

**JOINT STAFF REPORT
Fall FACT SHEET No. 10
Columbia River Compact**

October 20, 2003

<p>Purpose: To review coho salmon stock status and consider modifications to ongoing non-Indian commercial fishing seasons in the mainstem Columbia River.</p>

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Salmon and Steelhead

- The Biological Opinion concerning treaty Indian and non-Indian fall season fisheries was signed by NOAA Fisheries on July 30, 2003.
- 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% for non-Indian fisheries; however, sharing impacts could change based on inseason updates.
- All non-Indian fisheries outside the Snake River basin will be managed for an upriver wild steelhead impact rate to not exceed 2% on wild Group B index steelhead.
- Non-Indian fall fisheries will be managed not to exceed a total impact rate (including ocean and Columbia River fisheries) of 49% on LRH (Coweeman) fall chinook.
- Upriver fall chinook escapement goals include 7,000 adult fall chinook (4,000 females) to Spring Creek Hatchery and 43,500 adult fall chinook (natural and hatchery included) for spawning escapement above McNary Dam.
- Ocean and lower river fisheries will be managed to provide for Bonneville Dam escapement of at least 50% of the upriver coho salmon return.
- Non-Indian fisheries will be managed for an impact rate of less than 5% for Columbia River chum salmon.
- Based on the 2003 Incidental Take Permit issued by the OFWC, combined ocean and freshwater fisheries will be managed to limit impacts on wild coho destined for Oregon tributaries to no more than 29.2% and the freshwater fishery impacts shall not exceed 11.5% of the run entering the Columbia River.
- 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.
- ✓ Expected total catch of fall chinook in the mainstem Columbia River downstream of the Snake River, in lower Columbia River tributaries, and Select Areas is 84,300 of which 41,400 (49%) are expected to be harvested by the sport fishery and 42,500 (51%) by the commercial fishery. These catch estimates are based on pre-season abundance forecasts and fishery estimates. Actual harvest sharing will be influenced by stock specific fall chinook abundances and relative harvest rates by each respective fishery.

Sturgeon

- Sturgeon fisheries between the Columbia River mouth and Bonneville Dam during 2003-2005 are guided by a Joint State Sturgeon Fishery Management Agreement adopted by the Oregon and Washington Fish and Wildlife Commissions and the Columbia River Compact.
- The Joint State Sturgeon Fishery Management Agreement sets forth an annual harvestable number of 40,000 white sturgeon and allocates the harvestable number 80% sport (32,000 fish) and 20% commercial (8,000 fish).
- Commercial fisheries will be further managed based on a protocol adopted at the February 6, 2003 Compact hearing.

Protocol for Management of White Sturgeon in 2003-2005 Commercial Fisheries

- ✓ 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.

STOCK STATUS

Late Stock Coho

- Late stock returns typically begin to enter the lower Columbia River in late September and peak in October and the preseason run size forecast included 157,500 adults to the river mouth.

Weekly Coho Landings in Mainstem Commercial Fisheries (Zones 1-5), 1999-2003					
Return Year	Late Stock Run Size	Week 40 (Sep 28-Oct 4)	Week 41 (Oct 5-11)	Week 42 (Oct 12-18)	Weeks 40-42 (Sep 28-Oct 18)
1999	125,900	10,100	6,500	15,300	31,800
2000	227,100	23,200	6,800	49,000	79,000
2001	417,200	40,200	13,300	51,900	105,400
2002	232,600	24,100	15,500	11,300	50,900
2003	157,500	26,700	28,900	21,800	77,400

- CPUE data from Zones 1 and 2 has historically been used to update the late coho run size; however, the structure of the commercial fishery has changed in recent years which has reduced the accuracy of abundance estimates based on historical data.

<i>Weekly Coho Catch Rates (Catch per Delivery) in Mainstem Commercial Fisheries (Zones 1-2 only), 1999-2003</i>					
Return Year	Late Stock Run Size	Week 40 (Sep 28-Oct 4)	Week 41 (Oct 5-11)	Week 42 (Oct 12-18)	Weeks 40-42 (Sep 28-Oct 18)
1999	125,900	31.9	52.6	41.1	125.6
2000	227,100	65.5	55.4	109.3	230.2
2001	417,200	103.3	55.6	129.0	288.0
2002	232,600	140.8	109.0	47.0	296.8
2003	157,500	60.7	68.9	52.0	181.6

- Late stock coho generally do not start entering Washington hatcheries until mid to late October. Through October 13 a total of 3,200 late coho have returned to Cowlitz Hatchery and 800 have returned to the Lewis River. On average, the Cowlitz return is 13% complete and the Lewis return is less than 10% complete by October 13.
- Bonneville Dam counts of late coho through October 19 are 25,398. Based on average timing, the final late coho escapement over Bonneville Dam is projected to be 28,900. The preseason expectation was 11,500.
- Based on commercial landings to date and CPUE data during October the Joint Staff expects the late coho run size to be similar to the preseason forecast of 157,500.

FISHERY UPDATES

Late Fall Non-Indian Mainstem Commercial Fisheries

- During September 21 through October 9 weekly fishing seasons consisted of one 24-hour period (6 PM Sunday to 6 PM Monday) followed by one 48-hour period (6 PM Tuesday to 6 PM Thursday).
- At the October 9 hearing the Compact adopted fishing seasons in all Zones 1-5 for the final three weeks of October. Weekly fishing seasons consist of a 24-hour fishing period (6 PM Sunday to 6 PM Monday) followed by a 48-hour fishing period (6 AM Wednesday to 6 AM Friday).

<i>Non-Indian Commercial Fisheries Update</i>					
Species	August	September	Sept. 29-Oct. 2	Oct. 5-9	Oct. 12-17
Chinook	15,300	30,100	5,700	3,500	1,900
Coho	300	64,900	26,700	28,900	21,800
W. Sturgeon	2,500	800	300	200	700
G. Sturgeon	11	11	11	2	1

- Sturgeon per vessel landing limits were at three sturgeon per vessel during September 15 through October 9 and were increased to nine sturgeon per vessel effective October 12.
- Winter sturgeon landings during the week of October 12-17 totaled 659 as compared to the preseason expectation of 700-750.

2003 Lower Columbia River Commercial White Sturgeon Catch Summary		
<u>Fishery</u>	<u>Commercial Allocation = Guideline</u>	<u>Catch</u>
Mainstem Winter Gillnet	2,000	1,517
Select Area Gillnet	400	423
August Gillnet	2,000	2,546
Mainstem Late Fall Gillnet (thru 10/17)	3,600	1,888
	Cumulative Catch to Date =	6,374
	Quota Remaining =	1,626

FISHERY PROPOSAL

Non-Indian Commercial Salmon Fishery

<i>Recommendation</i>
The Joint Staff is not proposing any changes currently to the commercial fishing seasons.

- ✓ The currently adopted seasons are consistent with the Fall Management Agreement and results of the North of Falcon negotiation process.
- ✓ The late stock coho returns appear to be tracking similar to the preseason run size forecast.
- ✓ Commercial landings to date have exceeded preseason expectations for both early and late fall timeframes.
- ✓ Freshwater fishery impacts to Oregon state listed wild coho destined for Lower Columbia River tributaries are projected to total 8.9% as compared to the ESA-related impact limit of 11.5%.
- ✓ Based on preseason expectations chum impacts are 1.6% as compared to the ESA-related impact limit of 5%.

Future Compact Hearings

- The Joint Staff is not proposing any Compact hearings at this time; however, fisheries will be closely monitored and emergency hearings will occur as needed to modify ongoing non-Indian commercial fisheries.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
October 20, 2003