

Backgrounder

Oct 25, 2010

Public forums and site visits:

From August to October 2010, the Cohen Commission of Inquiry held a series of public forums in communities along the Fraser River and the sockeye's migratory route, where members of the public made presentations to the Commissioner. A list of communities the commission visited is available on the commission's [website](#). The Commissioner also held a series of site visits to allow the Commissioner to view aspects of the sockeye fishery first-hand

Evidentiary hearings:

Evidentiary hearings begin Monday, October 25 and will run through mid- December, and continue in the new year. The Commissioner will begin by hearing evidence about perspectives on conservation, sustainability and stewardship, and submissions on Aboriginal law as it relates to the sockeye fishery. This will be followed by evidence on the management of the sockeye salmon fishery, including the organizational structure of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, the Wild Salmon Policy, and the Pacific Salmon Commission, and evidence on possible scientific and technical causes for the decline in sockeye salmon in the Fraser River.

Hearings will run Mondays through Thursdays and are scheduled from 10 am to 12:30 pm and 2-4 pm each day. Hearings are open to the public and will be held at the Federal Court at 701 West Georgia Street, 8th floor. The evidentiary hearing schedule will be updated regularly on the commission's [website](#). Transcripts of each day's hearings, along with evidence presented at the inquiry that day, will be posted on the commission's [website](#) within about 10-14 days.

Interim report:

The Interim Report will set out the Commissioner's preliminary views on and assessment of previous examinations, investigations and reports relevant to the commission. The commission will present its interim report to the Governor in Council by October 29, 2010.

Scientific and technical research:

The commission contracted with external scientific researchers to study a wide range of technical and scientific issues designed to address potential causes for the decline of Fraser River sockeye. Descriptions of these research projects are available on the commission's [website](#). In most cases, the researchers will provide the commission with a progress report by November 15, 2010 and a final report by January 31, 2011. These reports will be peer-reviewed with researchers and external reviewers providing critical analysis. The final reports will be made public. The researchers will summarize their findings and conclusions during the commission's public evidentiary hearings, at which counsel for participants will have an opportunity to question the researchers and test their theories.