

**JOINT STAFF REPORT**  
**ZONE 6 SPORT STURGEON FACT SHEET No. 1**  
**Columbia River Joint State Hearing**  
**March 30, 2006**

**Purpose:** To consider modifications to the sport fishing seasons for sturgeon in The Dalles Pool.

- Annual harvest and harvest guidelines through 2005 are presented in Table 1 (attached).
- Assessment of The Dalles Pool sturgeon population conducted in 2005 indicates legal-size abundance may have decline by 80% since the 2002 assessment. Recruitment to legal size is expected to increase in the future based on strong production in 1996 and 1997.
- The sport harvest guideline was reduced from 400 fish to 100 fish for 2006. The treaty Indian commercial harvest guideline was reduced from 700 fish to 550 fish.
- An estimated 84 white sturgeon have been harvested from The Dalles Pool during January 1 through March 26, 2006 (Table 2).
- The number of fish observed each week in the creel surveys increased from zero between February 6 and March 5 to seven last week.
- Weekly harvest estimates increased from 10-11 fish during March 6-19 to 29 fish last week.
- Based on average catch rates since March 6 (17 fish/week), the 100 fish guideline will be met by April 2<sup>nd</sup>.

**Table 2. Sample data, estimated and projected harvest for The Dalles Pool, 2006.**

Month/Week	Sample rate	Average # of fish in-sample	Harvest estimate	Cumulative harvest
January	0.23	1.75	31	31
February	0.33	0.25	3	34
March 1-5	--	0.0	0	34
March 6-12	0.10	1.0	10	44
March 13-19	0.27	3.0	11	55
March 20-26	0.24	7.0	29	84
<i>March 6-26 ave./week</i>	<i>0.23</i>	<i>4.0</i>	<i>17</i>	
Projected harvest:				
March 27 – April 2			17	101
April 3-9 (Guideline 100)			17	118

**Joint Staff Recommendation**

- The Joint Staff recommends retention of sturgeon in The Dalles Pool be prohibited effective 12:01 AM April 8, 2006.

### *Treaty Indian Commercial*

- The winter treaty Indian commercial season ended March 21.

<i>Estimated 2006 January and winter season treaty Indian commercial harvest</i>			
	Bonneville Pool	The Dalles Pool	John Day Pool
Harvest Guideline	400	550	335
Estimated Harvest	115	388	312

### *Sturgeon Spawning Sanctuary*

- The white sturgeon population in The Dalles Pool exhibits poor natural production due to impacts from the hydropower system. Broodstock protection is an important component of efforts to rebuild the population.
- Broodstock congregate on the spawning ground just downstream of John Day Dam during May-July and are susceptible to increased reproductive failure and mortality resulting from injury and handling in the sport fishery.

<i>Joint Staff Recommendation</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>•The Joint Staff recommends adoption of the following miscellaneous regulation change:  Prohibit fishing for sturgeon from the grain silo complex at Rufus upstream to John Day Dam from May through July.</li></ul>

- This creates a sturgeon spawning sanctuary in The Dalles Pool extending 2.4 miles downstream from John Day Dam.
- The intent of the sanctuary is to reduce impacts of non-retention (catch and release) sport fisheries in The Dalles Pool on the survival and spawning success of white sturgeon.
- The recommendation will be presented to the respective Fish and Wildlife Commission for adoption.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife  
March 30, 2006

**Table 1. Zone 6 Sturgeon Harvest Guidelines and Harvest**

29-Mar-06

Area/Fishery	1996		1997		1998-2000				2001		2002		2003		2004		2005	
	Guide-line	Catch	Guide-line	Catch	1998-2000 Guideline	1998 Catch	1999 Catch	2000 Catch	Guide-line	Catch	Guide-line	Catch	Guide-line	Catch	Guide-line	Catch	Guide-line	Catch <sup>1</sup>
<b>Bonneville Pool</b>																		
Sport	1,350	1,353	1,520	1,463	1,520	1,626	1,235	1,262	1,520	1,426	1,520	1,560	1,700	1,542	700	852	700	588
Treaty Commercial	1,250	1,005	1,300	1,852	1,300	1,462	1,280	1,165	1,300	1,287	1,300	472	1,200	398	400	464	400	550
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,600</b>	<b>2,358</b>	<b>2,820</b>	<b>3,315</b>	<b>2,820</b>	<b>3,088</b>	<b>2,515</b>	<b>2,427</b>	<b>2,820</b>	<b>2,713</b>	<b>2,820</b>	<b>2,032</b>	<b>2,900</b>	<b>1,940</b>	<b>1,100</b>	<b>1,316</b>	<b>1,100</b>	<b>1,138</b>
Treaty Subsistence	--	260	--	130	--	109	90	191		174		146		93		60		66
<b>The Dalles Pool</b>																		
Sport	100	80	200	178	600-800	857	695	809	700	677	700	878	400	447	400	530	400	384
Treaty Commercial	300	230	400	498	1,000-1,200	1,108	1,051	1,342	1,100	1,215	1,100	1,152	900	866	900	975	900	831
<b>Total</b>	<b>400</b>	<b>310</b>	<b>600</b>	<b>676</b>	<b>1,800</b>	<b>1,965</b>	<b>1,746</b>	<b>2,151</b>	<b>1,800</b>	<b>1,892</b>	<b>1,800</b>	<b>2,030</b>	<b>1,300</b>	<b>1,313</b>	<b>1,300</b>	<b>1,505</b>	<b>1,300</b>	<b>1,215</b>
Treaty Subsistence	--	120	--	40	--	86	116	128		276		197		202		172		196
<b>John Day Pool</b>																		
Sport	100	62	560	464	560	593	422	434	560	299	165	187	165	163	165	229	165	132
Treaty Commercial	100	360	1,160	1,260	1,160	1,100	760	788	1,160	759	335	326	335	265	335	309	335	360
<b>Total</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>422</b>	<b>1,720</b>	<b>1,724</b>	<b>1,720</b>	<b>1,693</b>	<b>1,182</b>	<b>1,222</b>	<b>1,720</b>	<b>1,058</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>513</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>538</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>492</b>
Treaty Subsistence	--	110	--	63	--	45	28	24		26		27		30		37		49
<b>Zone 6 Total</b>																		
Sport	1,550	1,495	2,280	2,105	2,680-2,880	3,076	2,352	2,505	2,780	2,402	2,385	2,625	2,265	2,152	1,265	1,611	1,265	1,104
Treaty Commercial	1,650	1,595	2,860	3,610	3,460-3,660	3,670	3,091	3,295	3,560	3,261	2,735	1,950	2,435	1,529	1,635	1,748	1,635	1,741
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,200</b>	<b>3,090</b>	<b>5,140</b>	<b>5,715</b>	<b>6,340</b>	<b>6,746</b>	<b>5,443</b>	<b>5,800</b>	<b>6,340</b>	<b>5,663</b>	<b>5,120</b>	<b>4,575</b>	<b>4,700</b>	<b>3,681</b>	<b>2,900</b>	<b>3,359</b>	<b>2,900</b>	<b>2,845</b>
Treaty Subsistence		490		233			240	234	343		476		370		325		269	311
Sport closure dates																		
Bonneville Pool	1-Apr		5-Apr		20-Apr	17-Apr	8-Apr		13-Aug	5-Aug - 27 Sep			7-Jul	26-Jun		11-Jun		
The Dalles Pool	1-May		5-May		8-Jun	12-Jun	19-Jun		9-Apr	13-Jul		21-Jun	28-Jun		25-Jun			
John Day Pool	1-May		2-Sep		23-Nov	no closure			no closure		24-Aug		28-Jul	12-Jul		11-Jul		

<sup>1</sup> Preliminary.