

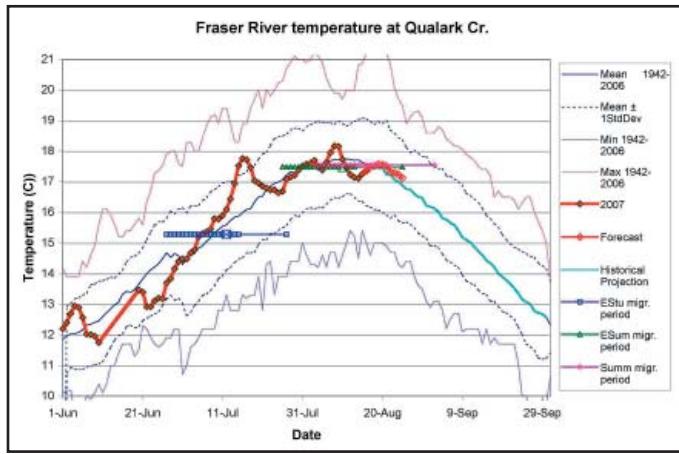
A weekly Aboriginal fisheries newsletter for  
fisheries representatives and their organizations

## FRASER SALMON UPDATE

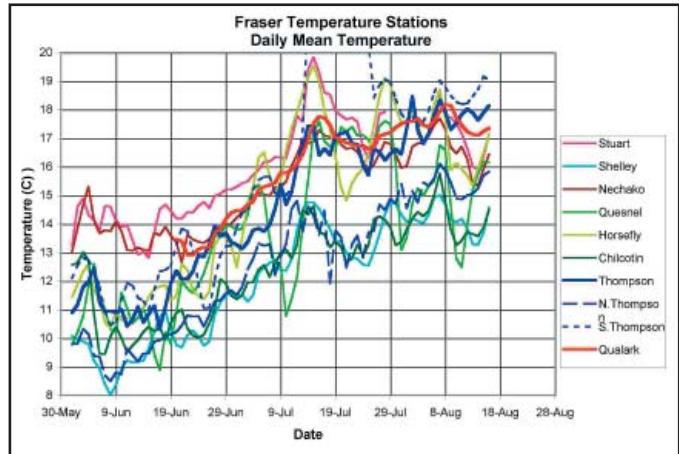
By Pete Nicklin, Watershed Stock Management Coordinator, FRAFS

### WATER CONDITIONS

Water conditions in the Fraser continue to be satisfactory for sockeye migration from a temperature and discharge point of view. The Fraser discharge at Hope is now tracking at the historical mean. Fraser temperatures at Qualark are currently just below the long term average, and forecast to stay below 18 degrees. The following graphs show the 2007 conditions in comparison to other years.

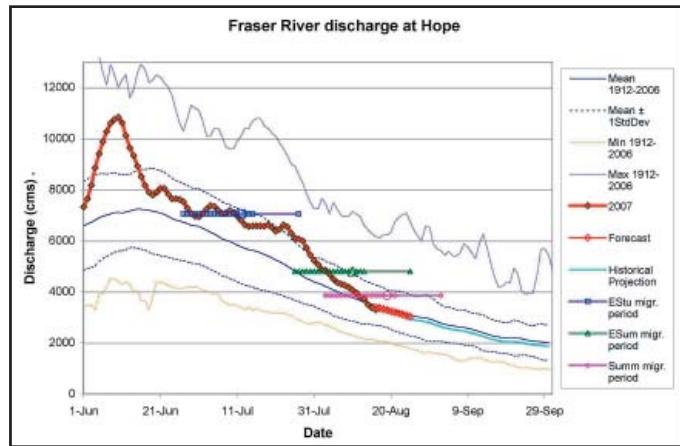


This graph shows the Fraser River temperatures at Qualark Creek (Lower Fraser). The line with the diamonds shows the 2007 temperatures. The open diamond portion of the line shows the forecast temperatures. The current temperature is approximately 17.4 degrees, and forecasted to stay below 18 degrees. We are now past the normal peak temperature period for the Fraser.



This graph shows the 2007 daily mean temperatures at various temperature stations throughout the Fraser watershed. The Thompson and South Thompson are currently the only systems above 18 degrees.

The next graph shows the Fraser River discharge at Hope. The line with the diamonds is the 2007 discharge. Current discharge is approximately 3300 cubic metres per second (cms) and forecast track very closely to the historical mean.

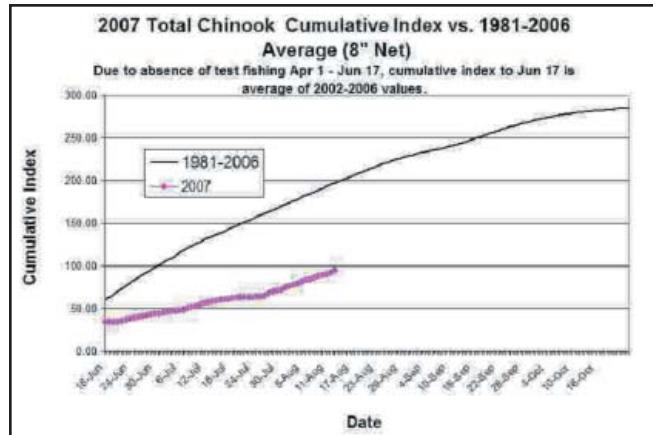


### FRASER CHINOOK

The Albion Test Fishery Cumulative catch results for 2007 continue at levels below the 1981 to 2006 average.

With Fraser sockeye returning at low abundances, people will be turning increased attention to Fraser Chinook. Although the Albion test fishery catch has picked up over the last few days, the cumulative catch is still tracking at about half of the 1981-2006 average.

Aerial and stream counts for Chinook are now being conducted, and this information will be included in the next couple of weeks.



The cumulative test fishery catch at Albion for 2007 is the bottom line in this graph. The top line is the average from 1981 to 2006. The cumulative catch is tracking at just over half the 1981-2006 average, and has been picking up in the last few days. A web link to the Albion Test Fishery page on the DFO website can be found in the General Information section of the Watershed Talk.

### FRASER SOCKEYE

This week has been interesting from a fisheries management point-of-view. The Fraser Panel adopted reduced in-season run size estimates on August 13th for the Early Summers and Summers: 120,000 and 750,000 respectively. The Panel also adopted the 90%P forecast for the Birkenhead and true Late run sockeye: 227,000 and 504,000 respectively. By adopting the reduced run sizes, available TAC was eliminated from the Early Summer and Late Run aggregates. On August 17th, the Fraser River Panel adopted a modest (cont.)

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increase to the Early Summers (150,000) and an increase to the true Late sockeye run size estimate (600,000); but at these run sizes there still is no TAC available from these timing groups. At the reduced Summer Run abundance estimate, the maximum available catch is 150,000, since the escapement target for the aggregate is 600,000 at the 750,000 run size. When current catch is accounted for, only about 80,000 remains in TAC for the Summer run.

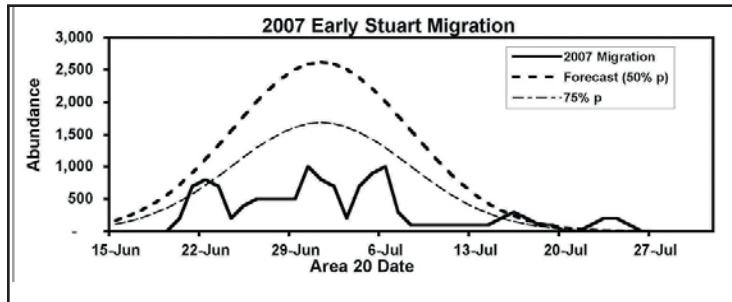
In response to the poor outlook for the sockeye return, DFO hosted a teleconference call on Monday August 13th to provide technical information and begin an in-season process to consult with First Nations with an interest in Fraser sockeye. The issue at hand is that at current run sizes, there is not enough TAC to meet DFO's target allocations for FSC needs in the Fraser. Further complicating the issue, the majority of the available Summer catch appears to be from the Chilko sockeye run (62% of the Summer Run is comprised of Chilko), currently the strongest returning stock in the Summer Run aggregate. Upstream of the Chilko River, and especially upstream of the Quesnel River, there will be very few sockeye returning to the very upper portion of the Fraser. It appears that both the Stellako and Late Stuart are returning well below cycle line averages. In the Thompson there are no Summer Run sockeye and when taking into account DFO's escapement objectives, there is no TAC for the Early Summers or true Late Run sockeye in that drainage. Nevertheless, DFO authorized a small FSC fishery in the Thompson drainage upstream of the Bonaparte.

In order to protect the Early Summers from further harvest, DFO has adopted the "10%" rule for protection of that aggregate, a similar strategy to the one used for protecting the Early Stuarts. In essence, when the proportion of a stock aggregate falls below 10%, and assuming that the stock has nearly completed its run according to run timing, 90% of the run is assumed to have been protected and fisheries can commence if there is TAC on the next-in-time aggregate. This rule can be a little difficult to apply in practice, however, if the smaller run becomes overwhelmed by a later aggregate in the stock identification fisheries, returns later than expected, or has a protracted migration period. In the case of the Early Summers, particularly the Miscellaneous portion of that aggregate, a more protracted return has contributed to fluctuations above and below the 10% proportion in the Lower River.

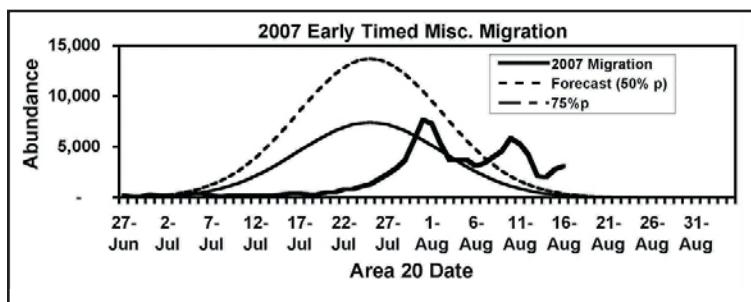
Now if that isn't a complicated enough situation, the Fraser Pinks have started to build in abundance, and there will be pressure to open fisheries on that run. The problem for those fisheries is that there is likely to be sockeye bycatch, with the potential to further reduce available Summer TAC and impact sockeye runs with no available TAC, if those fisheries are opened while Fraser sockeye are still en-route in marine areas. As of August 17th, all commercial fisheries in Fraser River Panel waters remain closed.

Oh yes, there is one more thing. The Lower Fraser recreational fishery for Chinook has been reported to be encountering sockeye, particularly in the area between Mission and Hope. Many First Nations are concerned about this fishery, and some of these concerns were expressed on the August 13th teleconference call, through letters to DFO and in meetings this week. DFO has stated that it will be canceling the Chinook recreational fishery from Mission to Hope effective midnight August 19th in order to reduce the sockeye encounter rate from the recreational fishery.

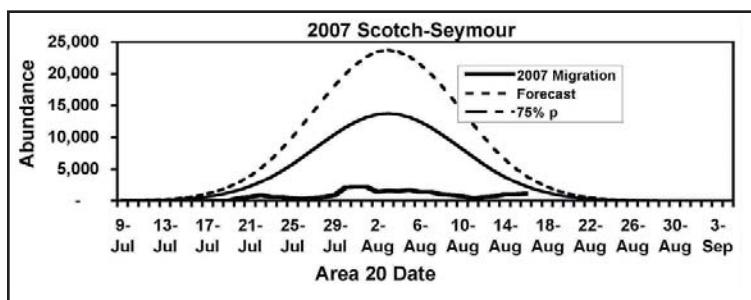
All in all, the 2007 sockeye season has proved to be more than just a warm-up for the anticipated complexities of the 2008 season.



*This graph shows the current information for the 2007 Early Stuart migration. The Early Stuarts have completed the marine portion of their migration, and are showing on their spawning grounds.*



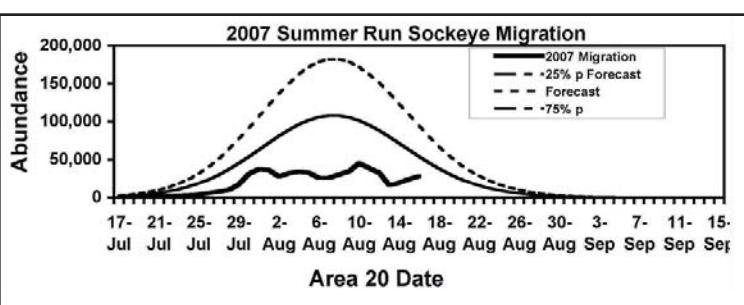
*This graph shows the current information for the 2007 Early Summer Misc. migration. There are indications that the early timed portion of the Early Summers may be running late, and are continuing to show up in the marine test fisheries, particularly Johnstone Strait. The Fraser River Panel has adopted a 120,000 run size estimate for the entire Early Summer aggregate for management purposes, significantly lower than the 75%P forecast level.*



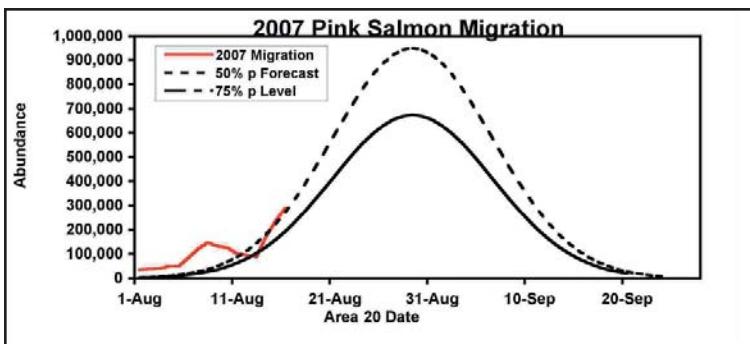
*This graph shows the Scotch/Seymour portion of the Early Summer aggregate. The Scotch/Seymour component is tracking significantly lower than the 75%P forecast.*

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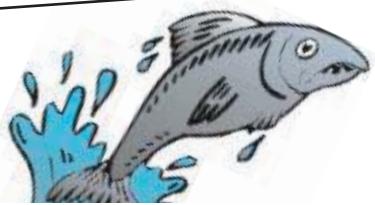


This graph shows the current information for the 2007 Summer Run migration. Summer sockeye are showing in the marine test fisheries. However, although the Summer run continues to provide a significant proportion of the test fishery catches, the overall abundance estimate is now lower than the 90%P forecast, and the Fraser River Panel has adopted a run size of 750,000 for management purposes.



This graph shows the current information for the 2007 Summer Run migration. Summer sockeye are showing in the marine test fisheries. However, although the Summer run continues to provide a significant proportion of the test fishery catches, the overall abundance estimate is now lower than the 90%P forecast, and the Fraser River Panel has adopted a run size of 750,000 for management purposes.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT**  
**PETE NICKLIN**  
**FRAFS WATERSHED STOCK**  
**MANAGEMENT COORDINATOR**  
**TEL: (250) 392-5888**  
**E-MAIL: [INDISEAENT@SHAW.CA](mailto:INDISEAENT@SHAW.CA)**



## GENERAL INFORMATION

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

**Albion Test Fishery – Chinook Gill Net:** [http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fraserriver/commercial/commercialalbionchnk\\_e.htm](http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fraserriver/commercial/commercialalbionchnk_e.htm)

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

**LGL Fishwheel Catch Updates:**  
[http://www.psc.org/info\\_lglfishwheelcatch.htm](http://www.psc.org/info_lglfishwheelcatch.htm)

**Upper/Mid/Lower Fraser Catch and Openings:**  
<http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fraserriver/firstnations.htm>

**Pacific Salmon Commission Test Fisheries:**  
[http://www.psc.org/info\\_testfishing\\_summaries.htm](http://www.psc.org/info_testfishing_summaries.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 Program:**  
[http://www-sci.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fwih/index\\_e.htm](http://www-sci.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fwih/index_e.htm)

## **Fraser Watershed Technical CONFERENCE CALLS**

Fraser Panel Liaison Mike Staley will share up-to-date technical information from the Fraser Panel via teleconference on Thursday afternoons at 4:00pm.

**NEXT CALLS: AUGUST 23, 2007; AUGUST 30, 2007**

In order to participate you will need the following numbers:

**Toll Free: 1-877-385-4099**

**Vancouver Local: 604-899-2339**

**Participant Access Code: 3196930#**

**The Watershed Talk is available for download  
at [www.frafs.ca](http://www.frafs.ca). Next issue: August 24, 2007**