



PACIFIC SALMON COMMISSION

ESTABLISHED BY TREATY BETWEEN CANADA
AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
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NEWS RELEASE

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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 been modest to date, with sockeye catches in the Area 20 gillnet test fishery remaining lower than anticipated over the past week. The observer at Hells Gate has reported steady sockeye migration over the past several days.

DNA analysis of a fish sample collected from a recent Area 20 gillnet test fishery indicated Fraser sockeye contributions of approximately 37% Early Stuart, 25% Early Summer-run, and 38% Summer-run sockeye. At the meeting today, the run-size estimate of 189,000 Early Stuart sockeye was increased to 240,000 fish. The 50% marine migration timing of Early Stuart sockeye through Area 20 is estimated to be July 9, which is 2 days later than the final pre-season forecast of July 7 and 5 days later than the long-term median timing of July 4. The estimated escapement of Early Stuart sockeye past Mission through July 17 is 160,000 fish.

Assessments of Early Summer-run sockeye abundance are ongoing. Most components of the Early Summer-run group have been represented in samples from marine test fisheries. Early Summer-run sockeye run-size estimates should be available in early August after their peak migration through marine areas. The estimated escapement of Early Summer-run sockeye past Mission through July 17 is 32,000 fish.

On July 17, the Fraser River water discharge at Hope was 4,518 cms, which is approximately 20% lower than average for this date. The temperature of the Fraser River at Qualark Creek on July 17 was 18.8°C, which is 2.8°C higher than average for this date. After reviewing environmental and stock assessment information at the Tuesday July 15 meeting, the Panel approved an increase in the management adjustment factor for Early Stuart sockeye from 0.86 to 2.12. No changes were made to the Early Stuart management adjustment at today's meeting. 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 Early Stuart escapement assessment program has begun or will begin very shortly. Regular in-season progress reports will begin starting July 31.

The Area 12 and 20 purse seine test fisheries have been rescheduled to start no earlier than Wednesday July 23 due to later than expected migration timing of Fraser sockeye stocks. These start dates will be reviewed at the next Panel meeting.

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 this summer to guide specific Panel management actions that may be required during the in-river sockeye migratory period to help achieve escapement goals.

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.

All commercial fisheries in Panel Area waters remain closed to fishing.

The next in-season meeting of the Panel is scheduled to occur on Tuesday July 22. 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>.