

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT - FALL FACT SHEET NO. 6
Columbia River Compact
August 24, 2009

Fisheries under consideration:	Non-Indian commercial salmon
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Management guidelines, allocations, and run forecasts for the 2009 fall season were presented in the Fall Fact Sheet #1(July 29, 2009)

Stock Status

- Fall Chinook passage through August 23 totals 37,020 adults and 11,989 jacks. Daily passage is around 4,000 adults per day. The run is typically 50% complete by September 7.
- Steelhead passage at Bonneville Dam has seen record daily counts, with passage totaling 398,300 fish between July 1 and August 23. Daily passage continues to be high, with 13,000 fish counted on August 23. TAC has updated the Group A steelhead run to 425,000 fish, compared to the preseason forecast of 278,900 fish at Bonneville Dam.
- Coho passage is starting to increase, with nearly 8,200 adults and 1,200 jacks counted through August 23. Over 700,000 coho are expected to return to the Columbia River this year, with 160,000 coho expected to pass Bonneville Dam. Coho passage at Bonneville is typically 50% complete on September 15.
- TAC is scheduled to meet again on September 2 to review run sizes and fisheries.

Non-Indian Commercial Fishery

- Preseason catch expectations included 5,230 adult Chinook for early August and an additional 14,100 adult Chinook for the late August. A total of 2,000 white sturgeon were allocated to the August portion of the fall fishing season (of the 8,000 fish annual commercial limit).
- Three 12-hour fishing periods were conducted on the evenings of August 4, 6, and 9. Landings from the first two periods were greater than projected. In response to the high catch, the Compact met and reduced the fishing area for the August 9. Landings from the three early August fishing periods totaled 9,400 Chinook.
- Two 10- hour fishing periods were conducted on the evenings of August 18 and August 20 in Zones 3-5 above the Kalama River. Landings in these two periods were greater than projected. The Compact met on August 21 and rescinded the fishing period scheduled for August 23.
- Preliminary analysis of stock composition of the August catch has shown a higher proportion of LRH in the catch than expected.

<i>Preliminary August Commercial Fishery Landings, 2009</i>				
Date	Deliveries	Chinook	Coho	White Sturgeon
Aug. 4-5 (Z 1-5)	158	3,295	26	730
Aug. 6-7 (Z 1-5)	151	4,719	96	386
Aug 9-10 (Z 2-5, reduced area)	152	1,395	36	1,090
Early August Total		9,409	158	2,206
Aug 18-19 (Z 3-5, above Kalama R.)	119	7,492	360	459
Aug 20-21 (Z 3-5, above Kalama R.)	(estimate)	6,500		
Mid-August Total		13,992		
Total		23,401	518	2,665

- Lower River Hatchery (LRH) stock Chinook are the most constraining stock for fall season fisheries. Harvesting more LRH than planned in August puts more risk on the September fisheries. The LRH run typically cannot be updated until October.
- There is expected to be some unused Chinook from ocean fisheries, which translates into LRH impacts that can be used in inriver fisheries.
- Harvesting more URBs in August could reduce late September Zone 4-5 harvests of these fish. Harvesting more LRHs in August could reduce the number of harvestable Chinook for September Zone 1-5 Chinook fisheries.

RECOMMENDATION

- The Joint Staff is recommending that the two fishing periods currently in place be modified. Staff is recommending a reduced fishing area, which would include only Zone 5 (rather than the previously adopted area of Zones 4-5). Staff is also recommending that the weekly sturgeon retention limit of nine fish be reduced to three fish per week and would apply to both Select Area and mainstem fisheries.

<i>Non-Indian Mainstem Commercial Early Fall Salmon Fishery</i>		
Season:	8 PM Tuesday August 25 to 6 AM Wednesday August 26	(10 hours)
	8 PM Thursday August 27 to 6 AM Friday August 28	(10 hours)
Area:	Zone 5	
Sanctuaries:	No river sanctuaries applicable	
Gear:	9" minimum and 9¾" maximum mesh size restriction.	
Allowable Sales:	Salmon and white sturgeon (43-54 inch fork length). A maximum of 3 white sturgeon may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel during each calendar week (Sunday through Saturday) that the fishery is open. The white sturgeon possession and sales limit includes mainstem and Select Area fisheries.	
Additional Rules:	24-hour Quick Reporting Rule will be in effect for Washington buyers. Nets not specifically authorized for use in this fishery may be onboard the vessel if properly stored. A properly stored net is defined as a net on a drum that is fully covered by a tarp (canvas or plastic) and bound with a minimum of ten revolutions of rope with a diameter of 3/8 (0.375) inches or greater.	

- ✓ Decreasing the fishing area reduces the risk of additional LRH encounters and preserves any remaining LRH impacts for future use in September/October fisheries.
- ✓ Impacts to URBs remain available under the current guidelines.
- ✓ Reducing the weekly sturgeon limit would continue to allow retention, but likely decrease total sturgeon landings. The sturgeon allocation set aside for August commercial fisheries has been exceeded and any additional harvest will be taken from the commercial allocation set aside for September and October fishing periods.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- The Joint Staff will continue to track all ongoing fisheries and schedule Compacts as necessary. The tribes may request a hearing on or around September 10 to adopt additional commercial fishing periods in Zone 6.