

COMMUNITY FISHING NOTICE

JULY 21, 2025



DECLINING SOCKEYE SALMON RETURNS 2025

Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA) Fisheries Team are raising concerns over the 2025 return of s'cwin (sockeye salmon) as numbers are tracking far below forecasts, and a thermal barrier in the Okanogan River has halted their migration home.

CURRENT SOCKEYE NUMBERS

- We are estimating **55,000 s'cwin to pass over Wells Dam to the Okanagan**, but most are stalled in the Columbia River, seeking refuge in cooler, deeper waters.
- On average, approximately 205,000 s'cwin pass Wells Dam - so only a $\frac{1}{4}$ of what we usually get will reach Osoyoos Lake and their spawning grounds in the Okanagan River system.

WHY ARE SOCKEYE NUMBERS LOWER?

- Extreme environmental conditions complicate challenges.
- As of June 30, 2025, water temperatures in the Okanogan River surpassed 22° Celsius, creating a thermal barrier.
- This barrier delays or halts s'cwin's upstream journeys, affecting their access to Osoyoos Lake and spawning grounds in the Okanagan River system.

WHAT CAN WE DO TO HELP?

- Our s'cwin are incredibly resilient, but in order to support their recovery, it is **crucial to limit harvest activities** to help ensure as many s'cwin as possible survive to spawn.
- Please only take what you need.
- The ONA will not be coordinating a harvest for community distribution, or Food Fishery this year.
- ONA Fisheries are conducting daily monitoring of river conditions and fish populations.