

HA'OOM FISHERIES SOCIETY

Implementing Rights-Based Fisheries on Behalf of
Ahousaht, Ehattesaht/Chinehkint, Mowachaht/Muchalaht,
Hesquiaht and Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations



REFLECTIONS ON A FIRST YEAR

by Ha'oom Staff

Starting a new organization is a daunting task, and starting one in the midst of a pandemic is ever more difficult, but we are pleased with the results. We would like to share some of our challenges, victories, and plans for the future with you, our fishers. We appreciate your patience and efforts as we move forward together into a prosperous and respectful future.

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HA'OOM

NOTES FROM OUR CO-CHAIRS

Co-Chair Errol Sam, Ahousaht First Nation

I am an Ahousaht fisherman who was requested by the Ahousaht Chiefs to represent our people as a director within Ha'oom Fisheries Society, which exists to facilitate our Aboriginal right to harvest and sell fish.

To date, we have not received an appropriate and realistic fishing package and negotiations are on-going. This past year, COVID-19 has been a hinderance to our operations. However, we were able to send our fishers out for suuhaa (salmon), halibut, lingcod, and other species.

Our board is working hard to develop appropriate organizational policies to continue to shape Ha'oom Fisheries Society into a strong and effective organization that works for the 5 Nations. Klecko klecko,
- Errol Sam

Board of Directors

- Wallace Samuel, Ahousaht
- Georgina Amos, Ehattesaht
- Victor Amos (Treasurer), Hesquiaht
- Patrick James, Mowachaht/Muchalaht
- Elmer Frank (Co-Chair), Tla-o-qui-aht
- Errol Sam (Co-Chair), Ahousaht
- Simon John (Secretary), Ehattesaht
- Constant Charleson, Hesquiaht
- Michael Maquinna, Mowachaht/Muchalaht
- Joseph David, Tla-o-qui-aht

Co-Chair Elmer Frank, Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations

Happy New Year to you all! Best wishes to you for 2021. I am Elmer Frank, from Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations. I have been on the Ha'oom board since 2019 and recently was appointed as co-chair of the board and I am excited to continue working towards insuring a prosperous, economic fishery.

Although 2020 was somewhat challenging for all fisheries in our industry, the majority of challenges were related to something we've never experienced before - the coronavirus. Considering the worldwide pandemic affecting us, we managed to finish off the season and put that behind us.

In 2021, we are hopeful to gain more interest in our fisheries and continue to support returning fishers. We continue to keep building on our fisheries plans so we have a foundation that will be beneficial for all fishers going forth.

We wish you all the best for 2021 and look forward to a successful year for you all.
- Elmer Frank

Pre-COVID-19 Crab Fisheries Monitoring Training with Ecotrust Canada



RECAP OF 2020

New Staff

Ha'oom Fisheries Society has grown! We've added new staff members to support our growing organization and to provide support to our fishers and on-going science efforts. We've also contracted specialists to help us move in the right direction. On that note, we'd like to welcome our newest hire, Kara-Anna Adams, Ehattesaht/Chinehkint Community Fisheries Liaison, to the team. Glad to have you on board Kara-Anna! - **Alex Gagne**

New Boat

Ha'oom Fisheries vessel has been busy this season. Getting settled in with her regular schedule of microtrawling. Our new work vessel has been nothing but a dream to operate. It's helping us gather data on juvenile suuhaa and providing access to remote rivers, all while being outfitted with top of the line safety and navigation equipment. Our team couldn't be happier with our new research vessel!

- **Stevie Dennis**

New Office

The Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council has graciously housed T'aaq-wiihak staff in the Uu-a-thluk office space above the post office in Tofino for the last several years. However, last winter during the transition away from the Tribal Council, Ha'oom Fisheries Society staff were tasked with finding a new work space.

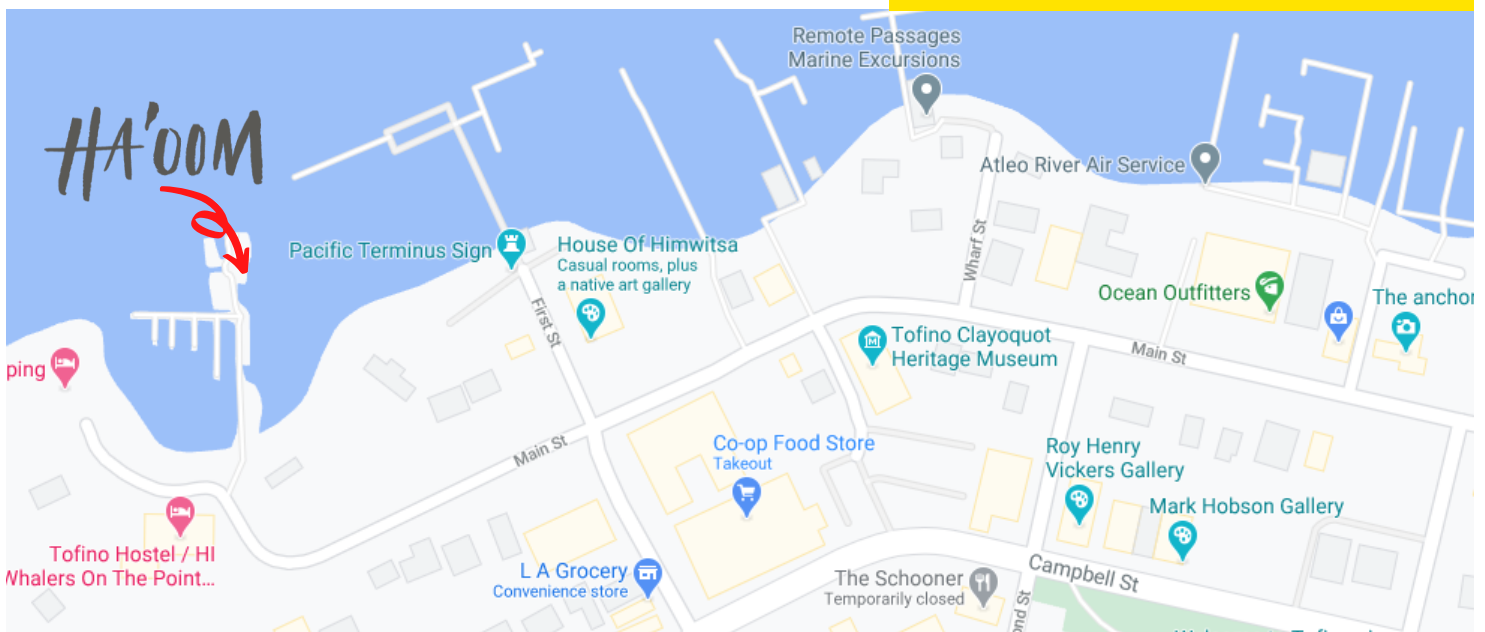
As many of you know acquiring space in Tofino is no easy mission, let alone a commercial space. Luckily, thanks to a lead from the Five Nations, staff were able to connect with a new fellow in town, Wolfgang Rieder. Wolfgang had recently purchased the old Icehouse Restaurant (known before that as North Sea Products) and was keen to see entities similar to ours prosper in the region. Five months later, with a signed lease in hand, staff began setting up shop.

Please see the below image for directions to our new office locale, we're now located at 200 Grice Street. Our office is open for fisher registrations Monday - Friday 9:00 am - 3:00 pm. If you forget your mask, not to worry we'll have you covered. - **Tessa Saxby-Jones**

Ha'oom Fisheries Society Staff and Contractors

- Alex Gagne, Executive Director
- Candace Picco, Biologist
- Jessica Edwards, Associate Biologist
- Kadin Snook, Fisheries Coordinator
- Kara-Anna Adams, Ehattesaht/Chinehkint Community Fisheries Liaison
- Lacey Adams, Tla-o-qui-aht Community Fisheries Liaison
- Lauren Dean, Communications Specialist
- Paul Rokeby-Thomas, Finance and Business Development Officer
- Saul Milne, Strategic Advisor
- Shelby Huebner, Ahousaht Community Fisheries Liaison
- Stevie Dennis, Fieldwork Technician
- Tessa Saxby-Jones, Program Coordinator

Ha'oom Fisheries Society Office Location



RECAP OF 2020 (CONTINUED)

Swift Water Training

In October of 2020, Lacey Adams, Jess Edwards, and Kadin Snook took their swift water rescue course with Raven Rescue in Nanaimo, BC. This course is required for the work Ha'oom does to support the Nations with their salmon swims and any research or restoration work done on rivers. It was three fun-filled days learning knots, rescue techniques and how to belly flop fearlessly into fast moving water. We are looking forward to conducting smolt swim surveys with the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council (NTC) and the Maaqutusiis Hahoulthee Stewardship Society (MHSS) in the Moyeha river this March, putting our new skills to work!

- Jess Edwards

COVID-19

COVID-19 has had a profound impact on the operations of Ha'oom Fisheries Society. We've had to make drastic changes to the ways that we communicate with each other, with the fishers, and with the Nations. As we are in our first year of operations, we've had to develop policies very quickly, which has been much more difficult due to COVID-19. These challenges included having to develop dock plans specific for COVID-19 which delayed the start of our fishery. Communicating these new policies and plans to our fishers and ensuring everyone's safety during the pandemic was quite difficult but we made it through safely.

Another area of difficulty was fish selling and shipping due to COVID-19 uncertainty. This caused reduced participation from our fishers, which was disappointing yet understandable. Some areas of positivity were that we could prove to ourselves that we are resilient! We were able to conduct a fishery with such restrictive policies and there were several fishing successes. We were also able to identify a roadmap to better online communications and use of creative communication tools, such as Zoom, to simulate in-person experiences. Thank you for your patience this year.

- Kadin Snook



Swift Water Training with Lacey

Swift Water Training in Action!



RECAP OF 2020 (CONTINUED)

5 Nations Stock Assessment Projects

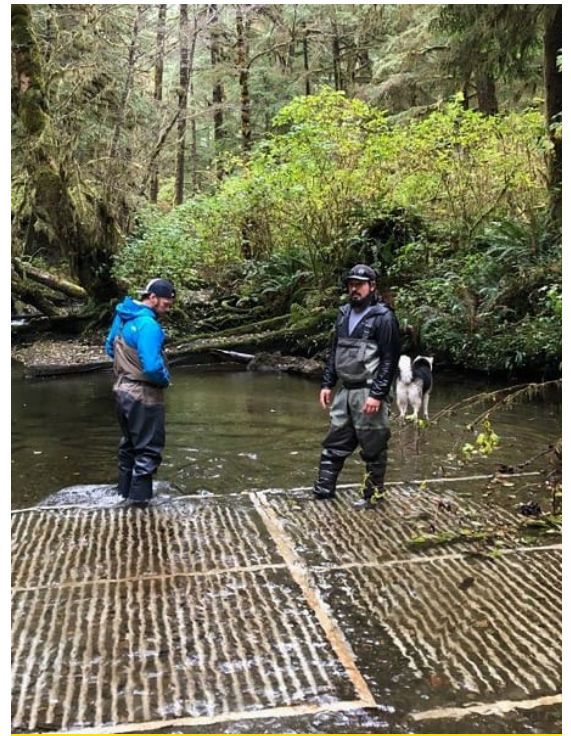
In the 2020 swim season, Ha'oom supported the Five Nations through a series of stock assessment projects, including swims, both in the field and in the planning and reporting process.

Stevie Dennis along with Jared Dick and Danny O'Farrell supported the Ahousaht, Hesquiaht, Tla-o-qui-aht and Ehattesaht on bank walk surveys and swim surveys. The surveys in Clayquot Sound were conducted on Upper and Lower Megin, Atleo River, Moyaha River, Ursus Creek, Bedwell River, Warn Bay Creek, Bawden Creek, Whitepine Creek, Watta Creek, Riley Cove Creek, Ice River, and Tranquil Creek. This was Stevie's first runs of swims and bank walks. Great job Stevie!

In the early fall, swims were started on the Burman, Canton, and Muchalaht Rivers to support MMFN start up. In Nootka Sound: Kadin Snook and Stevie Dennis supported Ehattesaht (Dave Miller, Fisheries Manager and Cory Hanson, Councillor) with swims on the Big Zeballos, Little Zeballos, Park River, Ceepeecee Creek and Owista Creek, primarily looking into chum with observations done on other salmon species.

Something noteworthy was that sockeye were present in Little Zeballos (which is normal) but it was interesting to see the numbers there.

We helped Clayquot Biosphere Trust with Jared Dick from Uu-a-thluk in doing the sediment and water quality measuring on the Moyeha to see what counters will occur during climate change events. - **Kadin Snook & Stevie Dennis**



Stevie and Jared (NTC) with Dog Nasuk Examine an Old Weir During a River Walk

Tristen Flanagan, Dom Charlie, and Jessica Edwards working on the gooseneck barnacle post harvest recovery project.

Photo: Melody Charlie



FORECAST FOR 2021 - NEW PROJECTS

Microtrolling

Ha'oom staff are working with Ahousaht, DFO, Uu-a-thluk, Central Westcoast Forest Society and Cedar Coast Field Station to sample juvenile salmon in Clayoquot, Nootka and Esperanza using "microtrolling" gear.

Microtrolling gear is basically modified recreational fishing gear. Lines with a small 5" flasher followed by a light leader with a small 1" Gibbs Mini G2 spoon are clipped directly to a downriggers line. This method is relatively low cost, compared to using trawling and seining methods and the fish caught can be sampled and returned to the water. Juveniles caught are sampled, measured, weighed and then 4 out of 5 juveniles are released, every fifth fish is frozen and kept for further analysis. DNA from fin tissue is used to identify the juvenile's origin and gill tissue is analyzed for 47 infectious agents known or suspected to cause disease in salmon.

Additionally, a new technology using salmon "Fit-Chips" uses biomarkers to identify the level and type of stress a salmon is experiencing. The types of stress or stressors being measured are low dissolved oxygen levels, temperature, and pathogens.

Together, all of these measurements will tell us which salmon populations use Clayoquot Sound and Nootka Sound as juveniles, how long to they stay and what stressors they are experiencing. This helps us answer questions about what the greatest contributors to salmon decline are, other than fishing and habitat damage.

- Candace Picco



Stevie Dennis Rigging Up the Microtrolling Gear

Microtrolling Fun (Safely) with Stevie and Jess



FORECAST FOR 2021 - NEW PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

Rockfish

We are going to be conducting a rockfish study! The study will use Indigenous Knowledge and a DFO rockfish habitat model to identify survey sites and record the presence, absence, and size distribution for three rockfish species within the Five Nations territory. The main objective is to gain a better understanding of the rockfish distribution in the Five Nations territory by species, size, depth and habitat-type through the following activities:

- 1. Local Indigenous Knowledge (IK) surveys and mapping exercise,
- 2. Determining dive and baited remote underwater video (BRUV) survey sites based on IK survey results and DFO habitat model,
- 3. (Funding dependent) Contracting and training Ha'oom Fisheries Society commercial divers to perform dive surveys three-four times per year in five to 10 survey sites over three years and deploying a BRUV camera system and analyzing the results to increase depth range. - **Candace Picco**



Shelby Enjoying the Sun in the Field

Justice Project

The Five Nations, working with NTC, were successful in receiving a three-year funding agreement to explore the development of laws for the T'aaq-wiihak fisheries and Salmon Parks based on the direction and inherent authority of the Ha'wiih. The vision is these laws would eventually replace the DFO imposed laws on the fishery and be a step towards shaping the fisheries to be in line with the authority of the Ha'wiih and different than the regular commercial fishery. The project will run from April 2021- March 2024. The project will support three new positions – a Project Coordinator and two community positions, hiring process to start in April 2021. The project will be guided by a steering committee – elders/knowledge holders from the Nations (committee to be set up after project starts in April). Please stay tuned for more information. - **Alex Gagne**

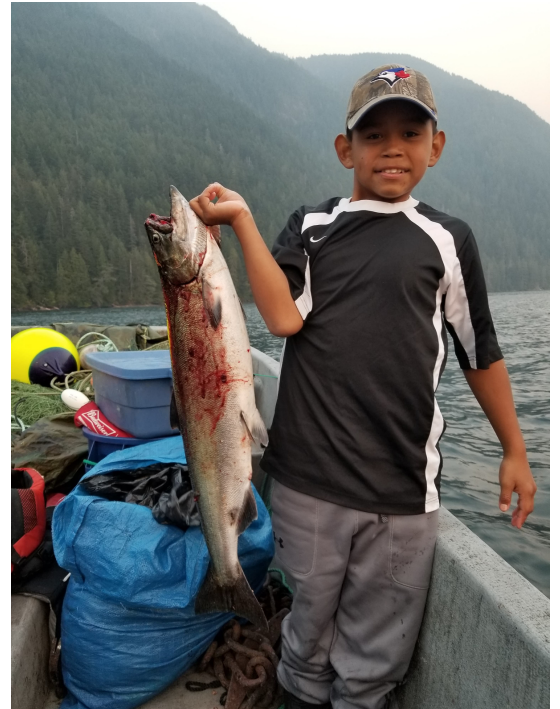
Kadin Bio Sampling Muchalaht Inlet Chinook, 2019



FORECAST FOR 2021 - NEW PROJECTS (CONTINUED)

New Projects and Capacity

A lot of work was done to build the foundation of the Society, including developing the strategic plan and a policy framework. Ensuring our policies are well developed, understood, easy to follow and adaptable will provide a strong base for the organization to build on in future years. After approving the strategic plan, the Society entered into an agreement with River Select to explore ways to increase the value of our Fisher's products and promoting future economic opportunities. River Select is a cooperative that works with First Nations all over BC to help build vibrant and affluent First Nation communities through unique, self-regulated and integrated fisheries businesses that are led by First Nations. We will be working with them to develop branding packages and perform a supply chain gap analysis for our fisheries. - **Paul Rokeby-Thomas**



Andrew, a Great Fisher from MMFN
(submitted through our photo contest)

2021 FISHERY UPDATE

Suuhaa - Winter Chinook Fishery

The 2021 winter fishery has been open since January 4th, 2021! To date, we have one participant, and we are excited to see more people participate as the season goes on. Don't forget to hail!

Ǿuuʔi - Halibut

We are projecting the halibut fishery opening on March 6th, with hail outs starting on March 5th.

Tuškuuḥ - Lingcod

We are projecting the lingcod fishery opening on April 1st, with hail outs starting on March 31st.

Please make sure that you register for the 2021 season as soon as possible. The 2020 roll over expires on March 31, 2021. A direct link to register is on the last page of this newsletter.

- Kadin Snook





NEGOTIATION UPDATES

The Parties are currently working through the language on the body of the “RAFR” document (the Reconciliation Agreement), and focused attention on the development of a Collaborative Governance Schedule that details how the parties will work together in the future development and implementation of the fisheries. Negotiations have been slow and limited to short teleconferences every two weeks. As you have likely heard, Canada came to the table with an offer of funds for a number of initiatives, including what they call a fish acquisition fund. There are also funds identified for the start-up and operating costs for the Ha’oom Board and Society. Additionally, there are funds for capital costs for vessel and gear upgrading and infrastructure needs. To date, none of these funds have been transferred or agreed to. Part of our work now is setting up a Trust to hold the majority of funds, with the exception of the annual operating funds for Ha’oom. - **Alex Gagne**

Lead Negotiators

- Cliff Atleo, Ahousaht
- Francis Frank, Tla-o-qui-aht
- Victor Amos/Constant Charleson, Hesquiaht
- Simon John, Ehattesaht
- Michael Maquinna, Mowachaht/Muchalaht

NEWLY DEVELOPED STRATEGIC PLAN

In the fall of 2020, the Board of Directors came together over a three day session to discuss the future goals and vision for the newly formed Ha’oom Fisheries Society. The outcome from the session was direction to focus on four main strategic priorities: Omeek “Good Fishermen”, Robust and Resilient Organization, Uu-a-thluk: “Taking care of”, and Communication/Engagement. Our next step as an organization is to develop and implement communications and operations plans for the future. - **Alex Gagne**

HA’OOM

FISHERIES SOCIETY 2020 – 2025 STRATEGIC PLAN

VISION
A prosperous, diverse, sustainable fishing culture, guided by T’aaq-wiihak, driven by the individual strengths, knowledge, and skills of our Muscim.

MISSION
Plan, develop, and implement opportunities for current and future generations benefit while passing on culture, traditions and knowledge through the sustainable harvest and stewardship of the Ha-houlthee of our Ha’wiih.

VALUES

- ✓ Isaak
- ✓ Tsa’walk
- ✓ OO-oo-tuh (be prepared)
- ✓ 7uh-mowa-shitl (keep some)
- ✓ Pride
- ✓ Work Ethic
- ✓ Ownership (assets)
- ✓ Support
- ✓ Accountability
- ✓ Fairness
- ✓ Viability
- ✓ Commitment
- ✓ Transparency
- ✓ Giving – Generous
- ✓ Unity
- ✓ Reciprocity

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

- ✓ Omeek: “Good Fisherman”
- ✓ Robust and Resilient Organization
- ✓ Uu-a-thluk: “Taking care of”
- ✓ Communication / Engagement

GOALS

Omeek: “Good Fishermen”
Explore economic opportunities to promote viability for our Nations.
 • Explore ways to increase value for products.
 • Identify and promote future opportunities.
 Support fishers in accessing opportunities.
 • Ensure means are available to promote success
 • Ensure a safe environment for our fishers.
 • Bridge the gap w/ hahuupa (teachings/knowledge).

Robust and Resilient Organization
Develop and implement processes to strengthen delivery of programs and services.
 • Ensure our policies are well developed, understood, easy to follow and adaptable.
 • Develop transparent and accountable financial processes.
 Attract, develop and retain diverse, high-quality staff.
 • Be an Employer of choice.
 • Provide professional development opportunities to support retention.

Uu-a-thluk: “Taking care of”
Promote strategic and responsible stewardship of resources respecting our Culture and Traditions.
 • Capitalize on new and emerging opportunities created by a changing environment.
 • Guardian program to reinvigorate guardians.
 • Conduct our own scientific / fieldwork.
 Operate fisheries in line with our aboriginal right respecting required external standards.
 • Don’t take more than we need: knowledge and best practices.
 • Ensure proper mechanisms are in place for fair, equitable access for our fishers.

Communication / Engagement
Develop, Improve and deliver persuasive communications both internally and externally.
 • Ensure we have a strong front-loaded communications Plan, adaptable to the ever-changing environment.
 • Ensure we embrace the necessary tools to message our stakeholders effectively.
 • Establish Protocols with complementary organizations.
 Tell our story.
 • Highlight the success of fishers and role models from our Nations.
 • Educate to help build interest in the industry.

(250) 725-2802 www.haoom.ca

COMMUNICATIONS

Keep Up to Date with HFS!

Ha'oom Fisheries Society sends out updates, requests for bids, workshop information, fishery notices and much more through e-mail, Facebook posts (both the HFS page and T'aaq-wiihak account), Instagram posts, and posts all notices to the www.taaq.ca website.

The best way to ensure that you're receiving important information is to sign up to receive our email newsletters. Please visit <http://eepurl.com/helRdP> to sign up.

2021 Registration

Please register for the 2021 fishing season as soon as possible. Your 2020 registration expires on March 31st, 2021. Visit <https://taaqwiihakfisheries.ca/register-for-taaq-wiihak/> and click on the registration link or call us (250-725-2802) or visit the office on Monday - Thursday from 9am-3pm.

HFS Rebrand

Ha'oom Fisheries Society is undergoing a rebrand to bring us into alignment with our values, goals, and vision for the future. This will include marrying together the HFS and T'aaq-wiihak brands to create a unifying brand for HFS to carry into the future. Stay tuned for more information on this rebranding roll out. - **Lauren Dean**

Engage with Us



websites: www.haoom.ca, www.taaq.ca



twitter: [@haoomfisheries](https://twitter.com/haoomfisheries)



facebook.com/haoomfisheriessociety
facebook.com/taaqwiihak.fisheries



instagram: [@haoomfisheriessociety](https://instagram.com/haoomfisheriessociety)



email: info@haoom.ca

Current and Historical Fisher Resources

Looking for a specific reference document? Registration information, application forms, COVID-19 Safety Plans, links to external agencies, fish vendor license applications and much more are located here:
<https://taaqwiihakfisheries.ca/resources/>

