

March 21, 2013

VANCOUVER - A federal official says this year's Fraser River sockeye salmon run may be lower than expected.

Les Jantz, a resources manager with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, says preliminary projections put returns somewhere between 1.6 and 15.6 million fish.

He says the working number the department is using is just under five million, and if that's the case there may be cuts in the commercial fishery.

Jantz says it's difficult to accurately predict the return because it's subject to environmental and other factors.

Fraser River sockeye runs have fluctuated wildly in recent years, with a collapse in the fishery in 2009 that promoted a federal inquiry, to a record number of fish in 2010.

Returns that year were about 34 million fish, a number that far exceeded forecasts made by federal officials. (CHNL)

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