BRITISH COLUMBIA

October 15, 2026

To: Distribution.

Re: Status Update for Fraser River Late-Run Summer Steelhead

Fraser River late-run summer steelhead are 10 populations that spawn in the Fraser watershed upstream of Hell's Gate. Four of these populations spawn in the Thompson watershed, two in the Chilcotin watershed, and the remaining four in other watersheds that are tributaries to the middle reaches of the Fraser River.

Few steelhead have been caught in the past few weeks in test fisheries in and around the Fraser River suggesting that the status of late-run summer steelhead remains poor. The spawning population forecast for the **Thompson** watershed is currently **43** (95% credible interval 16-380). The current probability that Thompson steelhead will be classified as an **Extreme Conservation Concern** is currently **98%**, the probability that they will be classified as a **Conservation Concern** is currently **less than 2%**, and the probability that they will be classified as **Routine Management** abundance is currently **near 0%**. Reference points for the Thompson watershed that define conservation classifications are the Limit Reference Point of 431 and the Conservation Concern Threshold of 1187. Below 431, Thompson steelhead are classified as an Extreme Conservation Concern. Between 431 and 1187, Thompson steelhead are classified as a Conservation Concern.

The spawning population forecast for the **Chilcotin** watershed is currently **20** (95% credible interval 7-183)**.** The current probability that Chilcotin steelhead will be classified as an **Extreme Conservation Concern** is **99%**, the probability that they will be classified as a **Conservation Concern** is **less than 1%**, and the probability that they

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will be classified as **Routine Management** abundance is **near 0%**. Reference points for the Chilcotin steelhead that define conservation classifications are the Limit Reference Point of 296 and the Conservation Concern Threshold of 763. Below 296, the Chilcotin steelhead are classified as an Extreme Conservation Concern. Between 296 and 763, the Chilcotin steelhead are classified as a Conservation Concern.

Conservation classifications are described further in the Provincial Framework for Steelhead Management in BC (2016) and supporting technical documents.

The current forecasted spawner abundance for the Thompson ranks 50th over a 50-year monitoring time frame. The current forecast for the Chilcotin ranks 54th over a 56-year monitoring time frame.

The migration of Thompson, Chilcotin, and other Fraser River late-run summer steelhead stocks through near-shore marine areas and the lower Fraser River occurs over about a 12-week period, normally peaking in Johnstone Straits and in Juan de Fuca Strait in late September. In the test fishing areas near Fort Langley, the run normally begins in late August and continues into the latter half of November, normally peaking in early-to-mid October. Stocks that spawn furthest inland (i.e. Chilcotin watershed) tend to arrive earliest while stocks that spawn furthest downstream (i.e. Nahatlatch) tend to arrive latest. The remaining stocks which include those that spawn in the Bridge, Seton, Stein, and in the tributaries of the Thompson watershed (i.e. Deadman, Bonaparte and Nicola watersheds), tend to be intermediate in their arrival timing to the Fraser River. These steelhead overwinter in the Thompson, Chilcotin and Fraser rivers and then complete their upstream migration into spawning tributaries in the spring.

The next update will be provided shortly after the last day of informative test fishing for Interior Fraser steelhead which is November 20.

Robert Bison
Biologist

The following figures are attached:

Figure 1. The estimated spawning abundances of Thompson River steelhead in relation to conservation reference points. The last data point illustrates the expected spawner abundance for this season's return which will spawn in the spring of 2027.

Figure 2. The estimated spawning abundances of Chilcotin River steelhead in relation to conservation reference points. The last data point illustrates the expected spawner abundance for this season's return which will spawn in the spring of 2027.

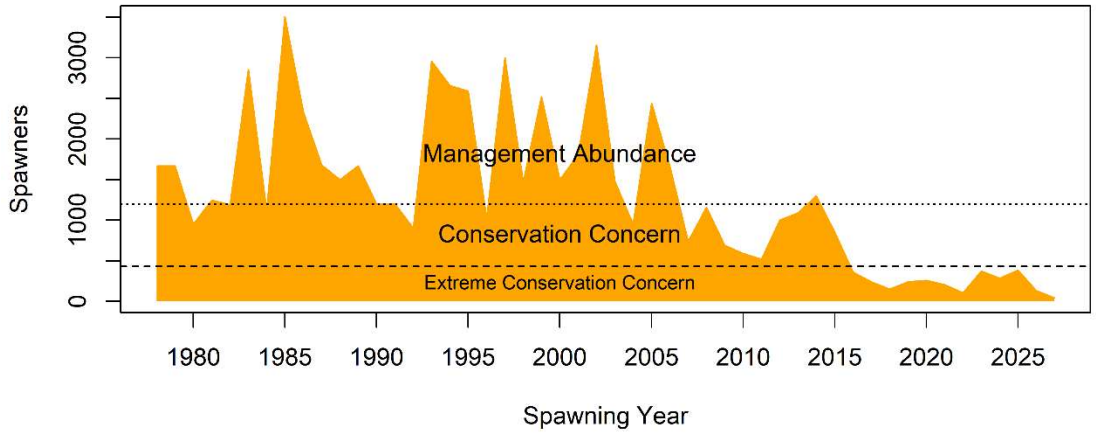


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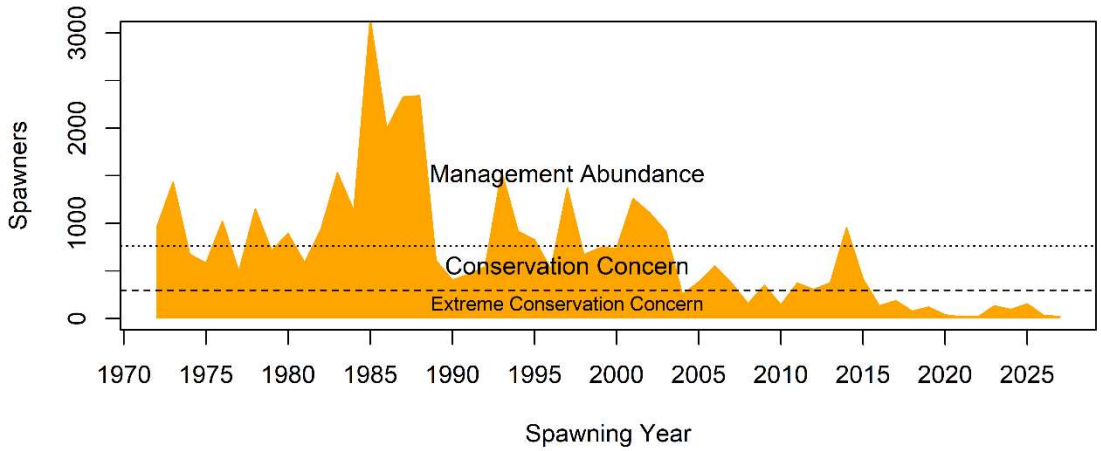


Figure 2. The estimated spawning abundances of Chilcotin River steelhead in relation to conservation reference points. The last data point illustrates the expected spawner abundance for this season's return which will spawn in the spring of 2027.