



TNG FISHERIES

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

This is the TNG Fisheries in-season bulletin that is released weekly throughout the salmon season from mid-July to mid-September to provide updates on the state of T̓silhqot'in fisheries and work in the field. These bulletins are publicly available on the TNG Facebook page and on the TNG website at www.tsilhqotin.ca/our-territory/fisheries/communications.

2025 T̓silhqot'in Fisheries:

We hope you're enjoying the 2025 salmon season! We're happy to see people on the river successfully catching Ja̓s (Chinook), Ts'eman (sockeye) and Dandzex (pinks) in the Chilcotin and the Fraser.

Reminder of the 2025 T̓silhqot'in Fisheries Plan approved by the TNG Council of Chiefs:

- The Chilko/Chilcotin mainstem and the Fraser River are open for Ts'eman and Dandzex. The Chilko/Chilcotin mainstem is also open for Ja̓s.
- Please do not fish in the Che̓zqox (Little Chilcotin) for the full season, except for the junction area with the Chilko. This protects critically endangered Che̓zqox Ja̓s by allowing them to return to their spawning grounds to support their recovery.
- Please see applicable requested voluntary protection measure in the box below.

Please see the August 13, 2025 Fisheries Notice attached on page 4.



2025 Applicable Voluntary Protection Measure:

The T̓silhqot'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:

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

Approved by the T̓silhqot'in Council of Chiefs June 17, 2025

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Chilko Ts'eman (Sockeye) Update – the good news continues!

- Chilko Ts'eman are **running very strong** in the Chilko and Chilcotin Rivers. The current Chilko Ts'eman in-season ocean return estimate of **4.3 million** has far exceeded all pre-season forecasts (the pre-season forecast was about 900,000).
- The 2025 Chilko Ts'eman return is in the top 5 highest returns in our recorded data set (since 1952), and the largest since 2010 – a great bounce-back after several lower return years since the Big Bar landslide in 2019.
- So far, about half a million Chilko Ts'eman have been counted as they enter T̓silhqot'in Territory past the Hanceville sonar. Observations indicate the fish are in **excellent condition**. They are now arriving at their spawning grounds in the Chilko, and will continue to arrive over the next several weeks (throughout September).
- Chilko is the single **strongest** returning salmon population in the Fraser this year, and **all Fraser Ts'eman populations** are exceeding their pre-season forecasts. This indicates that ocean conditions have been favourable for Ts'eman.
- Spawning grounds will be well seeded for future generations of Chilko Ts'eman on this cycle line. Most of the babies from 2025 parents will return in 2029 as 4 years olds, and some as 5 year olds in 2030.

Chilko Jaš (Chinook) Update:

- On-the-ground observations by the TNG Fisheries crew in the Chilko system indicate that Chilko Jaš have been returning in strong numbers reminiscent of the strong return in 2022.
- Chilko Jaš appear to be in very good condition and good health. We will know more specific details about the 2025 Jaš return when we conduct our post-season analysis of data collected through TNG and DFO collaborative stock assessment programs (winter 2025).
- Continuous Chilko Ts'eman migration has been observed alongside Chinook.

River Conditions Update:

- Temperatures in the Fraser River are currently very high for this time of year, which causes stress for migrating salmon; however, Chilko Ts'eman is a very strong population with special adaptations which make these fish more resilient against higher river temperatures than other Ts'eman populations.
- Fish passage has been very good through the T̓silhqox landslide impact area, as observed via the fish passage sonar at Hanceville. Turbidity level (cloudiness from particles in the water) has been a key concern since the slide, as high turbidity can cause health impacts and migration delays for salmon. Turbidity levels in the Chilcotin River are still slightly elevated, but have improved as water levels have dropped later in the season. Turbidity levels in the Fraser River downstream of the Chilcotin junction have also decreased to the lowest levels observed through the salmon migration period.

For more information about the TNG Fisheries Program, visit the TNG Fisheries page on the TNG website at www.tsilhqotin.ca/our-territory/fisheries

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

Scenes from the Field

Chilko Jaš (Chinook) Mark Recapture Program:



The Chilko Jaš Mark Recapture program gives us critical information about the numbers and health of Chilko Jaš returning to T̓silhqot'in Territory to spawn in 2025. This project is a DFO–TNG Fisheries partnership.

Left photo: Winston Bambrick of TNG Fisheries and Spencer Beauchamp of DFO angling for Chilko Jaš on Aug 24. Captured Jaš will be measured and tagged, and then released back into the river to spawn.

Right photo: Hayden Grinder of TNG Fisheries with a captured Jaš on Aug 24. The Jaš will be measured, tagged, and released back into the river to spawn.

Chilko Jaš Coded Wire Tag (CWT) program:

Hayden and Winston worked with Spencer Beauchamp of DFO and Greg Schuler of Spius Creek Hatchery on Aug 26 to install a raceway in preparation for brood (parent) stock collection for the Chilko Jaš CWT program. This stock assessment program is a TNG Fisheries/ DFO partnership that allows us to track where Chilko Jaš go in the ocean, how many are harvested and where, and their overall survival.

The raceway will be used to hold captured adult Jaš. When they're ready to spawn, eggs and milt (sperm) will be collected; eggs will be fertilized and raised in hatchery facilities (including TNG's own Salmon Conservation Hatchery!) before being released back into the Chilko River for their ocean migration.

Photo: Greg, Hayden and Spencer installing the raceway.





Tsilhqot'in
NATIONAL GOVERNMENT

2025 FISHERIES NOTICE

August 13, 2025

The Chilcotin/Chilko Mainstem is open for Jaê(Chinook), Ts'eman (sockeye) and Dandzex (pink) fisheries until the end of the 2025 fishing season.

The Fraser River is open for Ts'eman (sockeye) and Dandzex (pink) fisheries until the end of the 2025 fishing season.

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Jaê Reminder for the Cheêqox (Little Chilcotin River):

The Tsilhqot'in Council of Chiefs requests **voluntary compliance** with limited measures to protect early timed Jaê (Chinook) populations that are at **high risk of extinction**.

Please do not fish for Jaê in the Cheêqox system above the Chilko/Chilcotin junction for the full fishing season.

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

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*Dates may be adjusted in-season as more information becomes available.
Under extreme circumstances, emergency conservation measures may be implemented.*

Approved by Tsilhqot'in Nation Council of Chiefs, June 17, 2025

