

Fraser River Sockeye In-season Update – Tuesday, August 18, 2020

The below is a summary. If more specific details are required please refer to the attached Fraser Panel distribution for the call. If you have any questions or notice any errors in the summary please contact me jamie.scroggie@dfm-mpo.gc.ca so I can make adjustments.

Total In-season Catch and Escapement Accounted To-date

2020 Run status of Fraser sockeye salmon

Date: Aug. 18, 2020

Week of: Aug. 16 - Aug. 22, 2020	Sockeye					Total Fraser
	Management Group					
	E.Stuart	E.Summer	Summer	Late		
Mission passage (incls Pitt, Alouette, Coquitlam)	13,300	58,100	130,800	8,000		210,200
Catch downstream of Mission	100	1,100	2,400	100		3,700
Accounted Run To Date	13,400	59,200	133,200	8,100		213,900
Run size adopted in-season¹	14,000	72,000	169,000	28,000		283,000
Run size forecasted pre-season	13,000	218,000	611,000	99,000		941,000
Area 20 timing adopted in-season	7/Jul	17/Jul	27/Jul	15/Aug		26/Jul
Area 20 timing expected pre-season	4/Jul	24/Jul	31/Jul	6/Aug		30/Jul
Johnstone Str. Diversion Rate	Annual average to date					24%
	Preseason forecast of annual rate:					35%

¹ 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.

- Total accounted to date is 213.9k Fraser sockeye of which 13.4k are Early Stuart, 59.2k, Early Summer, 133.2k are Summer run and 8.1k are Late run

In-season Data Flow

a) Acoustics

- **Qualark:** Daily passage estimates have been low and steady, ~4-7k last 3 days.
- **Mission:** Daily passage estimates at Mission increased on the weekend but have dropped off, ~4-10k last 3 days.
- Mission estimates are lower than Qualark (34% difference) however Mission assessments are thought to be more robust at this time.
- Mission assessments detected small targets close to shore and have adjusted recent estimates downwards by 15%.

b) Test fishing catch

- Low catches in river. No marine area test fisheries are active.
- Some additional sets taken increase sample size but limited success.

c) Stock Proportions

- Stock Id proportions are holding steady and are dominated by Summer run with some Late Run.
- Harrison proportions have increased in-river indicating that delaying Harrison sockeye have moved into the river.

d) Environmental Conditions and Management Adjustments

- The temperature of the Fraser River at Qualark Creek on Aug 17 was 17.7°C, which is 0.4°C below average for this date.
- The Fraser River water discharge at Hope was 3538m³/s, which is approximately 10% above average for this date.

e) Big Bar Rock Slide Update

- 91,701 salmon have been counted at the Alfalfa sonar site (~10 km downstream of the slide).
- 26 radio tagged sockeye have passed the slide area.
- 77,249 salmon have been counted at the Churn Creek sonar site (~40 km upstream of the slide).
- Preliminary estimates using length frequencies at Churn suggest that 18,815 sockeye have past the slide as of August 14.
- 5,883 salmon have been transported by the Whooshh.
- 189 sockeye have been radio-tagged below Big Bar.
- No evidence of cycling in front of the lower sonar array.
- Sockeye have been observed spawning in tributaries and other places below the slide.

f) Observations Throughout the Watershed

- Qualark test fishery catch was inspected for condition. The prevalence of condition issues increased slightly to around 14% however this is not unusual for this time of year.
- Less sick fish are being observed below Hells Gate now. Very small numbers of sick fish are being observed in small tributaries in the Mid Fraser River.
- Sockeye observations in the Lillooet area indicate most sockeye are in good condition however there are some observations of red colored sockeye milling in some locations.

Reports From Other Areas

- None

Assessments and Recommendations

a) Escapement Projections and Run Size Assessment

- Projecting 18.0k sockeye to pass Mission over the next 6 days.
- Seeing slight better than expected escapements at Mission currently.
- Current adopted run size is 283k however current assessments indicate a lower return (254k).
- The Late Run in particular looks to be much lower than the current adopted value.

- The PSC will not be recommending any additional in-season run sizes to the Panel and will instead recommend final runs sizes to the Panel post season as there are no mngt implications and the return is fairly similar to the current adopted values.
- There is no TAC expected in 2020.

Current Fraser River Panel Adopted Values and Potential Harvest (Adopted Changes in Bold)

Management Group	In-season Run Size/ Forecast p50	Timing A20 50%date	Proportional Mngt. Adjust. ^a	Available Harvest ^b	Allowable Harvest ^c
Early Stuart	14,000	Jul 7	.69	0	1,400
Early Summer	72,000	Jul 17	.52	0	7,200
Summer	169,000	Jul 27	.16	0	16,900
Late	28,000	Aug 15	.41	0	2,800

^a Proportional Management Adjustment is multiplied by the escapement target to calculate the numerical management adjustment.

^b Available harvest after deductions. Harvest includes all catch from available TAC in all fisheries in Canada the United States. TAC will be assessed in-season.

^c Allowable harvest in an LAER scenario. Allowable harvest in a no TAC scenario is not a target and would be considered a maximum and includes catch in all fisheries in Canada and the United States and may include fishery induced mortalities. Most harvest in a LAER scenario is incidental harvest in fisheries directed at more abundant stocks or species.

b) Criteria for Fishing Decisions

- None

c) Fishery Recommendations

US Recommendations for Panel Waters:

- None

CA Recommendations for Panel Waters:

- None

d) Fishery Evaluation

- None

Other Business

- The Panel agreed to a reduced meeting schedule for the remainder of the season (Tuesdays). Distributions of the latest assessment information will be sent out as usual on Tuesdays and Fridays.

Next Meeting

- Next Panel meeting Tuesday August 25