

**OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT - WINTER FACT SHEET NO. 1
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
January 26, 2012**

Fisheries under consideration:

- Non-Indian commercial salmon fishing plan and regulations
- Select Area commercial fisheries
- Non-Indian commercial winter sturgeon
- Recreational salmon and sturgeon fisheries
- Treaty Indian Sales below Bonneville Dam

STOCK STATUS

Upriver Spring Chinook

The upriver spring Chinook run is defined as all spring Chinook destined for areas above Bonneville Dam and Snake River summer Chinook. Chinook passing Bonneville Dam between January 1 and June 15 are considered upriver spring Chinook. Snake River wild spring/summer Chinook and upper Columbia wild spring Chinook are components of this run and are federally-listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Spring Chinook returning to other tributaries above Bonneville Dam are part of this run but are not ESA-listed. Based on the recent ten-year average, Bonneville Dam passage is usually 50% complete by May 6. Over the past ten years, adult runs have averaged around 201,000 (range 86,000 to 335,000).

Willamette Spring Chinook

Willamette River spring Chinook tend to return earlier and exhibit broader migration timing than upriver spring Chinook. Wild spring Chinook destined for portions of the Willamette River and its tributaries are ESA-listed. Over the past ten years, runs (adults and jacks) have averaged around 80,000 fish (range 27,000 to 143,000).

Lower Columbia Spring Chinook

Spring Chinook returning to the tributaries of the lower Columbia River are destined for the Cowlitz, Kalama, Lewis, and Sandy rivers and Select Areas. Wild components of this group are ESA-listed, with the exception of the Select Area fish. Over the past ten years, the combined adult return has averaged around 21,400 fish (range 10,300 to 41,000) in the tributaries and 8,350 fish (range 2,600 to 25,900) in Select Areas.

Winter Steelhead

The geographic range of winter steelhead includes all tributaries of the Columbia River upstream to Fifteen Mile Creek on the Oregon shore and the Klickitat River on the Washington shore. Wild populations from the Cowlitz River upstream to the uppermost range, and specific areas above Willamette Falls are ESA-listed. Steelhead handled downstream of Bonneville Dam during November through April are considered to be winter steelhead. Over the past ten years, wild winter steelhead returns have averaged around 20,000 fish (range 11,000 to 33,000).

<i>Columbia River Mouth Salmon and Steelhead Returns - Actual and Forecasts**</i>					
			2011 Forecast	2011 Return	2012 Forecast
Spring Chinook	Total Spring Chinook		331,800	320,900	414,500
	Willamette		104,100	80,200	83,400
	Sandy		5,500	4,300	4,800
	Cowlitz*		6,600	4,100	8,700
	Kalama*		600	800	700
	Lewis*		3,400	1,400	2,700
	Select Areas		13,200	8,900	8,700
	Lower River total		133,400	99,700	100,300
	Wind*		4,900	7,800	8,400
	Drano Lake*		12,600	12,200	9,500
	Klickitat*		2,100	1,400	2,100
	Yakima*		10,300	13,400	12,000
	Upper Columbia	Total	22,400	16,500	32,600
	<i>Upper Columbia</i>	<i>Wild</i>	2,000	2,200	2,800
	Snake River	Total	91,100	127,500	168,000
	Spring/Summer <i>Snake River</i>	<i>Wild</i>	24,700	31,600	39,000
	Upriver Total		198,400	221,200	314,200
Summer Chinook	Upper Columbia	Total	91,100	80,600	91,200
Sockeye	Wenatchee		33,000	41,800	28,800
	Okanogan		126,800	143,500	431,300
	Snake River	<i>Wild</i>	2,100	1,900	1,900
	Total Sockeye		161,900	187,300	462,000
Steelhead Winter	Wild winter steelhead	<i>Wild</i>	15,200	16,800	15,300

*Return to tributary mouth

**Totals may not sum due to rounding

White Sturgeon

Abundance estimates for white sturgeon in the lower Columbia River are derived from annual mark/recapture studies. Angler success (CPUE) is also used as an index of population size. The abundance of legal-size fish (38-54 inches fork length (FL)) has declined from averages of 131,400 during 1998-2007 and 90,900 during 2008-2011, to 65,000 projected for 2012. Catch rates of sub-legal and legal-sized white sturgeon have also been declining recently. These trends, combined with increasing pinniped predation have resulted in corresponding harvest reductions.

Eulachon (Columbia River Smelt)

Eulachon (also known as Pacific or Columbia River smelt) return annually to the Columbia River to spawn in the mainstem and several tributaries downstream of Bonneville Dam. The fish typically enter the Columbia River in early to mid-January, though a small 'pilot' run often occurs in December. Eulachon return to fresh water at age 3-5. Peak tributary abundance is usually in February, with variable abundance through March, and an occasional late showing during April. Effective May 17 2010, Columbia River eulachon were federally-listed as threatened under the ESA.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Salmon and Steelhead

2008-2017 U.S. v Oregon Management Agreement

- The 2008-2017 *U.S. v Oregon* Management Agreement (MA) provides the treaty Indian and non-Indian fishery harvest frameworks and harvest rate schedules for salmon and steelhead stocks destined for areas upstream of Bonneville Dam.
- The MA includes an abundance-based sliding scale harvest schedule for upriver spring Chinook. Based on the MA and the preseason forecast, ESA impacts for 2012 fisheries are limited to 13%, with 2.2% for non-Indian fisheries and 10.8% for treaty Indian fisheries.
- Fisheries will also be managed to meet the catch balance provision in the MA for upriver spring Chinook which requires upriver mortalities in non-Indian fisheries not exceed the total allowable catch available for treaty Indian fisheries. The following table is derived from the harvest schedule within the MA and reflects the allowable catch and associated ESA impacts for treaty Indian and non-Indian fisheries.

Spring Management Period Harvest Rate Schedule						
Total Upriver Run Size	Snake River Natural Run Size	Treaty Indian Harvest Rate	Treaty Indian Catch Guideline	Non-Indian Harvest Rate	Non-Indian Mortality Guideline	Total Harvest Rate
82,000	8,200	7.4%	6,068	1.6%	6,068	9.0%
109,000	10,900	8.3%	9,047	1.7%	9,047	10.0%
141,000	14,100	9.1%	12,831	1.9%	12,831	11.0%
217,000	21,700	10.0%	21,700	2.0%	21,700	12.0%
271,000	27,100	10.8%	29,268	2.2%	29,268	13.0%
326,000	32,600	11.7%	38,142	2.3%	38,142	14.0%
380,000	38,000	12.5%	47,500	2.5%	47,500	15.0%
434,000	43,400	13.4%	58,156	2.6%	58,156	16.0%
488,000	48,800	14.3%	69,784	2.7%	69,784	17.0%

- The MA also specifies non-Indian fisheries occurring prior to a run size update be managed for a run size that is at least 30% less than the predicted upriver spring Chinook run size.
- A 30% reduction to the preseason forecast equates to a run size of 219,900, which allows for an ESA impact rate of 2.0% and an allowable harvest (kept plus release mortalities) of 21,990 upriver fish for non-Indian fisheries prior to a run size update.

Endangered Species Act

- A Biological Opinion (BO) based upon the management actions outlined in the MA was issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in 2008.
- Impacts to wild winter steelhead are limited to 2% for all mainstem Columbia River non-Indian fisheries.
- Impacts to eulachon are expected to be minimal for all mainstem Columbia River non-Indian fisheries.

Willamette Spring Chinook Management

- The Willamette River Fisheries Management Evaluation Plan (FMEP) limits freshwater fishery impacts on wild Willamette River spring Chinook to <15%.
- The Willamette River FMEP includes a sliding scale for escapement goals based on abundance of hatchery fish which determines the allocation of surplus hatchery spring Chinook to recreational and commercial fisheries downstream of Willamette Falls. The escapement goals are also intended to allow for full recreational fisheries in the upper Willamette River.
- Based on the FMEP and an expected return of 65,900 hatchery spring Chinook and the FMEP escapement goal of 30,500 hatchery fish, the harvestable surplus totals 35,400. This surplus is allocated 73% (25,800) for recreational fisheries downstream of Willamette Falls (including the mainstem Columbia River) and 27% (9,600) to commercial fisheries (including Select Areas).

2012 Spring Chinook Management

- The Washington and Oregon Fish and Wildlife commissions (Commissions) have provided guidance on spring Chinook management. This direction combined with catch balance provisions in the MA, result in the following guidelines for 2012:

Prior to the run update, allocation of upriver fish including release mortalities for non-Indian fisheries will be:

- 12,700 fish for the recreational fishery below Bonneville Dam
- 1,700 fish for the recreational fishery from Bonneville Dam to the OR/WA state line.
- 1,350 fish for recreational fisheries in the Snake River
- 5,900 fish for the mainstem commercial fishery
- 330 fish for Select Area commercial fisheries

Sturgeon

- The Commissions previously provided policy guidance for white sturgeon fisheries through the 2011-2013 Joint State sturgeon accord. The accord allowed for a harvest rate of no more than 22.5% of the legal-size population or 17,000 fish, whichever is less. The harvest rate can be reduced annually based on current stock assessments.
- On January 6, 2012 both the Commissions agreed to reduce the annual allowable harvest rate of white sturgeon from the 2011 level of 22.5%.
- After negotiations, the agency's Directors agreed to a harvest rate of 16% for 2012. Based on the 2012 abundance forecast of 65,000 legal-size fish, a total of 10,400 (9,600 with estuary length adjustment) white sturgeon will be available for harvest downstream of Bonneville Dam.
- The Directors also agreed to provide flexibility for the Willamette River fishery to meet the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife goal of at least four sturgeon retention days.

- The below Bonneville Dam and Willamette sturgeon fishing sanctuaries are unchanged in both time and area since 2010. The area known as the Oregon City Wall on the Willamette River is permanently closed to all bank angling.

2012 Sturgeon Fishery Management	
✓	Sturgeon fisheries will be managed for a harvestable number of 10,400 white sturgeon, which is based on a 16% harvest rate and the legal-size abundance estimate of 65,000 fish.
✓	The harvestable number is allocated 80% (8,320 fish) to recreational fisheries and 20% (2,080 fish) to commercial fisheries.
✓	The recreational fisheries share used to plan retention seasons downstream from Bonneville Dam will be managed to provide 60% of the harvest to the area downstream of the Wauna powerlines and 40% of the harvest to the area upstream. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The harvestable number for recreational fisheries is then adjusted to account for the Estuary size limit and the Willamette baseline. ✓ The harvest share between recreational fisheries upstream and downstream from the Wauna power line will be flexible and may be adjusted in-season to meet pre-season expectations for retention seasons and ensure the harvest rate does not exceed the maximum defined above. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The harvest guideline for the estuary will be up to 4,160 fish. ○ The harvest guideline for above Wauna will be up to 2,080 fish. ○ The Willamette will be managed to provide four retention days, with a harvest guideline of 1,768. ○ The Willamette harvest guideline in 2012 may be increased to provide the four retention days, but shall not exceed 2,022 fish.
✓	Recreational size limit is 38–54 inches FL and 41-54 inches FL during spring/summer portion of the below Wauna fishery. Commercial size limit is 43–54 inches FL.

Lower Columbia River White Sturgeon Management Guidelines by Fishery, 2010-2012			
	2010	2011	2012
Estimated Legal Abundance	85,000	77,000 ^a	65,000
Annual Harvest Guideline	24,000	17,000	10,400
Commercial (20%)	4,800	3,400	2,080
Recreational (80%)	19,200	13,600	8,320
Estuary ^b	9,600 (11,500)	6,800 (8,160)	4,160 (4,992)
Above Wauna	4,835	3,410	2,080
L. Willamette ^c	2,865	2,030	1,248
^a From 2011 preliminary population estimate, actual abundance estimate was 80,500			
^b Estuary guidelines (parenthesis) are converted to 41-54 inch equivalents due to different slot limit			
^c Willamette guideline in excess of baseline (520 fish in 2011 and 2012)			

- The Joint Staff met with the Columbia River Commercial Advisory Group (CRCAG) to solicit input for 2012 sturgeon season sub-allocations.

<i>Protocol For Management of White Sturgeon Retention in Commercial Fisheries During 2012.</i>															
✓	Manage for a commercial harvest of 2,080 white sturgeon with some level of sturgeon harvest allowed in all seasons/fisheries.														
✓	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Fishery/Season</th> <th># Allocated</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Winter/Spring</td> <td>480</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Summer</td> <td>200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Early Fall</td> <td>800</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Late Fall</td> <td>400</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Select Areas</td> <td>200</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Total</td> <td>2,080</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Fishery/Season	# Allocated	Winter/Spring	480	Summer	200	Early Fall	800	Late Fall	400	Select Areas	200	Total	2,080
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Winter/Spring	480														
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Select Areas	200														
Total	2,080														
✓	Conduct limited target sturgeon fisheries as necessary to optimize economic benefit.														
✓	Adopt landing limits as necessary to remain within season-specific catch expectations														
✓	Fish not harvested in a season may be added to the guideline for subsequent seasons.														

Eulachon (Columbia River Smelt)

- All recreational and commercial eulachon fisheries in the Columbia River mainstem and tributaries are currently closed.
- The states will continue to work with NMFS to develop and expand research activities which would provide information on adult and juvenile eulachon abundances and distribution. This will include discussions on using catch-per-unit-effort data in the mainstem Columbia River.

TREATY INDIAN FISHERIES

- Under permanent regulations, a winter set line fishery is open in Zone 6 during January 1-31.
- Under permanent regulations, a winter gillnet fishery is open in Zone 6 from noon February 1 to 6:00 p.m. March 21. Allowable sales include fish caught on platform/hook & line gear within the Zone 6 area. The tribes would like to modify the regulation to also allow the sale of fish caught in the area downstream of Bonneville Dam.
- The Joint staff recommends this modification be adopted as a permanent rule in both Washington and Oregon.

<i>Commercial Sales in area Downstream of Bonneville Dam - Staff Recommendation</i>
Commercial sales of salmon, steelhead, shad, carp, catfish, walleye, bass, and yellow perch caught in the tribal fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam will be allowed consistent with state/tribal MOU's during periods when the Zone 6 platform and hook and line fishery is open for commercial sales. Retention of sturgeon is prohibited. No sales are allowed on COE property at Bonneville Dam

2012 NON-INDIAN FISHERIES

Winter Sturgeon Commercial Fishery

<i>2012 Winter Commercial White Sturgeon Fishery – Staff Recommendation</i>		
Season	6 PM Monday January 30 – 6 PM Tuesday January 31, 2012 6 PM Wednesday February 1 – 6 PM Thursday February 2, 2012 6 PM Monday February 6 – 6 PM Tuesday February 7, 2012	(24 hours) (24 hours) (24 hours)
Area:	Mainstem Columbia River, Zones 1-5.	
Gear:	Drift gillnet. 9" minimum and 9 ¾" maximum mesh size restrictions. Nets fished any time between official sunset and official sunrise must have lighted buoys on both ends of the net. If the net is attached to the boat, then one lighted buoy on the end of the net opposite the boat is required	
Allowable Sales:	White sturgeon (43-54 inch fork length) and adipose fin-clipped salmon. A maximum of 10 white sturgeon may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel during each calendar week (Sunday through Saturday) that the fishery is open.	
Sanctuaries:	Sandy River sanctuary.	
Miscellaneous:	24-hour Quick Reporting Rule in effect for Washington buyers.	

- Based on input from the CRCAG, season structure is based on a guideline of 280 sturgeon for the winter sturgeon fishery and 200 for winter/spring season salmon fisheries.
- WDFW staff intends to conduct some onboard monitoring of this fishery.

Winter/Spring Salmon Commercial Fishery

- Since 2004, a commercial fishing plan has been developed in cooperation with the CRCAG to maximize the catch of hatchery spring Chinook and minimize handle of ESA-listed upriver spring/summer Chinook and wild winter steelhead.
- The Joint Staff will use the fishing plan as a guideline for managing the upcoming winter/spring season.
- The Joint Staff met with the CRCAG to solicit input for potential 2012 spring salmon seasons. Based on the preseason forecast, around 9,600 Willamette hatchery spring Chinook and 5,900 upriver fish are available for commercial harvest prior to an upriver run size update. Some of the group expressed interest in initiating commercial periods early in the season, when the proportion of Willamette origin Chinook in the catch and ex-vessel values are the highest.

<i>2012 Winter/Spring Pre-Season Commercial Chinook Fishing Plan</i>	
✓	Manage mainstem commercial fisheries to remain within commission allocation and catch balancing guidelines.
✓	Test fishing is expected to occur on Sundays or Tuesdays beginning as early as February 14.
✓	Fishing opportunity in February will be contingent upon favorable stock composition.
✓	Compact hearings to occur on Mondays (and/or Wednesdays), if test fishing results are positive.

- ✓ Full fleet fisheries are expected to occur on Tuesdays (and/or Thursdays) of each week, but may be scheduled on other days in order to maintain flexibility in developing fishing seasons. Results from Tuesday fisheries will determine whether fishing occurs on Thursdays.
- ✓ Fisheries may be conducted during daylight and nighttime hours. Large mesh fisheries will likely occur at night and tangle net fisheries may occur during day or night, dependent upon water conditions and minimizing conflicts between user groups.
- ✓ Fisheries may occur in Zones 1-5. February fishing will be limited to Zones 1-4 (up to Kelley Point) to maximize Willamette catch.
- ✓ Based on test fishing results, fishing periods could begin in mid February using large mesh gear, transitioning to tangle nets by mid-late March, depending primarily on steelhead abundance.
- ✓ Additional fishing periods may occur after run size updates are available.
- ✓ Test fishing may continue throughout the winter/spring season to collect biological data and maintain historic test fishing databases.

- In addition to the fishing plan, a set of general regulations are announced prior to the onset of the spring season. The regulations reflect management intent and allow commercial fishers to prepare for the upcoming season. These regulations are identical to those used in recent years and will be in place for the 2012 winter/spring season.

<i>2012 Commercial Spring Chinook Fishery Regulations</i>	
Season:	Individual fishing periods will not exceed 24 hours in length.
Area:	Zones 1-5. Actual upper boundary to be determined in season.
Sanctuaries:	As applicable. Grays River, Elochoman-B, Abernathy Creek, Cowlitz River, Kalama-B, and Lewis-B, Sandy and Washougal sanctuaries.
Allowable Sales:	Adipose fin-clipped Chinook salmon, white sturgeon, and shad.
Participants:	Licensed Columbia River commercial fishers that have completed the required state-sponsored workshop concerning live capture commercial fishing techniques. At least one fisher on each boat must have live capture certification.
Gear:	<p>4¼” maximum mesh size during tangle net fishery or 8” minimum mesh size during large mesh fishery.</p> <p>Monofilament gill nets are not allowed for 4¼” mesh tangle net fisheries.</p> <p>Nets that are fished at any time between official sunset and official sunrise must have lighted buoys on both ends of the net unless the net is attached to the boat. If the net is attached to the boat, then one lighted buoy on the opposite end of the net from the boat is required.</p> <p>There are no restrictions on the use of slackers or stringers to slacken the net vertically. There are no restrictions on the hang ratio. The hang ratio is used to horizontally add slack to the net and is determined by the length of the web per length of the corkline.</p> <p>Net length not to exceed 150 fathoms, except under the following conditions: An optional use of a steelhead excluder panel of mesh may be hung between the corkline</p>

and the 4¼” maximum mesh size tangle net. The excluder panel web must be a minimum mesh size of 12” stretched measure when taut under hand tension. Monofilament mesh is allowed for the excluder panel only. The excluder panel must be a minimum of five feet in depth and must not exceed ten feet in depth as measured from the corkline to the upper margin of the tangle net mesh as the net hangs naturally from a taut corkline. Weedlines or droppers (bobber type) may be used in place of the steelhead excluder panel. A weedline-type excluder means the net is suspended below the corkline by lines of no less than five feet in length between the corkline and the upper margin of the tangle net. A dropper-type excluder means the entire net is suspended below the surface of the water by lines of no less than five feet in length extending from individual surface floats to a submersed corkline. The corkline cannot be capable of floating the net in its entirety (including the leadline) independent of the attached floats. Weedlines or droppers, must extend a minimum of five feet above the 4¼” maximum mesh size tangle net. Tangle nets constructed with a steelhead excluder panel, weedlines, or droppers, may extend to a maximum length of **175 fathoms**. Tangle nets constructed with a steelhead excluder panel, weedlines, or droppers must have two red corks at each end of the net, as well as the red corks required under miscellaneous regulations.

Miscellaneous Regulations:

Soak times, defined as the time elapsed from when the first of the gill net web is deployed into the water until the gill net web is fully retrieved from the water, must not exceed 45 minutes.

Red corks are required at 25 fathom intervals, and red corks must be in contrast to the corks used in the remainder of the net.

Recovery Box: Each boat will be required to have two operable recovery boxes or one box with two chambers, on board. Each chamber of the recovery box(es) must include an operating water pumping system capable of delivering a minimum flow of 16 gallons per minute, not to exceed 20 gallons per minute of freshwater per chamber. Each box and chamber and associated pump shall be operating during any time that the net is being retrieved or picked. Each chamber of the recovery box must meet the following dimensions as measured from within the box; the inside length measurement must be at or within 39 ½ inches to 48 inches, the inside width measurements must be at or within 8 to 10 inches, and the inside height measurement must be at or within 14 to 16 inches.

Each chamber of the recovery box must include a water inlet hole between ¾ inch and 1 inch in diameter, centered horizontally across the door or end wall of the chamber and 1¾ inches from the floor of the chamber. Each chamber of the recovery box must include a water outlet hole that is at least 1½ inches in diameter located on either the same or opposite end as the inlet. The center of the outlet hole must be located a minimum of 12 inches above the floor of the box or chamber. The fisher must demonstrate to WDFW and ODFW employees, fish and wildlife enforcement officers, or other peace officers, upon request, that the pumping system is delivering the proper volume of fresh river water into each chamber.

All non-legal sturgeon, non-adipose fin-clipped salmon, and steelhead must be released immediately to the river with care and with the least possible injury to the fish, or placed into an operating recovery box.

Any fish that is bleeding or lethargic must be placed in the recovery box prior to being released. All fish placed in recovery boxes must be released to the river prior to

landing or docking.

At least 24-hour **Quick Reporting** will be required for Washington wholesale dealers, per WAC 220-69-240.

Observer program: As a condition of fishing, owners or operators of commercial fishing vessels must cooperate with department observers or observers collecting data for the department, when notified by the observer of his or her intent to board the commercial vessel for observation and sampling during an open fishery.

Tributary Spring Chinook Fisheries Downstream of Bonneville Dam

- No changes to permanent regulations are recommended for spring Chinook recreational fisheries in the Sandy, Clackamas, and Willamette rivers.
- Washington tributary seasons are in the Fishing in Washington pamphlet and are currently the same as in 2011. Daily bag limits remain reduced in the Kalama and Lewis rivers.

Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Fisheries

- The Columbia River downstream of the I-5 Bridge is currently open under permanent regulations for hatchery salmon and steelhead through March 31.
- The Columbia River from Bonneville Dam upstream to the Hwy 395 Bridge is currently open under permanent regulations for hatchery steelhead through March 31.
- Staff modeled several lower river spring Chinook season scenarios for 2012 based on past input from the public and the Columbia River Recreational Advisory Group (CRRAG). Modeled seasons were discussed with the CRRAG earlier this month to identify preferred options. None of the modeled seasons extended into the run size update timeframe of early May.

<i>2012 Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Recreational Fisheries - Recommendations</i>		
Downstream of Bonneville Dam		
Option 1	Thursday March 1 through Thursday April 5, 2012	36 retention days
Option 2	Thursday March 1 through Friday April 6, 2012, <u>except closed</u> March 20, March 27, April 3 (Tuesdays)	34 retention days
Area:	Buoy 10 upstream to Beacon Rock (boat and bank) plus bank angling only from Beacon Rock upstream to the Bonneville Dam deadline. Legal upstream boundary defined as: "A deadline marker on the Oregon bank (approximately four miles downstream from Bonneville Dam Powerhouse 1) in a straight line through the western tip of Pierce Island to a deadline marker on the Washington bank at Beacon Rock."	
Daily Bag Limit:	Two adult salmonids per day, but only one may be a Chinook. Only adipose fin-clipped fish may be kept. All other permanent regulations apply.	
Kept Catch Estimate:	Option 1: 14,300 adult Chinook (all stocks) from 102,400 angler trips. Option 2: 14,500 adult Chinook (all stocks) from 105,300 angler trips.	

Bonneville Dam to Oregon/Washington Border		
Season:	Friday March 16 through Wednesday May 2, 2012	48 retention days
Area:	Tower Island power lines (approximately 6 miles below The Dalles Dam) upstream to Oregon/Washington border, plus the Oregon and Washington banks between Bonneville Dam and the Tower Island power lines.	
Daily Bag Limit:	Two adult Chinook or steelhead per day or one of each. Only adipose fin-clipped fish may be kept. All other permanent regulations apply.	
Kept Catch:	1,600 adult Chinook.	
Additional regulations for both fisheries above:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For the mainstem Columbia River salmon and steelhead fishery from the Rocky Point/Tongue Point line upstream to OR/WA border, effective February 15 through June 15, 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. • In Washington, on the mainstem Columbia River below Bonneville Dam, anglers may not possess in the field fish mutilated so that size, species or fin clip cannot be determined until the angler has reached their automobile or principle means of land transportation and has completed their daily angling. 		

- Fishery recommendations were developed to remain within and comply with:
 - ✓ Impact limits for species listed under the ESA.
 - ✓ Buffers and catch balance provisions outlined in the MA.
 - ✓ Policy guidance and management objectives provided by the Commissions.
- Of the various season scenarios reviewed by the CRRAG, Option 1 received strong support although there was also support for the concept of closed days to accommodate the commercial fishery (Option 2) if it resulted in additional fishing time in April.
- The season for the Zone 6 fishery is based on the available pre-update allocation and estimated catch rates assuming slightly delayed run timing.
- Although a key management goal is to minimize the need for in-season emergency action, due to the dynamic nature of fisheries and fish runs, none of the options presented *guarantee* that in-season action will not be necessary in order to remain within ESA limits and/or catch balancing requirements.
- As requested by the CRRAG, staff is proposing a Joint State hearing be scheduled for early April to review the ongoing lower Columbia recreational spring Chinook fishery and consider an extension if enough fish remain available.

<i>Joint State Hearing for Below Bonneville Recreational Spring Chinook Fishery – Staff Recommendation</i>
Schedule a Joint State hearing for Wednesday, April 4 to review catches and consider an immediate season extension if possible.

Mainstem Steelhead and Shad Recreational Fishery

- Under permanent regulations, the Columbia River from Buoy 10 upstream to the Highway 395 Bridge at Pasco closes to steelhead retention April 1. The area downstream of the I-5 Bridge re-opens May 16 and upstream of the I-5 Bridge re-opens June 16.
- Under permanent regulations, the Columbia River is open for shad angling all year, except closed downstream of Bonneville Dam from April 1 through May 15.

Retention of Hatchery Steelhead and Shad During Spring Chinook Seasons – Staff Recommendation

Effective March 1-May 15, 2012, the mainstem Columbia River will be open for retention of adipose fin-clipped steelhead and shad **ONLY** during days and in areas open for retention of adipose fin-clipped spring Chinook.

- Beginning May 16 permanent rules resume; hatchery steelhead retention is allowed from the Tongue-Rocky Point line upstream to the I-5 Bridge and shad retention is allowed river-wide.

Recreational White Sturgeon Seasons

- Staff recommendations for retention seasons are based on guidance provided by the Commissions, input from the CRRAG, and public comments. Sturgeon catch and release will be open on non-retention days. Retention of green sturgeon is prohibited.

Above Wauna Powerlines

- In recent years, the mainstem sturgeon season above Wauna has generally been open to retention three-days-per-week (Thu-Sat) with no retention during August and September. During May-August, the spawning sanctuary reduces the area open for sturgeon angling.
- The 2012 guideline is about 800 fish less than the 2011 actual harvest. In order to remain within the 2012 guideline, staff is recommending an adjustment to the ‘standard’ season by delaying the first retention day in October.

<i>2012 Sturgeon Recreational Fishery for Above Wauna – Staff Recommendation</i>		
Season:	January 1 - July 31 and October 20 – December 31, 2012 Retention allowed Thursdays, Fridays, and Saturdays only	3 days/ week (121 retention days)
Area:	Mainstem Columbia River from the Wauna powerlines upstream to Bonneville Dam, and all adjacent Washington tributaries, EXCLUDING the lower Willamette River upstream to Willamette Falls (including Multnomah Channel and Gilbert River).	
Sanctuary:	Closed to angling for sturgeon from May 1 to August 31 from Bonneville Dam downstream to a line crossing the Columbia River from Navigation Marker 82 on the Oregon shore through the upstream exposed end of Skamania Island, continuing in a straight line to a marker on the Washington shore.	
Allowable Catch:	Up to 2,080 white sturgeon. Legal size: 38-inch minimum and 54-inch maximum FL	
Miscellaneous Regulations	Effective February 1 thru April 30, 2012, angling for all species is prohibited from a line between the upstream end of Sand Island (near Rooster Rock) and a marker on the Oregon shoreline, downstream to a line between the lower end of Sand Island and a marker on the Oregon shoreline.	

- The proposed closure of the Sand Island Slough has been adopted annually the past two years as a temporary rule to control harvest and illegal activity associated with sturgeon congregating in this area. Considering the reduced quota and past issues at this location, staff is requesting the Sand Island closure be re-adopted for 2012.
- In addition, staff is requesting the Compact provide guidance to work with our respective Commission's to make this a permanent annual closure for January-April beginning in 2013.

<i>Sand Island Slough Closure (Above Wauna Powerlines) – Staff Proposal</i>
Effective January 1, 2013: Prohibit angling for all species during January 1 through April 30 from a line between the upstream end of Sand Island (near Rooster Rock) and a marker on the Oregon shoreline, downstream to a line between the lower end of Sand Island and a marker on the Oregon shoreline.

Below Wauna Powerlines (Estuary)

- In recent years, the estuary white sturgeon retention season has generally been open seven days/week during January through April, followed by a short closure in early May, with a second retention season occurring from the second Saturday in May into or through July.
- When the fishery re-opens in May, the minimum FL increases from 38 inches to 41 inches. This harvest management tool was first implemented in 2004 at industry request to extend the duration of the fishery by reducing the number of fish retained. This narrower slot limit requires a reduction of the allowable guideline to maintain appropriate harvest rates.
- The vast majority of the catch and effort in this fishery occurs during May through June/July. Catch during January through April has been less than 25 fish annually since 2007.
- Variable catch rates and reduced effort in the past two years have allowed for season extensions beyond the retention period projected preseason.
- The 2012 guideline of 4,160 is 68% of the actual harvest in 2011 (6,117). Assuming 2010-2011 average catch rates, the general season structure utilized in recent years still applies.

<i>2012 Sturgeon Recreational Fishery for Below Wauna – Staff Recommendation</i>	
Season:	January 1 – April 30 and May 12 – July 8, 2012 (7 days/week) 179 retention days
Area:	Mainstem Columbia River from the Wauna powerlines downstream to the mouth at Buoy 10, including Youngs Bay, and all adjacent Washington tributaries
Allowable Catch	Up to 4,160 white sturgeon Legal size: 38-54 inches FL through April 30; 41- 54 inches FL thereafter

- Predicting the 2012 catch is confounded by the substantial drop in angler effort and variable catch rates since 2009. Average daily effort (397 anglers) during June and July 2011 was 70% of 2010 (560 anglers) and 38% of 2009 (1,048 anglers). However, kept catch per angler trip was 33% better in 2011 (0.24) compared to 2010 (0.18).

Lower Willamette River

- ODFW announced the 2012 lower Willamette River (including Multnomah Channel and Gilbert River) sturgeon retention fishery will open for up to four days in February (Fri 17th,

Sat 18th, Fri 24th, and Sat 25th). The harvest guideline is 1,728-2,022 fish. A review of the fishery is planned to follow the first two retention days to ensure harvest is tracking as expected.

Zone 6 Recreational Sturgeon Fisheries Update

- The Sturgeon Management Task Force is scheduled to meet February 7, 2012 to discuss and develop management recommendations for 2012 Zone 6 white sturgeon fisheries.
- Recreational fisheries in Zone 6 opened January 1 and continue until the pool-specific guidelines are met. Current (2011 based) guidelines include 2,000 fish from the Bonneville Pool, 300 fish from The Dalles Pool and 500 fish from the John Day Pool.
- In December 2011, the Joint States held a public meeting regarding sturgeon retention seasons in Zone 6. The discussions included the unpredictable nature of the season length in each pool, and the desire to have a retention period in Bonneville Pool during the summer months.
- Based on those discussions, staff would propose a retention closure in Bonneville Pool in mid-February if the quota has not previously been met. The intent would be to shift any of the remaining quota into the summer months. Through January 22, the Bonneville Pool fishery has reached nearly 40% of the current guideline.
- Catch to date in The Dalles Pool is well within the guideline. In 2011, this fishery closed on July 30.
- In recent weeks, the fishery in the John Day Pool has experienced variable effort and catch with estimated harvest well below the guideline. In 2011, this fishery closed on April 10.
- Staff will continue to monitor and update catch projections as the fisheries progress and request a hearing to close retention when necessary.

SELECT AREA FISHERIES

- Select Area fisheries target spring Chinook during the winter and spring seasons (mid-February through mid-June) and both spring Chinook and Select Area Bright (SAB) fall Chinook during the summer season (mid-June through July).
- Based on visual stock identification (VSI) and coded-wire tag (CWT) recoveries, catch in winter, spring, and summer Select Area commercial fisheries averaged 87.4% SAFE-produced Chinook, 7.9% lower river spring Chinook, 4.4% upriver spring Chinook, and 0.3% upper Columbia summer Chinook stocks during 2007–2011.
- Between 2002–2010, ESA-impacts to upriver spring Chinook in Select Area commercial fisheries have ranged between 0.013% and 0.468% and have averaged 0.140%; however, fishing opportunity was constrained in many years due to in-season management action. The 2011 impact rate to upriver spring Chinook was 0.138% (92% of the 0.150% Select Area allocation).
- Recreational harvest of spring Chinook in Select Areas averaged 530 fish (range 100 - 1,250) during 2001–2010. Catch estimates are based on catch record cards, which are typically delayed 1-2 years. The preliminary 2011 catch estimate is 750 spring Chinook.

- Options for 2012 winter, spring, and summer Select Area fisheries were developed based on input received during a public meeting held January 12, 2012 in Astoria and subsequent discussions with commercial fishers and fish processors. The proposed seasons are generally concurrent among Select Areas to minimize congestion as requested by industry.

Blind Slough/Knappa Slough Commercial Fishery

- Concurrent jurisdiction waters extend downstream from the Railroad Bridge in Blind Slough and encompass all of Knappa Slough and require Compact action.
- Oregon State waters extend upstream from the Railroad Bridge and require Oregon State action.

<i>Blind Slough/Knappa Slough Select Area - Recommendation</i>	
Winter Season:	Sunday and Thursday nights from February 12 through March 16 (10 nights). Sunday nights from March 18 through April 2 (3 nights) Open hours are from 7 PM to 7 AM (12 hours)
Spring Season:	Thursday night April 19, Tuesday night April 24, and Monday and Thursday nights from April 26 through June 15 (17 nights). Open hours are 7 PM to 7 AM (12 hours).
Area:	Winter season: Blind Slough area only Spring season: Blind Slough and Knappa Slough areas are open. From April 30 through June 15, the lower boundary of the Knappa Slough fishing area is extended downstream to boundary lines defined by markers on the west end of Minaker Island to markers on Karlson Island and the Oregon shore (fall boundary).
Gear:	Winter season: 7-inch minimum mesh size restriction Spring season: 9¾-inch maximum mesh size restriction Nets restricted to 100 fathoms in length with no weight restriction on leadline. Use of additional weights or anchors attached directly to the leadline is allowed. Nets not specifically authorized for use in these areas may be onboard a 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.
Allowable Sales:	Salmon, white sturgeon, and shad. A maximum of 2 white sturgeon may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel during each calendar week (Sunday through Saturday).
Miscellaneous Regulations:	Other permanent regulations including rules related to transportation and lighted buoys remain in effect. 24-hour Quick Reporting Rule in effect for Washington buyers

- ✓ Similar to prior years, the additional winter fishing periods in Blind Slough between March 11 and April 2 provides access to locally returning spring Chinook with minimal risk of increasing impacts to upriver stocks.

Tongue Point/South Channel Full-Fleet Commercial Test Fishery

- All waters in the Tongue Point/South Channel Select Area are under concurrent Oregon and Washington jurisdiction and require Compact action.

<i>Tongue Point/South Channel Select Area - Recommendation</i>	
Spring Season:	Monday and Thursday nights from April 26 through June 15 (15 nights). Open hours are 7 PM to 7 AM (12 hours).
Area:	The spring season Tongue Point fishing area includes all waters bounded by a line extended from the upstream (southern most) pier (#1) at the Tongue Point Job Corps facility through navigation marker #6 to Mott Island (new spring lower deadline), a line from a marker at the southeast end of Mott Island northeasterly to a marker on the northwest tip of Lois Island, and a line from a marker on the southwest end of Lois Island westerly to a marker on the Oregon shore. The South Channel area includes all waters bounded by a line from a marker on John Day Point through the green USCG buoy #7 to a marker on the southwest end of Lois Island upstream to an upper boundary line from a marker on Settler Point northwesterly to the flashing red USCG marker #10, northwesterly to a marker on Burnside Island defining the upstream terminus of South Channel.
Gear:	In the Tongue Point fishing area, gear restricted to a 9¾-inch maximum mesh size, maximum net length of 250 fathoms, and weight not to exceed two pounds on any one fathom. In the South Channel fishing area, gear restricted to a 9¾-inch maximum mesh size, maximum net length of 100 fathoms, and no weight restriction on leadline. Use of additional weights or anchors attached directly to the leadline is allowed.
Allowable Sales:	Salmon, white sturgeon, and shad. A maximum of 2 white sturgeon may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel during each calendar week (Sunday through Saturday).
Miscellaneous Regulations:	During April 26 through May 11, transportation or possession of fish outside the fishing area is unlawful (except while in transit to ODFW sampling station) until ODFW staff has biologically sampled individual catches. A sampling station will be established at the MERTS dock in the Tongue Point fishing area. After sampling, fishers will be issued a transportation permit by agency staff. Fishers will be able to confirm the location of the sampling station by calling 971-230-8247. Beginning May 14, fishers are required to call 971-230-8247 and leave a message including name, catch, and where and when the fish will be sold. Other permanent regulations including rules related to lighted buoys remain in effect. 24-hour Quick Reporting Rule in effect for Washington buyers

- ✓ Test fishing will be conducted during the week prior to the recommended opener in order to gauge whether the proposed start date should be postponed.
- ✓ Staff will to closely monitor the stock composition of Chinook landed in this fishery and will propose modifications to season structure (including closure) if needed.
- ✓ Although staff anticipates catches in the proposed fishery will be limited given recent releases, it will provide additional information on the potential to re-establish this site as a spring Chinook fishery.

Deep River Commercial Fishery

- Concurrent jurisdiction waters extend downstream from the Highway 4 Bridge and require Compact action.

<i>Deep River Select Area- Recommendation</i>	
Winter Season:	Sunday and Thursday nights from February 12 through March 16 (10 nights), and Sunday nights from March 18 through April 2 (3 nights). Open hours are 7 PM to 7 AM (12 hours)
Spring Season:	Thursday night April 19, Tuesday night April 24, and Monday and Thursday nights from April 26 through June 15 (17 nights). Open hours are 7 PM to 7 AM (12 hours).
Area:	Deep River fishing area extends from the markers at USCG navigation marker #16 upstream to the Highway 4 Bridge (all concurrent water).
Gear:	7-inch minimum mesh size restriction during the winter season and a 9¾-inch maximum mesh size restriction during the spring seasons. Nets restricted to 100 fathoms in length with no weight restriction on leadline. Use of additional weights or anchors attached directly to the leadline is allowed. Nets cannot be tied off to stationary structures. Nets may not fully cross navigation channel. It is unlawful to operate in any river, stream or channel any gill net longer than three-fourths the width of the stream (WAC 220-20-015 (1)). It shall be unlawful in any area to use, operate, or carry aboard a commercial fishing vessel a licensed net or combination of such nets, whether fished singly or separately, in excess of the maximum lawful size or length prescribed for a single net in that area, except as otherwise provided for in the rules and regulations of the department WAC 220-20-010 (17). Nets not specifically authorized for use in these areas may be onboard a 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. Lighted buoys required.
Allowable Sales:	Salmon, white sturgeon, and shad. A maximum of 2 white sturgeon may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel during each calendar week (Sunday through Saturday).
Miscellaneous Regulations:	Transportation or possession of fish outside the fishing area (except to the sampling station) is unlawful until WDFW staff has biologically sampled individual catches. After sampling, fishers will be issued a transportation permit by WDFW staff. During the winter season fishers are required to call 360-795-0319 to confirm the place and time of sampling. In the spring season a sampling station will be established at WDFW's Oneida Road boat ramp, about 0.5 miles upstream of the lower Deep River area boundary (USCG navigation marker #16). 24-hour Quick Reporting Rule in effect for Washington buyers

- ✓ Additional fishing periods during the early portion of the winter season provide access to locally returning spring Chinook with minimal risk of impacts to upriver stocks.

Youngs Bay Commercial Fishery

- All waters in Youngs Bay are Oregon State waters and require Oregon State action.
- The entire Youngs Bay Select Area is open to either Oregon or Washington fishers who possess valid licenses (fishing and boat) issued by either state. Per permanent rule, all landings from Youngs Bay must be delivered to an Oregon licensed buyer.

<i>Youngs Bay Select Area - Recommendation</i>	
Winter Season:	<p><u>Entire bay:</u> Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday nights from February 12 through March 9 (12 nights) Open hours are from noon to 6 AM (18 hours).</p> <p>Sunday March 11: Open hours are from 6 PM to midnight (6 hours)</p> <p>Thursday March 15 – Friday March 16: Open hours are from 10 PM to 4 AM (6 hours)</p> <p><u>Upstream of Old Youngs Bay Bridge:</u></p> <p>Sundays March 18 and March 25: Open hours are from 6 PM to midnight (6 hours)</p>
Spring Season:	<p><u>Entire bay:</u> Thursday April 19: Open hours are from 6 PM to midnight (6 hours)</p> <p>Tuesday and Thursday nights April 24 and April 26 (2 nights) Open hours are from 6 PM to 6AM (12 hours) Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday nights April 29 – May 11 (6 nights) Open hours are from 6 PM – noon (18 hours)</p> <p>Monday - Friday May 14 - June 15 (20 days) Open hours are from noon Monday to noon Friday (4 days)</p>
Summer Season:	<p><u>Entire bay:</u> Wednesdays through Fridays from June 20 to July 27 (12 days). Open hours are from 6 AM Wednesday to 6 AM Friday (48 hours)</p>
Area:	<p><u>February 12 through March 16 and April 19 through July 27:</u> Entire Youngs Bay fishing area: defined as the waters of Youngs Bay from the Highway 101 Bridge upstream to the upper boundary markers at the confluence of the Klaskanine and Youngs rivers; except for those waters which are closed southerly of the alternate Highway 101 Bridge (Lewis and Clark River).</p> <p><u>March 18 and March 25</u> Old Youngs Bay Bridge upstream to the confluence of the Youngs and Klaskanine rivers.</p>
Gear:	<p>A 7-inch minimum mesh size restriction during the winter season and a 9¾-inch maximum mesh size restriction during the spring and summer seasons. Maximum net length of 250 fathoms and weight on leadline not to exceed two pounds in any one fathom. Red corks are required at 25-fathom intervals and red corks must be in contrast to corks used in the remainder of the net. Use of additional weights or anchors attached directly to the leadline is allowed upstream of markers located approximately 200 yards upstream of the mouth of the Walluski River.</p>
Allowable Sales:	<p>Salmon, white sturgeon, and shad. A maximum of 2 white sturgeon may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel during each calendar week (Sunday through Saturday).</p>
Miscellaneous Regulations:	<p>Other permanent regulations including rules related to transportation and lighted buoys remain in effect.</p>

- ✓ Staff worked with industry to develop an approach for 2012 winter and spring seasons which provides increased opportunity in the winter to access early-migrating age-5 spring Chinook while minimizing the risk of encountering upriver stocks during the late winter and early spring timeframes.
 - Additional winter fishing periods in mid-March with reduced hours and/or area provide harvest opportunity, while minimizing impacts to upriver stocks.
 - The 29-day spring fishery consisting of progressively increasing fishing time should maximize harvest of local stocks while minimizing impacts to non-local stocks.
- ✓ As with all Select Area winter, spring, and summer fisheries, landings will be monitored weekly to determine stock composition. In-season modifications to fishing periods may occur to maximize harvest while minimizing impacts to non-target stocks.
- ✓ The 12-day summer fishery provides harvest opportunity on late spring Chinook and early returning SAB stock fall Chinook while allowing for SAB broodstock escapement.

Select Area Recreational Fisheries

- Permanent angling regulations for Oregon waters within the Select Areas of Youngs Bay and Blind Slough/Knappa Slough are listed in the 2012 Oregon Recreational Fishing Regulations booklet. These waters are open year-round to Chinook salmon (fin-clipped only during January 1-July 31), adipose fin-clipped steelhead, and adipose fin-clipped coho except for some seasonal tributary closures.
- Permanent Washington recreational fishing rules list waters of Deep River from the mouth to the town bridge are open to Chinook salmon (fin-clipped only during January 1-July 31), fin-clipped steelhead, and adipose fin-clipped coho the entire year.
- In order to ease enforcement of co-occurring recreational fisheries in Select Areas and the mainstem Columbia River, staff recommends that bag limits in Select Area recreational fisheries be modified to match those of the mainstem when the fisheries are open concurrently.

<i>Select Area Recreational Fisheries - Recommendation</i>
<p>Effective March 1 – June 15, 2012:</p> <p>On days when the mainstem Columbia River recreational fishery below Bonneville Dam is open to retention of Chinook, the salmonid daily bag limit in Oregon and Washington Select Areas will be the same as mainstem Columbia River bag limits.</p> <p>On days when the mainstem Columbia River fishery is <u>closed</u> to Chinook retention, the permanent salmonid bag limit regulations for Select Areas apply.</p>

Issues Requiring Compact/Joint State Consideration

Compact

- Treaty-Indian commercial winter sturgeon fishery – Compact Action (page 6)
- Non-Indian commercial winter sturgeon fishery – Compact Action (page 7)
- Non-Indian commercial salmon fishing plan & gear regulations – Compact Endorsement (pages 7-10)
- Blind Slough/Knappa Slough commercial fisheries – Compact and Oregon State Action (page 15)
- Tongue Point Select Area commercial fisheries – Compact Action (page 16)
- Deep River Select Area commercial fisheries – Compact Action (page 17)

Joint States

- Spring Chinook recreational fishing seasons – Joint State Action (pages 10-11)
- Joint State Hearing in early April (page 11)
- Shad and hatchery steelhead retention – Joint State Action (page 12)
- Recreational white sturgeon fisheries above Wauna powerlines – Joint State Action (page 12)
 - Sand Island Slough fishing closure – Joint State Endorsement (page 13)
- Recreational white sturgeon fisheries below Wauna powerlines – Joint State Action (page 13)
- Select Area recreational fisheries – Joint State Action (page 19)

Oregon Only

- Youngs Bay Select Area fisheries – Announce Oregon State Action (pages 18-19)

FUTURE MEETINGS

- The Joint Staff is not recommending any additional Compact hearings at this time.