

## FRASER SOCKEYE - IN-SEASON UPDATE

By Neil Todd, FRAFS

Mike Staley convened his scheduled sockeye in-season update at 4 pm on Thursday July 29, 2010 via teleconference call.

### TEST FISHERY OVERVIEW

Test fishing catches, particularly in Area 20, showed a significant increase in sockeye numbers early in the week. They have dropped somewhat in the last couple of days, indicating a lull in migration flow. However, the test fisheries in Area 12 have increased in the last couple of days. Sockeye usually show up here a couple of days in advance of the Area 20 test fishery. The increase in Area 12 could mean there is now another increase in numbers on its way (which would have to be confirmed over the weekend by an increase in Area 20 numbers) or it simply could mean that more sockeye are now diverting down through Area 12 instead of taking the "normal" route down and through Area 20. If the latter, this would not be good news.

### EARLY STUART SOCKEYE

Early Stuart sockeye are well on their way back to the spawning grounds. They have started to show in the terminal areas, and the information received indicates that they are arriving in good condition. The Fraser Panel confirmed an in-season run size assessment of 105,000 sockeye for the Early Stuart run this year.

### EARLY SUMMER RUN SOCKEYE

There is very strong indication that the Early Summer Run aggregate is returning in numbers significantly higher than the pre-season forecast. While no in-season assessments can yet be made (still too early in the run), the various models that PSC staff are running indicate substantial numbers, particularly in the Scotch/Seymour component, are returning. The Dept. of Fisheries and Oceans has opened/is opening significant sockeye fisheries on these stocks in the lower and mid-Fraser First Nation fisheries. In at least one instance the Department has over-riden a more risk averse approach proposed by one group and has committed to providing significantly increased

access despite the uncertainty in run size estimates and the rising trend in river temperatures.

### SUMMER RUN SOCKEYE

Summer Run sockeye are not yet showing up in the numbers that were expected pre-season. It is too early to hit the panic button as there is a very real possibility that they are coming in later (maybe 5-6 days later) than the pre-season timing forecast, similar to Early Stuart this year. Nevertheless, a note of caution is in order. We have seen in the past that "later timing" can actually turn out to be "oops - lower abundance than we anticipated".

### OTHER

Late Run sockeye, other than the Harrison River stock that seems to be behaving like an Early Summer run stock this year, are barely showing in the marine test fishery catches, but that is expected for this time of year. Harrison River sockeye are returning in good abundance, greater than the pre-season forecast.

### ENVIRONMENTAL CONDITIONS

Fraser River discharge continues to be lower than average (but it is not at record low). The low discharge means it continues to be sensitive to warm weather conditions. Hot summer weather in the Thompson River basin is influencing Thompson River temperatures which in turn are influencing the mid-lower Fraser temperatures. The prediction is that Fraser River temperatures at Hope could hit 21C late next week. This could mean higher than normal en route or pre-spawn mortalities for some Early Summer Run stocks (particularly Scotch/Seymour) if the weather conditions don't moderate significantly in the next week. And so far, the outlook is for at least another week of high summer temperatures in the Thompson basin.

The next update conference call will take place Thursday, August 5 at 4:00 p.m. (SEE GRAPHS ON PAGE 2)

## First Nations Fisheries Council

### Fall 2010 Assembly

November 2, 3 & 4, 2010

at the Nisga'a Hall, Prince Rupert BC

The First Nations Fisheries Council is seeking volunteers who wish to contribute their skills, expertise and vision to the planning of the upcoming Fisheries Council Fall 2010 Assembly. The theme will focus on fisheries co-management.

Interested participants are asked to please contact the Fisheries Council Communications Coordinator, Aimee Arsenault, by email at [aimee@fnfisheriescouncil.ca](mailto:aimee@fnfisheriescouncil.ca) or by phone at 604-836-1909

Visit [www.fnfisheriescouncil.ca](http://www.fnfisheriescouncil.ca) for more information

## VISIONS WORKSHOP

October 13 & 14, 2010

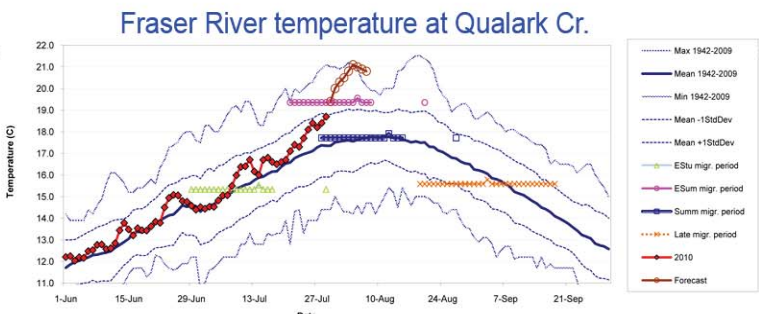
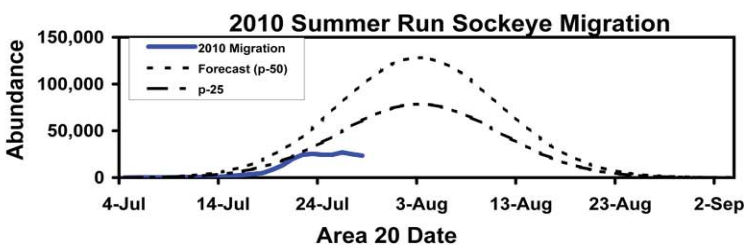
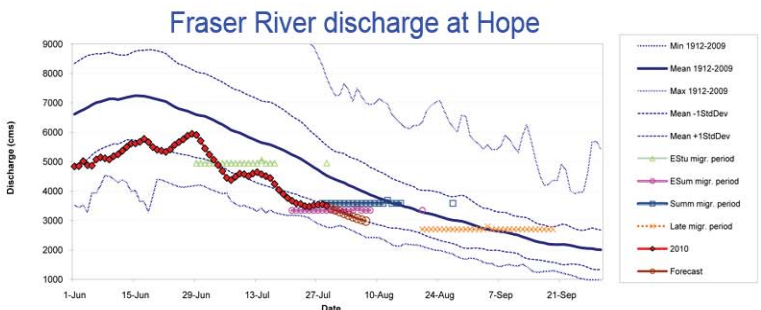
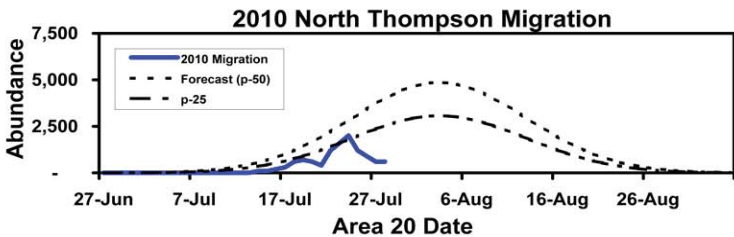
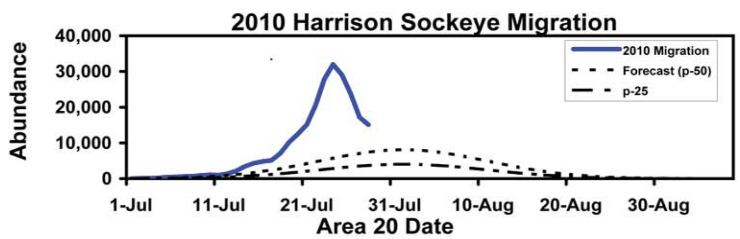
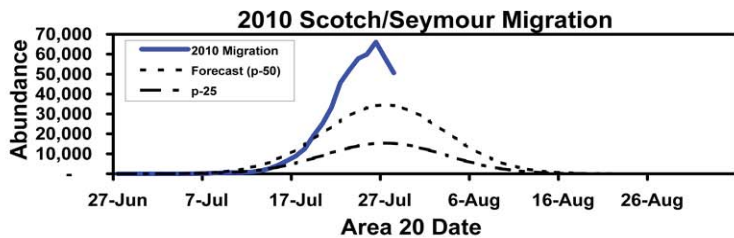
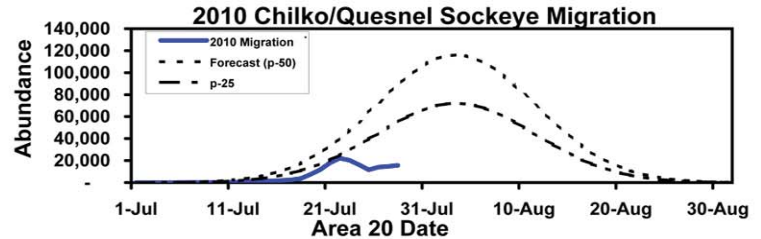
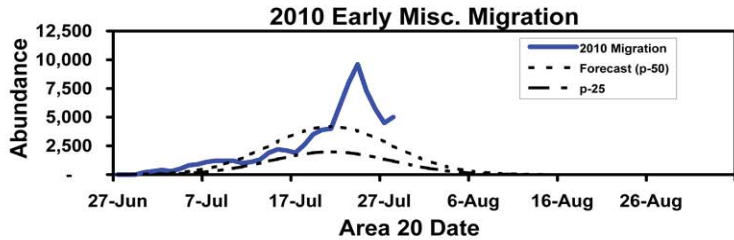
at Seabird Island Band

Agassiz, BC

If anyone would like to donate door prize items or arrange to set up a project display, please contact Aimee by email at [info@frafs.ca](mailto:info@frafs.ca) or by phone at 604-836-1909

For more information visit the FRAFS website at [www.frafts.ca](http://www.frafts.ca)

## FRASER SOCKEYE - IN-SEASON UPDATE (GRAPHS)



**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

**The Watershed Talk is also available for  
download at [www.frafs.ca](http://www.frafs.ca)**

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