



## PACIFIC SALMON COMMISSION

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

600 – 1155 ROBSON STREET  
VANCOUVER, B.C. V6E 1B5  
TELEPHONE: (604) 684-8081  
FAX: (604) 666-8707

Our File:

Your File:

**No. 12**

**NEWS RELEASE**

**September 16, 2005**

The Fraser River Panel met today to receive information on the status of Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon abundance and catches to-date. The abundance of Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon entering Johnstone Strait and Juan de Fuca Strait continued to decline over the past week, which is consistent with these fish approaching the end of their marine migration for the season. The diversion rate for Fraser River sockeye migrating through Johnstone Strait is presently estimated at approximately 95%. Late-run sockeye have been present in low but variable proportions in marine areas over the last several days. Commercial fisheries directed at Fraser River pink salmon commenced this week since the by-catch of Late-run sockeye was expected to be low enough to allow the conservation objective for these sockeye to still be achieved.

Fisheries in the United States have caught approximately 202,000 Fraser sockeye, and commercial fisheries in Canada harvested approximately 129,000 Fraser sockeye. Non-commercial catches of Fraser sockeye in Canada total approximately 935,000 fish in First Nations fisheries and 121,000 fish in test fisheries to-date.

The final in-season run size estimate of Early Stuart sockeye is 210,000 fish, with 50% arrival timing through Area 20 of July 16 (13 days later than average). The accounted run size of Early Summer-run sockeye is now 800,000 fish, with 50% arrival timing through Area 20 of August 20, which is 28 days later than average. The estimate of 7,000,000 Summer-run sockeye remains unchanged (50% arrival timing of August 23; 15 days later than average). The run size estimate of Late-run sockeye (excluding Birkenhead sockeye) is unchanged at 560,000 fish, with estimated 50% arrival timing of Late-run stocks through Area 20 as follows: Harrison (August 15); and Weaver and other Late-run stocks (August 31, which is 17 days later than average). The run size of Birkenhead sockeye is estimated to be 200,000 fish, with 50% arrival timing in Area 20 of August 25, which is 12 days later than average. The total estimated run size of adult Fraser River sockeye (four and five year old fish) is 8,720,000 fish, which is almost one third lower than the pre-season forecast (50% probability level) of 12,548,000 fish. Most of this shortfall is attributable to the poor return of Summer-run sockeye, which was approximately 4,000,000 fish lower than forecast.

Assessments of Late-run sockeye migration behavior in the lower Strait of Georgia suggest that these sockeye are not delaying their entry into freshwater (as they did prior to 1996, when they typically delayed for four to six weeks before entering the Fraser River). However, the late marine migration timing of Fraser River sockeye this season (including Late-run sockeye) should enhance the in-river survival rate of Late-run sockeye relative to some recent years when very early river entry occurred.

At the meeting on September 14, the Panel approved a run size estimate of 10,000,000 Fraser River pink salmon, which is substantially lower than the 50% probability level forecast of 16,318,000 fish. The estimated fry-to-adult survival rate of Fraser River pink salmon returning this year (2.4%, based on the present estimate of their run size), is considerably lower than average (3.5%). The 50% arrival timing of Fraser River pink salmon is estimated to be August 25, which is four days earlier than forecast, and approximately six days earlier than average. The average size of Fraser River pink salmon this season

is presently estimated at approximately 1.9 kg (4.2 pounds), which is similar to their average weight in 2001 and 2003. The diversion rate of pink salmon through Johnstone Strait is presently estimated at approximately 90%. Although the current run size estimate of Fraser River pink salmon is far below the pre-season forecast, given the relatively low catches, there should still be sufficient escapement to reach the spawning escapement goal of 6,000,000 fish.

Fisheries in the United States have caught approximately 300,000 Fraser River pink salmon, and commercial fisheries in Canada have harvested approximately 123,000 fish. Non-commercial catches of Fraser River pink salmon in Canada total approximately 234,000 fish in First Nations fisheries, 84,000 fish in test fisheries, and 8,000 fish in recreational fisheries to-date.

Environmental conditions in the Fraser watershed are suitable for successful spawning of sockeye and pink salmon. DFO is conducting spawning ground enumerations of several Early Summer-run, Summer-run, and Late-run sockeye stocks. The number of sockeye that have passed through enumeration fences on the following stocks to-date is as follows: Scotch Creek (4,740 fish); Nadina River (10,700 fish); McKinley Creek (44,000 fish); Kuzkwa Creek (8,300 fish); Stellako River (22,000 fish); Birkenhead River (17,000 fish) and Cultus Lake (Sweltzer Creek, 107 fish, of which 12 have been retained for brood-stock).

At the Panel meeting on September 12, the Panel relinquished regulatory control of U.S. Areas 4B, 5, and 6C effective 12:01 a.m., Tuesday, September 13.

**CANADIAN FRASER RIVER PANEL AREA WATERS:**

Remain closed to fishing.

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

Areas 6, 6A, 7, and 7A (excluding the Apex north and west of the East Point Line): Relinquish regulatory control effective 12:01 a.m., Saturday, September 17, 2005.

**TREATY INDIAN FISHERY:**

Remain closed to fishing.

**NON INDIAN FISHERY:**

Remain 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 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.

This is the final in-season news release of the Fraser River Panel in 2005.

**2005 Fraser River Panel Sockeye Review**

Week of: Sep. 11 - Sep. 17, 2005		Date: Sep. 16, 2005	
Area	Gear	Fraser Sockeye	
		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		61,600
D & E Areas 11-16	GN		44,300
H Areas 12-16	Troll		22,700
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			128,600
<b>United States</b>			
<u>Alaska</u>	Net&Troll		0
<u>Washington</u>			
T.I. Areas 4B/5/6C	Net		5,300
T.I. Areas 6/7/7A	Net		131,200
N.I. Areas 7/7A	Net		58,700
Washington Total			195,200
U.S. Total			195,200
<b>Non-commercial Catch</b>			
PSC Test			47,800
Other Test			73,000
Fraser River Aboriginal (FSC)			655,800
Areas 12-124 Aboriginal			278,800
Recreational			1,000
Charter			200
U.S. TI Ceremonial			6,700
Non-comm. Total			1,063,300
<b>Catch and Escapement</b>			
Catch Accounted-to-date			1,387,100
Potential Net Escapement (Mission esc. less Aboriginal & sport catch above Mission)			7,135,300
Total Accounted-to-date			8,522,400

**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	803,900	722,200	17,600	739,800	92%
Summ	Quesnel/Chilko	4,822,300	5,240,600	104,000	6,191,000	128%
	L.Stu./Stel.		822,400	24,000		
Late	Birkenhead	605,800	161,900	3,500	652,800	108%
	Adams/L.Shuswap		76,900	400		
	Weav/L.Misc.		173,000	1,000		
	Sub 1s		228,100	8,000		
	3 sub 1s		156,300		156,300	

### 2005 Fraser River Panel Pink Salmon Review

Week of: Sep. 11 - Sep. 17, 2005

Date: Sep. 16, 2005

		<b>Fraser Pinks</b>
Area	Gear	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	89,700
D Areas 11-16	GN	8,300
H Areas 12-16	Troll	23,800
H Areas 18-29	Troll	0
B Area 20	PS	0
E Area 29	GN	1,200
Canadian Selective		0
Canadian Total		123,000
<b><u>United States</u></b>		
<u>Alaska</u>	Net	0
<u>Washington</u>		
T.I. Areas 4B/5/6C	Net	4,000
T.I. Areas 6/7/7A	Net	164,200
N.I. Areas 7/7A	Net	118,700
Washington Total		286,900
U.S. Total		286,900
<b>Non-commercial Catch</b>		
PSC Test		13,600
Other Test		70,500
Fraser River Aboriginal		36,300
Areas 12-124 Aboriginal		197,700
Canadian Recreational		7,900
Charter		0
U.S. Ceremonial		13,200
U.S. Recreational		0
Non-comm. Total		339,200
<b>Catch and Escapement</b>		
Catch Accounted-to-date		749,100
Potential Net Escapement (Mission esc. less IF & sport catch above Mission)		3,061,200
Total Accounted-to-date		3,810,300