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**No. 8**

**WEEKLY REPORT**

**August 31, 2017**

The Fraser River Panel (Panel) met today to review assessment data on Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon. Test fishing catches increased in Johnstone Strait for a few days but have started to decline again. Overall, the test fishing catches continue to indicate that the abundances of sockeye salmon remain lower than expected for the time of year, relative to pre-season expectations of median forecast abundance and arrival timing. Levels of sockeye salmon escapement past lower river assessment areas are also tracking lower than pre-season expectations. The abundance of pink salmon entering the river has increased substantially as observed from increased catches in river test fisheries and increases in pink salmon escapements estimated by the Mission hydroacoustics program.

### **Run Status**

DNA analysis of a fish sample recently collected from the Area 12 purse seine test fishery indicated Fraser sockeye contributions of approximately 2% Early Summer-run, 52% Summer-run and 46% Late-run sockeye. Analyses of recent DNA samples collected from the Area 12 test fishery indicate that 68% of the pink salmon encountered are of Fraser River origin, 2% are from Puget Sound, and 30% are from South Coast stocks.

The estimated diversion rates of Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon through Johnstone Strait have increased since last week to 97% and 72%, respectively, based on recent purse seine test fishery catches in the two approach areas.

### **Management Groups**

#### **Fraser River Sockeye Salmon**

The Early Summer run is near completion. The estimated escapement of Early Summer-run sockeye past Mission through August 3 is 161,000 fish.

Small changes to future estimates of the Summer-run are possible as the migration through assessment areas is not yet complete. The estimated escapement of Summer-run sockeye past Mission through August 30 is 940,100 fish.

Daily abundances of Late run sockeye continue to track below median forecast levels. Increased proportions of the Late-run have been observed in the marine and in-river areas. The estimated escapement of Late-run sockeye past Mission through August 30 is 93,000 fish.

#### **Fraser River Pink Salmon**

At Monday's meeting, the Panel adopted an interim pink run size estimate for management purposes of 4,800,000 with a 50% peak migration timing through Juan de Fuca Strait of August 24. The estimated escapement of pink salmon past Mission through August 30 is 785,100 fish.

Based on very low sockeye encounter rates along the Juan de Fuca migration route, fisheries directed at Fraser River pink salmon continued in U.S. Fraser River Panel waters this week. As announced, Treaty Indian fisheries were opened with sockeye retention for ceremonial and subsistence purposes only. All Citizen reef-net fisheries

were also opened with non- retention of sockeye. The potential incidental mortality of sockeye encountered in the conduct of fisheries directed at Fraser River pink salmon will continue to be a factor in the Panel's decision-making process regarding future proposed fisheries, and impacts on Fraser River sockeye will be limited to low abundance exploitation rates (LAER) specified in Canada's spawning escapement plan.

### **Environmental Update**

On August 30, the Fraser River water discharge at Hope was about 2,025cms, which is approximately 20% lower than average for this date. The temperature of the Fraser River at Qualark on August 30 was 18.4°C, which is 1.4°C higher than average for this date. DFO's Environmental Watch program projects that river temperature will increase and remain at above average values for the time of year, while discharge is forecast to decrease to 1,767 cms by the end of the 10 day forecast period.

### **Escapement Update**

A number of spawning escapement assessment programs are underway throughout the Fraser watershed. The following summarizes DFO's fifth weekly report. Visual surveys have been ongoing in the North/South Thompson and the sockeye in the Upper Barriere River, Seymour and Anstey River are reported to be holding. A total of 2,288 sockeye have passed through the fence at Scotch Creek. Sockeye in the Nahatlatch River appear to be at or near peak of spawn.

The Gates Creek spawning channel which has been operational since August 14 has counted 1,440 sockeye into the channel and sockeye salmon in the creek appear to be in good condition. The Nadina River spawning channel has been operational since August 23 and 1,005 sockeye salmon have been counted into the channel to date. A total of 80,665 Chilko sockeye salmon and 21,181 Quesnel sockeye salmon have passed their respective sonar sites as of August 29. All sockeye observed in the Raft River are reported to be holding. The Stellako River hydroacoustic site has been operational since August 30 and daily estimates will be available for the next update. A mark-recapture study began on the Late Stuart August 30 and 28 tags have been applied to date. A visual survey on the Bridge River was conducted August 28 but no live or dead sockeye were observed. The Birkenhead hydroacoustic site has been operational since August 24 and 184 sockeye salmon have passed as of August 29. Visual surveys of live counts, dead recovery and water temperatures continue on the Harrison-Lillooet population. At Sweltzer Creek (Cultus), a total of 68 sockeye have passed through the fence as of August 28. Sockeye reports from all assessment areas state that the salmon appear vigorous and healthy.

### **Regulatory Announcements & Resources**

The Panel announced the following regulations for commercial salmon fisheries in Panel Area waters:

#### **CANADIAN FRASER RIVER PANEL AREA WATERS:**

Remain closed to commercial salmon fishing.

#### **UNITED STATES FRASER RIVER PANEL AREA WATERS:**

#### **TREATY INDIAN FISHERY:**

Areas 4B, 5, and 6C: Extend for drift gillnets from 12 p.m. (noon), Friday, September 1, 2017, to 12 p.m. (noon), Tuesday, September 5, 2017. Sockeye may be retained for ceremonial and subsistence purposes only.

Areas 6, 7, and 7A: Open to net fishing, excluding reef nets, from 5 a.m., Friday, September 1, 2017, to 9 p.m., Tuesday, September 5, 2017. Sockeye may be retained for ceremonial and subsistence purposes only.

Areas 7 and 7A: Open to reef nets from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m., daily from Friday, September 1, 2017, through Tuesday, September 5, 2017. Sockeye may be retained for ceremonial and subsistence purposes only.

## ALL CITIZEN FISHERY:

Areas 7 and 7A: Open to purse seines, with non-retention of sockeye, from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m., daily from Friday, September 1, 2017, through Tuesday, September 5, 2017.

Areas 7 and 7A: Open to drift gillnets, with non-retention of sockeye, from 8:05 a.m. to 11:59 p.m., daily from Friday, September 1, 2017, through Tuesday, September 5, 2017.

Areas 7 and 7A: Open to reef nets, with non-retention of sockeye, from 5 a.m. to 9 p.m., daily from Friday, September 1, 2017, through Tuesday, September 5, 2017.

Areas 7 and 7A: Open to beach seines, with non-retention of sockeye, from 5 a.m., Friday, September 1, 2017, through 9 p.m., Tuesday, September 5, 2017.

The next in-season meeting of the Panel is scheduled to occur on September 5<sup>th</sup>. Weekly reports in this series will be provided by the Panel through the Commission every Friday during the in-season management period to inform those interested in the progress of the Fraser River sockeye salmon run. Weekly reports and regulatory announcements can be obtained via <http://www.psc.org/publications/fraser-panel-in-season-information> or by subscribing to our eNews <http://tinyurl.com/PSCeNews>. Regulations and resources for fishing schedules, test fishing catch and DFO's environmental watch program can be found in Table 1.

Table 1. Regulations & Resources

Fishing Schedule Contacts/Resources	Phone Number/ Website Links
United States fishing schedules (Treaty Indian)	1-800-562-6142
United States fishing schedules (Non-Indian)	1-800-662-9825
Canadian commercial fishing regulations (from the lower B.C. mainland)	604-666-2828
Canadian commercial fishing regulations (from outside the lower B.C. mainland)	1-866-431-3474
PSC Daily Test Fishing Catch (recorded message)	604-666-8200 <a href="http://www.psc.org/info_testfishing.htm">http://www.psc.org/info_testfishing.htm</a> .
DFO's Environmental Watch program	<a href="http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/science/habitat/frw-rfo/index-eng.html">http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/science/habitat/frw-rfo/index-eng.html</a>

Note: For species other than sockeye salmon consult the appropriate regulatory agency regarding fisheries regulations in the Fraser River Panel Management Area.

### Contacts

Canada: Jennifer Nener, Chair, Fraser River Panel

United States: Lorraine Loomis, Vice-chair, Fraser River Panel

2017 Run status of Fraser sockeye

Date: Aug. 31, 2017

Week of: Aug. 27 - Sep. 2, 2017	Sockeye				Pink	
	Management Group				Total Fraser	Total Fraser
	E.Stuart	E.Summer	Summer	Late		
Mission passage (includes Pitt, Alouette, Coquitlam)	46,400	161,000	940,100	93,000	1,240,500	785,100
Catch downstream of Mission	200	2,000	16,000	4,000	22,200	38,000
Accounted run-to-date	46,600	163,000	956,100	97,000	1,262,700	823,100
<b>Run size adopted in-season<sup>1</sup></b>	<b>46,000</b>	<b>150,000</b>	<b>1,000,000</b>	<b>247,000</b>	<b>1,443,000</b>	<b>4,800,000</b>
Run size forecasted pre-season	99,000	343,000	3,407,000	583,000	4,432,000	8,693,000
<b>Area 20 timing adopted in-season</b>	<b>4/Jul</b>	<b>2/Aug</b>	<b>11/Aug</b>	<b>18/Aug</b>		<b>24/Aug</b>
Area 20 timing expected pre-season	1/Jul	20/Jul	6/Aug	14/Aug		28/Aug

<sup>1</sup> Run sizes are usually not adopted until after the peak of the run has passed through marine test fishery areas in Juan de Fuca and Johnstone Straits.

2017 Catch-to-date by fishery

Date: Aug. 31, 2017

Week of: Aug. 27 - Sep. 2, 2017		Sockeye		Pink	
		Total	Fraser	Total	Fraser
<b>Canada</b>		<b>52,750</b>	<b>52,650</b>	<b>24,830</b>	<b>15,450</b>
<b>Commercial</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	B Purse Seine	0	0	0	0
	D Gillnet	0	0	0	0
	E Gillnet	0	0	0	0
	F Troll	0	0	0	0
	G Troll	0	0	0	0
	H Troll	0	0	0	0
<b>First Nations</b>		<b>52,670</b>	<b>52,570</b>	<b>24,790</b>	<b>15,400</b>
	Food, Social & Ceremonial (FSC)	52,670	52,570	24,790	15,400
	Marine	9,100	9,000	23,430	14,040
	Fraser R.	43,530	43,530	1,360	1,400
	Economic Opportunity (EO) & Demonstration (Demo)	0	0	0	0
	Marine	0	0	0	0
	Fraser R.	0	0	0	0
<b>Recreational</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	Marine	0	0	0	0
	Fraser R. *	0	0	0	0
<b>Charter (Albion gillnet test fishery)</b>		<b>80</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>United States</b>		<b>400</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>13,900</b>	<b>10,220</b>
<b>Commercial</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13,900</b>	<b>10,220</b>
	Treaty Indian (TI)	0	0	10,310	7,420
	All Citizen (AC)	0	0	3,590	2,790
<b>Treaty Indian Ceremonial &amp; Subsistence (C&amp;S)</b>		<b>400</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>All Citizen Recreational</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Alaska *</b>		<b>na</b>	<b>na</b>	<b>na</b>	<b>na</b>
<b>Panel-approved Test Fisheries</b>		<b>12,990</b>	<b>12,570</b>	<b>33,430</b>	<b>13,720</b>
	Panel Waters	6,970	6,670	19,440	10,440
	Non-Panel Waters	6,020	5,910	14,000	3,280
<b>Total</b>		<b>66,110</b>	<b>65,600</b>	<b>72,160</b>	<b>39,390</b>

\* Recent LFA Recreational catches may be projected based on a scalar applied to Mission Escapement.

\*\* Alaska catch is processed post-season and so is unavailable in-season.