

Thursday, August 24, 2006

The Fraser River Panel met Thursday, August 24 to discuss assessment data on the Fraser River sockeye runs and consider harvest opportunities.

Test fishing catches by purse seine vessels in Johnstone Strait have been very high over the past two days, which indicates a strong migration of sockeye through this approach route. The diversion rate of Fraser sockeye through Johnstone Strait is presently estimated to be approximately 90%.

The Panel is continuing to use run size estimates of 1,700,000 Early Summer-run sockeye and 3,000,000 Summer-run sockeye for fisheries planning purposes. Current estimates of Late-run sockeye abundance are variable, however they indicate that the run could reach or exceed the 50% probability level forecast of 8,250,000 Late-run sockeye, excluding Birkenhead sockeye. A more accurate assessment of Late-run sockeye abundance should be available next week.

The water temperature of the Fraser River measured at Qualark Creek was 18.8 °C on August 23, which is almost 2 °C higher than average for this date. Fraser River water temperatures are forecast to increase slightly over the next few days and be in the 19 °C range by early next week. The discharge of the Fraser River is presently about 1,850 cms, which is approximately 7% less than the previous record low discharge for this date.

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 next in-season meeting of the Panel is scheduled to occur on August 25, 2006.