

The Pacific Salmon Commission Secretariat NEWSLETTER



A Message from the Executive Secretary

The Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC), established in 1985, has played a pivotal role in the management and conservation of Pacific salmon stocks shared by the United States and Canada. As the PSC marks its 40th anniversary, it is a prime opportunity to reflect on its achievements, recognize the challenges it has overcome, and celebrate its ongoing commitment to sustainable salmon fisheries.

The Commission remains an essential and inclusive forum to drive the engines of cultural and economic activity in each country through sound fisheries management. The countries bring many viewpoints through their delegations of indigenous, commercial, and sport fishers as well as expertise from state, provincial, and federal agencies. It is hard to imagine a more resilient organization to ensure all voices involved in the business, cultural, and conservation aspects of Pacific salmon management are heard across regional borders.

The PSC's 40th annual report will be published on [our website](#) soon, covering activities from April 1, 2024 to March 31, 2025. I encourage you to look over the new infographics on catch and run size, the short summaries of panel and committee activities, and other updates of interest to you. The annual report may get overlooked as routine business, but it's a great place to learn about what's happening with your peers in the PSC and maybe even something new about the organization's efforts.

I look forward to welcoming you all in Portland for our 2026 Post-Season Meeting (January 12-16, 2026) and back to Vancouver in February for the 41st Annual Meeting (February 9-13, 2026). Come prepared to connect with colleagues new and old, as we have several special events already scheduled. The list below will be augmented with more details at [this link](#).

January 12, 5-6 p.m.: The return of the PSC Data Den

January 13, 12-1:30 p.m.: Special presentation on the State of the North Pacific Ocean

January 14, 10-12am: CSC Workshop: "Accounting for consequences of demographic change" (open to all delegates, no registration)

5:30-6:30 p.m.: Northern Fund Special presentation on the Taku River stock assessment programs

February 10 (TBC): Historical commemoration of Tribes and First Nations in the PSC process (by invitation)

February 11 (TBC): 40th Anniversary celebration

February 13: Full-day technical training: "Accounting for changes in salmon dynamics when providing management advice." (Note that registration closed December 5)



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- John Field, *Executive Secretary*

PSC Data Den Returns at the Post-Season Meeting



The 2026 PSC Data Den (January 12, 5-6 p.m., at the Portland Post-Season meeting) takes the form of the well-known Dragon's Den/Shark Tank TV game show where a panel of "investors" receive pitches and decide to invest in the most appealing or profitable inventions. This is the same format as the successful PSC Data Den organized in 2019 and 2024. The session will run 5-7 pitches that present an idea or product that is either innovative in solving a data problem, makes (data) life easier, or makes data available to a wider audience.

Presenters (chosen by the Technical Committee on Data Sharing in early December) will make a five-minute pitch to a small panel of experienced data enthusiasts from the PSC community. They will be able to "invest" in the idea via tokens, and the idea with the most investments will walk away with some nice PSC swag. Presenters can use either existing data tools that they would like to share with a wider audience, or a data tool they've developed and would like to promote for wider use.

The session will be in front of an audience, so even if presenters don't win, they might create enough interest to be asked about their idea between the regular PSC meetings. The aim of this open session across the different PSC technical committees and panels is to stimulate discussion and exchange ideas that center on the huge data collection and research efforts made by the PSC community.

All delegates are invited to attend for a fun and informative evening with your PSC colleagues!

2nd Call for Seminar Steering Committee volunteers

Since 2021, members of the PSC have been invited to attend virtual seminars featuring distinguished speakers from the United States and Canada who explore how environmental variation affects salmon biology, ecology, and management. These seminars present both Western and Indigenous perspectives and highlight innovative management approaches to environmental change. Each session includes an extended Q&A that encourages thoughtful discussion, with recordings archived for future reference on the PSC YouTube channel.

As we head into 2026, the PSC Seminar Steering Committee is seeking volunteers to help bring new voices and ideas on environmental change to the PSC. We welcome interested participants from across panels, working groups, and technical committees to join us in planning future seminars. If you are interested in joining this team, please send an email to info@psc.org with the subject line "Steering Committee volunteer"!



New PSC Guidelines on Coding and Code Documentation

Historically, individual members of the different PSC committees developed and maintained their own executable programs independently. As coding knowledge and skills have become more widespread among Technical Committee members, there has been a shift toward the sharing of code as well as collaborative coding. This shift highlights the need for more structured development environments and the inclusion of documentation.

```

ach: function(e, t, n) {
  var r, i = 0,
      o = e.length,
      a = N(e);
  if (n) {
    if (a) {
      for (; o > i; i++)
        if (r = t.apply(e[i], n), r === !1) break
    } else
      for (i in e)
        if (r = t.apply(e[i], n), r === !1) break
  } else if (a) {
    for (; o > i; i++)
      if (r = t.call(e[i], i, e[i]), r === !1) break
  } else
    for (i in e)
      if (r = t.call(e[i], i, e[i]), r === !1) break
  return e
},
trim: b && !b.call("\uffeff\u00a0") ? function(e) {
  return null == e ? "" : b.call(e)
} : function(e) {
  return null == e ? "" : (e + "").replace(C, "")
},
takeArray: function(e, t) {
  var n = t || [];
  return null != e && (N(Object(e)) ? x.merge(n, "stri
),
toArray: function(e, t, n) {
  var r;
  if (t) {
    if (a) return a.call(t, e, n);
    for (r = t.length, n = n ? 0 > n ? Math.max(0, r
      if (n in t && t[n] === e) return n
  )
}

```

To support this work, the Technical Committee on Data Sharing (TCDS) has put together guidelines for coding best practices and documentation, drawn and adjusted from best practices put together by the Chinook Technical Committee (CTC), as well as the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES). They should be viewed as a first attempt to improve overall coding practices across the PSC while acknowledging the differences in coding needs across panels and committees as well as the time and financial constraints that may influence the ability to implement these guidelines.

These guidelines focus heavily on the use of the R programming language and the GitLab web-based platform for code collaboration, which are both widely used within the PSC community. It is recognized that other coding languages (e.g. vb.net) and code collaboration platforms (e.g. GitHub) exist and are being used.

The Technical Committee on Data Sharing (TCDS) believes the guidelines are a good first step, but feedback from other committees and panels will be required to ensure their applicability and usefulness. It is recognized that the guidelines can be adjusted or elaborated on as technology and best practices are incorporated or updated. The PSC guidelines on coding and code documentation are available on the [PSC SharePoint site](#), and comments/questions may be directed to Catherine Michielsens (michielsens@psc.org) and the TCDS co-chairs, Michael O'Brien (michael.obrien@dfo-mpo.gc.ca) and Nancy Leonard (nleonard@psmfc.org).



December 2025 Grant Program Updates

2025 Mark Selective Fishery Fund Project Selections

At the October Executive meeting, the Commission accepted the recommendations of the Mark Selective Fishery (MSF) Fund Committee and awarded \$1.45M USD to new projects.

With this approval, the MSF Fund is now fully allocated. Some projects will run through 2030, and upon completion of all work, the MSF Fund will have granted over \$4.1M USD to 29 projects.



Salmon eggs at the Chilliwack River Hatchery



Vedder River PIT (Passive Integrated Transponder) array site

Upcoming Northern Fund Project Presentation

At the January 2026 PSC Meeting, Jeff Williams (Alaska Department of Fish and Game) and Aaron Foos (Fisheries and Oceans Canada) will present on Taku River stock assessment programs.

Southern Fund Committee Field Trip

In September, the Southern Fund Committee and Grant Program staff visited several project sites in the lower Fraser River watershed.

The visit included stops at the Chilliwack River Hatchery and the Vedder River, where collaborative projects with Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Lower Fraser Fisheries Alliance are underway to improve coho salmon escapement estimates and support parental-based tagging of enhanced chum. The group also visited the Pacific Salmon Commission's hydroacoustic site to view recent safety upgrades.



Southern Fund Committee and PSC Staff visit the PSC hydroacoustic site

Sumas First Nation and PSC Secretariat cooperative research project continues

In 2025, members of Sumas First Nation and the PSC Secretariat conducted a joint project to evaluate the effects of set nets on the quality of data at the Mission hydroacoustics site.

This was the second year of a multi-year project funded by the Southern Fund. The team seeks to understand how set nets placed near sonar equipment may alter fish behaviour (e.g., travelling further offshore, holding or milling, travelling downstream) and in turn, how that may affect the quality of fish passage estimates provided to the Fraser River Panel by the Secretariat.

Nets were set on each bank of the river, one running perpendicular from shore (Figure 1), and one running parallel to shore (Figure 2) during multiple sockeye-directed Food, Social, Ceremonial (FSC) openings.



Figure 1. A Sumas First Nation FSC set net anchored downstream of the Mission hydroacoustics right bank site in August 2025.

Initial data exploration is underway, with considerations for how the placement of set nets interacts with different salmon abundances and concurrent drift net openings.

Beyond the data, the over-arching goal of this project is to explore the feasibility of set nets in the existing Protocol between the PSC, Sumas First Nation, and Fisheries and Oceans Canada, allowing for set nets to be placed within the boundaries of the Mission hydroacoustics site.

The original Protocol was signed in 2022 and includes just the use of FSC drift nets through the site boundary.



Figure 2. A Sumas First Nation FSC set net anchored downstream of the Mission hydroacoustics left bank site in August 2025.