

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT - FALL FACT SHEET NO. 11
Columbia River Compact
September 22, 2009

<i>Fisheries Under Consideration:</i> Non-Indian Commercial Salmon

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Salmon and Steelhead

- Management guidelines, allocations, and run forecasts for the 2009 fall season were presented in the Fall Fact Sheet #1 (July 29, 2009).
- The "2008-2017 U.S. v Oregon Management Agreement" (2008-2017 MA) provides specific fishery management guidelines for fall season fisheries in the mainstem Columbia River and Select Areas.
- Based on run size forecasts, NOAA guidance, and management agreements, the following impact rates apply to non-Indian fisheries for 2009:
 - 11% harvest rate for upriver bright fall Chinook (URB).
 - 38% exploitation rate (ER) for wild/natural Lower River Chinook (LRH) for combined ocean and Columbia River fisheries.
 - 20% ER for wild/natural Lower Columbia River coho (LCN coho) for combined ocean and Columbia River fisheries.
 - 2% harvest rate for summer steelhead (Group A and B index) during the fall season.
 - 5% harvest rate for chum salmon.

Sturgeon

- The 2009 harvestable number of 40,000 white sturgeon is allocated 80% recreational (32,000 fish) and 20% commercial (8,000 fish).
- The Compact adopted 2009 guidelines for distributing the 8,000 commercial white sturgeon amongst commercial fishing seasons.

STOCK STATUS

Fall Chinook

- The total 2009 adult fall Chinook preseason forecast was 532,900 adults to the Columbia River mouth, including 269,700 URB and 88,150 LRH adult Chinook.
- Adult passage at Bonneville Dam through September 21 includes 208,000 brights and 30,800 tules. Generally 84% of the bright passage and 96% of the tule passage is complete by September 21.

- Chinook migration over Bonneville Dam appears to be 5-7 days early for tules, and about 4 days early for brights.
- TAC met September 21 and downgraded the URB run to 203,000 fish at the river mouth. TAC also updated the BPH run to 41,000 fish at the river mouth.
- The McNary Dam counts through September 21 totals 74,700 adult fall Chinook. Passage is typically 50% complete around September 15. Passage goals at McNary Dam have been achieved annually for over the past 20 years. The current management goal is 60,000 adults.
- Returns to Spring Creek Hatchery through September 21 total 13,300 adult Chinook, including 6,700 males, 6,600 females, and 10,400 jacks (goal: 7,000 adults including 4,000 females). Although the adult goal has been achieved, the hatchery has experienced a higher than expected mortality and it is not clear at this point whether the egg-take goal will be fully met.
- Returns of tule fall Chinook Big Creek Hatchery were much earlier and pond mortality was higher than normal, but it appears production goals will be met.
- TAC is scheduled to meet again on September 28 to review passage and run size estimates.

Summer Steelhead

- Preseason forecasts for upriver summer steelhead totaled 351,000 steelhead (similar to recent average). Of those, Group A index fish were expected to total 278,900 fish and Group B index fish were expected to total 56,900 fish.
- Steelhead passage during July 1 through September 21 totals 555,400 fish, including 159,300 unmarked fish. Daily passage during August reached record highs. Daily passage during September has been comparable to recent years.
- TAC has reviewed steelhead passage at Bonneville Dam and predicts the total upriver run will be approximately 584,000 fish, including a conservative estimate of 40,000 Group B steelhead. The inseason update reflects a record (since 1984) Group A component, while the Group B component is expected to be at or below average.

Columbia River Coho

- The 2009 preseason forecast for coho returns to the Columbia River included 703,000 adults, comprised of 466,600 early stock (66%) and 236,500 late stock (34%). About 160,000 of these coho were expected to return to areas above Bonneville Dam.
- Passage at Bonneville through September 21 totals 116,339 adult and 5,300 jack coho. Coho passing Bonneville Dam are considered early stock through September 30 and late stock from October 1 onward.
- TAC will begin to update the coho forecast in the upcoming weeks.

FISHERY UPDATES

Buoy 10 Recreational Fishery

- The Buoy 10 fishery remains open for fin-clipped coho and steelhead. Chinook retention closed effective September 1.
- Through September 13, an estimated 57,000 anglers kept 5,800 Chinook and 45,400 coho compared to the preseason catch expectation of 10,700 Chinook and 119,000 coho.

Mainstem Recreational Fishery

- This fishery closed to retention of fall Chinook as planned on September 14 downstream of the Lewis River.
- The estimated kept catch for the area from Tongue Point/Rocky Point upstream to Bonneville Dam during August 1 through September 20 includes 13,600 adult Chinook, 1,000 coho, and 7,100 steelhead from 98,700 angler trips.

August Non-Indian Commercial Fisheries

- A total of 6 fishing periods were conducted during August. All periods included a 9-inch minimum mesh size restriction. Area restrictions increased as the August fishery progressed. Landings from August fisheries totaled 28,222 Chinook, 1,331 coho, and 2,969 white sturgeon.
- Chinook stock composition consisted of 28% URBs and 28% LRH compared to the preseason expectations of 26% URBs and 16% LRH.

Sturgeon Harvest

- Through September 22, a total of 5,834 white sturgeon have been landed in commercial fisheries (including Select Areas), leaving 2,166 available for harvest in mainstem fisheries. Select Areas were closed to retention of sturgeon on September 6.

<i>2009 Lower Columbia River Commercial White Sturgeon Catch Summary</i>			
Fishery	Guideline	Catch	Remaining
Mainstem Winter/ Spring Gillnet	1,700	1,810	0
Mainstem Summer Gillnet	600	632	0
August Gillnet	2,000	2,969	0
Mainstem Late Fall Gillnet	3,300	--	2,189
Select Area Gillnet	400	423	(23)
Sum	8,000	5,834	2,166

2009 Non-Indian Impact Summary					
Fishery	Season	Total	URBs	URB %	Status
Commercial	Early - Mid August	8,041	759	0.37%	complete
Commercial	Mid - Late August	1,412	362	0.18%	complete
Commercial	Z3-5 Mid - late August	14,420	5,866	2.89%	complete
Commercial	Z5 Late August	4,349	930	0.46%	complete
<i>Commercial</i>	<i>Select Areas</i>	<i>9,700</i>	<i>891</i>	<i>0.44%</i>	<i>in progress</i>
<u>Commercial</u>	<u>Sept/Oct Z4-5</u>	<u>3,200</u>	<u>1,000</u>	<u>0.49%</u>	<u>planned</u>
<u>Commercial</u>	<u>October Coho</u>	<u>3,331</u>	<u>936</u>	<u>0.46%</u>	<u>planned</u>
	Commercial Total	44,452	10,744	5.29%	
	Commercial Mainstem Total	34,752	9,853	4.85%	
Sport	Buoy 10	5,792	1,009	0.50%	complete
Sport	LCR Sport August-Sept 13	12,804	4,843	2.39%	complete
Sport	LCR Sept 14+	1,600	400	0.20%	complete
<i>Sport</i>	<i>Zone 6 - Bonn to Hwy 395</i>	<i>1,605</i>	<i>1,301</i>	<i>0.64%</i>	<i>in progress</i>
<i>Sport</i>	<i>Snake River</i>			<i>0.50%</i>	<i>in progress</i>
	Sport Total	26,201	8,568	4.22%	
	Sport <Bonneville	20,196	6,252	3.08%	
	<Bonneville Total	64,648	16,996	8.37%	
	Total	70,653	19,312	9.51%	

- Wild B steelhead impacts for non-Indian fisheries are estimated at 1.93%, including ongoing and proposed fisheries, compared to the 2% ESA limit.

FISHERY RECOMMENDATIONS

<i>Late Fall Non-Indian Commercial Salmon Fishery</i>		
Season #1:	9 PM Thursday, September 24 to 5 AM Friday, September 25, 2009 9 PM Monday, September 28 to 5 AM Tuesday, September 29, 2009	(8 hours) (8 hours)
Area:	Zones 4-5	
Gear:	8-inch minimum mesh size and 9¾-inch maximum mesh size	
Season #2:	6 AM – 6 PM Monday, September 28, 2009 6 AM – 6 PM Wednesday, September 30, 2009	(12 hours) (12 hours)
Area:	Zones 1-3	
Gear:	6-inch maximum mesh size; un-slackened floater gillnet	
Season #3:	6 AM – 6 PM Tuesday, September 29, 2009	(12 hours)
Area:	Zones 1-5	
Gear:	9-inch minimum and 9¾-inch maximum mesh size.	
The following applies to all proposed fisheries stated above		
Allowable Sales:	Salmon and white sturgeon. A maximum of 8 white sturgeon may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel during each calendar week (Sunday through Saturday) that the fishery is open. Limit applies to mainstem only. Select Areas remain closed to white sturgeon retention.	
Miscellaneous Rules:	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.	
Sanctuaries:	As applicable: Elokomin-B, Abernathy, Cowlitz, Kalama-B, Lewis-B, Sandy, and Washougal rivers.	
Additional Rules	24-hour Quick Reporting Rules will be in effect for Washington buyers.	
Expected Catch:	3,000-4,000 Chinook, 15,000 coho, and 1,600 white sturgeon.	

- ✓ The proposed fisheries are consistent with the Fall Management Agreement and results of the North of Falcon negotiation process. This proposal is based on current run size estimates and the associated allowable ESA impact limits.
- ✓ Depending upon fishery and run performance, the seasons may need to be adjusted in order to remain within impact allocations.
- ✓ It is too early to update the LRH run size, but based on returns to a few areas, staff thinks the run is early-timed and may be less than the preseason forecast. Because of this, the Joint Staff is recommending that lower river fisheries do not begin until the last week in September when most of the LRH should be in the tributaries.
- ✓ The URB run size estimate is close to the point when the allowable impact rate would decrease to 8.25% (less than 200,000). The TAC and Joint Staff are recommending fisheries proceed cautiously; however, based on the dam count trends, it appears that the URB run will easily exceed 200,000.

- ✓ The allowable coho catch for the mainstem commercial fishery was expected to be about 31,000 fish in preseason plans, not including unused impacts from ocean and Buoy 10 fisheries.

Future Compact Hearings

- The Joint Staff is recommending a hearing be scheduled via teleconference at 2 PM Tuesday, September 29 to review salmon stock status and ongoing fisheries.