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No. 3

WEEKLY REPORT

July 27, 2018

The Fraser River Panel (Panel) met today to review assessment data on Fraser River sockeye salmon. The migration of sockeye through both marine and Fraser River assessment areas has been modest to date. All purse seine test fisheries started this week. Catches of sockeye have been similar to those observed on past cycle years at this time of year with the exception of Cottonwood which is higher than average for this time of year. The observer at Hells Gate has reported steady sockeye migration over the past week.

Run Status

DNA analysis of a fish sample recently collected from the Area 20 purse seine test fishery indicated Fraser sockeye contributions of approximately 34% Early Summer-run (mostly Nadina and Early South Thompson), 45% Summer-run and 22% Late-run sockeye.

The estimated diversion rate, which is based on recent gillnet test fishery catches in the two approach areas, of sockeye salmon through Johnstone Strait is 17%. This is slightly lower than expected for this time of year on this cycle line.

Management Groups

The Early Stuart migration through the marine approach areas is nearing completion. At the Panel meeting today, the Panel adopted a further increase to the Early Stuart run size to 135,000 with an estimated marine 50% migration timing of July 5 in Area 20. Further updates to the in-season estimates of Early Stuart run size and timing are unlikely. The estimated escapement of Early Stuart run sockeye past Mission through July 26 is 121,700 fish.

Most components of the Early Summer-run group are represented in samples from marine test fisheries. Currently, the most abundant stocks are Nadina and Early South Thompson sockeye. Assessments of Early Summer run are ongoing, but data collected to date are consistent with the median pre-season forecast (2,155,000) or possibly larger. Early Summer-run sockeye run-size estimates should be available in mid-August after their peak migration through marine areas. The estimated escapement of Early Summer run sockeye past Mission through July 26 is 181,000 fish.

Most components of the Summer-run group are represented in samples from marine test fisheries. Currently, the most abundant stocks are Chilko and Quesnel sockeye. Assessments for the Summer-run group are ongoing. The estimated escapement of Summer-run sockeye past Mission through July 26 is 85,400.

Environmental Update

On July 26, the Fraser River water discharge at Hope was about 3,998cms, which is approximately 14% lower than average for this date. The temperature of the Fraser River at Qualark on July 26 was 18.0°C, which is 0.2°C higher than average for this date. DFO's Environmental Watch program projects that river temperature will increase and remain above average levels, while discharge is forecast to decrease to about 3,470cms over the next 10 days. Sustained water temperatures in this range can cause severe stress to

migrating sockeye and may lead to significant en route mortality. Migration conditions for Fraser sockeye will be monitored closely over the next several weeks and appropriate management actions will be taken.

Escapement Update

DFO has released their pre-season plan for spawning ground assessments (see <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/fraser/docs/Escapement/sockeye-rouge-eng.html>).

DFO reports that the Early Stuart spawning escapement assessment program has begun. The first sockeye was observed in the terminal area on July 21 and cyclic surveys began July 23. Initial reports are that fish are in good condition. Sockeye have been observed in several creeks that are part of the Early Stuart aggregate, primarily Middle River and Takla Lake streams.

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:

Treaty Indian Fishery:

Areas 4B, 5 and 6C: As previously announced, Open to drift gillnets 12:00 p.m. (noon), Friday, July 27, 2018, to 12:00 p.m. (noon) Tuesday, July 31, 2018.

Areas 4B, 5 and 6C: Extended for drift gillnets 12:00 p.m. (noon), Tuesday, July 31, 2018, to 12:00 p.m. (noon) Wednesday, August 01, 2018.

All Citizen Fishery:

Remains closed to commercial salmon fishing.

The next in-season meeting of the Panel is scheduled to occur on July 31. 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

United States: Kirt Hughes, Chair, Fraser River Panel
 Canada: Jennifer Nener, Vice-chair, Fraser River Panel