



Brian Smith, President
Polar Coachman Flyfishers
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October 24, 2022

To: Nikolaus Gantner
Senior Fisheries Biologist
BC Ministry of Forests
Omineca Region (7A)

Re: Stellako River closure September 30th

Dear Nikolaus:

Nikolaus, I have wrestled with this decision for many years now, and feel it is time to speak up about the October fall fishery on the Stellako, which is mainly an egg-chucking experience.

It is well known that trout will suck an egg deep into their throat and gullet, causing harm and most often lethal bleeding and consequent death when un-hooked. The Stellako rainbows are very vulnerable at this time, because for food they rely on loose, drifting eggs from spawn and waste from dying sockeyes to fatten-up for their winter layovers. They are voracious in their search for protein at this time. The river is also at low-flow in October, making all of the trout-holding runs easily fished with sinking line and egg patterns. If closed September 30th, fly fishers will still have the last two weeks of September to fish egg patterns, and they will still take dry flies at this time.

The Stellako indigenous rainbows are very special to this province, an uncommon and unique experience that fly fishers can enjoy without leaving pavement. I do not think closing the river one month earlier on September 30th will harm the fly fishers, but will do great benefit to the health and winter survival of its native trout population.

Sincerely

Brian Smith