



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, 2013

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 marine migration of Fraser sockeye has been protracted this season primarily because of the later than expected migration timing of Early Summer-run, Harrison, Chilko and Late Shuswap sockeye. The later marine timing of these stocks coupled with recent higher than expected purse seine test fishing catches of sockeye in the northern approach route, has resulted in small increases in the run size estimates for Early Summer-run and Summer-run, sockeye this week. The abundance of Fraser River pink salmon migrating through Johnstone and Juan de Fuca Straits has been very strong over the past week, resulting in increases to run size estimates in the upper portion of the forecast range. The median forecast was 8,926,000 Fraser River pink salmon. The diversion rate of Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon through Johnstone Strait is presently estimated to be 91%, and 35%, respectively. The migration of sockeye and pink salmon past Mission has been variable but strong over the past several days.

At the meeting on August 27, the run size estimate of 520,000 Early Summer-run sockeye was increased to 550,000 fish. Their estimated 50% marine timing through Area 20 is July 25, which is two days later than expected. At the meeting today the run size estimate for Early Summer-run sockeye was unchanged. The estimated escapement of Early Summer-run sockeye past Mission through August 28 is 512,000 fish.

The run size estimate of 2,300,000 Summer-run sockeye was increased to 2,400,000 fish at the meeting on August 27. Their estimated 50% migration timing though Area 20 is August 10, which is seven days later than expected. At the meeting today the run size estimate for Summer-run sockeye was unchanged. The estimated escapement of Summer-run sockeye past Mission through August 28 is 1,829,000 fish.

Assessments indicate that most Late-run sockeye are currently migrating upstream without delaying in the Strait of Georgia. Early entry of Late-run sockeye into the Fraser River is often associated with lower in-river survival and poor spawning success. At the meeting on August 27, the Panel approved a run size estimate of 450,000 Late-run sockeye with 50% marine timing through Area 20 of August 13. At the meeting today the run size estimate for Late-run sockeye was increased to 500,000 fish with 50% marine timing of August 15, which is three days later than expected. Most Late-run sockeye returning this season are from Late Shuswap stocks. Birkenhead sockeye were forecast to generate almost half of the Late-run sockeye production this season, however, abundance assessments to-date suggest that they are contributing less than 20% of the Late-run sockeye return. The estimated escapement of Late-run sockeye past Mission through August 28 is 254,000 fish.

DNA analyses of pink salmon sampled from Area 12, 13, and 20 purse seine test fisheries indicate that Fraser River pink salmon comprise approximately 60% of the pink salmon currently migrating through these areas. At the meeting on August 27, the Panel approved an increase in the run size estimate of Fraser River pink salmon from 10,000,000 to 14,000,000 fish, with 50% marine timing through Area 20 of August 25. At the meeting today the run size estimate of Fraser River pink salmon was increased to 16,000,000 fish with 50% marine timing of August 29, which is one day later than average. Fisheries targeting Fraser River pink salmon are being constrained by conservation concerns for Fraser River sockeye.

On August 28, the Fraser River water discharge at Hope was 2,410 cms, which is approximately 15% lower than average for this date. The temperature of the Fraser River at Qualark Creek on August 28 was 18.6 °C, which is 1.8°C higher than average for this date. At the meeting on August 27, the management adjustment factor for Early Summer-run sockeye was increased from 0.72 to 0.85 and for Summer-run sockeye it was increased from 2.35 to 2.45. The Panel also adopted a management adjustment factor for Late-run sockeye of 0.90 at the meeting on August 27. At the meeting today the management adjustment factors 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.

(Post-season review of this news release indicated that the pMA of 2.45 should be replaced with 2.48. The pMA of 2.45 was for Summer-run sockeye without Harrison. Additionally, due to a change in the run size for Late-run sockeye on August 29, the pMA for this run timing group increased to 0.91)

DFO provided a spawning escapement update for Fraser sockeye today. The Gates Creek channel operator reported that 12,941 sockeye have been counted into the creek above the channel and 9,430 sockeye into the channel to-date. There are no recent updates from the operators of the Scotch Creek enumeration fence or the Nadina River spawning channel. Visual surveys are ongoing on the North and South Thompson rivers, as well as the Quesnel system and lower Fraser River tributaries. DIDSON enumeration programs are ongoing on the Chilko, Stellako, and Birkenhead Rivers. A total of 60 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:

Areas 18-1, 18-4, and 18-11 and Areas 29-6, 29-7 and 29-9: Open to Area B seine assessment (2 vessels) ITQ fishery for pink salmon with non-retention of sockeye salmon 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily on Sunday, September 1, 2013 until further notice. (Please refer to DFO Fishery Notice for further details).

UNITED STATES FRASER RIVER PANEL AREA WATERS:

TREATY INDIAN FISHERY:

Areas 4B, 5 and 6C: Extended for drift gillnets from 12:00 p.m. (noon) Friday, August 30, 2013 to 12:00 p.m. (noon) Wednesday, September 4, 2013. Sockeye may be retained for ceremonial and subsistence purposes only.

Areas 6,7 and 7A: Open for net fishing from 5:00 a.m. Saturday, August 31 through 9:00 a.m. Monday, September 2, 2013, and from 5:00 a.m. Tuesday, September 3, 2013 through 9:00 a.m. Wednesday, September 4, 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. Sockeye may be retained for ceremonial and subsistence purposes only.

ALL CITIZEN FISHERY:

Area 7: Open to reefnets with non-retention of sockeye salmon from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily on Saturday, August 31, 2013, Sunday, September 1, 2013, Monday, September 2, 2013 and Tuesday, September 3, 2013.

Area 7 and 7A: Open to purse seines with non-retention of sockeye salmon from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Monday, September 2, 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.

Area 7 and 7A: Open to gillnets with non-retention of sockeye salmon from 8:00 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. (midnight) Monday, September 2, 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, September 3, 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. 29, 2013

Week of: Aug. 25 - Aug. 31, 2013	Sockeye				Total Fraser	Pink Total Fraser
	Management Group					
	E.Stuart	E.Summer	Summer	Late		
Mission passage (includes Pitt, Alouette, Coquitlam)	179,900	512,300	1,829,100	254,300	2,775,600	na
Catch downstream of Mission	1,900	32,500	218,000	33,500	285,900	307,900
Accounted run-to-date ¹	181,800	544,800	2,047,100	287,800	3,061,500	12,720,000
Run size adopted in-season ²	182,000	550,000	2,400,000	500,000	3,632,000	16,000,000
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	25/Jul	10/Aug	15/Aug		29/Aug
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. 29, 2013

Week of: Aug. 25 - Aug. 31, 2013		Sockeye		Pink	
		Total	Fraser	Total	Fraser
Canada		357,600	355,100	52,500	3,800
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		357,000	354,500	25,500	2,600
	Food, Social & Ceremonial (FSC)	357,000	354,500	25,500	2,600
	Marine	128,600	126,200	25,300	2,500
	Fraser R.	228,400	228,300	100	100
	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	1,100
	Marine	0	0	27,000	1,100
	Fraser R.	0	0	0	0
Charter (Albion gillnet test fishery)		600	600	0	0
United States		14,400	14,300	402,000	273,200
Commercial		4,100	4,100	369,000	268,600
	Treaty Indian (TI)	4,100	4,100	166,500	117,600
	All Citizen (AC)	0	0	202,500	151,000
Treaty Indian Ceremonial & Subsistence (C&S)		10,300	10,200	26,700	4,500
All Citizen Recreational		0	0	6,400	100
Alaska *		na	na	na	na
Panel-approved Test Fisheries		99,700	96,800	226,500	31,000
	Panel Waters	35,800	34,700	65,600	13,500
	Non-Panel Waters	63,900	62,200	161,000	17,500
Total		471,700	466,200	676,100	308,100

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