

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT - SUMMER FACT SHEET NO. 2
Columbia River Compact
June 23, 2006

Purpose: Update on Upper Columbia summer Chinook stock status and fisheries review

Management guidelines, stock status and past fisheries are described in Summer Fact Sheet #1, dated June 15, 2006.

STOCK STATUS

- The 2006 preseason forecast for Upper Columbia summer Chinook is for a return of 49,000 fish to the Columbia River mouth.
- Bonneville Dam counts from June 16-22 total 15,825 Chinook, with a daily average passage of 2,261 fish.
- Based on the 5-year average, the cumulative count through the same date is 15,869 fish with a daily average passage of 2,267 fish. The average run size during this period was 71,272 (including harvest).
- Passage is typically 23% complete by June 22 based on 2001-2005. Passage is typically 50% complete around July 1. Based on average timing (2001-2005), the 2006 return would be 68,800, not including harvest.
- Although it is early in the season, the run appears to be tracking above preseason expectations.

SUMMER SEASON FISHERIES

2006 Non-treaty Sport fisheries

- Summer Chinook sport fisheries are non-selective and are scheduled from the Tongue Pt./Rocky Pt. line upstream to Priest Rapids Dam during June 16-July 31, and from Priest Rapids Dam to Chief Joseph Dam during July 1 through October 15.
- Based on the 49,000 run size forecast, sport fisheries above Priest Rapids Dam are allocated 3,250 fish and 1,500 fish are allocated to sport fisheries below Priest Rapids Dam.
- Catch rates since June 16 have remained high in areas below Bonneville Dam. Above average flows appear to have directed fish nearshore resulting in improved catch rates, especially in bank fisheries. The estimated catch through June 21 is 1,293 Chinook kept and 16 released from 7,626 angler trips (0.17 Chinook/angler). Comparable CPUE data (week 26) from 2003-2005 ranged from 0.04-0.08 Chinook/angler.
- Assuming static catch rates, the projected recreational catch through Sunday, June 25 below Bonneville Dam is 2,269 Chinook kept; however, catch rates typically begin to decline as the season progresses, especially after early July.
- Based on the 2003-2005 average, Chinook anglers below Bonneville Dam handle about 3.8% of the run with a CPUE of 0.07.

- Based on the cumulative dam counts to date and catch in the recreational fishery, the Joint Staff believes the run size will be greater than 49,000, allowing additional harvest for fisheries below Priest Rapids Dam.

2006 Non-treaty Commercial Fishery

- Commercial fisheries occurring below Bonneville Dam are non-selective and are allocated 1,500 summer Chinook.
- Two commercial seasons were adopted at the June 15 Compact hearing and are scheduled to occur during the evenings of June 26 (Monday) and July 5 (Wednesday).
- Additional summer Chinook fishing periods will be considered if a run size update provides for increased harvest.

2006 Estuary Sturgeon Fishery

- The recreational sturgeon fishery downstream of the Wauna powerlines has included retention periods during January 1-April 30 (42-inch minimum) and an ongoing period from May 13 through July 4 (45-inch minimum).
- The management target is for a harvest of 15,000 fish to prevent exceeding the 16,000 harvest guideline.
- Catch rates were lower than normal prior to May but have averaged about one-fish per boat since the season reopened in mid-May. Current average catch rates of 2,485 fish/week are comparable to rates observed in June 2004 (2,464 fish/week) when the fishery closed in early July.
- The projected catch through June 30 for this area is 11,400 fish, which represents 76% of the management guideline.
- Based on current catch rates, some fish may remain available after the scheduled July 4 closure.

2006 Estimated Estuary Sturgeon Harvest	
Management Target	15,000
Harvest	
January 1-April 30	73
May 13-31 ^a	1,814
June 1-18 ^a	6,400
June 19-30 ^b	3,100
Total	~11,400
Remaining	~3,600
^a Preliminary estimate	
^b Projected	

FUTURE MEETINGS

- Staff recommends a hearing be scheduled for 2:00 PM Tuesday June 27 via teleconference to review ongoing fisheries and consider additional management actions. The Joint Staff will determine if additional management actions are needed based on updated run size and fishery performance. Based on this updated information, recreational fisheries below Priest Rapids Dam may require modification.
- A Columbia River Compact hearing has been scheduled for 10 AM Thursday, July 27, 2006 located at the River Street Building, 25 River Street in Cathlamet, Washington. The purpose of the hearing will be to review stock status of fall Chinook and consider non-Indian fall commercial fisheries.