

Friday, August 24, 2007

The Fraser River Panel met Friday, August 24 to receive an update on the status of the Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon runs and review the status of migration conditions in the Fraser River watershed.

Sockeye catches in the marine area purse seine test fisheries have declined considerably over the past few days. The marine migration of Early Summer-run sockeye has extended considerably longer than expected this season and consequently, at the meeting today the run size estimate for Early Summer-run sockeye was increased from 150,000 fish to 170,000 fish. The run size estimates for Summer-run sockeye of 825,000 fish and for true Late-run sockeye of 800,000 fish were unchanged at the meeting today. Assessments indicate that most Late-run sockeye are migrating directly into the Fraser River without delaying in the Strait of Georgia. As a result of lower run size assessments of Birkenhead sockeye, the Panel reduced the run size estimate from 227,000 fish to 150,000 fish at the meeting today.

Test fishing catches of pink salmon by purse seines in both marine approach areas have shown a strong increase over the past week. Current assessments of the run size of Fraser River pink salmon are generally tracking the 50% probability level forecast of 19,570,000 fish, although a more accurate assessment of their abundance this season will not be possible until after their peak migration occurs through Juan de Fuca Strait.

On August 23, the Fraser River discharge at Hope was about 2,900 cms, which is near average for this date and the water temperature at Qualark Creek was 17.5 °C, which is slightly higher than average. Fraser River water temperatures are forecast to decrease to approximately 16.9 °C over the next week.

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 for pink salmon from 12:00 p.m. (noon), Saturday, August 25, 2007 to 12:00 p.m. (noon) Wednesday, August 29, 2007.

Areas 6, 7, and 7A: Open to net fishing for pink salmon from 5:00 a.m., Sunday, August 26, 2007 to 9:00 p.m. Monday, August 27, 2007 southerly and easterly of a straight line drawn from the Iwersen's Dock on Point Roberts in the State of Washington to the Georgina Point Light at the entrance to Active Pass in the Province of British Columbia.

NON INDIAN FISHERY:

Areas 7 and 7A: Open to gillnets for pink salmon with non-retention of sockeye salmon from 8:00 a.m. to 11:59 p.m. (midnight) Tuesday, August 28, 2007 southerly and easterly of a straight line drawn from the low water range marker in Boundary Bay on the International Boundary through the east tip of Point Roberts in the State of Washington to the East Point Light on Saturna Island in the Province of British Columbia.

Areas 7 and 7A: Open to purse seines for pink salmon with non-retention of sockeye salmon from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Tuesday, August 28, 2007 southerly and easterly of a straight line drawn from the low water range marker in Boundary Bay on the International Boundary through the east tip of Point Roberts in the State of Washington to the East Point Light on Saturna Island in the Province of British Columbia.

Areas 7 and 7A: Open for reefnets for pink salmon with non-retention of sockeye salmon from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Saturday, August 25, 2007, from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Sunday, August 26, 2007 and from 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. Tuesday, August 28, 2007 southerly and easterly of a straight line drawn from the low water range marker in Boundary Bay on the International Boundary through the east tip of Point Roberts in the State of Washington to the East Point Light on Saturna Island in the Province of British Columbia.

(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 August 27, 2007.