

THE

Watershed's

SOURCE

WS-003

Upper Fraser Fisheries Conservation Alliance Society Newsletter

February 2007



INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>DFO Fall consultation review</i>	1
<i>Contact Information</i>	2
<i>DFO Fall consultation review</i>	2
<i>DFO Fall consultation review</i>	3
<i>Dr. David Levy</i>	3
<i>Dr. David Levy</i>	4
<i>UFFCA Membership</i>	4

Special Events

First Nations Leadership Council
 Joint BC First Nation—Federal
 Government Fisheries Forum
 March 5—6, 2007
 Contact: Chris Lewis
 604-922-7733

FRAFS

The Visions Conference
 March 28—30, 2007
 Prince George Civic Centre
 Contact: Aimee Arsenaault
 250-378-4235
 aimee@nicolatribal.org

**DFO Fall
 Consultation Review**

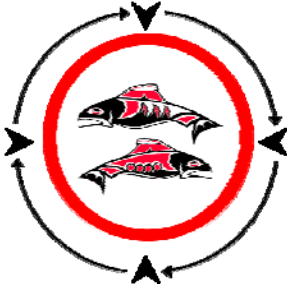
By Marcel Shepert

On October 12 and 13, DFO requested an “information exchange” with Upper Fraser First Nations. The form was held in Prince George, at the PG Friendship centre. The purpose of the meeting was bring DFO technical staff together with First Nations fisheries managers to discuss and exchange information on the following:

- **Fisheries Reform:** An update on progress to date and next steps
- **Update on local area items:**
 - Terminal fisheries & economic opportunities
 - Stock assessment framework
 - Fraser sockeye spawning escapement initiative
- **Pacific Salmon Treaty:** Upcoming Renewal
- **First Nations Access to Fish for Food, Social and Ceremonial (FSC) purposes:** Draft guiding principles to aid negotiations
- **Environmental Process Modernization Plan:** Current initiatives and ways they can be improved and linked to the Wild Salmon Policy
- **Wild Salmon Policy:** Proposed Conservation Units, Habitat Status Assessment, and Ecosystem Indicators and Monitoring (*Day Two*)

A number of First Nations were in attendance ranging from Williams Lake to Takla Lake, Prince George, and Quesnel. Mr. Brian Toth, R.P.Bio, M.B.A. facilitated the two days and provided a report which can be accessed on the UFFCA web site. www.uffca.ca The pur-

Upper Fraser Fisheries Conservation Alliance Society



1041 Whenun Road
Prince George, B.C. V2K 5X8
Telephone: 250-964-0337
Fax: 250-964-0399
Email: info@uffca.ca
Online: www.uffca.ca

§

*A fisheries conservation group serving the
Upper Fraser region since 2001.
Incorporated 2005.*

§

Board of Directors

Ron Murphy

Stswecem'c Xgat'tem First Nation

Thomas Alexis

Tl'azt'en Nation

Joe Alphonse

Tsilhqot'in National Government

Barb Wycotte

Esket'mec First Nation

Brian Toth

(Tech. Rep.)

Carrier Sekani Tribal Council

Lheidli T'enneh First Nation

Technical Team

Marcel Shepert

Executive Director-Coordinator

Peter Nicklin

Fisheries Biologist

**Letters are welcomed
& encouraged!**

pose of this article is to focus on Pacific Fisheries Reform only, subsequent articles will highlight, Pacific Salmon Treaty, FSC access, Environmental Process Modernization Plan, and Wild Salmon Policy.

Pacific Fisheries Reform (PFR)

Recent current court cases emphasize the need for DFO to consult with First Nations on fisheries management issues. The question is, how to achieve proper consultation so that both parties are aware and are comfortable moving to the next stage?

Two important reports were released simultaneously in 2004 which provided the basis for Pacific Fisheries reform: *Pierce McRae and Our Place at the Table*. Both reports stressed the need for change and laid out different approaches/prescriptions for achieving change in the Pacific fishery. Clearly all sectors need to share the responsibility for management, science, enforcement and monitoring, including cost.

Beginning in 2005 and then again in 2006, DFO implemented an action plan which incorporated First Nations and commercial demonstration fisheries, fisheries act renewal, discussions on individual transferable quotas (ITQ's) increased monitoring, catch reporting and enforcement, and a renewed urgency to support inter-tribal processes in B.C. While the process is slow, some progress is being made toward integrated processes including involvement of INAC and DFO. Other integrated processes are up and running but need attention these include the Integrated Harvest Planning Committee (IHPC), and the Integrated Ground Fish Committee. These processes are laying the foundation for future integration, but from a First Nations perspective are short of meeting the needs and aspirations of interior First Nations.

From participants at the forum concerns were raised

about the affects of mountain pine beetle and the resources needed to combat this epidemic i.e. cost sharing, and integrated structures for management, and general affects on the habitat that need redress immediately. While this may seem outside the purview of PFR, it is not. First Nations living in the heart of the heaviest hit areas demand an integrated approach with all resource agencies and governments. Interior First Nations want to be seen as leaders in the fight against this epidemic and are ideally situated to lead the charge, simply by being on the ground.

Other concerns focused on the management of the 2006 fishery which seemed to contradict the overall direction of PFR. Simply stated, DFO is on the record for expressing the desire to change the status quo fisheries management; "the status quo" was no longer practical and was in need of reform. Interior First Nations interpreted this to mean reductions in large mixed stock fisheries and more inland economic opportunities. Unfortunately, 2006 looked very much like a status quo year and inland First Nations saw little or no benefits, in fact the low Quesnel run was perceived as the final straw. First Nations want reform to work but there has to be a perception that DFO is really committed to it.

It should be noted that Pacific Fisheries Reform refers to not only economic opportunities in fisheries, but reform of *all* fisheries, including Food, Social and Ceremonial (FSC) fisheries. The inclusion of FSC fisheries within Pacific Fisheries Reform was not made clear in the presentation or discussion with participants, only that it will be discussed further with First Nations. Presenting PFR in this manner may lead First Nations to believe that PFR is separate from the discussions on FSC, when in fact they are all part of DFO's PFR mandate. The Information Exchange did not clearly outline the linkage between DFO's presentation on FSC Access negotiation principles and Pacific Fisheries Reform.

Dr. Dave Levy

Greetings! My name is Dave Levy and I have been recently hired as UFFCA's Habitat Biologist. I will be working closely with Marcel Shepert and Pete Nicklin to put a fisheries habitat "spin" on future UFFCA activities. I have worked professionally as a salmon biologist for 3 decades and most of my recent experience is with First Nations fisheries programs, much of it in the Middle and Upper Fraser. Some recent projects include developing a sockeye salmon counter for Lheidli T'enneh, designing a fisheries mitigation program for the St'at'imc Nation, undertaking fisheries impacts assessments for the Sencot'en Alliance, and working as the Independent Member on the Nechako Fisheries Conservation Program. These projects and others have provided me with perspective on how important it is to maintain and protect our fisheries habitats from human influence. I am very excited to be working in this part of the Fraser River, but also humbled by the monumental challenge of dealing with such an extensive area with its' large number of streams, rivers and lakes.

One of my immediate responsibilities is to serve as a mentor for UFFCA trainees. I am looking forward to working with several young, energetic individuals to build further capac-

ity for habitat management within UFFCA-member Nations. I believe in a “learn-to-do-by-doing” approach that utilizes real world training exercises. Also, coming down the pipe very soon is the DFO Wild Salmon Policy that will entail monitoring of habitat conditions for “Conservation Units”. There is potentially an important role for UFFCA to play in piloting the implementation of the habitat components of the Wild Salmon Policy.

Ongoing logging is the predominant source of fisheries habitat impacts throughout all of the UFFCA areas. Logging companies in BC are responsible for applying logging guidelines that affect small streams, for example, leave strip and stream crossing guidelines. There is consensus that this does not always work effectively either because the logging prescriptions are poorly designed, or else because they are poorly implemented. Auditing and monitoring efforts are inadequate and the net result is damage to fish habitats. With future GIS support, UFFCA will prepare a map showing the distribution of licensees over the UFFCA areas. We will then develop a strategy for improving the management of logging impacts on sensitive fish habitats.

Mountain Pine Beetle is a related problem, and like it or not, our forests are going to look very different 50 years from now. There will be substantial salvage logging efforts that will extend to the stream banks creating clear cuts over large areas. While there are dramatic effects on land, the impacts on fish and fish habitats are not so clearly understood. I’m planning on attending a Prince George Workshop on Mountain Pine Beetle and Fisheries Impacts in the New Year, and will share with you the results of those discussions.

Lastly, I am working at UFFCA to address your fisheries habitat management needs and encourage you to contact me to discuss any particular habitat issues that you are concerned about.

Aboriginal Governments & Tribal Councils eligible for UFFCA membership

T'exelc (Williams Lake First Nation)
 Stwecem'c Xgat'tem (Canoe Creek First Nation)
 Tsq'escen (Canim Lake First Nation)
 Xats'ull Cmetem' (Soda Creek First Nation)
 Cariboo Tribal Council
 Lhoosk'uz (Kluskus First Nation)
 Lhtako (Red Bluff First Nation)
 Ndazkho (Nazko First Nation)
 Tl'esqox (Toosey First Nation)
 Ulkatchot'en (Ulkatcho First Nation)
 Carrier-Chilcotin Tribal Council
 Wet'suwet'en First Nation
 Burns Lake First Nation
 Stellat'en First Nation
 Nadleh Whut'en First Nation

Saik'uz First Nation
 Takla Lake First Nation
 Nak'azdli First Nation
 Carrier Sekani Tribal Council
 Xenl Gwet'in (Nemiah First Nation)
 Yunesit'in (Stone Indian First Nation)
 Tsi Del Del (Alexis Creek First nation)
 Tl'etingox (Anaham First Nation)
 Estdilangh (Alexandria First Nation)
 Tsilhqot'in National Government
 Esketemc First Nation
 Lheidli T'enneh First Nation
 Tl'azt'en Nation
 Yekooche First Nation