

**NO. 8 NEWS RELEASE August 13, 1999**

All Fraser River Panel Area commercial fisheries remained closed this past week as PSC staff continued to assess the abundance of Summer-run sockeye salmon and to develop an initial in-season estimate of Late-run sockeye numbers. Mission hydroacoustic estimates of daily escapement were lower than projected based on test fishing catches in Juan de Fuca Strait (Area 20) and Johnstone Strait (Areas 12 and 13) assessment programs. A total of 242,000 Summer-run sockeye migrated past Mission in the period of August 6-12, bringing the total gross escapement of Summer-run stocks to 715,000 fish. The current in-season estimate of Summer-run stock abundance based on estimates of catch and escapement along with projections from marine test fishing catches remains at 1,400,000 fish compared to the pre-season forecast of 5,328,000 fish.

The abundance of Late-run sockeye stocks (including Adams, Birkenhead and Weaver stock groups) was set at a provisional level of 1,100,000 fish on August 6. Increased abundance of sockeye in Johnstone Strait late this week may provide the data needed to make an in-season assessment based on test fishing catches. Birkenhead sockeye salmon have begun entering the Fraser River and the gross escapement of this group now stands at 22,000 fish. Troll test fishing in the Strait of Georgia began this week to assess the numbers of Late-run sockeye accumulating there. Catches were low, but it is expected there will be a build-up of these stocks over the next three weeks.

The total return of Fraser River sockeye salmon for 1999 is now projected at approximately 3,050,000 fish compared to the pre-season forecast of 8,248,000 sockeye salmon.

The arrival timing of sockeye salmon continues to be close to the long-term average as forecast by Fisheries and Oceans Canada. Summer-run stocks appear to have peaked on August 3-4 (Area 20 timing). Late-run sockeye are expected to have peak arrival timing near their average date for the cycle of August 14 (Area 20). The Johnstone Strait diversion of sockeye has been difficult to estimate; however, over 50% of Fraser sockeye have arrived via the northern (Johnstone Strait) approach route this week.

Observations of sockeye salmon passage at Hells Gate this week indicated that sockeye were successfully migrating in expected numbers. River water levels remain high for this time of year with a discharge of approximately 6,000 cubic meters per second (cms) at Hope compared to the long-term average of about 4,000 cms.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada staff today reported that increasing numbers of Early Stuart sockeye salmon are now arriving in good condition at their natal streams in the Stuart River watershed. These fish were impeded in their migration by the high water in the Fraser Canyon and were first observed passing Hells Gate on July 20. The timing of first arrivals at the spawning grounds was 11 days later than previously observed. A more optimistic outlook for the spawning of this stock has emerged with the reports in recent days although no estimates are currently available.

The Panel announced that all Panel Area commercial fisheries will remain closed. The Panel will meet again Tuesday, August 17, to review the progress of the Summer-run sockeye salmon escapement and the arrival of Late-run sockeye in Juan de Fuca and Johnstone Straits.

## Fraser River Panel Sockeye Review

Week of: [Aug. 8 - Aug. 14, 1999](#)

Date: August 13, 1999

Area	Gear	Weekly Catch	%Fraser	Fraser Sockeye	
				Weekly	Cumul.
<b>Commercial Catch</b>					
<b>Canada</b>					
Areas 1-10	Net				0
Areas 1-10	Troll				0
Areas 124-27,11-12	Troll				2,300
Areas 11-16	Net				39,000
Areas 12-16	Troll				12,000
Areas 17-18-29	Troll				0
Area 20	Net				0
Area 29	Net				600
Canadian Total					53,900
<b>United States</b>					
Alaska	Net				0
<b>Washington</b>					
T.I. Areas 4B/5/6C	Net				18,600
T.I. Areas 6/7/7A	Net				0
N.I. Areas 7/7A	Net			0	0
U.S. Total				0	18,600
<b>Non-commercial Catch</b>					
PSC Test					39,000
Other Test					46,000
Fraser River Aboriginal					177,100
Areas 12-124 Aboriginal					35,000
Recreational					0
Charter					0
U.S. TI Ceremonial					0
Non-comm. Total					297,100
<b>Catch and Escapement</b>					
Catch Accounted-to-date					369,600
Potential Net Escapement (Mission esc. less Aboriginal & sport catch above Mission)					1,041,300
Total Accounted-to-date					1,410,900

### Gross Escapement (includes Pitt R. sockeye)

Run	Stock/Group	Esc. Goal	Mission Esc.	AFS Below Mission	Total Esc.	% Complete
EStu	Early Stuart	146,000	135,200	200	135,400	93%
ESum	Early Summer		337,000	9,000	346,000	n/a
Summ	Quesnel/Chilko		509,500	15,400	714,900	n/a
	Late Stuart/Stellako		183,500	6,500		
Late	Birkenhead		21,400	700	22,100	n/a
	Adam/Lshu		0	0		
	Weav/L Misc.		0	0		