

Tuesday, August 25, 2009

The Fraser River Panel met Tuesday, August 25 to receive an update on the migration of the Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon runs and review the status of migration conditions in the Fraser River watershed.

The migration of Fraser sockeye through Juan de Fuca Strait has declined considerably in recent days, while in Johnstone Strait there has been low but steady migration. At the meeting today the run size estimates of 175,000 Early Summer-run and 450,000 True Late-run sockeye were unchanged. The run size estimate of 700,000 Summer-run sockeye was decreased to 650,000 fish, with 50% migration timing through Area 20 of August 4. The Panel also reduced the run size estimate for the Birkenhead stock-group from 100,000 fish to 60,000 fish, with 50% migration timing through Area 20 of August 12.

The marine migration of Fraser River pink salmon through the assessment areas has continued to be strong over the past several days. It is too early to provide a run size estimate for Fraser River pink salmon since their forecast peak migration period through the marine assessment areas has not yet occurred. However, present assessments indicate that Fraser pinks are tracking abundance levels exceeding their 75% probability level forecast of 12,490,000 fish.

On August 24 the Fraser River discharge at Hope was approximately 2,400 cms, which is about 25% lower than normal, while the water temperature at Qualark Creek was 18.3 °C, which is 1.3 °C higher than average for this date. Water temperatures are forecast to average approximately 18 °C over the next ten days.

The Panel announced the following regulations for Panel Area waters directed at the harvest of pink salmon:

CANADIAN FRASER RIVER PANEL AREA WATERS:

Remain closed to fishing.

UNITED STATES FRASER RIVER PANEL AREA WATERS:

TREATY INDIAN FISHERY:

Areas 4B, 5 and 6C: Open to drift gillnets from 12:00 p.m. (noon), Wednesday, August 26, 2009 to 12:00 p.m. (noon) Saturday, August 29, 2009.

NON INDIAN FISHERY:

Areas 7 and 7A: Open to reefnets with non-retention of sockeye from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 26, 2009; 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Thursday, August 27, 2009; and from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Friday, August 28, 2009.

(Note: U. S. Non-Treaty fishers should check the U.S. hotline and WDFW regulations before fishing as there are additional State of Washington regulations, including time restrictions that may be in effect).

The next in-season meeting of the Panel is scheduled to occur on August 26, 2009.