

Friday, August 26, 2005

The Fraser River Panel met Friday, August 26 to receive an update on the migration of Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon and to discuss regulatory actions.

Purse seine test fisheries in Johnstone Strait confirm that a substantial migration of Fraser River sockeye salmon has been occurring through this area over the past week, which has resulted in higher estimates of their abundance. Providing early and accurate estimates of the abundance of Fraser River sockeye this season has been difficult because their marine migration has been much later than the latest dates on record and because of their asymmetrical migratory pattern through the marine assessment areas. Consequently, run size estimates have increased over-time as these very late migrating fish are accounted through the primary assessment areas.

At the meeting today, the run size estimate of Early Summer-run sockeye was increased to 450,000 fish. The 50% migration date of these sockeye through Area 20 is estimated to have occurred on August 10, which is ten days later than the latest date on record. The run size estimate of Summer-run sockeye was increased today to 6,000,000 fish (54% of the 50% probability level forecast of 11,048,000 fish). The 50% migration date of Summer-run sockeye through Area 20 is currently estimated to be August 22, which is six days later than their latest migration date on record. Late-run conservation constraints will inhibit the Panel's ability to conduct fisheries on surplus Summer-run sockeye that may have otherwise been available for harvest.

The migration of pink salmon through Johnstone Strait this season continues to be much stronger than the abundance currently migrating through Juan de Fuca Strait. An assessment of how Fraser River pink salmon abundance in the approach areas is tracking relative to the pre-season forecast (16,318,000 fish at the 50% probability level forecast) will be provided next week.

Fraser River temperature and flow conditions are currently satisfactory for the migration of sockeye and pink salmon.

**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: Extended for drift gillnets from 12:00 p.m. (noon), Saturday, August 27, 2005, to 12:00 p.m. (noon) Tuesday, August 30, 2005.

Areas 6, 7, and 7A: Extended for net fishing from 8:00 a.m., Saturday, August 27, 2005 to 9:00 p.m., Sunday, August 28, 2005

**NON INDIAN FISHERY:**

Areas 7 and 7A: Open to gillnets from 2:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m., Monday, August 29, 2005.

Areas 7 and 7A: Open to reef nets from 12:00 p.m. (noon) to 6:00 p.m., Monday, August 29, 2005.

Areas 7 and 7A: Open to purse seines from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday, August 29, 2005.

(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 Monday, August 29, 2005.