



PACIFIC SALMON COMMISSION

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

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NEWS RELEASE

July 26, 2013

The Fraser River Panel met today to review assessment data on Fraser River sockeye salmon and environmental conditions in the Fraser River watershed. Marine test fishing catches in Johnstone Strait and Juan de Fuca Strait indicate an increase in the abundance of Fraser sockeye salmon migrating through the marine approach areas. The diversion rate of Fraser sockeye through Johnstone Strait is presently estimated to be 43%. DNA analysis of samples collected from recent test fisheries in Johnstone Strait and Juan de Fuca Strait indicate that Early Summer-run and Summer-run sockeye are the dominant Fraser sockeye runs currently migrating through the marine assessment areas. The migration of sockeye past the Mission hydroacoustic site has increased in recent days. The observer at Hells Gate has reported low sockeye migration over recent days, which is consistent with the decreased passage observed at the Mission hydroacoustic site a few days earlier.

The marine migration of Early Stuart sockeye is complete. At the meeting today, the run size estimate of 180,000 Early Stuart was unchanged. The estimated escapement of Early Stuart sockeye past Mission through July 25 is 178,000 fish.

Preliminary assessments of Early Summer-run sockeye run size abundance are exceeding the p50 or mid-point forecast of 253,000 fish. A more accurate assessment of their abundance should be available next week after further data are collected. The estimated escapement of Early Summer-run sockeye past Mission through July 25 is 181,000 fish.

It is early in the marine migration of Summer-run sockeye through marine assessment areas. Summer-run sockeye (Chilko, Quesnel, Late Stuart, Stellako, Harrison, Raft, and North Thompson) are expected to provide most of the fishing opportunities directed at Fraser sockeye this season. The peak migration of Summer-run sockeye is expected to be earlier than average based on the pre-season forecast of Chilko timing. Current assessments suggest that their marine timing may be later than expected. In-season assessments of Summer-run sockeye abundance will not be available until after their expected peak migration period through Juan de Fuca Strait in early August. The estimated escapement of Summer-run sockeye past Mission through July 25 is 50,000 fish.

Catches of pink salmon in marine test fisheries have been at much higher levels than normal for this early in the season. It is likely that a large proportion of these pink salmon are from Canada South Coast (non-Fraser) and Washington pink salmon stocks that typically migrate earlier through the marine assessment areas than Fraser River pink salmon. DNA analysis of pink salmon tissue samples from marine test and commercial fisheries will be conducted over the next several weeks to provide estimates of stock composition and assist with run size estimation of Fraser River pink salmon.

On July 25, the Fraser River water discharge at Hope was 4,040 cms, which is approximately 19% lower than average for this date. The temperature of the Fraser River at Qualark Creek on July 25 was 20.0 °C, which is 2.9 °C higher than average for this date. Sustained exposure of sockeye to Fraser River water temperatures in this range may slow their migration and cause elevated levels of pre-spawning mortality. Fraser River water temperatures are forecast to decrease to slightly below 18 °C over

the next few days. There were no changes to management adjustments at the meeting today. Management adjustments are additional fish that are allowed to escape upstream to help achieve spawning escapement targets for Fraser River sockeye.

DFO initiated visual surveys of Early Stuart spawning grounds on July 23, although sockeye were first observed off the mouth of Gluske Creek on July 19. The sockeye are reported to be in good condition. Details on DFO's Fraser sockeye escapement enumeration plans this season are available at <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/fraser/docs/Escapement/sockeye-rouge-eng.html>.

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.

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

The next in-season meeting of the Panel is scheduled to occur on Monday, 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 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: Jul. 26, 2013

Week of: Jul. 21 - Jul. 27, 2013	Sockeye				Total Fraser	Pink
	Management Group					Total Fraser
	E.Stuart	E.Summer	Summer	Late		
Mission passage (includes Pitt, Alouette, Coquitlam)	177,500	181,200	49,900	600	409,200	na
Catch downstream of Mission	1,700	4,400	3,400	100	9,600	1,300
Accounted run-to-date	179,200	185,600	53,300	700	418,800	1,300
Run size adopted in-season¹	180,000	na	na	na	180,000	na
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	na	na	na		na
Area 20 timing expected pre-season	5-Jul	23-Jul	3-Aug	12-Aug		28-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.

2013 Catch-to-date by fishery

Date: Jul. 26, 2013

Week of: Jul. 21 - Jul. 27, 2013		Sockeye		Pink	
		Total	Fraser	Total	Fraser
Canada		4,100	3,900	1,200	0
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		4,000	3,900	300	0
	Food, Social & Ceremonial (FSC)	4,000	3,900	300	0
	Marine	400	300	300	0
	Fraser R.	3,600	3,600	0	0
	Economic Opportunity (EO) & Demonstration (Demo)	0	0	0	0
	Marine	0	0	0	0
	Fraser R.	0	0	0	0
Recreational		0	0	900	0
	Marine	0	0	900	0
	Fraser R.	0	0	0	0
Charter (Albion gillnet test fishery)		100	100	0	0
United States		0	0	0	0
Commercial		0	0	0	0
	Treaty Indian (TI)	0	0	0	0
	All Citizen (AC)	0	0	0	0
Treaty Indian Ceremonial & Subsistence (C&S)		0	0	0	0
All Citizen Recreational		0	0	0	0
Alaska *		na	na	na	na
Panel-approved Test Fisheries		11,100	9,500	7,900	1,300
Panel Waters		8,700	7,600	5,900	1,100
Non-Panel Waters		2,400	1,900	2,000	200
Total		15,200	13,500	9,100	1,300

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