



# WATERSHED TALK

## NEWSLETTER

Produced by the Fraser Salmon Management Council

SEPTEMBER 6, 2024

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 8

### 2024 WATERSHED TALK NEWSLETTER UPDATE

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*Welcome to the final issue of the WST for the 2024 salmon season. Today's issue contains a T̓silhqot̓in National Government Emergency Task Force summary from August 28<sup>th</sup> update, the Fraser River Panel update for this week, a Save the Date notice for the Lower Fraser Fisheries Alliance 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration, and a notice that registration for the BC Salmon Recovery and Resilience Conference in December is now open.*

*While we're winding down the 2024-2025 editions of the WST, we will be reintroducing the FSMC's quarterly Community Reports. Please keep a space in your inbox for us! And please keep sending your community updates to Kristin @ [communications@frasersalmon.ca](mailto:communications@frasersalmon.ca)!*

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### T̓SILHQOX (CHILCOTIN RIVER) LANDSLIDE

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On August 28<sup>th</sup> the T̓silhqot̓in National Government's (TNG) Emergency Salmon Task Force shared a [Situation Report](#)<sup>1</sup> with the headline "**First clear evidence of Chilko sockeye successfully passing through slide area**".

SONAR observations and helicopter overflights conducted last week indicated limited movement of sockeye into the Chilcotin River and past the slide. The SONAR counted 26 Sockeye sized targets past Hanceville between August 25 and 26 and the overflight conducted on August 26 observed small groups of fish holding in shallow margins downstream of the slide.

The TNG reported that while the initial numbers of sockeye are very low, they do indicate that natural passage is possible under these difficult conditions. With drier and cooler environmental conditions expected in the coming

weeks, there is hope that larger numbers of sockeye will soon be able to migrate through the slide area to their spawning grounds. Expected dry weather will also reduce risks of increased turbidity and expected cooler air temperatures will further reduce stress on sockeye in the Fraser River.

The majority of the Chilko sockeye run is thought to still be downstream of the slide, holding in the mid-Fraser as they wait for appropriate conditions to be able to pass. We have observed that Chilko sockeye can withstand substantial delay – in 2019 Chilko sockeye were delayed by 2-3 weeks due to the Big Bar landslide and were still able to return to spawning grounds.

The TNG caution that the conditions that these fish are experiencing are severe and have likely caused significant enroute mortality for Chilko Sockeye. Assessment of effects from the slide and other stressors (including Fraser River water temperature) are ongoing. While the “front” of the Chilko sockeye run has been highly exposed to slide impacts and highwater temperatures in the Fraser, the later “tail” end of the run is expected to be less impacted and in healthier condition. There have been recent observations of much healthier sockeye in the mid River compared to previous weeks – another positive sign that Chilko sockeye may be able to pass successfully as environmental conditions change.

Overall – there is reason to be optimistic that Chilko sockeye passage past the slide area will improve in coming days.

Please refer to the situation report linked in the first paragraph for more information and to see pictures of landslide site, river conditions and migrating sockeye.

### SONAR installation - monitoring salmon migration and slide passage



TNG Fisheries crew worked with technical partners from EcoFish Research Ltd. to install a new fish passage SONAR upstream of the slide at Hanceville on (Aug 8)



SONAR installed on the Fraser River at Churn Creek Aug 24-25 to monitor salmon migration in the Fraser between Big Bar and the Chilcotin River

\* photo taken from TNG August 28<sup>th</sup> Emergency Salmon Task Force Situation Report

\*Map credit to TNG

Please visit Situation Report (linked above) for more information on other monitoring activities and details on emergency conservation actions or visit the TNG website: <http://www.tsilhqotin.ca/our-territory/fisheries/communications/>. For questions please email: [tngsalmontaskforce@tsilhqotin.ca](mailto:tngsalmontaskforce@tsilhqotin.ca)

## FRASER PANEL UPDATES

### Fraser Panel Update for Friday, September 6, 2024

See last week's Panel report [here](#) <sup>2</sup>

The Pacific Salmon Commission Fraser Panel did not meet today; however, the PSC Secretariat released an update on the overview of run and catch status and biological information. While the information in these updates is considered preliminary until it is reviewed by the Panel we thought we could share elements of the update with you. Below are tables from the update that show the preliminary run status of Fraser sockeye and pink salmon and the catch to date by fishery for the week of September 1-7. Followed by charts depicting Chilko 2024 spawning ground comparisons and a paragraph on Fraser River environmental conditions.

#### 2024 Run status of Fraser sockeye and pink salmon

Date: Sep. 6, 2024

The information presented in this distribution has been prepared by PSC Secretariat staff and should be considered preliminary until reviewed by the Fraser River Panel

Week of: Sep. 1 - Sep. 7, 2024	Sockeye				Total Fraser
	Management Group				
	E.Stuart	E.Summer	Summer	Late	
Mission passage (incls Pitt, Alouette, Coquitlam)	200	140,400	303,200	24,500	468,300
Catch downstream of Mission	0	1,400	3,500	200	5,100
Accounted Run To Date	200	141,800	306,700	24,700	473,400
<b>Run size adopted in-season <sup>1</sup></b>	<b>na</b>	<b>143,000</b>	<b>275,000</b>	<b>38,000</b>	<b>456,000</b>
Run size forecasted pre-season	180	159,000	379,000	29,000	567,000
<b>Area 20 timing adopted in-season</b>	<b>na</b>	<b>14/Jul</b>	<b>1/Aug</b>	<b>15/Aug</b>	<b>29/Jul</b>
Area 20 timing expected pre-season	7/Jul	19/Jul	30/Jul	7/Aug	28/Jul
<b>Johnstone Str. Diversion Rate</b>	Annual average to date				<b>42%</b>
	Preseason forecast of annual rate:				<b>33%</b>

<sup>1</sup> Run sizes are usually not adopted until after the peak of the run has passed through marine test fishery areas in Juan de Fuca and Johnstone straits.

## 2024 Catch-to-date by fishery

Date: Sep. 6, 2024

Week of: Sep. 1 - Sep. 7, 2024		Sockeye	
		Total	Fraser
<b>Canada</b>		<b>14,445</b>	<b>14,426</b>
	<b>Commercial</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	B Purse Seine	0	0
	H Troll	0	0
	<b>First Nations</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>112</b>
	Food, Social & Ceremonial (FSC)	112	112
	Marine	0	0
	Fraser R.	112	112
	Economic Opportunity (EO) & Demonstration (Demo)	0	0
	<b>Escapement Surplus to Spawning Requirements (ESSR)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Recreational</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Charter (Albion &amp; A12 Chum test fishery)</b>	<b>230</b>	<b>230</b>
	<b>Other****</b>	<b>14,103</b>	<b>14,085</b>
<b>United States</b>		<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Commercial</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	Treaty Tribes (TRB)	0	0
	All Citizen (AC)	0	0
	<b>Treaty Tribes Ceremonial &amp; Subsistence (C&amp;S)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>All Citizen Recreational</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Other****</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
	<b>Alaska *</b>	<b>na</b>	<b>na</b>
<b>Panel-approved Test Fisheries</b>		<b>6,001</b>	<b>5,793</b>
	<b>Panel Waters</b>	<b>3,478</b>	<b>3,427</b>
	Canada	3,478	3,427
	U.S.	0	0
	<b>Non-Panel Waters**</b>	<b>2,523</b>	<b>2,366</b>
<b>Total</b>		<b>20,446</b>	<b>20,219</b>
	Catch Seaward of Mission ***	5,307	5,081
	Catch Upstream of Mission	15,139	15,139

\* Alaska data are processed post-season and so are unavailable in-season.

\*\* Includes Oualark

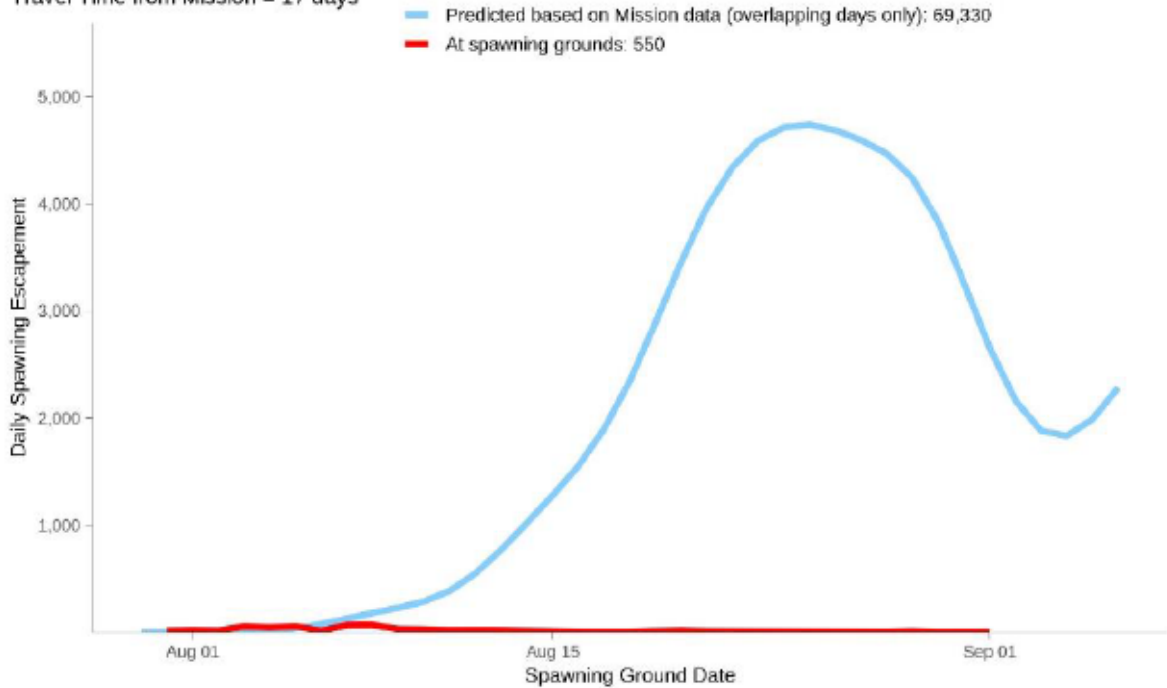
\*\*\* All catches in marine areas and in the Fraser River downstream of Mission

\*\*\*\* May include unauthorized directed retention or unauthorized bycatch retention in fisheries directed at other species

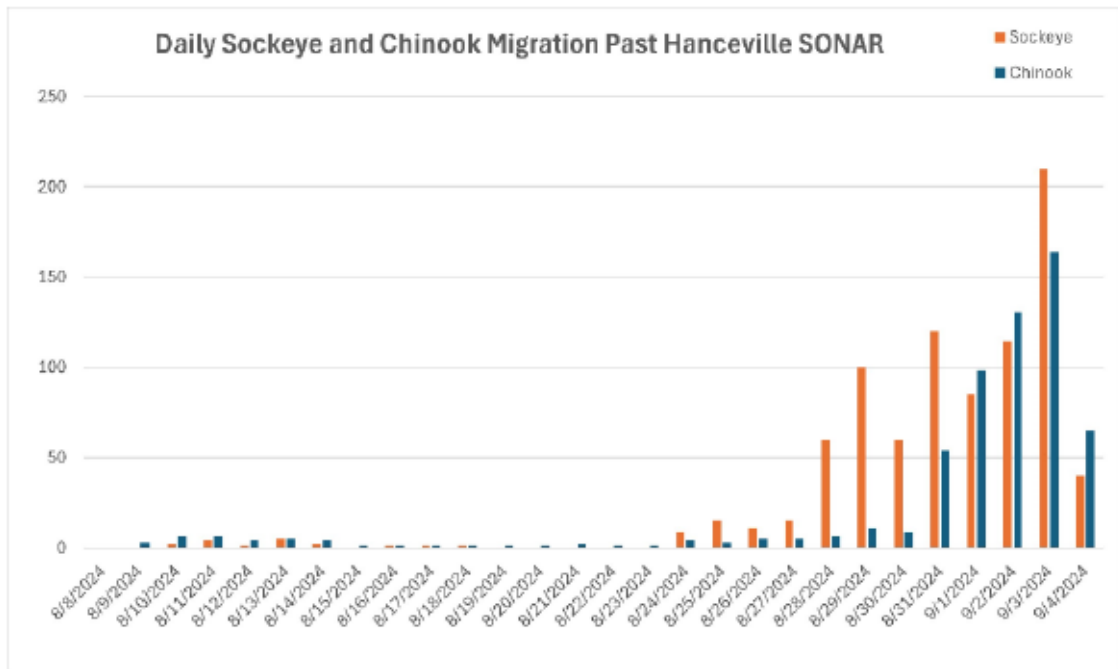
Given the concerns for Chilko sockeye we have highlighted the Mission – spawning ground comparison included in this week’s Panel update. Below are charts copied from the update. Please note the end-of-season Chilko run size estimate is 115,000 and SONAR counts at Hanceville from August 24<sup>th</sup> to September 4 saw a total of 839 Sockeye.

### Chilko 2024 Spawning Escapement

Travel Time from Mission = 17 days



1. 3-day smoothing applied to Predicted Spawning Escapement
2. Total difference for overlapping days: -68,780



**Environmental Conditions** <sup>2</sup> With the weather forecast for Kamloops and Prince George predicting above average temperatures Fraser River water temperatures are predicted to be 19.4°C next week (2.5 °C warmer than average). Discharge at Hope for September 4<sup>th</sup> was 1803m<sup>3</sup>/s (25% below historical discharge) and is forecasted to be 1638<sup>3</sup>m/s. Forecast precipitation for Kamloops is 4mm and for Prince George is 2mm.

To review the Panels report on fish condition (health), specific spawning ground reports and the 2024 Chilko sockeye escapement daily report please refer to pages 10,11 and 12 of the update.

## **FISHERIES AND OCEANS CANADA – FRASER RIVER SOCKEYE IN-SEASON UPDATE FOR AUGUST 23, 2024**

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### **[2024 Fraser River Sockeye Escapement In-season Update No.8](#)**

**[2024 Chilko Sockeye Escapement Update - September 4, 2024](#)** - as of September 2, an estimated 550 sockeye have been counted past the Chilko River hydroacoustic site. Sockeye passage is well below average as result of the landslide. However, in 2019, Chilko sockeye were delayed by the Big Bar landslide and significant numbers were not observed at the hydroacoustic site until early-September.

**[2024 Chilko Sockeye Escapement Update -September 06, 2024](#)** – As of September 4, an estimated 552 sockeye have been counted past the Chilko River hydroacoustic site. Sockeye passage is well below average as a result of the landslide, and is beginning to track below 2019 when the Big Bar landslide was also a migration impediment.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND SALMON CONFERENCES**

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### **[BC SALMON RECOVERY & RESILIENCE CONFERENCE \(December 3 & 4, 2024\)](#)**

The Province of British Columbia and the Pacific Salmon Foundation are hosting this conference at the Vancouver Convention Centre on December 3 and 4<sup>th</sup>. Registration is now live (click link above). The conference is looking to connect the growing network of salmon experts and their efforts to advance shared priorities for building resilient salmon populations. The conference offers a platform to connect, share knowledge and encourage collaborative thought leadership on salmon recovery and resilience. Registration bursaries for Indigenous people or First Nations related organizations are being offered.

Please contact [conference@PSF.ca](mailto:conference@PSF.ca) for more information.



## **LOWER FRASER FISHERIES ALLIANCE 10+ YEAR ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**

Join us in celebrating over a decade of Sq'eptset Syoyes Sth'o'th'eqwi – fishers working together – on the lower Fraser River.

### **WHEN**

Celebrations will span three days: **Tuesday, October 1, Wednesday, October 2, and Thursday, October 3.** You're invited to participate in as many activities as your schedule allows!

### **WHERE**

Each day we will celebrate a different region of the territory. We will begin and end the day at a host Nation in each of these three regions:

- **DAY 1** will be hosted in Kwikwetlem, Musqueam, Semiahmoo, Tsawwassen and Tseil-Waututh territories
- **DAY 2** will be hosted in Yale, Union Bar, Chawathil, Skawahlook, Skwah, Sumas, Peters, Sts'ailes, Soowahlie, Shxw'ow'hamel, Seabird, Scowlitz, Kwakwa'apilt, Cheam, Yakweawkwoose, Tzeachten, Squiala, Skowkale, Shxwha:y, Popkum, Leq'á:mel and Aitchelitz territories
- **DAY 3** will be hosted in Kwantlen, Katzie and Matsqui

### **WHAT TO EXPECT:**

During the celebrations, we will:

- Visit active habitat restoration and stewardship project sites being led by First Nations in the Lower Fraser region;
- Share cultural teachings through guided place names tours;
- Highlight the gains we made together in the last decade, from greater leadership from Nations to a growing number of community members working on the land and waters;
- Reconnect, network, and learn about each others latest projects; and
- Share food and ceremony, and recognize the people wo have helped build the momentum of First Nations-led stewardship in the Lower Fraser

**HOW TO RSVP** - for now save the dates October 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> . -Go to the LFFA website <http://www.lffa.ca> and click on the yellow highlighted link provided at the bottom of the “Save the Date!” post to be notified when registration opens.

If you have questions please reach out to [communications@lffa.ca](mailto:communications@lffa.ca)

Hých'ka Sí:yem! We thank you!

Ken Malloway & Sally Hope  
Co-Chairs, Lower Fraser Fisheries Alliance

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**Follow us on Facebook here:** <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100009897519200>

**Sign up for all the FSMC distributions here:** <https://frasersalmon.us3.list-manage.com/subscribe?u=52b75e17647b0b4460687b60d&id=d5bde22f9a>

**Subscribe to the FSMC calendar by clicking the subscribe to calendar button found at the bottom, right under the calendar by clicking here:** <https://frasersalmon.ca/events/>

You can also access the webinar for observing the Fraser River Panel meetings:

**Please click the link below to join the webinar:**

<https://psc-org.zoom.us/j/89632608507>

**One tap mobile:**

**8887880099,89632608507# US Toll Free**

**Telephone:**

**Dial In:**

**855 703 8985 Canada Toll Free**

**Webinar ID: 896 3260 8507**

**Mid- Fraser River attendees please text your questions during FRP calls to Greg Witzky at 778-694-9154. Can also email them to [executivedirector@frasersalmon.ca](mailto:executivedirector@frasersalmon.ca)**

### Links

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

BC River Forecast Centre Website: <http://bcrfc.env.gov.bc.ca>

Environment Canada’s Water Office Website: [http://www.wateroffice.ec.gc.ca/index\\_e.html](http://www.wateroffice.ec.gc.ca/index_e.html)

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

Pacific Salmon Commission Test Fisheries: [http://www.psc.org/info\\_testfishing.htm](http://www.psc.org/info_testfishing.htm)



Pacific Salmon Commission News and Regulatory announcements: <http://www.psc.org/publications/fraser-panel-in-season-information/fraser-river-panel-regulatory-announcements/>

Fraser River Mission Escapement Reports: <http://www.psc.org/publications/fraser-panel-in-season-information/fish-passage-past-the-psc-hydroacoustic-counting-station-near-mission-bc/>

Fraser River Environmental Watch Reports: <http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/science/habitat/frw-rfo/index-eng.html>

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>