

SOCKEYE UPDATE

August 27, 2018

Mike Staley, a biologist with FRAFS, provides sockeye in-season updates for First Nations every Thursday at 4 p.m. **First Nations are encouraged to phone in to these updates** (*next call Thursday August 30th at 4 p.m.*) in order to get the latest information on the runs, fisheries, and environmental conditions. The conference call numbers are:

1-866-512-0904 // Password: 4954972#

Following is the most current information regarding the sockeye return.

1. Early Stuart

The **pre-season forecast** was for a return of **84,000** this year.

Returns to date: 123,100 fish.

Outlook: Even though the run size was larger than the forecast, there was no direct harvest opportunities on Early Stuart sockeye. The run size was below the escapement target.

2. Early Summer Run stocks

The **pre-season forecast** was for a total return of **2,155,000** this year (all stocks combined in this management group).

Returns to date: 1,668,300 fish.

Outlook: The run size appears to be tracking below the pre-season forecasted median run size.

3. Summer Run stocks

The **pre-season forecast** was for a total return of **4,344,000** this year (all stocks combined in this management group). Summer run sockeye stocks are now the main stocks being encountered in all test fisheries.

Returns to date: 3,702,100 fish.

Outlook: The run size appears to be tracking the forecasted median run size.

4. Late Run stocks

The **pre-season forecast** was for a total return of **7,398,000** this year (all stocks combined in this management group).

Returns to date: 1,851,600 fish.

Outlook: The Late run sockeye group is the dominant group in the sockeye return this year and the greatest harvesting opportunities are expected for this timing group. It's too early to comment on the run size but some indication that it is tracking below the forecasted median run size.

5. Environmental Conditions

With lower river temperatures, conditions have improved significantly for the migration of Early Summer and Summer run sockeye. However, potential remains for unfavourable migration conditions for the Late Run stocks. In-season data will continue to inform fisheries decisions.

- Hope Flow (discharge): 1979 cms (cubic metres per second).
- Qualark Temperature: 16.9 C. The upper temperature threshold for Late Run sockeye is below this current temperature.

Comments

The in-season data flow and discussions are very important as they ensure appropriate sockeye management based on what is actually happening in the marine environment and in the river. River conditions, enroute mortality and the presence of other weak salmon species/stocks are a few considerations that play into the management of sockeye fisheries. Despite a stronger sockeye return this year, harvesting opportunities will remain uncertain throughout the season and will depend on the in-season information. This 'sockeye update' will therefore continue throughout the sockeye season relaying the most current information and fisheries management decisions.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Nicola Watershed Stewardship and Fisheries Authority (NWSFA).

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