

Fish Day Update and Summary

Friday June 10th, 2016

Our first fish day of the 2016 season occurred on Saturday June 4th at the House of Gathering. This was a joint effort between Hupačasath and Tseshaht harvesting from the Somass River and Papermill Dam. We are excited to be making strides to building a new and healthy relationship with our neighbours for our 2016 season. We would like to thank all our fishermen: Bert McCarthy, Sylvia Dick, Brendan Sam, Rick Mack, Boyd Fred and Rudy Watts Jr. for their contributions to ensuring we had fish to distribute to our members.

In the spirit of accountability and transparency Hupačasath Council would like to inform the community on how Fish Day comes together and answer some of the frequently asked questions related distribution.

ROUND TABLE DISCUSSIONS:

On Thursday June 2nd, Fisheries Manager Graham Murrell along with Chief Councillor Steven Tatoosh participated in the weekly roundtable discussion where the fishing plans are set for the week. From the conference call there was a decision made to host fish day on Saturday June 4th, leaving less than 48 hours to plan and organize a Fish Day.

This is a little earlier than previous years but Hupačasath First Nation took the opportunity to work respectfully and cooperatively with Tseshaht First Nation, rather than missing out on Fish Day.

There were really only two options presented during the call after negotiations:

- Hupačasath had the option to refrain from fishing on June 4th in hopes to allow for escapement. If Hupačasath chose not to host a Fish Day, Tseshaht could still beach seine at Papermill Dam.
- OR**
- Hupačasath and Tseshaht could work together harvesting for both communities and distributing the fish per person equally. Fishing to take place from 5am – 12 noon at Papermill Dam, and River Fishing from 5am-2pm.

OUR DECISION:

We opted to participate in the harvest for a variety of reasons including the need to provide fish to our membership and taking advantage of the opportunity to help produce a greater income for our members through the sale of fish while the prices are still at a higher rate.

OUR PLANNING:

We recognized we had less than 48 hours to plan for fish day however we had great faith in our team and a strong desire to provide fish to membership. Our preparation for fish day included:

- Notifying the community of Fish Day to the best of our ability via the Communication's department.
- Delegating the person in charge
- Advising the person in charge of procedure this time (due to short notice and time constraints we provided direction on how to arrange distribution).
- Hiring fisherman to fish on behalf of Hupačasath to ensure we have equal effort as TFN.
- Arranging equipment, vehicles, and people to transport fish,(fish must be caught, landed, counted, weighted, documented and iced in totes prior to being trucked to the office)
- Arranging of monitor, storage of fish, totes, ice, etc. and identifying forklift and crane operators
- Arranging buyers to be on site to purchase fish from members
- Documenting and accounting for fish via monitors and landing slips at each site
- Calculating what should be the appropriate amount per person for a share based on each communities fish day policies
- Communication between various parties to ensure accountability and fairness

How many fish were caught?

Eight Hupačasath & Tseshaht fisherman caught:

- 1153 pieces were caught via the on the river and
- 2050 pieced at the beach seine at Papermill Dam.

The fishermen use their own boats, nets, and other supplies and gear for our community fishery. For that effort a portion of the fish (25%) were sold to compensate the fishermen for time effort equipment costs. We feel positive that we can pay our own members rather than paying non-aboriginal seine boats.

How was the fish distributed?

A formula was used based off the average number of people who attend TFN and HFN Fish Days

This formula ranges for 450- 465 shares for TFN and 200-235 shares for HFN. Our agreement is set at these numbers for the time being.

Each person who showed up to fish day should have received the same amount whether you were a HFN or TFN member. Why did one group receive more?

We are two separate nations with two separate fish day policies that need to be followed for the distribution. *Please consider that the Tseshaht First Nation doesn't entitle fisherman, deckhands, or*

children under the age of 16 to receive a share. TFN's eligibility requirements are different which impacts the number of people eligible to receive fish.

How come it seems like TFN got more than us?

Substantially lower turnout at Tseshaht's fish day resulted in Tseshaht being able to distribute double shares to their fish day attendees while our attendance was as only slightly lower than usual turnout. Tseshaht also sent fish from Papermill Dam (200 pieces) to meet the terms of the equality agreements.

Why are we still using the HFN Fisheries Law from 1992?

The 1992 HFN Fisheries Law is the only official HFN policy that has been adopted by the membership.

Will we be changing our 1992 HFN Fisheries Law?

Yes - the policy committee along with Chief and Council have drafted a new policy that was first previewed by the community on Thursday May 19th. The policy still needs to go through the official policy adoption process. If you would like a copy of the DRAFT policy to review please request a copy from Jolleen Dick.

What happened to the extra totes at the end of the day?

The two extra totes that were at Fish Day before anyone arrived were there in-case the harvest was unsuccessful. Hupačasath Council had the option of purchasing these totes to distribute to those who showed up at fish day in the event no fish caught.

Since there was a successful catch we did not need to purchase the two totes. The agreed upon price in the vent we needed to purchase the fish was \$6.00 a pound. We decided we did not need to incur this expense as we had enough fish for distribution.

What happens to the left over fish?

As for the extra fish from the distribution, it has been past practice to bring the additional shares to the processing plant to freeze for our community freezer. The fish from this freezer is often used at community engagement sessions/meetings/etc.

The extra fish being removed and stored allows Hupačasath to honour an agreement with TFN to have each person have an equal share regardless of which nation the individual is registered to. As numbers of turn out fluctuate, so does the amount going to the freezer.

Why do we have to line up so many times? Is HFN going to make this easier?

Same procedure as last year- individuals had to line up to check in, and then check in to receive cash or fish.

There was an additional line up this time because each individual was given the option to sell to any of the buyers on site. There is a realization this complicates this and the fish are being handled more than

once, but there was concern from the community at the Fisheries Meeting that there was only one buyer available. This time we arranged for 3 buyers, this healthy competition helps drive up the price which ultimately benefits our members. Thank you for your patience as we work on streamlining processes. Our goal remains to serve our members effectively and efficiently and this requires a lot of work on our end.

We will try out a new procedure in hopes the Fish Day process is streamlined for all those involved. Please hold tight while we organize this for future fish days. Your feedback, assistance and ideas are always appreciated!