

Friday, September 16, 2005

The Fraser River Panel met Friday, September 16 to receive a final in-season update on the status of the Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon runs this season.

The abundance of Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon entering Johnstone Strait and Juan de Fuca Strait has declined over the past week, which is consistent with these fish approaching the end of their marine migration. The final accounted, 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 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.

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.

Environmental conditions in the Fraser watershed are suitable for successful spawning of sockeye and pink salmon.

**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).

This is the final in-season meeting of the Panel in 2005.