



WATERSHED TALK

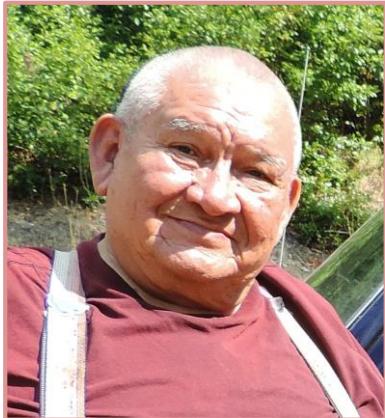
NEWSLETTER

Produced by the Fraser River Aboriginal Fisheries Secretariat

August 29, 2014

Volume XI, Issue 17

Sqyéytn for the elders.



“It’s just like goin’ back, the way we used to do.”
Opie Oppenheim

Opie Oppenheim (Coldwater IB) spent a sunny morning fishing on the Fraser River with his nephew Ranger Oppenheim and Shackan community members Shona Bara, Lee Seymour, Toby Abbott and Kirby James.

Being with the crew was “an elder’s treat.” Opie said. “But,” he added with smile, “I’m going to be sore for a few days.”

For the past four years the Siska Indian Band has set aside a fishing site for neighbouring communities to bring their elders to. It’s an easy walk to a sandy beach looking down river.

“Awesome,” is how Kirby James described his first year of fishing for the elders. “We thank the Creator and the community for the privilege to fish here.”

Over two days the crew caught 200 sockeye: fish that’ll provide “nourishment in the winter,” Kirby said. The catch will be cleaned then delivered “door to door,” Shona added.



(L-R) Tony, Shona, Lee and Kirby

This was Ranger’s fourth year. “It’s part of our teachings that we look after the old ones,” he said. “And it’s a blessing that we can come out and fish for them. To show them that there’s people that still care for them.”

- **Fraser Salmon Update: see Page 3**

FRASER RIVER ABORIGINAL FISHERIES SECRETARIAT

c/o Nicola Tribal Association • PO Box 188 • Merritt, BC • V1K 1B8
Tel: 250-378-4235 • Fax: 250-378-9119 | frafs15@gmail.ca • www.frafs.ca



WATERSHED TALK NEWSLETTER

August 29, 2014 • Volume XI, Issue 17



Elder's fishing site just down river from Siska.



Ranger Oppenheim (Shackan)

FRASER RIVER ABORIGINAL FISHERIES SECRETARIAT

c/o Nicola Tribal Association • PO Box 188 • Merritt, BC • V1K 1B8
Tel: 250-378-4235 • Fax: 250-378-9119 | frafs15@gmail.ca • www.frafs.ca



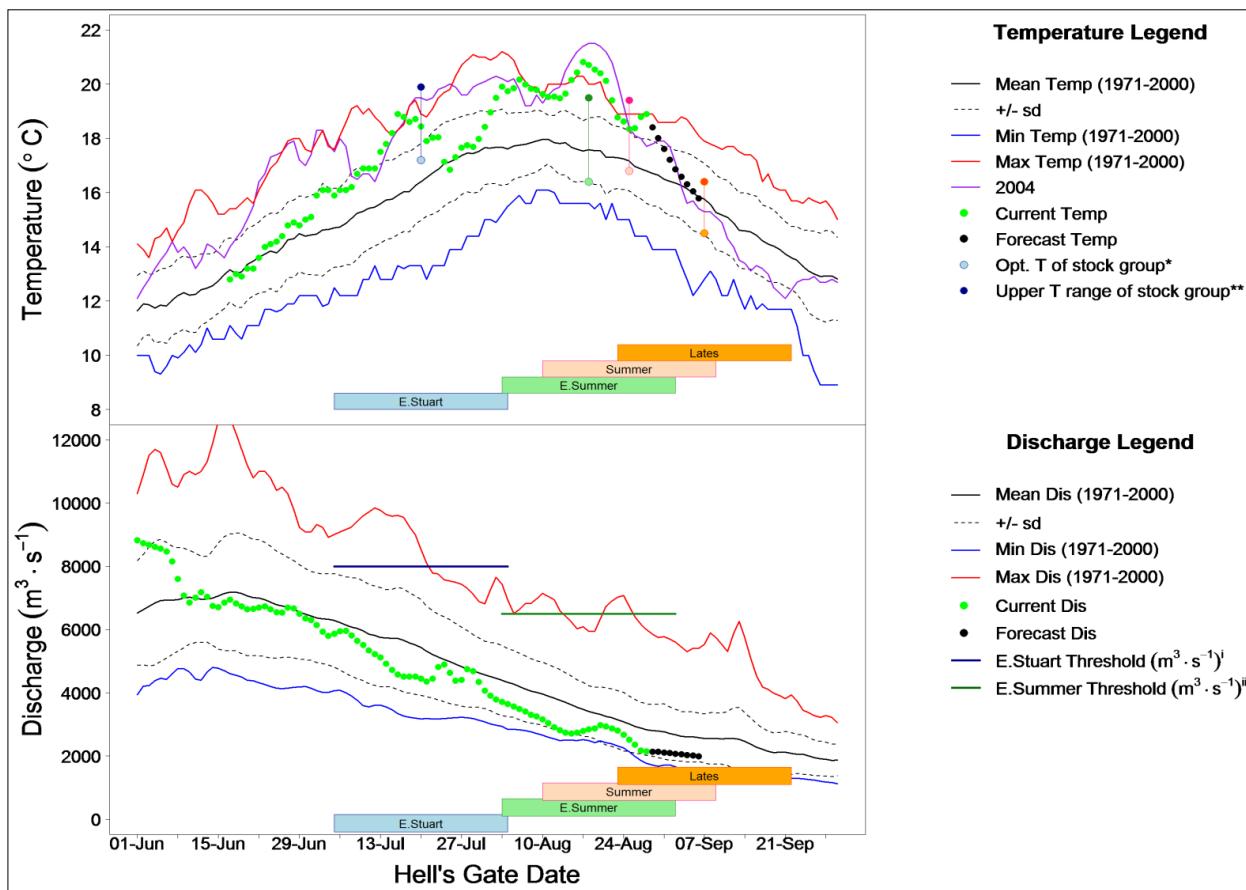
FRASER SALMON UPDATE

By: Pete Nicklin, FRAFS Biologist

The Fraser sockeye and environmental update is a summary of information from the August 29th Fraser River Panel distribution, FRAFS in-season update call (Aug 28th), and August 29th Fraser River Panel teleconference.

Fraser River Conditions

Fraser Discharge and temperatures at Hope and Qualark Creek (near Hope) respectively look like this (graphs from the Fraser River Panel Distribution August 29th, 2014):





Fraser River Conditions (continued)

The Fraser River water temperature is currently 18.9 degrees Celsius (2.1 degrees Celsius above average for this time of year), and is forecast to decrease to 16.6 degrees Celsius by the 3rd of September. The Fraser River discharge continues to be below average for this time of year with a flow of 2,146 m³/sec at the Qualark water station on August 28th (24% below average for this time of year). The discharge is predicted to track below average, with a forecast discharge of 2,053 m³/sec by September 3rd.

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 Chinook and Sockeye First Nations FSC Catch

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>

The Mid and Upper Fraser Harvest reports are posted to the DFO website (accessed through the link above). The Mid and Upper Fraser First Nations catch estimate to August 24th is 2,419 Chinook (DFO) and 143,000 sockeye (PSC August 29th distribution).

The Lower Fraser First Nations Chinook catch estimate to August 17th is 16,372 (DFO), and the FSC Fraser sockeye catch is estimated at 324,700 (PSC August 29th distribution).

The Marine First Nations catch is estimated at 263,300 Fraser Sockeye (PSC August 29th distribution).

Fraser Sockeye

The Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC) distributes the Fraser River Panel agenda and technical information for Panel members and observers to the process. The following information is a summary of key information from that document (August 29th) and the Fraser River Panel meeting from the same day.

According to the latest escapement update from DFO, the Early Stuarts are past peak die-off, and final escapement surveys were conducted August 21st. Preliminary spawning success is reported to be much lower than the long term average of 89%. Early Summer run sockeye are arriving on their spawning grounds throughout the Fraser watershed. Summer sockeye enumeration programs are in full operation, with those sockeye arriving in increasing abundances. The Sweltzer Creek (Cultus sockeye) fence is operational, with 110 sockeye through the fence and 14 retained for brood stock.



Fraser Sockeye (continued)

Test Fishing catches in the Johnstone Strait route (Areas 12&13) continue to be strong, while the Area 20 test fishery continues to be low as a result of the high diversion rate through the north (99%). Both marine test fishery approaches (including the Gulf Troll test fishery) are dominated by Late run sockeye. As expected, the Late run stock ID is primarily Late Shuswap/Portage through both approaches, and there is evidence of Late Run holding off the mouth of the Fraser.

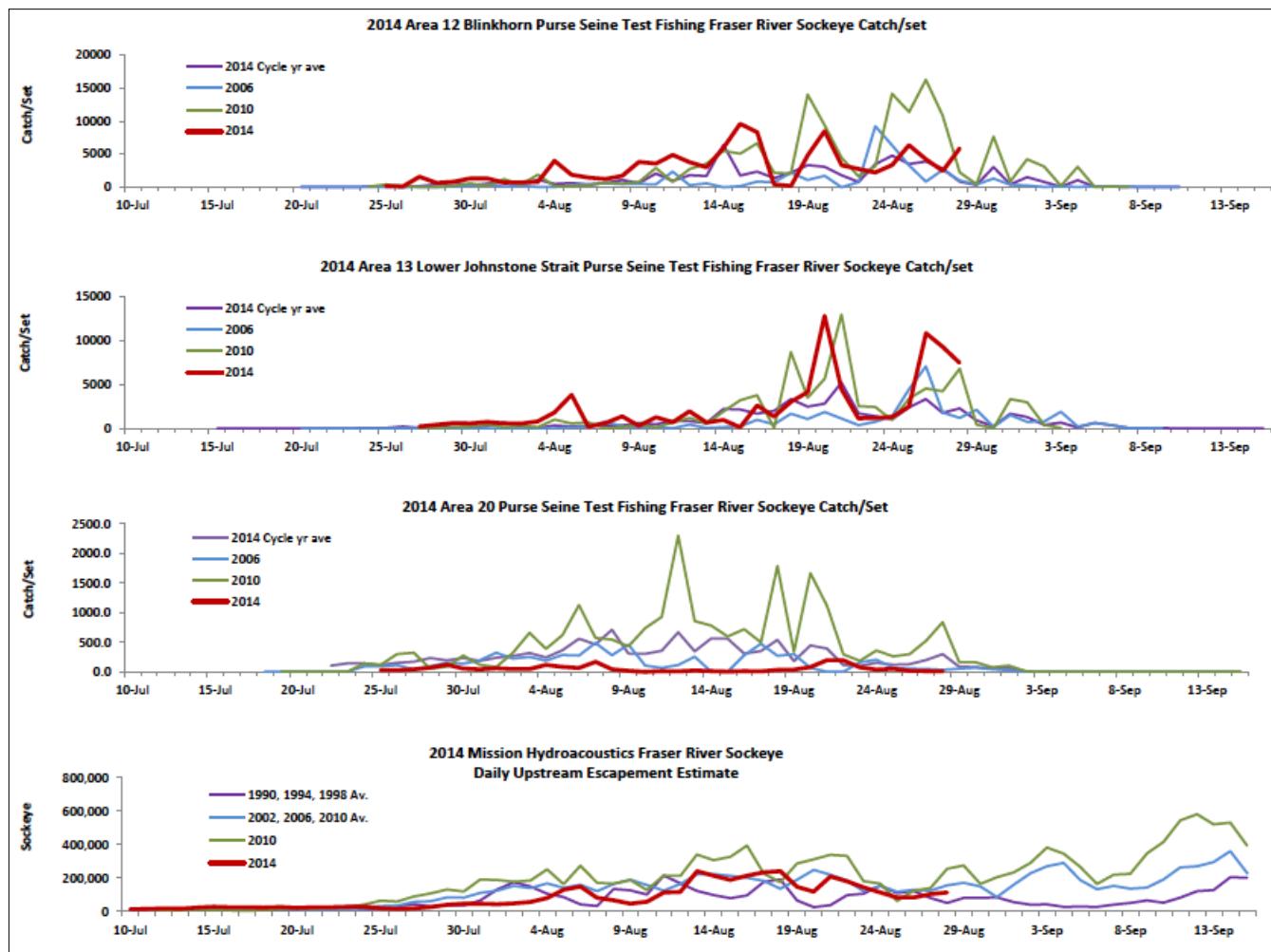
The Early Summers continue to track less than the p50 forecast (4.2M fish), the result of the lower-than-expected Early Thompson component of the Early Summer aggregate. The Early Summer Fraser River Panel adopted in-season run size estimate is currently 1.9 Million with August 8th timing. The Panel chose to remain at the pre-season MA for Early Summers, although there have been increased abundances of sockeye carcasses observed in the Thompson River system. The Summer Run sockeye continue to be tracking above pre-season expectations, and the Fraser River Panel adopted an increased in-season abundance estimate of 7 Million (up from Tuesday's estimate of 6 Million) and August 16th Area 20 timing. Fish condition has reported to be good in Upper Fraser food fisheries thus far.

Approximately 227,900 Early Stuart (same as last week), 1,129,600 Early Summer, 2,428,400 Summer sockeye and 462,500 Lates are estimated past the Mission hydro-acoustics station, for a total sockeye passage of 4,248,400 to date and another 3,004,700 fish projected en route to Mission over the next week after catches are removed. Birkenhead sockeye have started to show increased abundances in test fisheries over the past week, which is a better picture than last week. The Fraser River Panel did not adopt an in-season run size estimate for Lates due to uncertainty in the current test fishery picture and the management driver for fisheries being the Summers (the PSC provided an in-season abundance estimate of 8.5 Million for the Lates).

Continued next page



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

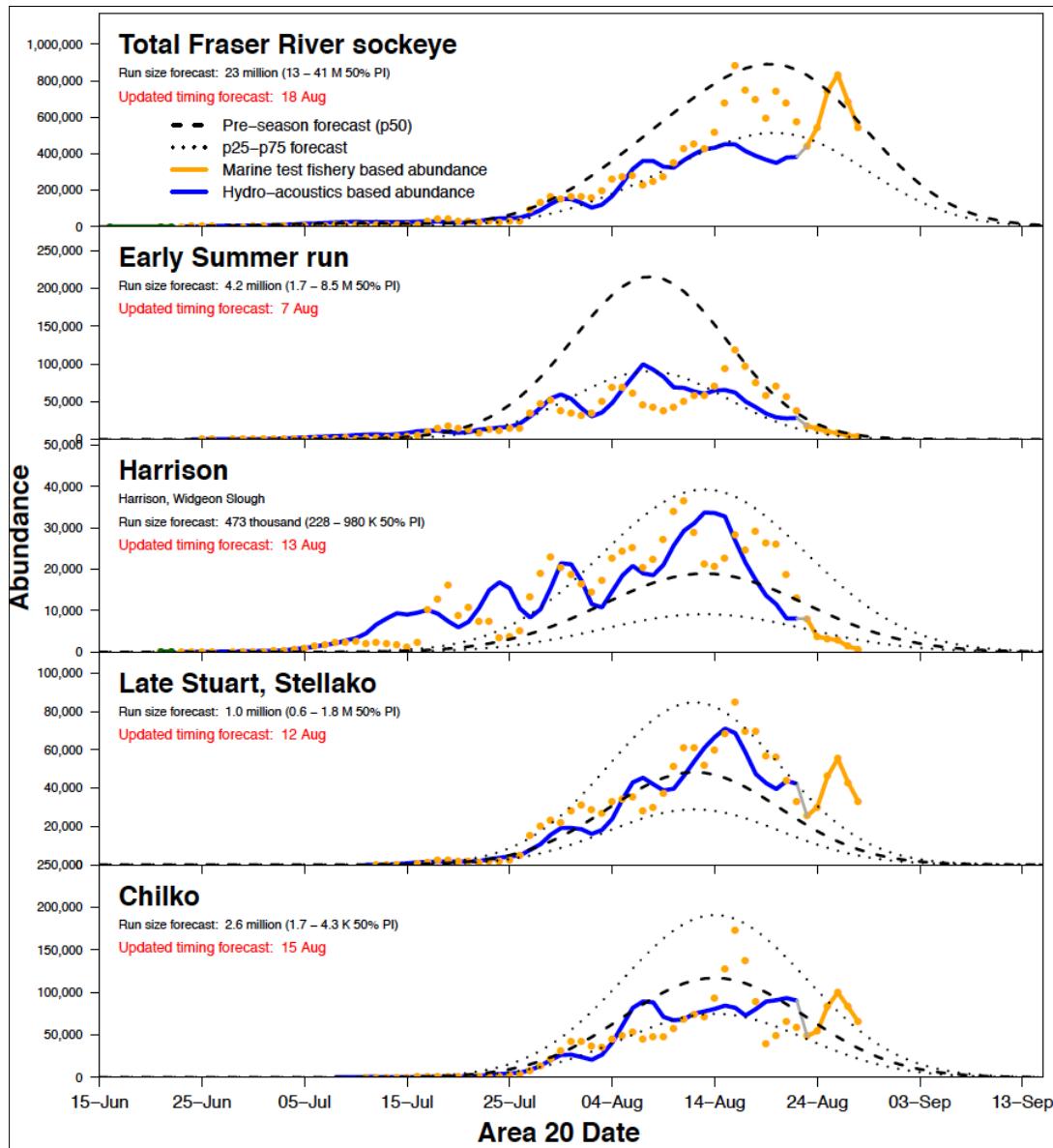


Continued next page

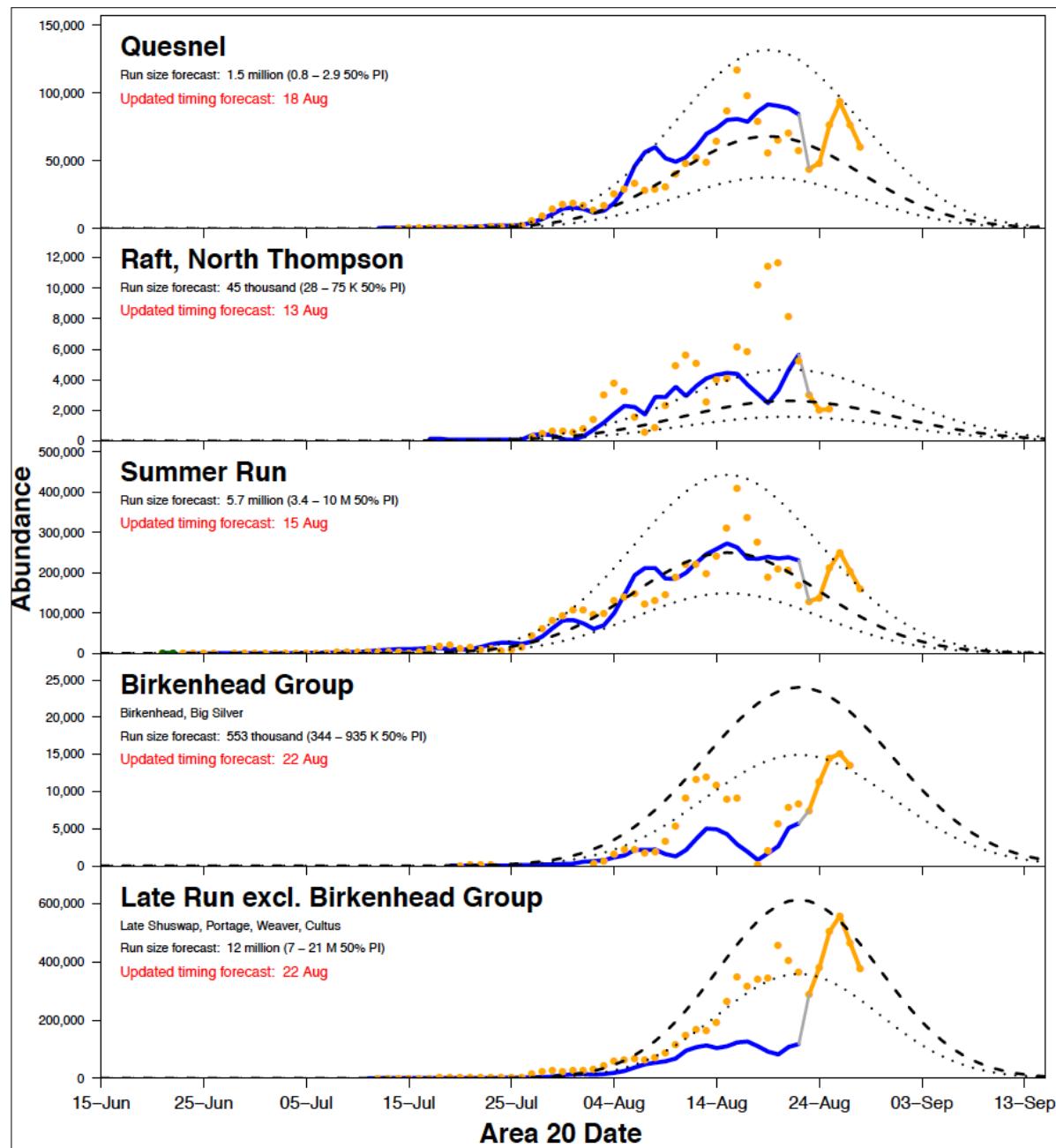


The following graphs show the 2014 estimated abundance and updated in-season timing based on Marine and in-river test fisheries and Mission hydro-acoustics compared to forecast. Current information shows continued confirmation of the adopted in-season estimate for Early Summers (1.9 Million). Summers appear to be tracking above pre-season expectations and have an adopted in-season estimate of 7 Million.

Estimated Abundance and In-Season Updated Timing



Continued next page



- The next Fraser River Panel meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, September 2nd.



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/news_frpnews.htm

Fraser River Mission Escapement Reports: 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>

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 Pete Nicklin by email: pnicklin@telus.net