

Friday, August 10, 2007

The Fraser River Panel met Friday, August 10 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.

The estimated abundance of sockeye salmon migrating through marine areas and into the Fraser River has been much lower than forecast over the past several weeks. At the meeting today the Panel reduced the run size estimate of Early Summer-run sockeye from 231,000 fish to 150,000. Estimates of Summer-run sockeye are much lower than their pre-season 50% probability level forecast of 3,369,000 fish. At the meeting today, the Panel approved a run size estimate of 1,261,000 Summer-run sockeye, which is the 90% probability level forecast. Stock identification analyses of sockeye samples collected from the lower Fraser River gillnet test fisheries indicate that Late-run sockeye are currently entering the Fraser River with little or no delay in the Strait of Georgia. The return of Late-run sockeye thus far is tracking a run size below the 50% probability level forecast. The migration of pink salmon through the marine approach areas has been occurring since approximately mid July. Assessments of their migratory timing, stock contribution to fisheries and abundance will be conducted over the next several weeks. The peak migration of Fraser River pink salmon through Juan de Fuca Strait usually occurs between late August and early September.

On August 9, the Fraser River discharge at Hope was about 4,200 cms, which is approximately 9% higher than normal, while the water temperature at Qualark Creek was 18.2 °C, which is approximately 0.5 °C higher than average for this date. Fraser River water temperatures are forecast to decrease to approximately 17 °C over the next week.

All commercial fisheries in Panel Area waters remain closed to fishing at the present time.

The next in-season meeting of the Panel is scheduled to occur on August 13, 2007.