

**JOINT STAFF REPORT
Fall FACT SHEET No. 1
Columbia River Compact**

July 30, 2003

Purpose: To review chinook salmon stock status and consider non-Indian commercial fishing options for the mainstem Columbia River.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Salmon

- A Management Agreement for upper Columbia River fall chinook, steelhead, and coho was reached by the *U.S. v Oregon* parties for fall fisheries occurring in 2003.
- The 2003 Fall Management Agreement allocates the 31.29% URB impact rate 23.04% for treaty Indian fisheries and 8.25% non-Indian fisheries; however, sharing impacts could change based on inseason updates.
- Non-Indian fisheries occurring during August will be managed in accordance with the "2003 Non-Indian Columbia River Fall Fishery Chinook Allocation Agreement" completed through the North of Falcon negotiation process.

Excerpts From the 2003 Non-Indian Columbia River Fall Fishery Chinook Allocation Agreement

- ✓ URB fall chinook impacts in fisheries downstream of the Snake River are allocated pre-season at 52% (4.29%) to the sport fishery and 48% (3.96%) to the commercial fishery. The Columbia River Compact/Joint States will use this URB impact allocation as guidance for making in-season management decisions concerning the Columbia River sport and commercial fisheries. Actual URB impacts in the fisheries may differ from pre-season estimates based on actual fishery catches, stock composition, and run-size updates. The *U. S. v. Oregon* TAC will update the URB run-size beginning in mid-September.
- ✓ Expectations for the commercial fishery include:
 - An early August salmon fishery up to 4 nights (modeled dates were August 5, 7, 11, 13). Mesh size is 8-inch minimum and area is below the Longview Bridge. URB allocation for this fishery is 0.76% (19% of the total commercial impacts of 3.96%) and total chinook catch expectation is 10,400 fish. Chinook/URB impacts not used in this fishery will transfer to future commercial fisheries.
 - Late August Zone 4-5 fishery during the last two weeks of August. Fishing is expected to occur up to 3 nights per week with breaks in between fishing days. Mesh size is 9-inch minimum and area is above the I-205 Bridge. URB allocation for this fishery is 0.83% (21% of the total commercial impact of 3.96%) and total chinook catch expectation is 6,500 fish. Chinook/URB impacts not used in this fishery will transfer to September fisheries.
 - Fishing areas and days in August fisheries may change based on in-season updates.
 - Sturgeon management will be consistent with sturgeon protocol adopted at the February 6, 2003 Compact hearing.

- Based on pre-season run size forecasts and North of Falcon negotiations, the catch allocation for commercial fisheries occurring during August is 16,860 chinook, including 3,980 URB's.

Sturgeon

- Sturgeon fisheries between the Columbia River mouth and Bonneville Dam during 2003-2005 are guided by a Joint State management plan adopted by the Oregon and Washington Fish and Wildlife Commissions and the Columbia River Compact.
- The annual allocation for commercial fisheries, including Select Area fisheries, is 8,000 white sturgeon which represents 20% of the annual harvestable number of 40,000.
- Commercial fisheries will be further managed based on protocol adopted at the February 6, 2003 Compact hearing.

<i>Protocol for Management of White Sturgeon in 2003-2005 Commercial Fisheries</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Fisheries should be managed for white sturgeon catch expectations of 2,000 for the winter-summer timeframe (January-July), 2,000 for the early fall timeframe (August), and 3,600 for the late fall timeframe (September-October).✓ Landings during SAFE fisheries are not to exceed 400 white sturgeon for the entire year with winter/spring/summer fisheries not to exceed 300.✓ Allow some level of incidental sturgeon harvest to occur during all target salmon seasons.✓ Conduct limited target sturgeon fisheries during winter and early fall timeframes if feasible.✓ Conduct target sturgeon fisheries during October if necessary to access commercial allocation.✓ Adopt white sturgeon possession and landing limits if necessary to remain within season specific catch expectation or to provide white sturgeon for harvest during subsequent salmon seasons.✓ Until further discussion occurs with the OFWC and the WFWC regarding sturgeon allocation among individual commercial fishers landings and possession limits will be in the form of per vessel limits and these limits will include both mainstem and Select Area fisheries.✓ Joint Staff will conduct an annual post season evaluation of white sturgeon retention with industry.

- The white sturgeon protocol provides for possession and sales limits but does not specify whether possession and sales limits should be in the form of daily or weekly limits.
- Sturgeon possession and sales limits during 2003 fall fisheries should be consistent with respect to being daily or weekly.

<i>Recommendation</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Joint Staff recommends that any sturgeon possession and sales limits adopted during August 1-October 31, 2003 be weekly limits.

- ✓ Weekly limits will be calculated based on catch guideline, duration of fishery, and expected participation levels.
- ✓ General response to past possession and sales limits suggest that weekly limits are preferred over daily limits.
- ✓ Reduces complexity of regulations required when adopting new fishing periods or modifying previously adopted fishing periods.
- ✓ Weekly limits are not expected to exceed market capacity.

STOCK STATUS

- Fall chinook salmon returns are expected to be near 600,000 adults, with brights comprising the majority of the returns.
- The 2003 fall chinook return is forecasted to be comprised of 376,400 brights (63%) and 218,800 tules (37%).

<i>Summary of Columbia River Adult Chinook Salmon Returns in 2002 and Forecast for 2003</i>			
Species, stock	2002 Return	2003 Forecast	Comments
Fall chinook	733,100	595,200	Fifth largest since 1948
Upriver bright (URB)	276,900	258,400	Second largest since 1989
Snake River wild (SRW)	NA	NA	
Mid-Columbia bright (MCB)	106,000	86,600	Third largest on record (since 1980)
Bonneville upriver bright (BUB)	57,900	43,100	Fourth largest on record (since 1980)
Pool upriver bright (PUB)	48,100	43,500	Second largest on record (since 1985)
Lower river bright (LRB)	2,400	1,800	Formerly a component of the BUB stock
Bonneville pool hatchery (BPH)	160,800	101,900	Fourth largest since 1976
Lower river hatchery (LRH)	156,400	116,900	Second largest since 1989
Lower river wild (LRW)	24,900	23,400	Second largest since 1989
Select area bright (SAB)	5,700	6,200	Based on recent 5-year average

COMMERCIAL FISHERY UPDATES

Sturgeon

- Landings during the 2003 winter/spring/summer fisheries were less than landing limits set forth in the white sturgeon protocol.
- Landings through July 17 total 1,700 white sturgeon which results in 6,300 white sturgeon remaining on the 8,000 fish catch guideline.

<i>2003 Lower Columbia River Commercial White Sturgeon Catch Summary</i>		
	Commercial Allocation =	8,000
Fishery	Guideline	Catch
Mainstem Winter Gillnet	2,000	1,517
Select Area Gillnet	400	207
August Gillnet	2,000	0
Mainstem Late Fall Gillnet	3,600	0
	Cumulative Catch to Date =	1,724
	Quota Remaining =	6,276

FISHERY PROPOSALS

Mainstem Salmon Fishery

<i>Recommendation</i>	
The Joint Staff recommends adoption of the following salmon fishing periods for the mainstem Columbia River:	
Season:	7 PM Monday August 4 to 7 AM Tuesday August 5 (12 hours) 7 PM Wednesday August 6 to 7 AM Thursday August 7 (12 hours) 7 PM Monday August 11 to 7 AM Tuesday August 12 (12 hours)
Area:	Mouth upstream to the lower Zone 4 fishing boundary extending from Warrior Rock on the Oregon shore to the Lewis River on the Washington shore (Zones 1-3).
Sanctuaries:	Grays River, Elokomina-A, Cowlitz River, Kalama-A, and Lewis-A.
Gear:	8" minimum and 9¾" maximum mesh size restrictions.
Allowable Sales:	Salmon and sturgeon. A maximum of seven sturgeon may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel during each calendar week (Sunday through Saturday) that the fishery is open. The seven sturgeon possession and sales limit includes both mainstem and Select Area fisheries during August 3-16.
Expected Catch:	4,000-7,000 chinook 1,400-2,100 white sturgeon <50 green sturgeon
Miscellaneous Rules:	Quick Reporting Rules will be in effect for Washington buyers.

- ✓ The proposed fishery is consistent with Fall Management Agreement and results of North of Falcon negotiation process.
- ✓ The proposed fishery allows additional opportunity to catch chinook with minimal impacts to URB stock fall chinook.
- ✓ Chinook catch during these fishing periods is expected to remain within 10,400 chinook catch and 0.76% URB impact expectations for this fishery.
- ✓ Preseason modeling and results of past fisheries during early August indicate that the majority of the catch will be tule fall chinook.
- ✓ The proposed fishery provides access to tule fall chinook in the lower river when in a more marketable condition.
- ✓ The proposed fishery allows opportunity to gain information and collect data concerning salmon fisheries during the early August time frame.
- ✓ The increased area from the Longview Bridge upstream to the lower Zone 4 boundary will open an additional 20 miles of river and provide increased opportunity. The additional fishing area is not expected to compromise the pre-season management plans for salmon or sturgeon, nor is it expected to result in a significantly greater harvest.
- ✓ The proposed weekly sturgeon retention regulation is consistent with the white sturgeon protocol and will maintain total sturgeon landings within the 2,000 fish allocation for August fisheries.

- ✓ Closed days between fishing periods allow for fishery checkpoints to update and modify ongoing fishery as needed.

Scheduled Compact Hearings

- A Columbia River Compact hearing has been scheduled for 10 AM Tuesday, August 12, 2003 at the Water Resources Education Center located at 4600 SE Columbia Way, Vancouver, Washington for the purposes of reviewing salmon, steelhead, and sturgeon stock status and considering August 2S commercial fishing seasons in the mainstem Columbia River.
- A Columbia River Compact hearing has been scheduled for 10 AM Friday, August 22, 2003 at the Water Resources Education Center located at 4600 SE Columbia Way, Vancouver, Washington for the purposes of reviewing salmon, steelhead, and sturgeon stock status and considering August 2S and treaty Indian commercial fishing seasons in the mainstem Columbia River.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
July 30, 2003