



Gitanyow *Fisheries* Authority



July 31, 2024

2024 Kitwanga River Salmon Enumeration Update #2

The Gitanyow Fisheries Authority (GFA) is pleased to announce that the Kitwanga River Adult Salmon Enumeration program is operational for 2024. Like in previous years, GFA will be providing regular updates on salmon escapement to the Kitwanga River (middle Skeena index) from July through to September. This year marks the 22nd 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 2024 funders and supporters, specifically the Gitanyow Chiefs (Gitanyow Huwilt Sustainability Fund), the Pacific Salmon Commission's Northern Endowment Fund and Fisheries and Oceans, Canada. GFA would also like to acknowledge and thank the Gitwankak Wilt Simadeeks for allowing GFA to continue to work within their traditional territory, as set out by our 2002 agreement. Updates will be distributed and posted on our website: www.gitanyowfisheries.com



Downstream view of KSEF on July 25, 2024

GFA staff installed the lower Kitwanga River Adult Salmon Enumeration Facility (KSEF) weir components from July 4-9, 2024 under normal water levels. The weir was fish tight by the morning of July 10. For 2024, we once again will be operating both a manual counting boxes and one digital video camera box with recording capabilities (DVR).

The water levels at the KSEF are currently at 0.58m, approximately 0.18m below the long-term average and water temperatures are slightly higher than normal, currently fluctuating between 11-15°C. For more information on water levels and water temperature at the KSEF by day and compared to previous years, refer to the stage and temperature graphs below.

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 4, 2024. Prior to July 4, the KsF was operated as a smolt fence and sockeye adults would have been prevented from swimming upstream undetected.

For 2024, 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 July 30, 2024:

KsF

Sockeye= 7

KSEF

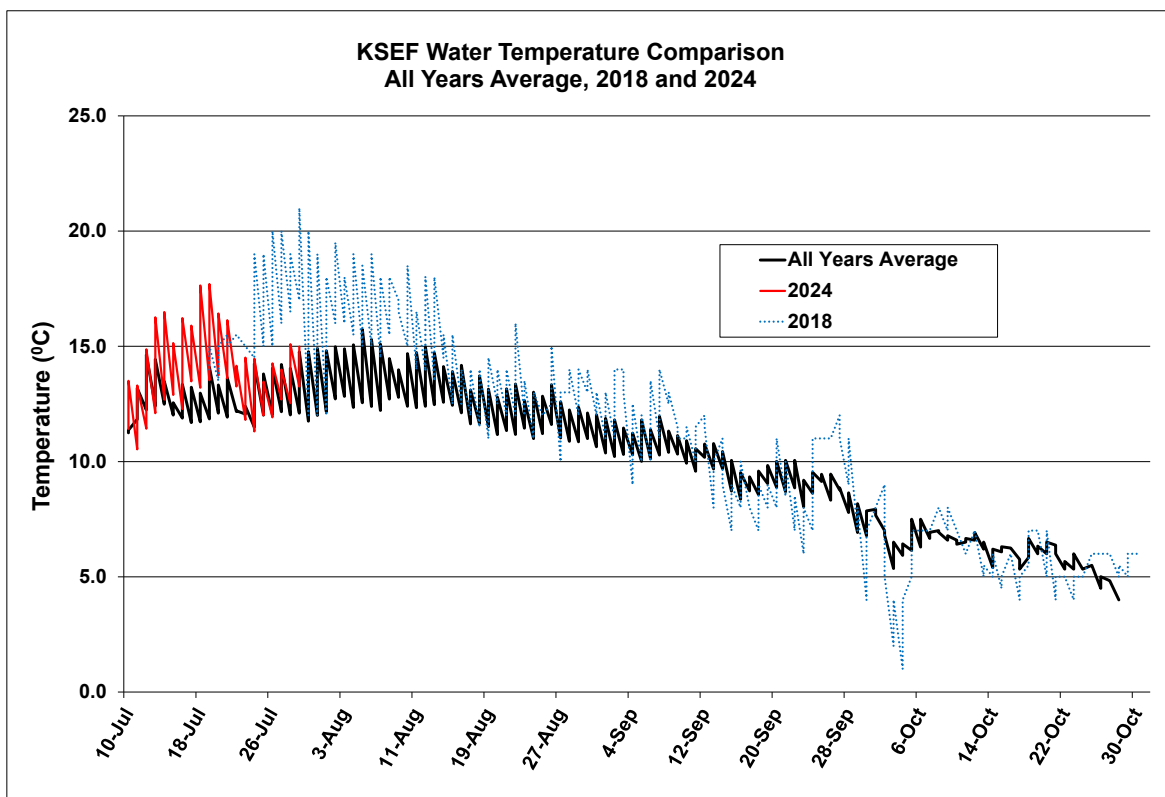
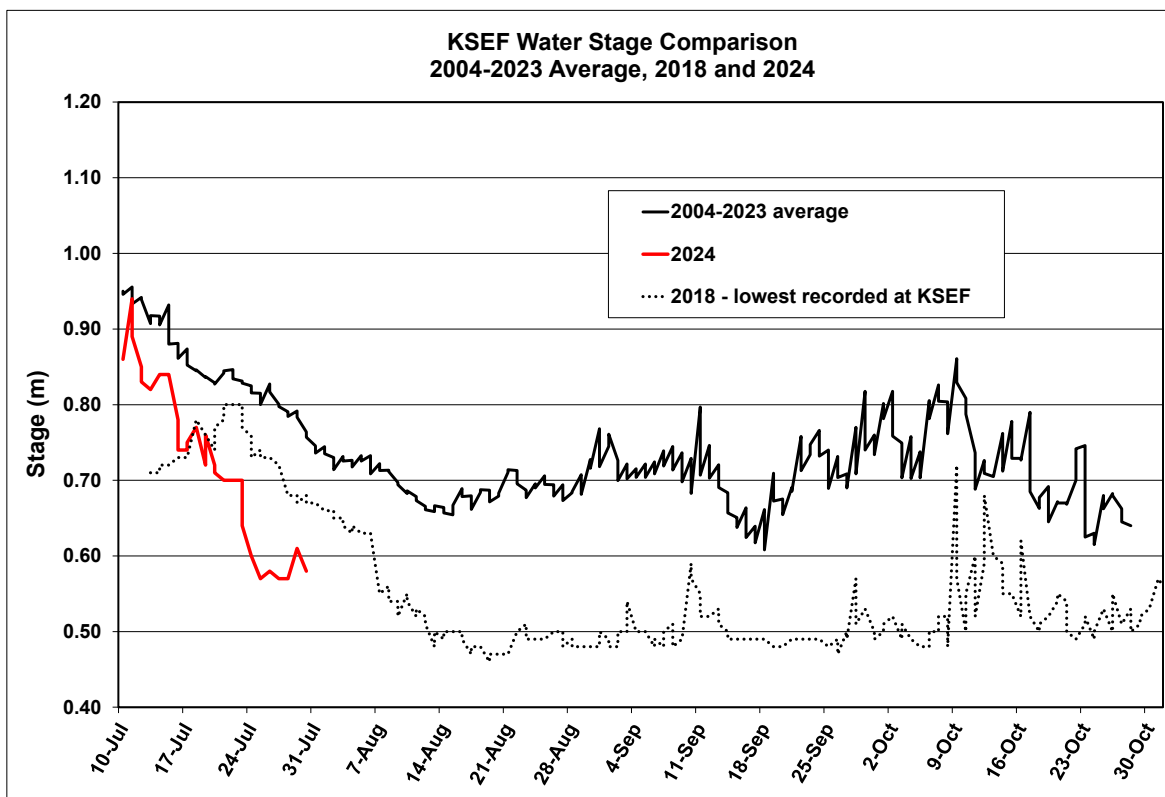
Sockeye= 1 Chinook= 46 Pink= 0 Chum= 0 Coho= 0

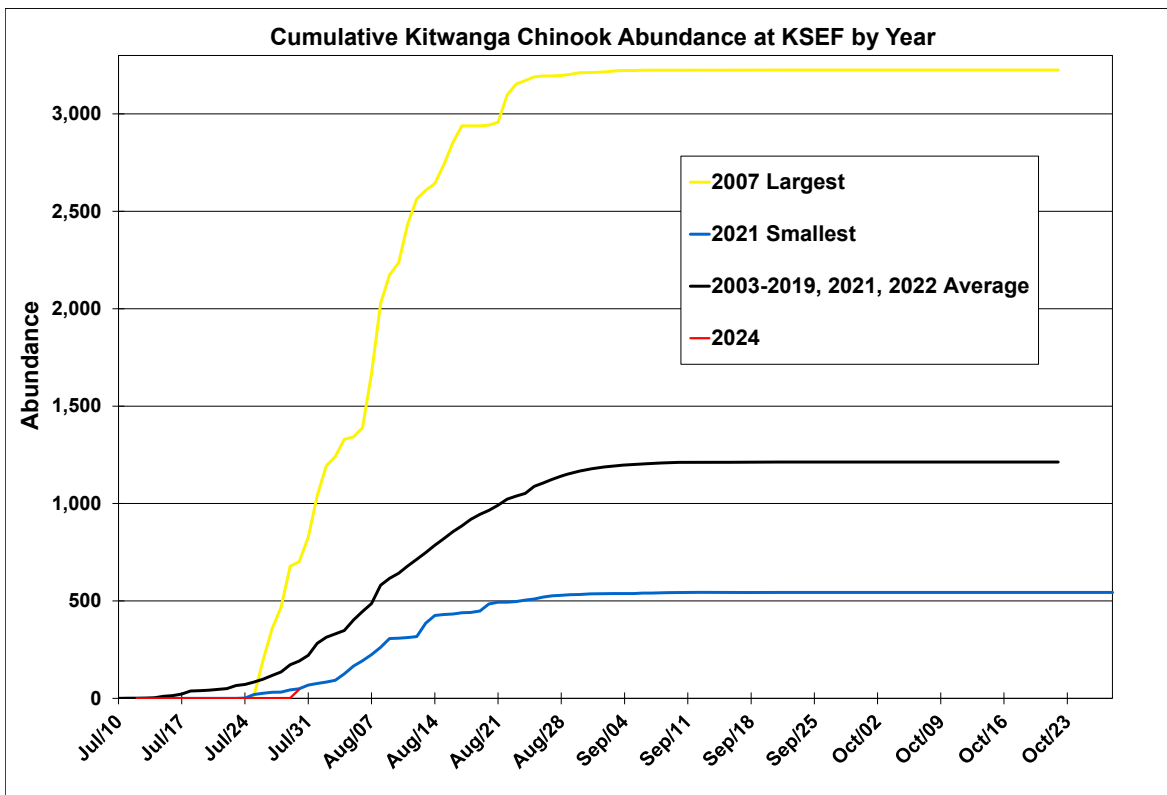
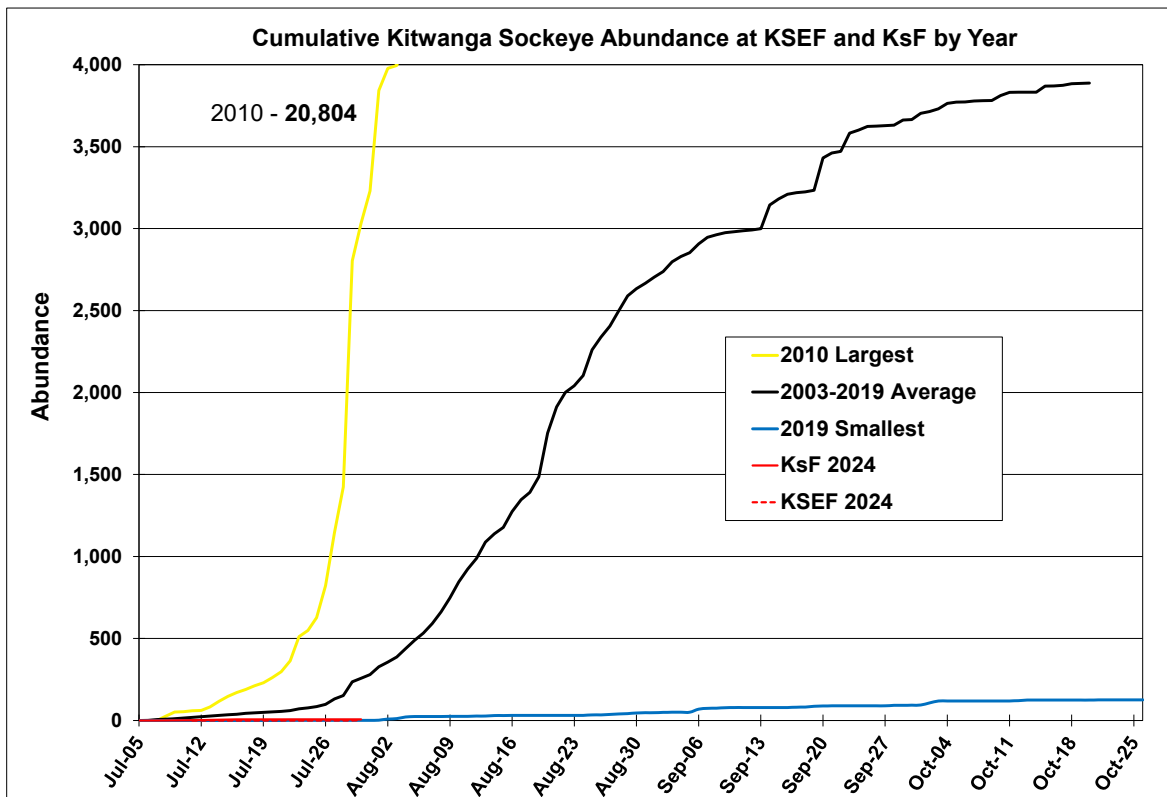
This year's **sockeye** escapement through the KSEF compares to a previous maximum observed to the day of 704 in 2022 (through the KsF), which resulted in an overall escapement of 2,454 and the minimum observed to the day of 0 in multiple years. Based on average run timing for Kitwanga sockeye to the day (2003-2019) it is predicted that approximately **2.7%** 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.

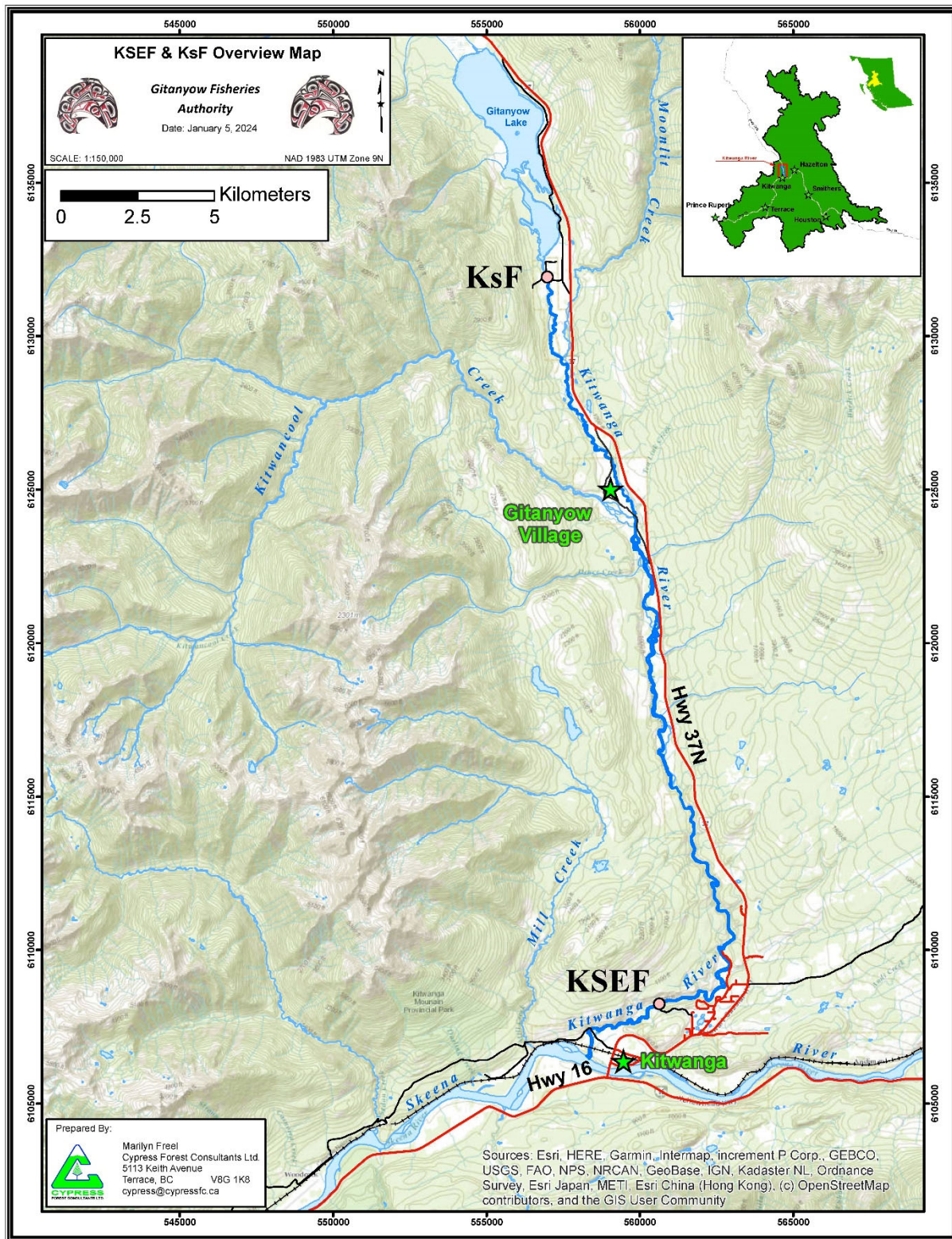
To date we have counted **46 Chinook** (plus 2 jacks) through the KSEF. This year's Chinook escapement compares to a maximum observed to the day of 965 in 2006, which resulted in an overall escapement of 3,014 and the minimum observed to the day of 1 in 2012, which resulted in an overall escapement of 848. Based on average run timing for Kitwanga Chinook to the day (2003 - 2019 and 2021 - 2023) it is predicted that approximately **15.8%** of the run should have passed the KSEF. 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 July 30, 2024







Map of the Kitwanga River / Watershed highlighting the locations of the KSEF and KsF.