



Gitanyow *Fisheries* Authority



August 8, 2016

2016 Kitwanga River Salmon Enumeration Facility Update #5

The Gitanyow Fisheries Authority (GFA) is pleased to announce that the Kitwanga River Salmon Enumeration Facility (KSEF) is now operational and GFA like in other years will be providing weekly updates on salmon escapement to the Kitwanga River (middle Skeena index stream) from this point onwards for 2016. This year marks the 14th consecutive year that GFA has implemented the program, which collects important in-season Pacific salmon stock assessment and biological information. GFA would like to thank our supporters the Gitanyow Chiefs, the Pacific Salmon Commission and Fisheries and Oceans Canada for providing funds and logistical support, making the operation possible again this year. As in other years, GFA will make the weekly updates (or more frequently) available throughout the salmon migration period (July – October) and post them on our website: www.gitanyowfisheries.com

The KSEF has been operational (impeding fish movement) since July 5, 2016, 5 days earlier than the usual annual start date of July 10. Water levels in the Kitwanga River have been stable but very low, among some of the lowest levels we have ever recorded for this time of year (2004-2015). Presently, the water level is 0.55m, approximately 0.17m below normal or 25% lower than average (see KSEF Water Stage – 2016 graph below for more detail). Water temperatures in the Kitwanga River appear to be average for this time of year and are currently fluctuating between **11-18°C**. Total salmon counts to the night of **August 7, 2016** are as follows:

Sockeye = 15 Chinook = 128 (plus 7 jacks) Pink = 3 Chum = 1 Coho = 2

To date we have counted **15 sockeye** through the KSEF. This year's sockeye escapement compares to a previous **maximum** observed to the day of 3,978 in 2010, which resulted in an overall escapement of 20,804 and the **minimum** observed to the day of 15 in 2012, which resulted in an overall escapement of 5,476 for the year. Based on average run timing to the day (2003-2015) it is predicted that approximately **8.3 %** of the run should now be past the KSEF. For more information on cumulative Kitwanga sockeye salmon abundance by date, refer to the graph below.

To date we have counted **128 Chinook** through the KSEF. This year's Chinook escapement compares to a **maximum** observed to the day of 1,665 in 2007, which resulted in an overall escapement of 3,225 and the **minimum** observed to the day of 14 in 2012, which resulted in an overall escapement of 848 for the year. Based on average run timing for Chinook salmon to the day (2003-2015) it is predicted that approximately **37.9%** of the run should now have passed the KSEF. For more information on cumulative Kitwanga Chinook salmon abundance by date, refer to the graph below.

To date we have counted **3 pink, 1 chum and 2 coho** salmon through the KSEF. Based on average run timing for these salmon species to the day (2003-2015) it is predicted that **less than 1%** of the runs should now have passed the KSEF. For more information on cumulative Kitwanga pink, chum and coho salmon abundance by date, refer to the cumulative abundance graphs below.







