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MEMORANDUM

November 9 1951.

To: Mr. Ch. Clay, Division Engineer.

From: E. W. Burridge, Regional Biologist.

The Wapish River sockeye spawning areas were visited by Inspector G. W. Kinsey and the writer during the latter part of October. The inspections were made on the Department's patrol aircraft.

It was hoped that these examinations could give some indication of the magnitude of the sockeye run as well as an idea of the potential spawning area in the watershed above Karatsen Falls. The three lake systems, Schoen, Vernon and Ross were thoroughly examined. The two former systems are situated above the falls and the latter one below. Deteriorating weather conditions reduced the amount of time spent on the examination of the spawning areas in and around Wapish Lake.

In all cases the creeks and beaches of these lakes were investigated for the presence of spawning fish, carcasses and worked areas. The only three tributary creeks of Schoen Lake were examined to a distance beyond which it was thought unlikely that sockeye would travel, due to the increasing gradient of the stream and consequently the increase in the size of the gravel. A similar number of streams were examined at Vernon Lake. The first mile or so of the Vernon River (below the lake) was also examined from a rubber boat. Ross Lake system has very few tributary creeks that are suitable for spawning. The two creeks at the head end, which rise rapidly a hundred yards from their entrance in to the lake, were examined and also the beaches at various parts of the lake shore. Observations were made at Karatsen Falls and the main river below the falls was examined for spawning sockeye and carcasses.

The area above Karatsen Falls appeared to be capable of accommodating far more sockeye than were observed on the grounds. This was particularly noticeable at Schoen Lake and at the head end of Vernon Lake where only a few fish were seen as well as a few workings on the bars. The beaches at the lower end of Vernon Lake were quite well worked. Numerous schools of kokanee were on the beaches and other areas were being worked by sockeye at the time of the visit. Large numbers of coho were seen in the Vernon River entering the lake.

The grounds of Ross Lake appeared to be well populated with sockeye. A heavy concentration was observed at the upper end of the lake and the beaches on both sides of the lake had been and were being well
