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No. 8

## WEEKLY REPORT

September 1, 2023

The Fraser River Panel (Panel) met today to review assessment data on Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon.

### **Test fishing and stock identification information**

Given declining sockeye and pink salmon catches in marine areas, the test fisheries in Juan de Fuca and Johnstone Strait were terminated 5-days and 2-days earlier than scheduled, respectively. DNA analysis of a fish sample recently collected from the Area 12 purse seine test fishery indicated Fraser River sockeye contributions of 1% Early Summer run, 59% Summer run and 40% Late run.

Over the last week, the estimated diversion rate for both sockeye and pink salmon through Johnstone Strait increased to 99%.

### **Assessment results**

#### **Fraser River Sockeye Salmon**

As of August 31, 1,405,100 Fraser River sockeye salmon have passed Mission and the current in-season run size estimate for total Fraser River sockeye based on adopted run size estimates for the individual management groups is 1,606,000 sockeye, which is very similar to the preseason forecast of 1,564,000. Observations of Late run in in-river test fisheries has been increasing and approximately 108,000 Late run sockeye are estimated to be delaying their entry into the Fraser River. In general, delayed upstream migration of Late run stocks increases the probability of successful migration to the spawning grounds given the lower water temperatures later in the season.

#### **Fraser River Pink Salmon**

Pink salmon catches in in-river test fisheries have increased substantially in the last week and they have also been observed passing Hells Gate. To date, 1,657,000 pink salmon have been observed migrating past Mission. At Tuesday's Panel meeting, the panel increased the pink salmon run size to 20 million with an associated Area 20 run timing of August 20. While the current in-season run size estimate of 20 million implies a higher productivity than recent years, it is not unprecedented.

### **Migration conditions in the Fraser River**

As of August 31, the Fraser River water discharge at Hope was 1,817 cms and remains similar to the historical minimum. The temperature of the Fraser River at Qualark has been declining given the time of the year but remains high and similar to historical maxima at 18.3°C. Over the next 10 days temperatures are however expected to decrease to 16.9°C, in line with historical averages.

### **Escapement Update**

The counting fence at Scotch Creek has been operational since August 11 but no sockeye have passed through. As there is an evacuation order due to wildfires, the fence was left open August 17 to allow for fish passage until crews are able to access the site. A limited ground survey or an aerial survey during the anticipated peak spawning period may occur if permissions to enter the area are provided by the appropriate authorities. Visual surveys in

the North/South Thompson system began August 17 but access has been limited due to the wildfires in the area. In the Upper Barriere, sockeye are primarily holding. Due to wildfires, access to the lower Adams River, Seymour River and McNomee Creek is closed and aerial surveys are planned during the anticipated peak spawning period. In the lower Fraser, visual surveys on the Upper Chilliwack River started August 1 and water levels are characterized as very low for this time of year. Sockeye in the upper Chilliwack River are in peak spawning and past peak spawning in the upper reaches. Surveys of the Nahatlatch River and Lake continue to be suspended due to wildfire activity, but a recent aerial survey indicates sockeye are primarily holding. As of August 29 an estimated 68,550 sockeye have migrated past the Nadina hydroacoustic site. Sockeye near the Nadina spawning channel were observed holding and appeared healthy. A visual survey of Gates Creek was conducted August 26 and sockeye were reported to be staging of the creek mouth in Anderson Lake.

At the Chilko River and Quesnel River hydroacoustic sites 46,822 and 16,284 sockeye have migrated past the respective sites as of August 29. Visual surveys in the Quesnel system began August 23 and observed sockeye are primarily holding. At the Stellako River hydroacoustic site, an estimated 85,716 sockeye have migrated past the site as of August 29. Sockeye in the Stellako River are primarily holding or migrating and most fish are healthy looking. Sockeye observed in the Raft River during visual surveys of the North Thompson system are primarily holding with some early stages of spawning occurring.

The Birkenhead hydroacoustic site has been operational as of August 16 and 533 sockeye have passed to date. No sockeye were observed on visual surveys in the Harrison-Lillooet area. The counting fence at Sweltzer Creek (Cultus Lake) has been fish tight since July 25 and night video recording started July 27, and one sockeye has been counted through the fence. The water temperature is 21.0°C.

### **Regulatory Announcements & Resources**

The Panel announced the following regulations for commercial salmon fisheries in Panel Area waters:

#### **CANADIAN FRASER RIVER PANEL AREA WATERS:**

Areas 29-4, and 29-6: Open for Area H troll ITQ fishery not earlier than 00:01 Saturday, September 2, 2023. Non-retention of sockeye. (Please refer to DFO Fishery Notice for further details)

Areas 29-4, 29-6, 29-7, 29-8 and 29-10: Limited entry Area B seine ITQ fishery not earlier than 06:00 Sunday, September 3, 2023. Non-retention of sockeye. (Please refer to DFO Fishery Notice for further details)

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

##### TREATY TRIBAL FISHERY:

Areas 4B, 5, and 6C: Extend for drift gillnet fishing from 12 p.m. (noon), Friday, September 1, 2023 through 12 p.m. (noon), Wednesday, September 6, 2023. Sockeye must be released.

Areas 6, 7, and 7A: Extend for net fishing from 9 a.m., Saturday, September 2, 2023 through 9 a.m., Wednesday, September 6, 2023. Sockeye must be released.

##### ALL CITIZEN FISHERY:

Areas 7 and 7A: Open for purse seine fishing 5 a.m. through 9 p.m., Saturday, September 2, 2023; 5 a.m. through 9 p.m., Sunday, September 3, 2023; 5 a.m. through 9 p.m., Monday, September 4, 2023; and 5 a.m. through 9 p.m., Tuesday, September 5, 2023. Sockeye must be released.

Areas 7 and 7A: Open for drift gillnet fishing from 8 a.m. through 11:59 p.m., Saturday, September 2, 2023; 8 a.m. through 11:59 p.m., Sunday, September 3, 2023; 8 a.m. through 11:59 p.m., Monday, September 4, 2023; and 8 a.m.

through 11:59 p.m., Tuesday, September 5, 2023. Sockeye must be released.

Area 7: Open for reef net fishing 5 a.m. through 9 p.m., Saturday, September 2, 2023; 5 a.m. through 9 p.m., Sunday, September 3, 2023; 5 a.m. through 9 p.m., Monday, September 4, 2023; and 5 a.m. through 9 p.m., Tuesday, September 5, 2023. Sockeye must be released.

The next in-season meeting of the Panel is scheduled to occur on September 5. Weekly reports in this series will be provided by the Panel through the Commission every Friday during the in-season management period to inform those interested in the progress of the Fraser River sockeye salmon run. Weekly reports and regulatory announcements can be obtained via [Fraser Panel In-Season Information - Pacific Salmon Commission \(psc.org\)](#) or by subscribing to our eNews [Pacific Salmon Commission \(list-manage.com\)](#). Resources and contacts for fishing schedules, regulations, test fishing catch and DFO’s environmental watch program can be found in Table 1.

Table 1. Regulations & Resources

Fishing Schedule Contacts/Resources	Phone Number/ Website Links
United States fishing schedules (Treaty Indian)	1-800-562-6142
United States fishing schedules (Non-Indian)	1-800-662-9825
Canadian commercial fishing regulations (from the lower B.C. mainland)	604-666-2828
Canadian commercial fishing regulations (from outside the lower B.C. mainland)	1-866-431-3474
PSC Daily Test Fishing Catch (recorded message)	604-666-8200 <a href="#">Test Fishing Results - Pacific Salmon Commission (psc.org)</a>
DFO’s Environmental Watch program	<a href="#">Fraser River environmental watch   Pacific Region   Fisheries and Oceans Canada (dfo-mpo.gc.ca)</a>

Note: For species other than sockeye salmon consult the appropriate regulatory agency regarding fisheries regulations in the Fraser River Panel Management Area.

**Contacts**

Canada: Adam Keizer, Chair, Fraser River Panel

United States: Jason Gobin, Vice-Chair, Fraser River Panel

2023 Run status of Fraser sockeye salmon

Date: Sep. 1, 2023

Week of: Aug. 27 - Sep. 2, 2023	Sockeye					Total Fraser
	Management Group					
	E.Stuart	E.Summer	Summer	Late		
Mission passage (includes Pitt, Alouette, Coquitlam) <sup>1</sup>	40,900	329,400	838,000	196,800		1,405,100
Catch downstream of Mission	200	4,000	11,100	4,300		19,600
Accounted run-to-date	41,100	333,400	849,100	201,100		1,424,700
<b>Run size adopted in-season <sup>1</sup></b>	<b>41,000</b>	<b>335,000</b>	<b>950,000</b>	<b>280,000</b>		<b>1,606,000</b>
Run size forecasted pre-season	23,000	186,000	1,167,000	188,000		1,564,000
<b>Area 20 timing adopted in-season</b>	<b>2/Jul</b>	<b>26/Jul</b>	<b>13/Aug</b>	<b>17/Aug</b>		
Area 20 timing expected pre-season	7/Jul	6/Aug	17/Aug	24/Aug		

<sup>1</sup> Run sizes are usually not adopted until after the peak of the run has passed through marine test fishery areas in Juan de Fuca and Johnstone straits.

2023 Catch-to-date by fishery

Date: Sep. 1, 2023

Week of: Aug. 27 - Sep. 2, 2023		Sockeye	
		Total	Fraser
<b>Canada</b>		<b>9,624</b>	<b>9,624</b>
	<b>Commercial</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	B Purse Seine	0	0
	D Gillnet	0	0
	E Gillnet	0	0
	F Troll	0	0
	G Troll	0	0
	H Troll	0	0
	<b>First Nations</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	Food, Social & Ceremonial (FSC)	0	0
	Marine	0	0
	Fraser R.	0	0
	Economic Opportunity (EO) & Demonstration (Demo)	0	0
	Marine	0	0
	Fraser R.	0	0
	<b>Recreational</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	Marine	0	0
	Fraser R.	0	0
	<b>Charter (Albion gillnet test fishery)</b>	<b>651</b>	<b>651</b>
	<b>Other**</b>	<b>8,847</b>	<b>8,847</b>
<b>United States</b>		<b>3,876</b>	<b>3,872</b>
	<b>Commercial</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	Treaty Tribes (TRB)	0	0
	All Citizen (AC)	0	0
	<b>Treaty Tribes Ceremonial &amp; Subsistence (C&amp;S)</b>	<b>3,353</b>	<b>3,353</b>
	<b>Other**</b>	<b>523</b>	<b>519</b>
	<b>All Citizen Recreational</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Alaska *</b>	<b>na</b>	<b>na</b>
<b>Panel-approved Test Fisheries</b>		<b>16,586</b>	<b>16,050</b>
	<b>Panel Waters</b>	<b>11,370</b>	<b>11,078</b>
	<b>Non-Panel Waters</b>	<b>5,216</b>	<b>4,973</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>30,086</b>	<b>29,546</b>

\* Alaska catch is processed post-season and so is unavailable in-season.

\*\* May include unauthorized directed retention or unauthorized bycatch retention in fisheries directed at other species