

Friday, September 1, 2006

The Fraser River Panel met Friday, September 1 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 steady over the past several days although they are considerably lower than the very high catches that were taken from August 23 through August 26, which coincided with the projected peak migration period of Late-run sockeye through these waters. The diversion rate of Fraser sockeye through Johnstone Strait is presently estimated to be approximately 90%. The estimated escapement of Early Summer-run and Summer-run sockeye past Mission has been lower than expected over the past several days.

At the meeting today, the run size estimates of 1,700,000 Early Summer-run sockeye, 2,500,000 Summer-run sockeye and 10,000,000 true Late-run sockeye, excluding Birkenhead sockeye were unchanged.

The water temperature of the Fraser River measured at Qualark Creek was 17.7 °C on August 31, which is 1.5 °C higher than average for this date. The generally satisfactory migration conditions for Fraser River sockeye this season has contributed to observations that most sockeye in the watershed have been in good condition. The discharge of the Fraser River on August 31 was about 1,650 cms, which is approximately 4% less than the previous record low discharge for this date.

CANADIAN FRASER RIVER PANEL AREA WATERS:

Area 29: Portions of 29 – 3, 4, 6 , 7 , 9, 10 and 11 to 17: Open to Area E gillnets from 8 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Tuesday, September 5, 2006. (Please refer to DFO Fishery Notices for further details).

UNITED STATES FRASER RIVER PANEL AREA WATERS:

TREATY INDIAN FISHERY:

Areas 4B, 5 and 6C: Extended for drift gillnets from 12:00 p.m. (noon) Saturday, September 2, 2006, to 12:00 p.m. (noon) Saturday, September 9, 2006.

Areas 6, 7, and 7A: Open to net fishing from 4:00 a.m., Tuesday, September 5, 2006 to 8:00 a.m. Wednesday, September 6, 2006.

NON INDIAN FISHERY:

Areas 7 and 7A: Open to gillnets from 3 p.m. to 11:00 p.m. Wednesday, September 6, 2006.

Areas 7 and 7A: Open to reef nets from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Wednesday, September 6, 2006.

Area 7A: Open to purse seines from 8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m., Wednesday, September 6, 2006.

(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 September 5, 2006.