

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT: SPRING FACT SHEET NO. 3a
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
May 5, 2015

<i>Fisheries under Consideration:</i> Mainstem commercial salmon Lower Columbia River recreational salmon Zone 6 recreational salmon

Stock status and management guidelines for 2015 Chinook fisheries were presented in Winter Fact Sheet #2a (January 28, 2015).

- River conditions are warmer and clearer than recent five- and ten-year averages. Current outflow at Bonneville Dam was measured at 191.5 kcfs on May 4 which is 70-90 kcfs lower than recent ten- and five-year averages respectively. Water temperatures have been approximately two to three degrees above normal and currently measure 55° F.
- Bonneville Dam passage through May 4 totals 154,033 adult Chinook. The *U.S. v. Oregon* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met May 4 to review the status of the upriver spring Chinook run and provided an in-season run update of 241,000 adult fish to the Columbia River.
- Adult spring Chinook passage at Willamette Falls through April 30 totals 17,686 fish, well above the five-year average cumulative passage to date of 6,012 fish. The five-year average 50% passage date is May 21.

Non-Indian Fishery Update

- Three mainstem commercial salmon fishing periods have occurred to date (31 hours total). Landings from the first two periods totaled 1,737 adult Chinook. Landings from the third period (May 4) are still being calculated, but appear to be within expectations at around 1,280 Chinook. Kept and release mortalities of upriver Chinook is estimated at 2,436 fish, or 54% of the current allocation of 4,493 fish.
- Mainstem commercial shad fisheries will be open under permanent regulations in Area 2S from 3 PM to 10 PM daily Monday through Friday from May 10 through June 20 (except on the observed Memorial Day holiday).
- Select Area fisheries are ongoing and expected to continue through June 13. Combined winter-spring landings through May 3 total 3,173 Chinook. Upriver Chinook mortalities total 273 compared to the current allocation of 362 fish.
- The lower Columbia River recreational Chinook fishery was open from January 1 through April 11, and was also open on April 16 and May 2-3. Catch estimates total 15,073 kept and 2,634 released adult fish from 107,634 angler trips. Kept and release mortalities of upriver Chinook is estimated at 11,686 fish, or 75% of the current allocation of 15,506 fish.
- The lower Columbia River from the Tongue Point/Rocky Point line upstream to the I-5 Bridge will open May 16 for hatchery steelhead and hatchery jack Chinook. Shad retention opens May 16 from Buoy 10 upstream to Bonneville Dam under permanent regulations.

- The recreational spring Chinook fishery from Bonneville Dam upstream to the Oregon/Washington border is scheduled to be open through May 6. Catch estimates through Sunday May 3 total 1,090 kept and 317 released adult fish. Kept and release mortalities of upriver Chinook is estimated at 1,122 fish. Catch projections for May 4-6 total 360 additional kept and release mortalities. The season total is estimated at 1,482 fish, or 72% of the current allocation of 2,068 fish.
- The recreational fisheries on the Snake River (Washington waters) are open on a days-per-week basis in four sections of the river. The fisheries are ongoing until the harvest allocation is met. Catch estimates through May 2 total 840 kept and 104 released adult fish. Kept and release mortalities of upriver Chinook is estimated at 850 fish or 52% of the current allocation of 1,627 fish.

Summary of 2015 Non-treaty upriver Chinook catches _ preliminary						
Fishery	Upriver Catch (kept plus release mortalities)					
	Pre-Update Allocated (167.7/ 232.5K)	Inseason Allocated (241.0 K)	In Hand	Projected	Total	Balance
Commercial						
Mainstem	1,760	4,493	2,436		2,436	2,057
Select Area (actual and proj.) <i>(proj. thru 6/13)</i>	244	362	273	89	362	0
Recreational						
Below Bonneville	10,318	15,506	11,686	0	11,686	3,820
Bonn to OR/WA border <i>(proj. thru 5/6)</i>	1,376	2,068	1,122	360	1,482	586
Snake River (actual and proj.)	1,083	1,627	850	777	1,627	0
Wanapum Tribal	30	45	0		0	45
Total Upriver Mortalities	14,810	24,100	16,367	1,226	17,593	6,508

Non-Indian Fishery Recommendations

Non-Indian Mainstem Commercial:

<i>Joint Staff Recommendations- 2015 Non-Indian Salmon Commercial Fishery</i>		
Season:	4:00 PM Wednesday May 6 to 6:00 AM Thursday May 7, 2015	(14 hours)
Area:	Zones 1-5	
Sanctuaries:	Grays River, Elochoman-B, Cowlitz River, Kalama-B, Lewis-B, Sandy, and Washougal.	
Allowable Sales:	Adipose fin-clipped Chinook salmon, and shad.	
Gear:	<p>Drift nets only. 4¼-inch maximum mesh size (tangle net). Single-wall multi-filament net only. Monofilament tangle nets are not allowed.</p> <p>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 inside of the opposite knot of the center mesh. Hand tension means sufficient linear tension to draw opposing knots of meshes into contact.</p> <p><u>Net length not to exceed 150 fathoms.</u> 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 may be increased from 150 to 175 fathoms for nets constructed with a steelhead excluder panel, weedlines, or droppers. An optional use of a steelhead excluder panel of mesh may be hung between the corkline and the 4¼-inches maximum mesh size tangle net. The excluder panel web must be a minimum mesh size of 12 inches 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 inch maximum mesh size tangle net. 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 as required.</p> <p><u>Red corks are required</u> at 25-fathom intervals, and red corks must be in contrast to the corks used in the remainder of the net.</p> <p><u>Multi net rule in place:</u> 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.</p>	

Regulations: **Soak times** are defined as the time elapsed from when the first of the gillnet web is deployed into the water until the gillnet web is fully retrieved from the water, must not exceed 45 minutes.

Recovery Box: Each boat will be required to have on board two operable recovery boxes or one box with two chambers. 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 a 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 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 salmonid 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.

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 the fishery. In addition, cooperation with department personal prior to a fishing period is expected.

Live Capture workshop: 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.

Lighted Buoys: 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.

24-hour quick reporting is in effect for Washington buyers (WAC 220-69-240(14)(d)).

- The catch estimate is 1,000 to 1,200 hatchery Chinook based on an expected 80 deliveries. Upriver mortalities are estimated at 1,000 fish or less. Season total upriver mortalities would be 3,436 fish, or 76% of the total commercial allocation at the current run size.
- Based on Commission guidance to use tangle nets in this fishery, staff is recommending an additional fishing period this week in advance of significant shad returns. Additional commercial opportunity is expected but may require the use of large mesh gear.
- With the clear water conditions, fishing during hours of darkness is needed for the fleet to gain access to the harvestable allocation of hatchery Chinook.
- A Wednesday night fishery avoids conflict with the Tuesday night and Thursday night fisheries in Select Areas.

Non-Indian Recreational - Lower Columbia River:

- An estimated total of 3,820 upriver mortalities remain available for this fishery. There are a few scenarios when considering how best to utilize this balance.
- During preseason discussions with the Columbia River Recreational Advisory Group (CRRAG), there has been a strong desire to open adult Chinook retention concurrent with the steelhead opener (May 16) and continue the fishery through the remainder of the spring season (June 15).
- Staff estimates that in order to re-open Chinook retention on May 16 a total of 3,200 upriver fish would be needed. Currently the balance is sufficient to open on May 16.
- Inseason and actions) have included providing short (1-2 day openers) to provide at least some opportunity.
- At last week’s hearing the decision to re-open for only two days and ‘save’ the balance to put towards the May 16 continuous opener was a balance between these two scenarios.

<i>2015 Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Recreational Fisheries</i>	
Downstream of Bonneville Dam	
Season	Open May 16 through June 15, 2015
Area:	Tongue Point/Rocky Point line upstream to Beacon Rock (boat and bank) plus bank angling only from Beacon Rock upstream to the Bonneville Dam deadline. Legal upstream boat 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. Release sockeye. Only adipose fin-clipped fish may be kept. All other permanent regulations apply.
Additional regulations	
The mainstem Columbia River will be open for retention of adipose fin-clipped steelhead and shad <u>only</u> during days and seasons open for retention of adipose fin-clipped spring Chinook.	
When the 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. On days when the mainstem Columbia River fishery is closed to Chinook retention, permanent salmonid bag limit regulations apply.	

- The recommendation provides for a continuous fishery beginning May 16 as requested by the CRRAG.
- Catch estimates total 5,000 Chinook handled including 3,200 upriver mortalities. Season total upriver mortalities would be 14,886 fish, or 96% of the total commercial allocation at the current run size. A projected balance of 620 upriver mortalities would remain.
- Options for accessing this projected balance would be to:
 1. Start the fishery one day earlier on Friday May 15
 2. Lift the boat boundary restriction as soon as possible (early June)
 3. Have a one-day retention period Saturday May 9. This option requires 100% of the current projected balance. If catch is higher than expected, it may jeopardize the ability to maintain Chinook retention through June 15.

Non-Indian Recreational - Bonneville to OR/WA border:

- An estimated total of 586 upriver mortalities remain available for this fishery.

<i>2015 Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Recreational Fisheries</i>	
Upstream of Bonneville Dam	
Season	Extend the current season through Sunday May 10, 2015 (4 additional 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 salmonids per day, but only one may be a Chinook. Only adipose fin-clipped fish may be kept. All other permanent regulations apply.

- Although catch through May 6 is expected to slightly exceed preseason expectations, the recent run update provides an opportunity to extend the Chinook fishery beyond the scheduled closure date.
- If additional fish become available due to a run update or lower than projected catches, staff would likely reserve these fish until the fishery could be re-open and continue through June 15.

Actual and Proposed Non-Indian Catch Balance

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	Pre-Update Allocated (167.7/ 232.5K)	Inseason Allocated (241.0 K)	In Hand	Projected	Total	Balance
Commercial						
Mainstem	1,760	4,493	2,436	1,000	3,436	1,057
Select Area (actual and Proj.) <i>(proj. thru 6/13)</i>	244	362	273	89	362	0
Recreational						
Below Bonneville	10,318	15,506	11,686	3,200	14,886	620
Bonn to OR/WA border <i>(proj. thru 5/10)</i>	1,376	2,068	1,122	860	1,982	86
Snake River (actual and proj.)	1,083	1,627	850	777	1,627	0
Wanapum Tribal	30	45	0	45	45	0
Total Upriver Mortalities	14,810	24,100	16,367	5,971	22,338	1,763

Future Hearing

- The Joint Staff may recommend a hearing as early as Monday May 11 to review stock status and non-Indian fisheries.