



August 3, 2007

To: Distribution

Spawner abundance assessments for the 2006/2007 return of Thompson River steelhead were recently completed. A total of 870 steelhead were estimated to have spawned this past spring (estimate is rounded to nearest tens; 90% confidence interval is 350-1200). This is the second lowest escapement recorded in 23 years of monitoring (Figure 2) and is consistent with the in-season forecast based on the Albion test fishery previously reported. This abundance is lower than the predominant brood year abundance of 1700 steelhead that spawned in the spring of year 2002.

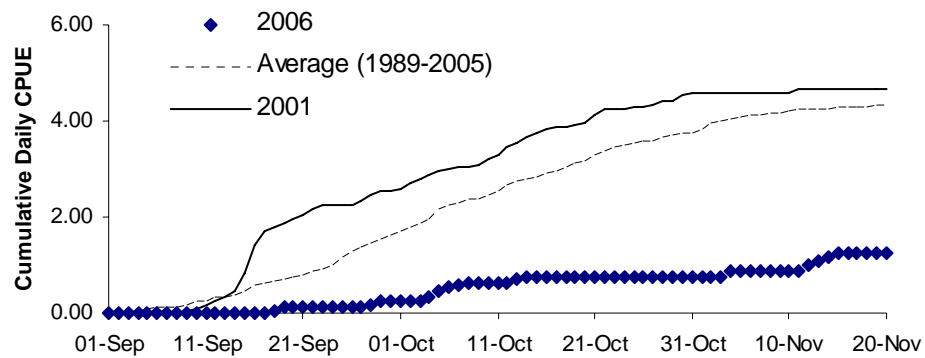
The spawner abundance estimates by stock are 640, 150, and 75 for the Nicola, Bonaparte and Deadman stocks, respectively. The abundance of 75 spawners for the Deadman stock is the lowest recorded. The abundance of Nicola and Bonaparte stocks are near the lowest recorded.

As previously reported, fishing mortality on Interior Fraser Steelhead has generally declined over the past 15 years as a result of restrictions on salmon net fisheries and steelhead sport fisheries. However since year 2000, fishing mortality has increased by about 2 to 3 fold as a result of the reinstatement of salmon net fisheries during the month of October. The best available estimates of fishing mortality rate on the 2006/07 return indicate that fishing mortality likely exceeded 20%. The sustainability of this level of fishing pressure remains unknown.

This report concludes a series of reports issued since September 2006 on the status of the 2006/2007 return of Interior Fraser Steelhead. The monitoring of abundance and fishing

mortality is expected to continue in the foreseeable future. A new series of report updates will commence by early October 2007 on the status of the 2007/2008 return of Interior Fraser Steelhead.

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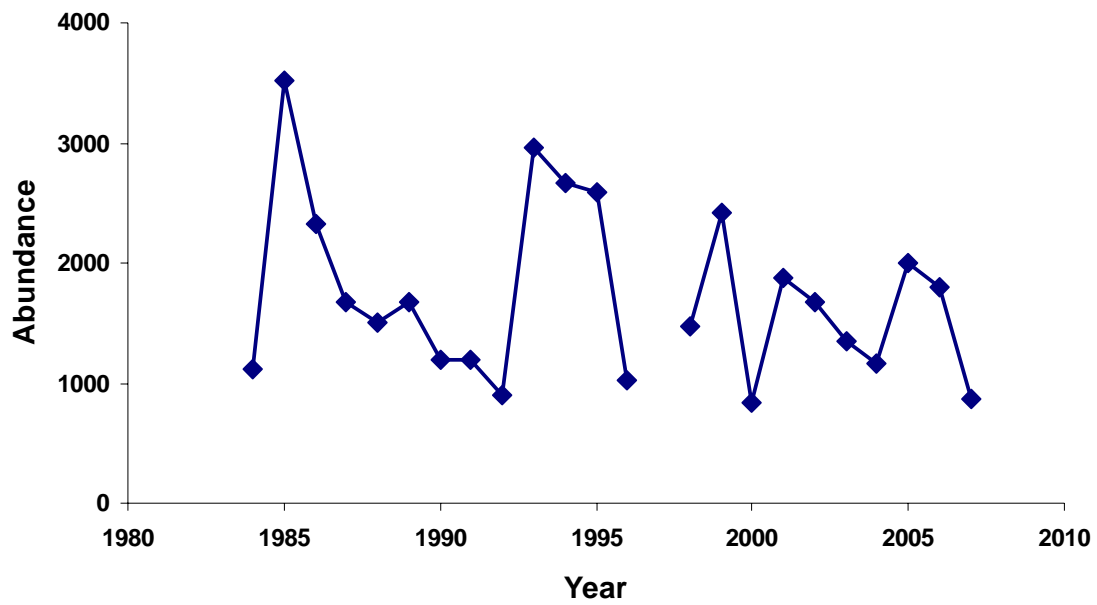
**Figure 1. Cumulative daily catch-per-unit-effort (CPUE) for year 2006 (diamonds) relative to the recent average (dotted line) and relative to the predominant brood year (solid line). Updated to November 20, 2006.**

**Table 1. Cumulative daily test indices for steelhead for the period Sept. 1 – Nov. 20.**

Test Fishing Year	Cumulative Index	Rank
1996	10.48	1
2000	8.49	2
1998	5.14	3
2001	4.65	4
1989	4.25	5
1995	4.19	6
2005	4.02	7
2002	3.10	8
1999	2.78	9
1997	2.02	10
2003	1.62	11
<b>2006</b>	<b>1.23</b>	<b>12</b>
2004	0.99	13

**Table 2. Cumulative daily test indices for steelhead for the period Oct. 1 – Nov. 20.**

Test Fishing Year	Cumulative Index	Rank
1984	17.76	1
1985	14.51	2
1986	10.60	3
1996	8.68	4
1982	7.51	5
1992	5.05	6
1988	5.04	7
1990	3.99	8
2000	3.93	9
1994	3.89	10
1989	3.15	11
1995	3.06	12
1983	2.87	13
1998	2.87	14
1991	2.76	15
1987	2.41	16
2005	2.29	17
2001	2.13	18
1981	2.07	19
1997	1.79	20
1999	1.72	21
2002	1.48	22
1979	1.47	23
1993	1.39	24
1980	1.38	25
2004	0.99	26
<b>2006</b>	<b>0.96</b>	<b>27</b>
2003	0.80	28



**Figure 2. Estimates of the abundance of Thompson River steelhead spawners from 1984 to 2007** (Note: an estimate for 1997 is not available due to high springtime stream flow which precluded assessment work from being carried out).