

Monday, July 25, 2011

The Fraser River Panel met Monday, July 25 to receive an update on the migration of the Fraser sockeye runs and review the status of migration conditions in the Fraser River watershed.

Test fishing catches of sockeye in the Area 20 purse seine and gillnet test fisheries increased considerably yesterday. Recent stock identification analyses indicate a high proportion of Harrison sockeye in marine and in-river DNA samples. At the meeting today, the run size estimate of 22,000 Early Stuart sockeye and their estimated 50% marine timing through Area 20 of July 2 were unchanged. Assessments continue to suggest that the marine migration of Early Summer-run sockeye is tracking about three days later than expected. An in-season assessment of how the run size of Early Summer-run sockeye is tracking relative to forecast should be available by early August.

High Fraser River discharge levels continue to create difficult upstream migration conditions for Fraser sockeye. On July 24, the Fraser River water discharge at Hope was approximately 8,100 cms, which is about 59% higher than average for this date. The temperature of the Fraser River at Qualark Creek on July 24 was 14.5 °C, which is 2.5 °C cooler than average for this date. Fraser River discharge levels and water temperatures will be monitored closely to determine if specific management actions are required during the in-river migratory period to help achieve sockeye escapement goals.

All commercial fisheries in Panel Area waters remain closed to fishing at the present time.

The next in-season meeting of the Panel is scheduled to occur on Tuesday, July 26, 2011.