

**OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE**  
**JOINT STAFF REPORT - FALL FACT SHEET NO. 11a**  
**Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing**  
**September 26, 2013**

Fisheries under consideration:	Non-Indian mainstem commercial salmon
--------------------------------	---------------------------------------

*Detailed information on stock status and management guidelines for Columbia River fisheries are presented in Fall Factsheet #1, dated July 25, 2013*

***Stock Status***

- Passage of adult fall Chinook at Bonneville Dam through September 25 totals 844,100 fish. Typically, passage is about 90% complete by September 25. The 2013 Columbia River return is currently projected to reach nearly 1,200,000 adult fall Chinook, including 832,500 Upriver Bright Chinook.
- Passage of upriver summer steelhead at Bonneville Dam through September 25 totals 213,300 fish. Counts have been less than expected since the beginning of the counting period on July 1. Upriver summer steelhead passage (July-October) is currently projected to reach 220,000 fish at Bonneville Dam, including 15,000 Group B stock (25% wild).
- Passage of adult upriver coho at Bonneville Dam through September 25 totals 26,900 fish. The counting period for this early stock component continues through September 30. Upriver early-stock coho passage at Bonneville is projected to reach 29,000 adult fish, compared to a preseason expectation of 96,000 fish.
- Coho are just beginning to enter the lower river tributaries and return to the hatcheries, so information on run strength is currently limited.
  - Washington tributaries are generally tracking behind expectations, although it is very early in the season to measure hatchery returns.
  - Oregon data suggests the coho returns are generally within expectations given the time of year. Although counts are ongoing at Willamette Falls, over 3,800 coho have been counted at Willamette Falls. Coho counts on the Clackamas River total 650 coho to date. Coho catch in the Select Areas will exceed preseason expectations.
- Chum salmon are typically later-timed and return to the Columbia during early October through December. Chum salmon are primarily from natural production, although there are hatchery enhancement programs in place which release fed-fry. Columbia River chum are ESA-listed. The chum population is relatively small compared to the abundant coho and Chinook stocks.

***Non-Indian Commercial Fishery***

- The August commercial season consisted of eight fishing periods during August 11-29 in Zones 4-5. Gear was restricted to a 9-inch minimum mesh. Weekly sturgeon landing limits were in place throughout the season. Catch included 45,600 Chinook, 700 sturgeon and 380 coho.
- The late fall commercial season is ongoing and has included four commercial periods during September 15-25 in Zones 4-5 and two periods scheduled for Zones 1-5 (September 26-30). All periods are restricted to 8-inch gear and a 2-sturgeon weekly landing limit. Landings for

all six periods (actual and projected) are estimated at 36,700 Chinook, 2,200 coho and 320 sturgeon.

- The 2013 annual commercial allocation of white sturgeon is 2,021 fish. A total of 81 fish are expected to remain on the commercial allocation after September 30.
- Based on pre-season planning, coho fishing in 2013 is expected to include a full-fleet pilot coho fishery during early October using 3.75-inch tangle nets. After two weekly fishing periods additional target coho periods may occur with unslackened 6-inch maximum mesh if coho remain available for harvest. Coho fisheries will likely occur in Zones 1-3 during daylight hours. The pre-season catch expectation for all mainstem commercial fisheries included 29,000 hatchery coho.
- As part of the Columbia River fishery reform process, beach seines were identified as one of the gear types that could be implemented during the 2013 fall season. A process is underway to develop the management framework that is expected to provide a pilot beach seine fishing period in October.

### SALMON FISHERY RECOMMENDATIONS

<i>Joint Staff Recommendation - Non-Indian Pilot Coho Tangle Net Commercial Fishery</i>	
<b>Season:</b>	6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Wednesday October 2, 2013 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Thursday October 3, 2013  6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Monday October 7, 2013 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Tuesday October 8, 2013 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Wednesday October 9, 2013 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Thursday October 10, 2013  6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Monday October 14, 2013 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Tuesday October 15, 2013  (12 hours each)
<b>Area:</b>	Zones 1-3. Upper deadline defined as a straight line projected from the Warrior Rock Lighthouse on the Oregon shore easterly through the green navigation Buoy #1 and continuing to the Washington shore
<b>Sanctuaries:</b>	Elokomin-A, Cowlitz River, Kalama-A and Lewis-A
<b>Gear:</b>	Drift nets only. Maximum mesh size is 3-3/4 inches. Unslackened, single-wall, multi-filament floater nets only. Monofilament nets are not allowed. Net length not to exceed 150 fathoms. A red cork must be placed on the corkline every 25 fathoms as measured from the first mesh of the net. Red corks at 25-fathom intervals must be in color contrast to the corks used in the remainder of the net. There are no restrictions on the hang ratio. The hang ratio is used to horizontally add slack to the net. The hang ratio is determined by the length of the web per length of the corkline. The use of slackers or stringers to slacken the net vertically is <u>prohibited</u> . Rip lines are allowed providing they do not vertically slacken the net

<b>Allowable Sales:</b>	Adipose fin-clipped coho salmon; pink salmon and Chinook salmon. White sturgeon and chum salmon may not be possessed or sold.
<b>Regulations:</b>	<p>Regulations typically in place for mark-selective commercial fisheries are in effect, including but not limited to: net length, use of recovery boxes, limited soak times, red corks, tangle-net certification, etc.</p> <p><b>Soak times</b>, 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 <u>30 minutes</u>.</p> <p><b>Recovery Box</b>: Each boat will be required to have on board two operable recovery boxes or one box with two chambers that meet the flow and size requirements standard for the winter/spring season. Each box and chamber and associated pump shall be operating during any time that the net is being retrieved or picked. All non-legal fish must be released immediately unharmed to the river or placed into an operating recovery box. All non-legal salmon and all steelhead that are bleeding, lethargic or appear lifeless 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.</p> <p><b>Measuring mesh size</b>: Mesh size is determined by placing three consecutive meshes under hand tension and the measurement is taken from the inside of one knot to the outside of the opposite knot of the center mesh. Hand tension means sufficient linear tension to draw opposing knots of meshes into contact</p> <p><b>Observer program</b>: 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.</p> <p><b>Live Capture workshop</b>: Only licensed Columbia River commercial fishers that have completed the required state-sponsored workshop concerning live capture commercial fishing techniques may participate in this fishery. At least one fisher on each boat must have live capture certification.</p>
<b>Additional Rules:</b>	<p><b>Multiple net rule in effect</b>: Which means 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.</p> <p><b>Lighted Buoys</b>: 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><b>24-hour</b> quick reporting required is for Washington wholesale dealers, per WAC 220-69-240.</p>

- Effort is expected to be limited. Staff estimates less than 50 vessels may participate.
- Pre-season modeling assigned 20,000 hatchery coho for this pilot fishery. Estimating actual catch is difficult, since there is no historical data to draw on.
- Staff will monitor catch as the season progresses and make adjustments if needed.
- The overall coho mark rate is expected to be 64%. If the actual mark rate is significantly different from expectations, then the number of hatchery fish available changes accordingly.
- Steelhead handle is estimated at less than 300 fish.

- The mortality rate used for this pilot fishery is 13.6% for salmon and steelhead.
- The allowable sales for this fishery have been modified to address permanent regulations adopted by The Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission in June 2013 prohibiting retention of Columbia River chum salmon.

<b><i>Recommendation: 2013 Non-Indian Mainstem Commercial Salmon Fishery</i></b>	
Season:	Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday nights
Dates:	October 1-16, 2013 (7 nights)
Open Hours:	8 PM to 6 AM (10-hours)
Area:	Zones 4-5. Lower deadline defined as a straight line projected from the Warrior Rock Lighthouse on the Oregon shore easterly through the green navigation Buoy #1 and continuing to the Washington shore
Sanctuaries:	Washougal and Sandy Rivers
Gear:	Drift gillnets only. 8" minimum mesh size restriction. Multiple net rule in effect, which means 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. 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:	Chinook, coho and pink salmon. White sturgeon and chum salmon may not be possessed or sold.
Additional Rules:	24-hour quick reporting required for Washington buyers, pursuant to WAC 220-69-240

- Catch estimates include 7,500 Chinook and 1,100 coho.
- Provides opportunity to harvest surplus Chinook for the remainder of the 2013 fall season.

<b><i>Recommendation: 2013 Select Area Commercial Fall Fisheries</i></b>
Effective 4:00 p.m. September 30, 2013: Prohibit the possession and sale of chum salmon in all Select Area fishing sites.

- The recommendation would maintain concurrent regulations in Columbia River mainstem and Select Area commercial fisheries.

***Non-Indian Fisheries ESA Impact Estimates***

- Considering all the data in hand, non-Indian fisheries (including completed, on-going, proposed, and planned fisheries) are expected to remain within the ESA constraints for both salmon and steelhead.
  - Impacts to lower Columbia natural (LCN) Chinook are currently projected at 36.2% compared to the 38.97% limitation.
  - Impacts to wild Group B steelhead are currently projected at 1.98% compared to the 2.00% allowable take limitation.

- URB impacts are projected to be 12.4% compared to the 15.0% available.
- Impacts to Lower Columbia River (LCR) coho are estimated at 14.3% compared to the 15% limitation.

### **Future Meetings**

- The Joint staff will recommend additional hearings as needed.