



PACIFIC SALMON COMMISSION

ESTABLISHED BY TREATY BETWEEN CANADA
AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
MARCH 18, 1985

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NEWS RELEASE

August 29, 2014

The Fraser River Panel met today to review assessment data on Fraser River sockeye salmon. The migration of sockeye through marine and lower Fraser River assessment areas as well as past the Mission hydroacoustic site has remained strong; similar to last week. The observer at Hells Gate has also reported a steady level of sockeye migration over the past week with fish being in good condition. Extremely high fractions of Fraser sockeye continue to be migrating via the Johnstone Strait route; an estimate of more than 95% for the past week, which is unprecedented.

DNA analysis of a fish sample collected from a recent Area 12 purse seine test fishery indicated Fraser sockeye contributions by stock group of approximately 1% Early Summer-run, 41% Summer-run and 58% Late-run. Early Summer-run proportions have declined relative to last week suggesting that their marine migration is virtually complete. Summer-run and Late-run proportions remain strong relative to last week's samples.

At the meeting on August 26th, the Panel adopted a run-size for the Early Summer-run group of 2.0 million fish with a median timing through Juan de Fuca Strait of August 8th. At the meeting today, the Panel adopted a run-size for the Early Summer-run group of 1.9 million with a timing of August 8th. Future changes to the run-size estimates for the aggregate are expected to be relatively small. The estimated escapement of Early Summer-run sockeye past Mission through August 28th is 1,129,600 fish.

At the meeting on August 26th, the Panel adopted a run-size for the Summer-run group of 6.0 million fish. At the meeting today the Panel adopted a run size for the group of 7.0 million with a median timing through Juan de Fuca Strait of August 16th. Assessments of Summer-run sockeye abundance are ongoing. The estimated escapement of Summer-run sockeye past Mission through August 28th is 2,428,500 fish.

At the meeting today, the Panel chose to not change the pre-season adopted run-size for the Late-run group of 12.73 million fish with a median timing through Juan de Fuca Strait of August 22nd. Late-run sockeye abundances have increased in marine areas and some Late-run sockeye have migrated upstream past Mission. The estimated escapement of Late-run sockeye past Mission through August 28th is 462,500 fish. The second troll survey of Georgia Strait was completed yesterday. Catches in that survey suggest that approximately 2.5 million Late-run sockeye are estimated to be delaying their upstream migration in Georgia Strait.

On August 28th, the Fraser River water discharge at Hope was 2,146 cms, which is 24% below the average for this date. The temperature of the Fraser River at Qualark Creek on August 28th was 18.9°C, which is 2.1°C above average for this date. River temperatures are forecast to decrease to 16.6°C by September 3rd. No changes were made to the management adjustments at the meeting today. Management adjustments are additional fish that are allowed to escape upstream to help achieve spawning escapement targets for Fraser River sockeye.

Details of DFO's Fraser sockeye spawner enumeration plans have been posted on the DFO website (<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/fraser/docs/Escapement/sockeye-rouge-eng.html>). The fifth in-season escapement report was released yesterday. Early Stuart sockeye are past the period of peak die-off. Final surveys were conducted on August 21st. Preliminary evaluation of spawning success is well below the long-

term average of 88.9%. This project is now complete. The counting fence on Scotch Creek was fish tight on August 6th and 49,429 sockeye have been reported to have passed through the fence thus far. The hydroacoustic counter at the Eagle River began operations on August 8th. The total from six 20 minute counts per day has increased from 150 sockeye on August 19th to 665 sockeye on August 26th. The mark-recapture study on the Seymour River mark-recapture study began August 15th; to date, 266 tags have been applied and no carcasses with tags have been recovered. Migration into the river has increased since the previous reporting period with sockeye reported to be generally in good condition. The counters at Gates Creek and the Gates Creek spawning channel were operational August 8th; 39 sockeye have been counted into the channel and 2,289 counted into the creek above the channel. Visual surveys indicate that sockeye are beginning to pair up and spawn in some areas of the North and South Thompson watersheds. The second and third ground surveys of the Upper Chilliwack River were conducted this past week. Sockeye are past the period of peak spawning. A survey of Chilliwack Lake was completed on August 25th. Spawning activity was detected by a Remotely Operated Vehicle. The first surveys of the Nahatlatch River and Lake will be conducted today. The Nadina River spawning channel was operational on August 19th; to date, 13,570 sockeye have been counted into the channel. The channel operator reports that sockeye in the channel generally appear in good condition with only a few mortalities observed so far. The hydroacoustic counters (DIDSON) indicate that sockeye migration continues to increase in both the Chilko and Quesnel systems. The first visual survey of the upper Horsefly River was conducted on August 27th. Hydroacoustic counts (DIDSON) into the Stellako River have increases since the first counts on Aug 23rd. Visual surveys of Summer run populations in the North Thompson area began on August 12th. Sockeye continue to migrate into the Raft River with very little spawning activity observed to date. To date, 110 sockeye have passed through fence at Sweltzer Creek and 14 sockeye have been retained for brood stock. The water temperature in Sweltzer Creek is 24.5°C; the next update will be Thursday September 4th.

The Pacific Salmon Commission reports daily test fishing catches of sockeye salmon on its recorded message at 604-666-8200 and on the internet at: http://www.psc.org/info_testfishing.htm. In addition, Fraser River Panel news releases, fishery regulations, sockeye catch and escapement data, and sockeye salmon stock status reports are available on this website.

Environmental data collected in the Fraser River watershed through DFO's Environmental Watch program will be included in weekly in-season news releases from the Pacific Salmon Commission (<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/science/habitat/frw-rfo/index-eng.html>). Fraser River discharge levels and water temperatures will be monitored closely to guide specific Panel management actions that may be required during the in-river sockeye migratory period to help achieve escapement goals. Fraser River water temperatures are forecast to continue to decrease due to cooler air temperatures. Migration of sockeye has increased in the Thompson River and other areas of the Fraser watershed since the last report. Prior observations of sockeye have indicated that fish have generally been in good condition. More recent observations in the Thompson watershed indicate fish condition has decreased from previous reports. Reports in other areas of the Fraser watershed continue to indicate sockeye are generally in good condition. Ground crews will continue to monitor fish behavior and health in the Fraser watershed. In relation to the Mount Polley mine tailings spill that occurred on August 4th water and fish samples are continuing to be collected in the Quesnel system as well as in the Fraser River mainstem and results are being provided at the following link. <http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/eemp/incidents/2014/mount-polley.htm>.

United States fishing schedules during the season will be available for Treaty Indian fisheries through the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission at 1-800-562-6142. Non-Indian fishing schedules will be available through the National Marine Fisheries Service's Hotline in Seattle at 1-800-662-9825. Canadian commercial fishing regulations will be announced on the Fisheries and Oceans Canada recorded message at 604-666-2828 (from the lower B.C. mainland), and toll free from outside the lower B.C. mainland at 1-866-431-3474, and via fishery notices. Consult the appropriate regulatory agency regarding fisheries regulations pertaining to species other than sockeye and pink salmon in the Fraser River Panel Management Area.

The Panel announced the following regulations for Panel Area waters:

CANADIAN FRASER RIVER PANEL AREA WATERS:

As previously announced Area 18-1, 18-4, and 18-11 and Area 29-1 to 6: Open to Area H troll ITQ fishery from 12:01 a.m. Wednesday August 6, 2014 until further notice.

Area 29: Portions of 29 – 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 11 to 17: Open to Area E gillnets from 9 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Tuesday September 2, 2014.

Please refer to DFO Fishery Notices for further details.

<http://notices.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fns-sap/index-eng.cfm>).

UNITED STATES FRASER RIVER PANEL AREA WATERS:

TREATY INDIAN FISHERY:

Areas 4B, 5 and 6C: As previously announced, open for drift gillnets 12:00 p.m. (noon), Wednesday, August 27, 2014, to 12:00 p.m. (noon) Saturday, August 30, 2014.

Areas 4B, 5 and 6C: Extended for drift gillnets from 12:00 p.m. (noon) Saturday, August 30, 2014 through 12:00 p.m. (noon) Wednesday, September 3, 2014.

Areas 6, 7 and 7A: As previously announced, open for net fishing from 5:00 a.m. Wednesday, August 27, 2014 through 9:00 a.m. Saturday, August 30, 2014.

Areas 6, 7 and 7A: Extend for net fishing from 9:00 a.m. Saturday, August 30, 2014 through 9:00 a.m. Sunday, August 31.

Areas 6, 7 and 7A: Open for net fishing from 12:01 a.m. (midnight) Tuesday, September 2, 2014 through 9:00 a.m. Wednesday, September 3, 2014.

ALL CITIZEN FISHERY:

Area 7 and 7A: Open to purse seines from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Sunday, August 31, 2014.

Area 7 and 7A: Open to gillnets from 8:00 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. (midnight) Monday, September 1, 2014.

Area 7 and 7A: As previously announced, open to reefnets from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Friday, August 29, 2014.

Area 7 and 7A: Open to reefnets from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily from Saturday, August 30, through Tuesday, September 2, 2014.

(Note: U. S. All Citizen fishers should check the U.S. hotline and WDFW regulations before fishing as there are additional State of Washington regulations, including time restrictions that may be in effect).

Updates on the run status and catches of Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon are included in the attached tables.

The next in-season meeting of the Panel is scheduled to occur on Tuesday, September 2nd. News releases 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 runs. News releases and regulatory announcements can be obtained via http://www.psc.org/news_frpnews.htm or by subscribing to our eNews <http://tinyurl.com/PSCeNews>.

2014 Run status of Fraser sockeye salmon

Date: Aug. 29, 2014

Week of: Aug. 24 - Aug. 30, 2014	Sockeye					Total Fraser
	Management Group					
	E.Stuart	E.Summer	Summer	Late		
Mission passage (includes Pitt, Alouette, Coquitlam) Catch downstream of Mission	227,900	1,129,600	2,428,400	462,500		4,248,400
	5,400	578,600	2,748,600	1,725,100		5,057,700
Accounted run-to-date	233,300	1,708,200	5,177,000	2,187,600		9,306,100
Run size adopted in-season ¹	233,500	1,900,000	7,000,000	na		na
Run size forecasted pre-season	299,000	4,126,000	5,699,000	12,730,000		22,854,000
Area 20 timing adopted in-season	9/Jul	8/Aug	16/Aug	na		
Area 20 timing expected pre-season	7/Jul	7/Aug	15/Aug	22/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.

2014 Catch-to-date by fishery

Date: Aug. 29, 2014

Week of: Aug. 24 - Aug. 30, 2014		Sockeye	
		Total	Fraser
Canada		5,092,900	5,080,000
Commercial		4,156,800	4,147,700
	B Purse Seine	2,327,800	2,320,700
	D Gillnet	895,900	894,100
	E Gillnet	746,600	746,600
	G Troll	35,400	35,400
	H Troll	151,200	151,000
First Nations		855,600	851,800
	Food, Social & Ceremonial (FSC)	734,700	731,100
	Marine	266,600	263,300
	Fraser R.	468,100	467,700
	Economic Opportunity (EO) & Demonstration (Demo)	120,900	120,800
	Marine	0	0
	Fraser R.	120,900	120,800
Recreational		78,700	78,600
	Marine	100	100
	Fraser R. *	78,600	78,600
Charter (Albion gillnet test fishery)		1,900	1,900
United States		277,200	276,500
Commercial		274,100	273,500
	Treaty Indian (TI)	162,000	161,600
	All Citizen (AC)	112,100	111,900
Treaty Indian Ceremonial & Subsistence (C&S)		3,100	3,000
All Citizen Recreational		0	0
Alaska *		na	na
Panel-approved Test Fisheries		141,900	139,200
	Panel Waters	34,100	32,600
	Non-Panel Waters	107,800	106,600
Total		5,512,000	5,495,700

* LFA Recreational catch is currently estimated mostly based on Mission Escapement

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