

Friday, August 13, 2004

The Fraser Panel met Friday, August 13 to receive an update on the migration of Fraser River sockeye and the status of migration conditions in the Fraser River watershed. The estimate of 1,500,000 Early Summer-run sockeye (69% higher than the 50% p level forecast of 885,000 fish) remains unchanged. 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 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.

In-river temperature conditions for Fraser River sockeye continue to be adverse. Fraser River discharge at Hope is currently 2,510 cms (23% lower than normal for this date) and the water temperature (at Qualark Creek) is presently 19.8 °C. 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 high in-river temperatures.

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 next in-season meeting of the Panel is scheduled to occur on August 16, 2004.