



Gitanyow *Fisheries* Authority



August 4, 2022

2022 Kitwanga River Salmon Enumeration Facility Update #1

The Gitanyow Fisheries Authority (GFA) is pleased to announce that the Kitwanga River Adult Salmon Enumeration Facility (KSEF) is operational for 2022. Like in other years GFA will be providing weekly updates on salmon escapement to the Kitwanga River (middle Skeena index) from July through to September. This year marks the 20th 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 their 2022 funders and supporters, specifically the Gitanyow Chiefs (Gitanyow Huwilp Sustainability Fund), the Pacific Salmon Commission's Northern Endowment Fund and Fisheries and Oceans, Canada. GFA would also like to acknowledge and thank the Gitwangak Wilp Simadeeks for allowing GFA to continue to work within their traditional territory, as set out by our 2002 agreement. Weekly updates will be distributed and posted on our website: www.gitanyowfisheries.com



Downstream view of KSEF on August 3, 2022

High water in 2022 prevented the installation of the KSEF by the usual start date of July 10. However, GFA was able to instal the in-river KSEF components between July 21-23, 2022 and the fence was rendered fish tight by the afternoon of July 23. The later than normal start will be considered when producing final estimates of salmon escapement for this year. For 2022, we once again will be operating both a manual counting box and a digital video camera recorder (DVR).

The water levels at the KSEF are currently at 0.86m, approximately 0.13m above the long-term average and water temperatures are normal, currently fluctuating between 10-15°C.

Like in previous years, the KsF (smolt fence) located at the outlet of Gitanyow Lake will be used again this year to count adult sockeye through an additional DVR camera system. The KsF DVR has been operational since July 11, 2022, and to date 710 adult sockeye have passed through this secondary upper counting facility. Prior to July 11, the KsF was operated as smolt fence and sockeye adults would have been prevented from swimming upstream undetected.

For 2022, the total sockeye return will be reported through both the KsF and the KSEF for comparison purposes and all other salmon counts will only be reported when they migrate past the KSEF.

Total salmon counts to the end of August 2, 2022

KsF

Sockeye= 710

KSEF

Sockeye= 2

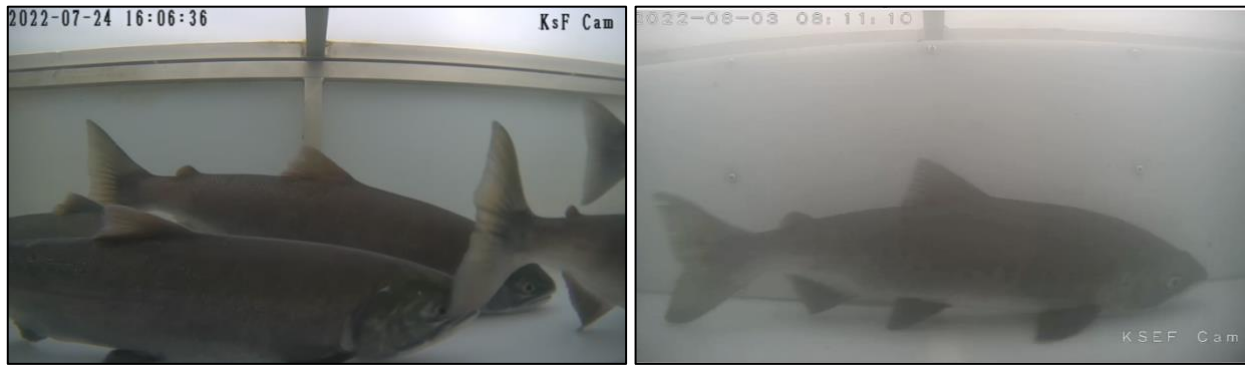
Chinook= 72

Pink= 0

Chum= 0

Coho= 0

This year's **sockeye** escapement through the KSEF compares to a previous maximum observed to the day of 1,424 in 2010, which resulted in an overall escapement of 20,804 and the minimum observed to the day of 0 in multiple years (2012 and 2017), which resulted in overall escapements of: 5,476 and 397 for each of these years respectively. Based on average run timing for Kitwanga sockeye to the day (2003-2019) it is predicted that approximately **4.2%** of the run should have passed the KSEF. For more information on cumulative Kitwanga sockeye salmon abundance through the KSEF by day, refer to the sockeye salmon graph below.



View of multiple sockeye through the KsF camera box on July 24, 2022 (left photo) and view of one sockeye through the KSEF camera box on August 3, 2022

To date we have counted 72 **Chinook** (plus 1 jack) through the KSEF. This year's Chinook escapement compares to a maximum observed to the day of 1,194 in 2007, which resulted in an overall escapement of 3,225 and the minimum observed to the day of 2 in 2012, which resulted in an overall escapement of 848 for the year. Based on average run timing for Kitwanga Chinook to the day (2003- 2019 & 2021) it is predicted that approximately **25.7%** of the run should have passed the KSEF. Of note, because the KSEF operations started 13 days later than normal (usual start date of July 10), it is likely that some Chinook may have passed the site before it became fish tight, however based on average run timing between July 10-23 (2003-2019 & 2021) only about 5.3% of the run would have been missed. The final Kitwanga Chinook escapement for 2022 will be adjusted in the post-season to account for the late start. For more information on cumulative Kitwanga Chinook salmon abundance by date, refer to the Chinook graph below.



View of Chinook through the camera box at KSEF on August 2, 2022

