

Friday, August 4, 2006

The Fraser River Panel met Friday, August 4 to discuss assessment data on the Fraser River sockeye runs and consider harvest opportunities.

The Area 20 gillnet and purse seine test fisheries continue to indicate a strong migration of sockeye through Juan de Fuca Strait. Sockeye catches in the Area 12 and 13 test fisheries have generally been lower than expected over recent days. The Panel is continuing to use the 50% probability level forecast of 1,303,000 Early Summer-run sockeye for fisheries planning purposes. It is too early to provide an in-season update on the run-size of Summer-run sockeye. Recent DNA samples from both Juan de Fuca and Johnstone Straits indicate Summer-run stock proportions far below those expected. An assessment of their run-size should be available by late next week after a larger portion of the Summer-run return has migrated through marine assessment areas. Abundance and run-timing assessments for Late-run sockeye will be conducted over the next several weeks. Late-run sockeye have comprised a low proportion of Fraser sockeye migrating through marine assessment areas until recently. Current DNA samples from both marine approach areas indicate a rapid increase in Late Shuswap sockeye proportions.

Fraser River water temperatures (measured at Qualark Creek) have declined over the past week and the temperature on August 3 was 18.4 °C. However, it is forecast to increase over the next several days and exceed 19 °C by August 8. Water temperatures of approximately 19 °C cause stress to migrating sockeye and may slow their migration.

CANADIAN FRASER RIVER PANEL AREA WATERS:

Area 18-1, 18-4 and 18-11: Open to Area H troll 12:01 a.m., Tuesday, August 8, 2006, until further notice.

Area 124: Open to Area G troll 12:01 a.m., Monday, August 7, 2006, until further notice.

Area 123: Planned opening for Area G troll 12:01 a.m., Monday, August 7, 2006. To be confirmed by DFO on August 5.

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, August 5, 2006, to 12:00 p.m. (noon) Wednesday, August 9, 2006.

Areas 6, 7, and 7A: Open to net fishing from 4:00 a.m., Sunday, August 6, 2006 to 9:00 p.m. Sunday, August 6, 2006.

NON INDIAN FISHERY:

Areas 7 and 7A: Open to gillnets from 2:00 p.m. to 12:00 a.m. (midnight) Monday, August 7, 2006.

Areas 7 and 7A: Open to reef nets from 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday, August 7, 2006.

Areas 7 and 7A: Open to purse seines from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday, August 7, 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 August 7, 2006.