

Friday, August 24, 2001

The Fraser Panel met Friday August 24 to review the status of the sockeye and pink salmon migrations. The estimate of Summer-run sockeye abundance remains at approximately 5,000,000 fish. The total return of Late-run sockeye is projected now to reach 550,000 fish, close to the 50% probability level forecast of 528,000. The early upstream migration of Late-run sockeye stocks is continuing in 2001. This behavioral phenomenon first became obvious in 1996 and has continued each year since. These stocks have suffered high en route and pre-spawning mortality associated with early river entry. The continued viability and productivity of these stocks has become a major concern to the Panel.

During the past week, catches of Fraser pink salmon have been increasing in purse seine test fisheries in Johnstone Strait. Fisheries and Oceans Canada has forecast that the 50% date for the Fraser pink salmon migration in Area 20 will be approximately September 2. Approximately 64% of the pink migration is forecast to migrate through Johnstone Strait.

All Panel Area fisheries remain closed for the conservation of Late-run sockeye. The Panel will meet again at 11:00 a.m., Tuesday, August 28th to review the status of Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon stocks.