

**JOINT STAFF REPORT  
SPRING CHINOOK FACT SHEET  
Compact/Joint State Hearing  
May 5, 2003**

<p><b>Purpose:</b> To review spring chinook salmon stock status, review 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 provides a fluctuating pattern of spill with alternating periods (2-4 days) of high or low spill. Recently spill ranged between 128 kcfs and 147 kcfs during April 28-May 1, and 87 kcfs and 102 kcfs during May 2-4.
- During May 1-4 flow ranged between 219 kcfs and 256 kcfs. Flows during early May typically range between 200 kcfs and 350 kcfs.
- Water temperatures measured at Bonneville Dam were 50°F-51°F during the first five days of May. Water temperatures typically range between 52°F-56°F during early May.
- Visibility measured at Bonneville Dam has ranged from 4.0 feet to 5.3 feet during May 1-5. Visibility fluctuates during early May, typically ranging between 1.5-4.0 feet.

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

- Willamette River water conditions remained relatively stable during the month of April.
- Flows measured at Salem ranged between 25,100-42,200 cfs during April and have not exceeded 23,000 cfs since May 1.
- Temperature measured at Willamette Falls ranged between 50°F-52°F since April 9-31 and increased to 55°F on May 5.
- Visibility measured at Willamette Falls has exceeded 2 feet since April 18 and has exceeded 3 feet during the first five days of May.

## **SPRING CHINOOK STOCK STATUS**

### ***Upriver Run***

- The preseason forecast was for a return of 145,400 upriver spring chinook to the Columbia River mouth.
- Upriver spring chinook passage over Bonneville Dam typically peaks in late April.
- Passage has been stable over the last two weeks with daily counts of 2,000-4,400 during April 23-May 4.
- Upriver spring chinook passage over Bonneville Dam has exceeded preseason expectations with 149,329 adults passing through May 4. During 2000-2002 cumulative spring chinook counts at Bonneville Dam through May 4 ranged between 146,900-329,800 adults.
- The TAC met on Monday May 5 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***

- The preseason expectation was for a return of 109,800 Willamette spring chinook adults to the Columbia River mouth.
- 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 fluctuating with daily counts increasing from 95 on April 16 to 1,674 on April 23 and subsequently declining to 622 on April 26.
- Through April 26 a total of 11,400 spring chinook adults have passed Willamette Falls as compared to 2002 when 5,752 adults passed through April 26.

## 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 Bonneville Dam during January 1-May 15 below the I-5 Bridge and during February 15-May 15 above the 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.

<i>Catch and Effort During the 2003 Mainstem Spring Chinook Sport Fishery Below Bonneville Dam</i>					
Time Period	Angler Trips	Total Catch	Kept Catch	Upriver Stock	
				%	Impact
February	9,600	432	209 (48%)	100%	0.023%
March	65,800	8,790	5,597 (64%)	81%	0.369%
April	68,800	14,348	9,345 (65%)	53%	0.394%
May 1-3	7,400	1,190	864 (73%)	34%	0.021%
<b>Total</b>	<b>151,600</b>	<b>24,760</b>	<b>16,015 (65%)</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>0.807%</b>

- Due to large catches and a 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 Sunday April 6.
- 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 9-30 impacts to upriver stocks totalled 0.134% in the lower Columbia River sport fishery.
- Effort remained high during the first three days of May but catch rates slowed.

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

- The mainstem Columbia River was originally scheduled to be opened for adipose fin-clipped salmon, adipose fin-clipped steelhead, and shad from Bonneville Dam upstream to McNary Dam (excluding salmon angling from a boat and from the Washington shore between Bonneville Dam and Tower Island power lines) during February 15-May 15.
- 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 typically intensifies in late April and early May coincident with increased passage of upriver spring chinook.

- At the April 28 Compact/Joint State hearing the mainstem fishery was reduced to a 4-day per week fishery with open days being Wednesday-Saturday consistent with the ongoing sport fishery occurring below the I-5 Bridge.
- Through May 4 a total of 1,646 spring chinook have been handled with 892 kept, which results in a 0.09% 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 limited effort and catch during March. Fishing conditions have generally been good since early April and catches increased dramatically in response to improved fishing conditions.
- During most of April fishing was excellent throughout the entire lower river, excluding Multnomah Channel. Catch rates were generally one spring chinook kept for every 1-2 boats in the mainstem Willamette River below Willamette Falls while catches in Multnomah Channel were slower at one spring chinook kept for every 2-4 boats.
- Poor fishing conditions reduced angler success during the final weekend in April with catch rates of one chinook kept for every 5-10 boats.
- Since May 1 fishing has improved with catch rates of one chinook kept for every 1-5 boats.

### ***Select Area Commercial Salmon Fisheries***

- Select Area fisheries occurred during the winter time frame in Blind Slough and Youngs Bay.
- Select Area spring seasons were originally scheduled to occur weekly during mid-April through mid-June in Tongue Point, Blind Slough, Deep River, and Youngs Bay.
- Preseason expectations for impacts to upriver spring chinook resulting from the combined winter and spring Select Area seasons were based on the 1999-2001 average of 0.05%.
- 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).
- 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 April 28 and rescinded and/or modified the majority of the previously adopted fishing periods scheduled to occur during Thursday April 24 through Friday May 9.
- Open fishing periods during April 24-May 9 were reduced from five to two in Blind Slough and from seven to two in Deep River with the open fishing area reduced for both sites. The Youngs Bay fishery was reduced from a total of nine fishing days to one 8-hour fishing period with no changes to the open fishing area and the spring season in Tongue Point was eliminated completely.

<i>Spring Chinook Landings During 2003 Winter and Spring Commercial Fisheries</i>					
Fishery	Time Period	Total Catch	Kept Catch	Upriver Percent	Stock Impacts
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	340	340 (100%)	19%	0.033%
Spring Blind Slough	April 17-May 2	716	716 (100%)	6%	0.022%
Spring Youngs Bay	April 16-18	2,319	2,319 (100%)	9%	0.109%
Spring Deep River	April 17-May 2	103	103 (100%)	18%	0.009%

- Catches during the May 1-2 fishing periods were similar to preseason expectations with spring chinook landings totaling 400 in Blind Slough and 15 in Deep River.
- Handle of upriver spring chinook dropped significantly during the most recent fishing period. Upriver spring chinook comprised 3% of the total catch in Blind Slough during May 1-2 as compared to 9% during April 17-18 and comprised 13% of the Deep River catch during May 1-2 as compared to 19% during April 17-23.

<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 5/2)	3,500	3,500	350	0.17%
Below Bonneville Sport (thru 5/3)	24,800	16,000	8,600	0.81%
Bonneville to McNary Sport (thru 5/4)	1,600	900	900	0.09%
<b>Total to Date</b>	<b>35,689</b>	<b>23,689</b>	<b>11,884</b>	<b>1.76%</b>
Spring Select Area Commercial (5/7-6/13)	8,500	8,500	40	0.02%
Below Bonneville Sport (thru 5/15)	1,000	700	200	0.02%
Bonneville to McNary Sport (thru 5/15)	400	200	200	0.02%
<b>Projected Total</b>	<b>9,900</b>	<b>9,400</b>	<b>440</b>	<b>0.06%</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>45,589</b>	<b>33,089</b>	<b>12,324</b>	<b>1.82%</b>

- Impacts to upriver spring chinook in sport fisheries below McNary Dam through May 15 are projected to total 0.94% (85% of allocation) as compared to the preseason guideline of 1.11%.
- Impacts to upriver spring chinook in mainstem commercial fisheries below Bonneville Dam through June 13 are projected 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 and Select Areas, or as a management buffer) through May 15 are projected to total 0.39% (130% 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 no modifications to the ongoing four-day per week sport fishery in the lower Columbia River.</li> </ul>

- ✓ The fishery provides a sport fishing opportunity to access surplus hatchery spring chinook while limiting impacts to listed species.
- ✓ Allows fishery to continue through previously scheduled closing date of May 16.

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

<i>Recommendation</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Joint Staff is recommending no modifications to the ongoing four-day per week sport fishery in the Columbia River between Bonneville and McNary Dam.</li></ul>

- ✓ The fishery provides a sport fishing opportunity to access surplus hatchery spring chinook while limiting impacts to listed species.
- ✓ Allows fishery to continue through previously scheduled closing date of May 16.

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

<i>Recommendation</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Joint Staff is recommending that the currently adopted fishing period be rescheduled to occur on Wednesday May 7 as follows: 11 AM - 7 PM Wednesday May 7</li></ul>

- ✓ Effective Monday May 12 Select Area spring season fishery regulations revert to times and areas adopted at the February 6 and March 4 Compact hearings.
- ✓ Proposed modification will not increase impacts to upriver spring chinook.
- ✓ Proposed modification is supported by commercial industry to improve marketing opportunities during the upcoming Mother's Day weekend.

**FUTURE MEETINGS**

- The Joint Staff is not recommending any future Compact or Joint State hearings at this time.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife  
May 5, 2003