



Williams Lake
FIRST NATION



WLFN Fisheries Report

August 3, 2023

Currently, all WLFN fishing spots on the Fraser and Chilcotin rivers are closed (between Deadman and Hixon) and will remain closed until August 17th. Discharge levels are of considerable concern, with present water levels at Hells Gate currently measuring below the minimum historical level recorded in 1991. If this trend continues, water levels could fall well below any previously recorded levels, drastically affecting the vulnerable Summer Sockeye runs.

While it may appear that there are plenty of salmon in parts of the Fraser, Thompson, and Chilcotin rivers at the moment, certain runs are dangerously low in numbers, so their protection is critical. Many of the salmon presently passing through WLFN Stewardship lands

are the endangered Early Stuart and Summer Sockeye runs, which travel far past WLFN territory to spawn.

2023 marks the spawning year of offspring from Early Stuarts affected by the 2019 Big Bar slide. While 2023 population numbers for Early Stuarts are stronger than anticipated (presently 39,900, compared to the forecasted 23,000), this follows a concerning downward trend. In 1992, 700,000 Early Stuarts spawned.

CLOSURES

Currently, all WLFN fishing spots on the Fraser and Chilcotin rivers are closed and will remain closed until August 17th. This includes: Deadman-Chilcotin, Chilcotin-Quesnel and Quesnel-Hixon.

POPULATIONS

	SQLELTEN7ÚWI · SOCKEYE			KEKÉSU7 · CHINOOK	S.HENI7 · PINK
	EARLY STUART	EARLY SUMMER	SUMMER (INCLUDING CHILKO)		
POPULATION	40,800 (AUG. 1, 2023, MISSION BC)	157,100 (AUG. 1, 2023, MISSION BC)	27,000 (AUG. 1, 2023, MISSION BC)	— (SPAWNS LATER IN SEASON)	300 (SPAWNS LATER IN SEASON)
FORECASTED POPULATION	23,000	186,000	1,167,000	49,400	6,135,000

WATER CONDITIONS

	TEMPERATURE (AVERAGE HISTORICAL TEMP.)	DISCHARGE (AVERAGE HISTORICAL DISCHARGE)
MARGUERITE	18.1°C (18.3°C; +0.2C)	1,210m ³ /s (~2,000m ³ /s)
QUESNEL RIVER	18.2°C (16.1°C; +2.1C)	187m ³ /s (~370m ³ /s)
BIG BAR	—	1,360m ³ /s (~2,450m ³ /s)



IF YOU CATCH A TAGGED FISH

Researchers with Fisheries and Oceans Canada, in partnership with First Nations and the Province of BC, are tagging Chinook, Sockeye, and Coho salmon with radio tracking transmitters. The numbers printed on the radio tracking transmitters uniquely identify individual salmon and will be used to evaluate adult salmon migration success associated with the Big Bar landslide.

Please report the tag numbers along with the date and location of capture or recovery to BigBarTag@gmail.com or turn the tags in with the above information through your local catch monitoring program.