



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

No. 4

WEEKLY REPORT

July 30, 2021

The Fraser River Panel (Panel) met today to review assessment data on Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon.

Test fishing and stock identification information

The purse seine test fisheries in Area 12 and Area 20 started earlier this week with relatively strong sockeye and pink salmon catches in both areas. DNA analysis of a fish sample recently collected from the Juan de Fuca Strait, Area 20 purse seine test fishery, indicated Fraser River sockeye contributions of 2% Early Stuart, 15% Early Summer, 81% Summer and 1% Late run. The majority of sockeye en route to the Fraser River are currently migrating through the Juan de Fuca Strait route rather than through Johnstone Strait. Pink salmon catches in marine area purse seine test fisheries appear to be above the recent year cycle average; however, based on the DNA sample from the Area 12 purse seine test fishery, Fraser River pink salmon only account for 7% of the sample.

Assessment results

Fraser River Sockeye Salmon

The Early Stuart migration through the marine approach areas is winding down. The current escapement plus catch of Early Stuart run sockeye is 67,400 fish.

The estimated escapement plus catch of Early Summer-run sockeye through July 29 is 18,000 fish. While most of the Early Summer-run groups have been represented in the catch samples from marine test fisheries, thus far a limited number of later timed Early Thompson sockeye have been detected. The Early Summer run group is currently tracking around the p25 forecast of 59,000, assuming preseason forecast timing of July 24. The recent increase in test fishing catches indicate that the Early Summer run could be later timed. Assuming a median historical timing of July 28, the Early Summer run would be tracking closer to the p50 forecast of 108,000 sockeye. At this time, it is still too early to provide an in-season run size estimate, given the limited Early Summer run in catch and escapement.

For Summer run sockeye only a very limited number of fish have been observed in the marine and in-river test fisheries. The escapement plus catch as of July 29 is 14,500 sockeye.

Fraser River Pink Salmon

It is still very early in terms of pink salmon assessments. While Fraser River pink salmon have been caught by the marine purse seine test fisheries in low proportions, pinks have not yet been observed migrating past Mission.

Migration conditions in the Fraser River

The extreme heat wave and wildfires that affected much of western North America, are likely impacting migration conditions for Fraser River sockeye. On July 29, the temperature of the Fraser River at Hope was 18.7°C, which is 0.4°C higher than average for this date. The Fraser River water discharge at Hope was 3,039cms, which is 32% lower than average for this date. DFO's Environmental Watch program projects that river temperature will increase, and discharge is forecast to decrease to 2,653cms over the next 6 days. The upstream migration of sockeye is expected to be negatively impacted by these migration conditions.

At Big Bar, the discharge is below average. All salmon arriving at Big Bar seem to be able to pass the slide using the nature-like fishway and there is little or no delay in upstream migration. As of July 26, a total of 81,597 salmon have been detected at the Churn Creek telemetry site 40km upstream of Big Bar. Sockeye stocks with spawning grounds in the watershed upstream of the rockslide need about 10 days to migrate from the Lower Fraser River to the rockslide location. Based on pre-season timing forecasts for Early Summer run, we would expect peak migration passing the rockslide around August 9. As of July 26, 159 sockeye have been tagged in the lower Fraser near Matsqui and 467 Early Stuart sockeye have been collected for broodstock.

Escapement Update

DFO reports that the Early Stuart spawning escapement assessment program has begun. Cyclic visual surveys began July 25, and while sockeye have been observed at the mouth of Narrows Creek, no sockeye have been observed in any spawning streams to date. The Nadina and Stellako River hydroacoustic sites have been operational since July 24 and July 25, respectively, and no sockeye have been observed. The counting fence at Sweltzer Creek (Cultus Lake) was fish tight as of July 26 and no sockeye have been observed through the fence to date.

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 3. 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 https://www.psc.org/publications/fraser-panel-in-season-information/test-fishing-results/
DFO's Environmental Watch program	http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/science/habitat/frw-rfo/index-eng.html
Province of B.C.: Big Bar Landslide Incident	https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/plants-animals-ecosystems/fish/fish-passage/big-bar-landslide-incident?keyword=big&keyword=bar&keyword=landslide
DFO: Salmon counts at the Big Bar landslide site	https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/pacific-smon-pacifique/big-bar-landslide-eboulement/smon-count-denombrement-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

2021 Run status of Fraser sockeye salmon

Date: Jul. 30, 2021

Week of: Jul. 25 - Jul. 31, 2021	Sockeye				Pink	
	Management Group				Total	Total
	E.Stuart	E.Summer	Summer	Late	Fraser	Fraser
Mission passage (includes Pitt, Alouette, Coquitlam) ¹	66,900	17,400	13,500	0	97,800	0
Catch downstream of Mission	500	500	1,100	0	2,100	100
Accounted run-to-date	67,400	17,900	14,600	0	99,900	100
Run size adopted in-season ¹	65,000	na	na	na	na	na
Run size forecasted pre-season	18,000	108,000	1,046,000	159,000	1,331,000	3,009,000
Area 20 timing adopted in-season	4-Jul	na	na	na		na
Area 20 timing expected pre-season	5-Jul	24-Jul	5-Aug	13-Aug		25-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.

2021 Catch-to-date by fishery

Date: Jul. 30, 2021

Week of: Jul. 25 - Jul. 31, 2021		Sockeye		Pink	
		Total	Fraser	Total	Fraser
Canada		16	16	0	0
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		0	0	0	0
	Food, Social & Ceremonial (FSC)	0	0	0	0
	Marine	0	0	0	0
	Fraser R.	0	0	0	0
	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)		16	16	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		2,728	2,430	977	70
Panel Waters		1,714	1,597	636	58
Non-Panel Waters		1,014	833	341	12
Total		2,744	2,446	977	70

* Alaska catch is processed post-season and so is unavailable in-season.