



PACIFIC SALMON COMMISSION

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

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NEWS RELEASE

September 15, 2006

The Fraser River Panel reviewed stock assessment data on the Fraser sockeye runs at the meeting today. The marine migration of Fraser sockeye this season appears to be nearing completion at this time; assessments are ongoing.

Fisheries in the United States have caught approximately 661,000 Fraser sockeye, and commercial fisheries in Canada harvested approximately 3,707,000 Fraser sockeye (including First Nation economic fisheries). Non-commercial catches of Fraser sockeye total approximately 882,000 sockeye. The estimated total catch of Fraser River sockeye this season (5,250,000 fish) has been the largest since 1997.

The run size estimates of 1,450,000 Early Summer-run sockeye and 2,000,000 Summer-run sockeye were unchanged at the meeting today. The estimated escapements of Early Summer-run and Summer-run sockeye past Mission through September 14 are 757,000 fish and 824,000 fish, respectively.

The run size estimate of true Late-run sockeye (excluding Birkenhead sockeye) remains at 7,500,000 fish. Current assessments are observing few true Late-run sockeye still delaying in the lower Strait of Georgia, indicating that there may be fewer sockeye delaying in marine waters than was previously projected. The estimated total catch and escapement of these sockeye is approximately 4,573,000 fish through September 14 of which an estimated 1,907,000 fish have migrated past Mission.

The water temperature of the Fraser River measured at Qualark Creek was approximately 16.9 °C on September 14. Water temperatures are forecast to decline to the 13 °C range by September 20. The discharge of the Fraser River on September 14 was about 1,400 cms, and continues to be at record low discharge levels. Although environmental conditions will continue to be monitored, further changes to management adjustment factors for Early Stuart, Early Summer-run and Summer-run sockeye are unlikely since Early Stuart sockeye spawning is complete and most of the migration of Early Summer-run and Summer-run sockeye has passed Mission and is either en route or has reached their spawning grounds. There have been recent reports of substantial numbers of stressed and dead sockeye in the Thompson River. The final management adjustment factor for Late-run sockeye will depend on the median date of migration past Mission which will be determined over the next few weeks.

DFO's spawning ground enumeration programs are underway at various locations throughout the Fraser River watershed. Approximately 3,000 sockeye have been counted into Gates Creek spawning channel through September 13. Observers at the enumeration fence on Scotch Creek have counted approximately 136,000 sockeye past the fence through September 14. The Nadina River spawning channel operator has counted approximately 4,000 sockeye past the fence through September 11. Approximately 3,000 sockeye have passed the McKinley Creek enumeration fence through September 13. The migration of Chilko sockeye passed Henry's Bridge has been steady over the past several weeks. The enumeration fence on the Stellako River has had about 13,000 sockeye counted past it through September

13. The counting fence at Sweltzer Creek has enumerated 1,791 Cultus Lake sockeye through September 12, which is substantially higher than the brood year passage of sockeye to 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:

Remains closed to fishing.

NON INDIAN FISHERY:

Remains closed to fishing.

(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.htm. In addition, Fraser River Panel news releases, fishery regulations, sockeye escapement data, and 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 1-888-858-9319. 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 and pink salmon in the Fraser River Panel Management Area.

Estimated catches and escapements of Fraser River sockeye salmon this season are provided in the table below. The next in-season meeting of the Panel is scheduled to occur on September 22; however this meeting will be confirmed at a later date.

2006 Fraser River Panel Sockeye Review

Week of: Sep. 10 - Sep. 16, 2006

Date: Sep. 15, 2006

Area	Gear	Weekly Catch	%Fraser	Fraser Sockeye	
				Weekly	Cumul.
Commercial Catch					
<u>Canada</u>					
A & C Areas 1-10	Net				0
F Areas 1-10	Troll				0
G Areas 123-127,11-12	Troll				172,400
B Areas 11-16	PS				1,406,000
D Areas 11-13	GN				473,600
H Areas 12-16	Troll				209,600
H Areas 18-29	Troll				200
B Area 20	PS				54,000
E Area 29	GN				775,100
Canadian Selective					159,900
FRA Economic Opportunity					456,100
Canadian Total					3,706,900
<u>United States</u>					
<u>Alaska</u>	Net&Troll				0
<u>Washington</u>					
T.I. Areas 4B/5/6C	Net				22,900
T.I. Areas 6/7/7A	Net				422,000
N.I. Areas 7/7A	Net				216,500
Washington Total					661,400
U.S. Total					661,400
Non-commercial Catch					
PSC Test					63,900
Other Test					63,000
Fraser River Aboriginal (FSC)					337,800
Areas 12-124 Aboriginal					291,400
Recreational					125,000
Charter					600
U.S. TI Ceremonial					500
Non-comm. Total					882,200
Catch and Escapement					
Catch Accounted-to-date					5,250,500
Potential Net Escapement (Mission esc. less Aboriginal & sport catch above Mission)					3,062,300
Total Accounted-to-date					8,312,800

Gross Escapement (includes Pitt R. sockeye)

Run	Stock/Group	Adjusted Target *	Mission Esc.	FN Below Mission	Total Esc.	% Complete
EStu	Early Stuart	68,500	67,600	400	68,000	99%
ESum	Early Summer	992,500	757,000	80,600	837,600	84%
Summ	Quesnel/Chilko	2,120,500	650,600	70,000	909,400	43%
	L.Stu./Stel.		173,600	15,200		
Late	Birkenhead	5,283,400	145,400	5,900	2,166,000	41%
	Adams/L.Shuswap		1,733,400	91,700		
	Weav/L.Misc.		90,000	5,000		
	Sub 1s		83,500	11,100		
	3 sub 1s		0		0	