

**JOINT STAFF REPORT  
SPRING CHINOOK FACT SHEET  
Compact/Joint State Hearing  
April 28, 2003**

<p><b>Purpose:</b> To review spring chinook salmon stock status, review the ongoing spring chinook sport and commercial fisheries, and consider sport and commercial fishing options.</p> <p><b>TAC:</b> This Fact Sheet was not reviewed by the TAC.</p>
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**MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES**

***Endangered Species Act (ESA)***

- Fisheries being considered at this Compact are addressed in a Section 7/10 Application outlining proposed non-Indian fisheries that the states of Washington and Oregon submitted to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on November 3, 2000.
- The ESA limits aggregate fishery impacts to  $\leq 2\%$  for listed wild steelhead.

***Interim Management Agreement***

- An Interim Management Agreement covering fisheries for upriver spring chinook, summer chinook, and sockeye is in effect for 2001-2003.
- The Interim Management Agreement includes a sliding scale spring chinook harvest matrix for 2001-2005 and allocates upriver impacts between non-Indian and treaty Indian fisheries for 2001-2003.
- Based on preseason run size forecasts, the Interim Management Agreement limits impacts to listed upriver spring chinook to  $\leq 2\%$  for non-Indian fisheries and  $\leq 9\%$  for treaty Indian fisheries in 2003.

***Non-Indian Upriver Impact Allocation***

- Non-Indian fisheries will be managed in accordance with the guiding principles, fishery management objectives, and impact sharing matrix adopted by the Oregon and Washington Fish and Wildlife Commissions and the Columbia River Compact.
- Non-Indian impacts are allocated 1.7% for fisheries below McNary Dam and 0.3% for fisheries above McNary Dam and Select Area fisheries or as a management buffer.
- Upriver impacts for non-Indian fisheries below McNary Dam in 2003 are further allocated 35% (0.59% impact) for commercial fisheries and 65% (1.11% impact) for sport fisheries.

***Willamette Spring Chinook Management***

- The Fisheries Management and Evaluation Plan (FMEP) for Willamette spring chinook limits impacts for all freshwater fisheries in 2002 to  $\leq 15\%$  on wild Willamette River spring chinook.
- Based on the preseason run size forecast of 109,800 the Willamette River Basin Fish Management Plan (WFMP) allocates surplus hatchery Willamette River spring chinook 70% for sport fisheries (40,900 fish) and 30% for commercial fisheries (17,500 fish) in 2003.

## **WATER CONDITIONS**

### ***Lower Columbia River***

- Columbia River water conditions at Bonneville Dam remained relatively stable during early April but changed dramatically with the initiation of the spill test on April 14.
- The spill test will provide a fluctuating pattern of spill with alternating periods (2-4 days) of high or low spill. Spill ranged between 70 kcfs and 95 kcfs during April 14-15, 140 kcfs and 150 kcfs during April 16-19, 103 kcfs and 104 kcfs on April 20-21, 142 kcf during April 22-23, and 101 kcfs-104 kcfs during April 24-27.
- Since April 14 flow has ranged between 198 kcfs and 278 kcfs as compared to April 1-13 when flow ranged between 181 kcfs and 208 kcfs.
- Flows during the last half of April typically range between 125 kcfs and 400 kcfs. During April 16-28 in 2001 flows ranged between 94 kcfs and 137 kcfs with spill levels at 0.0 kcfs on all days.
- Since April 14 water temperatures measured at Bonneville Dam have been stable at 50°F. Water temperatures typically range between 50°F-54°F during late April and in 2001 temperature ranged between 50°F-52°F during April 17-26.
- Visibility measured at Bonneville Dam has ranged from 3.5 feet to 5.0 feet since April 16. Visibility fluctuates during late April, typically ranging between 2-4 feet and in 2001 visibility ranged between 4-6 feet during April 16-28.

### ***Lower Willamette River***

- Willamette River water conditions have been relatively stable during April.
- Flows measured at Salem ranged between 31,500-42,200 cfs during the first 25 days of April.
- Temperature measured at Willamette Falls has ranged between 48°F-52°F during April 1-25.
- Visibility measured at Willamette Falls has ranged between 1.8 feet and 3.8 feet during April and exceeded 3 feet during April 21-25.
- Fishing conditions decreased considerably over the weekend with flows increasing to 43,000 cfs on April 26 and visibility decreasing to 2.8 feet on April 28.

## **SPRING CHINOOK STOCK STATUS**

### ***Upriver Run***

- The preseason spring chinook run size forecasts include returns of 145,400 upriver stock and 109,800 Willamette stock to the Columbia River mouth.
- Upriver spring chinook passage over Bonneville Dam is tracking ahead of preseason expectations with 126,600 adults passing through April 27. During 2000-2002 cumulative spring chinook counts at Bonneville Dam through April 27 ranged between 109,600-296,100 adults.
- Upriver spring chinook passage over Bonneville Dam typically peaks in late April.
- The TAC met on Monday April 28 and the spring chinook run size expectation remained at 180,000 adults passing Bonneville Dam and 193,000 adults to the Columbia River mouth.

### ***Willamette River***

- Spring chinook passage over Willamette Falls typically peaks in late May. During 1990-1999 the date on which 50% of the run had passed Willamette Falls averaged May 16.

- Based on results from the lower Willamette River sport fishery during the month of April the return appears to be on track to achieve preseason expectations.
- Adult passage is improving with daily counts increasing from 95 on April 16 to 1,334 on April 21.
- Through April 21 a total of 5,122 spring chinook adults have passed Willamette Falls.

## NON-INDIAN FISHERY UPDATES

### ***Below Bonneville Spring Chinook Sport Fishery***

- The mainstem Columbia River was originally scheduled to be open for adipose fin-clipped salmon, adipose fin-clipped steelhead, and shad angling from the mouth at Buoy 10 upstream to McNary Dam (excluding salmon angling from a boat and from the Washington shore between Bonneville Dam and Tower Island power lines) during January 1-May-15 below I-5 Bridge and during February 15-May 15 above I-5 Bridge.
- Fishing was typically slow during February but improved significantly during March, especially in the gorge just below Bonneville Dam. Poor water conditions reduced fishing opportunities below the mouth of the Willamette during the last half of March and focussed the fishery to the gorge where fishing conditions were good.

<b><i>Catch and Effort During the 2003 Mainstem Spring Chinook Sport Fishery Below Bonneville Dam</i></b>					
Time	Angler	Total	Kept	Upriver Stock	
Period	Trips	Catch	Catch	%	Impact
February	9,600	432	209 (48%)	100%	0.023%
March	65,800	8,790	5,597 (64%)	81%	0.369%
April 1-26	65,800	13,608	8,826 (65%)	55%	0.388%
<b>Total</b>	<b>141,200</b>	<b>22,830</b>	<b>14,632 (64%)</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>0.780%</b>

- Due to large catches and high proportion of upriver fish in the catch a Joint State meeting was held on Tuesday April 1 to consider modifications to the ongoing spring chinook sport fishery. At this meeting the states of Oregon and Washington modified the ongoing season to be closed between the I-5 Bridge and Bonneville Dam seven days per week and remain open between the mouth at Buoy 10 and the I-5 Bridge four days per week (Wednesday through Saturday). The modified season took effect on April 6 and was adopted with the intent of maintaining a partial sport fishery until the first upriver run size update that was expected to occur in mid to late April.
- Fishing remained good during April 1-5 which resulted in a 0.260% impact on upriver spring chinook during the first five days of April.
- Since April 9 fishing has slowed considerably in response to restrictive fishery regulations, fluctuating water conditions, and improved tributary fisheries. During April 9-27 impacts to upriver stocks have totalled 0.128% in the lower Columbia River sport fishery.

### ***Bonneville to McNary Spring Chinook Sport Fishery***

- Preseason expectations were for a catch of 1,600 spring chinook in this fishery, which would result in a 0.09% impact on upriver spring chinook.
- Effort and catch in this fishery are typically minor prior to mid-April.
- The fishery will intensify in late April and May coincident with increased passage of upriver spring chinook.

- Through April 24 a total of 1,139 spring chinook have been handled with 637 kept, which results in a 0.06% impact on upriver spring chinook.

***Lower Willamette Spring Chinook Fishery***

- The mainstem Willamette River below Willamette Falls is open for adipose fin-clipped chinook salmon and adipose fin-clipped steelhead the entire year.
- Poor fishing conditions have limited effort and catch during March. Fishing conditions have been good since early April and catches have increased dramatically in response to improved fishing conditions.
- Since April 3 fishing has been excellent throughout the entire lower river, excluding Multnomah Channel. Catch rates have generally been one spring chinook kept for every 1-2 boats in the mainstem Willamette River below Willamette Falls while catches in Multnomah Channel have been slower at one spring chinook kept for every 2-4 boats.
- Poor fishing conditions reduced angler success over the weekend with catch rates of one chinook kept for every 5-10 boats.

***Select Area Commercial Salmon Fisheries***

- Select Area fisheries occurred during the winter time frame in Blind Slough and Youngs Bay select areas.
- Ongoing Select Area spring seasons occurring in Tongue Point, Blind Slough, Deep River, and Youngs Bay are scheduled to continue through mid-June.
- Preseason expectations for winter and spring season Select Area fisheries combined were based on the 1999-2001 average of 0.05%.
- Impacts to upriver spring chinook totaled 0.18% during spring season Select Area fisheries that occurred in 2002.
- Upriver catch estimates for Select Area fisheries are based on VSI and CWT analysis for all Select Area sites except Deep River (VSI analysis only).

<b><i>Spring Chinook Landings During 2003 Winter and Spring Commercial Fisheries</i></b>					
<b>Fishery</b>	<b>Time Period</b>	<b>Total Catch</b>	<b>Kept Catch</b>	<b>Upriver Percent</b>	<b>Stock Impacts</b>
Winter Demonstration	Feb 17-March 21	5,667	3,173 (56%)	74%	0.668%
Winter Select Area	Feb 18-March 2	89	89 (100%)	44%	0.018%
Spring Tongue Point	April 16-17	317	317 (100%)	19%	0.031%
Spring Blind Slough	April 17-18	317	317 (100%)	9%	0.015%
Spring Youngs Bay	April 16-18	2,312	2,312 (100%)	9%	0.109%
Spring Deep River	April 17-23	88	88 (100%)	19%	0.009%

- During the initial fishing period of the spring season impacts to upriver spring chinook greatly exceeded preseason expectations with a total impact of 0.164%. The winter season impact was 0.018% which results in a grand total of 0.182% for all Select Area commercial fisheries to date.
- Due to the larger than expected impact on upriver stocks the Compact met on April 24 and rescinded all previously adopted fishing periods for the time frame of 7 PM Thursday April 24 through 7 PM Thursday May 1.

<i>Spring Chinook Catch and Impacts Summary</i>				
Fishery	Total Handle	Kept Catch		Upriver Impact
		Total	Upriver	
Commercial Demonstration	5,700	3,200	2,000	0.67%
Winter Select Area Commercial	89	89	34	0.02%
Spring Select Area (thru 4/24)	3,100	3,100	350	0.16%
Below Bonneville Sport (thru 4/26)	22,800	14,600	8,300	0.78%
Bonneville to McNary Sport (thru 4/26)	1,100	600	600	0.06%
<b>Total to Date</b>	<b>32,789</b>	<b>21,589</b>	<b>11,184</b>	<b>1.69%</b>
Spring Select Area Commercial (5/1-5/9)	2,000	2,000	100	0.05%
Below Bonneville Sport	0	0	0	0.00%
Bonneville to McNary Sport	1,100	600	600	0.06%
<b>Projected Total</b>	<b>3,100</b>	<b>2,600</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>0.11%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>35,889</b>	<b>24,189</b>	<b>11,884</b>	<b>1.80%</b>

- Impacts to upriver spring chinook in sport fisheries below McNary Dam are estimated to total 0.9% (81% of allocation) as compared to the preseason guideline of 1.11%.
- Impacts to upriver spring chinook in mainstem commercial fisheries below Bonneville Dam are estimated to total 0.67% (114% of allocation) as compared to the preseason guideline of 0.59%.
- Impacts to upriver spring chinook in other fisheries (above McNary Dam, Select Areas, buffer) estimated to total 0.43% (143% of allocation) as compared to the preseason guideline of 0.3%.

### FISHERY RECOMENDATIONS

#### *Below Bonneville Spring Chinook Sport Fishery*

<i>Recommendation</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Joint Staff is recommending that the Columbia River below Bonneville Dam be closed to salmon, steelhead, and shad angling effective Wednesday April 30.</li> </ul>

- ✓ Impacts for fisheries below McNary Dam are near the 1.7% limit.

#### *Tongue Point Commercial Select Area Fishery*

<i>Recommendation</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Joint Staff is recommending that all previously adopted fishing periods effective 7 PM Thursday May 1 through 7 AM Friday June 13 be rescinded.</li> </ul>

- ✓ Impacts to upriver spring chinook in Select Area fisheries have exceeded preseason expectations.
- ✓ Only early returning 5-year-old fish are returning to this site.
- ✓ Fish not caught will most likely stray into the Blind Slough fishery and will be caught in that fishery.

***Blind Slough Commercial Select Area Fishery***

<i>Recommendation</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Joint Staff is recommending that fishing periods scheduled to occur from 7 PM Tuesday May 6 to 7 AM Wednesday May 7 be rescinded.</li><li>• The Joint Staff is also recommending that the legal fishing area be reduced to include the Blind Slough area only for the next two fishing periods that are scheduled to occur on 7 PM Thursday May 1 to 7 AM Friday May 2 and 7 PM Thursday May 8 to 7 AM Friday May 9.</li></ul>

- ✓ Impacts to upriver spring chinook in Select Area commercial fisheries have exceeded preseason expectations.
- ✓ Reduced fishing time will reduce impacts to upriver spring chinook but will allow some opportunity to harvest net-pen reared spring chinook.
- ✓ Reduced area will minimize impacts to upriver stock spring chinook.

***Deep River Experimental Commercial Select Area Fishery***

<i>Recommendation</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Joint Staff is recommending that fishing periods scheduled for 7 PM Tuesday May 6 to 7 AM Wednesday May 7 and 7 PM Wednesday May 7 to 7 AM Thursday May 8 be rescinded.</li></ul>

- ✓ Impacts to upriver spring chinook have exceeded preseason expectations.
- ✓ Reduced fishing time will reduce impacts to upriver spring chinook but will allow some opportunity to harvest net-pen reared spring chinook.
- ✓ Reduced fishing area could be considered to further reduce impacts to upriver spring chinook.

***Youngs Bay Commercial Select Area Fishery***

<i>Recommendation</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Joint Staff is recommending that fishing periods currently scheduled to occur between 7 PM Thursday May 1 to 6 PM Friday May 10 be rescinded and adopt the following 8-hour fishing periods. 7 AM - 3 PM Thursday May 1 Noon - 8 PM Thursday May 9</li></ul>

- ✓ Impacts to upriver spring chinook in Select Area commercial fisheries have exceeded preseason expectations.
- ✓ Reduced fishing time will reduce impacts to upriver spring chinook but will allow some opportunity to harvest net-pen reared spring chinook.
- ✓ Reduced area was considered but not recommended due to excessive crowding in open fishing area.

**FUTURE MEETINGS**

- The Joint Staff recommends that the next Compact/Joint State Sport hearing occur via telephone at 10 AM Tuesday May 6 for the purposes of updating spring chinook stock status, reviewing spring chinook fisheries, and considering modifications to sport and commercial fisheries.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife  
April 28, 2003