

Tuesday, August 22, 2006

The Fraser River Panel met Tuesday, August 22 to discuss assessment data on the Fraser River sockeye runs and consider harvest opportunities.

The diversion rate of Fraser River sockeye through Johnstone Strait has increased over recent days and is presently estimated to be approximately 80%. The estimated run size of 1,700,000 Early Summer-run sockeye was unchanged at the meeting today. The estimated migration of Summer-run sockeye through the marine assessment areas over recent days has been substantially lower than was expected. Therefore, although there is considerable uncertainty in current assessments of Summer-run sockeye abundance, the Panel has decided to use a lower run size of 3,000,000 Summer-run sockeye for fisheries planning purposes. Estimates of Summer-run sockeye abundance will be examined at the next Panel meeting on Thursday. Assessments of Late-run sockeye timing and abundance suggest that they are returning later than forecast and are tracking a run size that may be lower than the 50% probability level forecast of 8,812,000 fish. A more accurate assessment of Late-run sockeye abundance this season will be available next week.

The water temperature of the Fraser River measured at Qualark Creek was 19 °C on August 21, which is almost 2 °C higher than average for this date. Fraser River water temperatures are forecast to reach 20.4 °C by this weekend. Water temperatures in this range will increase the pre-spawning mortality rate of sockeye en route to their spawning grounds. The discharge of the Fraser River is presently about 1,900 cms, which is approximately 200 cms lower than the previous record low discharge for this date.

CANADIAN FRASER RIVER PANEL AREA WATERS:

Area 18-1, 18-4 and 18-11 and Area 29-1 to 6: Closes to Area H troll: ITQ Demonstration Fishery 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, August 22, 2006.

Area 20 – 1, 3, 4: Closes to Area B purse seine at 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, August 22, 2006. There will not be a fishery in this area on Wednesday, August 23, 2006; please refer to the DFO Fishery Notices for further details).

Area 29: Portions of 29 – 3, 4, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 11 to 17: Closes to Area E gillnets at 9:00 p.m., Tuesday, August 22, 2006. There will not be a fishery in this area on Wednesday, August 23, 2006 ; please refer to the DFO Fishery Notices for further details).

UNITED STATES FRASER RIVER PANEL AREA WATERS:

TREATY INDIAN FISHERY:

Areas 4B, 5 and 6C: Closes to drift gillnets at 12:00 p.m. (noon) Wednesday, August 23, 2006.

Areas 6, 7, and 7A: Closes to net fishing at 10:00 p.m. Tuesday, August 22, 2006.

NON INDIAN FISHERY:

Areas 7 and 7A: The previously announced gillnet fishery that was to occur on Wednesday, August 23, 2006, has been cancelled.

Areas 7 and 7A: The previously announced purse seine fishery that was to occur on Wednesday, August 23, 2006, has been cancelled.

(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 August 24, 2006.