

R.R. #1, Ladner,

XXXXXXXXXXXX

17th September 1923.

Maj. J. A. Motherwell,

Inspector of Fisheries,

Vancouver, B.C.

Dear Sir:-

I am in receipt of your letter of the 10th inst., asking if, in my opinion, Fraser river sockeye salmon can be taken in any appreciable quantities in  $6\frac{1}{2}$ " gill nets. My opinion is that they cannot.

You are aware that on Rivers Inlet, I think in 1921, the fishermen complained that their take of sockeyes was lessened because the fish were smaller than usual and many escaped through the  $5\frac{3}{4}$ " mesh. Subsequently Mr. Stone found many sockeyes on the spawning ground with net marks on them showing they had passed through the nets, and he also, as well as the canning tallies, corroborated the fishermen's contention that the fish were unusually small. The fact that this departure from the usual size enabled the fish to escape through a  $5\frac{3}{4}$ " mesh would indicate that only an exceedingly slight difference in size of mesh is necessary to allow the sockeyes to get through.

Naas river sockeye are the largest on the coast and nets used on that river are  $5-7/8$ " mesh. Cohoes run along with sockeyes toward the end of August and often fishermen changed over to  $6\frac{1}{2}$ " mesh nets as they found the increased take of cohoes made the use of the larger mesh more profitable. An occasional sockeye was captured by these coho nets - generally tangled in the web after the twine had caught on the gill or in the mouth - but the number so taken were no greater than would sometimes be taken in  $8\frac{1}{2}$ " mesh spring salmon nets in the early part of the season. In my opinion there would be no justification for preventing the use of  $6\frac{1}{2}$ " mesh nets on account of any ill effect they would have on the sockeye species.

Yours truly

HD/P.

