributaries of the Lower Skeena an estimated 12-13,000 spawners was approximately 25% greater than the Main Cycle year return.

The following is a resume of the escapements to major spring producing tributaries of the Lower Skeena.

Kispiox-	3,000	Lakelse--	500	Kalum--	7,000
Others---	1,500				

The closure of the commercial fishery in Areas 4-4 & 4-5 until the last week in June appears to have resulted in an increase in the spring escapement to the Skeena River spawning grounds. This is apparent in the increase in the escapement to the main Lower Skeena spring producing tributaries/Kalum, Kispiox, Lakelse/.

Steelhead - The catch per unit of effort in both the Indian Food Fishery and the Sport Fishery during August indicated a good return of this species to the Upper Section of the Skeena River System.

However, very poor angling success in the Lower Skeena Tributaries during the

period October till December indicated a below average return to this section of the Skeena System.

General - During the first 10 days of October approximately 12 inches of rain fell in the Skeena Valley. The resulting flash floods and extreme high water caused heavy scouring, erosion and changes in course on some streams. Damage was particularly severe on the lower end of streams. It appears likely that salmon spawn near the lower end of streams sustained heavy damage. The species most affected would be pinks and chums.

Most coho on the Lower Skeena do not spawn until late October or November. Consequently this species would have suffered little damage.

Fortunately the main spawning areas in the major salmon producing streams like the Lakelse and Kitwanga River, are located immediately downstream from a lake. The lake would act as a buffer and modify the run off pattern.

	<u>Snowfall</u>	<u>Precipitation Water Content</u>	<u>Temperature</u>		
			<u>High</u>	<u>Low</u>	<u>Mean</u>
January	98.1	7.23	20	11	15
February	38.4	4.10	34	27	31
March	24.7	2.19	40	26	33
April	.1	2.52	50	35	42
May	XXXX	1.71	55	39	47
June		1.63	61	45	53
July		2.60	66	48	57
August		.28	74	52	63
September		3.24	66	49	57
October		12.15	50	40	45
November	12.9	3.32	38	32	35
December	37.1	9.82	37	31	34



Enforcement .

During 1974 a total of 8 prosecutions were carried out for violations of the Fisheries Act. and the British Columbia Fishery Regulations.

At the end of the year charges had been laid, and court action was pending against 2 other persons.

A total of \$1,350.00 in fines was levied by the court for the offences listed above. In addition the following items were confiscated by the Court.

1 Harbour Seal Pelt --- 1 35 H.P. Outboard Motor --- 4 gill nets  
41 pcs of salmon.

In addition, 5 gill nets that were being used illegally were seized from Person or Persons Unknown.

Fry Salvage

No fry salvage carried out in the Terrace - Lakelse Sub-District in 1974.

Herring

Not applicable to 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 attributable to this industry is not a serious problem in this sub-district.

In 1974, 71 logging referrals were handled through this sub-district. Due to increased liaison between logging companies, B. C. Forest Service, B. C. Fish and Wildlife Branch and the Fisheries and Marine Service 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 limited by the 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.

Obstructions and Stream Diversions

Beaver dams are a recurring problem in this sub-district. Most of these problems occur in the Kispiox Valley and occasionally on the tributaries of the Gitnadoix, Kalum and Lakelse River.

In the first week in October unusually high flooding occurred removing these obstructions from most of the tributaries. Prior to the flood no work was done on the removal of these obstructions and inspections after the flood revealed that nearly all of the beaver dams had been washed out.

Water Licences - Placer Mining Operations

During 1974 3 water licence applications were processed for domestic purposes.

Sea Lions - not applicable to this sub-district

Seals - Hair seals enter the Skeena River Estuary in May and June to have their pups. While on occasion strays go as far inland as Babine lake, large concentrations are seldom seen upstream from the Khyex River. While it is impossible to accurately estimate the extent of predation on Skeena River salmon it is no doubt considerable.

Bears(Grizzly, Black) - 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.

Others(Mergansers) - There are a few mergansers in this area, but not enough to be considered a problem.

Administration

Staff

Fishery Officers - Morris E. Bogart - permanent duty in the Terrace sub-district.  
Herbert Lang - Transferred to Terrace in July for permanent duty as Sport Fish Officer.

Guardians - Ben Bolton - June 24 - Oct. 5 stationed in Terrace  
Fred Loutitt - June 3 - Nov. 1 stationed in Terrace

Equipment

Vehicles In addition to the 1970 4X4 International for which replacement has been requested a 1974 Dodge Van was added to the sub-district with the assignment of the Sport Fishery Officer.

Boats In addition to the 13 foot Valco a 14 ft Smokercraft and trailer is presently used for patrols and escapement counts.

Motors - One 85HP Johnson outboard was added to the inventory. This unit is used to replace the worn out 65HP mercury that was used on the Valco riverboat. A 20 HP Mercury accompanied the 14 ft Smokercraft from Prince Rupert.

Other - Two portable radio's were purchased and have proved a valuable asset to the sub-district

Logging Operations

Most of the logging activity was carried out in the Kitsumkalum Valley, Copper River Valley, Lakelse System and Kleanza Valley. The Terrace Forest District clear cut a total of 11,974 acres with 1102 of these selectively logged for cedar poles. Total manpower involved in the harvesting and processing of this wood was 745 men.

Despite the fact that cedar pole production was up 66% total production was down 22% from 1973. Following are a number of the factors which contributed to this production slow down. The major one's are increased field inspections by the Forest Service and the changes being made by the recommendations submitted by other resource agencies. Another major factor was the market slow down beginning in the middle of the year and continuing on till the end of the year. This resulted in some mills shutting down therefore reducing production. The I. W. A. strike had an adverse effect on the production in June and the high water damage in October, estimated at \$1,000,000 cut into the profits of most logging companies and slowed production as it rendered some area's inaccessible due to the number of bridges and roads washed out.

Other problems in the lumber industry have been the severe beetle infestations which have occurred in the Kitwanga, Hazelton and Bulkley area's with minor outbreaks in the Terrace area.

With logging being the major industry in this sub-district it is estimated that 50% of the Fishery Officer's time is occupied with logging applications and field inspections.

SPORTFISHINGSpring Salmon

In an effort to conserve spring salmon several closures by public notice were implemented in this sub-district. The Kalum system was closed above Deep Creek from June 1 - Oct. 31 and was closed above the C.N.R. bridge from Aug. 19 - Oct. 31. The Kispiox River, the Kitwanga River and Kitwanga Lake were closed throughout the year. The Lakelse River was closed above the boundaries located near the mouth.

Angling by locals and non-residents was concentrated around the mouths of the Kalum, Lakelse, Copper, Kispiox and Bulkley Rivers. Good Success was reported at all these locations.

Water conditions early in the fishing year were considered good for spring salmon fishing and the effect of the commercial closure in area 4-4 and 4-5 was suspected of contributing to the good success experienced this year.

It is estimated that 600 spring salmon and 300 jack springs were taken from the main stem Skeena and its tributaries between Kwinitza and Kispiox.

Cohoe

Angling for coho was concentrated in the Lakelse, Copper and Gitnadoix Rivers and to a lesser extent in the Ksiks River.

Approximately 2000 coho were taken from the main stem Skeena and its tributaries between Kwinitza and Kispiox. The this estimate it is judged that 600 of these came from the Lakelse River.

The flood of October had little effect on the coho sportfishery as most of the effort and the run had finished by this time.

Steelhead

Good catches of steelhead were reported on the Copper, Kispiox, and Lakelse Rivers.

Marvin Bogart  
Fishery officer