



# TNG FISHERIES

*The latest information important to T̓silhqot̓'in fish and fishing activities*

## 2024 T̓silhqot̓'in Nation Fisheries Plan

On July 19, 2024 TNG shared the 2024 T̓silhqot̓'in Fisheries Plan on behalf of the T̓silhqot̓'in Council of Chiefs. The plan schedules **harvest opportunity** when the stronger Chilko populations of Ja̓s (Chinook) and Ts'eman (sockeye) return to the Territory.

- A **Ja̓s** opening is scheduled from **Fri, Aug 16 through to the end of the fishing season**.
- A **Ts'eman** opening is scheduled from **Fri, Aug 23 until Sun, Sept 1**.

The plan **supports T̓silhqot̓'in Nation conservation goals** and asks fishers to follow voluntary measures to protect early timed Chilcotin Ja̓s and Taseko Ts'eman populations that are at **high risk of extinction**, and this year's weaker 2024 Chilko Ts'eman population.

**See the 2024 Fisheries Plan attached on page 4.**

## Salmon Health Report Card for T̓silhqot̓'in Stocks:



**High risk of extinction for Upper Chezqox Ja̓s** (Upper Chilcotin Chinook) and Dasiqox Ts'eman (Taseko sockeye). These are early timed stocks that return to the Little Chilcotin and Taseko systems to spawn, and migrate through the Chilcotin mainstem from early July to mid August.



**High conservation concern for later-timed T̓silhqot̓'in Ja̓s stocks** that return to the Territory from early August to mid September.



**Expecting the lowest year for T̓silhqox Ts'eman** (Chilko sockeye) – this is the “echo” of the worst disaster we've had (2020)

The T̓silhqot̓'in Council of Chiefs requests voluntary compliance with limited measures to protect early timed Ja̓s (Chinook) and Ts'eman (sockeye) populations at high risk of extinction, and this year's weaker 2024 Chilko sockeye population.

### #1. Please do not fish for Ja̓s (Chinook) in the Little Chilcotin system above the Chilko/Chilcotin junction for the full fishing season.

- Please protect these Ja̓s stocks that are at **high risk of extinction** as they return to their spawning grounds.

### #2. Scheduled openings for Ja̓s and Ts'eman (sockeye):

**a) JA̓S:** If you can, **please delay fishing for Ja̓s in the Chilko/Chilcotin mainstem until the scheduled opening Fri, Aug 16** (midnight, Thurs night) **through to the end of the season**, when the stronger Chilko Ja̓s population will be in the Territory.

**b) TS'EMAN:** If you can, **please do not harvest Ts'eman until the scheduled opening Fri, Aug 23** (midnight, Thurs night) **to Sun, Sept 1** (end of day).

- Allow early-timed Ja̓s and Ts'eman that are at high risk of extinction to pass through the mainstem and return to their spawning grounds.
- In this very difficult year for Ts'eman, please take only what you need and support the rebuilding/ replenishment of this weaker 2024 population.

**PLEASE NOTE: We expect stronger returns of T̓silhqox Ts'eman (Chilko sockeye) in the next 3 years (2025, 2026, 2027) based on currently available information.**

**Because very low Ja̓s and Ts'eman returns are expected this year, fishers are encouraged to fish other resident fish, e.g., Dek'any (rainbow trout), Sabay (bull trout), Lhagh Sisich'el (suckers).**

**CLICK HERE for the 2024 pre-season forecast and 2024 season context**

## Update on T̕ilhqot̕in Salmon Stocks:

- All the ocean and Fraser in-river test fisheries and SONAR systems are now mobilized and operational. Most are focused on counting returning Fraser Ts'eman stocks.
- All systems for ocean and Fraser River monitoring are now operational, and we're monitoring the migration of T̕ilhqot̕in Ts'eman stocks as they migrate past the northern and southern tips of Vancouver Island and into the Lower Fraser River.

### Taseko Ts'eman (sockeye):

- Early timed Taseko Ts'eman are now on migrating up the Fraser River on route to their natal spawning streams in the Taseko system in T̕ilhqot̕in Territory.
- TNG Fisheries is monitoring their confirmed low numbers with our SONAR in the Lower Chilcotin (a TNG/DFO partnership).
- Taseko Ts'eman are **at high risk of extinction**. TNG Fisheries is preparing to conduct brood (parent) stock collection for emergency conservation enhancement to rebuild this population.

### Chilko Ts'eman (sockeye):

- Later timed Chilko Ts'eman are now showing up in low numbers in ocean test fisheries, but have not yet been detected in the Lower Fraser River. It's still too early to get an estimate of how many are returning from the ocean.
- They are expected to reach their spawning grounds in the Chilko system in T̕ilhqot̕in Territory in early Aug to mid Sept.
- Chilko has been the strongest Fraser Ts'eman population in recent years, but this year's weaker 2024 population is a **high conservation concern**.

### Upper Chilcotin Ja̕ (Chinook):

- Critically endangered early timed Upper Chilcotin Ja̕ are now in the Little Chilcotin system in T̕ilhqot̕in Territory.
- This population is at **high risk of extinction** and returning in very low numbers in 2024.
- TNG Fisheries is leading emergency conservation enhancement to rebuild this population while keeping it a "wild" Ja̕ stock.
- See the page 3 for an update on emergency conservation enhancement for Upper Chilcotin Ja̕.

### Chilko Ja̕ (Chinook):

- TNG Fisheries will begin monitoring and assessment in the Territory for Chilko Ja̕ in 2 weeks, and will provide an update at that time.

## Environmental Conditions:

- Fraser River temperatures are 3.7°C degrees above average and are warm enough to cause stress and increase mortality for salmon as they migrate to their spawning grounds; they are expected to drop back to near-average levels later this week.
- Fraser River flow/discharge levels are 34% lower than average. Low flows mean salmon passage issues are less likely at difficult points along their migration (e.g., Big Bar), but they also contribute to higher water temperatures.
- TNG Fisheries is collecting real-time water quality and quantity information in all 3 key natal systems in T̕ilhqot̕in Territory (Chilcotin, Chilko, Taseko) through our TNG-led Aquatic Habitat Monitoring Program.
- Little Chilcotin River temperatures were critically high last week and through the weekend. Fortunately with some rain and lower air temperatures, the water has cooled to more normal levels. This is great news for the Little Chilcotin Ja̕ populations, including critically endangered Upper Chilcotin Ja̕.

TNG Fisheries collects, monitors, and analyzes in-season fisheries information from the ocean to the spawning grounds from late June until the end of Sept, which we report on through these weekly in-season fisheries bulletins.

[Click here to learn more](#)

## Highlights from the Field

### TNG-led Upper Chilcotin SONAR Installation (July 22, 2024)



Leonard English (TNG Fisheries Coordinator) led the Upper Chilcotin SONAR installation with TNG Fisheries Technician Hayden Grinder and technical support from Ecofish. It provides a real-time spawner estimate for **critically endangered Upper Chilcotin Jaš** to inform emergency conservation enhancement activities. This project requires a lot of planning and smooth operation because it's the most important thing we're doing this season – working to save this population, which is at high risk of extinction.

*Photo: Leonard, Hayden, and Ecofish technicians installing the Upper Chilcotin SONAR.*

### This week: TNG-led Taseko SONAR installation (July 25-26)

Leonard, Gerald, and Hayden are preparing to install the Taseko SONAR, which provides critical population information about critically endangered Taseko Ts'eman and informs emergency conservation enhancement activities.

### Fraser/Chilcotin Junction and Lower/Little Chilcotin SONAR:

The TNG Fisheries crew continues to analyze SONAR files from the TNG-led Fraser/Chilcotin Junction SONAR (installed June 29) and the Lower/Little Chilcotin SONAR (TNG/DFO partnership; installed July 10), which help us prepare for emergency conservation enhancement activities for early timed Taseko Ts'eman and Upper Chilcotin Jaš, both of which are at high risk of extinction.

### Emergency conservation enhancement for Upper Chilcotin Jaš (July 24, 2024)



TNG Fisheries is leading emergency conservation enhancement to rebuild critically endangered Upper Chilcotin Jaš, which are at high risk of extinction. Exciting news: On Wed, July 24, the crew captured 2 Upper Chilcotin Jaš for brood (parent) stock. Eggs will be fertilized and raised to the fry stage at Quesnel River Research Centre (partner conservation hatchery) to increase their chance of survival; they will be released as fry into their natal stream in spring 2025. We are working to capture a few more adult spawners to complete this top priority stock rebuilding project.

*Photo: Leonard with TNG Fisheries Biologist Pete Nicklin in the Upper Chilcotin on brood stock collection day. The brood fence is visible in the background. Special thanks to the TNG Rangers for helping us install the brood fence!*

## TNG FISHERIES TEAM

#### RANDY BILLYBOY

Fisheries Manager

Contact for questions:

rbillyboy@tsilhqotin.ca

Tel: 250-392-3918

#### MICHELLE TUNG

Fisheries Strategy Lead

#### LEONARD ENGLISH

Fisheries Coordinator

#### WINSTON BAMBRICK

Jr. Hatchery Manager

#### GERALD WILLIAM

Sr. Fisheries Technician

#### HAYDEN GRINDER

Fisheries Technician

#### PETE NICKLIN

Biologist

#### ANDREA STERLING

Biologist

#### AIMEE ARSENAULT

Communications

## TNG FISHERIES WEEKLY BULLETINS

For weekly updates on the status of Tšilhqot'in salmon stocks, fisheries, and TNG Fisheries Department activities, please see our weekly fisheries bulletins, along with more information about the TNG Fisheries Program, at [www.tsilhqotin.ca/our-territory/fisheries](http://www.tsilhqotin.ca/our-territory/fisheries) and on the TNG Facebook page.

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



# Tsilhqot'in Fisheries Plan 2024 Salmon Season

The Tsilhqot'in Council of Chiefs requests voluntary compliance with limited measures to protect early timed Jaš (Chinook) and Ts'eman (sockeye) populations at high risk of extinction, and this year's weaker 2024 Chilko sockeye population.

## Requested Voluntary Protection Measures:

**#1. Please do not fish for Jaš (Chinook) in the Little Chilcotin system above the Chilko/Chilcotin junction for the full fishing season.**

- Please protect these Jaš stocks that are at **high risk of extinction** as they return to their spawning grounds.

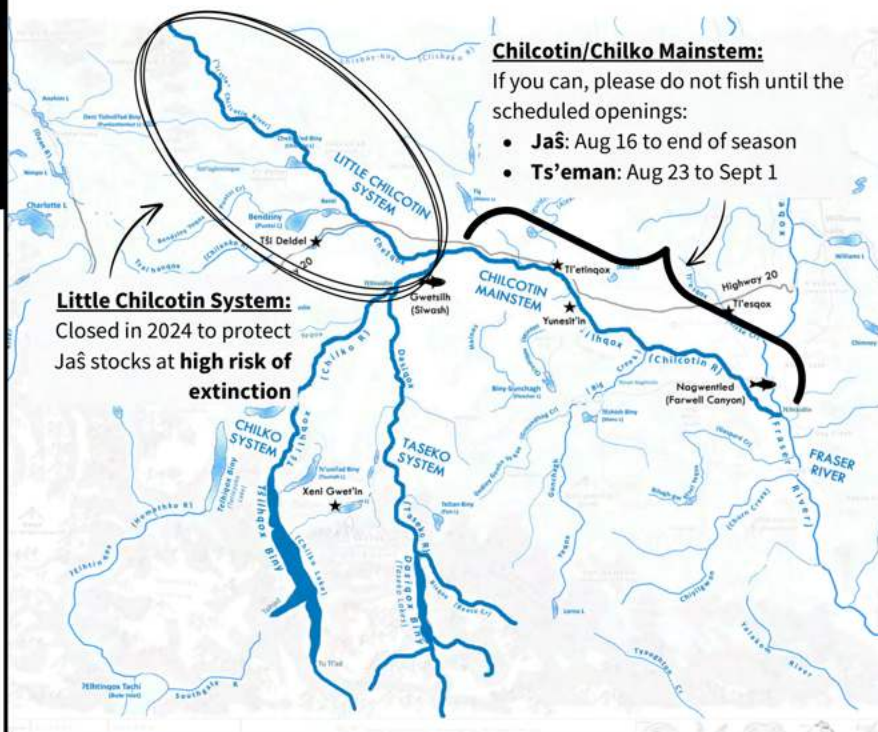
**#2. Scheduled openings for Jaš and Ts'eman (sockeye):**

**a) JAŠ:** If you can, **please delay fishing for Jaš in the Chilko/Chilcotin mainstem until the scheduled opening Fri, Aug 16** (midnight, Thurs night) **through to the end of the season**, when the stronger Chilko Jaš population will be in the Territory.

**b) TS'EMAN:** If you can, **please do not harvest Ts'eman until the scheduled opening Fri, Aug 23** (midnight, Thurs night) **to Sun, Sept 1** (end of day).

- Allow early-timed Jaš and Ts'eman that are at **high risk of extinction** to pass through the mainstem and return to their spawning grounds.
- In this very difficult year for Ts'eman, **please take only what you need** and support the rebuilding/replenishment of this weaker 2024 population.

**PLEASE NOTE:** We expect stronger returns of Tsilhqox Ts'eman (Chilko sockeye) in the next 3 years (2025, 2026, 2027) based on currently available information.



**We can all help protect our at-risk Jaš and Ts'eman populations for the future by allowing them to safely return to their spawning grounds.**

**Jaš and Ts'eman are expected to return in very low numbers this year. Please consider fishing for other resident fish — e.g., Dek'any (rainbow trout), Sabay (bull trout), Lhagh Sisch'el (suckers).**

**Please note:** Fishery opening dates may be adjusted in-season as more information becomes available. Under extreme circumstances, emergency conservation measures may be implemented.

