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*A Sustainable Contribution
to the Sea-to-Sky Economy*

An examination of the economic impact
of guided angling in the Sea-to-Sky Region,
and the case for preserving angler access
through sustainable fishing practices.

The guided angling industry in the Sea-to-Sky Region focuses on *experiences*, rather than harvest, to *preserve* the fish species that are integral to the region.

The Sea-To-Sky Region remains one of the most important tourism corridors in the province. Guided angling allows guests from around the world to experience the BC's famous wilderness and fishing. The angling guides in the Sea-to-Sky Region recognize the importance of minimizing their impact on fish populations while providing amazing experiences. The guided anglers focus on catch and release, even when retention is possible. This sustainable method of fishing generates large economic impacts while keeping exploitation low. It is vital to keep angling opportunities enacted.

In the fall of 2020, DFO closed the catch and release fishery for chum salmon in the Squamish River and its tributaries...

Closing fisheries in this way does little to reduce incidental mortality. The late announcement and unclear regulations caused confusion among anglers and angling guide businesses suffered. There was no scientific data offered from DFO to the reason of the closure, it was closed based on 'anecdotal information'. This study was completed to shed light on the importance of open angling opportunities in the Sea to Sky Region and was fully funded by the Freshwater Fisheries Society of British Columbia.

IMPACT OF GUIDED ANGLING IN THE SEA-TO- SKY REGION

The economic impacts of guided angling in the Sea-to-Sky Region have never previously been estimated. New research by Big River Analytics provides the first ever estimates of the economic impacts of guided angling in the region for each of the four major guiding seasons. The following figures are based on data from 2016 to 2019.

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ANNUAL DOMESTIC OUTPUT PER YEAR

\$1,629,959

ANNUAL DOMESTIC OUTPUT PER GUIDE SEASON

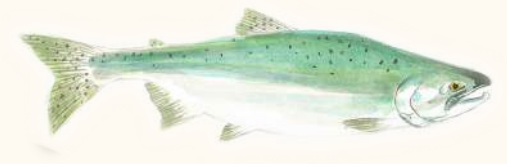
SPRING STEELHEAD

\$103,739



PINK SALMON

\$716,595



COHO & CHUM

\$221,237



LAKE SEASON
March - October

\$546,899



SPRING STEELHEAD

Catch and release has been shown to be a successful way of conserving fish stocks while allowing continued access, even in times of lower abundance. For most anglers in the Sea-to-Sky, it can take many days to land a single spring steelhead. Releasing the fish allows it to spawn, and proper catch and release handling techniques minimize incidental mortality.

Because this study only includes guided angling operations, who have years of experience properly handling and re-leasing fish, the mortality rate for fish landed under guide supervision is lower than average, likely close to 5%. This low mortality rate, combined with the low catch rate of steelhead in the Sea-to-Sky Region, results in an extremely high value per fish caught and an even higher value per fish killed through incidental mortality. Domestic output per killed steelhead in the Sea-to-Sky (\$223,936) is more than four times greater than in the Lower Skeena Region (\$55,459).

DOMESTIC OUTPUT
per fish caught

\$12,198

GDP
per fish caught

\$7,077

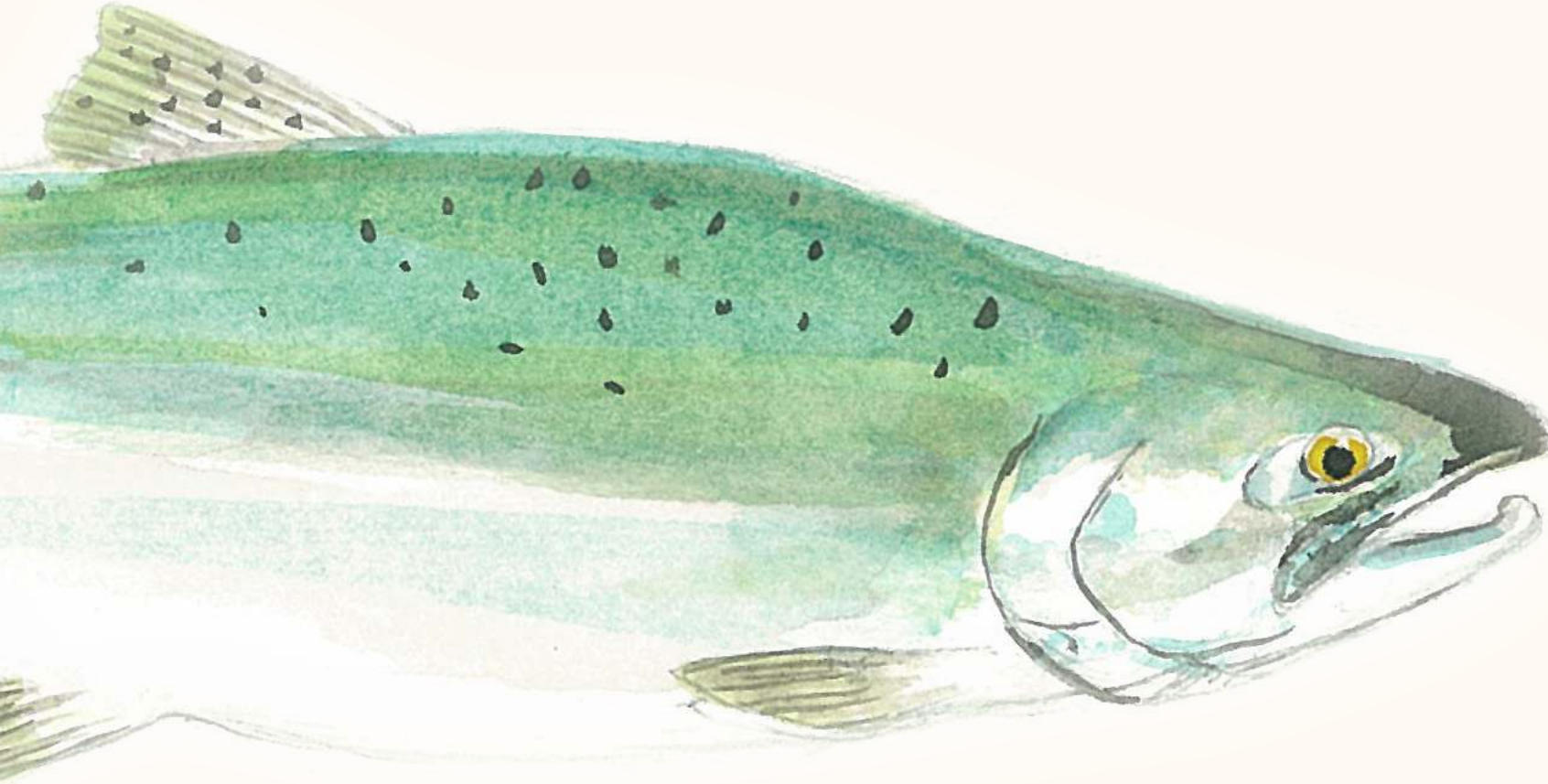
DOMESTIC OUTPUT
per deceased fish

\$223,936



PINK SALMON

During the summer on odd years, an abundance of pink salmon make their way up Howe Sound and flood into the Squamish River. These figures from the 2019 season demonstrate the significant economic impact of pink salmon fishing in the Sea-to-Sky Region.



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DOMESTIC OUTPUT
per fish caught

\$482

GDP
per fish caught

\$280

DOMESTIC OUTPUT
per year

\$756,916

GDP
per year

\$439,163

LABOUR INCOME
per year

\$259,563

DOMESTIC OUTPUT
per fish caught

\$1,787

GDP
per fish caught

\$1,037

DOMESTIC OUTPUT
per deceased fish

\$30,302

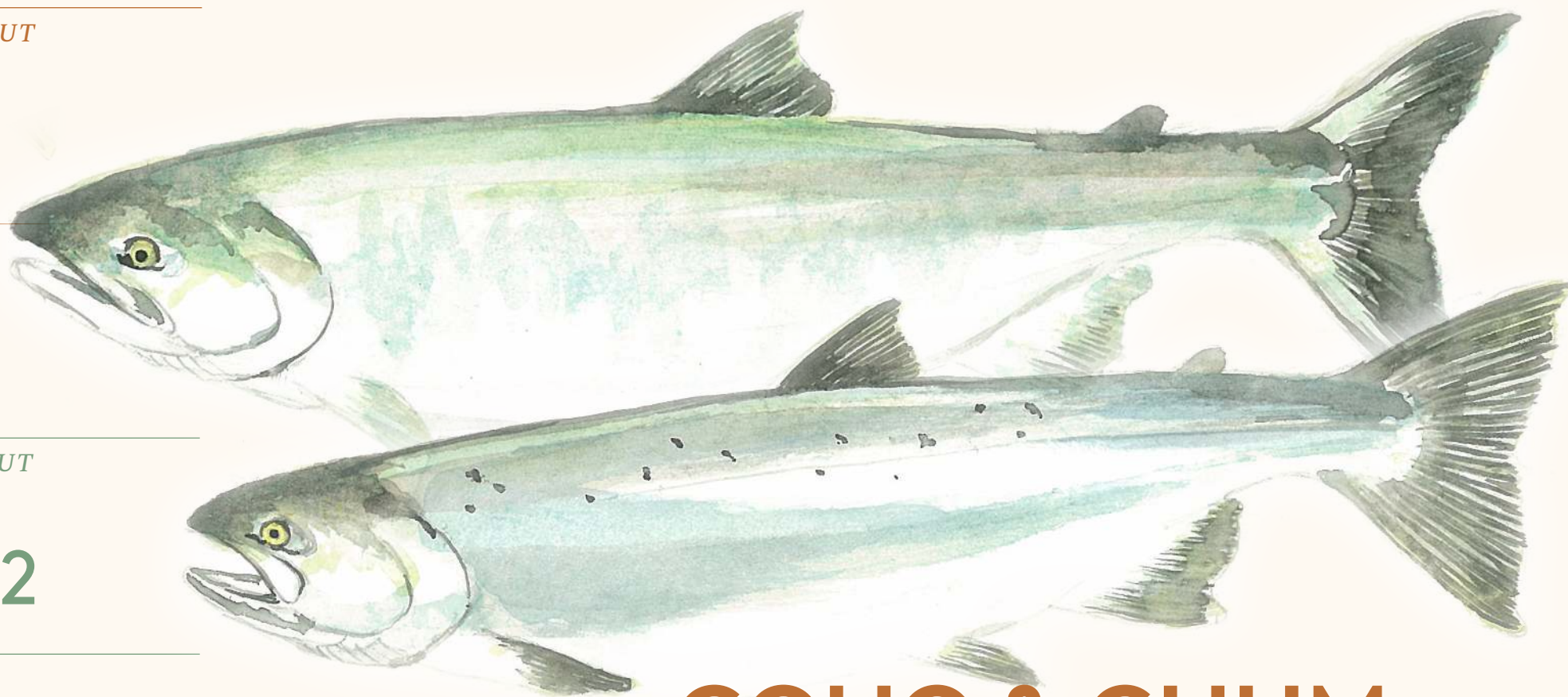
GDP
per deceased fish

\$17,581

LABOUR INCOME
per deceased fish

\$10,391

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COHO & CHUM

As rivers start to drop and clear in the fall, two different species of salmon enter the rivers of the Sea-to-Sky Region: the coho and chum salmon. These species are targeted by guided anglers almost exclusively for catch and release, producing a large economic impact per fish caught.

Conservation is a *shared* responsibility.

Conservation measures are most effective when they evaluate the scale of impacts different user groups have on the limited resource. Guided angling generates high economic value, and poses minimal threat to fish stocks. This needs to be considered in future policy decisions. The long-term sustainability of guided angling relies on it.



RESEARCH
BY

Big River
Analytics

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