

Friday, July 29, 2011

The Fraser River Panel met Friday, July 29 to receive an update on the migration of the Fraser sockeye runs and review the status of migration conditions in the Fraser River watershed.

Recent purse seine test fishing catches in Johnstone and Juan de Fuca Straits continue to indicate a modest migratory abundance of Fraser River sockeye salmon. At the meeting today, the Panel increased the run size estimate for Early Stuart sockeye from 22,000 fish to 23,000 fish. Abundance assessments of the early-timed component of the Early Summer-run sockeye run are close to the forecast but their marine migration timing is estimated to be more than one week later than expected. A more accurate assessment of the run size of Early Summer-run sockeye should be available next week after their expected peak migration period through the marine assessment areas has occurred. It is early in the migration of Summer-run sockeye through the marine assessment areas and an update on their run size and marine migration timing will not be available until after the first week of August.

Fraser River discharge levels have declined considerably over the past few weeks; however they are still at levels that may have an adverse effect on the upstream migration of sockeye. Discharge levels are forecast to decrease over the next week and migration conditions for Fraser sockeye should improve. On July 28, the Fraser River water discharge at Hope was approximately 6,800 cms, which is about 46% higher than average for this date. The temperature of the Fraser River at Qualark Creek on July 28 was 15.3 °C, which is 2.0 °C cooler than average for this date.

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: Extended for drift gillnets from 12:00 p.m. (noon) Saturday, July 30, 2011 to 12:00 p.m. (noon), Wednesday, August 3, 2011.

NON INDIAN FISHERY:

Remains closed to fishing.

The next in-season meeting of the Panel is scheduled to occur on Tuesday, August 2, 2011.