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AUG 7 1930

LETTER No. 2829



CANADA

DEPARTMENT OF MARINE AND FISHERIES
FISHERIES BRANCH

OFFICE OF FISHERY INSPECTOR AT Smithers, B.C.

August 4th. 19 30.

Sir:--

In reply to your favor of July 11th. file 5-H-1 re remarks, Indians were allowed to fish on Sunday owing to being hindered during the week by blasting during the construction of the bridge) I beg to advise you that the gaffing or spearing operations at Hagwilget are carried on right under where the foundation work is going on and as debris is coming down all day it is hazardous for the Indians to fish while this work is going on, and as the Indians are entitled to their food supply they have been allowed to fish on Sunday so as to compensate them in time lost by bridge construction.

This will not interfere with the conservation of the fish as the fish are having more freedom in passing than they ordinarily do.

James Boyd, Esq.
Supervisor of Fisheries
Prince Rupert, B. C.

I am Sir:
Your obedient servant

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Smithers, B. C.
November 10th, 1930.

Sir:

In presenting this report on Upper Skeena for the season of 1930, I have much pleasure in informing you that conditions on the whole for the propagation of salmon in the district has been very favorable.

The angling has been successful this season, both trout and salmon being very plentiful.

The summer was hot and dry so that the fish had to contend with low water and a warmer temperature than was good for spawning. Low water interfered with the ascent of fish up the Upper Bulkley so that the springs did not reach as far as they usually do. This was not a great detriment as there were sufficient beds for them to spawn on. This area had the best run of springs that it has had in four years. The fish were of a good size and the males and females were evenly divided. They were well spent and the area was well seeded. Up to the present the run of cohoes on this area has been very light but I would not be a bit surprised if a run were to come in yet, judging from the the way the fish have straggled in this season.

This season has been a very hard one to compare as the runs on the different areas have straggled along all season and at times looked as though they were a washout in comparison with other years. This outlook was dispelled by the time on the runs of sockeye and springs so that it is quite possible that although the coho outlook has not been very bright up to now that with all the soft weather that it may improve and not be the washout that it appears on some of the areas in Babine.

The Hazelton area has had a very good season in every class of fish that frequents it. The run of springs was good, sockeye were a normal and very consistent during the season. The run of pinks was more than one would expect for an off season. Chums were better than last season. The cohoes were lighter in run this season than last and must be considered as a light run.

The Moricetown and Bulkley area had an abnormal run of springs and sockeye and the areas are more than well seeded. The run of coho was medium at Moricetown. The fish on these waters all arrived in good shape and with the exception of that part of the Bulkley above the junction of the Morice the water would be about the same temperature as other seasons, so that there is no reason why there should not be extra good results in spawning.

The Kitwancool area reports a very good run of every kind of salmon, with an extra good run of coho.

Babine has had an extraordinary year, springs were the best in a number of years, sockeye is calimed as the greatest year in many, pinks I would consider as a very light run but I am informed by the patrolman that it is an average of an off season. It does not show anything like it should considering the run at the coast. This was no doubt caused by the low water which would make it very

Approved Jan 19/31
R. Owen

W. Madley
Jan 19/31
B.C.

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difficult for the fish to navigate the Babine river from the Skeena to Babine Lake. This of course would not be harmful in the case of the pinks as they will spawn any place in the rivers, so that it is immaterial whether they reach the lake or not. Cohoe on this area has been a very light crop. The fish arrived in good shape but were very sparse, so that the seeding of them will be very light. While speaking of Babine, it would be well to draw your attention to the tremendous waste this season on some of the creeks. At Fifteen Mile, much waste occurred. This was caused by the lack of gravel on the upper stretches just below the falls, so that as the fish spawned they kept turning up the eggs that had been deposited before. Couple this up with the excess run and you have the waste. Two methods by which this could be avoided, firstly by fencing as the hatchery officials usually do, and spawning the fish, eyeing the eggs and then planting on the upper stretches between Luger and Pinkut Lakes. This would be satisfactory providing that it would not kill the fry coming over the falls when they started for the sea. The other method would be to improve the falls so that the fish could ascend them without difficulty and spawn naturally. Either of these methods would eliminate the waste.

At Tiche Creek the waste was very great, in fact nearly 90 per cent of the first run was a waste. This creek was very shallow and low this season owing to the hot dry weather, bush fires and the fact that the timber has been burned around the headwaters, so that the water comes off with a rush early in the season and later on there is not enough. The temperature of this stream became too hot and spoiled many eggs. The fish were struggling up it mostly out of the water so that they died from exhaustion and from being out of the water before they had a chance to spawn. Notwithstanding the loss the area would be still well seeded as it is very limited on account of the samllness of the water that was flowing over it. On another year where there was an abnormal run I would recommend that the hatchery spawn on this creek as there is no other method that I can see that the waste could be eliminated. It would have to be remembered that if the season was as hot as this past one that this could not be done as Morrison Creek would also be too warm and the eggs would die on the hands of the hatchery people as their early spawning did this season. The first run to this area were large fish nearly two to one female. The next run were of average size and were about fifty fifty.

Sockeye were first caught at Babine this season on July 15th. The fish were large and fairly even in sex. They were fairly ripe and then some greener ones arrived. From this it would appear that the fish had considerable difficulty in coming up the Babine River which was quite low. Very few fish stayed on this area until September from which time it steadily improved until it was the biggest run that our patrolman has seen in seven years. The fish were an average size but carried the largest percentage of runts seen on the Babine area this season, running about 10 per cent. Quite a few springs were on this area as well this season, something that has not been seen for a number of years. The pinks were very few, so that it would appear that they were having difficulty in reaching Babine in the stage of water that existed this year, as they were very plentiful in the Skeena. The coho was very light. This area has been well seeded by sockeye, lightly by springs and very lightly by pinks and cohoes.

Exp made Jan 19/31
W.D.W.

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The lower Babine River has had the biggest run of sockeye and springs that it has had in years. These fish were of an average size and about 50/50. Many very large springs were noticed. The run of pinks was disappointing to me considering the run on the coast but according to the patrolman it was an average of an off season which it was. A heavy run of sockeye reached this area in November and according to Mr. Eaton of the hatchery that th at the area was jistt red with sockeye.

Cohoe was very weak in numbers. The area has been well seeded by sockeye, springs, medium by pinks and very lightly by coho. Hatchery officials spawned a number of springs on this area.

On August 7th there were ten Indian families securing their food supply at the Island on Babine River. On the 20th all the families were represented, making in all 70 families with an average catch of 1000 sockeye, included with a total of 500 springs and 200 pinks.

Copper river area had a good run of spring, sockeye and pinks. They were good average fish and were well spent. The area is well seeded. Cohoes have been light and the area will be lightly seeded.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,

(sgd) A. R. McDonell.
Fisheries Inspector.

J. Boyd, Esq.,
Supervisor of Fisheries,
Prince Rupert, B. C.