

**OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND
WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT: FALL FACT SHEET #5
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
August 27, 2015**

Fisheries under consideration:	Buoy 10 recreational Non-Indian commercial Youngs Bay commercial/recreational
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Detailed information on stock status and management guidelines for Columbia River fisheries are presented in Fall Factsheet #1, dated July 29, 2015.

Stock Status

- Passage at Bonneville Dam through August 26 totals 59,700 adult Fall Chinook. Chinook passage to date has been generally tracking within expectations. Based on the 10-year average, passage is 50% complete by September 8.
- Passage of upriver summer steelhead since July 1 totals 161,400 fish. Passage to date has been tracking lower than expectations. Based on the 10-year average, passage is 50% complete by August 11.
- The *U.S. v. Oregon* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will begin weekly reviews of Chinook and steelhead stock status next week.

River Conditions

- The Columbia River flows at Bonneville Dam are currently 153 kcfs, which is slightly higher than the ten-year average of 141 kcfs for August 25.
- Water temperature at Bonneville Dam is 70° F, which is similar to the recent ten-year average (71° F) for August 25.

Early Fall Non-Indian Commercial Fishery

- The Early Fall fishery is underway and scheduled to continue through August 29. Season structure consists of three (9-hour) fishing periods per week (Sunday, Tuesday and Thursday) in Zones 4-5 using large mesh (9-inch minimum) gear. A total of 47,500 Chinook were expected to be landed given the 1.7% LRH impacts allocated to August commercial fisheries.
- Harvest through August 26 includes 17,965 Chinook and 75 Coho. Landings for tonight's fishery are projected at 7,500 Chinook. Analysis of the coded-wire tags (CWTs) for August 9-14 indicated that stock composition was tracking high for LRH and low for BPH.
- Considering the projected harvest through August 28 and the CWT data through August 14, staff estimates a total of 14,000 Chinook (0.47% LRH impact) remain available for harvest in August.

Select Area Commercial Fisheries

- Commercial fisheries in Youngs Bay opened August 4 and the other Select Areas sites opened this week. Chinook harvest in Youngs Bay has been very low to date, totaling 800 fish through August 20, which is 30% of the recent 5-year average.

- The abundance of Select Area Bright (SAB) fall Chinook has been much lower than expected which has prompted concern about adequate escapement for hatchery broodstock needs.
- In Youngs Bay, the two (12-hour) periods adopted for the week of August 23 represented a 71% reduction of fishing time for that week relative to the typical fishing schedule.

Recreational Fisheries

- Catch estimates for the lower Columbia River (LCR) recreational fishery include 2,500 Chinook kept from 25,000 angler trips during August 1-23. Hot weather and a weak tide series last week appears to have slowed the fishery some. This fishery transitions to mark-selective regulations for Chinook during September 8–14 in the area from Tongue Point upstream to Warrior Rock.
- The area from Warrior Rock upstream to Bonneville Dam is scheduled to remain open for Chinook through December. Catch rates have been fairly low in this area, but are also expected to improve.
- The fishery from Bonneville Dam upstream to the Highway 395 opened August 1 and is scheduled to remain open through December 31. The season total catch expectation for this fishery is 9,000 Chinook.
- The Buoy 10 fishery opened August 1 and Chinook retention is scheduled to be open through September 7. Preseason modeling for Chinook harvest (including release mortalities) totaled 34,845 fish. LCN wild tule impacts allocated to this fishery total 4.1%. Nearly 52,000 hatchery Coho were set aside for this fishery.
- The Buoy 10 fishery got off to a strong start and effort and catch rates have remained high. Harvest through August 23 included 30,600 Chinook and 18,600 Coho from 65,300 angler trips. Actual catch last week (August 17-23) was much higher than projected and likely the highest on record (nearly 18,300 Chinook kept).
- Available CWT data from the Buoy 10 fishery indicates stock composition remains higher for LRH stock than expected preseason (22% v 17%). This means that impacts to LCN wild tules are accruing at a rate that is higher than expected.
- Beginning August 24 the fishery switched to a mark-selective fishery (MSF) for Chinook. Projected catch for the MSF included 6,200 Chinook (including release mortalities) for the first week (Aug 24-30) and 3,400 for the second week (Aug 31 – Sep 7).
- Effort and Chinook catch rates during August 24-26 is tracking higher than projected and includes 4,600 Chinook mortalities. Chinook mark rates are higher than modeled (46% v 40%) which also contributes to the higher kept catch. The release mortality rate remains at 19% for both Chinook and Coho. Catch projections for this week total 11,300 Chinook mortalities.
- Catch projections through August 30 total 41,900 Chinook mortalities and 23,300 Coho from 94,400 anglers. LCN tule impacts are projected to be 5.3% by August 30.
- The projected catch of 41,900 Chinook represents 120% of the Chinook allocated and 129% of the Buoy 10 impacts allocated for LCN tules based on the available data.

Recommendations:

Recommendation: 2015 Non-Indian Mainstem Commercial Early Fall Fishery	
Season:	9 PM Sunday August 30 to 6 AM Monday August 31 (9 hours)
Area:	Zones 4-5. The deadline at the lower end of Zone 4 is 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. 9-inch minimum mesh size restriction. Multiple net rule NOT in effect, which means nets not authorized for this fishery may not be onboard. Lighted buoys required.
Allowable Sales:	Chinook, Coho, pink, and sockeye salmon, and shad
Additional Rules:	Washington buyers: 24-hour quick reporting required pursuant to WAC 220-69-240. Oregon buyers: Electronic submission of fish receiving tickets required pursuant to OAR 635-006-0210

- Catch could range from 10,000 to 18,000 Chinook.
- Late August/early September is very volatile as Chinook abundance is rapidly increasing. This volatility makes estimating catch difficult. If harvest is on the high-end of the range, the additional fish would be transferred from the September/October commercial Zone 4-5 fisheries which are allocated 19,000 Chinook and 0.6% LCN tule impacts.
- Consistent with preseason planning, late fall commercial mainstem fisheries are expected to begin the week of September 13.

Recommendation: 2015 Buoy 10 Recreational Fishery	
Action:	Effective Saturday August 29 through Wednesday September 30: retention of Chinook is prohibited.
Area:	From a true north and south line through Buoy 10 upstream to a projected line from Rocky Point of the Washington Shore through Red Buoy # 44 to the navigation light at Tongue Point on the Oregon bank.

- Closing Chinook retention at Buoy 10 immediately will help minimize the risk of impacting the ongoing LCR sport fishery between Tongue Point and Warrior Rock.
- Chinook retention is scheduled to re-open at Buoy 10 on October 1. The area remains open to hatchery Coho.

Youngs Bay Fishery

- All waters in this fishing area are Oregon State waters and require Oregon State action, but all waters are open to Washington licensed fishers.

<i>Oregon Staff Recommendation: 2015 Select Area Fall Season - Youngs Bay Fishery</i>	
Season:	7 PM Monday August 31 to 7 AM Friday September 4 3.5 days
Area:	The Youngs Bay fishing area includes all waters from the new Highway 101 Bridge upstream to the upper boundary markers at Battle Creek Slough; including the lower Walluski River upstream to the Highway 202 Bridge and the lower Lewis and Clark River upstream to the overhead power lines immediately upstream of Barrett Slough.
Gear:	<p>Legal gear is restricted to 6-inch maximum mesh size. 250 fathoms maximum net length, and weight on the leadline not to exceed two pounds on any one fathom. Use of additional weights and anchors attached directly to the leadline is allowed in Youngs Bay between markers located approximately 200 yards upstream of the mouth of the Walluski River and the upper deadline at Battle Creek Slough, in the lower Walluski River upstream to the Highway 202 Bridge, and in the Lewis and Clark River from the Alternate Highway 101 Bridge upstream to the overhead power lines immediately upstream of Barrett Slough. Red corks are required at 25-fathom intervals and red corks must be in contrast to corks used in the remainder of the net.</p> <p>Multiple Net Rule: 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>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>
Allowable Sales:	Chinook, Coho, Pink, and Sockeye salmon and shad
Additional Rules:	Oregon buyers are required to submit fish receiving tickets electronically pursuant to OAR 635-006-0210.

- The recommendation of a 3.5 day period for the week of August 30 represents a 50% reduction of the typical fishing hours for this timeframe.
- The recommended fishing period provides commercial harvest opportunity on fall Chinook and Coho while allowing for additional hatchery escapement.

Select Area Recreational

- Select Area and local tributary recreational fisheries are currently open under permanent regulations. Due to the unusually low abundance of SAB Chinook, modification to the open season for the Youngs Bay recreational fishery is necessary to meet SAB broodstock escapement needs.

<i>Oregon Staff Recommendation: 2015 Select Area Fall Season - Youngs Bay Recreational Fishery</i>
Effective September 1 to October 15: Retention of non-adipose fin clipped Chinook is prohibited in the waters of Youngs Bay/River from the commercial fishing deadline at Battle Creek Slough upstream to Youngs River Falls and the Klaskanine River from the confluence with Youngs River upstream to the Youngs River Loop Bridge (Tidewater Bridge).

- This closure is intended to reduce the harvest of SAB fall Chinook to meet broodstock needs while still allowing recreational harvest of adipose fin-clipped fall Chinook and Coho.