

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT: WINTER FACT SHEET NO. 7
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
April 4, 2016

<i>Fisheries under Consideration:</i>	Non-Indian Mainstem Commercial Salmon Select Area Commercial Fisheries (Youngs Bay)
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Stock status and management guidelines for 2016 Chinook fisheries were presented in Winter Fact Sheet #1a (January 27, 2016).

- River conditions on the Columbia are fairly normal for this time of year. Water temperatures currently measure 47° F compared to the 5-yr average of 46° F for this date. Current outflow at Bonneville Dam is 179 kcfs, compared to the 5-yr average of 271 kcfs for this date.
- Adult Chinook passage at Bonneville Dam through April 3 totals 456 fish. Based on the pre-season forecast and 5-year average timing, about 700 fish would be expected at Bonneville Dam by this date. The 5-yr average 50% passage date at Bonneville Dam is May 7.

Mainstem Commercial

- Winter steelhead abundance typically peaks in mid-March, then declines as the fish move into the tributaries. Passage at Bonneville Dam and Willamette Falls indicates the run is tracking generally within expectations given the forecast of nearly 17,000 wild fish.
- The number of upriver spring Chinook (kept plus release mortalities) available to the mainstem commercial fishery prior to a run size update is 1,222 adult fish. An additional 7,150 Willamette hatchery spring Chinook are available to commercial fisheries for the 2016 spring season, but access to these fish is constrained by the commercial upriver Chinook allocation.
- Test fishing has occurred in Zones 2-3 on Sundays beginning March 13. Data from the April 3 test fishery indicates Chinook abundance continues to increase while steelhead abundance is decreasing, when compared to data collected the week prior (March 27).

2016 Spring Chinook Observation Summary_ All data preliminary														
						Chinook						Steelhead		
Fishery	Month	Date	(inches)	# of	Zones	Handle	Mark	%	Upriver	Chin/ Drift	Chin/ Sthd	Sthd/ Drift	Total Sthd	Mark Rate
			Mesh											
Test	Mar	13	4.25	16	2-3	4	50%	50%		0.4	1.0	0.4	4	50%
Test	Mar	20	4.25	17	2-3	33	82%	52%		1.9	1.1	1.7	29	72%
Test	Mar	27	4.25	17	2-3	42	83%	64%		2.5	1.9	1.3	22	64%
FullFleet	Mar	29	4.25	74	1-5	160	84%	47%		2.2	5.7	0.4	28	64%
Test	Apr	3	4.25	18	2-3	49	84%	73%		2.7	5.4	0.5	9	56%

- A (9-hour) commercial fishing period took place on March 29 in Zones 1-5 using tanglenet gear. Catch projections included 1,200 Chinook kept and around 900 upriver mortalities. Actual landings total 1,192 adult Chinook kept and 890 upriver mortalities from 86 deliveries.

- Based on landings to date, an estimated 332 upriver Chinook, or 27% of the pre-update commercial quota remains available. Considering expected mark rates and upriver Chinook stock proportions, staff is estimating about 400 total Chinook remain available for commercial harvest.
- Given the limited balance of fish available for harvest and building Chinook abundance, additional commercial fishing opportunity prior to the run-update will require landing limits. A similar approach was used in 2011, 2013, and 2015. This has proven to be a useful tool when harvestable fish are limited. All other regulations typically in place for spring season fisheries would remain in place (recovery boxes, limited drift times, etc.). Landing limits would be based on the remaining balance (all stocks) divided by the expected number of participating vessels. The biggest challenge for this approach is determining the number of vessels expected to participate and the stock composition of the kept catch.
- Staff is recommending the following season:

<i>Joint Staff Recommendation- Non-Indian Salmon Commercial Fishery</i>	
Season:	10:00 AM to 8:00 PM Tuesday April 5, 2016 (10 hours)
Area:	Zones 1-5
Sanctuaries:	Grays River, Elochoman-B, Abernathy Creek, Cowlitz River, Kalama-B, Lewis-B, Sandy and Washougal.
Gear:	<p>Drift nets only. 4¼-inch maximum mesh size restriction. Single-wall multi-filament net only. Monofilament tangle nets are not allowed.</p> <p>Net length not to exceed 150 fathoms. Net length can increase from 150 to 175 fathoms for nets constructed with a steelhead excluder panel, weedlines, or droppers.</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>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>
Allowable Sales:	<p>Adipose fin-clipped Chinook salmon and shad.</p> <p>Landing limits in place:</p> <p>A maximum of four (4) adult adipose-fin clipped Chinook may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel. The first four (4) adult hatchery fish must be retained and no additional drifts may be conducted once the Chinook limit has been retained.</p> <p>Jacks (Chinook less than 24-inches in total length) do not count against the adult landing limit.</p>

Regulations

Standard regulations typically in place for spring Chinook commercial fisheries are in effect, including but not limited to: net length, use of recovery boxes, limited soak times, red corks, lighted buoys, tangle net certification, etc.

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.

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

Recovery Box: 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; pumps must continue to run until the net is fully retrieved and completely on board the vessel. Pumps shall continue to run whenever a fish is in the recovery box. 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 non-legal 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.

Additional Rules:

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. Additionally, cooperation with department personnel 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.

24-hour **quick reporting** required for Washington wholesale dealers, per WAC 220-69-240. Oregon buyers are required to electronically submit fish receiving tickets pursuant to OAR 635-006-0210.

- The expected kept catch is up to 360 adult Chinook based on 90 deliveries, assuming all participants achieve the four fish maximum limit.
- If the period is adopted, season total Chinook catch is expected to total 1,189 adult upriver fish (kept and release mortalities) which represents 97% of the catch balance allowed pre-update and about 57% of the ESA impact allowed pre-update.
- Season total wild winter steelhead release mortalities are expected to total 24 fish which represents 0.7% of the 2.00% ESA impact limit allowed.
- An alternative approach would be to delay additional commercial opportunity until next week following the scheduled end of the recreational spring Chinook fishery. Staff expects that bag limits and regulations would remain identical.

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.
- Select Area winter commercial fisheries concluded March 29.
- To date, cumulative upriver mortalities total 69 fish, or 35% of the 198 fish reserved for Select Area commercial fisheries prior to the run update.
- The final period in Youngs Bay (March 28) consisted of a 4-hour period restricted to the upper portion of Youngs Bay (Walluski area). Landings included 32 Chinook with no upriver catch.
- In 2015, a significant number of fish escaped the commercial fishery due to a large break in fishing time following the winter season. To avoid a similar situation, Oregon staff is recommending minimal commercial opportunity be provided in the upper Youngs Bay area between the typical winter and spring seasons.
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<i>2016 Youngs Bay Select Area – Staff Recommendation</i>	
Winter/ Spring Season:	Wednesday April 6; 6:30 PM to 10:30 PM (4 hours) Sunday April 10; 9:30 AM to 1:30 PM (4 hours) Wednesday April 13; 12 PM (noon) to 4:00 PM (4 hours) Sunday April 17; 4:30 PM to 8:30 PM (4 hours)
Area:	From the first powerlines downstream of the Walluski River upstream to the confluence of the Youngs and Klaskanine rivers (Walluski Area).
Gear:	Winter season: 7-inch minimum mesh size restriction Maximum net length of 250 fathoms and weight on leadline not to exceed two pounds in any one fathom. 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. 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 and/or anchors attached directly to the leadline is allowed upstream of markers located approximately 200 yards upstream of the mouth of the Walluski River.
Allowable Sales:	Salmon and shad. Retention and sale of sturgeon is prohibited.
Miscellaneous Regulations:	Permanent regulations including rules related to transportation and lighted buoys remain in effect.

- The expected impact to upriver spring Chinook for the proposed fisheries is zero. Staff will monitor the fishery closely and rescind remaining fishing periods if any meaningful numbers of upriver spring Chinook are encountered.

Future Meetings

- A Joint State hearing is scheduled for 2:00 PM Thursday April 7 to review the ongoing Lower Columbia River sport fishery and consider a summer season recreational fishery for white sturgeon retention in Bonneville Pool