

**JOINT STAFF REPORT
WINTER FACT SHEET NO. 14
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
April 8, 2004**

Purpose: To review salmon stock status, the ongoing recreational fishery, and Select Area commercial fisheries and consider additional Select Area commercial fishing options.

2004 MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Non-Indian Upriver Impact Allocation

- Non-Indian fisheries will be managed to limit impacts to listed upriver spring chinook to $\leq 2\%$ in 2004. Non-Indian impacts are allocated 60% for sport fisheries (1.2%) and 40% for commercial fisheries (0.8%).
- Non-Indian commercial fisheries are being managed for an overall 0.8% upriver impact with 0.2% reserved for Select Areas and as a management buffer. The mainstem upriver impact through the March 29-30 fishing period is estimated to be 0.518%, which is 86% of the 0.6% impact reserved for this fishery.
- The Columbia River sport fishery allocation includes fisheries above McNary Dam (Snake River sport/Wanapum tribal) and the sport fishery from Bonneville to McNary Dam which are expected to impact 0.2% and 0.1% of the listed upriver spring chinook, respectively.
- Joint Staff recommends a management buffer of 0.1% for sport fisheries with the remaining 0.8% reserved for the mainstem sport fishery below Bonneville Dam.

STOCK STATUS

- The pre-season spring chinook run size forecasts include returns of 360,700 upriver stock (94% 4-year old) and 109,400 Willamette stock to the Columbia River mouth.
- Counts of spring chinook at Bonneville Dam through April 6 are 1,722 adults. On average about 7% of the run passes by April 7.
- Run sizes cannot be updated until late April for upriver stock and early May for Willamette stock. The average 50% passage day at Bonneville Dam is April 26.

FISHERY UPDATES

Non-Indian Sport Fisheries

2004 Spring Chinook Sport Fishing Plan

- ✓ Fishery checkpoints will occur one or two days per week during April 1-May 15.
- ✓ Fishery checkpoints will be used to monitor progress towards adopted upriver spring chinook impact guideline and modify ongoing fishery.
- ✓ Modifications to ongoing fishery will occur in the following order:
 - 1) Reduce fishery between the I-5 Bridge and Bonneville Dam to less than seven days per week.
 - 2) Eliminate fishery between the I-5 Bridge and Bonneville Dam completely.
 - 3) Reduce fishery below the I-5 Bridge to less than seven days per week.
 - 4) Eliminate fishery below the I-5 Bridge completely.
- ✓ Manage the fishery above Bonneville Dam to maintain opportunity fairness with fishery below the I-5 Bridge.

- The mainstem Columbia River is 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 1st thru May 15 below I-5 Bridge, and during March 16 thru May 15 above I-5 Bridge.

| <i>Catch and Effort During the 2004 Mainstem Spring Chinook Sport Fishery Below Bonneville Dam</i> | | | | | |
|---|--------|-------|-------|---------------|--------|
| Time | Angler | Total | Kept | Upriver Stock | |
| Period | Trips | Catch | Catch | % | Impact |
| February | 9,500 | 80 | 50 | 43 | 0.001% |
| March | 48,900 | 3,730 | 2,930 | 56 | 0.057% |
| April 1-4 | 18,500 | 3,230 | 2,400 | 72 | 0.065% |
| Total | 76,900 | 7,040 | 5,380 | 63 | 0.123% |

- Fishing was generally slow during February and March with catch rates of one fish per 12 boat anglers. Catch rates increased beginning about April 1 and checks over the past weekend show catch rates of one fish per five boat anglers.
- Impacts to upriver spring chinook in the mainstem sports fishery below Bonneville Dam totaled 0.123% through April 4, 2004. This represents 10.25% of the total sports fishery impact (1.2%), and 15% of the portion of the impact (0.8%) that is reserved for the mainstem sports fishery below Bonneville Dam.

Select Area Fisheries

- Winter fisheries in Youngs Bay and Blind Slough through March 21 have landed 1,341 spring chinook, with a combined upriver impact of 0.021%. Total impacts to date represent 2.6% of the total upriver spring chinook impact limit (0.80%) and 10.5% of the 0.2% impact guideline reserved for Select Areas and as a management buffer.
- A total of 9 white sturgeon have been harvested in these fisheries.

FISHERY RECOMENDATIONS

Below Bonneville Spring Chinook Sport Fishery

| <i>Recommendation</i> |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Joint Staff is recommending no modifications to the ongoing sport fishery in the lower Columbia River. |

Select Area Commercial Fisheries

- The fishing industry has requested consideration of additional fishing time in Select Areas prior to the scheduled 12-h fishing period scheduled for April 22 to maximize harvest of local stocks while ex-vessel prices are high.
- To determine stock composition in these areas, voluntary test fishing was conducted in Youngs Bay and Blind Slough on April 6-7. Based on visual stock identification, the upriver stock composition was 6.1% in upper Youngs Bay (above the old Youngs Bay Bridge) and 0.0% in Blind Slough. Additional test fishing data is provided in the following table.

| Select Area Test Fishing Summary, April 6-7, 2004 | | | | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|--------|---------------|--------------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|
| Site (area) | Boats | Gear | Drifts | Observer Data | | | | |
| | | | | CHS Marked | CHS Unmarked | CHS Total | Mark Rate | Percent Upriver |
| Youngs Bay (>old Bridge) | 4 | <5.5" | 17 | 35 | 0 | 35 | 100% | 6.1 |
| Blind Slough | 2 | <5.5" | 4 | 7 | 0 | 7 | 100% | 0.0 |

- Restricting the fishing area in Youngs Bay and open hours in both areas is recommended to minimize impacts to upriver spring chinook while providing some harvest opportunity on local stocks while ex-vessel values are high. Night fishing is required in Blind Slough due to high water clarity.

| Recommendation | |
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Joint Staff is recommending the following fishing period for Select Area fisheries: Youngs Bay (upstream of the old Youngs Bay bridge) and Blind Slough from 8 PM-Midnight Monday April 12 (4 hours) | |

- ✓ The proposed season provides for both areas to be opened concurrently on a nighttime high water immediately following the Easter weekend.
- ✓ The estimated landings for the proposed seasons are 600-1,000 spring chinook in Youngs Bay and 350 spring chinook in Blind Slough.
- ✓ Based on estimated harvest and stock composition from test fishing, expected impacts to upriver spring chinook for these early spring seasons would be 0.010-0.017% in Youngs Bay and 0.005% in Blind Slough (assuming 5% upriver stock composition).
- ✓ Combined year-to-date SAFE fishery impacts to upriver spring chinook with these proposed seasons would be 0.036-0.043% (~5.0% of the 0.8% non-Indian commercial allocation and 18.0-21.5% of the 0.2% impact guideline reserved for SAFE fisheries and as a management buffer).

FUTURE MEETINGS

- The Joint Staff recommends weekly updates on Wednesday afternoons at 1PM by telephone to review stock status and the on-going sport fishery.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
April 8, 2004