

## **Nicomen Slough Fishery Assessment (Creel) Survey** **September 22 – December 2, 2001**

**Prepared by:** Sue C.H. Grant, M.Sc.  
Biologist, Chum Salmon and Fishery Assessments

Stock Assessment, Lower Fraser Area  
Fisheries and Oceans Canada

### **Regulations**

Nicomen Slough was open from the confluence of Siddle (Bell's) creek downstream to the Fraser River. The recreational fishery was closed at night, from one hour after sunset to one hour before sunrise. Coho retention of 4 hatchery fish per day (only 2 can be over 35 cm) was permitted from April 1 to March 31. Chum retention of 2 fish per day was permitted from April 1 to March 31. On Norrish (Suicide) Creek, coho retention of 4 hatchery coho per day (only 2 can be over 35 cm) was permitted from April 1 to March 31.

### **Study Area**

The Nicomen Slough-Norrish Creek study area extended from the mouth of the Nicomen Slough to its confluence with Norrish Creek and up Norrish Creek to a point approximately 200 metres upstream of the railway bridge.

### **Survey Methods**

The Nicomen Slough/Norrish Creek recreational fishery survey began on September 22, 2001.

The surveyor worked all weekends and holidays with rotating days off during the week. They worked one of two shifts (morning or afternoon) that spanned the entire daylight period. Shifts were randomly assigned to each survey day.

The surveyor conducted angler interviews at their survey sites to obtain the following information: where the angler was fishing, party size, length of angling trip, when their fishing lines were in the water, how much longer they intend to fish, target species, gear used, total catch retained, total catch released. Interviews were used to determine catch-per-unit effort (CPUE), release-per-unit effort (RPUE), and to summarize the angler characteristics listed above.

Daily effort is calculated using a combination of interview data, hourly rod counts conducted at the survey sites, and instantaneous effort rod counts of the survey area (conducted twice per week: one weekend and one weekday drive through of the entire system). Using total effort, CPUE and RPUE is expanded to determine catch and release

numbers by species for the entire study area. Such analyses are documented in several DFO publications (Schubert 1992; Schubert 1995)

One surveyor assessed the Nicomen Slough/Norrish Creek recreational fishery. The surveyor began conducting complete hourly rod counts on October 7. Instantaneous effort counts began on October 13; counts occurred during peak effort (10:00 am). Instantaneous effort rod counts from the 2002 were used on dates prior to and after October 13-17, 2001 to calculate effort for this period.

### **September/October**

In September/October, the boat launch located at the end of River Road was used by anglers to access the Nicomen Slough and other systems by boat. Shore-based angling on the Nicomen Slough was concentrated at the boat launch and along River Road south of the Lougheed Highway Bridge (Hwy #7). Only limited angling occurred in the upper parts of the Nicomen Slough (above the Highway bridge) or on Norrish Creek.

The surveyor was stationed at the boat launch for the majority of the survey day since most of the angling effort (shore- and boat-based) could be captured at this site. Although interviews were obtained from boat-based anglers returning from other systems, these were excluded from the Nicomen analyses. The surveyor spent part of their survey day collecting incomplete interviews from anglers fishing from shore along River Road.

### **November**

Until mid-November, interviews were conducted similar to the month of October. After mid-November, the surveyor started spending a proportion of their daily interview time in locations that also included above the highway bridge up to the hatchery. Most interview time was allocated to Norrish Creek, near the hatchery, where most angling activity occurred.

For analyses the data were stratified into month and day type (weekend and weekday). Data were stored and analyzed using excel.

### **References**

Schubert, N.D. 1992. Angler Effort and Catch in the 1985-1988 Lower Fraser River Sport Fishery. Canadian Manuscript Report of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences No. 2170.

Schubert, N.D. 1995. Angler Effort and Catch in Four Fraser River Sport Fisheries, 1991. Canadian Manuscript Report of Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences 2267.

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