

**JOINT STAFF REPORT
WINTER FACT SHEET NO. 8
Columbia River Compact
March 15, 2004**

Purpose: To review ongoing commercial fisheries and consider non-Indian commercial fishing seasons for salmon and sturgeon in the mainstem Columbia River.

STOCK STATUS

Spring Chinook

- Spring chinook primarily enter the lower Columbia River during March and April with upriver stock abundance peaking during the late March to early April timeframe.
- The preseason 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. Impact guidelines are 0.80%
- The upriver spring chinook count through March 11 at Bonneville Dam was 49 spring chinook. Recent past counts are 2,618 in 2003 and 348 in 2002. Current counts suggest the run may be late compared to previous years. Run update efforts will begin in earnest in late March.
- Willamette Spring Chinook are just beginning to pass Willamette Falls with two hatchery chinook passing as of March 11th.
- Run sizes cannot be updated until late April for upriver stock and early May for Willamette stock.

Wild Winter Steelhead

- Wild winter steelhead pass through the lower Columbia River primarily during January through early April and peak during late March.
- The preseason forecast was for a return of 32,200 wild winter steelhead to the Columbia River mouth. Impact guideline is currently 2.00%.
- Wild winter steelhead passage over Willamette Falls has been good to date with daily counts ranging between 21-152 during the first six days of March with a total count of 5,818 as of March 11, 2004.
- Willamette wild winter steelhead typically represent 55% of the total wild winter steelhead return to the Columbia River with a range of 36-77% during 1993-2002.
- The wild steelhead Bonneville Dam count through March 11 was 217 steelhead, which potentially was a mix of summers and winter-run fish. 413 had passed through this time last year.
- Other lower Columbia wild winter steelhead have later average run-timing than the Willamette, hitting their average 50% tributary passage dates in April or May. 90 wild

winter steelhead have passed over Marmot Dam on the Sandy as of Feb 29, compared to 119 this time last year.

FISHERY UPDATES

Non-Indian Salmon Commercial Demonstration Fishery

- Four test fishing days occurred on February 22, February 29, March 7 and March 14, with all test fishers using 4-1/4" tangle nets.
- Two 16 hour fishing periods occurred on March 2 (5:00 AM - 9:00 PM) and March 4-5 (3:00 PM - 7:00 AM), and a two 24 hour fishing periods occurred March 9-10 (5 AM - 5 AM) and March 11-12 (10AM –10AM) with 9" minimum and 9-3/4" maximum mesh size restrictions in effect for all periods.
- Long-term mortality rates used to determine impact rates are the same as those recommended by the TAC: 40% for chinook and 30% for steelhead in large mesh (8" -9-3/4"), and 18.5% for chinook and steelhead in small mesh ($\leq 4\frac{1}{4}$ ").
- Impacts to listed species during the first four fishing periods are estimated to be 0.064 for upriver spring chinook and 0.200% for wild winter steelhead. Total impacts to date represent 8.00% of the upriver spring chinook impact limit and 10% of the wild winter steelhead impact limit.
- Over the four fishing periods, a total of 1,961 chinook were kept and an estimated 17% were of upriver stock.
- The observed mark rate for chinook was 78% with a total observation of 45 chinook kept and 3 steelhead released for the March 11-12th fishing period. The March 14th test fishery observations are shown in the table below.

<i>Table 1. 2004 Spring Chinook Fishery Monitoring Data Summary</i>								
		Observer Data						
Fishing period (Zones 1 - 4)	Gear	Drifts	Chinook		Chinook Mark Rate *	Steelhead	Steelhead Mark Rate	
			Chinook Marked	Un Marked				
Test Fishery Feb. 22	4 1/4"	21	3	2	60%	20	45%	
Test Fishery Feb. 29	4 1/4"	22	8	2	80%	14	43%	
16 hr. Fishery Mar. 2	9"	77	8	4	67%	4	25%	
16 hr. Fishery Mar. 4-5	9"	95	26	17	60%	6	33%	
Test Fishery Mar. 7	4 1/4"	19	5	4	56%	18	50%	
24 hr. Fishery Mar. 9-10	9"	81	42	10	76%	4	0%	
24 hr Fishery Mar 11-12	9"	101	35	10	78%	3	33%	
Test Fishery Mar. 14	4 1/4"	17	13	8	64%	12	33%	

*Percents of those fish for which marks could be determined.

- For the four fishing periods a total of 105 sturgeon have been landed which leaves 199 sturgeon on the guideline.

<i>Chinook and Steelhead During 2004 Demonstration Fishery</i>												
Fishing Period	Gear	Del	Chinook Kept			Chinook Released			Steelhead Released		White Sturgeon	
			Total	Upriver Stock	L River Stock	Total	Upriver Stock	L River Stocks	Total	Wild Winter		
Mar 2 (16 hr) + Mar 4-5 (16 hr)	9"	179	572	64	508	352	92	260	168	110	51	
Mar 9-10 (24 hr) + Mar 11-12 (24hr)	9"	291	1,389	263	1,126	415	164	251	145	105	54	
Total			1,961	327	1,629	767	256	511	313	215	105	

Select Area Fishery

- Through March 10, the estimated upriver impact for the Youngs Bay and Blind Slough winter seasons is estimated to be 0.002%. An additional 12-hour and 18-hour fishing period occurred March 13-14 in Blind Slough and Youngs Bay respectively. Landings were not available prior to this hearing.

Smelt Fishery

- Commercial mainstem landings total 15, 796 pounds, with the last landing reported on March 9th.
- Tributary landings are increasing daily, with a total of 14,725 pounds reported as of March 12th.
- Management is continuing to monitor the fishery.

FISHERY RECOMMENDATIONS

Non-Indian Salmon Commercial Demonstration Fishery

- The Joint Staff is recommending the following fishing period to allow the commercial fishery access to their Willamette River hatchery spring chinook allocation.

<i>Recommendation</i>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Joint Staff is proposing the following additional fishing period for the commercial demonstration fishery.
Season:	3 pm to midnight Monday March 15, 2004
Area:	Mouth to Kelley Point (Zones 1-4)
Sanctuaries:	Grays River, Gnat Creek, Elokomina –B, Abernathy Creek, Cowlitz River, Kalama-B, and Lewis-B.
Gear:	Net length not to exceed 150 fathoms. 9” minimum and 9-¾“ maximum mesh size restrictions.
Allowable Sales:	Adipose fin-clipped chinook salmon and sturgeon. A maximum of 3 white sturgeon may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel.
Participants:	Columbia River commercial fishers with appropriate licenses and legal gear that attended a state-sponsored workshop concerning live captive commercial fishing techniques and possess a certificate that allows participation in this fishery.
Miscellaneous Regulations:	<p>Soak times, defined as time elapsed from when first mesh enters the water to when last mesh leaves the water, must not exceed 45 minutes.</p> <p>Red corks are required at 25-fathom intervals and red corks must be in contrast to the corks used in the remainder of the net.</p> <p>Use of recovery boxes will be required on all lethargic or bleeding salmonids.</p> <p>Each participant will be required to have 2 operable recovery boxes or one box with two chambers in place to participate in this fishery. Operable recovery boxes will require a flow of 16-20 gallons per minute to the box or each chamber. Each box shall be operating during any time that the net is being retrieved or picked.</p> <p>Lighted buoys required on each end of nets being fished between sunset and sunrise.</p> <p>Quick reporting rule in effect for Washington buyers.</p>

NEXT COMPACT HEARING

- The Joint Staff is recommending a Compact hearing for Thursday March 18, the time to be determined.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

March 15, 2004