



600 – 1155 ROBSON STREET
VANCOUVER, B.C. V6E 1B5
TELEPHONE: (604) 684-8081
FAX: (604) 666-8707

No. 9

WEEKLY REPORT

September 8, 2017

The Fraser River Panel (Panel) met today to review assessment data on Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon. Test fishing catches of sockeye and pink salmon have declined in both Johnstone and Juan de Fuca Straits this past week. Consistent with the pre-season schedule, marine area purse seine test fisheries have been terminated in both areas. Overall, the test fishing catches indicate that the abundances of sockeye and pink salmon remain much 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 have declined substantially this past week and are also tracking at levels much lower than pre-season expectations. The abundance of pink salmon entering the river has increased substantially and pink salmon are the predominant species in 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 2% Early Summer-run, 54% Summer-run and 44% Late-run sockeye. Analyses of recent DNA samples collected from the Area 12 test fishery indicate that 75% of the pink salmon encountered are of Fraser River origin, 19% are from Puget Sound, and 6% are from Canadian South Coast stocks.

The estimated diversion rates of Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon through Johnstone Strait are estimated to be 85% and 84%, respectively, based on recent purse seine test fishery catches in the two approach areas.

Management Groups

Fraser River Sockeye Salmon

The Panel adopted final in-season estimates for all sockeye management groups. The final adopted in-season estimates and timing are as follows: Early Stuart run-size estimate of 47,000 fish with July 4 timing; Early Summer-run run-size estimate of 165,000 with August 4 timing; Summer-run run-size estimate of 1,044,000 with August 11 timing, and Late-run run-size estimate of 231,000 with August 16 timing.

Daily abundances of all sockeye salmon tracked well below their median forecast levels for 2017. As of September 7, the Mission hydroacoustics program estimated 46,400 Early Stuart, 161,900 Early Summer, 1,009,900 Summer, and 139,400 Late-run sockeye.

Fraser River Pink Salmon

At Tuesday's meeting, the Panel adopted an interim pink run size estimate for management purposes of 4,500,000 with a 50% peak migration timing through Juan de Fuca Strait of August 23. At today's meeting, the Panel adopted a further decrease to the estimated Fraser River pink salmon run of 3,700,000 with a 50% peak migration timing through Juan de Fuca Strait of August 19th. The estimate of peak migration time is tied for the earliest timing on record (tied with 1961; in records dating back to 1959). The estimated escapement of pink salmon past Mission through September 7 is 1,817,500 fish.

Environmental Update

On September 7, the Fraser River water discharge at Hope was about 1,884cms, which is approximately 21% lower than average for this date. The temperature of the Fraser River at Qualark on September 7 was 18.1°C, which is 2.1°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 1,688 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 sixth weekly report. Visual surveys have been ongoing in the North/South Thompson and the sockeye observed in the system are at or near peak of spawn. A total of 4,190 sockeye have passed through the fence at Scotch Creek. In the Lower Fraser, a survey was conducted in the Upper Pitt River system and sockeye salmon are holding in the Upper Pitt River but sockeye in Corbold Creek and Upper Pitt Channel are near peak of spawn. Nathatlatch River sockeye are also in peak of spawn. The Gates Creek spawning channel which has been operational since August 14 has counted 2,217 sockeye into the channel and sockeye salmon in the creek are in the early stages of spawning. The Nadina River spawning channel has been operational since August 23 and 1,457 sockeye salmon have been counted into the channel to date and the fish are primarily holding and in good condition. An aerial survey was done on the Upper Bowron River and tributaries and sockeye are reported to be at or near peak of spawn. A survey was also conducted on Taseko Lake but only one carcass was recovered to date. A total of 204,678 Chilko sockeye salmon and 56,943 Quesnel sockeye salmon have passed their respective sonar sites as of August 29. Visual surveys have also been conducted in the Quesnel system and sockeye in the Horsely River are reported to be in the early stages of spawning. All sockeye observed in the Raft River are reported to be at or near peak of spawn. The Stellako River hydroacoustic site has been operational since August 30 and as of September 5th 11,709 sockeye have past the sonar site. A mark-recapture study began on the Late Stuart August 30 and 1,199 tags have been applied to date. A visual survey on the Bridge River was conducted September 4 and sockeye are reported to be in the early stages of spawning. The Birkenhead hydroacoustic site has been operational since August 24 and 2,311 sockeye salmon have passed as of September 5. Visual surveys of live counts, dead recovery and water temperature monitoring continue on the Harrison-Lillooet population. At Sweltzer Creek (Cultus), a total of 116 sockeye have passed through the fence as of September 5. Six sockeye have been retained for broodstock to date.

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:

Remain closed to commercial salmon fishing.

The Panel will be updated periodically on run status and test fishing updates. This is the last in-season Weekly Report for the 2017 season. 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 http://www.psc.org/info_testfishing.htm .
DFO's Environmental Watch program	http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/science/habitat/frw-rfo/index-eng.html

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: Sep. 8, 2017

Week of: Sep. 3 - Sep. 9, 2017	Sockeye				Pink	
	Management Group				Total Fraser	Total Fraser
	E.Stuart	E.Summer	Summer	Late		
Mission passage (includes Pitt, Alouette, Coquitlam)	46,400	161,900	1,009,900	139,400	1,357,600	1,817,500
Catch downstream of Mission	200	2,000	17,300	5,000	24,500	135,200
Accounted run-to-date	46,600	163,900	1,027,200	144,400	1,382,100	1,952,700
Run size adopted in-season¹	47,000	165,000	1,044,000	231,000	1,487,000	3,700,000
Run size forecasted pre-season	99,000	343,000	3,407,000	583,000	4,432,000	8,693,000
Area 20 timing adopted in-season	4/Jul	4/Aug	11/Aug	16/Aug		19/Aug
Area 20 timing expected pre-season	1/Jul	20/Jul	6/Aug	14/Aug		28/Aug

¹ 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: Sep. 8, 2017

Week of: Sep. 3 - Sep. 9, 2017		Sockeye		Pink	
		Total	Fraser	Total	Fraser
Canada		61,440	61,350	29,750	19,910
Commercial		0	0	0	0
	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
First Nations		61,330	61,240	29,370	19,530
	Food, Social & Ceremonial (FSC)	61,330	61,240	29,370	19,530
	Marine	9,300	9,200	24,800	14,960
	Fraser R.	52,010	52,010	4,570	4,600
	Economic Opportunity (EO) & Demonstration (Demo)	0	0	0	0
	Marine	0	0	0	0
	Fraser R.	0	0	0	0
Recreational		0	0	0	0
	Marine	0	0	0	0
	Fraser R. *	0	0	0	0
Charter (Albion gillnet test fishery)		110	110	380	380
United States		1,500	1,400	124,990	104,480
Commercial		0	0	124,820	104,360
	Treaty Indian (TI)	0	0	111,310	93,330
	All Citizen (AC)	0	0	13,510	11,030
Treaty Indian Ceremonial & Subsistence (C&S)		1,500	1,400	170	120
All Citizen Recreational		0	0	0	0
Alaska *		na	na	na	na
Panel-approved Test Fisheries		13,890	13,470	36,880	15,120
	Panel Waters	7,340	7,030	20,750	11,340
	Non-Panel Waters	6,560	6,450	16,130	3,780
Total		76,830	76,260	191,620	139,510

* 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.