

Smithers, B. C.
Dec. 31st. 1943

Sir:-

I beg leave to submit the following annual report for Upper Skeena Area covering the season of 1943

(A) Sport fishing for the year has been very good although on a slightly diminished extent owing to war conditions. The different lakes and rivers afforded plenty of sport to those that indulged in fishing. There were a few parties that of outsiders that were able to fish Babine Lake and these were mostly from Prince Rupert.

Indian food supply catches were not as heavy this season on the Skeena and Bulkley Rivers as are customary owing to the Indians being occupied at other industries. The Babine catch was also lighter.

The escape of salmon to spawn areas was average or lighter and there was nothing in the escape to account for the decrease in the commercial catch at the coast, so that the only conclusion that can be reached by your inspector is that the run was fished intensively some place before it reached the Skeena River or that the war bombing had an effect on it. The first conclusion would seem to be more justified as the size of the Sockeye on the spawn areas of Babine was much smaller. There was very little high water this year, consequently there was considerable clear water in the rivers and this in my opinion would be the reason why the escape was higher in comparison with the cycle year than the commercial catch. The Pink escape was heavy and size of the fish was the best that had been seen in years.

(B) We had no commercial fishing in the area this year and there has been no changes from the customary food supply fishing.

(C) Owing to low water the food supply catch at Hagwilget on the Bulkley was lighter. Moricetown was also some lighter on account of Indians be occupied at other work. The food supply fishing on the Skeena was also lighter for the same reason, the fishermen being occupied at other work.

(D) The customary abuses at Moricetown held the spotlight for a time and as it appeared to your inspector on the Morice Lake inspection that there were not enough fish on the areas, instructions were given to close off certain areas at Moricetown. Some of the Indians at that point had been giving trouble and as they were all earning sufficient money that the fish were not so necessary for them, a summons was ~~sworn-out~~ issued to one Johnny Tommy and he was prosecuted by the Prov. Police and fined twenty dollars and costs by the Prov. Gov't. Agent Mr. Bryant. This should have a salutary effect on them in the future

(E) Close seasons were well observed

(F) An Inspector is engaged the year around, two Guardians and two Patrolmen are engaged during the four months of the fishing season. In addition there are two boats and outboard engines on Babine lake used to prevent illegal fishing, regulate the Indian Food Supply fishing and inspect the different spawn areas. The Inspector also visits the Morice Lake and Kispiox River spawn areas

(G) Creeks and rivers are patrolled, mills where there is any danger of sawdust pollution are visited and inspected. By enquiry & observation all waters are protected.

(H) There is but one fishway in the district that has been built. This is situated at Moricetown on the Bulkley River. At some stages of water there is some difficulty for fish to negotiate it.

(I) The Babine Lake spawn areas were visited four times by the Inspector as well as being covered by the Patrolmen. This area was also visited this season by representatives of the canneries. Morice Lake area was inspected by the Inspector with a packer and horses. This trip was hampered by cloudy weather and the lack of boats, and the fact that the time for inspection is always too short owing to the inspection of Babine Lake curtailing it. The impression your inspector received on the Morice Lake area was that the runs were light in comparison to the cycle year. There is no reason why this area should be any different to Babine on which it was about as the cycle year

Kispiox spawn areas was visited with a packer and horses. This area had a light run of Sockeye, medium Cohoe and a heavy run of Pinks. The canoes on this area have rotted and are not available any more. The surrounding country to the spawn area are hills and swamps and some places with plenty of down timber. Everyplace there is moss nearly a foot deep, which makes very tough travelling on foot. In summer weather one could do it by foot by camping out overnight but at the time of inspection trips one requires too much equipment to pack on their backs. I understand that another run of Cohoe hit this area and also the Upper Bulkley River in November but it was not a very heavy run according to information I can gather.

LOWER BABINE RIVER:

Sockeye arrived on the area to spawn about the last of Aug., light run of medium fish with females 60%. These spawned out before Sept. 15th Sept. 21st. a heavy run of medium & small sockeye, 60% females with 5 to 10% Runts, not as heavy as 1939 and smaller fish.

Springs: began arriving on Aug. 14th. but there was practically no spawning until the middle of Sept. This was a medium run of medium fish with sexes even, spawned freely, considerably lighter than 1939

Coho: began arriving on Aug. 14th. a medium run of medium fish, sexes even, spawned freely, the area received a medium seeding.

Pinks: began arriving July 27th. and were spawning freely on Sept. 15th. These were large fish with females in majority. A heavy run and the area has received a heavy seeding by this species, heavier than 1941

MC DONALD CR: flowing into Lower Babine River just below Nilkitlwa Lake

Sockeye: arrived on the area July 9th. a light run estimated at 185 small and medium fish with females in majority, lighter than 1939

Pinks arriving on July 29th, a medium run estimated at 1000, mostly large fish with females about 60%, spawned freely and the area has received a medium seeding, better than 1941

UPPER BABINE RIVER

AREA NO. 1

Sockeye arriving at Babine on July 9th. but no spawning on the area until the middle of Sept. when there a considerable number on the spawning beds but which appeared to be going through into the lake and the areas beyond. On Sept. 28th a medium ^{heavy} run of medium & small Sockeye with females 60% and 10% runts arrived on the area and stayed. The fish spawned freely and the area received a medium heavy seeding. The run was estimated by the Patrolman as about 1/3 less than 1942 the previous year. It would be about as 1939 except the sizes which were smaller, less in females and more Runts

Springs there was the odd spring that reached the area in the middle of Sept. The area received a light seeding by this species.

Pinks an odd Pink arrived on the area in Sept. but they were so few that they were not worth considering

Coho: a light run of medium fish, sexes even, in the middle of Sept. area received a light seeding.

AREA #2 or HATCHERY SECTION

Sockeye the bulk of the spawning on the area commenced on Sept. 28th. and had a fairly heavy run of medium and small fish with 10% Runts. The patrolman estimated as 1/3 less than 1942. I would consider it is about as 1939 except that the fish are smaller and there were not quite as many females.

Springs the odd medium spring arrived about Sept. 20th. The area would receive a light seeding by this species

Pinks arrived on the area in the middle of Aug. a light run of large fish with females in majority, a light seeding on this area, lighter than 1941 or 1939

Coho: arrived on the area about the middle of Sept. a light run of average fish with sexes even, a light seeding by this species. 1940 was also a light run.

AREA NO. 3 or ISLAND SECTION

Sockeye spawning on this area about Sept. 28th, a fairly heavy run of medium and small fish with 10% Runts and 60% females. The area received a fairly heavy seeding by this species. Estimated by the Patrolman as 1/3 less than 1942 but in comparison with 1939 would be about the same except that the fish were smaller, were more Runts and a few less females

UPPER BABINE RIVER

AREA #3 or ISLAND SECTION

Sockeye:

Springs a few pair arrived during the later part of Sept. a light run of medium fish, sexes even, spawned freely and were well spent. The area would receive a light seeding by this species, lighter than 1939

Cohos a light run of medium fish with sexes even in Sept. spawned freely, the area would receive a light seeding, about as 1940

Pinks very few of this species arrived on the Upper Babine this season as they seemed content to stay on the Lower river, large fish with females in majority, a light seeding by this species, lighter than 1941 but bigger fish:

TRAIL CR: flowing into Upper Babine River just below bridge

Sockeye : arrived on the area July 20th, estimated at 118, medium and small fish with females in majority; In 1942 there 140 large fish with females 2 to 1 male. There was no report for 1939

Pinks there were no Pinks this season

SALMON CR: draining Salmon Lake into Morrison or Hatchery Lake

Sockeye arriving on the area on Sept. 9th., a heavy run of medium and small fish with females in majority. This area was better than the cycle year of 1939 when there were approximately 1500 large fish 66% females on the area. The area would receive a heavy seeding.

Cohos arrived between the middle and the last of Sept. would be considered a heavy run of average fish, sexes even, 1940 was a light run so it would appear as though this was better year.

NINE MILE CR: flowing into Babine Lake about 9 miles from Post

Sockeye arrived on Aug. 9th, a run of 1600 medium and small fish, 60% females, The fish spawned freely and the area has received a fairly heavy seeding, estimated as 25% more than 1942 and would be some better numbers than 1939, but a smaller variety of fish and fewer females.

Cohos no record this season.

MORRISON CR. draining Morrison or Hatchery Lake into Hatchery Arm

Sockeye arriving on the area in first week of Sept so that on Sept. 16 there were 12000 mostly medium size with females 60%. During the later part of the month it was estimated that 4000 more came on the area making a total of 16000 on the area. They spawned freely and the area received a heavy seeding. In comparison with the cycle year of 1939 it would appear be slightly in excess in numbers but a smaller variety and a few less females. 1939 was estimated as 50% more than 1938 when there were 10000 sockeye on the area.

Cohos arriving on the area latter part of Sept., medium run of medium fish sexes fairly even. spawned freely and the area received a medium seeding by this species. 1939 had between 2 & 3 hundred on the area. this year was better.

FULTON RIVER: flowing into Babine Lake near Topley Ldg. from the South

Sockeye arriving on the area Aug. 14th but was a light run until Sept. 18th. From this date until the last of Sept. a big run of medium & small fish with 10% Runts and 60% females. Estimated at 79000 by Patrolman.

About the same as the cycle year of 1939 except that the size was smaller and there were a few less females. There was considerable waste both years

Cohos arrived the last of Sept. and early Oct. On Oct 28th. there were about 1000 on the area average fish with sexes even. better than 1940 when there were between 3 & 5 hundred.

TACHEKOR: flowing into Babine Lake about 2 miles East of Topley Ldg.

Sockeye arriving early in Aug. so that on 4th. there were 2625 on area: Sept. 1st. another run of 3400. The fish were medium size about 60% females. The area would receive a heavy seeding in comparison to 1939 when there were 2333 mostly large fish.

Cohos about 1st week in Oct. about 2 to 300 average fish, sexes even would be about as 1940 when there was a light run.

PIERRE CR: flowing into Babine Lake from the South about 18 miles west of Donald's Ld.

Sockeye arriving on Aug. 4th. 900, Aug. 9th, 2800, Aug. 31st 5300, Sept. 7th 975, Sept 20th. 2000 making a total of 11975 medium and small fish 60% females. In 1939 there were 11434. The sizes would compare fairly well but the sexes were the opposite. The fish spawned freely and the area received a medium heavy seeding.

Cohos arriving first week in Oct. a light run of 2 to 3 hundred average fish sexes fairly even, about as 1940

TWIN CR:

~~TWIN CR~~; flowing into Babine Lake from the South about 14 miles west of Donald's Ldg.

Sockeye arriving in the 1st week in Aug. so that on the 4th. there 2700 on the area. Aug 31st. another run 1700 and on Sept. 10th 250 making a total of 4650 sockeye on the area for the season. They were medium and small fish with females 60%. In 1939 there were 4874 sockeye mostly large fish with 60% females. This year compares favorably in numbers and sex but was a much smaller size.

Cohoos arriving on the area the latter part of Sept, a light run of average fish with sexes fairly even, between 2 & 3 hundred, much like 1940

PENDLETON CR:

Sockeye arrived Aug. 18th, 990 medium and small fish 60% females, compares favorably with cycle year of 1939

FIFTEEN MILE or ANDERSON CR: into Babine Lake from the South about 10 miles East of Donald's Ldg.

Sockeye arrived Aug. 10th, 100, Aug. 14th, 150, Aug 20th, 2700, Sept 4th 2000 making a total of approximately 5000: medium and small fish with females 60%. In 1939 there were 35000, mostly large fish. This year does not compare favorably with the cycle year. The food supply catch was only 200 and then the Indians left on account of no fish.

Cohoos arriving first week in Oct. a light run of average fish, sexes fairly even, would be about as 1940

SIX MILE CR:

Sockeye arrived on Aug. 22nd. and had 267 medium size with 60% females spawned freely and were well spent, 1939 had 342 75% large 25% medium and small with 60% females

FOUR MILE CR:

Sockeye, on Aug. 16th about 336 medium sized fish, 60% females 1939 had 1402 on the area so that this year does not compare favorably with the cycle year

GRIZZLY CR: flowing into Beaver River about 8 miles from the head of Babine Lake

Sockeye arrived on the area about Aug. 17th, about 2575 medium and small fish, 60% females, The area received a light seeding, does not compare favorably with the cycle year when there were 11200 large and medium fish 60% females

MC DONELL CR: & ZYMOETZ or COPPER RIVER Mc Donell Cr joining Dennis Lake and McDonell Lake and the Zymoetz or Copper River draining the Mc Donell Lake. This area was not visited but from information given by Indians, it had a medium run of Steelhead, Sockeye, Springs and Coho UPPER BULKLEY RIVER that part of the Bulkley above the junction with the Morice

Sockeye were a light run

Springs were extra light

Cohoos in Oct, Nov, & Dec a medium run

Steelhead in May were a medium run

The water on this area was very low all season which may have had some bearing why there were no more fish on it than there were.

MORICE RIVER draining Morice Lake into the Bulkley River

the weather was very bad during the inspection being overcast practically all the time so that observation was bad. It may have been that the fish were not yet on the spawning grounds but from what I saw it was a light run

Sockeye latter part of Aug and Sept. a light run medium fish, did not compare favorably with the cycle year of 1939

Springs latter part of Aug. & early Sept. a light run of medium fish did not compare favorably with 1939

Cohoos my visit was too early for this species as fish came in Nov. but would judge that it would be a medium run of average fish, 1940 was an average run.

NANIKA RIVER: draining Kid Price Lake and entering Morice Lake about 3 miles from the outlet. This area was not visited through lack of time KITWANCOOL RIVER draining Kitwancool Lake into the Skeena River from the North about 2 miles west of Kitwangak

Sockeye arrived July 5th a heavy run, would compare favorably with 1939

Cohoos Sept. 15th a heavy run heavier than 1942

Pinks Aug. 2nd. a heavy run heavier than 1942 or 1941

Steelhead in May heavy, Chums very light this year

KITSEUGHLA RIVER: flowing into the Skeena River from the South near Skeena Xing.
Cohoos arriving Aug. 10th a light run lighter than 1940
Steelhead May & Oct. medium run about as usual
COMEAU CR: flowing into the Skeena River from the South near Carnaby about 10 miles South West of Hazelton.
Cohoos this creek was washout this season
Pinks " " " " " "
Steelhead " " " " " "
Chums very few in this area this year
This creek had its channel changed by the beaver and entered the Skeena River nearly $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles above the old creek
STONEY CR: flowing into the Skeena River from the North about 10 miles South west of Hazelton and nearly opposite to Carnaby
Cohoos Sept. 3rd. a medium run heavier than 1940
Pinks Aug. 21st. a ~~light-run, lighter-than-19~~ a medium run, lighter than 1941
Chums; there were none visible this year
SEALFY CR: flowing into Skeena River from the South about 4 miles S. W. of Hazelton, and draining Sealey Lake
Cohoos Aug. 9th a medium run, heavier than 1940
Pinks Aug. 6th a medium run lighter than 1941
MISSION CR: flowing into the Bulkley River from the South about opposite to Hazelton and a half mile above junction with Skeena River
Pinks Aug. 8th a medium run lighter than 1941
CEDAR CR: flowing into the Skeena River from the North about 1 mile north of Hazelton
Pinks Aug. 18th, a medium run about as 1942
Cohoos Aug. 26th a light run, lighter than 1942
DATE CR: flowing into the Kispiox River from the North about 3 miles north of Kispiox Village
Cohoos Sept. 20th a medium run about as 1942
Pinks Aug. 12th a medium run about-as lighter than 1942
DEAN:HEAVNOR or DANIEL CR: flowing into the Kispiox River from the N about 7 miles North of Kispiox Village
Cohoos Sept. 1st a medium run lighter than 1942
Pinks Aug. 20 a heavy run large fish, heavier than 1941
Chums Oct. 17th a light run
BIERNES CR: flowing into Kispiox River from the South about 13 miles north of Kispiox Village
Cohoos Sept. 1st. a medium run lighter than 1940
Pinks Aug. 20th. a heavy run, heavier than 1941
CULLEN CR: flowing into the Kispiox near 1st. Cabin Y.T.L. about 21 miles North of Kispiox Village.
Cohoos Sept. 1st a light run, lighter than 1940
Pinks Aug. 20th. a heavy run of large fish, heavier than 1941
MONGESEE CR: flowing into the Kispiox about 55 miles North of Kispiox Village:
Sockeye late in Aug. a light run, lighter than 1939
Springs June, no information this season
Cohoos Sept. 1st a light run lighter than 1940
Pinks Sept. 1st. a heavy run large fish, heavier than 1941 and for the past number of years.
Steelhead May & Sept. heavy according to Indians
AMMONOOK CR: flowing into Kispiox about 65 miles North of Hazelton
Sockeye Sept. a light run, very little evidence in sight
Cohoos Sept. Oct. a light run lighter than 1940
LAG-DA-DAH AREA about 70 miles North of Hazelton into the Kispiox River
Stevens Cr. draining Stevens Lake into Kispiox River 70 miles North of Hazelton.
Sockeye Sept. a light run. lighter than 1939
Cohoos Sept. Oct. Nov. a light run lighter than 1940
Steelhead May & Oct. a heavy run favorable with other years.
Clubb Cr: Narrows; & Falls or Allen Cr: were merely a repetition of Stevens Cr. This is one of the poorest years I have seen on these areas. There were even very few ducks this season whereas other seasons there would be from 10 to 20 times the numbers, reason no dead fish.