



PACIFIC SALMON COMMISSION

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

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

Our File:

Your File:

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NEWS RELEASE

August 15, 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 increased over the past week. The observer at Hells Gate has also reported increased sockeye migration over the past week with fish being in good condition. Marine area test fishing catches continue to indicate that extremely high fractions of Fraser sockeye are migrating via the Johnstone Strait route; an estimate of more than 95% for the past week which is unprecedented for the time of year.

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 14% Early Summer-run, 46% Summer-run and 40% Late-run. Early Summer and Summer-run proportions have decreased and Late-run proportions have increased relative to last week's samples.

At the meeting today, the Panel adopted an Early Stuart run size of 233,500 sockeye, based on the accounted totals of 227,900 fish past Mission and 5,500 catch downstream of Mission.

At the meeting on August 12, the Panel adopted a run-size for the Early Summer-run group of 1,800,000 with a median timing through Juan de Fuca Strait of August 8th. At the meeting today, the run-size estimate of Early Summer-run sockeye was unchanged. Assessments of Early Summer-run sockeye abundance continue and changes to estimates for the more abundant and later-timed components (i.e. Early Thompson) may result in future changes to the run-size for the aggregate. The estimated escapement of Early Summer-run sockeye past Mission through August 14 is 685,200 fish.

Assessments of Summer-run sockeye abundance are ongoing. Strong marine area test fishing catches this week in Johnstone Strait have generated daily abundance estimates consistent with the median forecast level of 5.7 million sockeye if their timing is as expected (August 15th median timing through Juan de Fuca Strait). In-season run size updates for the Summer-run group should be available next week, after their peak migration through marine areas. The estimated escapement of Summer-run sockeye past Mission through August 14 is 1,061,400 fish.

Late-run sockeye abundances are increasing in marine areas and some Late-run sockeye have migrated upstream past Mission. However, it is too early in their migration to provide an in-season estimate of their total return. In-season run size updates for the Late-run group should be available soon after their expected peak migration through marine areas (August 22nd median timing through Juan de Fuca Strait). The estimated escapement of Late-run sockeye past Mission through August 14 is 103,200 fish. Additional Late-run sockeye are estimated to be delaying their migration in Georgia Strait. Catches in troll test fisheries scheduled to begin next week will be used to confirm and estimate the abundance of Late-runs holding in this area.

On August 14, the Fraser River water discharge at Hope was 2,781 cms, which is 25% below the average for this date of 3,699 cms. The temperature of the Fraser River at Qualark Creek on August 14 was 19.7°C, which is 1.9 °C above average for this date. River temperatures are forecast to increase to

20.4°C by August 19th. 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 third in-season escapement report was released yesterday. Early Stuart sockeye continue to be reported in good condition and are nearing or at the period of peak die-off in most creeks. Water levels remain low and are noted to be limiting or restricting sockeye access to some streams. The counting fence on Scotch Creek was fish tight on August 6th and 2 sockeye have been reported to have passed through the fence thus far. The counters at the Eagle River and Gates Creek were operational on August 8th. No sockeye have been observed past the counters to date. Visual surveys of Early Summer-run populations in the North Thompson areas began August 11th. No sockeye have been observed to date. An aerial survey of the Upper Chilliwack River was conducted August 12th. Sockeye appear to be in good condition and are in the early stages of peak of spawn. The Nadina Channel is expected to be operational by early next week and the channel operator reports that sockeye are holding downstream of the channel and they appear to be in good condition. The hydroacoustic counters (DIDSON) on the Chilko River were operational on August 9th. The counting fence at Sweltzer Creek was fish tight and operational as of July 28th and 15 sockeye are reported to have passed through the fence into Cultus Lake. The water temperature in Swelter Creek is 23°C; the next update will be Thursday August 21.

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 increase due to higher than normal temperatures in the Prince George area. Overall, recent observations of sockeye in the Fraser River watershed have been reported in good condition although a small number of mortalities have been observed in the BC Interior and Lower Fraser Area. Ground crews will continue to monitor fish behavior and health in the Fraser watershed.

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 12:00 PM (noon), through 6:00pm Tuesday, August 19, 2014. (Please refer to DFO Fishery Notices for further details).

Canada announced the following fishery parts of which will occur in Canadian Fraser Panel Area waters:

Areas 123 and 124: Open to Area G troll from 12:01am Sunday August 17th to 11:59pm, (midnight), Monday August 18th. (Please refer to DFO Fisheries Notice 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, for drift gillnets 12:00 p.m. (noon), Wednesday, August 13, 2014, to 12:00 p.m. (noon) Saturday, August 16, 2014.

Areas 4B, 5 and 6C: Extended for drift gillnets 12:00 p.m. (noon), Saturday, August 16, 2014, to 12:00 p.m. (noon) Wednesday, August 20, 2014.

Areas 6, 7 and 7A: As previously announced, Open for net fishing from 5:00 a.m. Friday, August 15, 2014 through 9:00 a.m. Saturday, August 16, 2014.

Areas 6, 7 and 7A: Extend for net fishing from 9:00 a.m. Saturday, August 16, 2014 through 9:00 a.m. Monday, August 18, 2014.

Areas 6, 7 and 7A: Open for net fishing from 5:00 a.m. Tuesday, August 19, 2014 through 9:00 a.m. Wednesday, August 20, 2014.

ALL CITIZEN FISHERY:

Area 7 and 7A: As previously announced, open to purse seines from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Thursday, August 14, 2014.

Area 7 and 7A: Open to purse seines from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday, August 18, 2014.

Area 7 and 7A: As previously announced, open to gillnets from 8:00 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. (midnight) Thursday, August 14, 2014.

Area 7 and 7A: Open to gillnets from 8:00 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. (midnight) Monday, August 18, 2014.

Area 7 and 7A: As previously announced, open to reefnets from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 13, 2014.

Area 7 and 7A: Open to reefnets from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday, August 18, 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, August 19. 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. 15, 2014

Week of: Aug. 10 - Aug. 16, 2014	Sockeye				Total Fraser
	Management Group				
	E.Stuart	E.Summer	Summer	Late	
Mission passage (includes Pitt, Alouette, Coquitlam)	227,900	685,100	1,061,300	103,200	2,077,500
Catch downstream of Mission	5,500	295,700	1,003,200	449,200	1,753,600
Accounted run-to-date	233,400	980,800	2,064,500	552,400	3,831,100
Run size adopted in-season¹	233,500	1,800,000	na	na	2,033,500
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	na	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. 15, 2014

Week of: Aug. 10 - Aug. 16, 2014		Sockeye	
		Total	Fraser
Canada		1,767,400	1,759,000
Commercial		1,237,000	1,231,900
	B Purse Seine	809,900	805,800
	D Gillnet	321,800	320,900
	E Gillnet	73,400	73,400
	G Troll	0	0
	H Troll	31,800	31,700
First Nations		508,000	504,700
	Food, Social & Ceremonial (FSC)	505,400	502,100
	Marine	198,800	195,900
	Fraser R.	306,600	306,200
	Economic Opportunity (EO) & Demonstration (Demo)	2,600	2,600
	Marine	0	0
	Fraser R.	2,600	2,600
Recreational		21,600	21,600
	Marine	0	0
	Fraser R.	21,600	21,600
Charter (Albion gillnet test fishery)		800	800
United States		86,500	86,200
Commercial		83,900	83,500
	Treaty Indian (TI)	57,800	57,600
	All Citizen (AC)	26,000	26,000
Treaty Indian Ceremonial & Subsistence (C&S)		2,700	2,600
All Citizen Recreational		0	0
Alaska *		na	na
Panel-approved Test Fisheries		111,900	109,200
Panel Waters		23,700	22,300
Non-Panel Waters		88,200	86,900
Total		1,965,800	1,954,400

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