

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

JOINT STAFF REPORT SPRING FACT SHEET NO. 2 May 15, 2006

<i>Fisheries under consideration:</i>	Columbia River Commercial fishery Washougal Reef Commercial Shad Select Area Commercial Lower Columbia River Recreational Fishery
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STOCK STATUS

- The preseason forecast for upriver spring Chinook is 88,400 adults at the river mouth. The upriver spring Chinook count through May 14 at Bonneville Dam totaled 73,073 spring Chinook. The spring management period concludes June 15.
- TAC updated the Adult spring Chinook forecast to Bonneville Dam to 95,000 with a projection for the river mouth of 100,000 upriver spring Chinook. TAC looked a variety of predictors several of which predicted somewhat below 95,000, and several predictors that predicted above. TAC still has uncertainty about what the final run size will be primarily because of the very unusual pattern to the run to date. However, TAC believes that 100,000 upriver fish at the river mouth is a reasonable estimate given the available data. TAC will meet again as necessary to update the run further.
- Spring Chinook counts over Willamette Falls total 12,470 adults as of May 7. The 50% passage date is typically in mid-May; however counts have started to decline since the peak count of 1,434 observed on April 28.

FISHERY UPDATES

- The recreational fishery below Bonneville Dam, in the area from Buoy 10 to the I-5 Bridge, closed April 14. The recreational catch is estimated at 5,497 kept (and 1,132 released) spring Chinook from 63,008 angler trips. The upriver component of the catch is 3,156 kept and 812 released fish. Total upriver sport take is estimated at 3,237 fish.
- The Columbia River from Rocky Point/Tongue point up to the I-5 Bridge is scheduled to open for Chinook jacks and steelhead May 16 under permanent regulations. The Columbia River also opens May 16 for shad angling below Bonneville Dam.
- The recreational Chinook fishery above Bonneville Dam closed between May 1 and May 12. An estimated 60 anglers kept 22 and released 7 Chinook last week.
- Commercial shad fishing opens in the 2S area beginning May 15.
- SAFE commercial fisheries have landed an estimated 4,024 Chinook through May 12 including 82 upriver spring Chinook. Fisheries are scheduled to continue through mid-June in Blind/Knappa Slough and Deep River and through July in Youngs Bay.
- SAFE recreational fisheries are open year-round although spring Chinook harvest in 2006 has been lower than recent years.

- Commercial fishing was put on hold in mid-March. Landings totaled 1,033 Chinook (177 released). The upriver component of the catch is 227 kept and 106 released. Total upriver commercial take is estimated at 269 fish.
- Test fishing was conducted Sunday May 14. A total of 14 drifts resulted in 25 Chinook and 9 steelhead handled. Mark rates were 84% for Chinook and 22% for steelhead. Upriver stock comprised 12% of the Chinook handle, based on visual observation only.

Combined Fishery Impacts

- Based on the 100,000 run size, commercial impacts total 0.215% (25% of 0.86% commercial guideline), which includes the on-going shad and SAFE fisheries. Recreational impacts total 0.802% (70% of 1.14% sport guideline), which includes the on-going steelhead fishery and projected impacts associated with fisheries above Bonneville Dam.
- Combined impacts total 1.02%, or 51% of the 2.00% limit.

RECOMMENDATIONS

<i>Mainstem Columbia River Commercial Fishery</i>	
Season:	12:00 PM- 10:00 PM Tuesday May 16, 2006 (10 hours)
Area:	Zones 1-4, upstream to Kelley Point.
Sanctuaries:	Grays River, Elokom-B, Abernathy Creek, Cowlitz River, Kalama-B, and Lewis-B.
Gear:	8" minimum and 9¾" maximum mesh size restriction. Use of monofilament nets is allowed.
Allowable Sales:	Adipose fin-clipped Chinook salmon, sturgeon, and shad. A maximum of eight sturgeon total (white or green) may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel during each calendar week (Sunday through Saturday) that the fishery is open. The eight sturgeon possession/sales limit includes both mainstem and Select Area fisheries. The maximum green sturgeon size limit is 60 inches.
Participants:	Columbia River commercial fishers with appropriate licenses and legal gear that attended a state-sponsored workshop concerning live capture commercial fishing techniques.
Miscellaneous Regulations:	Regulations were adopted at January 26, 2006 Compact, which include: Use of recovery boxes, limited soak times, red corks, net length restrictions and lighted buoy requirements. Cooperation of vessel operators to allow state monitors onboard to observe and collect data is also required.
	Quick Reporting Rule for Washington buyers.

- ✓ Based on a run size of 100,000 fish, stock composition, mark rate and use of a large mesh net, allowable harvest is estimated to range between 1,500 and 3,300 fish.
- ✓ Estimated catch for this proposed fishery is 1,200-2,000 fish.
- ✓ A small mesh net (tangle net gear) is unfavorable due to the high abundance of shad in the lower river and the 45-minute soak time limitation.

<i>SAFE Recommendation</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Joint Staff is recommending that the on-going fishery in Youngs Bay be modified as follows: Prohibit the retention of non-adipose fin-clipped spring Chinook through May 21, 2006.

- ✓ Industry has requested an increased weekly limit for sturgeon. Current catch is 96 fish, which is ahead of 2005. An increase would likely result in the guideline being reached prior to the conclusion of the summer season.

Washougal Reef Commercial Shad Season

- Staff is recommending the following shad commercial fishing periods in the mainstem Columbia River:

Season:	8 PM – 12 AM (midnight) daily May 16-18 (3 days) May 21-25 (5 days) May 30- Jun 1 (3 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; 5⅝"-6¼" 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.

- ✓ The Joint Staff will estimate salmonid handle and mortalities in this fishery based on past years' data.

Recommendation

- The Joint Staff is recommending the mainstem Columbia River sport fishery be re-opened.

Option 1

Area: Tongue Point upstream to the I-5 Bridge only
Dates: May 17- June 15, 2006, or until guideline is achieved

Option 2

Area: I-5 Bridge to Bonneville Dam only
Dates: May 17- June 15, or until guideline is achieved

Option 3

Area: A combination of options 1 and 2. (Tongue Point to Bonneville Dam)
Dates: Would require days per week, or closing prior to June 15

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 through June 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.

FUTURE HEARINGS

- Staff may recommend a hearing at 2:00 pm on Wednesday May 24.