

Big Bar Landslide Response

2020 Timeline of key events

ABBREVIATIONS: High Bar First Nation (HBFN) | Stswe'em'c Xgat'tem First Nation (SXFN) | First Nations Leadership Panel (FNLP) | Upper Fraser Fisheries Conservation Alliance (UFFCA) | Province of British Columbia (Province) | Public Service and Procurements Canada (PSPC) | Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) | Peter Kiewit Sons ULC (Kiewit)

Winter

January 13/14
Second contingency planning technical team meeting is held

January 17
DFO Minister Jordan met with HBFN and SXFN leadership, and Kiewit during site visit

February 18
First East Toe riverbank blast successfully completed, 1,200 m³ blast material removed

February 27
HBFN, SXFN, Province and DFO visited site

March 9 -11
HBFN, SXFN and UFFCA review mitigation plans

March 28
"Nature-like" fishway completed

January 9
HBFN and SXFN met with PSPC, Kiewit and JESC to develop Indigenous Benefit Plan

January 14
Equipment mobilized to site; winter work commences

January 23
Tripartite After Action Review of Incident Command System and response held

February 21
Third contingency planning technical team meeting held

February 29
Site access completed

March 4
National and regional PSPC staff, alongside regional and local DFO staff, met with HBFN and SXFN on site

March 16
COVID-19 response launched across the Province, landslide response continues as part of emergency operations

March 29
River in-channel blasting completed

Spring

April 14
Whooshh Innovations Ltd awarded contract for pneumatic fish pump equipment by PSPC

May 19
First long-term planning technical meeting held

April 11
Final East Toe riverbank blast completed, 1,800 m³ blast material removed

May 7
Concrete lock block fish ladder completed

May 27
First day of DFO radio tagging operations

Summer

June 3
French Bar Creek Holding Facility for salmon operational

Mid-June to early August
Sustained higher than average flow conditions delayed fish migration; Fish transport and enhancement operations interrupted due to flooding

June 16
Second long-term planning technical meeting held

June 21
Two-lane Whooshh Passage Portal™ operational

June 23
First Chinook transported to Vanderhoof adult Chinook holding facility

July 14
Initial salmon observed migrating upstream when water levels dropped to 4,000 m³/s

July 18
Indigenous crews commence truck and transport operations

July 23
First two salmon arrive at Churn Creek hydroacoustic site, confirming fish passage upstream

July 25
First sockeye observed in concrete fish ladder

Aug 4
Sockeye start arriving at Big Bar in greater numbers

Aug 12
Truck and transport operations suspended, 1,500 fish moved over the slide

Aug 18
Last Chinook at French Bar Creek Holding Facility transported to Vanderhoof

Aug 30
UFFCA commences natal stream brood collection

Sept 8
Whooshh™ operations concluded, 8,200 fish moved through the system; Fish wheel operations began downstream for coho radio tagging

June 3
Upper Fraser First Nations and DFO met to develop a process to identify and track priority Chinook stocks for emergency conservation enhancement

June 8
First fish radio tagged

June 20
First fish wheel operational downstream of Big Bar, led by Gitksan Watershed Authorities in collaboration with St'at'imc Eco Resources and administered by the Fraser Salmon Management Council

June 21
First two Chinook arrived at concrete fish ladder and transported to French Bar Creek Holding Facility

July 2-3
Permanent fishway option endorsed by JESC and FNLP

July 17
Six-lane Whooshh™ system operational

July 22
DFO monitoring team commences beach seining in Lillooet, BC

July 24
First fish transported through the Whooshh™ system

July 31
First batch of sockeye transferred from French Bar Creek Holding Facility to Cultus Lake Salmon Research Laboratory (CLL)

Aug 11
First spawning of 35 female sockeye at CLL

Aug 14
Target of collecting and transporting 400 Early Stuart sockeye to CLL achieved

Aug 28
Whooshh™ tube extension completed and operational; French Bar Creek Holding Facility demobilization commences

Sept 1
Third long-term planning technical meeting held

Fall

Oct 21
DFO monitoring program concluded onsite operations and radio tagging activities, 1,000 fish radio tagged

Nov 17
PSPC awarded permanent fishway construction contract to Kiewit

Dec 8
HBFN and SXFN leadership visited the site along with DFO, PSPC, Provincial and Kiewit staff

Oct 6
Indigenous partners and DFO released 20,000 2019 brood year Early Stuart sockeye as fall smolts

Oct 24
Alfalfa and Churn Creek sonars ceased operations, 161,000 fish detected 40 km upstream of slide site to date

Dec 7
JESC representatives briefed FNLP regarding next steps in permanent fishway implementation and 2021 summer operations

Dec 15
Fourth long-term planning technical meeting held