

Thompson-Shuswap Salmon Collaborative

A partnership between Secwépemc Fisheries Commission (SFC), Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), and BC Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship (WLRS).

Newsletter

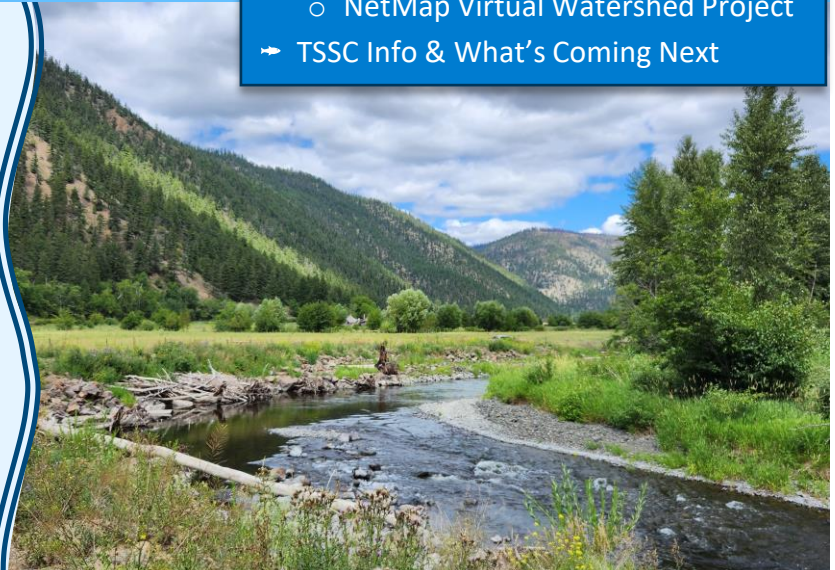
February 2024

In this issue...

- ➔ Updates from the Steering Committee & Technical Working Groups
- ➔ Spotlight Stories
 - Emergency Response to Drought
 - NetMap Virtual Watershed Project
- ➔ TSSC Info & What's Coming Next

Our Shared Vision

Work urgently, collaboratively, and strategically to achieve immediate and long-term benefits for salmon ecosystems in a changing climate, for present and future generations.



*Bank stabilization project along the Deadman River.
Photo Credit: Kate O'Neill*

Updates from the Steering Committee – We heard you!

In the March 2023 Thompson-Shuswap Salmon Collaborative (TSSC) workshop and follow-up *What We Heard Report*, you identified key themes of work needed to support the development of the Integrated Salmon Ecosystem Plan in the Thompson-Shuswap. The steering committee has been meeting monthly to advance what we heard. This includes forming sub-committees to explore work planning, action prioritization, communication and engagement with the Thompson-Shuswap salmon community, as well as advancing three technical working groups.

Updates from the Technical Working Groups

Three technical work groups (TWG) were kicked off in the summer and fall of 2023. Priorities that participants have identified for the groups include: the development of Netmap virtual watersheds (**Geospatial TWG**, see project spotlight on page 2), identifying modeling, monitoring and assessment priorities to support functioning hydrology (**Hydrology TWG**), and gathering information on salmon habitat across the planning area (**Salmon Ecology and Restoration TWG**). Additional objectives and priorities for the TWGs will be identified in early 2024.

Spotlight Stories



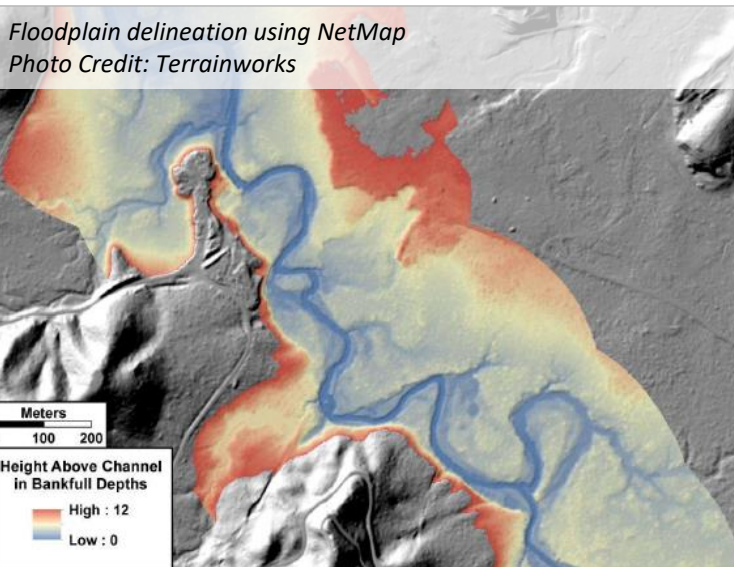
Emergency Response to Drought

To address the severe drought emergency in the Thompson-Shuswap region in 2023, the TSSC collected hydrometric data in streams known for both high salmon values and susceptibility to drought. This valuable data was presented during the weekly Thompson Okanagan Drought Response Team calls to make recommendations on drought levels to inform water management decisions.



*Consolidating flows at Lemieux Creek confluence.
Photo Credit: Secwepemc Fisheries Commission*

In response to the numerous migratory barriers caused by drought, strategic measures were implemented in several streams. The approach was to consolidate flows at river confluences allowing unimpeded access for salmon to their spawning grounds. In Lemieux Creek, this initially involved using sandbags, with subsequent hands-on digging as flows diminished to ensure a better connection to the North Thompson River. In the Salmon River frequent visits were made to remove a barrier, resulting in 75% of the blocked chinook run successfully arriving at their spawning grounds upstream. Emergency efforts like these enabled the TSSC to effectively respond to drought conditions.



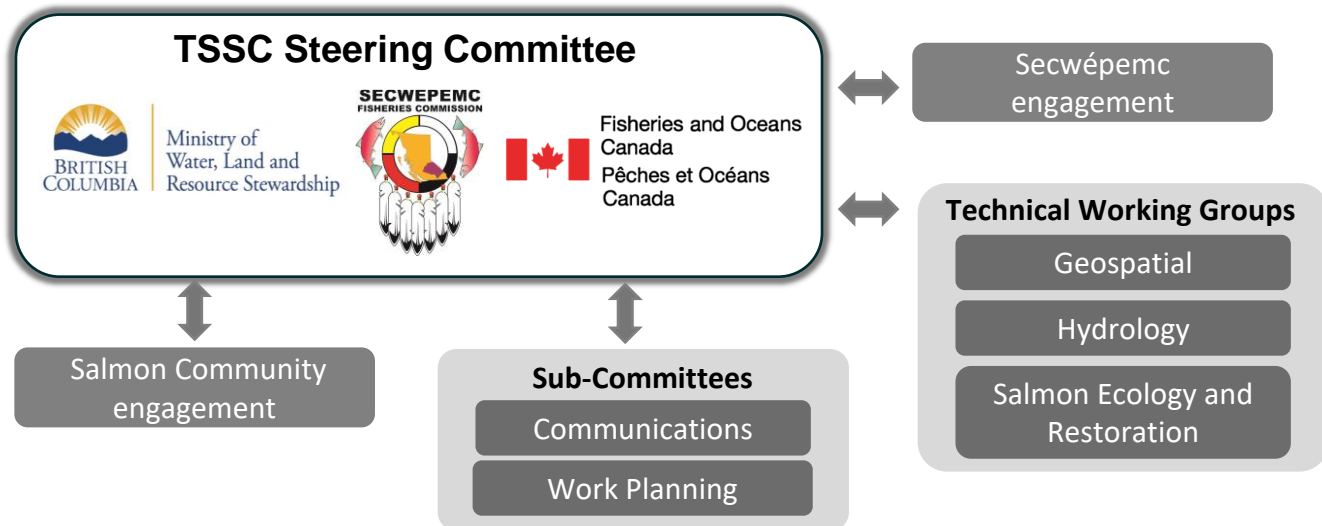
NetMap Virtual Watershed Project

The TSSC is working with Bonaparte and Skeetchestn First Nations on an exciting new project to create virtual watersheds of the Bonaparte and Deadman Rivers using a tool called NetMap!

NetMap is a geospatial tool developed by [TerrainWorks](#) and has been used in the United States and Alberta to guide watershed planning and salmon ecosystem restoration. This is the first NetMap project in BC.

NetMap allows users to visualize and analyze complex geospatial information in a more integrated way, that can support identification of restoration and mitigation options that will lead to healthier salmon ecosystems. Potential applications include identifying where restoration work, such as riparian planting and connectivity remediation, may confer the most benefits for salmon. We're excited to get this work underway and looking forward to presenting early results by this summer.

TSSC Info & Contacts



Secwépecm Fisheries Commission

Murray Ross, Director - mross@shuswapnation.org

Pat Matthew, Policy Manager - pmatthew@shuswapnation.org

Aaron Gillespie, Program Manager - agillespie@shuswapnation.org

DFO - Integrated Planning for Salmon Ecosystems

Chantelle Caron, Section Head - chantelle.caron@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Tom Appleby, Senior Biologist - thomas.appleby@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

BC – Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

Erica Jenkins, Salmon Restoration Specialist - Erica.Jenkins@gov.bc.ca

Lyndsey Johnson, Aquatic Habitat Biologist - Lyndsey.Johnson@gov.bc.ca

Kurt Frei, Regional Aquatic Ecologist – Kurt.Frei@gov.bc.ca

Thank you

for contributing to the TSSC Workshop in March 2023! We look forward to seeing you virtually for a follow up in March 2024.

What's Coming Next?

TSSC Virtual Meeting: March 4th, 2024 (1 pm – 4 pm)

Hosted by the TSSC as a follow-up to the March 2023 workshop, to provide more detailed updates on the work underway, and seek feedback on progress so far and guidance going forward. A save-the-date calendar invite and agenda with more information will be sent shortly.

Ongoing Secwépecm Meetings – Dates TBD

We want to hear from you!

What would you like to see in future TSSC Newsletters? Do you have projects you'd like to spotlight or information to contribute to the Technical Working Groups?

Please contact sfinfo@shuswapnation.org to give us your feedback.