

The Fraser River Panel reviewed Fraser sockeye catch estimates and run-size assessments at the meeting today. The Panel was also informed of reports of sockeye in poor physical condition in portions of the Fraser River watershed. Due to Late-run conservation constraints, commercial fishing in Canadian Panel Area waters was very limited over the past week. United States fishers continued to harvest small numbers of sockeye because of the low migration of Fraser sockeye through their Panel Area waters. Catches of Fraser River sockeye in all fisheries totals 1,917,000 fish to-date. Canadian and United States commercial catches of Fraser sockeye total 1,323,000 fish and 136,000 fish, respectively, while 458,000 fish have been harvested in non-commercial fisheries.

The proportion of Fraser sockeye migrating through Johnstone Strait has averaged approximately 90% over the last two weeks; considerably higher than the forecasted, seasonal diversion rate of 78%. Summer-run sockeye are still prevalent among the sockeye stocks migrating through the marine approach areas. The marine migration of Early Summer-run sockeye is above pre-season expectations for this time of year, although it is declining rapidly. Birkenhead and true Late-run sockeye are present in low proportions in the marine and lower Fraser River assessment areas.

The estimate of 1,500,000 Early Summer-run sockeye (69% higher than the 50% p level forecast of 885,000 fish) remains unchanged. Recent DNA analyses indicate that Early Summer-run sockeye comprise less than 15% of the Fraser sockeye migration through Johnstone Strait and Juan de Fuca Strait. The estimated migration of Early Summer-run sockeye past Mission through August 12 is 814,000 fish.

As a result of lower than projected estimates of Summer-run sockeye escapements at Mission over the past week and moderate test-fishing catches in Johnstone Strait test fisheries, the Panel approved a reduction in the run size estimate of Summer-run sockeye from 4,000,000 to 3,500,000 fish (50% p level forecast was 3,501,000 fish) at the meeting today. The 50% arrival timing of Summer-run sockeye in Area 20 is estimated to have occurred on August 6 (pre-season forecast timing for Chilko sockeye). DNA analyses continue to indicate strength in Late Stuart and Stellako stock abundance while estimates of Chilko and particularly Quesnel sockeye are weaker than expected. The estimated migration of Summer-run sockeye past Mission through August 12 is 757,000 fish.

True Late-run sockeye (Weaver, Late Shuswap, Cultus, Portage) and Birkenhead sockeye currently comprise a low proportion of the Fraser sockeye presently migrating through the marine approach areas. DNA analyses indicate that contributions of true Late-run sockeye are dominated by Weaver sockeye, which was anticipated since they were forecast to contribute over 50% of the true Late-run sockeye run this season. The average 50% arrival timing of Birkenhead and true Late-run sockeye in Area 20 is August 12, and August 14, respectively. The return abundance of Late-run sockeye through the marine assessment areas to-date this season is tracking higher than was expected during pre-season planning.

Fraser River water temperature (measured at Qualark Creek) has been far warmer than normal for the past several weeks. The water temperature is currently 19.8 °C and it is forecast to range from 20.0 °C to 20.9 °C over the next eight days. Fraser sockeye exposed to high river temperatures for sustained

periods, often experience high in-river mortality. Over the past week there have been reports of sockeye in the Fraser watershed that appeared sick and were displaying abnormal migratory behavior, which is consistent with these adverse in-river temperatures. A large portion of the sockeye recently sampled at the fish wheel near Lytton had skin lesions. Additionally, several sockeye have been observed holding near the mouths of Fraser River tributaries (e.g., Texas Creek) where the water temperature is much cooler than the mainstem of the Fraser River. The discharge of the Fraser River at Hope is near the record low for this date and is currently approximately 2,510 cms (23% lower than normal for this date). Environmental conditions for migrating sockeye in the Fraser watershed will be monitored closely over the coming weeks.

The escapement of Early Stuart sockeye past the enumeration fences on Forfar, Gluske, Kynock, and Dust creeks to-date is far below brood year (2000) levels. Visual surveys have begun in the North and South Thompson River areas. Observers at the Scotch Creek enumeration fence report that no sockeye have migrated through the fence thus far, but sockeye have been spotted holding below the fence. There have been no observations of Chilko sockeye to-date at Henry's Bridge or of Cultus Lake sockeye at the Sweltzer Creek enumeration fence.

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: Extended for drift gillnets until from 12:00 p.m. (noon), Saturday, August 14, 2004 to 11:59 p.m., Saturday, August 14, 2004.

Areas 6, 7, and 7A: Extended for net fishing from 11:59 p.m., Friday, August 13, 2004 to 11:59 p.m., Saturday, August 14, 2004.

NON INDIAN FISHERY:

(Note: U. S. Non-Treaty fishers should check the U.S. hotline before fishing as additional State of Washington regulations, including time restrictions are in effect).

Areas 7 and 7A: Will close as scheduled for purse seines and reef nets at 9:00 p.m., Friday, August 13, 2004

The Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC) 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/TestFish/>. The PSC has provided information on Late-run Fraser River sockeye migration behavior, en route mortality, and research results on the Internet at: <http://www.psc.org/Pubs/LateRun/Index.htm/>. In addition, Fraser River

Panel news releases, fishery regulations, sockeye escapement data and stock status reports are available on the Internet at: www.psc.org. United States fishing schedules during the season are available for Treaty Indian fisheries through the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission at 1-800-562-6142. Non-Indian fishing schedules are 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, on the Internet at: <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/> and via fishery notices. Consult the appropriate regulatory agency regarding fisheries regulations in addition to those adopted by the Panel for the Fraser River Panel Management Area.

The next in-season meeting of the Panel is scheduled to occur on August 16. Periodic news releases in this series will be provided by the Panel through the Commission to inform those interested in the progress of the Fraser River sockeye salmon runs.

2004 Fraser River Panel Sockeye Review

Week of: Aug. 8 - Aug. 14, 2004

Date: August 13, 2004

Area	Gear	Weekly Catch	%Fraser	Fraser Sockeye	
				Weekly	Cumul.
Commercial Catch					
<u>Canada</u>					
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				500,000
D Areas 11-16	GN				155,700
H Areas 12-16	Troll				134,200
H Areas 18-29	Troll				0
B Area 20	PS				10,500
E Area 29	GN				240,900
Canadian Selective					15,100
FRA Economic Opportunity					266,400
Canadian Total					1,322,800
<u>United States</u>					
<u>Alaska</u>		Net&Troll			0
<u>Washington</u>					
T.I. Areas 4B/5/6C	Net				14,400
T.I. Areas 6/7/7A	Net				56,700
N.I. Areas 7/7A	Net				65,100
Washington Total					136,200
U.S. Total					136,200
Non-commercial Catch					
PSC Test					22,500
Other Test					49,400
Fraser River Aboriginal (FSC)					138,600
Areas 12-124 Aboriginal					247,100
Recreational					0
Charter					0
U.S. TI Ceremonial					100
Non-comm. Total					457,700
Catch and Escapement					
Catch Accounted-to-date					1,916,700
Potential Net Escapement (Mission esc. less Aboriginal & sport catch above Mission)					1,533,200
Total Accounted-to-date					3,449,900

Gross Escapement (includes Pitt R. sockeye)

Run	Stock/Group	Adjusted Target *	Mission Esc.	FN Below Mission	Total Esc.	% Complete
EStu	Early Stuart	197,500	189,000	4,000	193,000	98%
ESum	Early Summer	1,080,700	814,000	60,000	874,000	81%
Summ	Quesnel/Chilko	1,928,500	254,000	23,000	844,000	44%
	L.Stu./Stel.		503,000	64,000		
Late	Birkenhead	184,500	21,000	2,000	26,000	14%
	Adams/L.Shuswap		0	0		
	Weav/L.Misc.		3,000	0		