

Steve Gotch
Area Director, DFO
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August 12, 2025

Dear Area Director Gotch,

The PSC has now identified TAC for Fraser River Summer run sockeye. While no commercial/public (recreational) fishery has been prosecuted to date, we believe there are socially significant, biologically low impact fishing opportunities which would minimize risk and allow British Columbians' and their families an opportunity to spend time fishing responsibly and sustainably.

Given the current in-season return we estimate a public sockeye fishery harvest between 10,000-30,000 fish (e.g., the 2022 run size estimate of 6.6 million was and 11,000 fish were harvested).

We recognize the constraint for a fishery on Summers is the possibility of exceeding the LAER (maximum allowable exploitation rate) of 10% on Late run sockeye, which, based on a current run size, equates to 47,000 fish (with P50 of 470,000). Based on DFO creel survey results from previous years a negligible proportion of the 10% LAER for Lates would be harvested by the public fishery.

Following are recommended paths to ensure responsible and sustainable public fishing opportunities on Fraser River summer run sockeye:

- Opening a fishery in the Fraser River upstream of Lytton immediately would have no impact on Lates
- Opening a lower Fraser River fishery immediately would have negligible impact on Late runs (less than a few hundred sockeye)
- Opening a marine Sockeye fishery immediately is low risk and would result a negligible impact on Late runs
- As the proportion of Lates increases, the in-river fishery could be moved upstream of the Harrison to avoid Birkenhead and Weaver stocks
- Reinstating creel surveys and monitoring to ensure harvest from the public fishery is sustainable and can be closed should management require it, subject to changing stock composition and increasing proportions of Lates

Opening this fishery immediately would have little if any measurable impact on Late run fish, generate between \$17-31 million in expenditures, increase funding for conservation through license sales, and most importantly, provide food security by putting locally harvested salmon in British Columbians' freezers. This fishery offers a unique opportunity to connect families with nature and the province's rich fisheries heritage.

This opportunity is highly time sensitive, as the proportion of Late run sockeye in the lower Fraser and marine approach areas will increase over time. Given the negligible impacts in comparison to

the significant social, food security, and economic benefits to British Columbians we believe it should proceed immediately.

We are here to work with the department to ensure responsible, sustainable fisheries occur in a timely manner. Please reach out if you require any information.

In Conservation,

Dean Werk
Fraser Valley Salmon Society President
UFV-SFAC Chair
Chair Pink, Sockeye, Chum Working Group SFAB



Kevin Estrada, B.Sc
Co-Chair
Fraser Valley Angling Guides Association



Jesse Zeman
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