

Friday, August 3, 2007

The Fraser River Panel met Friday, August 3 to receive an update on the status of the Fraser River 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 that began on August 1 and gillnet test fishing catches have indicated an increasing migration of sockeye through marine approach areas, which is consistent with the anticipated building abundance of Summer-run sockeye entering coastal waters over the coming week. However, the overall abundance of Fraser sockeye migrating through marine assessment areas over the past week has continued to be lower than expected. At the meeting today, the Panel approved a run size estimate of 231,000 Early Summer-run sockeye (the 90% probability level forecast) for management purposes. Summer-run sockeye migration through marine areas is presently tracking an abundance level below their 50% probability level forecast (3,369,000 fish) or their migration timing is later than average. A more accurate assessment of their abundance should be available by late next week.

On August 2, the Fraser River discharge at Hope was about 4,900 cms, while the water temperature at Qualark Creek was 17.7 °C, which is near normal for this date. Fraser River water temperatures are forecast to decrease to 17.0 °C.

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 August 6, 2007.