

COLUMBIA RIVER INTER-TRIBAL FISH COMMISSION
JOINT STAFF REPORT: FALL FACT SHEET NO. 16b
Columbia River Compact
October 14, 2015

Fisheries under consideration:	Treaty commercial sturgeon setline
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Detailed sturgeon stock status and historic harvest data were presented in the 2015 Joint Staff Report Concerning Stock Status And Fisheries For Sturgeon And Smelt (December 18, 2015)
<http://wdfw.wa.gov/publications/01675/wdfw01675.pdf>.

Stock Status and Management Guidelines

- The joint state/tribal Sturgeon Management Task Force meets periodically to review stock status, harvest and rebuilding efforts for sturgeon in Zone 6. The Task Force recommends both sport and treaty commercial harvest guidelines for each reservoir in Zone 6. These recommendations have been accepted by the states and treaty tribes.
- The 2015 treaty commercial sturgeon guidelines are shown in the catch table in the following section.
- Each year an adult stock assessment is done for one of the three reservoirs. Stock assessment is a joint state/tribal project using gillnets and setlines in a mark-recapture study. Stock assessment work will begin this year in the John Day Pool in December.
- Young of the year sampling is carried out in each reservoir every fall using very small mesh gillnets. Young of the year sampling has concluded in the John Day Pool and will be finished in The Dalles Pool this week. The Bonneville Pool will be done next week.

2015 Treaty Sturgeon Fisheries

- 2015 treaty commercial sturgeon fisheries have consisted of a January setline fishery in each Pool. There was also a winter season gillnet fishery that began in February. The Dalles and John Day Pools was open from February 2 through February 24. The Bonneville Pool was open from February 23 through March 21.
- Sturgeon are also harvested for subsistence use during spring, summer, and fall season fisheries targeting salmon and steelhead. These subsistence fish are not included in the commercial harvest guidelines. The preliminary total 2015 subsistence catch to date is 67.
- The following table contains the 2015 commercial harvest to date.

2015 Treaty Indian Season Commercial Landings by Pool and Associated Catch Guidelines					
Reservoir	January Setline	Winter Gill Net	Commercial Total	Commercial Guideline	Remaining
Bonneville	1	377	378	1,100	722
The Dalles	0	93	93	325	232
John Day	81	803	884	1,000	116
Total	82	1,273	1,355	2,425	

- Late fall setline fisheries are periodically used to access remaining fish on the commercial harvest guidelines. Setline fisheries normally have relatively modest effort and catch rates.

Tribal Fishery Plan

Treaty Commercial Salmon

- The four Columbia River treaty tribes have adopted the following regulations:

<i>2015 Treaty Indian Fall Commercial Sturgeon Setline Fishery</i>	
Season for The Dalles Pool:	6:00 AM Monday October 19 to 6:00 PM Friday October 30, 2015
Season for the Bonneville Pool:	6:00 AM Monday November 2 to 6:00 PM Friday, November 13, 2015
Sanctuaries:	Standard sanctuaries applicable to setline gear.
Gear:	Setline Gear. Fishers are encouraged to use circle hooks and avoid J-hooks. It is unlawful to use setline gear with more than 100 hooks per set line, with hooks less than the minimum size of 9/0, with treble hooks, without visible buoys attached, and with buoys that do not specify operator and tribal identification
Allowable Sales:	Sturgeon from 43 to 54 inches fork length in The Dalles Pool and from 38 to 54 inches fork length in the Bonneville Pool may be sold or kept for subsistence purposes. Sturgeon within the legal size limit and caught in platform and hook and line fishery may be sold <u>if</u> caught during the open period and open area of the set line fishery. Fish landed during the open periods are allowed to be sold after the period concludes.
Additional:	24-hour quick reporting required for Washington buyers, pursuant to WAC 220-69-240 except that landings must be reported within 24-hours of completing the fish ticket. It is unlawful to sell, barter, or attempt to sell or barter sturgeon eggs that have been removed from the body cavity of a sturgeon prior to sale of the sturgeon to a wholesale dealer licensed, or to sell or barter sturgeon eggs at retail. It is unlawful to deliver to a wholesale dealer any sturgeon that are not in the round with the head and tail intact.

- The fishery closure dates are expected to be temporary. This step-wise approach will allow managers to assess harvest to date and plan additional opportunity to provide access to any remaining fish on each of the harvest guidelines.
- The tribes will monitor the catches and take action to close the fisheries earlier if the harvest guidelines are expected to be reached before the scheduled closure dates.
- At this time, the tribes are not considering opening the John Day Pool.

Future Meetings

- The next Compact Hearing will be scheduled depending on the status of ongoing fisheries.