

Friday, August 27, 2010

The Fraser River Panel met Friday August 27 to review stock assessment data on the Fraser River sockeye runs, plan fisheries and review 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. At the meeting today, the Panel approved increasing the run sizes for several Fraser River sockeye runs and adopting the following estimates of their 50% marine migration timing through Area 20: Early Summer-run sockeye increased from 3,200,000 fish to 3,700,000 fish (August 9 marine timing); Summer-run sockeye increased from 4,500,000 fish to 4,800,000 fish, (August 15 marine timing); Harrison sockeye increased from 1,000,000 fish to 1,200,000 fish (August 11 marine timing); Late Shuswap/Weaver sockeye increased from 16,000,000 fish to 20,000,000 fish (August 20 marine timing); and the forecast of 241,000 fish from the Birkenhead stock-group. The total run size estimate for Late-run sockeye (which includes Late Shuswap, Weaver, Harrison and Birkenhead sockeye) has increased from 17,241,000 fish to 21,441,000 fish. Current run size assessments suggest that the total Fraser sockeye return this season is slightly over 30,000,000 fish (including 105,000 Early Stuart sockeye), which is the largest return since 1913.

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. Migration conditions for Fraser sockeye will be monitored closely over the next several weeks and appropriate management actions will be taken.

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 1, 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 next in-season meeting of the Panel is scheduled to occur on Tuesday, August 31, 2010.