

NO. 6 NEWS RELEASE July 28, 2000

The Fraser River Panel met three times this week to decide upon fisheries management action for the harvest of Fraser River sockeye salmon. Early in the week, PSC staff provided information that led the Panel to adopt in-season run-size estimates for the Early Summer sockeye stocks. While the pre-season forecast was for a return of 289,000 to 547,000 fish, the in-season update adopted on July 25 was for a return of 800,000 fish. At this run size, the total allowable catch (TAC) for international sharing was 333,000. Fisheries in Canadian Area 29 (Fraser River and Strait of Georgia) and United States Areas 6,7 and 7A (San Juan Islands and Point Roberts) commenced Wednesday, July 26. These were the first commercial fisheries in these areas since 1998. On July 26, catches in the Area 29 commercial gillnet fishery are estimated at 150,000 sockeye and in the United States Treaty Indian fishery, 50,000 sockeye. In addition, the Treaty Indian fishery in Areas 4B, 5 and 6C (Juan de Fuca Strait) which opened on July 21 has caught 33,000 sockeye. Other fisheries in Canada and the United States are ongoing at the writing of this release.

Approximately, 520,000 Early Summer sockeye have been estimated in escapement and catch. Of this total, 381,000 have passed the Mission hydroacoustic site or have been harvested in Canadian First Nations fisheries in the Fraser River below Mission. The gross escapement target for these stocks is now set at 555,000 fish. In addition, an escapement of approximately 155,000 Summer-run sockeye have been estimated at Mission, which includes First Nations catches.

The focus of Panel management now has turned toward Summer-run sockeye, as these stocks are predominant in the approach routes to the Fraser River. The DFO pre-season forecast for these stocks (Chilko, Stellako, Late Stuart and Quesnel) was for a total abundance of 1,564,000 (75% probability level) to 2,668,000 (50% prob. level) fish with the Chilko stocks contribution slightly over 50% of the number. Test fishing in Area 20 (Juan de Fuca Strait) and Area 12 (Johnstone Strait) have indicated that the abundance may be within this range, but the estimation models currently do not provide adequate certainty as to the actual abundance for the Panel to adopt an in-season estimate at today's meeting. An initial estimate could be made as early as Tuesday, August 1.

The Panel expressed concern regarding the relatively weak showing to date of Chilko sockeye in escapement and catch. While the forecast was for a modest return (50% probability level = 1,444,000; 75% prob. level = 931,000), current racial proportions show Chilko comprises 25-40% of the Summer-run abundance versus pre-season forecast proportions of about 50%. The arrival timing of Chilko sockeye may be slightly later than other Summer-run sockeye stocks, but the relatively low proportions of Chilko causes concern. Fisheries in Panel Area waters will remain closed after the completion of on-going fishing this week. The review scheduled for early next week, will provide the Panel with the information needed to identify any fishing opportunities for next week.

Early Stuart sockeye have begun to arrive at Fort St. James in the past few days. These fish have taken approximately 15-16 days to travel from Hells Gate to the outlet of Stuart Lake, compared to an average time of 13 days. This longer travel time could be due to high water conditions in the Fraser River. These fish appear to have been delayed in the Fraser Canyon for up to a week before passing Hells Gate.

Gate Creek sockeye (an Early Summer stock) have been observed at Seton Dam and in Portage Creek between Seton and Anderson Lakes. This is the year of the "dominant" cycle return for this stock. DFO will provide escapement information for other Early Summer sockeye stocks as information from spawning grounds become available.

The Panel will meet by telephone conference on Tuesday, August 1, to formulate fishery management plans for the week of July 30-August 5.

Fraser River Panel Sockeye Review

Week of: [Jul. 23 - Jul. 29, 2000](#)

Date: July 28, 2000

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				125,000
Canadian Total					125,000
<u>United States</u>					
Alaska	Net				0
<u>Washington</u>					
T.I. Areas 4B/5/6C	Net				30,300
T.I. Areas 6/7/7A	Net				48,100
N.I. Areas 7/7A	Net				0
Washington Total					78,400
U.S. Total					78,400
Non-commercial Catch					
PSC Test					49,700
Other Test					800
Fraser River Aboriginal					274,400
Areas 12-124 Aboriginal					8,300
Recreational					0
Charter					3,000
U.S. TI Ceremonial					1,900
Non-comm. Total					338,100
Catch and Escapement					
Catch Accounted-to-date					541,500
Potential Net Escapement (Mission esc. less Aboriginal & sport catch above Mission)					616,300
Total Accounted-to-date					1,157,800

Gross Escapement (includes Pitt R. sockeye)

Run	Stock/Group	Adjusted Target	Mission Esc.	AFS Below Mission	Total Esc.	% Complete
EStu	Early Stuart	359,600	328,100	26,300	354,400	99%
ESum	Early Summer	554,800	361,300	19,600	380,900	69%
Summ	Chilko		28,500	1,400	155,400	n/a
	L.Stu./Stel./Ques.		117,800	7,700		n/a
Late	Birkenhead		0	0	0	n/a
	Adam/LShu		0	0		
	Weav/L.Misc.		0	0		