
From: James Dixon - NOAA Federal <james.dixon@noaa.gov>
Sent: Monday, April 19, 2021 8:17 AM
To: Ned Currence
Cc: Ben A. Starkhouse; Devin Flawd; Mark Nelson; Tom M. Chance; Susan Bishop - NOAA Federal; Gerald I. James; George Swanaset Jr; Jones, Robert
Subject: Re: Nooksack Chinook radio telemetry
Attachments: 2021 Nooksack early MOs April 13_jdedits v2.docx

Ben, Ned,

Thank you for your responses and request for clarification of my earlier email. Ned, very much appreciate the reiteration of the Nooksack Tribe's plans for this year.

Just to be clear, we are comfortable with the fishery being planned to go through the 30th of June. I indicated this on our call a week or so ago and meant to reiterate that in my first email response. We do understand and appreciate the importance of these fisheries to your communities and we want to continue to work with you to advance these fisheries and the conservation of the Nooksack river salmon.

In moving away from the request to continue fisheries past June 15th, as has been the case in years past, we think it would be practical and reasonable to still keep a "check-in" of sorts, at least for this first season of a planned, full-length June fishery. This is not meant to be a decision point for the June fishery, just a reasonable in-season update of how things are progressing relative to our expectations. It is very unlikely, based on the recent past performance and pattern of impact usage that there would be any concern for the second half of June fishery. We are simply attempting to validate this assumption for this first year of planned, full June fishery.

As for the potential need to extend the fishery into July and whether the pre-season planning period needs to include July in the description. Again, we are open to having these discussions should the situation arise, in-season. However, we are being asked to consider extending the fishery into a timeframe that has been a concern for the potential impacts to the SF program and population. We are being asked to consider this in the absence of information from projects implemented to specifically help answer these concerns. That is not something that we can do at this point. That is why we indicated that, should the situation arise, toward the end of June, where there are impacts remaining and you would like us to consider the potential extension of the fishery into June, we would need certain information to be available to us, with reasonable time to review and discuss it.

Perhaps the the June 18th "check-in" can serve a dual purpose for this year?

Please see my additional revisions to the Nooksack Early fishery description, attached.

Please let me know if these are acceptable for this year's fisheries. I am happy to set up a call if we need to discuss further.

On Thu, Apr 15, 2021 at 5:25 PM Ned Currence <ncurrence@nooksack-nsn.gov> wrote:

Hi all:

First, thank you Ben for including Nooksack Tribe in your reply. I had not realized there were NMFS concerns with our Ceremonial and Subsistence fisheries. I just want to take a moment and reiterate to James our intentions for this year. As I mentioned on our call, Nooksack Tribe is not intending to fish in July this year. There will be a time when we would like to pursue that, and especially given how successful the Skookum Hatchery program has been in increasing the population abundance. That program has really effective, and NOR abundances are appreciably stronger now too. I also appreciate the Critical Stocks funding which has substantially supported the program. These two populations are more proportional in strength now, although, as reflected in our forecasts, the South Fork population may be the stronger population right now.

As stated on our call, Nooksack Tribe is not intending to intentionally fish even late June for our Ceremonial and Subsistence fisheries. We will finish by June 15 if possible. However, if our fisheries are not completed by June 15, we would like the opportunity to fish through June 30. Ceremonial and subsistence chinook are critically important to our Tribe and Tribal members. Critically important. Consequently, we are reluctant to simply agree to forego C&S harvest the second half of June. Too rarely are both Tribes given credit for ending commercial fisheries directed on these stocks 40 years ago, and we do not want to lose the opportunity to Ceremonially and Subsistence fish through June 30, should we need that additional two weeks. We will conduct these critically important fisheries as quickly as we are able. We will try to be completed by mid-June, but request the remainder of June be available should we need that. These C&S fisheries are extremely important to the Tribe, its members and its ceremonies, and we know that to be true for Lummi Nation as well.

Thank you,

Ned

From: Ben A. Starkhouse <BenS@lummi-nsn.gov>

Sent: Thursday, April 15, 2021 2:33 PM

To: James Dixon - NOAA Federal <james.dixon@noaa.gov>

Cc: Devin Flawd <DevinF@lummi-nsn.gov>; Mark Nelson <MarkN@lummi-nsn.gov>; Tom M. Chance <TomC@lummi-nsn.gov>; Susan Bishop - NOAA Federal <susan.bishop@noaa.gov>; Ned Currence <ncurrence@nooksack-nsn.gov>; Gerald I. James <GeraldJ@lummi-nsn.gov>

Subject: Re: Nooksack Chinook radio telemetry

NOTICE: This email is from an external source and is not from a Nooksack-nsn email.

James,

Thanks for the review and reply.

Based on my understanding of previous conversations and after reading your email and edits I'm a little confused with where things are at.

I believe what you're saying is that the tangle net fishery can continue to June 30 without getting in-season approval from NMFS, correct? What's the purpose of the June 18 check-in then? Will the information provided at that point be used to allow or prohibit fishing through the end of June? If not, then why have the "check-in" on June 18?

It would appear that NMFS is not comfortable with allowing fishing to occur during July, until additional discussions about the radio tag work can be had. Just to be clear, fish from the radio tag study were captured below the Slater Road bridge (RM 0.0 to 3.5), and any fishing that Lummi would do in July would occur below the Slater Road bridge (I don't think Nooksack planned to fish in July at this point). So there is not a lot the radio tag study could tell us about shaping fisheries below Slater. If there were fisheries being proposed above the bridge then sure, the radio tag results could be pretty informative. Based on CWT recoveries we know Skookum (SF) chinook enter the river as early as late-April and we see Skookum CWTs recovered from our August river fishery (below Slater). So I don't think there's a lot of fishery shaping that could be done below Slater to avoid SF chinook; they're either there or they're not (it's a relatively short section of river), and based on CWT recoveries they're in the lower mainstem from April to August. As I've mentioned a few times, if we get clearance to fish in July (below Slater) we would limit our NOR impacts to less than 5, most likely 3 or less. The SF NOR terminal area forecast for 2021 is 338 fish, so any fishing in July would have a negligible impact on the total return of SF fish.

Would NMFS be more comfortable if there was a distinction made between fishing downstream of the Slater Road bridge (RM0.0-3.5) into July and fishing upstream of the Slater Road bridge into July?

Ben

Ben Starkhouse

Fisheries Harvest Manager

Lummi Natural Resources

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From: James Dixon - NOAA Federal <james.dixon@noaa.gov>
Sent: Thursday, April 15, 2021 10:37 AM
To: Ben A. Starkhouse <BenS@lummi-nsn.gov>
Cc: Devin Flawd <DevinF@lummi-nsn.gov>; Mark Nelson <MarkN@lummi-nsn.gov>; Tom M. Chance <TomC@lummi-nsn.gov>; Susan Bishop - NOAA Federal <susan.bishop@noaa.gov>
Subject: Re: Nooksack Chinook radio telemetry

Ben,

Thanks for sharing the draft language describing the Nooksack terminal fishery and the cwt-recovery in harvest info. I have added some proposed edits to the attached doc.

I think there are two areas to discuss:

One is the request for a shift away from the June structure we have had, where Lummi requests (early June) to extend the fishery past June 15th with the directive to provide NOAA with a request and supporting information. As I indicated during our discussion, this seems like a reasonable change to the annual process, given the prior performance of the fishery pre and post- June 15th and the scale of the fishery post June 15th. However, I did indicate that we should still check-in later in June (2nd or 3rd week) to confirm the 2021 post June 15th fishery would still be at the "scale" that it has been in recent years (small % of total impacts remaining). It does look like you have indicated a check-in for June 21 in the writeup. I would like the check-in to happen by the 18th. I think that a general review of recent year (2019) escapements, status of the ongoing fishery - the impacts accrued to that point, catch estimates of HORs, and the remaining impacts would suffice for this check-in (see my edits).

The second issue is the proposed fishery extension into July, should there be remaining impacts, and the resulting proposed mgmt period running from April through July. This is concerning as we have not discussed any specifics of what a fishery moving into July would look like and I am uncomfortable with the "base" mgmt period expanding through July, at this point. We are open to having discussions, if the need should arise, but these discussions need to be informed by the results of the telemetry work, which might inform the shaping of the fishery, in area and time that might minimize the impacts to the SF NOR fish. I am suggesting that the spring mgmt period be limited to April-June 30 for 2021 (see my edits).

Please let me know if you want to have any further discussion on these issues.

Thank you,

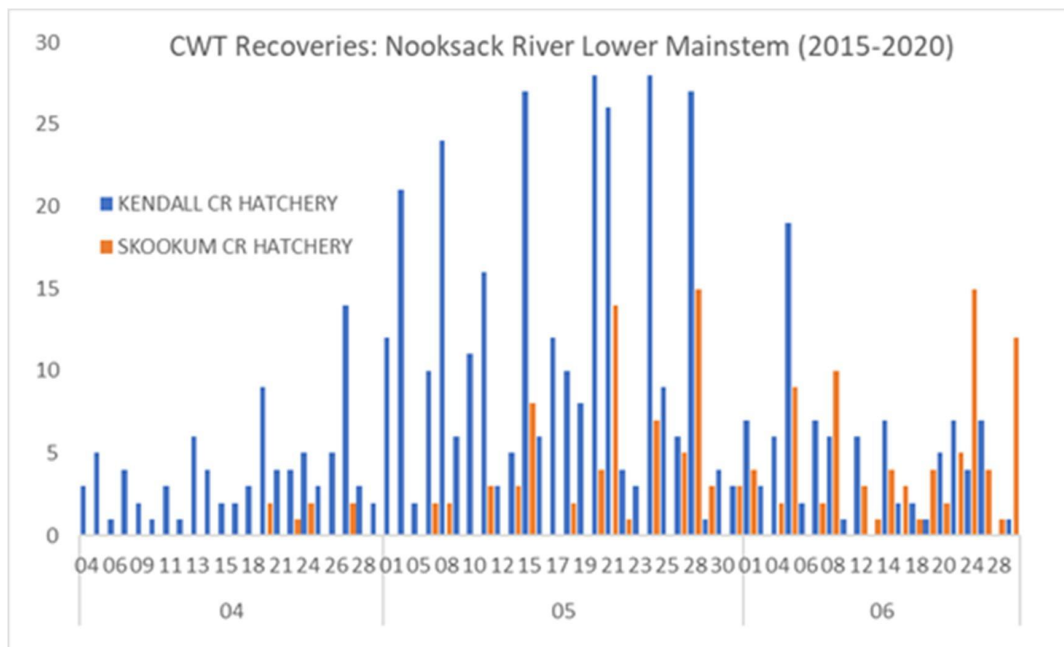
On Wed, Apr 14, 2021 at 10:30 AM Ben A. Starkhouse <BenS@lummi-nsn.gov> wrote:

James,

CWT recoveries from Lummi's tangle net fishery may be the best source of data to show a temporal delineation between NM/MF (Kendall) and SF (Skookum) Chinook. The figure below shows the total number of CWTs recovered in the tangle net fishery between 2015-2020.

By supplemental plan language do you mean the attached? Yes, please look it over. The paragraph describing non-tribal fisheries has not been updated with 2021 language. I added a paragraph describing the Lummi Bay fishery and changed the dates for the June "check-in".

Ben



Ben Starkhouse

Fisheries Harvest Manager

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From: James Dixon - NOAA Federal <james.dixon@noaa.gov>

Sent: Monday, April 12, 2021 5:23 PM

To: Ben A. Starkhouse <BenS@lummi-nsn.gov>

Cc: Devin Flawd <DevinF@lummi-nsn.gov>; Mark Nelson <MarkN@lummi-nsn.gov>

Subject: Re: Nooksack Chinook radio telemetry

Ben, Devon,

Just making sure that I didn't miss anything related to the telemetry work? My email has been crammed lately so I have missed some things.

Also Ben, if you want to run any of the Nooksack supplemental plan language by me for this year, I'd be happy ro look at it.

Thanks,

Thanks,

On Tue, Apr 6, 2021 at 11:19 AM James Dixon - NOAA Federal <james.dixon@noaa.gov> wrote:

Thanks Ben,

Hi Devon,

We are mostly interested in whether there are any clear temporal delineation of the NF/MF fish and the SF fish, based on encounters in the research fishery? Additionally, if there were any significant differences between the hatchery and natural-origin fish from either population?

Happy to chat if you need any clarity on the questions.

Thanks,

On Tue, Apr 6, 2021 at 11:12 AM Ben A. Starkhouse <BenS@lummi-nsn.gov> wrote:

James,

The radio telemetry research was overseen by Devin (cc'd), Lummi's stock assessment manager. Devin is still developing the presentation, which will be given April 29 at 11am, but would be happy to answer questions you might have in the meantime.

Ben

Ben Starkhouse

Fisheries Harvest Manager

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