

**JOINT STAFF REPORT
WINTER FACT SHEET NO. 6
Columbia River Compact
March 8, 2004**

Purpose: To consider non-Indian commercial fishing seasons for salmon and sturgeon in the Columbia River

Spring Chinook:

- Three test fishing days occurred on February 22, February 29 and March 7 with all test fishers using 4-¼" tangle nets.
- Two 16 hour fishing periods occurred on March 2 (5:00 AM to 9:00 PM) and March 4-5 (3:00 PM to 7:00 AM), with 9" minimum and 9-¾" maximum mesh size restrictions in effect.
- Over the two fishing periods, a total of 557 chinook were kept and an estimated 11% were of upriver stock.
- The observed mark rate for chinook was 64% with a total observation of 34 chinook kept and 10 steelhead released for the two fishing periods.
- Additional fisheries monitoring information is summarized in Table 1.
- Anticipated catch from the next fishing period: 500 to 1000 chinook.

Impacts:

- Upriver Stock – 0.016% (Guideline 0.8%). Based on the Chinook mark rate observed during monitoring (64%) and Visual Stock Identification (VSI) of upriver fish in the landed catch for the two fishing periods.
- Wild Winter Steelhead – 0.100% (Guideline 2%). Based on kept Chinook/steelhead ratios and the steelhead mark rate observed during monitoring of the two fishing periods.
- The commercial fishery has caught 2% of the upriver spring chinook allowable impact and 5% of the wild winter steelhead allowable impact.

SAFE:

Youngs Bay – A total of 188 chinook and 5 sturgeon have been landed through March 7 with an upriver impact of 0.001%.

- Blind Slough – A total of 27 chinook and no sturgeon have been landed through March 7 with 0.001% upriver impact.

Sport Report:

Reporting date March 8, 2004:

- Boat anglers in the Portland to Longview area are averaging 0.03 chinook and 0.03 steelhead caught per boat. Over the March 6-7 weekend, 30 boats checked kept 1 clipped chinook and 1 clipped steelhead.
- Over the March 6-7 weekend, 7 estuary boats checked kept 1 clipped chinook.
- Bank anglers in the same area are averaging 0.06 chinook and 0.02 steelhead caught per rod. Over the March 6-7 weekend, 121 bank rods checked kept 7 clipped chinook and 2 clipped steelhead.

Smelt Update:

Some abundance of smelt reported near Clatskanie on Friday March 5 and in the Cowlitz over the weekend of March 6-7. Staff will continue to monitor the run.

Table 1. 2004 Spring Chinook Fishery Monitoring Data Summary

| Fishing period (Zones 1 - 4) | Gear | Observer Data | | | | | Landings Summary | |
|------------------------------------|--------|---------------|--------------|--------------|------|-----------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| | | Drifts | Chin Kept | Chin Rel. | Sthd | Chin Mark Rate* | Landings | Avg. Wt. |
| Test Fish Feb. 22 | 4 1/4" | 21 | 3 | 2 | 20 | 60% | | |
| Test Fish Feb. 29 | 4 1/4" | 22 | 8 | 2 | 14 | 80% | | |
| 16hr. Fish Mar. 2 | 9" | 77 | 8 | 4 | 4 | 67% | 208 | 18.9 |
| 16hr. Fish Mar. 4 | 9" | 95 | 26 | 17 | 6 | 60% | 349 | 18.9 |
| Test Fish Mar. 7 | 4 1/4" | 19 | 5 | 4 | 18 | 56% | | |

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

Recommendations:

2004 COMMERCIAL DEMONSTRATION SALMON FISHERY

| | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| DATES: | Option 1: 5 AM – 9 PM Tuesday March 9 (16 hrs) Option 2: 1 PM Tuesday March 9 – 5 AM Wednesday March 10 (16 hrs) |
| AREA: | Mouth to Kelley Point (Zones 1-4) |
| SANCTUARIES: | Grays River, Gnat Creek, Elokomin –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 RULES: | <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> |

Comments on Fishing Options

- **Monitoring and enforcement are easier during daylight hours. In the lower river (below Hammond), daylight hours are preferred by some because of the large numbers of crab pots in the area. Sport/commercial interactions increase during daylight hours.**

- **Nighttime periods may provide better fishing efficiency. The Columbia River is currently very clear thus heavier, multi-strand nets are more easily avoided by fish during the daylight hours. Nighttime hours will likely result in fewer observations during fishery monitoring, due to safety and navigation constraints.**

RECOMMENDED NEXT COMPACT:

If Option 1:

Wednesday, March 10 at 1:00 PM

If Option 2:

Wednesday, March 10 at 3:00 or 4:00 PM