

Prince George, B. C.,
February 23rd, 1927.

The Chief Inspector of Fisheries,
Winch Building,
Vancouver, B.C.

Sir:

RE RUN OF SOCKEYE TO UNCHA LAKE.

As per your instructions, while at Francois Lake on February 18th and 20th, 1927, I made diligent enquiry re the run of sockeye to Uncha Creek during the fall of 1926. I was unable to meet any one who had been in that vicinity during the fall or who knew of anyone who had been. No person lives on Uncha Creek.

However I conversed with Gus. Wendberg, a farmer, living near Uncha Lake, he informed me that an Indian named Mollice living at Mollice Lake, had taken him (Wnedberg) to the point on Uncha Lake the outlet of Uncha Creek and showed him where years ago, (before 1906) the Indians had erected fish drying stages, for collecting sockeye from the annual run. That since the year 1906 the Indians had not attempted to take sockeye at this point for the reason that the run was too small in numbers. That previous to 1906, the Indians did capture large numbers of sockeye at this point.

I did not obtain any information whatever on a late run of sockeye, during 1926.

Yours very truly,

(SGD.) R. W. MacLeod.

R. W. MacLeod.
Fishery Overseer.

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FILE/DOSSIER...706-46-2-517.....
REEL/BOBINE.....
DATE...26-08-86.....

File 15-1

Prince George, B. C.,
January 7th, 1927.

A. P. Halladay, Esq.,
Inspector of Fisheries,
New Westminster, B. C.

RE SOCKEYE RUN FRANCOIS LAKE

Sir:

In reply to yours dated December 11th, 1926, I beg to submit the following report.

I at once wrote Sheriff E. S. Peters a very old timer, who is taking his Christmas vacation, with his family, on the ranch, at Fraser Lake, B. C. I have received the following letter in reply.

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Fraser Lake, B. C.
Dec. 28th, 1926.

R. W. MacLeod,
Fishery Overseer,
Prince George, B. C.

Dear Sir:

In answer to your letter. Mrs. Peters (native woman) went to the Stellace Indian Reserve this p.m. and interviewed some of the older Indians there and obtained the following items from:

- Mrs. Charles (old woman)
- Londale (old woman)
- Old Isaac
- Isadore (Chief)
- Dorothy Charles (old woman)

None of these Indians could set any date, only as far back as they could recollect, some fifty years or so,

They said in the old days the sockeye salmon run was very heavy into Francois Lake, spawning heavily in the Nithi River, up to BOREL and ANZUS lakes and into the creeks emptying into these lakes, spawned in Uncha Creek, passed up into UNCHA, RINTA AND KNAPP lakes and spawned in the creeks emptying into these lakes, spawned in Trout River for some distance from the mouth, the run continued through Francois Lake to the Nadina River the whole length, into Nadina Lake and some of the creeks emptying into Nadina Lake.

That the salmon gained in weight, putting on fat, after entering the waters of Francois Lake from the Stellace River and Fraser Lake, the Indians were all unanimous regarding this, maintaining that the Francois Lake sockeye were much heavier and fatter than the catch in Stellace River or Fraser Lake.

All the above Indians worked salmon at the mouth of the Nadina River and the quantity and quality of the sockeye caught were so good that the Hazelton Indians used to come there at times owing to the superior quality of the sockeye over the Skeena River run.

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RE SOCKEYE RUN, FRANCOIS LAKE

Of late years and until this autumn, there have been very few sockeye salmon in Francois Lake, but rather strange late this fall quite a run of sockeye salmon went up Francois Lake and some Indians who had nets at the mouth of Uncha Creek, in the lake, for lake trout, caught quite a few excellent sockeye in there trout nets, this was near the end of October.

The Indians used to put in weirs at Stellaco River and Nautley River and close the rivers, yet large numbers of sockeye used to get by and pass on through to Francois Lake, the Nadina River and on up there.

Personally I know, from my own observation and from talking to the Indians when I was in charge of the Hudson Bay Company Post at Fraser Lake, 1899 - 1910, that although the Indians both at Stella and Nautley used to catch the sockeye by thousands every year, it made no appreciable difference on the numbers that passed on through to the waters of Francois Lake and tributaries.

Just as many salmon seemed to enter the Endako River and on up to BURNS and DECKER lakes.

Yours faithfully,

E. S. Peters.
SHERIFF

ENDS.....

I also wrote the Father Superior of the Roman Catholic Mission School for Indians at La Jas, on Fraser Lake a man who has been some sixty years with the Indians, and received the following reply.

BEGINS-

La Jas, B. C.,
Jan. 2, 1927.

R. W. MacLeod,
Fishery Overseer,
Prince George, B. C.

Dear Sir:

I had a good opportunity to talk Sockeye Salmon with the old Indians of Stella and those living at the mouth of Francois Lake, Chief Isidore and Jamie Sacharie, they stated that in the old times, when they were young men, the sockeye salmon were very plentiful and of excellent quality in Francois Lake and its main tributaries, that there were two runs the first usually light in early August and a second run late in October of large numbers and the best quality of any salmon the Indians know anything about in the interior.

Yours sincerely,

N. COCCOLA

Father Superior.

ENDS.....

RE SOCKEYE RUN - FRANCOIS LAKE

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Writing John Brathwaite, of La Jac, B. C. on Fraser Lake I received the following reply, this man is a very old timer.

BEGINS--

La Jac, B. C., 30th Dec. 1926.

R. W. MacLeod,
Fishery Overseer,
Prince George, B. C.

Dear Sir:

In answer to your inquiries regarding sockeye salmon in Francois Lake. To my own knowledge the Indians years ago caught large quantities of sockeye in the Stellaco River, they used to tell me that they caught more in Francois Lake and its tributaries and I have no reason to doubt them, as the run up the Stellaco River was in most years very large. Of late years there has been practically none. The last big run was in 1909 or 1910.

In order to be sure of my statements, about Francois Lake I am going to make enquiries of one or two reliable Indians whom I have known since the early days and will let you know the results.

Sincerely yours,

JOHN BRATHEWAITE

ENDS.....

During September last I had conversation with Jimmie Holland an Indian, on the Nadina River, where he was born fifty-two years ago and the information he conveyed to me was that previous to about twenty years ago the sockeye run up the Nadina River was very large, his statement being "The river was full of sockeye, spawning, and they were very fat, the Hazelton Indians often making a seven day pack trip with horses to fish in the Nadina for sockeye, secure the oil and pack it home as well as large quantities of smoked sockeye, he stated from his own knowledge the Nadina sockeye were of better quality than the sockeye caught in the Skeena river." Fish cache stages are still in position on this Indian Reserve on the Nadina River twelve miles above its outlet into Francois Lake.

Sockeye ascending the Fraser River to Prince George, enter and ascend the Nechako River to Fort Fraser on the C. N. Ry., enter and ascend the Nattley River into Fraser Lake, enter and ascend the Stellaco River into Francois Lake and into the Nithi, Uncha, Trout and Nadina River which are the main feeders to Francois Lake.

I shall forward all the information obtainable from time to time bearing on this subject.

Yours very truly,

(Sgd) R. W. MacLeod.

Fishery Overseer.