

2023 PRE-SEASON BULLETIN

SOMASS SOCKEYE & ROBERTSON CREEK HATCHERY CHINOOK

Stock Assessment

Pre-season forecast:

Somass Sockeye (Great Central and Sproat) - Range 500,000 to 700,000
Henderson Sockeye - Outlook 15,000 – 25,000
Robertson Creek Hatchery Chinook – 114,000

Escapement: For preliminary Sockeye escapement results and to view the Sproat River fishway cameras check this link:
<http://www.pacfish.ca/wcviweather/Content%20Pages/Sproat/CameraStream4.aspx>

Test Fishery: Seine vessel Nita Maria testing starts June 5 for Sockeye and August 21 for Chinook.

Check this link for Sockeye test updates:

https://www-ops2.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fos2_Internet/Testfish/rptdtfdparm.cfm?fsub_id=236

Check this link for Chinook test updates:

https://www-ops2.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fos2_Internet/Testfish/rptdtfdparm.cfm?fsub_id=592

First in-season Sockeye re-forecast: June 22

First in-season Chinook re-forecast: August 31

Fishing Plans

Fishing plans are discussed at weekly Thursday Roundtable meetings throughout the summer.

First Nations

Maa-nulth (Huu-ay-aht First Nations, Toquaht Nation, Uchucklesaht Tribe, Yuulu?i?ath Government-Ucluelet First Nation, & Ka:'yu:'k't'h'/Che:k'tles7et'h' First Nations) – The Maa-nulth Nations fish in Area 23 within their Southern Domestic Fishing Area. This area encompasses Barkley Sound and Alberni Inlet south of Sproat Narrows. Throughout the fishing season Maa-nulth fishers harvest fish as part of their treaty rights and have priority access to salmon after conservation needs are met. The Maa-nulth Nations also designate commercial fishing vessels to harvest salmon. While fishing for Maa-nulth, commercial vessels display a green Maa-nulth Fisheries flag.

Tsu-ma-uss (Hupacasath & Tseshaht) – The Tsu-ma-uss Nations fish salmon in the Somass River and Alberni Inlet. During the fishing season, the Tsu-ma-uss Nations fish with hook and line, small capacity gillnet boats, dipnets, and a drag seine at Paper Mill Dam. They may also designate commercial fishing vessels to fish on their behalf. After conservation, the Tsu-ma-uss have priority access to salmon for Food, Social, and Ceremonial purposes. Throughout the season they also have Economic Opportunity (EO) commercial fisheries. Look for EO gillnet opening signs at the Clutesi Marina boat ramp.

Commercial

Area D Gillnet – The Area D gillnet fleet fish in Barkley Sound and Alberni Inlet. Based on pre-season forecasts, it is anticipated that Area D will have three openings in Barkley Sound in June before moving into Alberni Inlet for July Sockeye fishing and August-September Chinook fishing.

Area B Seine – Area B Seine fisheries are anticipated to start late June in Alberni Inlet for Sockeye fishing and in the third week of August for Chinook fishing. A “seine free zone” around China Creek is typically in place during seine fisheries. A limited fleet of seine vessels designated by the Area B Harvest Committee will participate in the Area 23 seine fishery.

Recreational

Recreational salmon fishing occurs in Barkley Sound, Alberni Inlet, and the Stamp and Somass Rivers. Check the DFO website for fishing limits, openings, and closures: <https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/rec/tidal-maree/a-s23-eng.html>
<http://dev-public.rhq.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fm-gp/rec/fresh-douce/region1-eng.html>

In-season bulletins will be sent out weekly with the weekly fishing plan and updated stock assessment information. To be added to the bulletin distribution list please email: Christie.Morrison@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

All commercial and recreational openings are posted on DFO's Fishery Notice System:
<https://notices.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fns-sap/index-eng.cfm>

The management of the Area 23 salmon fisheries is conducted through a Harvest Roundtable process. Local First Nations and representatives from each fishing sector are active members at this table and work together to meet conservation goals and provide weekly consensus-based fishing plans.

Fishing plans are developed to minimize disruptions across the various fisheries. Please be respectful of all groups while participating in the fishery.