



WATERSHED TALK

NEWSLETTER

Produced by the Fraser River Aboriginal Fisheries Secretariat

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2019 FRASER SALMON UPDATE

By: Aidan Fisher, FRAFS Biologist

We are back in-season for the 2019 Fraser sockeye fishery. FRAFS biologists will be providing a summary of the weekly fishery management decisions for Fraser sockeye in the Watershed Talk. In addition, we will be summarizing the news on the Big Bar rock slide. If you are interested in further details, there is a website and daily updates regarding the slide.

This summary table will be updated throughout the season as information and decisions become available.

Sockeye Management Group	Pre-Season Planning Forecast (P50)	In-Season Adopted Run Size	Area 20 Timing (for 50% of run)
Early Stuart	41,000	N/A (too early for run size update)	Preseason (July 5)
Early Summer	465,000	N/A (too early for run size update)	Preseason (July 30)
Summer	3,393,000	N/A (too early for run size update)	Preseason (Aug 10)
Lates	359,000	N/A (too early for run size update)	Preseason (Aug 18)
TOTAL	4,795,000	N/A (too early for run size update)	Preseason (Aug 9)

Environmental conditions, slightly warmer and lower flows than the 30 year average. Temperature and discharge are heavily affected by current weather. Low snowpack throughout the Fraser watershed means there is little snowmelt influence compared to previous years which can regulate temperature and discharge. Management Adjustments are affected by environmental conditions and could change because observed data are sitting on the breakpoint between normal pMAs and increased pMAs.

Big Bar Slide

The Big Bar rock slide is a significant issue and affects numerous Fraser salmon species and individual stocks in 2019 and onward. Observed high volumes of debris in river has resulted in the acoustic equipment to be removed, thus fish passage at the slide site is unknown at this time. The acoustic equipment will be installed as soon as the conditions allow. There are a number of options being considered to obtain an estimate fish passage through the slide, planning is ongoing.

Based on the p50 forecast, 77% of Fraser salmon are affected by the Big Bar slide therefore understanding fish passage over the slide is vitally important.

There are a number of technical surveys that are planned for the site and fish passage that will be implemented over the next few weeks. Fisheries management will be considering the effect to fish passage of the Big Bar slide and will be working to incorporate or model the slide in current fisheries management models. This is uncharted territory with regards to the slide and in-season management.

Information on the slide can be found through the FRAFS Website <http://frafts.ca/node/75> or through the EMBC website <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content?id=636BAFFB10A1492C964B5FE1E90E80F1>

Early Stuarts

20,000 accounted to date past Mission.

Early Stuart are forecasted at 41,000 (P50). It is still too early for an in-season run size estimate for this management group.

Early Summers

3,400 accounted to date past Mission.

Early Summers are forecasted at 465,000 (P50). It is still too early for an in-season run size estimate for this management group.

Summer Run

Summers are forecasted at 3,393,000 (P50). It is still too early for an in-season run size estimate for this management group.

Late Sockeye

Lates are forecasted at 359,000 (P50). It is still too early for an in-season run size estimate for this management group.

Sockeye Closures

Area	Start Date	Start Time	3 Week End Date	4 Week End Date	End Time	Management Action
Areas 111, 121, 123 to 127	23-Jun		15-Jul	22-Jul		Earliest potential opening to FN FSC fishing for Fraser sockeye = July 15 (Sn, Gn, Tr)
Area 11	23-Jun		15-Jul	22-Jul		Earliest potential opening to FN FSC fishing for Fraser sockeye = July 15 (Gn, Tr); July 25 (Sn) ^{1,2}
Area 12	23-Jun		15-Jul	22-Jul		Earliest potential opening to FN FSC fishing for Fraser sockeye = July 15 (Gn, Tr); July 25 (Sn) ^{1,2}
Area 13	23-Jun		15-Jul	22-Jul		Earliest potential opening to FN FSC fishing for Fraser sockeye = July 15 (Gn, Tr); July 25 (Sn) ¹
Areas 14 to 16	23-Jun		15-Jul	22-Jul		Earliest potential opening to FN FSC fishing for Fraser sockeye = July 15 (Gn, Tr); Aug 15 (Sn) ¹
Areas 17, 19, 20 and 21	23-Jun		15-Jul	22-Jul		Earliest potential opening to FN FSC fishing for Fraser sockeye = July 15 (Sn, Gn, Tr)
Areas 18 and 29	27-Jun	Noon	19-Jul	26-Jul	Noon	Earliest potential opening to FNs FSC fishing for Fraser sockeye = July 19, noon
Steveston-Mission Bridge	27-Jun	Noon	19-Jul	26-Jul	Noon	Earliest potential opening to FNs FSC fishing for Fraser sockeye = July 22, 6 AM
Mission Bridge-Sawmill Cr	28-Jun	6:00 AM	22-Jul	29-Jul	6:00 AM	FNs FSC: Open to selective fishing for chinook (dip net, angling and potential for 8" mesh gill net) and open in trib for sockeye and chinook.
Sawmill Cr-Texas Cr	03-Jul	6:00 PM	24-Jul	31-Jul	6:00 PM	FNs FSC: Open to selective fishing for chinook (dip net, angling) and open in trib for sockeye and chinook.
Texas Cr-Kelly Cr	03-Jul	6:00 PM	24-Jul	31-Jul	6:00 PM	
Kelly Cr-Deadman	03-Jul	6:00 PM	24-Jul	31-Jul	6:00 PM	
Deadman-Chilcotin	09-Jul	6:00 PM	28-Jul	04-Aug	6:00 PM	FNs FSC: Open to selective fishing for chinook (dip net, angling) and open in trib for sockeye and chinook.
Chilcotin-Quesnel	09-Jul	6:00 PM	28-Jul	04-Aug	6:00 PM	
Quesnel-Hixon	09-Jul	6:00 PM	28-Jul	04-Aug	6:00 PM	
Hixon-Prince George	11-Jul	6:00 PM	02-Aug	09-Aug	6:00 PM	FNs FSC: Open to selective fishing for chinook (dip net and 8" mesh gill net) and open in trib for sockeye and chinook.
Prince George-Stuart R	11-Jul	6:00 PM	02-Aug	09-Aug	6:00 PM	FNs FSC: Some allowable harvest in terminal areas.

¹ Gear restrictions remain in place to protect Sakinaw sockeye until July 25 (Queen Charlotte and Johnstone Straits) and August 15 (northern Strait of Georgia).

² Additional sockeye closures will remain in place in portions of Areas 11 and 12 until late July in waters north of Lewis Point to protect Nimpkish sockeye.

The Early Stuart window closure is in place for the Fraser River and the marine approach area. The end date for the Early Stuart Window closure has not been announced to date. The potential dates for each region are in the table above, from the Draft 2019-2020 Southern Salmon IFMP (p. 392).

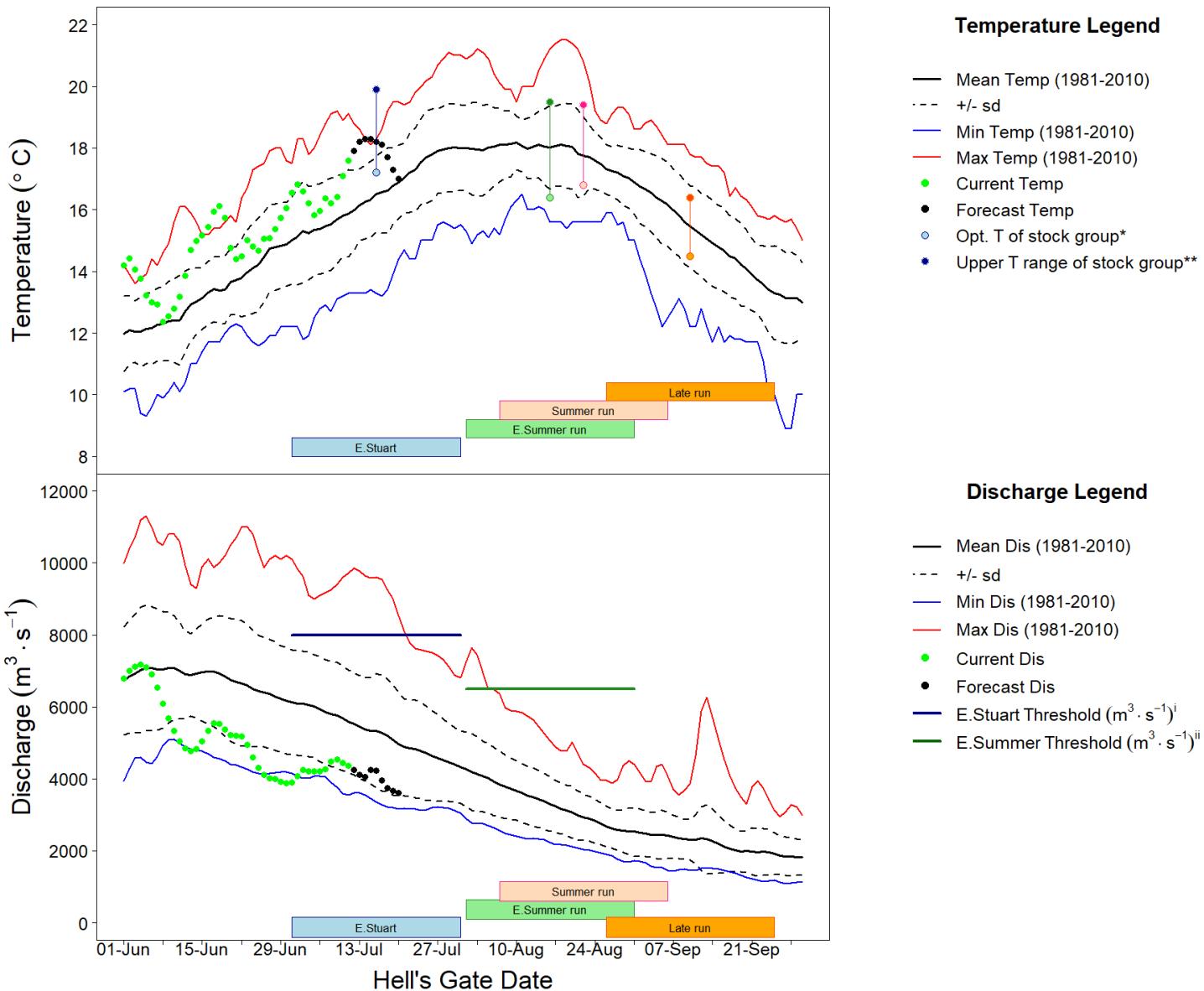
Fraser River Conditions

The main source of information for Temperature and Discharge data and forecasts is DFO's Environmental Watch Program (see link below).

The BC River Forecast Centre website (see links below) has information and links related to discharge and temperatures at various monitoring stations throughout the Fraser watershed, including snow pillow and melt updates.

Environment Canada's Water Office webpage provides access to real time hydrometric data at many locations throughout the Fraser watershed (see links below).

Fraser Discharge and temperatures at Hope and Qualark Creek (near Hope) respectively look like this (graphs from the Fraser River Panel Distribution July 11th, 2019):



The Fraser River water temperature at Hope is currently 17.6 degrees Celsius (1.7 degrees Celsius above average for this time of year), and is forecast to increase to 18.1 degrees Celsius by July 17th. The Fraser River discharge is within the usual annual differences at 4,371 m³/sec at the Qualark water station on July 11th (22% below average for this time of year). The discharge is predicted to continue tracking below average but within the usual annual variation, with a forecast discharge of 3,961 m³/sec by July 17th.

Fraser River Fisheries Information

Fraser First Nations Fisheries information can be found on the DFO website at:

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/fraser/index-eng.html>

DFO staff will be distributing Fraser Salmon Bulletins, and we strongly encourage people to review and comment on the DFO bulletin if time and resources permit. Contact your local DFO Resource Manager for a copy, and addition to the distribution list.

Fraser Sockeye Salmon

The Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC) distributes the Fraser River Panel meeting agenda and technical information for Panel members and observers to the process. The following information is a summary of key information from that document (July 11th, 2019) and the Fraser River Panel meeting from the same day.

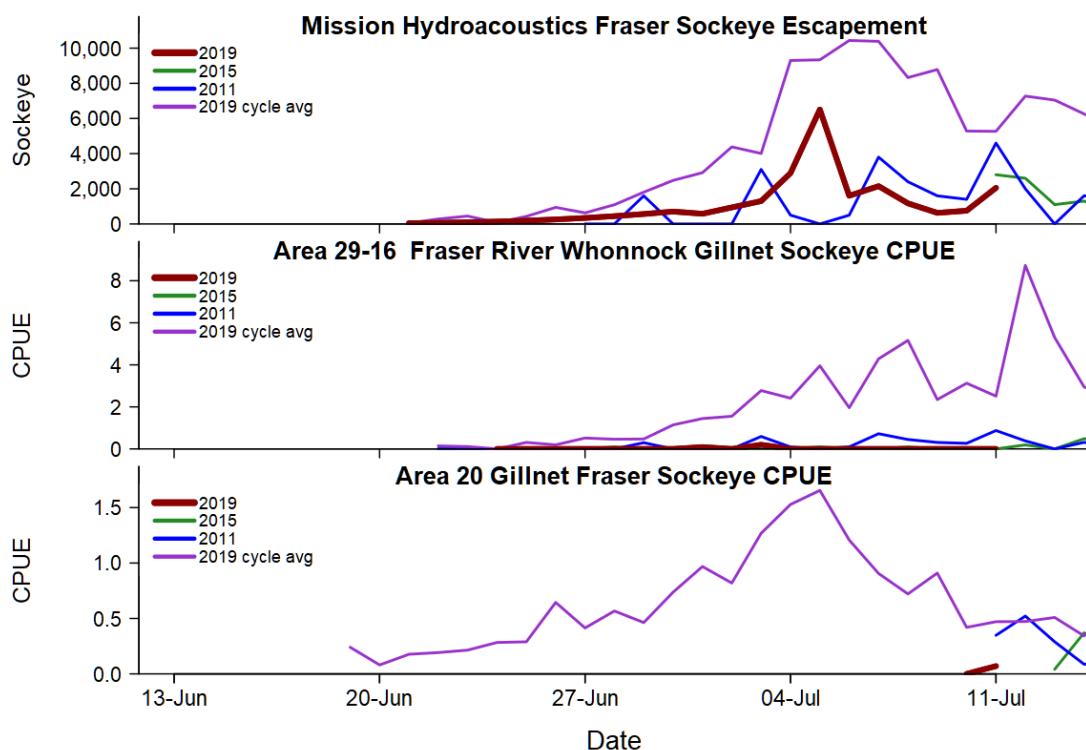
Stock Identification

To date there have not been enough samples taken to estimate stock ID. Next week there will potentially be sufficient sample size to estimate stock ID and proportions.

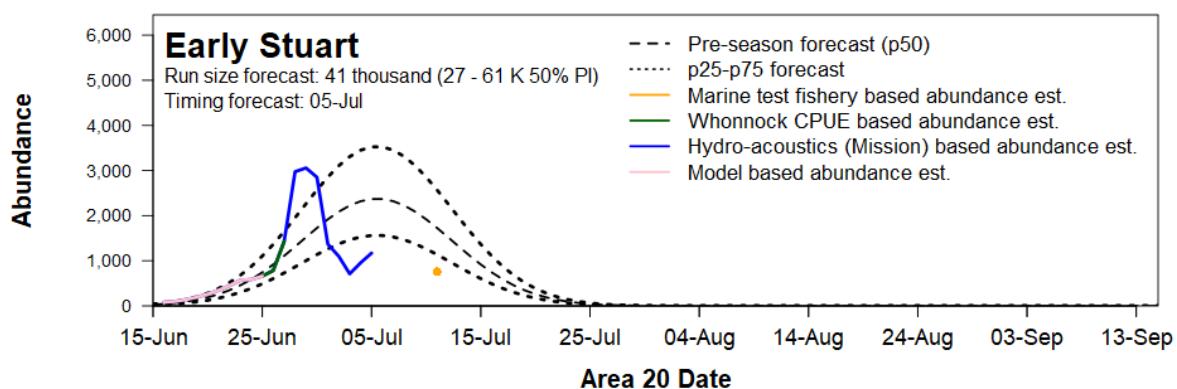
Test Fisheries

Test fisheries have recently started. A total of 24,000 Fraser sockeye have been accounted-to-date, comprised of 20,000 Early Stuart sockeye, 3,400 Early Summer run sockeye. Test fishery catch to date has been minimal.

Test fishing graphs and Mission hydro-acoustics information from the PSC distribution package:



Estimated Abundance and In-Season Timing Compared to Forecast



The next Fraser River Panel meeting is scheduled for 11AM Tuesday July 16th.

Fraser River Panel Schedule:

Tuesday and Friday 11am.

Canada dial-in: 1-888-299-2873

(USA dial-in: 1-888-585-9008)

Conference ID: 287-053-397

Links

With Chinook and sockeye approaching and in the Fraser, these links may be of interest:

BC River Forecast Centre Website: <http://bcrfc.env.gov.bc.ca>

Environment Canada's Water Office Website: http://www.wateroffice.ec.gc.ca/index_e.html

Pacific Salmon Commission Website: www.psc.org

Pacific Salmon Commission Test Fisheries: http://www.psc.org/info_testfishing.htm

Pacific Salmon Commission News and Regulatory announcements: <http://www.psc.org/publications/fraser-panel-in-season-information/fraser-river-panel-regulatory-announcements/>

Fraser River Mission Escapement Reports: <http://www.psc.org/publications/fraser-panel-in-season-information/fish-passage-past-the-psc-hydroacoustic-counting-station-near-mission-bc/>

Fraser River Environmental Watch Reports: <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/science/habitat/frw-rfo/index-eng.html>

The Albion Test Fishery information can be found at:

<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/fraser/docs/commercial/albionchinook-quinnat-eng.html>

For more information contact Aidan Fisher by email: Aidan.Fisher@lffa.ca