



PACIFIC SALMON COMMISSION

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

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NEWS RELEASE

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The Fraser River Panel met today to review assessment data on Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon, discuss fisheries management plans for the harvest of pink salmon and review environmental conditions in the Fraser River watershed. The abundance of Fraser River sockeye migrating through Johnstone and Juan de Fuca Straits has been steady over the past week. The diversion rate of Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon through Johnstone Strait is presently estimated to be 90%, and 50%, respectively. DNA analysis of samples collected from recent test fisheries in Johnstone and Juan de Fuca Straits indicated high proportions of Summer-run sockeye with lower proportions of Late-run sockeye. The migration of sockeye past Mission has been strong over the past several days.

At the meeting today, the run size estimate of 520,000 Early Summer-run sockeye was unchanged. Their estimated 50% marine timing through Area 20 is July 24, which is one day later than expected. The estimated escapement of Early Summer-run sockeye past Mission through August 22 is 493,000 fish.

The marine migrations of Late Stuart, Stellako, Harrison, and Quesnel sockeye are declining in abundance. Chilko sockeye comprise most of the Summer-run sockeye still migrating through the marine assessment areas. At the meeting today, the run size estimate of 2,300,000 Summer-run sockeye was unchanged. Their estimated 50% migration timing through Area 20 is August 9, which is six days later than expected. The estimated escapement of Summer-run sockeye past Mission through August 22 is 1,488,000 fish.

Assessments indicate that most Late-run sockeye are currently migrating upstream without delaying in the Strait of Georgia. Assessments of Late Shuswap/Portage stocks exceed their median (50% probability) forecast while those for Birkenhead and Weaver sockeye are tracking below their median forecasts, falling at the lower end of their forecasted distribution. Current assessments suggest that the aggregate abundance of Late-run sockeye is below their median (50% probability) forecast of abundance; however, there is still significant uncertainty in the Late-run sockeye abundance assessments. A more accurate assessment of their abundance should be available next week. The estimated escapement of Late-run sockeye past Mission through August 22 is 150,000 fish.

Purse seine test fishing catches of pink salmon in the marine approach routes have increased in recent days. DNA analyses of pink salmon sampled from the Area 20 purse seine test fishery indicate that Fraser River pink salmon comprise almost half of the pink salmon migrating through this area. Analysis of samples collected from the Area 12 and 13 purse seine test fisheries indicate that Fraser River pink salmon currently comprise about 20% of the pink salmon currently migrating through these areas, with Canada South Coast (non-Fraser) pink salmon stocks contributing most of the balance. At the meeting today, the Panel approved a run size estimate of 10,000,000 Fraser River pink salmon.

There have been reports over the past week of some sockeye mortalities in the Fraser and Thompson Rivers, which is likely associated with the extremely high water temperatures that many Fraser sockeye have been exposed to since late July. Migration conditions for Fraser River sockeye have improved over the past week as water temperatures measured at Qualark Creek have decreased by approximately 2 °C, but temperatures remain above those levels expected to cause migration stress. Further decreases in Fraser River water temperatures are forecast to occur over the next week. On August 22, the Fraser River water discharge at Hope

was 2,900 cms, which is approximately 10% lower than average for this date. The temperature of the Fraser River at Qualark Creek on August 22 was 18.9 °C, which is 1.6 °C higher than average for this date. At the meeting today, the current management adjustment factors for Early Summer-run sockeye (0.72) and Summer-run sockeye (2.35) were unchanged. Management adjustments are additional fish that are allowed to escape upstream to improve the probability of achieving spawning escapement targets for Fraser River sockeye.

The DFO spawning escapement update for Fraser sockeye on August 22 reported that Early Stuart sockeye are now past the peak of spawning. The escapement enumeration program on Scotch Creek has counted 7,223 sockeye past the fence to-date. The Gates Creek spawning channel operator reported that 8,760 sockeye have been counted into the creek above the channel to-date. The Nadina River spawning channel operator reported that 2,106 sockeye have been counted into the channel to-date. Due to the much lower than expected estimates of Quesnel sockeye abundance this season, the DIDSON enumeration system that was originally planned for the Horsefly River has been replaced with roving visual surveys. A total of 49 Cultus Lake sockeye have passed the Sweltzer Creek enumeration fence to-date.

The Panel announced the following regulations for Panel Area waters:

CANADIAN FRASER RIVER PANEL AREA WATERS:

Remains closed to fishing.

UNITED STATES FRASER RIVER PANEL AREA WATERS:

TREATY INDIAN FISHERY:

Areas 4B, 5 and 6C: Open to drift gillnets from 12:00 p.m. (noon) Saturday, August 24, 2013 to 12:00 p.m. (noon), Wednesday August 28, 2013.

Areas 6.7 and 7A: Open to net fishing from 5:00 a.m. Sunday, August 25 through 9:00 a.m. Tuesday, August 27, 2013, in the area southerly and easterly of a straight line drawn from Iwersen's dock on Point Roberts in the State of Washington to the Georgina Point Light at the entrance to Active Pass in the Province of British Columbia.

ALL CITIZEN FISHERY:

Area 7: Open to reefnets with non-retention of sockeye salmon from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Saturday, August 24, 2013 and Sunday, August 25, 2013.

Areas 7 and 7A: Open to purse seines with non-retention of sockeye salmon from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Tuesday, August 27, 2013, in the area southerly and easterly of a straight line drawn from Iwersen's dock on Point Roberts in the State of Washington to the Georgina Point Light at the entrance to Active Pass in the Province of British Columbia.

Areas 7 and 7A: Open to gillnets with non-retention of sockeye salmon from 8:00 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. (midnight) Tuesday, August 27, 2013, in the area southerly and easterly of a straight line drawn from Iwersen's dock on Point Roberts in the State of Washington to the Georgina Point Light at the entrance to Active Pass in the Province of British Columbia.

(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 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 and pink salmon stock status reports will be 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.

The next in-season meeting of the Panel is scheduled to occur on Tuesday, August 27, 2013. 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 and pink 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>.

2013 Run status of Fraser sockeye and pink salmon

Date: Aug. 23, 2013

Week of: Aug. 18 - Aug. 24, 2013	Sockeye				Pink	
	Management Group				Total	Total
	E.Stuart	E.Summer	Summer	Late	Fraser	Fraser
Mission passage (includes Pitt, Alouette, Coquitlam)	180,100	493,000	1,487,700	149,500	2,310,300	na
Catch downstream of Mission	1,900	32,500	215,500	31,300	281,200	38,200
Accounted run-to-date ¹	182,000	525,500	1,703,200	180,800	2,591,500	4,480,000
Run size adopted in-season ²	182,000	520,000	2,300,000	na	3,002,000	10,000,000
Run size forecasted pre-season	211,000	253,000	3,718,000	583,000	4,765,000	8,926,000
Area 20 timing adopted in-season	2/Jul	24/Jul	9/Aug	na		na
Area 20 timing expected pre-season	5/Jul	23/Jul	3/Aug	12/Aug		28/Aug

¹ For pink salmon the accounted run-to-date is a reconstruction-based estimate.

² 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.

2013 Catch-to-date by fishery

Date: Aug. 23, 2013

Week of: Aug. 18 - Aug. 24, 2013		Sockeye		Pink	
		Total	Fraser	Total	Fraser
Canada		337,600	335,100	52,400	3,200
Commercial		0	0	0	0
	B Purse Seine	0	0	0	0
	D Gillnet	0	0	0	0
	E Gillnet	0	0	0	0
	G Troll	0	0	0	0
	H Troll	0	0	0	0
First Nations		337,000	334,500	25,300	2,400
	Food, Social & Ceremonial (FSC)	337,000	334,500	25,300	2,400
	Marine	128,600	126,200	25,200	2,300
	Fraser R.	208,400	208,300	200	200
	Economic Opportunity (EO) & Demonstration (Demo)	0	0	0	0
	Marine	0	0	0	0
	Fraser R.	0	0	0	0
Recreational		0	0	27,000	700
	Marine	0	0	27,000	700
	Fraser R.	0	0	0	0
Charter (Albion gillnet test fishery)		600	600	0	0
United States		8,000	8,000	40,400	7,600
Commercial		4,100	4,100	7,300	1,300
	Treaty Indian (TI)	4,100	4,100	7,300	1,300
	All Citizen (AC)	0	0	0	0
Treaty Indian Ceremonial & Subsistence (C&S)		4,000	3,900	26,700	6,300
All Citizen Recreational		0	0	6,400	100
Alaska *		na	na	na	na
Panel-approved Test Fisheries		97,300	94,400	225,600	27,500
Panel Waters		33,900	32,800	64,800	12,000
Non-Panel Waters		63,400	61,700	160,800	15,500
Total		442,900	437,500	313,400	38,300

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