



WATERSHED TALK NEWSLETTER

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Update: Fraser Chinook and River Conditions

By Pete Nicklin,
FRAFS Fraser Fisheries Biologist

Happy June everyone!

This salmon update is the first for 2014, and based on a request for information on what's happening thus far with Fraser chinook and Fraser River environmental conditions.

Anyone that's had a look at the Fraser over the past month will have noticed the water levels rising to the end of May, and decreasing over the last couple of weeks.

The BC River Forecast Centre website (<http://bcrfc.env.gov.bc.ca>) 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 (http://www.wateroffice.ec.gc.ca/index_e.html).

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June 26th Pre-Season Teleconference

On Thursday June 26th from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m., FRAFS Biologist Mike Staley will deliver a pre-season update. Discussion will be based on the most recent Fraser Panel meetings.

To phone in:

Tel.: 1.866.512.0904

Participant code: 4954972#



Job Posting: NSTC Fisheries Catch Monitor

To see the job description, visit:

http://northernshuswaptribalcouncil.com/?page_id=160

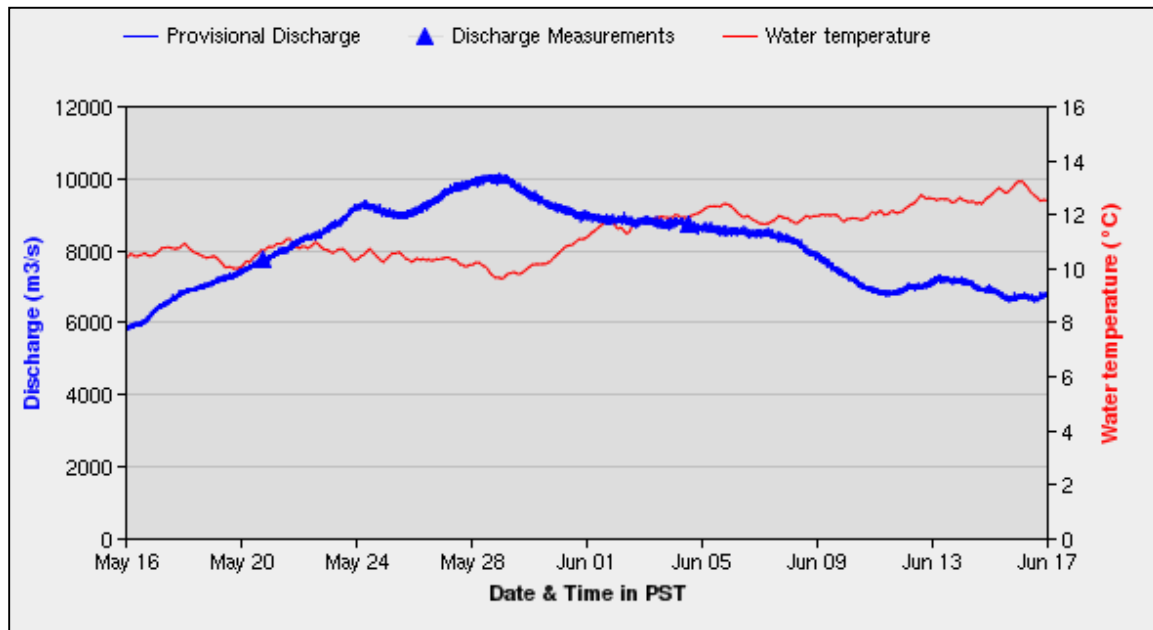
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Update: Fraser River Environmental Conditions

Discharge and temperature at the Hope water station for the time period May 16th to June 17th 2014 looks like this:



Taken from the graph, the Fraser River discharge at Hope (thick line – blue if you are looking at this in colour) reached a peak of approximately 10,000 cms (cubic metres per second) May 16th and has decreased to about 6,900 cms by June 17th. For a reference of what that means in terms of fish passage, in general the Early Stuart sockeye threshold for upstream passage is considered 8,000 cms. Fraser temperatures (thin line – red in colour) have ranged from about 9.5 to 13 degrees Celsius for the same time period.

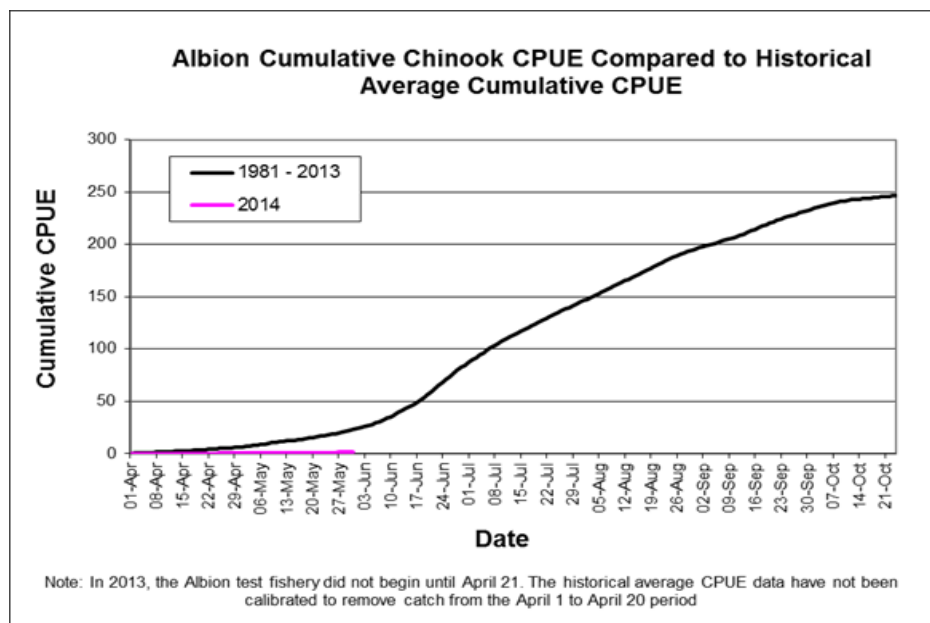
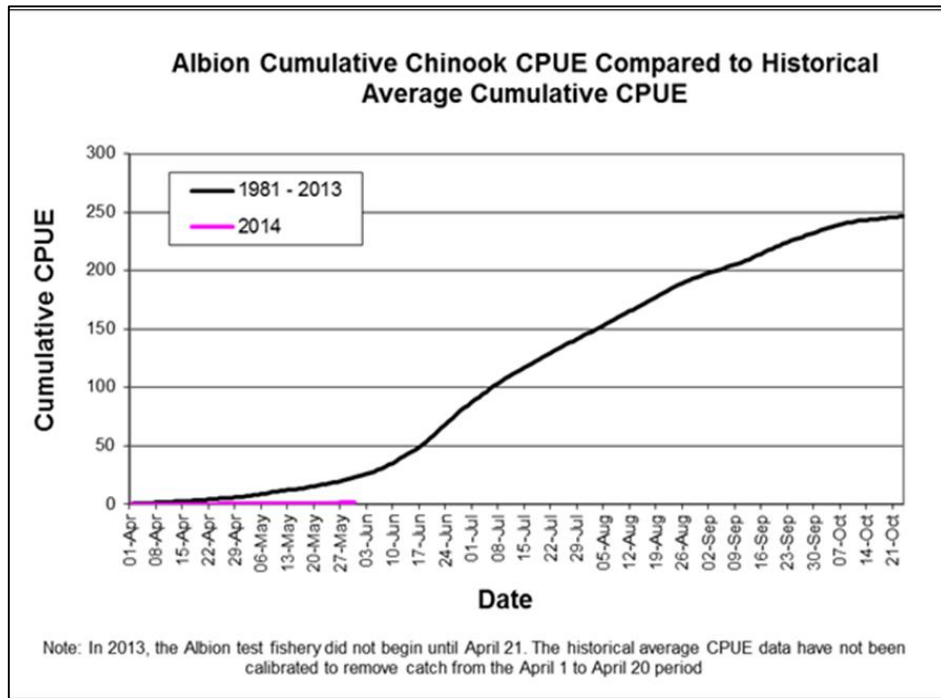
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Update: Fraser River Chinook

Fraser Chinook Albion Test Fishery

(Graphs from DFO website: Albion Chinook Test Fishery): June 17th, 2014



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Fraser Chinook

Fraser Spring 5₂ & Summer 5₂ In-season Abundance Update

The Draft 2014-2015 South Coast Salmon IFMP indicated DFO's intent to start the Spring 5₂ and Summer 5₂ chinook season in Zone 1 management, meaning chinook management measures associated with an expected abundance of less than 45,000 return to the mouth of the Fraser would be implemented until a final in-season abundance is determined.

DFO uses an in-season model to estimate the returning abundance of Spring 5₂ and Summer 5₂ chinook based on the cumulative catch of chinook (from the standard 8" net) in the Albion Chinook Test Fishery for a specific time period, as has been done the past several years. The test fishery uses a standard 8" mesh net and a multi-panel mesh net, with the standard net and the multi-panel net fished on alternate days. The Albion Chinook Test Fishery has been operating since April 22nd in 2014. However, the in-season model for estimating Spring 5₂ and Summer 5₂ returns doesn't start incorporating the catch data until the first full statistical week in May.

In 2014 the cumulative chinook catch from the 8" net for the first full week statistical week in May (May 5) through to June 14th was 13. This total catch (and associated effort for the time period) results in predicted Spring 5₂ and Summer 5₂ chinook return to the mouth of the Fraser River in a range of 33,000 to 69,000, with a median of **47,550**. **The median value is within the 45,000 to 85,000 Zone 2 Management range.**

The June 16th in-season abundance estimate was DFO's final in-season abundance estimate, and the median in-season estimate confirms DFO's **Zone 2 management actions** for the remainder of the Spring 5₂ and Summer 5₂ return.

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>

Fraser First Nations Chinook Catches

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>

2014 chinook catch information for Mid/Upper Fraser First Nations has not yet been posted to the DFO website, but I'm hopeful I can get additional information for the next Watershed Talk Salmon Update.

2014 chinook catch information for Lower Fraser First Nations indicates a cumulative catch of **912 to June 1st**.

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Upcoming Salmon Updates

As the salmon season progresses, weekly updates for sockeye will be distributed as per prior years.

The final salmon **IFMP** has not yet been released, but when it is, an overview of key management information from the document will be summarized.

For more information, email Pete Nicklin: pnicklin@telus.net



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