

PESLLWÉLSTEN

Adams Lake Fisheries

with Brennan Lund, Natural Resource Technician

What is the Communal Fishery?

The communal fishery runs from about August 15th to around September 15th, typically when the meat quality begins to decrease. We utilize a large gill net boat, and 2 nets with 8" mesh, one is 1200' long, the other is 500'. We fish the Little Shuswap Lake to target Chinook salmon to provide for community members. Adams Lake Band has a large fish cleaning station on the shores of Little Shuswap and has multiple community freezers which are fully stocked with packaged salmon annually.

What programs do you offer in community?

Our main goal is to fill the community freezer with fish that are already packaged, to provide easy meals to elders, and for food security purposes. On weekends, community members can meet us at our fish station when we bring the boat in, and we offer whole salmon. Usually, they come prepared and will butcher their own salmon, but we gut all the left-over fish and distribute them to people throughout the day to ensure everyone who needs fish gets their fair share. Left over fish from the community freezer are canned and distributed in community.

How do you incorporate traditional and cultural practices in your programs?

We were taught our fishing methods from community elders, who often visited the fish station. They showed us how to prepare the salmon and better methods for catching them. We also received multiple visits from the school and were able to pass on our knowledge to the school children.

What are the positive things happening on the ground for the communal fishery?

The community fishery brings a lot of people together for the love of the salmon, everyone is cheerful and helps each other as it is a special time of year to many people. There is never a shortage of help when a large load of salmon is brought to shore, and it is a very good feeling to be able to help provide for the community every day.

How are you maintaining your sockeye population?

Adams Lake Band has been leading the way in local conservation through our Adams Lake restoration project. This past summer we fertilized the lake with a specific liquid blend fertilizer which promotes the growth of plankton, which feed the salmon fry and allow them to travel to the ocean at a larger size, giving them a better chance at surviving in the ocean and returning to spawn. As well, this past year we did not have a commercial license to harvest Sockeye salmon, so we were required to use 8" gillnet mesh to selectively harvest the very healthy Chinook run.

What are the future plans for the communal fishery?

In the future we plan on purchasing some new gillnets to increase our effectiveness, and to perhaps incorporate more traditional methods such as spearfishing at night using pitch wood fires to attract the salmon to the boat.



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