



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

No. 6

WEEKLY REPORT

August 18, 2017

The Fraser River Panel (Panel) met today to review assessment data on Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon. Test fishing catches continue to indicate that the abundances of sockeye salmon remain less than expected for the time of year relative to pre-season expectations of abundance and arrival timing. Levels of sockeye salmon escapement past lower river assessment areas are also tracking less than pre-season expectations. Pink salmon catches in the marine area purse seine test fishery located in Juan de Fuca Strait increased in recent days and current estimates suggest that less than half of the migration is occurring in Johnstone Strait. Over the past week, the observer at Hells Gate reported an increase in both sockeye and pink salmon migration past the site.

Run Status

DNA analysis of a fish sample recently collected from the Area 20 purse seine test fishery indicated Fraser sockeye contributions of approximately 2% Early Summer-run, 71% Summer-run, which mostly consists of Chilko/Quesnel fish, and 27% Late-run sockeye. Analyses of recent DNA samples collected from the Area 12 test fishery indicate that 30% of the pink salmon encountered are of Fraser River origin, 15% are from Puget Sound, and 55% are from South Coast stocks.

The estimated diversion rate of sockeye salmon through Johnstone Strait is similar to last week at 78% while the diversion rate of Fraser pink salmon has decreased to 44%, based on recent purse seine test fishery catches in the two approach areas.

Management Groups

Fraser River Sockeye Salmon

At today's meeting, the Panel's adopted an Early Summer-run run size of 150,000 with a peak Area 20 timing of August 2. Changes to future estimates are possible as the migration through assessment areas is not yet complete. The abundance of Pitt sockeye is still the predominate component of the Early Summer-run group. The estimated escapement of Early Summer-run sockeye past Mission through August 17 is 128,900 fish.

Summer-run sockeye continue to be the dominant management group in marine area samples. No changes were made to the current in-season estimate of 1,250,000. The Summer run is still tracking well below the p25 forecast (1,861,000) and much closer to the p10 forecast (1,065,000). The estimated escapement of Summer-run sockeye past Mission through August 17 is 495,300 fish.

Late-run sockeye are currently tracking well below the p50 run size of 583,000. During the call today the Panel adopted a provisional run size of 247,000 (p25 forecast) for management purposes, with a peak Area 20 timing of August 18. The estimated escapement of Late-run sockeye past Mission through August 17 is 37,300 fish.

Fraser River Pink Salmon

Current Fraser River pink salmon abundance data are insufficient to generate a credible in-season estimate of the total return at this time. The estimated escapement of pink salmon past Mission through August 17 is 180,800 fish.

Environmental Update

On August 17, the Fraser River water discharge at Hope was about 2,505cms, which is approximately 23%

lower than average for this date. The temperature of the Fraser River at Qualark on August 17 was 19.0°C, which is 0.9°C higher than average for this date. DFO's Environmental Watch program projects that river temperature will decrease and remain at above average values for the time of year, while discharge is forecast to decrease to 2,257cms 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 third weekly report. The Early Stuart sockeye are at the tail end of peak die off. The Scotch Creek fence has been in place since August 9. To date no sockeye have passed through the fence; however, they have been observed holding downstream of the fence. Visual surveys began on the North/South Thompson on August 16. No sockeye have been observed. A Lower Fraser survey on the Upper Chilliwack River was conducted Aug 15, and the sockeye are approaching peak of spawn. They appear vigorous and healthy. A total of 621 Chilko sockeye and 544 Quesnel sockeye have passed their respective sonar sites as of August 15. At Sweltzer Creek (Cultus), a total of 18 sockeye have passed through the fence. These sockeye salmon appear vigorous and healthy.

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 next in-season meeting of the Panel is scheduled to occur on August 22. Weekly reports in this series will be provided by the Panel through the Commission every Friday during the in-season management period to inform those interested in the progress of the Fraser River sockeye salmon run. 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: Aug. 18, 2017

Week of: Aug. 13 - Aug. 19, 2017	Sockeye				Pink	
	Management Group				Total Fraser	Total Fraser
	E.Stuart	E.Summer	Summer	Late		
Mission passage (includes Pitt, Alouette, Coquitlam)	46,400	128,900	495,300	37,300	707,900	180,800
Catch downstream of Mission	200	1,300	7,400	800	9,700	8,200
Accounted run-to-date	46,600	130,200	502,700	38,100	717,600	189,000
Run size adopted in-season¹	46,000	150,000	1,250,000	247,000	1,693,000	na
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	2/Aug	14/Aug	18/Aug		na
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: Aug. 18, 2017

Week of: Aug. 13 - Aug. 19, 2017		Sockeye		Pink	
		Total	Fraser	Total	Fraser
Canada		11,220	11,220	240	210
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		11,190	11,190	240	210
	Food, Social & Ceremonial (FSC)	11,190	11,190	240	210
	Marine	0	0	30	0
	Fraser R.	11,190	11,190	210	200
	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)		0	0	0	0
United States		0	0	0	0
Commercial		0	0	0	0
	Treaty Indian (TI)	0	0	0	0
	All Citizen (AC)	0	0	0	0
Treaty Indian Ceremonial & Subsistence (C&S)		0	0	0	0
All Citizen Recreational		0	0	0	0
Alaska *		na	na	na	na
Panel-approved Test Fisheries		10,060	9,660	24,600	8,240
Panel Waters		5,370	5,060	10,810	4,390
Non-Panel Waters		4,700	4,600	13,800	3,840
Total		21,280	20,880	24,840	8,440

* 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.