



# WATERSHED TALK

## NEWSLETTER

Produced by the Fraser River Aboriginal Fisheries Secretariat

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### Fraser Salmon In-season Update

By Pete Nicklin,  
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#### *General*

The information in this update summarizes the information from the FRAFS July 18<sup>th</sup> Thursday in-season teleconference call, the Fraser River Panel information distribution July 19<sup>th</sup>, and Albion Chinook test fishery graphs from the DFO website.

The first 2013 FRAFS in-season teleconference (hosted by FRAFS Biologist Mike Staley) took place at Thursday July 4<sup>th</sup>, and these calls will continue weekly throughout the sockeye season, unless otherwise specified.

This Update covers:

- Fraser Chinook Albion Test Fishery;
- Water Conditions; and
- Fraser Sockeye.

***Please continue to the next page to for the complete report.***



### Pulling Together 2013

*"When you awaken your spirit, many opportunities, talents and strengths will be revealed." (Serena Steel, Simpcw)*

From July 26<sup>th</sup> to August 2<sup>nd</sup>, a fleet of 19 large First Nation canoes representing over 300 paddlers and their crews will participate in Pulling Together 2013.

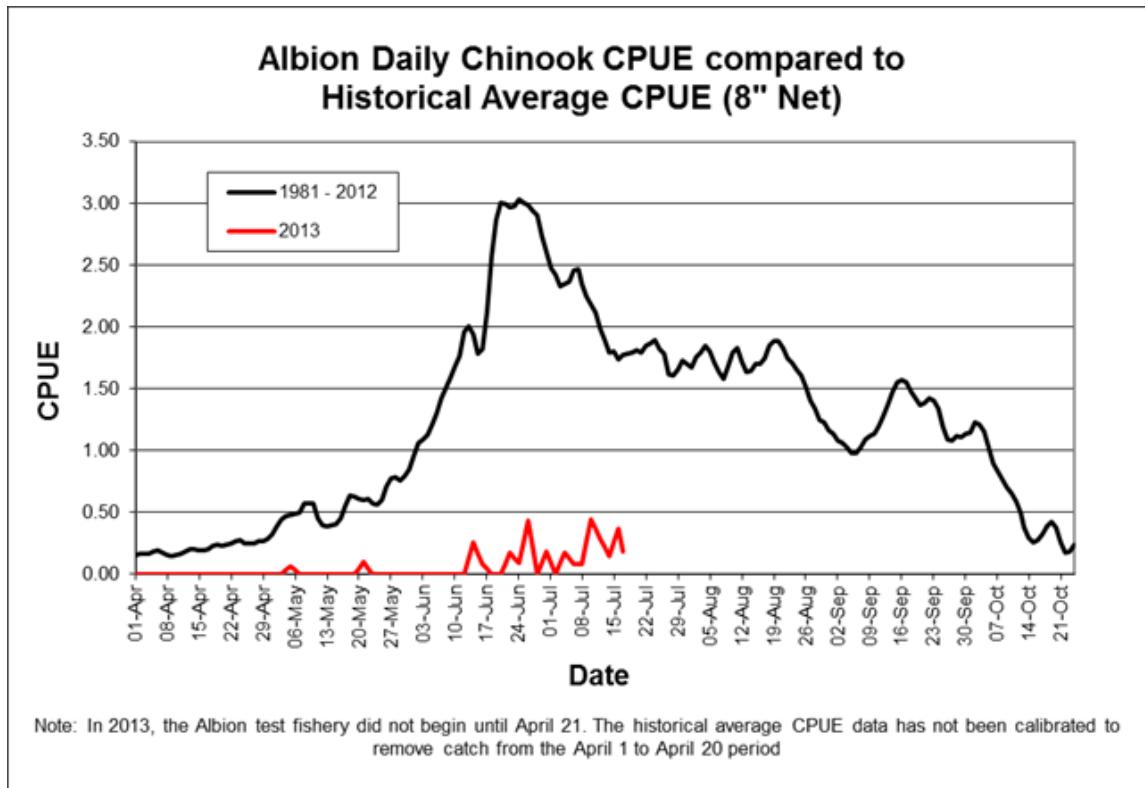
Their goal is to "recognize the past and to enhance understanding between Public Service Agencies and Aboriginal Peoples by canoeing the traditional highway, strengthening our future relations."

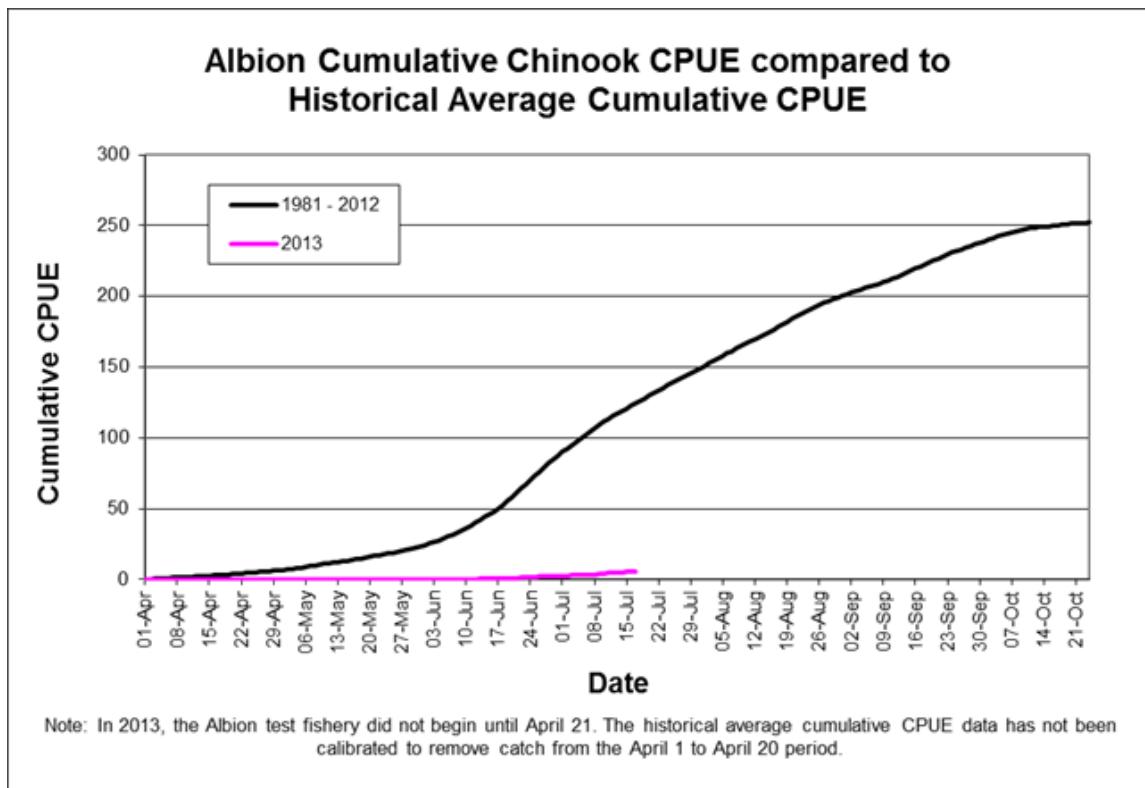
Serena Steel created this year's logo. Be sure to read her [handwritten note](#) about what inspired her.

For more information, please visit [PT 2013](#).



**Fraser Chinook Albion Test Fishery**  
(Graphs from DFO website: *Albion Chinook Test Fishery*)





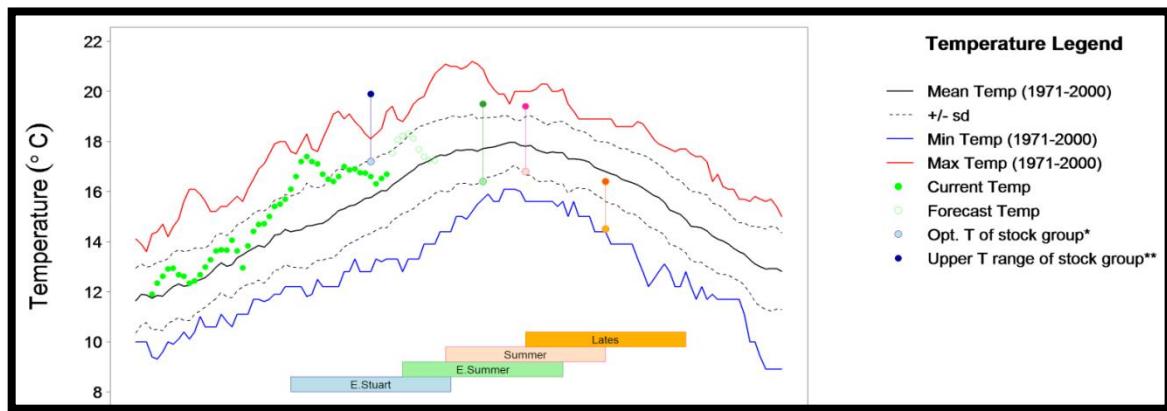
## Water Conditions

Fraser River discharge and temperature information is updated and distributed by the Pacific Salmon Commission. The graphs in this section are taken directly from that update.

Current Fraser River temperatures at Hope are above average for this time of year. Water discharge in the Fraser declined rapidly but is leveling off; below average for this time of year and forecast to track below the average for the next several days.

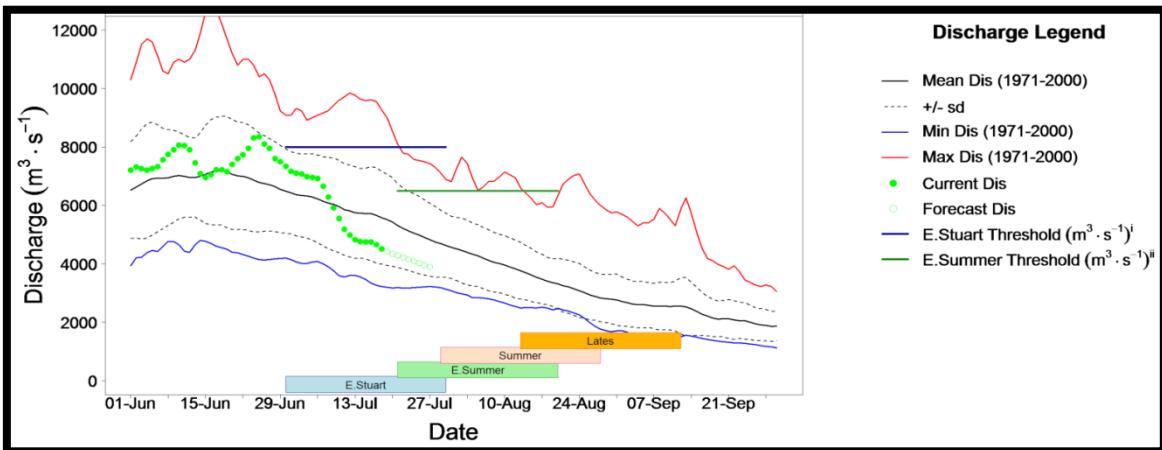


## Fraser River Temperature at Qualark



**Figure 1:** This graph shows the Fraser River temperatures at Qualark Creek (Lower Fraser). The line with the solid green circles shows the 2013 observed temperatures. The unfilled green circle portion of the line shows the forecast temperatures. The current temperature is approximately 16.7 degrees Celsius and forecast to increase to 17.7 degrees Celsius by July 24<sup>th</sup>. The current temperature is slightly above average for this time of year (16 degrees Celsius – solid black line is the average (1971-2000)). The vertical lines connected by circles show the Optimal and Upper temperature range of the sockeye aggregates.

## Fraser River Discharge at Hope



**Figure 2:** This graph shows the 2013 Fraser River discharge at Hope. The line with the solid green circles is the 2013 observed discharge values, and the forecast discharge shows as unfilled green circles. Fraser River discharge is below average for this time of year. The July 18<sup>th</sup> discharge was 4510  $m^3$ /sec (approximately 19% lower than average for the date), and forecast to decrease to approximately 4091  $m^3$ /sec by July 24<sup>th</sup>.



## Fraser Sockeye

Fraser sockeye are in marine approach areas and migrating in the Fraser River.

The marine test fishery in Area 20 (Strait of Juan de Fuca – southern tip of Vancouver Island) was flat and low from July 15<sup>th</sup> to the 17<sup>th</sup>, but picked up on July 18<sup>th</sup>. The Area 12 (Johnstone Strait) Round Island test fishery is still low, but the Naka Creek test fishery recorded 181 sockeye on July 18<sup>th</sup>. In-river test fisheries at Whonnock and Cottonwood remain low with respect to sockeye catches. Purse seine test fisheries in both marine approaches have been delayed until Monday July 22 (Area 20 and 12) and Wednesday July 24<sup>th</sup> (Area 13).

The Early Stuart migration is declining in marine areas and most of these sockeye are in the river. Early Stuart Area 20 timing is now estimated at July 2<sup>nd</sup> in Area 20, three days earlier than expected pre-season. The first Early Stuarts have started to arrive on the spawning grounds in the Stuart system (*thanks to Darren Haskell of T'lazten Fisheries for the email!*).

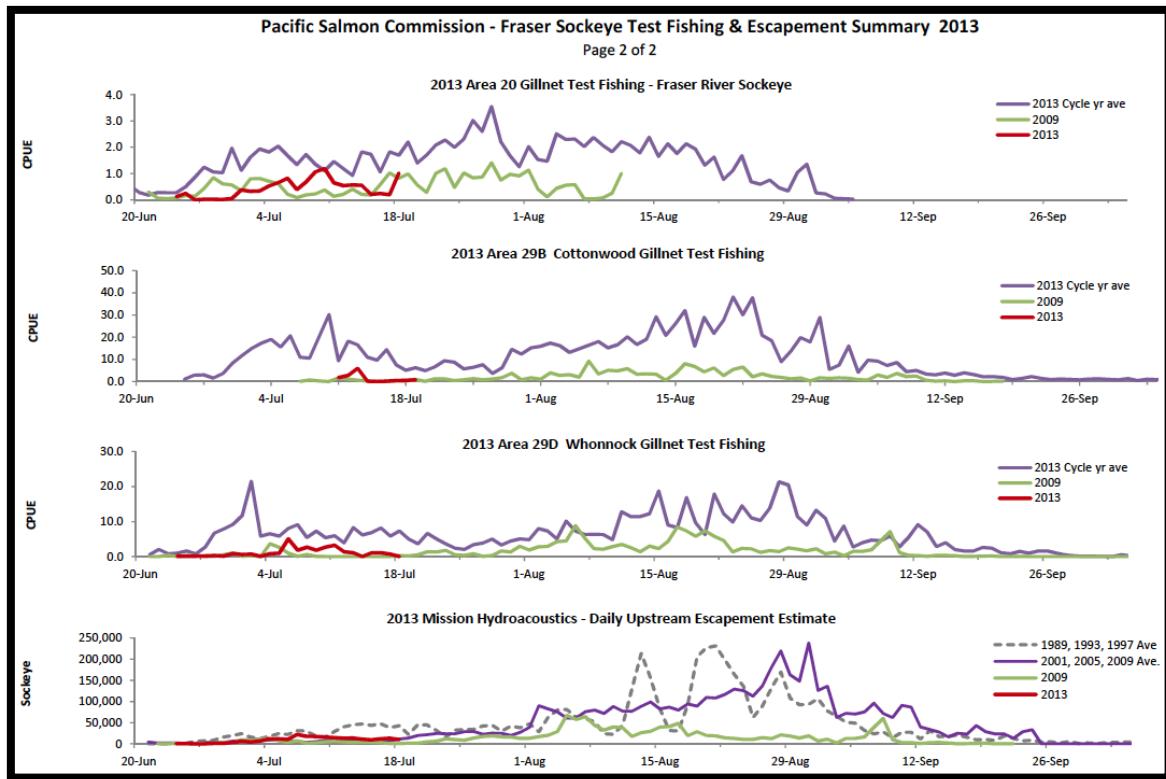
An estimated 167,500 Early Stuarts, 88,000 Early Summers, and 9,600 Summers have passed the Mission hydroacoustics station to date (July 18<sup>th</sup>).

The current in-season run size estimate (July 19<sup>th</sup>) for Early Stuarts is 180,000 (July 2<sup>nd</sup> Area 20 timing), which is less than the P50 pre-season forecast of 211,000. The proportional Management Adjustment (pMA) for Early Stuarts based on that timing is 1.33, or approximately 144,000 fish. With an Early Stuart escapement goal of 108,000 and current Management Adjustment of approximately 144,000, an estimated 252,000 Early Stuarts would be needed to pass Mission in order to meet this escapement goal. At the current in-season run size estimate, Management Adjustment and escapement goal (108,000) there is no Total Allowable Catch (TAC) for the Early Stuarts.

Early Summer sockeye dominate the mix of Fraser sockeye in the most recent Area 20 test fishery stock identification results, with Pitt and Chilliwack comprising most of the Early Summer stocks assessed to date. It is still too early in the season for an in-season estimate of the Early Summers. While the Chilliwack and Pitt stocks are tracking close to and above forecast respectively, the Nadina, Early Thompson and Gates sockeye, and the other small stocks of the Early Summer Run group that originate upstream from Hope, are a significant portion of the aggregate and these stocks are still being assessed for their contributions to the entire Early Summer group. So far their status in relation to their pre-season forecasts is unknown.

A few Summer Run sockeye are being identified in test fisheries, with Harrison sockeye being the highest proportion of recent test fisheries in Area 20, and Late Stuart/Stellako comprising the highest proportion of the most recent Area 12 test fishery. As with the Early Summers, it is too early for an in-season estimate of this timing group.

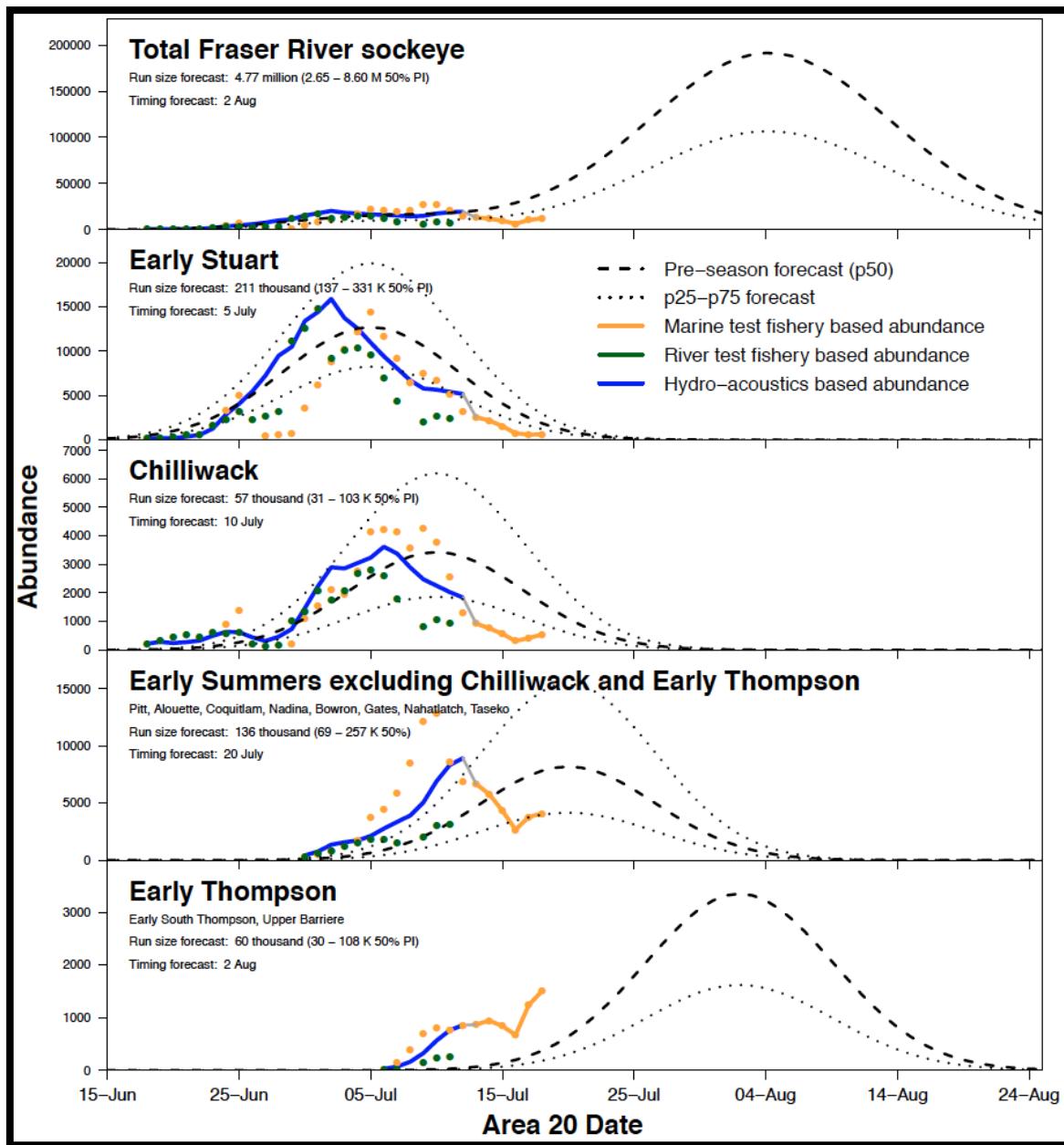
The next scheduled Fraser River Panel meeting is Tuesday July 23<sup>rd</sup> at 11AM.

*Fraser Sockeye Test Fishery Summary (Provided by Pacific Salmon Commission)*

**Figure 3: Pacific Salmon Commission 2013 test fisheries summary (to July 18<sup>th</sup>).**



Fraser Sockeye Area 20 sockeye passage Graphs (Provided by Pacific Salmon Commission)



**Figure 4:** These graphs show the current (July 18<sup>th</sup>) information for the 2013 Fraser, Early Stuart, Early Summer and Summer sockeye migration.

For more information contact Pete Nicklin by email: [pnicklin@telus.net](mailto:pnicklin@telus.net)



## FRAFS First Nations In-Season Technical Conference Calls

Thursdays at 4:00 PM (unless otherwise noted)

Hosted by FRAFS Biologist Mike Staley

Dial in number: Toll-free: 1-866-512-0904

Participant code: 4954972#

## General Information

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

Albion Test Fishery – Chinook Gill Net:

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

Pacific Salmon Commission Website: [www.psc.org](http://www.psc.org)

Fraser River Fisheries Information : <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/fraser/index-eng.htm>

Pacific Salmon Commission Test Fisheries: [http://www.psc.org/info\\_testfishing.htm](http://www.psc.org/info_testfishing.htm)

Pacific Salmon Commission News and Regulatory announcements: [http://www.psc.org/news\\_frpnews.htm](http://www.psc.org/news_frpnews.htm)

Fraser River Mission Escapement Reports: [http://www.psc.org/info\\_inseasonfraserescapement.htm](http://www.psc.org/info_inseasonfraserescapement.htm)

Fraser River Environmental Watch Reports:

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

