

Tuesday, August 29, 2006

The Fraser River Panel met Tuesday, August 29 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 lower than the very high catches that were taken from August 23 through August 26. The diversion rate of Fraser sockeye through Johnstone Strait is presently estimated to be approximately 94% and test fishing catches in the Area 20 purse seine test fishery indicate a low migration of Fraser sockeye through Juan de Fuca Strait. The estimated escapement of sockeye past Mission has been lower than was projected over recent days.

At the meeting today, the run size estimate of 1,700,000 Early Summer-run sockeye was unchanged while the run size estimate for Summer-run sockeye was decreased from 3,500,000 fish to 2,500,000 fish. The run size estimate of 10,000,000 true Late-run sockeye, excluding Birkenhead sockeye was unchanged.

The water temperature of the Fraser River measured at Qualark Creek was 18.6 °C on August 28, which is 2 °C higher than average for this date. Fraser River water temperatures are forecast to decrease over the next few days and then increase to 18.8 °C by September 5. The discharge of the Fraser River is presently about 1,620 cms, which is approximately 5% 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: As previously announced: Open to Area E gillnets from 7 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Tuesday, August 29, 2006.

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) Wednesday, August 30, 2006, to 12:00 p.m. (noon) Saturday, September 2, 2006.

Areas 6, 7, and 7A: As previously announced: Open to net fishing from 4:00 a.m., Monday, August 28, 2006 to 10:00 p.m. Tuesday, August 29, 2006.

NON INDIAN FISHERY:

Areas 7 and 7A: As previously announced: Open to gillnets from 9:00 a.m. Wednesday, August 30, 2006 to 1:00 a.m. Thursday, August 31, 2006.

Areas 7 and 7A: As previously announced: Open to reef nets from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Wednesday, August 30, 2006.

Areas 7 and 7A: As previously announced: Open to purse seines from 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m., Wednesday, August 30, 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 1, 2006.