



# PACIFIC SALMON COMMISSION

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

**July 25, 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 been modest over the past week. In particular, sockeye catches in the Area 20 gillnet test fishery have been lower than anticipated over the past week. The observer at Hells Gate has reported steady sockeye migration over the past several days with fish being in good condition.

DNA analysis of a fish sample collected from a recent Area 20 gillnet test fishery indicated Fraser sockeye contributions of approximately 4% Early Stuart, 31% Early Summer-run, and 61% Summer-run sockeye. Summer-run proportions to date have been dominated by Harrison stock at 53% in the most recent sample. At the meeting today, the run-size estimate of 240,000 Early Stuart sockeye was unchanged. The estimated 50% marine migration timing of Early Stuart sockeye through Area 20 continues 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. Further updates to the in-season estimates of Early Stuart run size and timing are unlikely. The estimated escapement of Early Stuart sockeye past Mission through July 24 is 205,000 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 and in-river test fisheries. Data from marine test fisheries collected to date are consistent with the later timing observed in Early Stuart sockeye, and the forecast for a later-timed Chilko stock. 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 24 is 97,000 fish.

On July 24, the Fraser River water discharge at Hope was 4,903 cms, which is near average for this date. The temperature of the Fraser River at Qualark Creek on July 24 was 17.1°C, which is average for this date. After reviewing environmental and stock assessment information at today's meeting, the Panel approved a decrease in the management adjustment factor for Early Stuart sockeye from 2.12 to 1.96. No further changes are expected to be made to the Early Stuart management adjustment following today's meeting, as current estimates are based on a full complement of observed temperature and flow data. 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. Regular in-season progress reports will be provided by DFO, starting July 31.

Enforcement and catch monitoring patrols in the mid-Fraser upstream of Hells Gate have noted very few reports of holding or distressed fish. Overall, sockeye encountered incidentally have been reported in good condition. A recent rain event in the BC interior and cooler air temperatures have resulted in cooler water temperatures in many areas including the Nechako River.

At the meeting on Tuesday, July 22, the Area 12 and 20 purse seine test fisheries were re-scheduled to start on Friday, July 25 due to later migration timing of Fraser sockeye stocks than expected pre-season.

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](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 29. 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](http://www.psc.org/news_frpnews.htm) or by subscribing to our eNews <http://tinyurl.com/PSCeNews>.