

## Selectivity Grids in Seine Bunts

Grids are a response to the Minister of Fisheries Challenge given to the salmon industry in 1998, "that salmon fisheries of the future had to be risk adverse conservation based." Of immediate concern were the cohoes destined for the Thompson and Skeena rivers. The objective of the grids is to allow the safe, in water escapement of non-target species of salmon while retaining target and marketable fish using grids durable enough to address drum, spooling-pin and power block demands while minimizing damage to the fish (scaling and gilling). Grids of various shapes, designs, colours, materials, clarity and location were placed into the bunt of a seine net. Two grids of a kind were installed in the front panel of the bunt while two different grids were installed in the middle panel. A catcher bag, attached to the outside of the bunt with separate chambers for the different grids, contained all of the fish that escaped through the grating to determine size, species, DNA and any preference by the fish for the various shapes of openings, grid design or texture. Due to the salmon's migratory timing and patterns, research time is very limited. Over the last four seasons, experiments with the grids have proven very successful. All salmon will access the grids, with some preference indicated by species to grid shapes and colour. A high percentage of non-target cohoes (~70%) passed through the gridding while retaining (~ 85%) of target sockeye. Progress in all areas to be discussed.

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