



PACIFIC SALMON COMMISSION

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

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NEWS RELEASE

August 27, 2010

Fraser Sockeye Run Largest Since 1913

The Fraser River Panel met today to review stock assessment data on the Fraser River sockeye runs, plan fisheries, and discuss sockeye migration conditions in the Fraser River watershed. Purse seine test fishing catches of sockeye have been extremely strong in Johnstone Strait over the past several days, while catches in the Area 20 purse seine test fishery have been much lower but steady. These large catches and data from other marine and in-river assessment programs have resulted in further increases in run size estimates for Fraser River sockeye runs migrating through marine areas. The current total run size estimate for Fraser River sockeye this season of 30,046,000 fish is the highest since 1913, when it was estimated to be almost 39,000,000 fish. The very large return of Fraser sockeye this season is mainly a result of generally good sockeye escapements to the spawning grounds in the Fraser River watershed in the brood year (2006) for the four year old sockeye returning this season as well as high marine survival rates for most of the juvenile sockeye from the 2006 brood year that entered the ocean in 2008. Additionally, a large return of Late Shuswap sockeye (including the Adams River run) typically occurs every four years, with the most recent large return of these sockeye occurring in 2006. High marine survival rates of juvenile salmon are often associated with a good food supply, favorable marine temperatures, and low predation during their ocean residency.

DNA analyses indicate that the stock composition of Fraser sockeye in the Areas 12 and 20 marine approach routes to the Fraser River are averaging about 5% Summer-run and 95% Late-run sockeye. The diversion rate of Fraser sockeye through Johnstone Strait has increased to approximately 94%. The migration of sockeye past Mission and Hells Gate over the past several days continues to be strong. The estimated total commercial catch of Fraser sockeye to-date is 4,933,000 fish, while non-commercial catches (from test, First Nations FSC, Charter, and recreational fisheries) total 790,000 fish.

The marine migration of Early Summer-run sockeye is virtually complete. At the meeting on August 24 the run size estimate of 2,900,000 Early Summer-run sockeye was increased to 3,200,000 fish. At the meeting today, the Panel increased the run size estimate for Early Summer-run sockeye to 3,700,000 fish, with 50% marine migration timing through Area 20 of August 9. The estimated escapement of Early Summer-run sockeye past Mission through August 26 is 2,473,000 fish.

At the meeting on August 24 the run size estimate of 4,000,000 Summer-run sockeye was increased to 4,500,000 fish. At the meeting today, the Panel increased the run size estimate for Summer-run sockeye to 4,800,000 fish, with 50% marine migration timing through Area 20 of August 15. The estimated escapement of Summer-run sockeye past Mission through August 26 is 2,471,000 fish.

DNA analyses indicate that Late Shuswap sockeye are contributing over 90% of the total Late-run sockeye abundance presently migrating through the marine approach routes. Test fishing catches of Late-run sockeye in the gulf troll test fishery indicate that a relatively high proportion of these fish are delaying in the lower Strait of Georgia prior to entering the Fraser River. It is projected that approximately 8,900,000 Late-run sockeye are presently delaying. At the meeting on August 24 the run size estimate for Harrison sockeye was increased from 900,000 fish to 1,000,000 fish and at the meeting today the run size estimate was increased to 1,200,000 fish. The 50% marine migration timing of Harrison

sockeye through Area 20 is currently estimated to be August 11. At the meeting on August 24, the Panel approved an increase in the run size estimate for Late Shuswap/Weaver sockeye from 11,000,000 fish to 16,000,000 fish and at the meeting today, the run size estimate was increased to 20,000,000 fish. The 50% marine migration timing of Late Shuswap/Weaver sockeye is currently estimated to be August 20. The Panel is continuing to use the forecast run size for the Birkenhead stock-group of 241,000 fish, for fisheries planning purposes. The total run size estimate for Late-run sockeye is now 21,441,000 fish. The estimated escapement of Late-run sockeye past Mission through August 26 is 1,839,000 fish.

Migration conditions for sockeye in the Fraser River are currently satisfactory. On August 26 the discharge of the Fraser River at Hope was 2,070 cms, which is 32% below average for this date. The temperature of the Fraser River at Qualark Creek on August 26 was 17.8 °C, which is 1.0 °C above average for this date. Fraser River water temperatures at Qualark Creek are forecast to decrease to 16.8 °C by September 4. At the meeting on August 24, after reviewing environmental and stock assessment information, the Panel decreased the management adjustment factors for Early Summer-run sockeye from 0.39 to 0.38 and for Summer-run sockeye from 0.22 to 0.15. At the meeting today, the management adjustment for Early Summer-run sockeye was decreased to 0.36. Management adjustments are employed to help achieve spawning escapement targets for Fraser River sockeye.

The DFO spawning escapement update for Fraser sockeye on August 26 reported that sockeye arriving on their spawning grounds throughout the watershed are generally in good condition, with the exception of some pre-spawning mortality in the Nadina River and spawning channel. The escapement enumeration program on Scotch Creek has counted approximately 302,000 sockeye past the fence through August 25. Visual surveys of North and South Thompson streams noted spawning activity in most streams and a record count of sockeye in the Eagle River. Approximately 5,000 sockeye are currently in the Nadina River spawning channel. The Gates Creek spawning channel had about 6,900 sockeye counted into it through August 25, while approximately 1,800 sockeye have passed into spawning areas in the creek. A mark-recapture program for sockeye is underway on the Seymour River. DIDSON hydro-acoustic units are enumerating the migration of Chilko and Horsefly sockeye. The Stellako River enumeration fence became operational on August 25. A total of 473 Cultus Lake sockeye have passed the Sweltzer Creek enumeration fence through August 25 and an additional 120 fish have been retained for broodstock.

The Panel announced the following regulations for Panel Area waters:

CANADIAN FRASER RIVER PANEL AREA WATERS:

Area 18-1, 18-4 and 18-11 and Areas 29 – 1 to 6: As previously announced, open to Area H troll as of 12:01 a.m. Sunday, August 8, 2010 and continues until further notice (please refer to DFO Fishery Notices for further details).

Area 20-1, 3, 4: As previously announced, open to Area B purse seine, ITQ Demonstration Fishery, daily from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Sunday, August 22, 2010 to Friday August 27, 2010 (please refer to DFO Fishery Notices for further details). No further opportunities are anticipated in Area 20.

Area 29: Subareas 29-1 to 4, 6, 7 and 9 to 17: Open to Area E gillnets from 10:00 a.m. Monday, August 30, 2010 to 10:00 a.m., Tuesday, August 31, 2010; and open from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Wednesday, September 1, 2010 (Please refer to DFO Fishery Notices for further details).

UNITED STATES FRASER RIVER PANEL AREA WATERS:

TREATY INDIAN FISHERY:

Areas 4B, 5 and 6C: As previously announced, extended for drift gillnets from 12:00 p.m. (noon), Wednesday, August 25, 2010 through 12:00 p.m. (noon) Saturday, August 28, 2010.

Areas 4B, 5 and 6C: Extended for drift gillnets from 12:00 p.m. (noon) Saturday, August 28 through 12:00 p.m. (noon) Wednesday, September , 2010.

Areas 6,7, and 7A: As previously announced, open to net fishing from 5:00 a.m. Thursday, August 26, 2010 through 9:00 a.m. Sunday, August 29, 2010.

Areas 6,7 and 7A: Extended for net fishing from 9:00 a.m. Sunday, August 29, 2010, through 9:00 a.m. Monday, August 30, 2010. Open to net fishing from 5:00 a.m. Tuesday, August 31, 2010 through 9:00 a.m. Wednesday, September 1, 2010.

NON INDIAN FISHERY:

Areas 7 and 7A: Open to purse seines from 5:00 a.m. through 9:00 p.m., Monday, August 30, 2010.

Areas 7 and 7A: Open to reefnets from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Monday, August 30, 2010, and from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Tuesday, August 31, 2010.

Areas 7 and 7A: Open to gillnets from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m. (midnight), Monday, August 30, 2010.

(Note: U. S. Non-Treaty 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_2010.htm In addition, Fraser River Panel news releases, fishery regulations, sockeye and escapement data, and sockeye 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 Tuesday, August 31. 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.

2010 Fraser River Panel Sockeye Review

Week of: Aug. 22 - Aug. 28, 2010

Date: Aug. 27, 2010

					Fraser Sockeye	
Area	Gear				Cumul.	
Commercial Catch						
Canada						
A & C	Areas 1-10	Net			0	
F	Areas 1-10	Troll			0	
G	Areas 123-127,11-12	Troll			0	
B	Areas 11-16	PS			1,946,430	
D	Areas 11-13	GN			593,340	
H	Areas 12-16	Troll			153,820	
H	Areas 18-29	Troll			16,930	
B	Area 20	PS			127,910	
B	Area 29	PS			0	
E	Area 29	GN			698,400	
FRA Econ. Opp. + BCI FN Demo					306,270	
Canadian Total					3,843,100	
United States						
<u>Alaska</u>		Net&Troll			0	
<u>Washington</u>						
	T.I. Areas 4B/5/6C	Net			118,080	
	T.I. Areas 6/7/7A	Net			518,260	
	N.I. Areas 7/7A	Net			453,520	
Washington Total					1,089,860	
U.S. Total					1,089,860	
Non-commercial Catch						
	PSC Panel Area Test				48,080	
	PSC non-Panel Area Test				15,600	
	Fraser River Aboriginal (FSC)				391,980	
	Areas 12-124 Aboriginal				256,770	
	Recreational				63,280	
	Charter (Albion & Qualark TF)				4,116	
	U.S. TI Ceremonial				10,100	
Non-comm. Total					789,930	
Catch and Escapement						
	Catch Accounted-to-date				5,722,890	
	Potential Spawning Escapement (Mission esc. less FN, sport & Qualark TF catch above Mission)				6,431,560	
Total Accounted-to-date					12,154,450	
Gross Escapement (includes Pitt R. sockeye)						
Run	Stock/Group	Adjusted Target *	Mission Esc.	FN Below Mission	Gross Esc.	% Complete
EStu	Early Stuart	105,000	100,900	200	101,100	96%
ESum	Early Summer	2,135,400	2,473,400	98,800	2,572,200	120%
Summ	Quesnel/Chilko	2,611,900	2,221,700	106,600	2,587,900	99%
	L.Stu./Stel.		249,400	10,200		
Late	Birkenhead	11,901,740	29,500	2,300	1,925,300	16%
	Adams/L.Shuswap		1,219,100	62,400		
	Weav/L.Misc.		30,700	2,100		
	Harrison		559,500	19,700		