

No. 3 NEWS RELEASE July 13, 2001

The passage of Early Stuart sockeye salmon through Juan de Fuca Strait is nearing completion. Revised racial identification estimates of Early Stuart proportions resulted in a small downsizing of the run which is now projected to reach 230,000 fish. The escapement of this stock past the Mission hydroacoustic site now stands at 194,000 fish. The revision to the racial identification data produced a slightly earlier estimate of the peak or 50% arrival date. PSC staff project that the Early Stuart sockeye run was four days earlier than average. Age 5 fish comprised about 50% of the 2001 return and were a few days earlier arriving than age 4 fish.

Revised estimates of Early Summer sockeye numbers in Area 20 test fishing catches and at Mission indicate that these stocks are also returning somewhat earlier than average. On Tuesday, July 10, the Panel approved adopting an estimate of Early Summer sockeye arrival timing four days earlier than average. Much of this earlier timing is associated with the early arrival of age 5 fish, although age 4 Early Summer sockeye have been identified in samples from the Fraser River since June 28th. The age composition of Early Summer sockeye that have arrived at Mission is approximately 83% age 5 fish and 17% age 4 sockeye. The escapement of Early Summer sockeye past Mission is estimated at 49,000 fish. Current assessment suggests that the Early Summer sockeye run is either earlier than currently projected (i.e., four days early) and/or is larger than the pre-season 50% probability level forecast, likely because of the large return of age 5 sockeye. Fisheries and Oceans Canada has monitored early arrival of Early Summer sockeye salmon into Chilliwack Lake, in the lower Fraser watershed.

Analyses of Canadian Area 20 test fishing scale samples show that Summer-run sockeye stocks have begun arriving in Juan de Fuca Strait. Late Stuart sockeye predominate in the Summer-run sockeye being identified. These fish are primarily age 5 sockeye from the successful 1996 brood year spawning. In 2000, approximately 800,000 age 4 Late Stuart sockeye returned from ocean rearing areas. Now age 5 fish are arriving earlier than the age 4 component of the 2001 run. Chilko and Quesnel sockeye have also been identified in the samples, but in lower proportions. DFO has provided the Panel with a forecast of arrival timing for Summer-run sockeye that is two days earlier than average. The proportions of Summer-run sockeye in scale samples are expected to rise to high levels within a short time because of the expected numerical predominance of this run-timing group in the 2001 return of Fraser River sockeye.

Environmental conditions in the Fraser River remain within acceptable limits for sockeye salmon migration. The water level in the river is currently at 4,800 cms and falling. Water temperatures at Hells Gate are approaching 18 C. Heating of the river water during the recent warm period may accelerate if water levels begin to drop. The Panel is concerned that en route mortality may occur if river water temperatures continue to rise.

Fisheries in Panel Area waters remain closed to commercial fishing for the conservation of Early Stuart and Early Summer sockeye salmon. The commencement of a commercial closure of all fishing during the peak migration of the Early Summer sockeye run was adjusted from July 14 to July 10 in Area 20. This closure will move toward the river at the migration speed of sockeye salmon and will result in a two-week closure in all commercial/recreational fisheries, sequentially.

2001 Fraser River Panel Sockeye Review

Week of: Jul. 8 - Jul. 14, 2001

Date: July 13, 2001

| Area | Gear | Weekly Catch | %Fraser | Fraser Sockeye | |
|---|-------|--------------|---------|----------------|---------|
| | | | | Weekly | Cumul. |
| Commercial Catch | | | | | |
| <u>Canada</u> | | | | | |
| Areas 1-10 | Net | | | | 0 |
| Areas 1-10 | Troll | | | | 0 |
| Areas 124-27,11-12 | Troll | | | | 0 |
| Areas 11-16 | Net | | | | 0 |
| Areas 12-16 | Troll | | | | 0 |
| Areas 17-18-29 | Troll | | | | 0 |
| Area 20 | Net | | | | 0 |
| Area 29 | Net | | | | 0 |
| Canadian Total | | | | | 0 |
| <u>United States</u> | | | | | |
| Alaska | Net | | | | 0 |
| <u>Washington</u> | | | | | |
| T.I. Areas 4B/5/6C | Net | | | | 0 |
| T.I. Areas 6/7/7A | Net | | | | 0 |
| N.I. Areas 7/7A | Net | | | | 0 |
| Washington Total | | | | | 0 |
| U.S. Total | | | | | 0 |
| Non-commercial Catch | | | | | |
| PSC Test | | | | | 5,700 |
| Other Test | | | | | 0 |
| Canadian Selective | | | | | 0 |
| Fraser River Aboriginal | | | | | 9,200 |
| Areas 12-124 Aboriginal | | | | | 500 |
| Recreational | | | | | 0 |
| Charter | | | | | 700 |
| U.S. TI Ceremonial | | | | | 0 |
| Non-comm. Total | | | | | 16,100 |
| Catch and Escapement | | | | | |
| Catch Accounted-to-date | | | | | 16,100 |
| Potential Net Escapement (Mission esc. less Aboriginal & sport catch above Mission) | | | | | 233,800 |
| Total Accounted-to-date | | | | | 249,900 |

Gross Escapement (includes Pitt R. sockeye)

| Run | Stock/Group | Adjusted Target | Mission Esc. | FN Below Mission | Total Esc. | % Complete |
|------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------|------------------|------------|------------|
| EStu | Early Stuart | - | 192,200 | 2,100 | 194,300 | - |
| ESum | Early Summer | - | 48,700 | 100 | 48,800 | - |
| Summ | Chilko | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | - |
| | L.Stu./Stel./Ques. | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | - |
| Late | Birkenhead | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | - |
| | Weav/L.Misc. | - | 0 | 0 | 0 | - |