

A weekly Aboriginal fisheries newsletter for
fisheries representatives and their organizations

Fraser Sockeye - Technical Update

By Neil Todd, FRAFS

Mike Staley convened the second 2010 sockeye in-season update at 4 pm on Thursday July 15 2010 via teleconference call.

Early Stuart sockeye

The peak of the run is now in the river. The Early Stuart run is returning at a higher number than the precautionary pre-season forecast.

Last week the Salmon Commission issued an in-season run size estimate of 110,000. However, now that the bulk of the run is into and moving up the river they feel they can produce an estimate with a bit more certainty. It is likely that there will be a reduction to the in-season run size estimate to 100,000 as of today.

The consensus among First Nations at meetings in April and May was to hold off all fishing on Early Stuart unless more than 156,000 returned. At a run size of 100,000 all Early Stuart sockeye are needed for the spawning grounds. The estimated management adjustment (accounting for run size estimate uncertainty and en route mortality) means that even without fishing approximately 83,000 will reach the spawning grounds.

The Pacific Salmon Commission estimates that about 76,000 Early Stuart sockeye have now passed the Mission hydroacoustic facility.

Early Summer Run sockeye

A few Early Summer Run sockeye have showed up. The Pacific Salmon Commission estimates that approximately 8,000 have passed Mission.

There is a conservation concern for some of the Early Summer Run stocks, particularly Bowron and Nadina. These stocks start showing up in the last part of the Early Stuart run. First Nations attending meetings in April and May agreed to hold off fishing until one week after the Early Stuart have passed through their territories. This will allow for safe passage for portions of the Early Summer Run stocks.

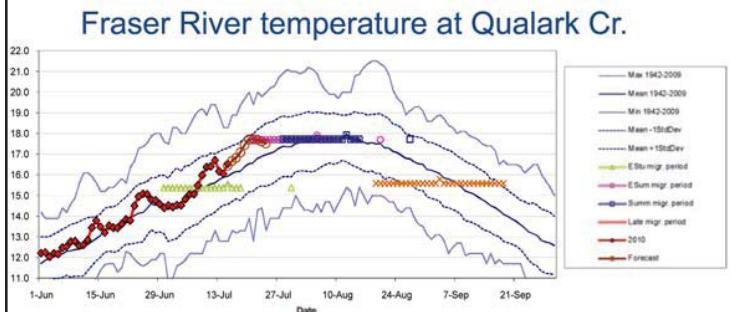
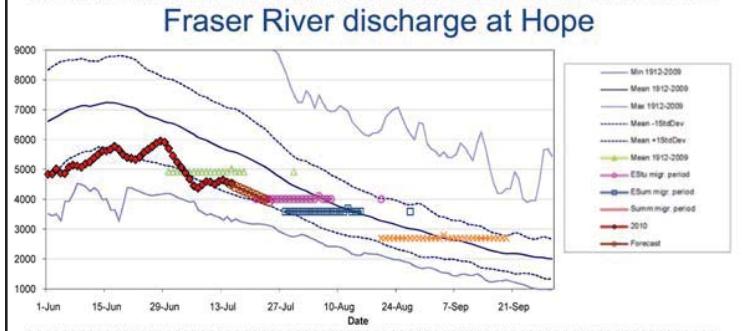
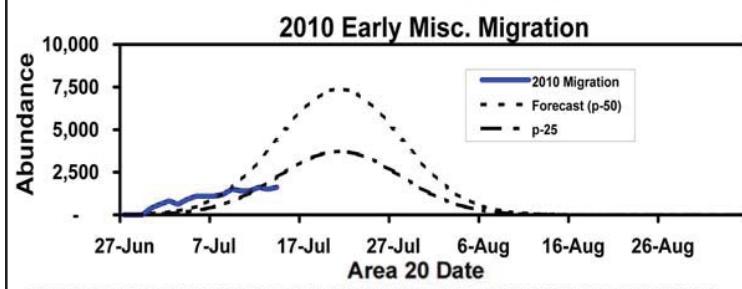
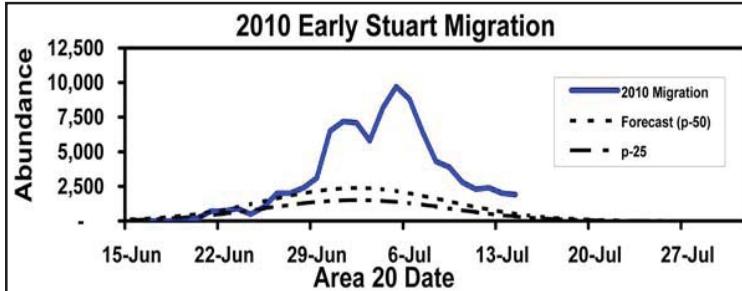
Test fisheries (marine area)

The Area 12 test fishery (Johnstone Strait) started a few days ago. Catches are in the neighbourhood of 20-35 fish which is considered pretty good for this time of year. Stock composition as of July 13 was 48% Early Stuart, 48% Early Summer Run, and 4% Summer Run. The Area 20 (Strait of Juan de Fuca) test fishery has been operating since June 21 and saw the peak of the Early Stuart run about July 4 or 5. Stock composition in this fishery (Fraser R stocks) as of July 13 was: Early Stuart – 38%; Early Summer Run – 38%; Summer Run – 6%; and Harrison – 17%.

Environmental Conditions

Fraser River conditions are still reasonably favourable for migration – discharge (flow) is about 25% below average for this time of year but temperatures are holding at about normal for this time of year. There is no word yet if the lower than normal flows will pose any passage problems for the Early Stuart or Early Summer Run sockeye.

**THE NEXT UPDATE CONFERENCE CALL WILL TAKE PLACE
THURSDAY, JULY 22 AT 4:00 P.M.**



VISIONS WORKSHOP
October 13 & 14, 2010 at Seabird Island Band

In-Season Technical Update
Conference Calls - Thursdays at 4:00pm
Hosted by FRAFS Biologist Mike Staley
Open to all interested First Nations
Call in number and access code are distributed weekly
via the FRAFS email distribution list