



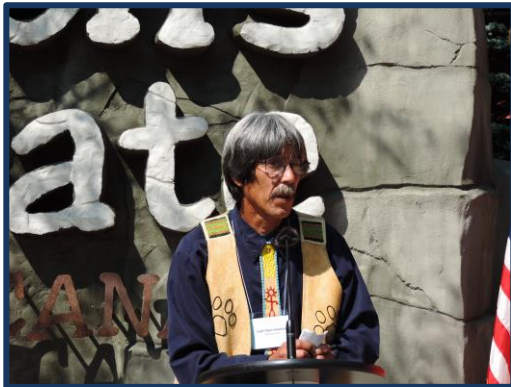
# WATERSHED TALK NEWSLETTER

Produced by the Fraser River Aboriginal Fisheries Secretariat

August 26, 2013

Volume X, Issue 9

## 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Hell's Gate Rockslide



*"This is an issue for all human beings."*

Speaking to an audience made up of people from all around the world, Chief Fred Sampson (Siska) shared a First Nations' perspective about the devastating Hell's Gate Rockslide of 1913.

Gesturing to the canyon walls, the Chief painted a picture of "strong, resilient and brave people" who hung scaffolding in order to dip net, and pack up the cliffs, their "number one protein source." But that ended when rock blocked the river.

An estimated 20% of the First Nations population above Hell's Gate was lost to starvation and malnutrition in the year following the disaster. "Our elders tell stories of our people going down

to the river to scrape the rocks and the cracks for last year's blood to be able to make some soup," he said.

Chief Sampson thanked the international commission that built the Hell's Gate fishways. He also spoke of the First Nations' effort in saving the resource. "Our brothers and sisters," like the Stó:lō downstream and other nations from the north, came "to pack fish in baskets over the slide."

Concluding on a note of conservation and collaboration, Chief Sampson encouraged everyone to protect the gift of natural resources. "We all have to come together. Let's work together and protect what we have, for all children, for the future."

To see more on this event, visit: [Fishways](http://fishways.ca)



**FRASER RIVER ABORIGINAL FISHERIES SECRETARIAT**

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## Fraser Salmon In-season Update

### General

The information in this update summarizes the information from:

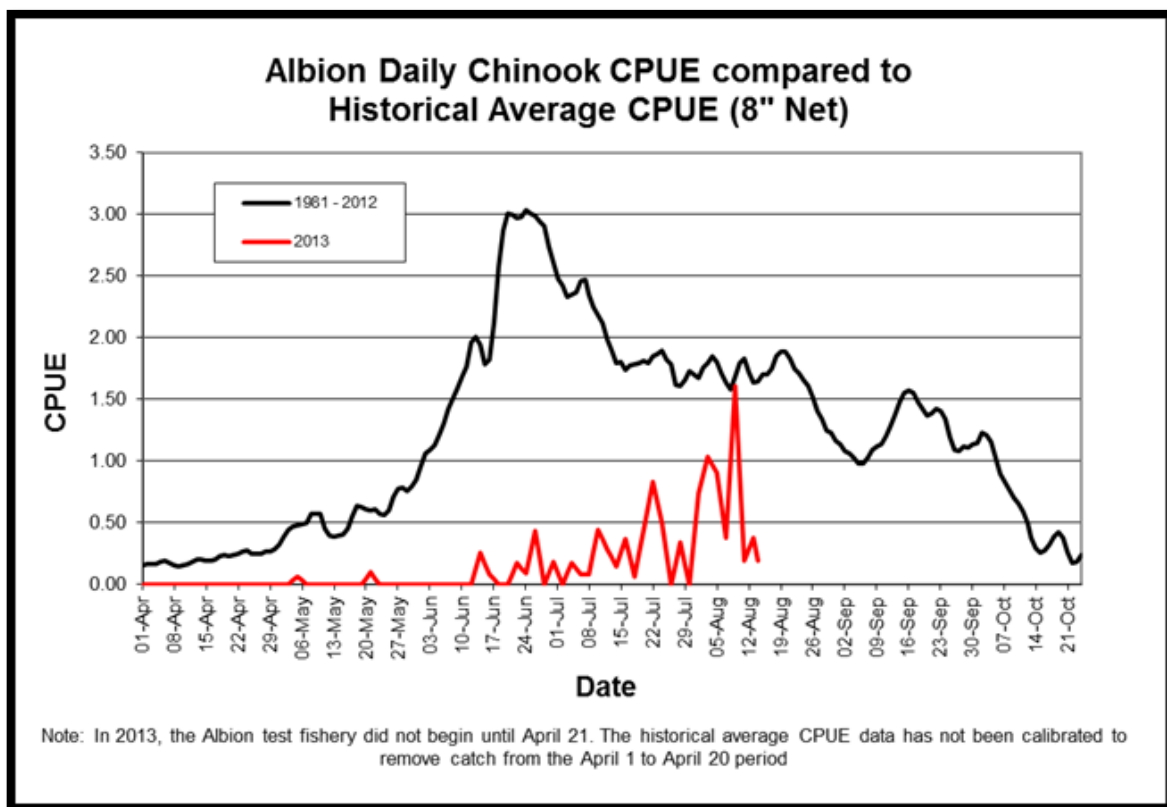
- FRAFS August 22<sup>nd</sup> Thursday in-season teleconference call;
- Fraser River Panel information distribution August 23<sup>rd</sup>; and
- Albion Chinook test fishery graphs from the DFO website.

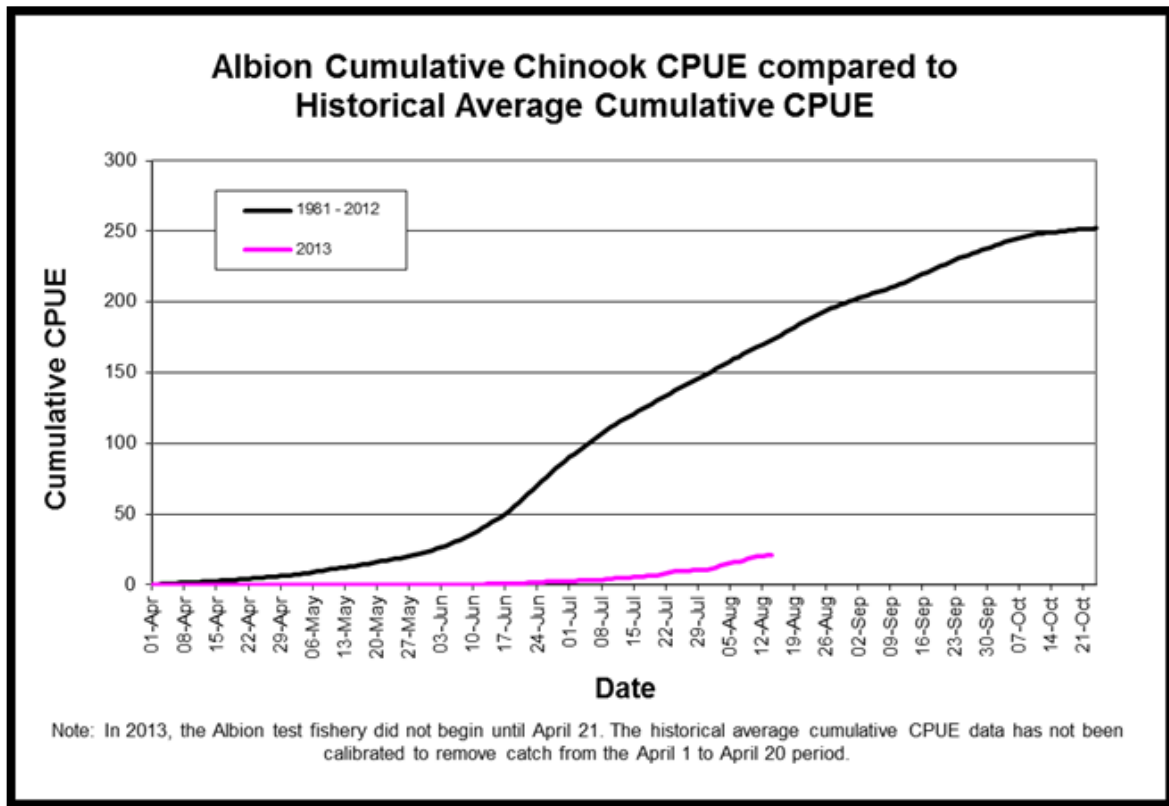
Note that the Thursday in-season updates (presented by Mike Staley) will continue weekly throughout the sockeye season.

### Fraser Chinook Albion Test Fishery

(Graphs from DFO website: Albion Chinook Test Fishery)

NOTE: information has not been updated on the DFO website this week





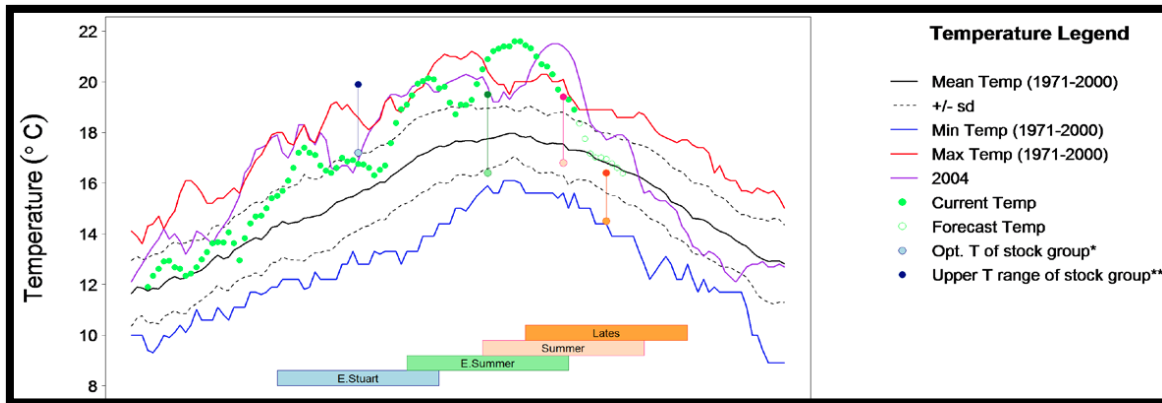
### *Water Conditions*

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, but have dropped rapidly from the record temperatures observed last week. However, current temperatures are now below the Upper Temperature ranges for Early Summer and Summer sockeye, but above the Upper Temperature range for Lates. Water discharge in the Fraser continues to track slightly below average for this time of year and forecast to track close to the historical average for this time of year. The high Fraser temperatures have resulted in a very high Management Adjustment for Summer sockeye, which was previously adopted by the Fraser Panel (2.35).

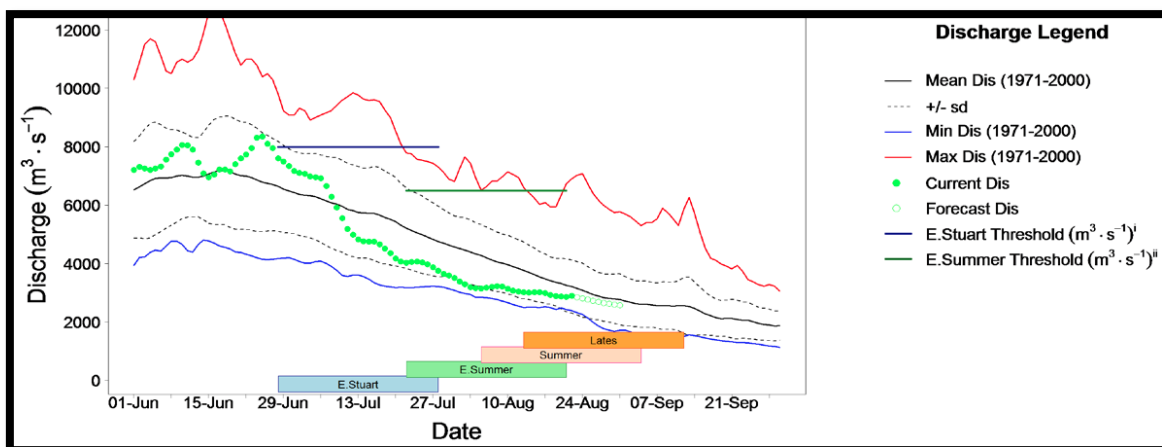


## Fraser River Temperature at Qualark



**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 18.9 degrees Celsius and forecast to decrease to 17 degrees Celsius by August 28<sup>th</sup>. The current temperature is above average by 1.6 degrees, and has dropped rapidly from the record temperatures observed last week. The vertical lines connected by circles show the Optimal and Upper temperature range of the sockeye aggregates. Current temperatures are dropping below the Upper Temperature range for Early Summer and Summer sockeye but are still above the Upper Temperature range for Late sockeye.

## 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 August 22<sup>nd</sup> discharge was 2898  $\text{m}^3/\text{sec}$  (approximately 10% lower than average for the date), and forecast to decrease to approximately 2648  $\text{m}^3/\text{sec}$  by August 28<sup>th</sup>.



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### *Fraser Sockeye*

Summer and Late sockeye are dominating the sockeye marine test fishery catches. Early Summers are finishing the marine portion of their return migration and comprise a small part of the recent marine test fisheries in Johnstone Strait.

As reported last week, marine test fisheries have been scaled back to reduce test fishery impacts on Fraser sockeye. Early Summers are still showing in small proportions in Area 12 test fisheries, and aggregate abundance greater than pre-season expectations. The Summer run sockeye continue to show in marine test fisheries, and are showing later timing than expected pre-season, but remain at lower abundance than pre-season expectations. Late sockeye are showing in marine and in-river test fisheries.

An estimated 493,000 Early Summers, 1,487,700 Summers and 149,400 Lates have been estimated through the Mission hydroacoustics station to date (August 22<sup>nd</sup>).

Early Summer sockeye are now at an estimated aggregate abundance of 525,500, which continues to climb from the pre-season expectation of 253,000 and adopted in-season run size of 520,000.

Summer Run sockeye continue to show some strength in marine test fisheries (mainly Chilko), and later timing than expected. The in-season Summer aggregate estimate remains 2.3 million based on August 9<sup>th</sup> timing.

Current information indicates the Late Run sockeye are returning lower than pre-season expectations (P50 forecast), but the run size was not changed at today's Panel meeting due to uncertainty in abundance assessments at this time. Birkenhead and Weaver/Cultus appear to be returning lower than pre-season expectations, while Late Shuswap/Portage appear to be higher than pre-season expectations.

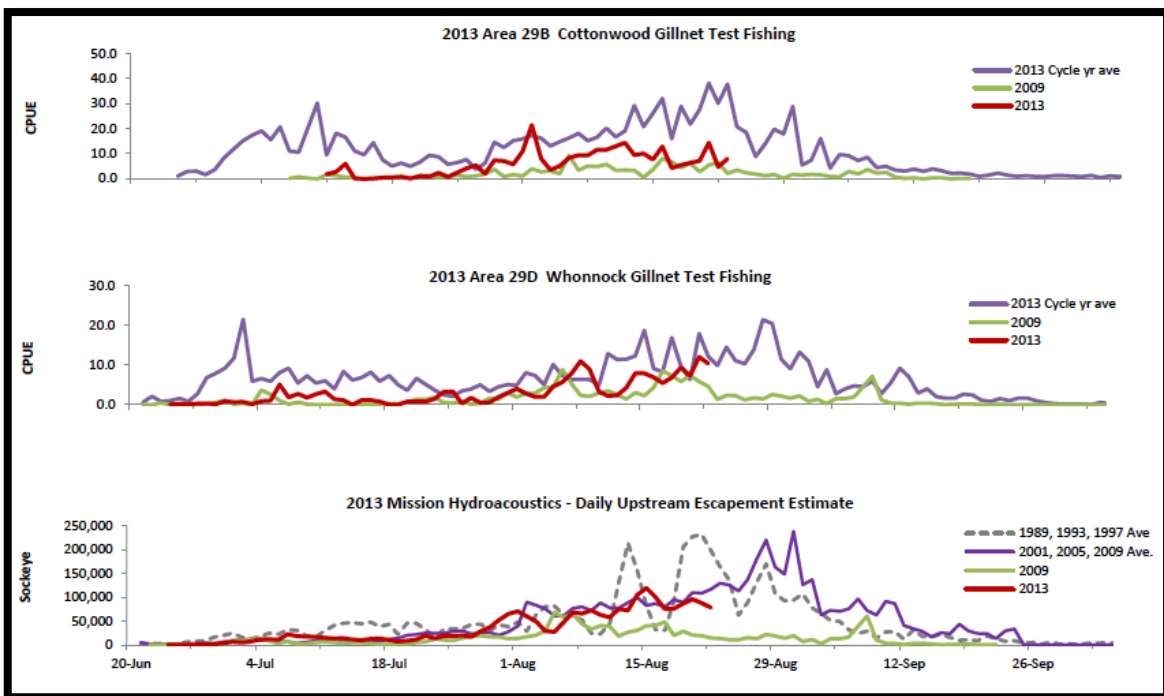
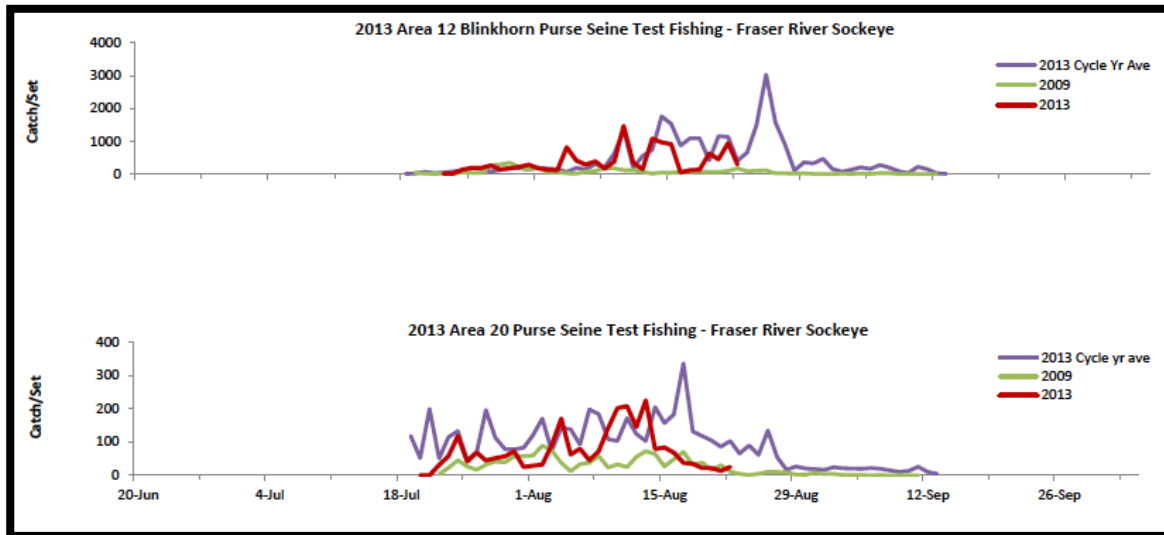
### *Fraser Pinks*

Fraser pink salmon are early in their migration, but appear to be tracking above pre-season abundance expectations (see graph). The in-season run size estimate for Fraser Pinks was increased to 10 million at today's Fraser River Panel meeting, compared to a pre-season forecast of approximately 8.9 million.

The next scheduled Fraser River Panel meeting is Tuesday August 27<sup>th</sup>.



*Fraser Sockeye & Pink Test Fishery Summary, and escapement summary  
(Provided by Pacific Salmon Commission)*

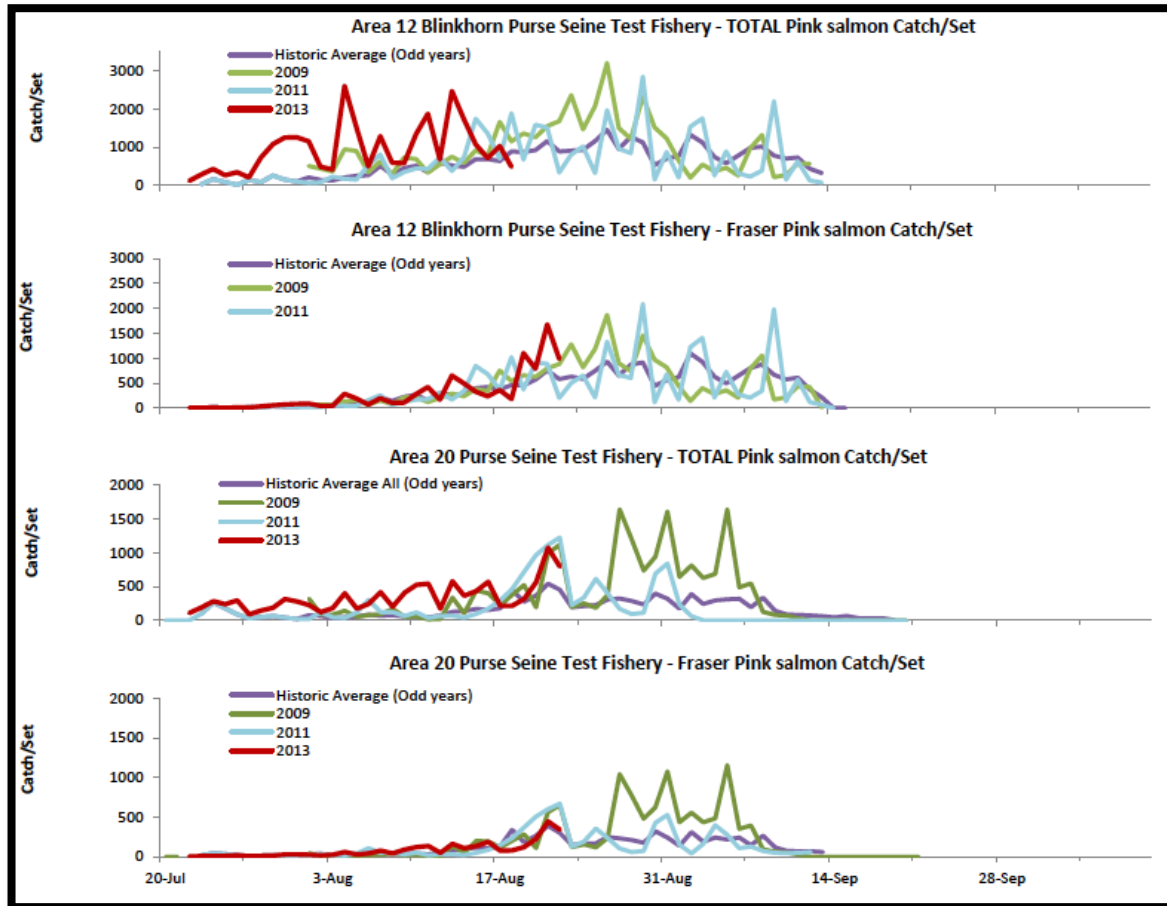


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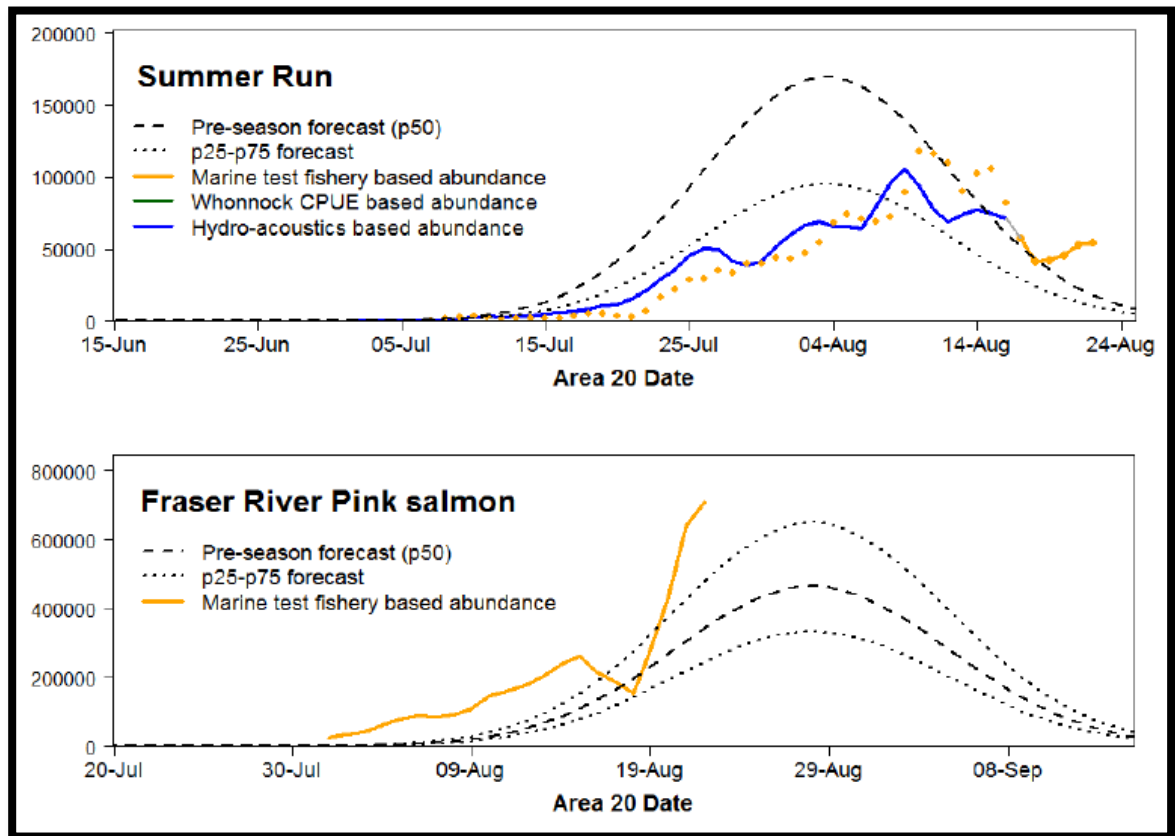
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**Figure 3: Pacific Salmon Commission 2013 test fisheries summary (to Aug 15<sup>th</sup>).**

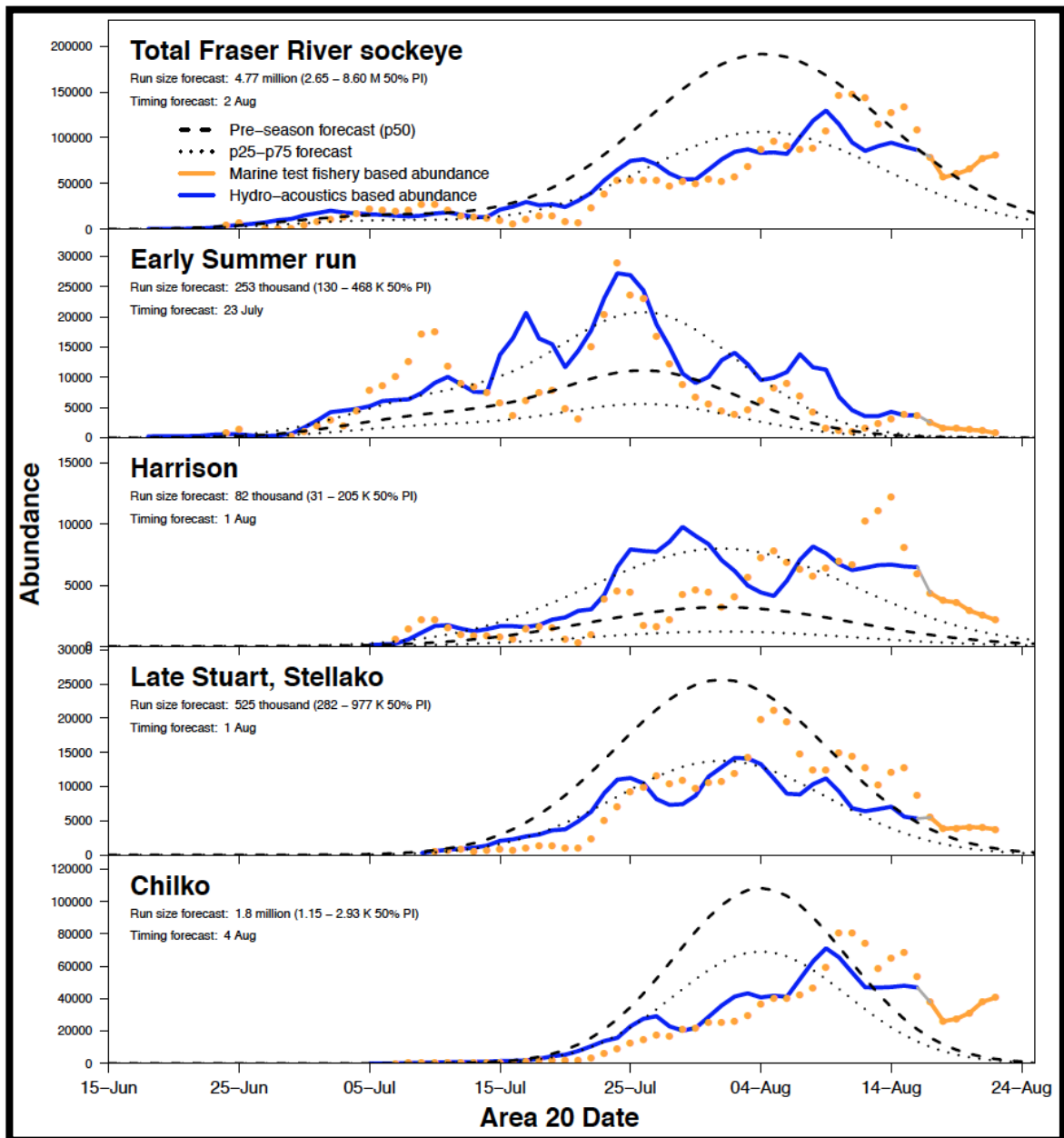
*2013 Fraser Summer Sockeye and Pink Run Status (provided by Pacific Salmon Commission)*

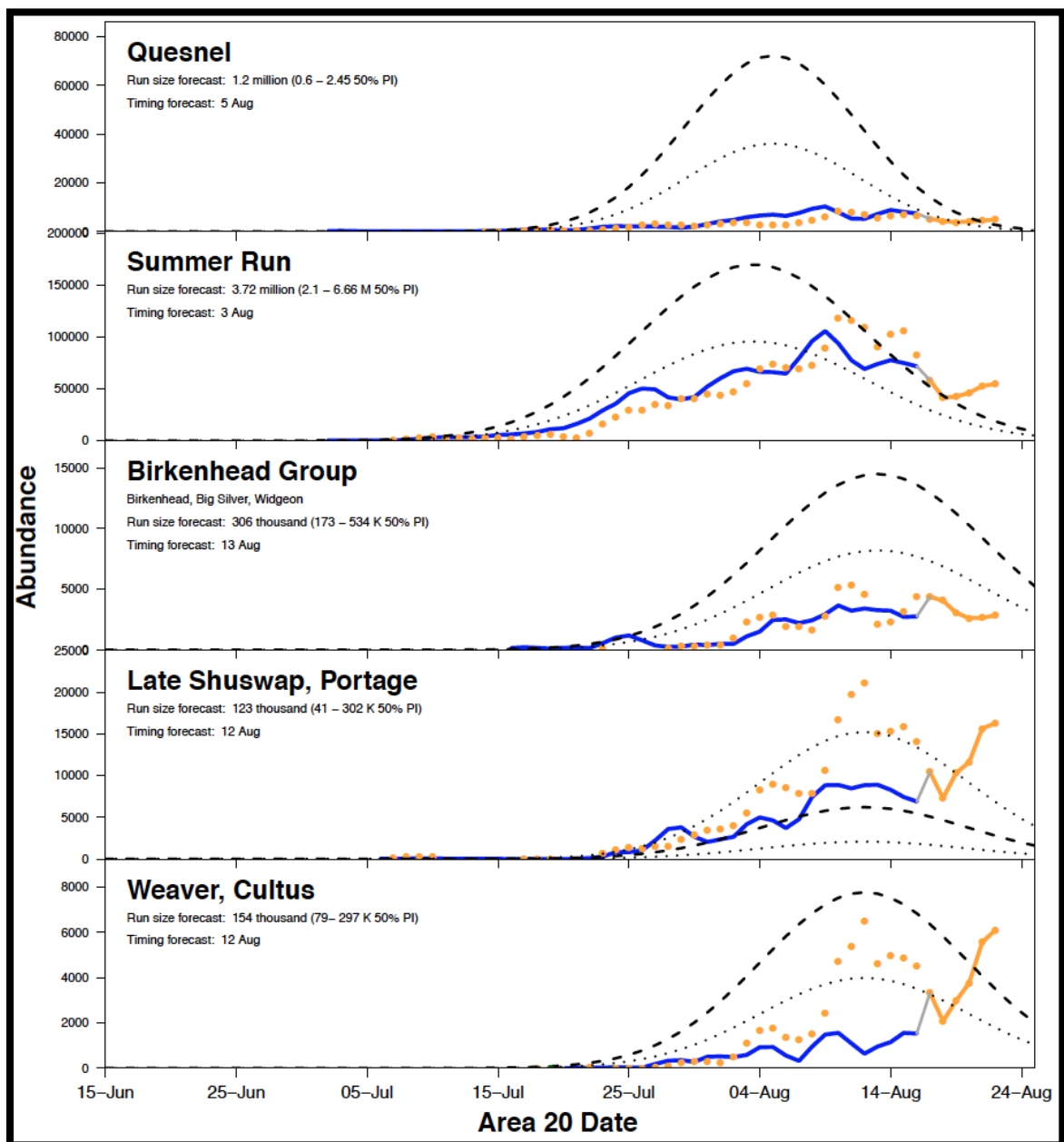


**Figure 4. Fraser Summer Sockeye and Pink Run Status compared to pre-season expectations**

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







**Figure 5: These graphs show the current (Aug 22<sup>nd</sup>) information for the 2013 Fraser, Early Summer, Summer and Late sockeye migration.**

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



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## **FRAFS First Nations In-Season Technical Conference Calls**

- Thursdays at 4PM unless otherwise noted
- Hosted by FRAFS Biologist Mike Staley
- Dial in numbers:
- Toll-free: 1-866-512-0904
- Passcode/conference number: 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>