



TNG FISHERIES

The latest information important to T̓silhqot'in fish and fishing activities



TNG Weekly Salmon Fisheries Season Update: Wednesday, July 21, 2021

We're into the fishing season now! And glad we were able to announce a 2 week fisheries opening for Jaš (Chinook) last week. The opening is for July 16-30.

After the first couple of weeks of the in-season period, salmon return information is flowing in from assessments along the migration route from the ocean to the spawning grounds.

The TNG Fisheries Department is focusing on providing the best information to inform T̓silhqot'in Leadership decision-making on fisheries and to keep T̓silhqot'in people up to date on everything we know.

Throughout the season, we'll be providing weekly updates on Wednesday afternoons via Zoom and written TNG Fisheries Bulletins.

Key considerations for the 2021 fishing season:

- Low forecasted returns for Ts'eman (sockeye) and Jaš (Chinook); however, we have had some good news that the Early Stuart sockeye run and the first part of the Jaš migration through Big Bar are better than expected!
- Available information and environmental conditions are constantly changing; we are monitoring Ts'eman and Jaš data nearly daily, and providing up-to-date information to support awareness of key issues.
- Extreme and unusual environmental conditions, including wildfires, heat, and high water levels, broadly related to climate change and impacts to the landscape.
- Good news from Big Bar! We now have evidence that salmon passage is good for both Jaš and Ts'eman at current water levels, and that work completed to date at the site has resulted in successful migration past the slide. Water temperatures also haven't been as extreme as we've seen in past years.
- The protection of every salmon stock is critical to the health of the T̓silhqot'in fishery (bio-diversity and eco-system health).

FISHERIES TEAM

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Jaŝ (Chinook)

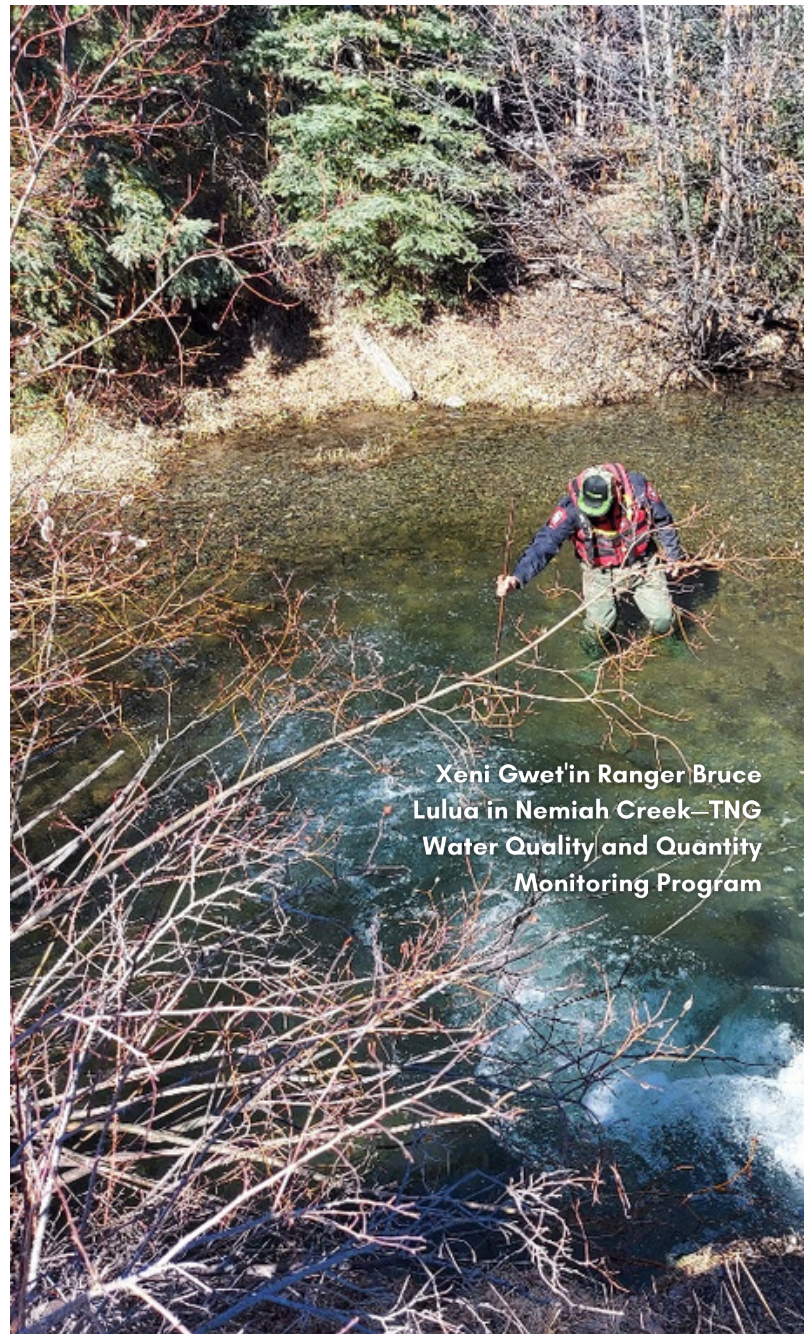
- Confirmed steady passage of Jaŝ through the Big Bar Landslide site.
- Jaŝ catches have been confirmed by Tŝilhqot'in members and reported by TNG Fisheries catch monitors at fishing sites—in both the Chilcotin watershed and the Fraser mainstem.

Ts'eman (Sockeye):

- Some good news on Early Stuart Ts'eman! We can now say Early Stuart have made it past the Big Bar slide, and the Early Stuart return has exceeded its forecast of 18,000, with an estimated run size of 59,000.
- Even though Early Stuart have exceeded their forecast, this run size is still a conservation concern; fishing for Early Stuart remains closed due to conservation concerns at this run size.
- The Early Stuart do not spawn in Tŝilhqot'in Territory, but migrate through the Fraser on their way to their spawning grounds in the Stuart River.
- The early summer runs, including Taseko Ts'eman, are just starting to reach Big Bar.
- There is early indication of summer run Ts'eman returns in the marine area, including Late Stuart, Stellako, Quesnel, and Chilko. They are still a few weeks away from reaching Tŝilhqot'in Territory and migrating past fishing sites.
- Ts'eman returning to the Chilcotin Watershed (Taseko and Chilko) typically enter the Fraser from early to late July. While water levels were higher a few weeks ago, they're now below average for this time of year, which creates good conditions for passage at Big Bar.
- Water temperatures remain slightly above average, but are not extreme at this time.

Fishing Activities Update:

- **DFO has issued a communal fishing licence for the Chilcotin watershed and the mainstem Fraser (July 16-30, 2021).**
- TNG Fisheries senior staff will be meeting with Tŝilhqot'in Chiefs and senior TNG staff to discuss possible Ts'eman opportunities.
- TNG Fisheries staff are meeting with DFO on a weekly basis to exchange information and discuss potential openings for Ts'eman later in the season.



Xeni Gwet'in Ranger Bruce Lulua in Nemiah Creek—TNG Water Quality and Quantity Monitoring Program

TNG Fisheries Department Activities

TNG Fisheries activities this season are focused on:

- **Stock assessment and information analysis** to inform decision making, e.g., catch monitoring, aerial counts, SONAR (Taseko and roving), and partnership with DFO annual programs
- **Emergency enhancement** activities to support at-risk stocks (new and critical work for TNG)
- Territory-wide **water monitoring** that will be active by the end of July

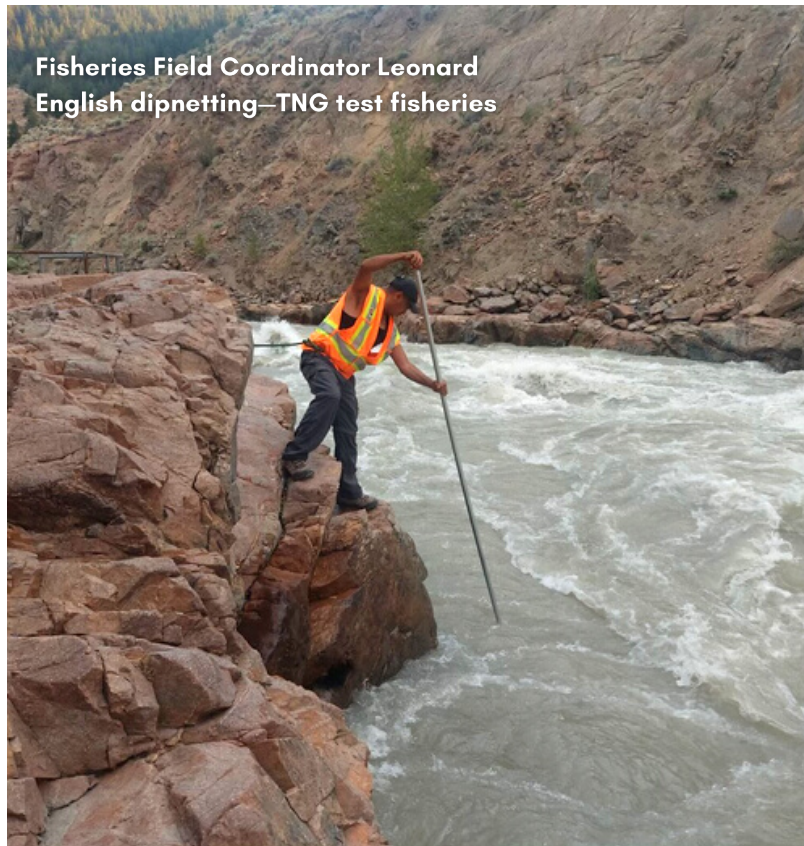
We're receiving in-season salmon information from various sources (e.g., Pacific Salmon Commission, DFO), and are also collecting information through our own programs. TNG catch monitoring is now underway, and we're in the process of putting our on-the-ground assessments in place within the Territory:

- Test fisheries (dipnet)
- Installation of SONAR in the Lower Chilcotin is complete
- Installation of SONAR in the Taseko is planned for July 26
- Installation of telemetry stations to track radio tagged Jaꞩ (Chinook) and Ts'eman (sockeye)

To reduce the risk of loss of at-risk Upper Chilcotin Chinook populations, TNG is working with the Upper Fraser Fisheries Conservation Alliance (UFFCA) and DFO to implement **emergency enhancement** activities.

Enhancement refers to activities that increase the number of offspring produced from returning spawners. In this case, collecting brood stock (eggs/sperm) from spawners, incubating fertilized eggs, rearing fry in a hatchery, and releasing them back into the natal streams when the fry are ready.

Fisheries Field Coordinator Leonard English dipnetting—TNG test fisheries



Successful installation of Water Quality and Quantity Monitoring Stations! Installations expected to be completed this week.



Tagged Tꞩilhqox Jaꞩ (Chilko Chinook) smolt—coded wire tag program to track juvenile Jaꞩ.



WEEKLY IN-SEASON FISHERIES UPDATES

Wednesday Afternoons

1:00PM to 2:00PM

mid-July to end of August

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ZOOM MEETING LINK:
fisheries.live/tng2021

Meeting ID: 869 9877 1924
Passcode: 830690

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OR JOIN BY PHONE:
Toll Free: 1-855-703-8985

Meeting ID: 869 9877 1924
Passcode: 830690

2021 Dates:

Wednesdays, July: 14, 21, 28

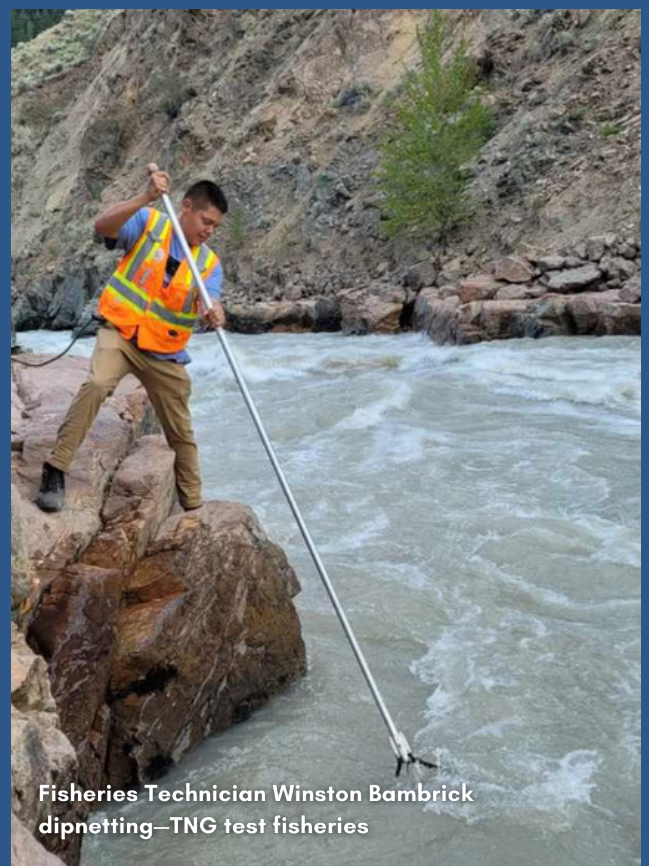
Wednesdays, August: 4, 11, 18, 25

These calls are to share fisheries information with T̓silhqot̓in Chiefs, Councils, TNG and community staff, and T̓silhqot̓in members, including Elders. We'll present on salmon populations and returns, fishing opportunities, and TNG Fisheries Dept activities.

For questions please contact TNG Fisheries Manager Randy Billyboy
rbillyboy@tsilhqotin.ca • 250-392-3918

The TNG Fisheries Department collects, receives and analyzes in-season salmon and fisheries information on a weekly basis from our own programs, and from DFO and the Pacific Salmon Commission. We'll share weekly in-season fisheries bulletins and host weekly update Zoom calls on **Wednesday afternoons** from July 14th to the end of August to keep folks up to date on in-season fisheries information.

Although TNG Fisheries provides information and works on many aspects of salmon returning to T̓silhqot̓in Territory and other parts of the upper Fraser, decisions about 2021 community fisheries openings and closures are made by T̓silhqot̓in Leadership, and also by DFO. Fisheries opening and closure notices are shared broadly with communities by TNG central communications.



Fisheries Technician Winston Bambrick dipnetting—TNG test fisheries