

**JOINT STAFF REPORT
WINTER FACT SHEET NO. 2
Columbia River Compact/ Joint State Hearing
January 26, 2006**

Fisheries Under Consideration:

- Non-Indian commercial and sport fisheries below Bonneville Dam
- Select Area Commercial fisheries
- Non-Indian sport fisheries from Bonneville Dam upstream to McNary Dam
- Treaty Indian Fisheries

Columbia River Salmon and Steelhead - 2006 Forecasts and 2005 Returns

Run	2006 Forecast	2006 Comments	2005	
			Preseason Forecast	Actual Return
<u>Spring Chinook</u>				
Willamette	46,500	Less than 2005 return - similar to late 1990's	116,900	61,000
Sandy	8,200	Less than 2005 return - greater than 5-yr average	7,400	9,400
Cowlitz	8,700	Similar to 2005 and recent 5-yr average returns	12,700	9,200
Kalama	2,100	Less than 2005 and recent 5-yr average returns	4,500	3,100
Lewis	4,400	Similar to 2005 and recent 5-yr average returns	7,600	3,400
Select Areas	3,100	One-third of 2000-2004 average return	10,200	2,400
<u>Upriver Spring (Includes Snake River Summer Chinook)</u>				
Total Run	88,400	Good, greater than average runs of 1980's and 1990's	254,100	106,900
Snake River wild	14,600	Similar to 2005 return, less than recent 5-yr average	23,400	13,100
Upper Columbia Wild	1,600	Similar to 2005 return, less than recent 5-yr average	6,200	2,500
<u>Summer Chinook</u>				
Upper Columbia	49,000	Good, continued improvement over 1990's returns	62,400	60,000
<u>Sockeye</u>				
Upriver	31,100	Down from recent years, improved over late 1990's	70,700	72,500
Snake River	21	Poor, mostly returns from captive brood	66	20
<u>Steelhead</u>				
Wild Winter	16,000	Similar to 2005 return	27,000	14,700
Skamania Index	NA		15,300	11,900
Group A Index	NA		245,500	251,600
Group B Index	NA		47,800	49,000
Total Upriver Index	NA	Forecast forthcoming	308,600	312,500

STOCK STATUS

Upriver Spring Chinook

- The upriver spring Chinook run is defined as all spring Chinook destined for areas above Bonneville Dam and Snake River summer Chinook. The spring management timeframe is January 1 through June 15. The listed portion of this run will be used to determine impacts to spring and summer Chinook stocks listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).

Upper Columbia Summer Chinook

- Upper Columbia summer Chinook pass Bonneville Dam during June 16 through July 31. These Chinook are not listed under the ESA and the population is considered healthy.

Winter Steelhead

- The winter steelhead range includes all tributaries of the Columbia River upstream to Fifteenmile Creek in Oregon and the Klickitat River in Washington. All wild winter steelhead are ESA-listed except those within the Southwest Washington ESU. The Southwest Washington ESU includes all naturally-spawned populations of winter-run steelhead in river basins of, and tributaries to, Grays Harbor, Willapa Bay, and the Columbia River below the Cowlitz River in Washington and the Willamette River in Oregon.

2006 MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Salmon

Interim Management Agreement

- The "2005-2007 Interim Management Agreement for Upriver Chinook, Sockeye, Steelhead, Coho and White Sturgeon" provides species-specific harvest frameworks and harvest rates for non-Indian and treaty Indian fisheries management.
- The Interim Management Agreement includes an abundance-based sliding scale harvest matrix for upriver spring and Snake River summer Chinook with impacts during 2006 limited to 9% for both non-treaty fisheries (2%) and treaty Indian fisheries (7%) combined based on preseason forecasts.

Endangered Species Act (ESA)

- The TAC submitted a Biological Assessment to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) describing proposed fisheries consistent with the "2005-2007 Interim Management Agreement for Upriver Chinook, Sockeye, Steelhead, Coho and White Sturgeon". A Biological Opinion has been received from NMFS.
- The states submitted a Biological Assessment to NMFS regarding impacts to wild winter steelhead during 2006-2007 fisheries.

Willamette Spring Chinook Management

- The Fisheries Management Evaluation Plan (FMEP) limits freshwater fishery impacts on wild Willamette River spring Chinook to <15% and requires the release of wild Willamette spring Chinook in all freshwater fisheries.

- The Willamette River Basin Fish Management Plan (WFMP) includes a sliding scale for escapement goals based on abundance and determines allocation of surplus hatchery spring Chinook to sport and commercial fisheries.
- Based on the WFMP and an expected return of 41,900 hatchery spring Chinook, the freshwater harvest of surplus hatchery Willamette River spring Chinook (16,600 fish) is allocated 85% (14,100 fish) for sport fisheries and 15% (2,500 fish) for commercial fisheries.

Non-Indian Spring Chinook Allocation

- Guiding principles, fishery management objectives and sport/commercial impact allocations were adopted by the Washington and Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commissions (WFWC and OFWC) in January 2006 to provide the Joint Staff with preseason guidance when shaping and managing fisheries during 2006-2008. The following table reflects the policy guidance from both commissions:

<i>Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Allocation For Non-Indian Fisheries, 2006-2008</i>	
Guiding Principles	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meet conservation requirements for wild spring Chinook including populations listed under the federal Endangered Species Act. • Manage non-Indian harvest of spring Chinook within the provisions of the <i>U.S. v Oregon</i> Management Agreement for upriver spring/summer Chinook. • Manage harvest to meet hatchery escapement goals. • Focus sport and commercial fisheries allocation on harvest of hatchery fish by implementing live capture and release of unmarked spring Chinook. 	
Fisheries Management Objectives	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific structure of sport and commercial fisheries will be set by the Columbia River Compact on an annual basis to meet adopted allocation policies and fisheries objectives after annual run size forecasts are available. • Provide for inseason management flexibility to utilize the non-Indian upriver spring Chinook impact allocation to meet the objectives of both fisheries, i.e., upriver impact sharing adjustments in response to inseason information pertaining to catch and run size. • Adjustments to the sport fishery may occur inseason if it is estimated the fishery will not continue through April. Inseason adjustments may include such options as days/week and area closures. • Recognize economic benefits of sport and commercial fisheries in the Columbia River. • Provide for sport fisheries throughout the Columbia River downstream of McNary Dam, sport/tribal fisheries in the Snake River and Upper Columbia River, commercial fisheries in the lower Columbia River, and commercial and sport fisheries in Select Areas. 	

- The OFWC policy guidance suggested that if possible, commercial fishing opportunity should be focused on the February-March timeframe in order to harvest the earlier arriving Willamette hatchery Chinook and avoid conflicts with recreational anglers in April.
- Allocation of upriver spring Chinook impacts to sport and commercial fisheries will be announced at the Compact hearing.

Sturgeon

- A Joint State Agreement has been in effect and renewed every three years since 1997.
- A new agreement is being developed by the states of Oregon and Washington, with guidance from both state commissions and will be in effect during 2006-2008.
- The harvestable number of 40,000 white sturgeon is allocated 80% (32,000 fish) sport and 20% (8,000 fish) commercial with specific size limits in place for both user groups.

- Season allocations within the sturgeon commercial fishery protocol were developed for 2006 at the December 2005 Columbia River Commercial Advisory Group meeting.

Protocol For Management of White Sturgeon Retention in Commercial Fisheries During 2006

- ✓ Fisheries should be managed for white sturgeon catch expectations of 1,800 for the winter-spring timeframe (January-June 15) with 1,600 for winter sturgeon and 200 for winter salmon, 500 for the summer timeframe (June 16-July 31) with an additional 300 maximum rollover from any remaining winter-spring allocation, 2,000 for the early fall timeframe (August) with an additional rollover of any remaining allocation from winter-summer, and 3,300 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 timeframe 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.
- ✓ Joint Staff will conduct an annual post-season evaluation of white sturgeon with industry.

- The Sturgeon Management Task Force (SMTF) met on January 23, 2006 to discuss Zone 6 sturgeon fishery management guidelines for 2006.
- Meeting results will be provided at the Compact hearing.

Smelt

- A Joint State Eulachon Management Plan has been in effect since 2001.
- The Joint State Eulachon Management Plan provides for three levels of fishing based on 1) parental run strength, 2) juvenile production, and 3) estimates of ocean productivity.
- For 2006, a Level 1 fishery is currently in place for commercial and sport fisheries effective January 1 in the mainstem Columbia River and Washington tributaries.
- The December 15, 2005 Compact called for a smelt fishery checkpoint at the January 26 Compact hearing.

NON-INDIAN COMMERCIAL FISHERIES

2006 Commercial Smelt Fisheries

- The commercial mainstem Columbia River fishery at Level 1 consists of two 9-hour fishing periods per week (7 AM-4 PM Mondays and Thursdays) and is scheduled to continue through March 31.
- Commercial catch in the mainstem Columbia River has improved as the season has progressed. The first smelt landings occurred on December 27, 2005 with total December landings of 620 pounds. Landings during January 1-23 total 6,041 pounds for a season total of 6,661 pounds landed to date.
- The Cowlitz River is the only Washington tributary open to commercial smelt fishing, consistent with a Level 1 fishery. The season consists of two 6-hour fishing periods per week (6 PM-Midnight Sundays and Wednesdays) and is scheduled to occur January 1-March 31. Other Washington tributaries remain closed to commercial smelt fishing. No Washington tributary landings have been reported to date.

- Water temperatures at Bonneville Dam during January 10-23 are consistent with the recent 5-year average temperature of 41° F, which is conducive to smelt migration.
- Flow during the same period has averaged 208 kcfs, which is greater than the 5-year average of 150 kcfs. Persistent rainfall has contributed to high flows in the tributaries that may delay migration into the tributaries.
- Continued presence of smelt in the mainstem is encouraging but harvest remains low. With no significant presence of smelt in the tributaries, the states are not recommending any changes to the currently adopted seasons at this time but will continue to monitor the fishery.

2006 Winter Commercial Sturgeon Fishery

- The Compact adopted the winter commercial sturgeon season with a 1,600 white sturgeon catch guideline in effect.
- The adopted fishery consists of seven 24-hour fishing periods from 6 PM Tuesday to 6 PM Wednesday during January 10-February 22.
- Landings through the first two fishing periods (Jan. 10-11 and Jan. 17-18) total 82 white sturgeon and zero spring Chinook.

<i>White Sturgeon Landings During Winter Commercial Seasons, 1999-2005</i>							
Week	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Jan. 5-11	--	--	994	773	389	--	--
Jan. 12-18	610	534	555	502	365	407	80
Jan. 19-25	248	205	360	338	408	428	40
Jan. 26-Feb. 1	189	139	341	409	328	375	106
Feb. 2-8	225	75	384	134	--	234	144
Feb. 9-15	211	247	--	469	--	252	23
Feb 16-22	--	--	--	--	--	--	80
Total	1,483	1,200	2,634	2,625	1,490	1,696	473

- Landings to date are less than expected due to low effort and unfavorable river conditions. The fishery is not likely to exceed the catch guideline.

<i>Recommendation</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Joint Staff recommends adoption of the following additional winter commercial sturgeon fishing periods in the mainstem Columbia River: 	
Season:	6 PM Thursday February 2 to 6 AM Friday February 3 (12 hours) 6 PM Thursday February 9 to 6 AM Friday February 10 (12 hours) 6 PM Thursday February 16 to 6 AM Friday February 17 (12 hours)
Area:	Zones 1 - 5.
Gear:	9" minimum and 9 ¾" maximum mesh size restrictions.
Allowable Sales:	Sturgeon and adipose fin-clipped salmon.
Sanctuaries:	Sandy River sanctuary.
Miscellaneous:	Quick Reporting Rule in effect for Washington buyers.

- The proposed fishing periods are in addition to those set at the December 15, 2005 Compact.
- The proposed fishing periods will allow commercial fishers additional opportunity to harvest the sturgeon allocated for the 2006 winter season.

2006 Winter Salmon Commercial Fishery

- For 2004 and 2005, a plan was developed in cooperation with the Columbia River Commercial Fishing Advisory Group to maximize the catch of Willamette River hatchery spring Chinook and minimize handle of ESA-listed upriver spring/summer Chinook and wild winter steelhead.
- A similar plan is being proposed by the Joint Staff for the 2006 winter season, although it has not yet been reviewed or accepted by the advisory group who will meet January 27.

<i>2006 Winter Season Commercial Fishing Plan</i>	
✓	Test fishing occurs on Sunday.
✓	Compact to occur Monday afternoon.
✓	Full fleet fishery may occur Tuesday depending on results from test fishing on Sunday.
✓	Use Tuesday full fleet fishery as test fishery or conduct test fishing on Tuesday.
✓	Compact to occur Wednesday afternoon.
✓	Full fleet fishery may occur Thursday depending on results from previous full fleet fishery or test fishing on Tuesday.

- ✓ The fishing plan will:
 - Provide data necessary for making orderly fishery management decisions.
 - Provide for timely adoption of fishing seasons based on data collected from the full fleet fishery or test fishing.
- ✓ Test fishing may be initiated in late February with the adoption of full fleet fishing periods depending on the results of test fishing.
- The 2006 mark rate is expected to be near 75% for upriver spring Chinook and 85% for Willamette River spring Chinook.
- The TAC has provided the following recommendations for commercial fishery mortality rates:
 1. Large mesh gear (8” or 9” minimum mesh size): 40% for spring Chinook and 30% for steelhead.
 2. Small mesh gear (4¼” maximum mesh size): 18.5% for spring Chinook and steelhead.

<i>Recommendation</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Joint Staff is recommending that the following regulations be in effect during the 2006 winter/spring commercial salmon fishing season: 	
Season:	Individual fishing periods will not exceed 24 hours in length during large mesh fisheries and will not exceed 16 hours during small mesh fisheries.
Area:	Mouth to Kelley Point (Zones 1 - 4) likely for majority of the fishery.
Sanctuaries:	Grays River, Elokom-B, Abernathy Creek, Cowlitz River, Kalama-B, and Lewis-B sanctuaries.
Gear:	Net length not to exceed 150 fathoms except for nets fitted with a steelhead excluder (175 fathoms). 8" minimum and 9¾" maximum mesh sizes during large mesh fishery. 4¼" maximum mesh size during tangle net fishery. Use of steelhead excluder encouraged by both Washington and Oregon management staff.
Allowable Sales:	Adipose fin-clipped Chinook salmon, sturgeon and shad.
Participants:	Columbia River commercial fishers with appropriate licenses and legal gear that attended a state-sponsored workshop concerning live capture commercial fishing techniques and possess a certificate that allows participation in this fishery.

Miscellaneous Regulations:

As a condition of fishing, owners or operators of commercial fishing vessels must cooperate with Department observers or observers collecting data for the Department, when notified by the observer of their intent to board the commercial vessel for observation and sampling during an open fishery.

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.

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.

Use of recovery boxes is required on all lethargic or bleeding salmon or steelhead.

Each vessel participating in this fishery is required to have 2 operable recovery boxes or one box with two chambers. Operable recovery boxes require a flow of 16-20 gallons per minute to each chamber of the box(es). Each box must be operating during any time that the net is being retrieved or picked.

Lighted buoys are required on each end of nets being fished between sunset and sunrise.

Quick Reporting Rule in effect for Washington buyers.

- ✓ The proposed fishery:
 - Will be managed to remain within ESA-related impact limits and WFMP catch allocations for listed upriver spring Chinook, wild winter steelhead, and Willamette hatchery spring Chinook.
 - Is consistent with guiding principles adopted by the Oregon and Washington Fish and Wildlife commissions.
 - Is expected to effectively target Willamette hatchery spring Chinook while minimizing impacts to listed spring/summer Chinook and steelhead.
- ✓ Short duration fishing periods will also limit handle of steelhead and wild Chinook.
- ✓ Large mesh size restriction will target Chinook while minimizing steelhead handle.
- ✓ Large B sanctuaries for Washington tributaries will increase protection for wild winter steelhead in the associated streams.
- ✓ Use of recovery boxes will improve the survival rate of all listed species.
- ✓ The use of nets fitted with a steelhead excluder is encouraged to further reduce steelhead handle.
- ✓ Nighttime seasons may be adopted to minimize commercial/sport interactions.
- ✓ Onboard monitoring will occur inseason and throughout the test fishery to determine species-specific encounter and mark rates for use in estimating cumulative impact rates.
- ✓ Oregon permanent regulations (OAR 635-006-0140) require that as a license condition, owners or operators of commercial fishing vessels must cooperate with Department or Federal fishery observers, or observers collecting data for the Department.

2006 Non-Indian Area 2S Commercial Shad Season

- The proposed 2006 shad season is similar to seasons adopted since 1996.

<i>Recommendation</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff is recommending the following shad commercial fishing periods in the mainstem Columbia River: 	
Season:	3 PM - 10 PM daily May 15-19 (5 days) May 22-26 (5 days) May 30- Jun 2 (4 days) June 5-9 (5 days) June 12-16 (5 days) June 19-23 (5 days)
Area:	True north/south line through Light #50 near the mouth of the Sandy River upstream to the commercial fishing boundary near Beacon Rock.
Gear:	Single-wall, unslackened, floater gill net; 5 ³ / ₈ "- 6 ¹ / ₄ " mesh size restrictions; 10-lb breaking strength; and the net may not exceed 150 fathoms in length or 40 meshes in depth.
Allowable Sales:	Only shad may be kept and sold. All salmon, walleye, and sturgeon must be immediately returned to the water.

- ✓ Area restrictions have been in effect since 1976 and gear restrictions have been in effect since 1996.
- ✓ The Joint Staff will estimate salmonid handle and mortalities in this fishery based on past years data.

2006 Non-Indian Washougal Reef Commercial Shad Season

- The proposed 2006 shad season is similar to seasons adopted prior to 2001 and in 2005.

<i>Recommendation</i>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff is recommending the following shad commercial fishing periods in the mainstem Columbia River: 	
Season:	8 PM – 12 AM (midnight) daily May 14-18 (5 days) May 21-25 (5 days) May 28- Jun 1 (5 days) June 4-8 (5 days) June 11-15 (5 days) June 18-22 (5 days)
Area:	Waters of Zones 4-5 inside a line commencing at the white six-second equal-interval light approximately ¾ miles east of the Washougal Woolen Mill pipeline and projected westerly to the Washougal blinker light, thence to the four-second blinker light on the east end of Lady Island, thence easterly and along the shoreline of Lady Island to the State Highway 14 Bridge, thence easterly across the State Highway 14 Bridge to the mainland.
Gear:	Single-wall, unslackened, floater gill net; 5 ³ / ₈ "-6 ¹ / ₄ " mesh size restrictions; and a 30-lb maximum breaking strength.
Allowable Sales:	Only shad may be kept and sold. All salmon, walleye, and sturgeon must be immediately returned to the water unharmed.

- ✓ This fishery was not adopted between 2000-2004 due to lack of participation. The Compact adopted a season in 2005 at the request of industry.
- ✓ The Joint Staff will estimate salmonid handle and mortalities in this fishery based on past years' data.

NON-INDIAN SPORT FISHERIES

2006 Smelt Recreational Fishery

- Sport smelt fisheries on the mainstem Columbia River are open seven days a week, 24 hours a day through March 31. The daily limit is 25 pounds per person, concurrent with Oregon rules. No catch has been observed or reported for the mainstem.
- Consistent with a Level 1 fishery, the Cowlitz River is the only Washington tributary open for sport smelt fishing. The season consists of one 16-hour fishing period per week (6 AM-10 PM Saturday) during January 1-March 31 with a daily bag limit of 10 pounds per person. Oregon tributaries are open year round for sport dipping under permanent rules.
- No significant effort and catch has been observed or reported in mainstem or tributary sport fisheries during January.
- Based on the lack of smelt in the tributaries, management is not proposing any changes to either smelt fisheries at this time and will continue to monitor the fishery weekly.

2006 Mainstem Spring Chinook Sport Fishery

- The mainstem Columbia River from the mouth at Buoy 10 upstream to the I-5 Bridge is open to salmon angling during January 1 through March 31 under permanent regulations.
- The ODFW and WDFW met with the Columbia River Recreational Advisory Group on January 17, 2006 to discuss season recommendations and inseason management of the Columbia River spring Chinook fishery.
- Based on preseason forecasts and fishery modeling, along with discussion with the Columbia River Recreational Advisory Group, the states have developed a fishing plan for the 2006 spring Chinook sport fishery intended to extend the fishery for as long as possible throughout as much of the river as possible.

<i>2006 Spring Chinook Sport Fishing Plan</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ Fishery checkpoints will occur one or two days per week during April.✓ Fishery checkpoints will be used to monitor progress towards the adopted upriver spring Chinook impact guideline and modify the ongoing fishery as needed.✓ Increase opportunity in fisheries below Bonneville Dam if possible.✓ Manage the fishery in the lower Columbia River to maintain opportunity fairness with fishery above Bonneville Dam.

Recommendation

- The Joint Staff is recommending the current mainstem Columbia River sport fishery be extended beyond March 31st, to allow additional sport fishing opportunity. Area-specific recommendations follow:

Buoy 10 to I-5 Bridge

Area: Buoy 10 upstream to the I-5 Bridge.

Dates: January 1 – April 19, 2006

Catch Limits: Oregon: Two adult salmon or steelhead per day. Only adipose fin-clipped fish may be kept.
Washington: Two adult salmon and two steelhead per day. Only adipose fin-clipped fish may be kept.

Bonneville Dam to McNary Dam

Area: Tower Island power lines (approximately 6 miles below The Dalles Dam) upstream to McNary Dam plus the Oregon bank between Bonneville Dam and the Tower Island power lines.

Dates: March 16 - April 19, 2006

Catch Limits: Oregon: Two adult salmon or steelhead per day. Only adipose fin-clipped fish may be kept.
Washington: Two adult salmon and two steelhead per day. Only adipose fin-clipped fish may be kept.

Miscellaneous Regulations: For the mainstem Columbia River salmon and steelhead fishery upstream of the Rocky Point/Tongue Point line effective during February 15 through May 15, 2006, it is unlawful when fishing from vessels which are less than 30 feet in length, substantiated by Coast Guard documentation or Marine Board registration, to totally remove from the water any salmon or steelhead required to be released.

- ✓ The proposed fishery:
 - Assumes a 55-60% allocation of the 2% non-treaty fishery impact limit on upriver spring and Snake River summer Chinook and includes a 25% management buffer.
 - Is consistent with policy guidance provided by the Oregon and Washington Fish and Wildlife commissions.
 - Provides sport fishing opportunity to access surplus hatchery spring Chinook and limits impacts to ESA-listed species.
 - Provides a stable fishery for planning purposes.
 - Provides for the greatest number of angler days and trips.
- ✓ Additional fishery options using the proposed fishery as a baseline have the following effect:
 - One fish daily limit below I-5 Bridge or Rooster Rock results in an impact savings of 7%.
 - March open above I-5 Bridge reduces April opportunity below I-5 Bridge by three angler days and reduces overall angler effort by 7,900 trips.
 - March plus two early April days open above I-5 Bridge with a one fish daily limit reduces April opportunity below I-5 Bridge by five angler days and reduces overall angler effort by 14,400 trips.
 - Splitting anglers days evenly above and below I-5 Bridge reduces April opportunity below I-5 Bridge by nine days and reduces overall angler effort by 26,900 trips.
 - March and April open below Rooster Rock reduces April opportunity by six angler days and reduces overall angler effort by 17,300 trips.

- March and April open below Rooster Rock with March also open above Rooster Rock reduces April opportunity by eight angler days and reduces overall angler effort by 26,700 trips.
- Maintaining the upper boundary at the I-5 Bridge provides for the longest season and potential to update the run size (mid-late April) which will allow for flexibility for additional fishing opportunity.
- First fishery checkpoint is scheduled for Tuesday April 4.

2006 Mainstem Steelhead and Shad Sport Fishery

- The mainstem Columbia River is currently closed to steelhead angling below I-5 Bridge during April 1-May 15 and between I-5 Bridge and McNary Dam during April 1-June 15 under permanent regulations.
- The mainstem Columbia River upstream to Bonneville Dam is currently closed to shad angling during April 1-May 15 under permanent regulations.

<i>Recommendation</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Joint Staff is recommending that the mainstem Columbia River be open for adipose fin-clipped steelhead and shad during open seasons for adipose fin-clipped spring Chinook.

2006 Tributary Spring Chinook Sport Fisheries

- No changes are recommended for permanent regulations pertaining to spring chinook sport fisheries in the Willamette, Clackamas, and Sandy rivers.
- Washington tributary fisheries in the Cowlitz, Kalama and Lewis rivers are expected to support full season fisheries and bag limits based on the preseason forecast.
- Fishing seasons in the tributaries of Bonneville Pool will be announced at a later date.

2006 Mainstem Sturgeon Sport Fishery

- Fishing during January was slow with moderate effort and low catch rates.
- The projected white sturgeon catch for January 2006 is 100 fish, which is similar to the low catch observed in 2005.

TREATY INDIAN FISHERIES

2006 Treaty Indian Sturgeon Setline Season

- Under permanent Compact rules the commercial sturgeon setline fishery is open January 1-31 of each year.
- No landings have been reported as of January 23.

2006 Treaty Indian Winter Gillnet Season

- The treaty Indian tribes may recommend a mainstem winter commercial season at this hearing.

2006 Treaty Indian Spring and Summer Ceremonial and Subsistence (C&S) Fisheries

- The tribes may recommend spring and summer C&S season options at this hearing.

2006 Treaty Indian Experimental Zone 6 Target Shad Season

- In 2006, the tribes may implement a shad dipnet fishery during June at The Dalles Dam east ladder exit.

SELECT AREA FISHERIES

- Select Area (SAFE) fisheries targeting spring Chinook have occurred in Youngs Bay since 1992, in Blind Slough and Tongue Point since 1998, and in Deep River since 2003.
- The 2,535 Chinook landed in 2005 Select Area winter-summer fisheries was the lowest harvest since 1999 and only 28% of the 2000-2004 average (9,157 Chinook).
- Based on visual stock identification (VSI) and coded-wire-tag (CWT) recoveries, catch in winter-summer SAFE fisheries has been comprised of 84% local, 13% lower river, and 3% upriver stocks during 1998-2005.
- Since 1998, impacts to listed Snake River wild spring Chinook have ranged between 0.01% and 0.20% and have averaged 0.094%. The 2005 impact rate to upriver spring Chinook was very low with 0.009% accrued in winter fisheries and 0.004% for the spring fishery (0.013% combined).
- Sport fisheries in Select Areas have increased in recent years but harvest in 2005 was reduced from previous years similar to commercial landings. Based on limited creel surveys in 2005, a minimum of 160 spring Chinook were caught in Select Areas and associated tributaries.
- No winter or spring SAFE fisheries have occurred in the Tongue Point site since 2003 because production-level releases of spring Chinook were discontinued in 2000 due to straying of returning adults. Limited test fishing was conducted in 2005 to recover returns from experimental releases at the new MERTS site. A limited fishery may be considered in May 2006 to recover additional adults if sufficient commercial impacts remain available.
- Recommendations for 2006 winter-summer SAFE fisheries were developed based on input received during a public meeting held January 19 with commercial fishers in Astoria.

Blind Slough/Knappa Slough Commercial Fishery

- Concurrent jurisdiction waters extend downstream from the Railroad Bridge in Blind Slough and encompass all of Knappa Slough and require Compact action.
- Oregon State waters extend upstream from the Railroad Bridge and require Oregon State action.
- An Oregon license is required in Oregon State waters and either an Oregon or Washington license is required in concurrent jurisdiction waters.

Recommendation

The Joint Staff is recommending the following seasons for the Blind Slough/Knappa Slough Select Area:

Winter Season:	Wednesday and Sunday nights from February 22 through March 13 (6 nights). Open hours are from 7 PM to 7 AM (12 hours).
Spring Season:	Monday and Thursday nights during April 20 through June 16 (17 nights). Open hours are 7 PM to 7 AM (12 hours).
Area:	Blind Slough area only open during winter season and Blind Slough and Knappa Slough areas open during spring season. During May 1 through June 16, the lower boundary of the Knappa Slough fishing area is extended downstream to boundary lines defined by markers on the west end of Minaker Island to markers on Karlson Island and the Oregon shore (fall boundary).
Gear:	A 7-inch minimum mesh size restriction during the winter season and an 8-inch maximum mesh size restriction during the spring season. Nets restricted to 100 fathoms in length with no weight restriction on leadline. Use of additional weights or anchors attached directly to the leadline is allowed.
Allowable Sales:	Salmon, sturgeon, and shad. A maximum of 3 white sturgeon may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel during each open period.
Miscellaneous Regulations:	Special transportation permits are not required to take fish outside the fishing area. Permanent transportation regulations will be in effect.

- ✓ Wednesday and Sunday night fishing periods during the winter season should provide adequate harvest opportunity while avoiding overlap of mainstem and Select Areas fishing periods.
- ✓ The 8-inch maximum mesh size restriction during the spring season is recommended to target salmon and minimize sturgeon harvest.
- ✓ Night fishing periods and weekend closures during the spring season will minimize interactions with recreational anglers.
- ✓ Split fishing periods allow for fishery modifications as needed to maximize catch of SAFE stock spring Chinook and minimize handle of listed species.
- ✓ Fishing seasons are concurrent with Youngs Bay and Deep River (spring) seasons at the participants request to minimize congestion in fishing areas.
- ✓ Extending the downstream boundary of Knappa Slough to the west end of Minaker and Calander sloughs (fall boundary) beginning in May will provide additional fishing area as requested by commercial fishers with little risk of increasing impacts to upriver spring Chinook.

Deep River Commercial Fishery

- Concurrent jurisdiction waters extend downstream from the Highway 4 Bridge and require Compact action.
- Either a Washington or Oregon license is required in concurrent jurisdiction waters.

Recommendation	
The Joint Staff is recommending the following season for the Deep River Select Area:	
Winter Season:	Monday nights from February 20 through March 14 (4 nights) Open hours are from 6 PM to 8 AM (14 hours)
Spring Season:	Monday and Thursday nights during April 20 through June 16 (17 nights). Open hours are 7 PM to 7 AM (12 hours).
Area:	Deep River fishing area from the markers at USCG navigation marker #16 upstream to the Highway 4 Bridge.
Gear:	7-inch minimum mesh size restriction during the winter season and an 8-inch maximum mesh size restriction during the spring season. Nets restricted to 100 fathoms in length with no weight restriction on leadline. No nets can be tied off to stationary structures. Nets may not fully cross navigation channel. Use of additional weights or anchors attached directly to the leadline is allowed.
Allowable Sales:	Salmon, sturgeon, and shad. A maximum of 3 white sturgeon may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel during each open period.
Miscellaneous Regulations:	Transportation or possession of fish outside the fishing area (except to the sampling station) is unlawful until WDFW staff has biologically sampled individual catches. After sampling, fishers will be issued a transportation permit by agency staff. A sampling station will be established upstream of the Highway 4 Bridge at the upper pen site at Kato’s dock.

- ✓ The new winter season is proposed to hopefully increase participation at this site and reduce escapement, and was requested by industry.
- ✓ Previous test fishing has shown that steelhead handle at this site is minimal.
- ✓ An 8-inch maximum mesh size restriction during the spring season is recommended to target salmon and minimize sturgeon catch.
- ✓ Night fishing periods and weekend closures during the spring season will minimize interactions with recreational anglers.
- ✓ Split fishing periods allow for fishery modifications as needed to maximize catch of SAFE stock spring Chinook and minimize handle of listed species.
- ✓ Fishing seasons are concurrent with Youngs Bay and Blind Slough/Knappa Slough spring seasons at the participant’s request to minimize congestion in fishing areas.

Youngs Bay Commercial Fishery

- All waters in Youngs Bay are Oregon State waters and require Oregon State action.
- An Oregon license is required to participate in this fishery.

<i>Recommendation</i>	
The ODFW staff is recommending the following seasons for the Youngs Bay Select Area:	
Winter Season:	<p>6 PM Wednesday February 15 - 6 AM Thursday February 16 (12 hours) 6 PM Sunday February 19 - noon Monday February 20 (18 hours) 6 PM Wednesday February 22 – 6 AM Thursday February 23 (12 hours) 6 PM Sunday February 26 - noon Monday February 27 (18 hours) 6 PM Wednesday March 1 - 6 AM Thursday March 2 (12 hours) 6 PM Sunday March 5 - noon Monday March 6 (18 hours) 6 PM Wednesday March 8 - 6 AM Thursday March 9 (12 hours) 6 PM Sunday March 12 – 6 AM Monday March 13 (12 hours) 6 AM to 10 AM Thursday March 16 (4 hours; upstream of Old Youngs Bay Bridge) Noon to 4 PM Thursday March 23 (4 hours; upstream of Old Youngs Bay Bridge) 6 AM to 6 PM Monday March 27 (12 hours; upstream of Walluski River mouth) 6 AM to 6 PM Thursday March 30 (12 hours; upstream of Walluski River mouth) 6 AM to 6 PM Monday April 3 (12 hours; upstream of Walluski River mouth) 6 AM to 6 PM Thursday April 6 (12 hours; upstream of Walluski River mouth) 6 AM to 6 PM Monday April 10 (12 hours; upstream of Walluski River mouth) 6 AM to 6 PM Thursday April 13 (12 hours; upstream of Walluski River mouth)</p>
Spring Season:	<p>9 AM to 1 PM Monday April 17 (4 hours; upstream of Old Youngs Bay Bridge) 6 PM Thursday April 20 - 6 AM Friday April 21 (12 hours) 6 PM Monday April 24 - 6 AM Tuesday April 25 (12 hours) 6 PM Thursday April 27 - 6 AM Friday April 28 (12 hours) 6 PM Monday May 1 - noon Tuesday May 2 (18 hours) 6 PM Thursday May 4 - noon Friday May 5 (18 hours) Noon Monday May 8 - noon Friday May 12 (4 days) Noon Monday May 15 - noon Friday May 19 (4 days) Noon Monday May 22 - noon Friday May 26 (4 days) Noon Monday May 29 - noon Friday June 2 (4 days) Noon Monday June 5 - noon Friday June 9 (4 days) Noon Tuesday June 13 - noon Friday June 16 (3 days)</p>
Summer Season	<p>Noon Wednesday June 21- noon Friday June 23 (2 days) Noon Wednesday June 28- noon Friday June 30 (2 days) Noon Wednesday July 5- 6 PM Thursday July 6 (1 day) Noon Wednesday July 12- 6 PM Thursday July 13 (1 day) Noon Wednesday July 19- 6 PM Thursday July 20 (1 day) Noon Wednesday July 26- 6 PM Thursday July 27 (1 day)</p>
Area:	<p><u>February 15 through March 13 and April 20 through July 27:</u> Youngs Bay fishing area with upper boundary at the confluence of the Youngs and Klaskanine rivers.</p> <p><u>March 16, March 23, and April 17:</u> Old Youngs Bay Bridge upstream to the confluence of the Youngs and Klaskanine rivers.</p> <p><u>March 27 through April 13:</u> Markers at mouth of Walluski River upstream to the confluence of the Youngs and Klaskanine rivers.</p>

Gear:	A 7-inch minimum mesh size restriction during the winter season and an 8-inch maximum mesh size restriction during the spring and summer seasons. Maximum net length of 250 fathoms and weight on leadline not to exceed two pounds in any one fathom. Red corks are required at 25-fathom intervals and red corks must be in contrast to corks used in the remainder of the net. Use of additional weights or anchors attached directly to the leadline is allowed upstream of the mouth of the Walluski River.
Allowable Sales:	Salmon, sturgeon, and shad. A maximum of 3 white sturgeon may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel during each open period.
Miscellaneous Regulations:	Special transportation permits are not required to take fish outside the fishing area. Permanent transportation rules will be in effect.

- ✓ The 8-day regular winter season will target the first arrivals of the age-5 component of the run prior to the time when significant interceptions of non-local Chinook stocks occur.
- ✓ Wednesday and Sunday night fishing periods during the winter season should provide adequate harvest opportunity while avoiding overlap of mainstem and SAFE fishing periods.
- ✓ Addition of new winter fishing periods after mid-March with progressively restrictive area boundaries will provide opportunity to harvest initial returns of spring Chinook released from the South Fork Klaskanine Hatchery in 2004 and reduce the significant pinniped predation observed in 2005, while minimizing impacts to upriver stocks that may be in the lower bay area during this timeframe.
- ✓ The 29-day spring fishery consisting of progressively increasing fishing time and/or area is designed to maximize harvest of local stocks while minimizing impacts to non-local stocks.
- ✓ As with all Select Area winter-spring fisheries, landings will be monitored weekly to determine stock composition. Inseason modifications to fishing periods may occur to maximize harvest while minimizing impacts to non-target stocks.
- ✓ The new regulation requiring red corks at 25-fathom intervals was requested by enforcement to facilitate enforcement of net length. The intent is to implement this regulation for all future fishing periods in Youngs Bay.
- ✓ Split fishing periods during the winter and early spring seasons allow for inseason modifications as needed to maximize catch of SAFE stock spring Chinook and minimize handle of listed species.
- ✓ Most spring fishing periods are concurrent with Blind Slough/Knappa Slough and Deep River openings at the participant's request to minimize congestion in fishing areas.
- ✓ The 8-day summer fishery is recommended to provide harvest opportunity on remaining local spring Chinook and early returning Select Area bright (SAB) stock fall Chinook while allowing for SAB broodstock escapement.
- ✓ Fishing periods late in week during the summer season facilitate direct sales to public.

Select Area Sport Fisheries

- Permanent angling regulations for Oregon waters within the Select Areas of Youngs Bay and Blind Slough/Knappa Slough are listed in the 2006 Oregon Sport Fishing Regulations booklet. These waters are open year-round to Chinook salmon (fin-clipped only during January 1-July 31), adipose fin-clipped steelhead, and adipose fin-clipped coho except for some tributary closures.
- Permanent Washington sport fishing rules list waters of Deep River from the mouth to the town bridge open to Chinook salmon (fin-clipped only during January 1-July 31), fin-clipped steelhead, and adipose fin-clipped coho the entire year.

MISCELLANEOUS REGULATIONS

- Consistent with Commission guidance for 2006-2008 fisheries, the Compact adopted a temporary rule at the December 15, 2005 hearing to reduce the maximum green sturgeon size limit for lower Columbia River commercial fisheries to 60 inches.
- Washington is proceeding with adoption of the green sturgeon size limit as a permanent rule. The OFWC is also anticipated to adopt the green sturgeon size limit as a permanent rule.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- The Joint Staff is not recommending any additional Compact hearings at this time. Compact hearings will be held beginning in late February to consider commercial salmon fishing periods.

<i>Issues Requiring Compact/Joint State Consideration</i>
➤ Non-Indian commercial sturgeon fishery (page 5)
➤ Non-Indian commercial salmon fishing plan and gear regulations (pages 6-7).
➤ Area 2S shad fishing season (page 8).
➤ Washougal Reef shad fishing season (page 8)
➤ Non-Indian spring Chinook sport fishing plan and season (pages 9-10).
➤ Steelhead and shad retention during the non-Indian spring Chinook sport fishery (page 11).
➤ Treaty Indian winter gillnet fishery (page 11).
➤ Treaty Indian shad dipnet fishery (page 12).
➤ Blind Slough/Knappa Slough Select Area winter and spring commercial fisheries - Compact and Oregon state action (pages 12-13).
➤ Deep River Select Area spring commercial fishery - Compact action (page 14).
➤ Youngs Bay Select Area winter, spring, and summer fisheries - Oregon state action (pages 15-16).

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