Southern BC

Conservation and Protection

2020-21 Post Season Review

C&P Northern BC Interior Challenges

- **Lack of salmon** above the Big Bar slide area resulted in significant closures and a lack of food fish for FN's.
- **New Officer** training &, reduced budgets
- Working through **habitat files** without experienced staff.

Northern BC Interior Successes

- 2 **New Fishery Officers** & 1 vacancy filled by Deployment
- TNG (Tsilhqot'in National Government) **guardian program**, 2 guardians trained with FFA designation; collaborative management discussions.
- Built **stronger partnerships** with RCMP, BCCOS, NRO's and FN's and effective support to neighboring detachments (Lillooet, Bella Coola, RCMP - SAR)
- Strong **support by FN's** in the NBCI area for C&P patrol activities/closures
- **Significant** fish/gear/vehicle **seizures** each involving over 100 salmon each
- **Large** scale **Habitat files** in the Chilcotin area (serious harm & failure to comply with Corrective Measure's)
- Species at Risk Program **(SARA) support** i.e. Critical Habitat for Hot Water Physa (snails)

NBCI Conservation Closure Seizures

C&P Southern BCI Challenges

- Some Lillooet and Lytton area FN chose to **disregard the Department's closures** and license conditions prohibiting gillnets for sockeye/chinook
  - Lillooet area: several thousand sockeye harvested; unlicensed; investigations ongoing
  - Lytton area: several hundred chinook were harvested with prohibited gillnets; investigations ongoing
- **Limited Fishery Officer coverage** of day and night poaching on the mid Fraser with only 2 officers in Lillooet and 2 officers in Kamloops
- **Large area to patrol for the limited number of Officers** (fisheries and habitat violations) – i.e.14 hr. drive from one end (McBride area) of the detachment area to the other (Castlegar area)
- Columbia River SARA inspections and investigations require extensive travel

C&P Southern BCI Successes

- Fishery Officers continued with **patrols on SARA listed Columbia Sturgeon** and had positive impacts on the Columbia River – there was a **newly created SARA Fishery Officer** position out of Salmon Arm last year and this effort continues.
  - Continued patrols; detect gear targeting sturgeon; hydro-electric dam impacts
- Increased coverage in Kamloops area (Nicola, Coldwater, North Thompson, etc. from **backfilling positions** occupied by Fishery Officers working **on Mount Polley** investigation and filling **vacancies**.
- **Increased** emphasis on fish **habitat enforcement**. Conducted 122 Habitat investigations from January 01, 2020 to November 15, 2020. A large number of these files have resulted in corrective measures to counteract, mitigate and remedy the adverse impacts to fish habitat.

Lower Fraser Area

Conservation and Protection

2020-21 Post Season Review

Detachments: Fraser Valley East – Fraser Valley West – Fraser Coastal

Lower Fraser Area Top 5 Operational Priorities for 2020-21

- **Public Health and Safety** - CSSP and illegal sales where human health is at risk.
- Fraser River – **Stocks of Concern**
- General Compliance **Inspections**
- **Endangered** Species/**Invasive** Species
- **Habitat** Enforcement

Lower Fraser Area - Conservation and Protection

Fraser Coastal Detachment 2020-21

2020-21 Fraser Coastal Successes

- **Priority for human health and safety** shellfish violations: (Canadian Shellfish Sanitation Program) CSSP patrols result in the seizure of significant quantities of potentially contaminated shellfish - numerous violations tickets, Appearance Notices and warnings issued
- Significant **Illegal gear** (crab trap) **recovery** – several hundred traps seized
- Commercial **large scale investigations**
- **Improved partnerships**: ECCC, RCMP, BC COS, others CBSA, TC, NOAA/NMFS
- Completed training for three Fishery Officers

2020-21 Fraser Coastal Challenges

- **Covid-19 has increased** CSSP **harvesting** to unprecedented levels – need more proactive strategy with community engagement, media, etc.
- FSC harvested fish for sale continues to be the primary source of **illegal unregulated and unreported fishing**.
- Two Fishery **Officers transfer** to SCA, meaning 2 more **vacancies** – The number of vacancies and continuous turnaround slows momentum for more complex investigations

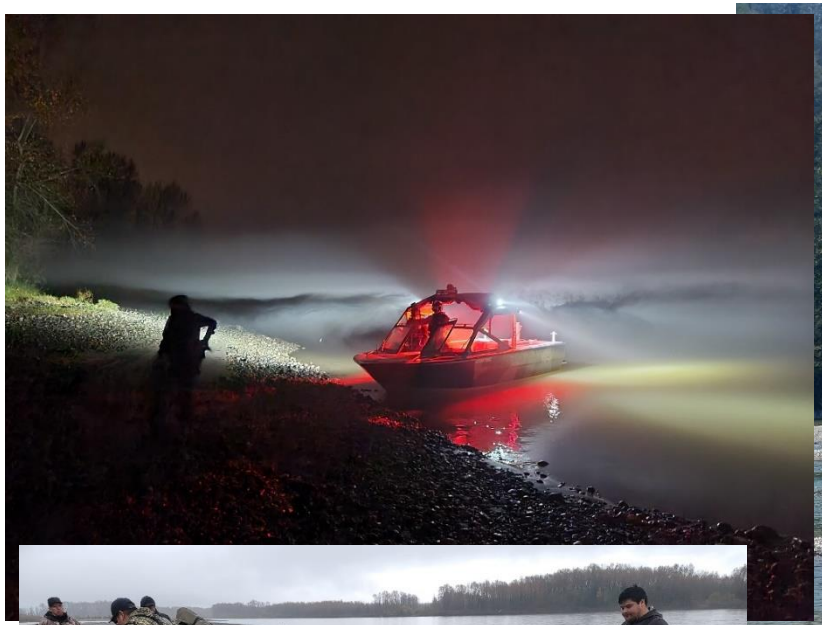
Fraser Valley West 2020-21

Fraser Valley West Successes

- Several **CSSP patrols resulted in seizures of commercial quantities** of contaminated product
- 14 **gillnet seizures** – removal of gear benefits stocks of concern
- Successful completion of another **cross boundary illegal gear** (commercial crab) **operation** - Joint venture with Washington State Fish and Wildlife and RCMP - crab gear recovery from Boundary Bay (~250 illegal commercial traps and associated gear removed)
- Increased General Compliance Inspection presence at Air Cargo locations.
- Multi-year commercial crab violations investigations initiated in 2019 continue, utilizing electronic monitoring data only – several trials set for 2020 and 2021
- **Full-time habitat directed Fishery Officer position filled** (FO Powers) and posted to Langley - Large scale habitat investigations – changes to the Fisheries Act now in force in 2020 (94 Habitat incidents reported from June 01 to November 24. Of those 94, 7 incidents required further assessment with a biologist resulting in corrective measures. All 7 are still active investigations)
- All **GT-04 Fishery Officer positions filled** - only 1 Supervisory position vacant

Fraser Valley West Challenges

- Exponential increase in numbers of resource users as **COVID-19** (indirectly) **pushed more people outdoors**
- **Backlog in courts** (delays and cancellations of proceedings)
- Different sectors in different phases of “Return to Work” (e.g. biologists working from home cannot attend site visits with FOs)
- Many **programs cancelled** (i.e. education sessions, career fairs, in person meetings) which led to reduced ability to be proactive
- **low salmon returns** = reduced opportunities i.e. sport/commercial Chinook and Sockeye opportunities limited
- High number of larger scale **habitat occurrences building** in FVW
- Increasing number of recreational user groups with **Covid-19 impacting** many **smaller systems**



FRASER VALLEY EAST 2020-21

Fraser Valley East Successes

- A productive **day and night enforcement** program during peak salmon season
- Over **300 net seizures**
- Good **communication between DFO/Rec/Indigenous** – helped to calm conflict on the Vedder and Fraser
- Influx of **new helicopter funding** for patrols of the Fraser and tributaries
- Assistance from new Fishery Officers from the DFO whale team
- Robust high visibility and covert rec fish enforcement program
- 1 new Fishery Officer (Bijan Sametz-Asgari) welcomed to FVE

Fraser Valley East Challenges

- **Short staffed** – 4 vacancies
- **COVID-19 challenges**
- **Low fish returns** resulted in higher tensions and conflict from/between user groups

Lower Fraser Area Gill-Net Seizures 2020-21

- Fraser Valley East 301 (25 of these are associated to violation files)
- Fraser Valley West 15 (1 of these was an Eulachon net)
- Fraser Coastal 3 (2 of these were Eulachon nets)

Total gill nets to date (this fiscal year) **318**

WHALE PROTECTION UNIT – ANNACIS ISLAND DETACHMENT 2020-21

Whale Protection Unit Successes

- Creation of **new detachment** with a dedicated focus on marine mammal protection (priority is for SRK)
- Establishing processes to **work collaboratively** with other detachments
- **Engagement** with whale watching **industry**
- Providing **education and outreach** to various user groups.

Whale Protection Unit Challenges

- **Focus on building the unit**:
  - **Staffing** positions
  - Establishing **priorities** and work planning
  - Solving logistical issues,
  - Finding administrative support
- Lack of equipment:
  - New vessel did not arrive until mid August
  - Patrol trucks did not arrive until September
- Not fully staffed until September

Patrol Activity Profile

Note: This information could be incomplete. Please contact your RHQ C&P office if you plan to release it for official public reports.

Sub Detachment: SRKW WHALE TEAM
Office: SRKW (ANNACIS)

Start Date: 1 Jan 2020
End Date: 20 Nov 2020

	Patrols	Main Patrol Hours	Total Patrol Hours	% of Patrol Hours	FO Hours	Vessels Checked	Vehicles Checked	Persons Checked	Gear Checked	Sites Checked	Violations
Main Patrol W.E.											
SARA - WHALE (SOUTHERN RESIDENT KILLER)	18	119.75	124.75	37 %	296.0	2	1	3	12	88	0
REC - SALMON (NON-TIDAL)	8	53.5	53.5	16 %	100.0	0	5	220	210	85	12
SARA - WHALE (KILLER)	8	50.25	51.75	15 %	115.5	0	0	0	0	8	0
OTHER - CSSP	11	43.0	48.25	14 %	74.0	0	2	26	13	31	14
ABORIGINAL - SALMON	5	21.0	21.0	6 %	28.5	0	0	27	25	276	2

South Coast Area (Vancouver Island and Lower Coastal Mainland) 2020-21

Enforcement Challenges

- **Complexity of measures**, untimely restrictions, inconsistency between areas, lack of information to the public and general uncertainty
- Fraser River Salmon **conservation measures**: Chinook restrictions; Steelhead window closures; Sockeye conservation
- C&P **focused on highest priorities** (CSSP) and areas of highest risk (until Safe Work Procedures and inspection approaches worked out)
- **Access Restrictions** to communities meant: Boat ramps closed; Small communities closed; Limited accommodations & services; First Nations communities entered self quarantine or forbid access
- US **Borders closed** to all but essential travel – had impacts on user groups i.e. fishing charters/lodges – vessel registration and fishing license issues
- COVID measures complicated inspections of fishers
- Non-essential travel was restricted

South Coast – COVID-19

Dramatic changes to **Recreational Fishery**:

- Early season effort very low
- Locals only at first
- Regional visitors expanded mid-season
- Many locals fished for the first time in years & others went out daily as they were not working
- Non-resident Sport Fishing licenses suspended/cancelled. No new licenses issued.
- No US anglers and Alberta fishers only arrived when travel restrictions relaxed
- Guides & Lodges impacted (closed or locals only)
- Complexity of restrictions: Open/closed/open; size restrictions & variable size limits
- Support for the regulations was mixed. Chinook/SRKW measures for the recreational salmon fishery continue to be challenging for many clients and communities.

South Coast - First Nation Fisheries

- 5 Nations - Ahousaht Rights based **fisheries required monitoring**. Lack of agreed to fishing plans and management measures complicated enforcement
- Somass Sockeye & Chinook fisheries challenging due to **lack of agreement**. Illegal sales, protest and defiance of DFO fishing plans. Late season negotiated agreement.
- Concern for **illegal sales** generally within south coast area - Changing to high $ value species
- **Fraser restrictions limit opportunities**
- **Expectations are high for reconciliation**; and traditional enforcement approaches are difficult

South Coast – Commercial Fisheries

- Very **limited fisheries due to conservation measures**
- WCVI was one of few bright spots with limited Sockeye and significant Chinook openings. Compliance was general good
- Late Season Chum openings East Coast Vancouver Island including JST, Comox and Nanaimo areas.
- Fisheries were well attended and compliance to conservations measures good.

South Coast – Successes

- South Coast C&P is **on track to meet** overall **patrol frequency requirements for CSSP** closed beaches for the first time
- **Significant violations on shellfish from closed areas** moving into the commercial market have been detected and seized.
- C&P's Bi-Valve traceability project is underway
- **Major case files underway**
- 2000 lbs of commercial clams seized from a closed area and were falsely labeled from an open area – File is awaiting charge approval from PPSC

SOUTH COAST

MARINE PATROL PROGRAM

South Coast MPP (Gold) Crew

Crew of 12

- 9 CCG staff working 28 days on 28 days off
- 2 Fishery Officers working 14 days on 14 days off

RHIB Patrol Stats

RHIB Hours: **640** hours

RHIB Mileage : **6796** **nm** or **12586** **km**

Vessels Checked

Commercial Vessels - 242

Recreational Vessels - 445

First Nations Vessels - 30

752 vessels checked to date in 2020

People Checked

Commercial = 374 (Registered)

Recreational = 1009 (Licenced)

First Nations = 49 (Designated)

1963 checked to date in 2020

Violations encountered

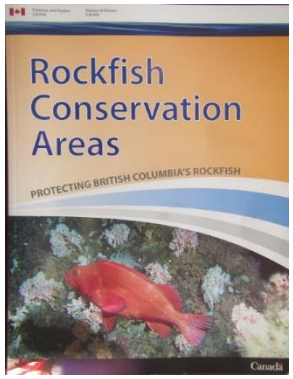
Violations= 211

CSSP (Canadian Sanitary Shellfish Program)

2020 Areas patrolled and cleared = **457**

2019 Areas patrolled and cleared = **532**

RCA (Rockfish Conservation Areas)



2020 patrols of RCAs = 805

2019 Areas Cleared = 937

Marine Protected Areas

2020 Marine Protected Areas patrolled = 20

2019 Marine Protected Areas patrolled = 30

Marine Mammal

2020 Incidents attended = 6

2019 Incidents attended = 10

Stats for C&P Southern BC

Violations - by Action - FY 20/21 (to December 10th)

Count of Action	Column Labels			
Row Labels	BC INTERIOR & YUKON	LOWER FRASER	SOUTH COAST	Grand Total
CHARGES LAID	4	52	38	94
CHARGES NOT APPROVED		1	3	4
CHARGES PENDING/UNDER REVIEW	9	212	120	341
DIVERTED (ALTERNATIVE MEASURES)			1	1
FISHERY OFFICER'S DIRECTION (AIS)			1	1
INSPECTOR'S DIRECTION (HABITAT)		2	3	5
NATIVE PROTOCOL	24	15	33	72
SEIZURE(S) - PERSONS UNKNOWN	8	192	52	252
TICKET ISSUED	48	873	351	1272
WARNING ISSUED	78	296	407	781
Grand Total	171	1643	1009	2823

Stats for C&P Southern BC

Violations - by Action - By Category - FY 20-21 (to December 10th)

Count of Action	Column Labels			
Row Labels	BC INTERIOR & YUKON	LOWER FRASER	SOUTH COAST	Grand Total
CHARGES LAID	4	52	38	94
Aboriginal			1	1
Commercial		5	11	16
CSSP		12	4	16
Recreational	3	35	20	58
UCAT	1		2	3
CHARGES NOT APPROVED		1	3	4
Commercial			2	2
Recreational			1	1
UCAT		1		1
CHARGES PENDING/UNDER REVIEW	9	212	120	341
Aboriginal	4	16	1	21
Commercial		35	39	74
CSSP		66	2	68
Habitat	3	4	1	8
Other		11	1	12
Recreational		69	61	130
SARA			10	10
UCAT	2	11	5	18
DIVERTED (ALTERNATIVE MEASURES)			1	1
FISHERY OFFICER'S DIRECTION (AIS)			1	1
Habitat			1	1
INSPECTOR'S DIRECTION (HABITAT)		2	3	5
Habitat		2	3	5
NATIVE PROTOCOL	24	15	33	72
Aboriginal	21	6	33	60
UCAT	3	9		12
SEIZURE(S) - PERSONS UNKNOWN	8	192	52	252
Aboriginal	8	10	5	23
Commercial			2	2
Habitat			1	1
Other		1	3	4
Recreational		34	28	62
SARA			13	13
UCAT		147		147
TICKET ISSUED	48	873	351	1272
Commercial		10	11	21
CSSP		422	3	425
MPA		1	23	24
Other	1	1	2	4
Recreational	44	436	309	789
SARA		3	1	4
UCAT	3		2	5
WARNING ISSUED	78	296	407	781
Aboriginal	8	11	1	20
Commercial		15	35	50
CSSP		31	33	64
Foreign			1	1
Habitat	3	5	5	13
MPA		1	24	25
Other	1	2	4	7
Recreational	54	223	283	560
SARA	4	2	20	26
UCAT	8	6	1	15
Grand Total	171	1643	1009	2823

QUESTIONS?