



## PACIFIC SALMON COMMISSION

ESTABLISHED BY TREATY BETWEEN CANADA  
AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
MARCH 18, 1985

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**No. 10**

**NEWS RELEASE**

**September 2, 2005**

The Fraser River Panel was provided with assessments of the status of Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon at the meeting today. Fraser River sockeye continue to set new records for extremely late migratory timing this season, which has resulted in further increases in in-season run size estimates. The total abundance of Fraser River sockeye migrating through the marine assessment areas has declined over the past week although sockeye abundance continues to be steady through Johnstone Strait. The escapement of sockeye past Mission and Hell's Gate has been strong over the past several days. The current estimate of the diversion rate of Fraser River sockeye salmon through Johnstone Strait is approximately 90%.

Fisheries in the United States have caught approximately 139,000 Fraser sockeye, and an assessment fishery in Canada harvested approximately 1,100 Fraser sockeye. Non-commercial catches of Fraser sockeye in Canada total approximately 703,000 fish by First Nations fisheries and 113,000 fish in test fisheries to-date.

The marine migration of Early Summer-run sockeye spanned an extremely broad period this season. Recent DNA analyses suggest a strong return of Raft River (tributary of the North Thompson River) sockeye, which are usually one of the later-timed Early Summer-run sockeye stocks. At the meeting on August 29, the run size estimate of Early Summer-run sockeye was increased from 450,000 fish to 500,000 fish and at the meeting today; it was further increased to 650,000 fish (91% of the 50% probability level forecast of 718,000 fish). The 50% arrival timing of these sockeye through Area 20 is now estimated to have occurred on August 17, which is 17 days later than the latest date on record and 25 days later than average. The estimated escapement of Early Summer-run sockeye past Mission through September 1 is 554,000 fish.

Recent DNA analyses indicate that Summer-run sockeye comprise approximately 90% of the Fraser sockeye presently migrating through the marine approach areas. Chilko and in particular, Quesnel sockeye continue to be the most prevalent sockeye in the marine and in-river assessment areas. The previous run size estimate of 6,000,000 Summer-run sockeye was increased to 6,500,000 fish (59% of the 50% probability level forecast of 11,048,000 fish) at the meeting today. The 50% arrival timing of Summer-run sockeye through Area 20 is now estimated to have occurred on August 24, which is eight days later than their latest marine migration date on record and 16 days later than their average marine timing. The escapement of Summer-run sockeye past Mission through September 1 is currently estimated at 4,000,000 fish.

At the meeting on August 29, the Panel approved an increase in the run size estimate of Harrison River sockeye from 180,000 fish to 250,000 fish, and an abundance estimate for the remaining Late-run (excluding Birkenhead) stocks returning this season of 81,000 fish (assuming the 75% probability level forecast of abundance) for a projected total of 331,000 Late-run sockeye. Over the past few days, estimates of the abundance of Late-run run sockeye migrating through marine areas have increased. At the meeting today, The Panel approved an increase in the run size estimate for Harrison River sockeye

from 250,000 fish to 260,000 fish, along with a run size estimate for the remaining Late-run stocks of 156,000 fish (50% probability level forecast of abundance) for a total of 416,000 Late-run (excluding Birkenhead) sockeye. The estimated escapement of Late-run sockeye past Mission through September 1 is 269,000 fish.

Stock identification analyses indicate that Fraser River pink salmon currently comprise approximately 90% of the pink salmon migrating through Johnstone Strait and Juan de Fuca Strait. The migration of pink salmon through the marine approach routes has generally been at moderate levels over the past week. The diversion rate of Fraser River pink salmon through Johnstone Strait is presently estimated at approximately 72%. Abundance estimates of Fraser River pink salmon are tracking slightly below the 75% probability level forecast of 11,698,000 fish, although current estimates of their run size are highly uncertain due to variability in assumptions regarding their 50% migratory timing through Area 20. The historic 50% migratory timing of Fraser River pink salmon through Area 20 is September 1. If information suggesting a large number of pink salmon en route to the marine approach areas is verified in purse seine test fisheries, run size estimates for the Fraser River pink salmon will likely increase. A more accurate assessment of their run size should be possible next week after a larger portion of the run has been accounted through the assessment areas and a clearer identification of their arrival timing has been established.

Fisheries in the United States have caught approximately 102,000 Fraser River pink salmon, and an assessment fishery in Canada harvested approximately 400 fish. Non-commercial catches of Fraser River pink salmon in Canada total approximately 221,000 fish in First Nations fisheries, 85,000 fish in test fisheries, and 8,000 fish in recreational fisheries to-date. Fisheries directed at Fraser River pink salmon will be constrained because of the Panel's conservation mandate to protect co-migrating Late-run sockeye. The escapement of pink salmon past Mission through September 1 is currently estimated at 718,000 fish. Large migrations of pink salmon past Hell's Gate have continued over the past week.

Migration conditions for Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon in the Fraser River watershed continue to be satisfactory. Despite low flows this season, Fraser River water temperatures have been much more conducive to successful migration of sockeye salmon than was the case in 2004 when record-high temperatures combined with low flows and caused high in-river mortality of sockeye en route to their spawning grounds. Weather conditions in the upper Fraser River watershed through much of July and August were cooler than normal which helped to moderate water temperatures. Generally favorable river conditions this season should benefit spawning success rates and improve the likelihood of a strong return of sockeye from this brood in 2009.

Escapement assessments of several Early Summer-run, Summer-run, and Late-run sockeye stocks are ongoing. The Nadina River Spawning Channel operator reported that approximately 4,000 sockeye have been counted past the fence to-date. The enumeration fence on the Stellako River was operational on August 26 and approximately 5,800 sockeye have been counted through the fence thus far. The McKinley Creek fence was operational on August 15 and approximately 1,600 sockeye have been counted through it to August 31. Observers at the Cultus Lake enumeration fence have counted 25 sockeye passing the fence to-date and they are reported to be in good condition.

The Panel announced the following regulations for Panel Area waters:

**CANADIAN FRASER RIVER PANEL AREA WATERS:**

Remain closed to fishing.

## **UNITED STATES FRASER RIVER PANEL AREA WATERS:**

### **TREATY INDIAN FISHERY:**

Areas 4B, 5 and 6C: Open to drift gillnets 4:00 a.m., Saturday, September 3, 2005 to 12:00 p.m. (noon) Wednesday, September 7, 2005.

Areas 6, 7, and 7A: Open to net fishing from 4:00 a.m., Saturday, September 3 to 9 p.m. Monday, September 5, 2005, in the area southerly and easterly of a straight line drawn from Iwersen's dock on Point Roberts in the State of Washington to the Georgina Point Light at the entrance to Active Pass in the Province of British Columbia.

### **NON INDIAN FISHERY:**

Areas 7 and 7A: Open to purse seines from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m., Tuesday, September 6, 2005, in the area southerly and easterly of a straight line drawn from Iwersen's dock on Point Roberts in the State of Washington to the Georgina Point Light at the entrance to Active Pass in the Province of British Columbia.

Areas 7 and 7A: Open to gillnets from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 a.m. (midnight), Tuesday, September 6, 2005, in the area southerly and easterly of a straight line drawn from Iwersen's dock on Point Roberts in the State of Washington to the Georgina Point Light at the entrance to Active Pass in the Province of British Columbia.

(Note: U. S. Non-Indian 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 Pacific Salmon Commission reports daily test fishing catches of sockeye salmon on its recorded message at (604) 666-8200 and on the internet at: [http://www.psc.org/info\\_testfishing\\_collections\\_2005.htm](http://www.psc.org/info_testfishing_collections_2005.htm). In addition, Fraser River Panel news releases, fishery regulations, sockeye and pink escapement data, and sockeye and pink salmon stock status reports will be available on this website. United States fishing schedules during the season will be available for Treaty Indian fisheries through the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission at 1-800-562-6142. Non-Indian fishing schedules will be available through the National Marine Fisheries Service's Hotline in Seattle at 1-888-858-9319. Canadian commercial fishing regulations will be announced on the Fisheries and Oceans Canada recorded message at 604-666-2828 (from the lower B.C. mainland), and toll free from outside the lower B.C. mainland at 1-866-431-3474, and via fishery notices. Consult the appropriate regulatory agency regarding fisheries regulations pertaining to species other than sockeye and pink salmon in the Fraser River Panel Management Area.

The Panel will meet again on September 6 to evaluate the status of the Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon runs and to consider regulatory actions.

## 2005 Fraser River Panel Sockeye Review

Week of: Aug. 28 - Sep. 3, 2005

Date: Sep. 2, 2005

		<b>Fraser Sockeye</b>	
Area	Gear		Cumul.
<b>Commercial Catch</b>			
<b>Canada</b>			
A & C Areas 1-10	Net		0
F Areas 1-10	Troll		0
G Areas 123-127,11-12	Troll		0
B Areas 11-16	PS		0
D & E Areas 11-16	GN		1,100
H Areas 12-16	Troll		0
H Areas 18-29	Troll		0
B Area 20	PS		0
E Area 29	GN		0
Canadian Selective			0
FRA Economic Opportunity			0
Canadian Total			1,100
<b>United States</b>			
<u>Alaska</u>	Net&Troll		0
<u>Washington</u>			
T.I. Areas 4B/5/6C	Net		5,100
T.I. Areas 6/7/7A	Net		88,200
N.I. Areas 7/7A	Net		38,900
Washington Total			132,200
U.S. Total			132,200
<b>Non-commercial Catch</b>			
PSC Test			44,400
Other Test			69,000
Fraser River Aboriginal (FSC)			424,400
Areas 12-124 Aboriginal			278,800
Recreational			400
Charter			0
U.S. TI Ceremonial			6,700
Non-comm. Total			823,700
<b>Catch and Escapement</b>			
Catch Accounted-to-date			957,000
Potential Net Escapement (Mission esc. less Aboriginal & sport catch above Mission)			4,832,900
Total Accounted-to-date			5,789,900

### Gross Escapement (includes Pitt R. sockeye)

Run	Stock/Group	Adjusted Target *	Mission Esc.	FN Below Mission	Total Esc.	% Complete
EStu	Early Stuart	207,600	206,100	1,500	207,600	100%
ESum	Early Summer	653,900	554,400	15,600	570,000	87%
Summ	Quesnel/Chilko	4,631,600	3,252,400	87,400	4,111,000	89%
	L.Stu./Stel.		747,500	23,700		
Late	Birkenhead	531,600	88,200	3,100	368,700	69%
	Adams/L.Shuswap		19,800	100		
	Weav/L.Misc.		44,500	200		
	Sub 1s		205,000	7,800		
	3 sub 1s		110,500		110,500	

**2005 Fraser River Panel Pink Salmon Review**

Week of: Aug. 28 - Sep. 3, 2005

Date: Sep. 2, 2005

Area	Gear	Fraser Pinks	
			Cumul.
<b>Commercial Catch</b>			
<b><u>Canada</u></b>			
A & C Areas 1-10	Net		0
F Areas 1-10	Troll		0
G Areas 123-127,11-12	Troll		0
B Areas 11-16	PS		0
D Areas 11-16	GN		400
H Areas 12-16	Troll		0
H Areas 18-29	Troll		0
B Area 20	PS		0
E Area 29	GN		0
Canadian Selective			0
Canadian Total			400
<b><u>United States</u></b>			
Alaska	Net		0
<b><u>Washington</u></b>			
T.I. Areas 4B/5/6C	Net		3,900
T.I. Areas 6/7/7A	Net		60,100
N.I. Areas 7/7A	Net		38,100
Washington Total			102,100
U.S. Total			102,100
<b>Non-commercial Catch</b>			
PSC Test			11,200
Other Test			73,400
Fraser River Aboriginal			23,700
Areas 12-124 Aboriginal			197,700
Canadian Recreational			7,900
Charter			0
U.S. Ceremonial			19,300
U.S. Recreational			0
Non-comm. Total			333,200
<b>Catch and Escapement</b>			
Catch Accounted-to-date			435,700
Potential Net Escapement (Mission esc. less IF & sport catch above Missior			717,500
Total Accounted-to-date			1,153,200