

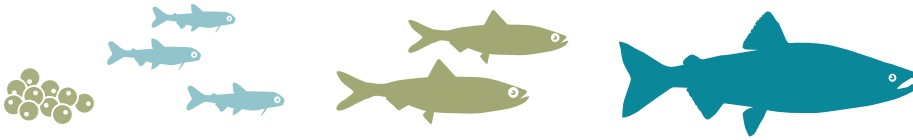
Introductions and Transfers of Live Fish in BC

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) monitors the movement of live fish into and within British Columbia. Whether a fish is being moved to an aquaculture facility, into the environment for enhancement or for research, it is important that DFO is aware of where and how the introduction or transfer will occur to ensure there is low risk to the fish being transferred, wild fish and the environment.

TYPES OF TRANSFERS

MARINE FINFISH AQUACULTURE

Commercial finfish cultivation is the largest aquaculture sector in British Columbia. The majority of finfish cultivated are Atlantic salmon, though Pacific salmon and sablefish are also cultivated.

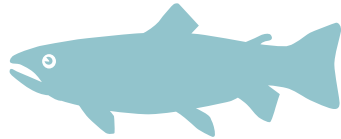


SALMONID ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM (SEP)

SEP plays a key role in DFO's work to conserve and manage Pacific salmon stocks.

Juvenile salmon releases for enhancement purposes are assessed in order to protect wild salmon.

SEP RELEASED
5,013,621
JUVENILE
SALMON
IN BC IN 2020



FRESHWATER AQUACULTURE*

Freshwater aquaculture transfers include species such as trout, tilapia and crayfish.

* Freshwater aquaculture transfers are co-authorized by DFO and the Province of British Columbia.



SHELLFISH AQUACULTURE

Shellfish aquaculture transfers include species such as Pacific oyster, Manila clam and geoduck.



PUBLIC DISPLAY AND EDUCATION

Local native species are collected, transferred and displayed for educational purposes.

PROVINCIAL STOCKING PROGRAM*

The Province of British Columbia stocks closed lakes with a variety of freshwater fish species to support recreational fisheries.



RESEARCH

Fish are often sourced from the wild, hatcheries or other research facilities and transferred to academic institutions and public or private labs.



SPIRITUAL RELEASE

British Columbia's Buddhist community sometimes engages in spiritual release, which is the release of live fish that were originally headed to live food markets, for religious reasons. DFO manages this activity to ensure that the fish are locally-caught native species, suitable for re-release, and are released in dedicated locations.



OTHER AQUACULTURE PURPOSES

Wild and/or captive fish are often transferred to aquaculture facilities for broodstock development (i.e. produce offspring that will be reared for consumption).



INTRODUCTIONS AND TRANSFERS COMMITTEE

The Introductions and Transfer Committee (ITC) receives and reviews all applications for the intentional transfer or release of live fish into natural waters and facilities that are connected to natural waters. The ITC considers the risk to wild and cultivated fish and the environment due to fish movement and releases. Following the [National Code on Introductions and Transfers of Aquatic Organisms](#), members of the ITC include DFO and provincial government experts, such as veterinarians and scientists.

HOW SPECIES ARE INTRODUCED OR TRANSFERRED



APPLICATION & SCREENING

The application is determined to be routine or non-routine.

ROUTINE APPLICATION

Routine means there is historical precedent.

NON-ROUTINE APPLICATION

Non-routine applications may require additional documents and a formal risk assessment. ([Appendices 6 & 7 of the National Code](#)).*



REVIEW BY ITC AND DECISION-MAKING AUTHORITY

The application is distributed to the ITC for review. The ITC may also refer the application to an external subject matter expert for advice.

The ITC confirms that the application meets the requirements of **S.56 a, b and c of the Fishery (General) Regulations** and will provide a transfer risk evaluation to the decision-making authority.

Who is the decision-making authority? DFO Pacific Region's Regional Director General may exercise or delegate the power to issue introduction and transfer licences on behalf of the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans for routine movements.

In some instances a provincial/territorial minister or official may also authorize the issuance of introduction and transfer licences.

The decision-making authority will consider the ITC's assessment, and also take into account socio-economic factors and Indigenous considerations, and consultations if there is risk of a potential infringement of rights, to determine whether to approve the movement or not.



ISSUANCE

✓
If the application is approved by the decision-making authority, an ITC licence will be granted.

✗
If the application is not approved by the decision-making authority, the request is denied. Applicants may resubmit an application to the ITC with new information for reconsideration.

S.56 OF THE FISHERY (GENERAL) REGULATIONS

a)
the release or transfer of the fish would be in keeping with the proper management and control of fisheries

b)
the fish do not have any disease or disease agent that may be harmful to the protection and conservation of fish

c)
the release or transfer of the fish will not have an adverse effect on the stock size of the fish or the genetic characteristics of fish or fish stocks.

In 2020 the ITC reviewed **330** APPLICATIONS

The most requested species to transfer are ATLANTIC SALMON, RAINBOW TROUT, AND PACIFIC SALMON



A FORMAL RISK ASSESSMENT IS REQUIRED WHEN:

THE INTRODUCTION AND TRANSFER PROPOSED IS A FIRST-TIME EXOTIC SPECIES

AND/OR

A TRANSFER OF A SPECIES WOULD RESULT IN A RANGE EXTENSION

AND/OR

A NEW OR NOVEL PURPOSE IS PROPOSED FOR WHICH THE OUTCOMES ARE PRESENTLY NOT KNOWN

CONTACT US

QUESTIONS ON THE INTRODUCTIONS AND TRANSFERS PROCESS CAN BE SENT TO ITC@DFO-MPO.GC.CA