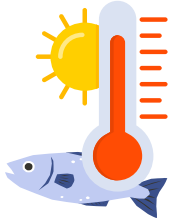


OMINECA REGION

Fish and Drought Interactions at-a-glance



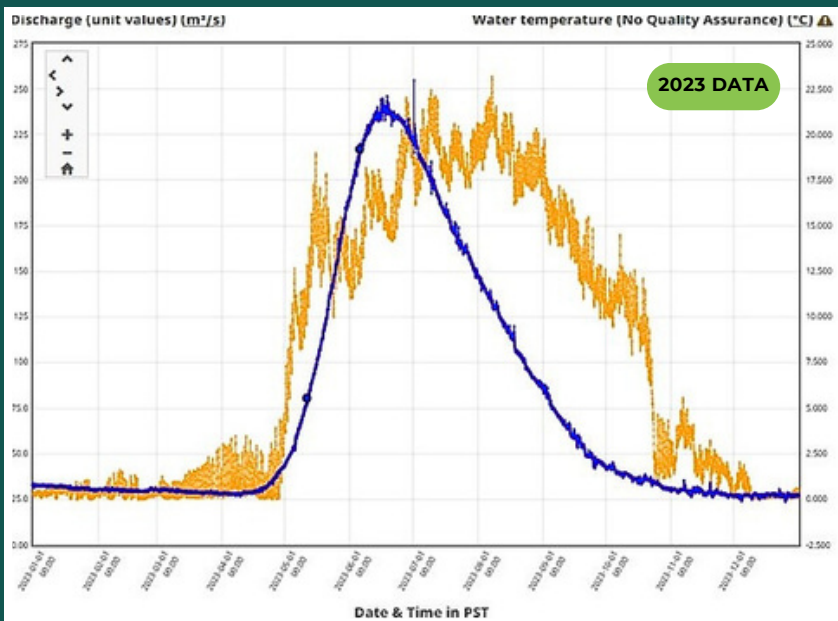
Photo: Nechako River



Stream temperatures during drought that average above **20** degrees Celsius for a week can be harmful to salmonids.

FISH LIFE STAGES IMPACTED BY DROUGHT

- **Rearing** fish may be affected by low stream flows, high water temperatures in late summer, decrease in available habitat (e.g. pools, riffles), a decrease in invertebrate drift and food production, lack of groundwater input to maintain cold water refuge habitat, changes in water quality (e.g. dissolved oxygen and nutrients), and potential stranding in isolated pools, side channels and tributary streams.
- High temperature and low flows in rivers and tributary streams may affect fish **migration** and access to stream spawning habitat.



→ HYDROGRAPH

Stuart River near Fort St. James (08JE001) 2023 data shows flow (**blue line**) and water temperature (**yellow line**).

- Flow decreases after freshet in April to June, with low flows in late summer, fall, winter.
- Summer water temperatures in the river reach highs of 18-21 degrees Celsius in July to August.

REGIONAL STREAM HIGHLIGHTS

Streams are prioritized for monitoring during drought for water management and ecosystem values.

- Omineca region monitors several streams in their hydrometric monitoring network. Monitoring includes checking Water Survey of Canada and BC River Forecast Center hydrometric station stream flow and water temperature data, stream flow measurements and visual monitoring for drought conditions.
- Streams monitored during drought include: Salmon River, Sinkut River, Stellako River, Bowron River, Parsnip River, Crooked River, Chilako River, Chalko River, Goat River, Holmes River, McKale River, Morkill River, Nation River, Torpy River, Willow River, Haggen Creek, Murray Creek, Clear Creek, Trankel Creek, Hogsback Creek, Stoney Creek, Khai Creek, Corkscrew Creek, Cluculz Creek, Dog Creek, and Walker Creek
- The Salmon River is a designated “Sensitive Stream” under the Water Sustainability Regulation.

REGIONAL FISH HIGHLIGHTS

- Many rivers, streams and lakes in Omineca region provide habitat for chinook and sockeye salmon, kokanee, rainbow trout, bull trout, lake trout, arctic grayling, burbot, and other resident fish species.
- The Nechako River and its tributary (Stuart River) are home to a population of upper Fraser white sturgeon (federally listed as Endangered under the Species at Risk Act). The Sturgeon Mortality Watch helps report sightings of white sturgeon on the Nechako River.
- The Salmon River watershed provides spawning and rearing habitat for a population of Chinook Salmon (upper Fraser, stream, spring population) assessed as Endangered by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC).