

The Fraser River Panel was provided with assessments on the status of Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon at the Panel meeting on September 5. Catches of Fraser River sockeye salmon in all fisheries totals 2,168,000 to date. Canadian commercial catches total 1,045,000 fish, while commercial catches in the United States are estimated at 243,000 fish. In addition, Canadian First Nations fishers have caught an estimated 738,000 sockeye and recreational fishers have caught 34,000 sockeye. Catches of Late-run sockeye (excluding Birkenhead sockeye) in all fisheries in Canada and the United States thus far total 284,000, and 32,000 fish, respectively.

Fraser River sockeye salmon presently migrating through Johnstone Strait are comprised of approximately 30% Summer-run sockeye, 30% Birkenhead sockeye, and 40% Late-run sockeye. The current in-season run-size estimate for Summer-run sockeye of 3,300,000 fish was not changed at the Panel meeting today. It is estimated that the 50% migration timing of Summer-run sockeye through Area 20 occurred on August 7. The escapement of Summer-run sockeye past Mission to date is estimated at 2,043,000 fish.

The Panel maintained the provisional run size estimate for Late-run Fraser sockeye of 1,319,000 fish (excluding Birkenhead sockeye). Current abundance indicators suggest that the run size of Birkenhead sockeye will likely exceed the present provisional estimate of 322,000 fish. The 50% migration timing of Late-run sockeye past Area 20 and Mission is projected to have occurred on August 15 and September 1, respectively. Due to the early upstream migration by many Late-run sockeye, it is estimated that a large proportion (over 75%) of these sockeye will die en route to their spawning areas. Current assessments project that approximately 25% of the Late-run sockeye are delaying in the southern Strait of Georgia. The escapement of Late-run sockeye (excluding Birkenhead) past Mission now totals 615,000 fish.

The Panel approved a provisional in-season run size estimate of 25,000,000 Fraser River pink salmon at the meeting today, which is slightly lower than the 25% probability level estimate of 25,504,000 fish. If this provisional run size estimate is accurate, it would be the largest Fraser pink run since at least 1959. The diversion rate of Fraser River pink salmon through Johnstone Strait is presently estimated at 70%. Very large catches of pink salmon occurred in the Johnstone Strait purse seine test fisheries over the past week (almost 30,000 pinks were caught in the Area 12 purse seine test fishery on September 2). It is estimated that approximately 90% of these pink salmon are of Fraser River origin. These high catches are indicative of the peak of the migration of Fraser River pink salmon through this marine approach route. Current assessments of the 50% arrival timing of Fraser pinks through Area 20 are similar to the forecast timing of August 31. The estimated total catch of Fraser River pink salmon in Canadian commercial fisheries to date is 388,000, while in United States Panel Area waters 268,000 Fraser pinks have been harvested. The estimated escapement of Fraser River pink salmon past Mission to date is 1,435,000 fish.

Environmental conditions in the Fraser River for the migration of Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon have remained satisfactory over the past week. However, low water levels and high water temperatures in some tributaries of the Fraser River have created adverse migratory conditions for some sockeye. The water temperature of the Fraser River (measured at Qualark Creek) is currently 17.6 °C and has been less than 18 °C since August 24.

DFO's spawning ground enumeration programs are underway at various locations throughout the Fraser River watershed. Observers at the Scotch Creek enumeration fence have counted approximately 3,300 sockeye to September 2. Operators at the Nadina River spawning Channel report that approximately 900 sockeye were in the channel as of September 1. Enumerators on the Stellako River and Birkenhead Rivers have counted approximately 4,500 and 16,500 sockeye through the fences, respectively. The migration of Cultus Lake sockeye through the Sweltzer Creek fence has reached 162 fish.

The Fraser River Panel will relinquish regulatory control of the following areas on the dates specified below:

**CANADIAN PANEL AREA WATERS:**

Area 20: Relinquish regulatory control effective Saturday, September 6, 2003.

**UNITED STATES PANEL AREA WATERS:**

Areas 4B, 5, and 6C: Relinquish regulatory control effective Saturday, September 6, 2003.

The Panel announced the following regulations for Panel Area waters:

**CANADIAN PANEL AREA WATERS:**

Area 18-4: Open for Area H Troll from 00:01 a.m. Sunday, September 7 to 11:59 p.m. Tuesday, September 9. Only pink, chinook and chum salmon may be retained.

**UNITED STATES PANEL AREA WATERS:**

**TREATY INDIAN FISHERY**

Areas 6, 7, and 7A: Open for net fishing until 9:00 p.m., Friday, September 5 and from 5:00 a.m., Tuesday, September 9 to 9:00 p.m., Wednesday, September 10, 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. Purse seines may retain only pink and coho salmon.

**NON INDIAN FISHERY**

Areas 7 and 7A: Purse seines open 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily, Sunday, September 7, Monday, September 8, and Thursday, September 11, 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. Only pink salmon may be retained.

Areas 7, 7A: Extended for Reef nets. Open 5:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. daily to Saturday, September 13. Only pink salmon and marked coho (without an adipose fin) may be retained.

Note: Fishers catching a radio-tagged sockeye (which will have a thin wire antenna protruding from the mouth and an external, blue Floy tag attached to the antenna) are requested to please contact the following phone number, which is toll free in Canada and the U.S. 1-877-666-7575.

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 updated information on Late-run Fraser River sockeye migration behavior, en route mortality, and research results and plans on the Internet at: <http://www.psc.org/Pubs/LateRun/Index.htm/>. In addition, Fraser River Panel news releases, fishery regulations, sockeye and pink escapement data and stock status reports are available on the Internet at: [www.psc.org](http://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 and via fishery notices.

The Panel will meet again September 9 to evaluate the status of the Fraser River sockeye and pink salmon runs and to consider regulatory actions.

## 2003 Fraser River Panel Sockeye Review

Week of: Aug. 31 - Sep. 6, 2003

Date: September 5, 2003

Area	Gear	Weekly Catch	%Fraser	Fraser Sockeye	
				Weekly	Cumul.
<b>Commercial Catch</b>					
<b>Canada</b>					
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				473,000
D Areas 11-16	GN				167,000
H Areas 12-16	Troll				127,000
H Areas 18-29	Troll				0
B Area 20	PS				6,000
E Area 29	GN				259,000
Canadian Selective					13,000
Canadian Total					1,045,000
<b>United States</b>					
<u>Alaska</u>	Net&Troll				0
<u>Washington</u>					
T.I. Areas 4B/5/6C	Net				35,000
T.I. Areas 6/7/7A	Net				124,000
N.I. Areas 7/7A	Net				84,000
Washington Total					243,000
U.S. Total					243,000
<b>Non-commercial Catch</b>					
PSC Test					41,000
Other Test					66,000
Fraser River Aboriginal					521,000
Areas 12-124 Aboriginal					217,000
Recreational					34,000
Charter					100
U.S. TI Ceremonial					400
Non-comm. Total					880,000
<b>Catch and Escapement</b>					
Catch Accounted-to-date					2,168,000
Potential Net Escapement (Mission esc. less Aboriginal & sport catch above Mission)					2,880,000
Total Accounted-to-date					5,048,000

### Gross Escapement (includes Pitt R. sockeye)

Run	Stock/Group	Adjusted Target *	Mission Esc.	FN Below Mission	Total Esc.	% Complete
EStu	Early Stuart	29,000	29,000	0	29,000	100%
ESum	Early Summer	452,000	370,000	14,000	384,000	85%
Summ	Quesnel/Chilko	1,670,000	1,700,000	112,000	2,172,000	130%
	L.Stu./Stel.		343,000	17,000		
Late	Birkenhead	1,370,000	192,000	10,000	850,000	62%
	Adams/L.Shuswap		374,000	21,000		
	Weav/L.Misc.		241,000	12,000		