



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:

No. 4

NEWS RELEASE

July 27, 2012

The Fraser River Panel met today to review assessment data on Fraser River sockeye salmon, plan fisheries and discuss sockeye migration conditions in the Fraser River watershed. Marine test fisheries continue to indicate a moderate marine migration of Fraser sockeye through the marine assessment areas over the past several days. However, catches in the Area 12 purse seine test fishery increased considerably yesterday. Recent DNA analyses indicate that the stock composition of Fraser River sockeye in Area 20 is approximately 29% Early Summer-run, 63% Summer-run, and 8% Late-run sockeye. The diversion rate of Fraser River sockeye through Johnstone Strait is presently estimated at 28%. Sockeye catches in the lower Fraser River gillnet test fisheries have continued to be low.

The marine migration of Early Stuart sockeye is complete. The run size estimate of 180,000 Early Stuart sockeye, with 50% marine timing through Area 20 of July 4 (five days later than forecast) was unchanged at the meeting today. The estimated escapement of Early Stuart sockeye past Mission through July 26 is 182,000 fish.

At the Panel meeting on July 24 the Panel approved a run size estimate of 410,000 Early Summer-run sockeye with 50% marine timing through Area 20 of July 12, which is four days earlier than expected. At the meeting today, the run size estimate for Early Summer-run sockeye was increased to 420,000 fish, although their estimated marine timing was unchanged. The estimated escapement of Early Summer-run sockeye past Mission through July 26 is 349,000 fish.

The marine migration of Summer-run sockeye appears to be tracking later than expected, however assessments of their abundance will not be available until after their peak migration through marine areas occurs. Late Stuart/Stellako sockeye continue to be the dominant Summer-run sockeye currently migrating through the marine assessment areas. The estimated escapement of Summer-run sockeye past Mission through July 26 is 71,000 fish.

On July 26 the discharge of the Fraser River at Hope was approximately 6,600 cms, which is approximately 36% above average for this date. The temperature of the Fraser River at Qualark Creek on July 25 was 16.7⁰ C, which is 0.2⁰ C lower than average for this date. The Panel manages fisheries to provide additional Fraser sockeye above the spawning escapement targets through application of management adjustments. The management adjustments help ensure that the escapement targets are met, which off-sets en route mortality and other factors that could affect meeting spawning escapement targets. At the Panel meeting on July 24, after reviewing environmental and stock assessment information, the Panel approved a decrease in the management adjustment factor for Early Stuart sockeye to 3.19, and at the meeting today it was unchanged. Also, at the Panel meeting on July 24 the Panel approved an increase in the management adjustment factor for Early Summer-run sockeye from the pre-season estimate of 0.32 to 1.12 and at the meeting today it was unchanged.

The Panel announced the following regulations for Panel Area waters:

CANADIAN FRASER RIVER PANEL AREA WATERS:

Remain closed to fishing.

UNITED STATES FRASER RIVER PANEL AREA WATERS:

TREATY INDIAN FISHERY:

Areas 4B, 5 and 6C: As previously announced, open to drift gillnets 12:00 p.m. (noon), Wednesday, July 25, 2012, to 12:00 p.m. (noon) Saturday, July 28, 2012.

ALL CITIZEN FISHERY:

Remains closed to fishing.

(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).

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_collections. In addition, Fraser River Panel news releases, fishery regulations, sockeye catch and escapement data and sockeye and salmon stock status reports will be available on this website.

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 salmon in the Fraser River Panel Management Area.

The next in-season meeting of the Panel is scheduled to occur on Monday, July 30. News releases in this series will be provided by the Panel through the Commission to inform those interested in the progress of the Fraser River sockeye salmon runs.