

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT: FALL FACT SHEET #4
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
August 25, 2016

Fisheries under consideration:	Buoy 10 recreational salmon Non-Indian mainstem commercial salmon
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Detailed information on stock status and management guidelines for the 2016 fall season were presented in Fall Factsheet #1 (July 27,2016)

Stock Status

- Passage at Bonneville Dam through August 24 totals 50,059 adult Fall Chinook. Nearly 628,000 adult Fall Chinook are projected to pass Bonneville Dam this year. Passage to date is within expectations. Based on the 10-year average, passage is 50% complete by September 8.
- Passage of upriver summer steelhead since July 1 totals 89,411 fish. Passage to date has been very low. Based on the 10-year average, passage is 50% complete by August 13.
- The *U.S. v. Oregon* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) reviews Chinook and steelhead stock status weekly. TAC has downgraded the Group A component to 123,400 fish (31,000 wild). This combined with the preseason forecast of 25,800 Group B fish brings the total projection to 149,200 steelhead at Bonneville Dam. TAC will meet again on August 29.

River Conditions

- The Columbia River flows at Bonneville Dam are currently 123 kcfs, which is less than the ten-year average of 159 kcfs.
- Water temperature at Bonneville Dam is 72° F, which is slightly higher than the recent ten-year average (71° F).

Non-Indian Commercial Early Fall Fishery

- The Early Fall fishery is underway and scheduled to continue through August 26. 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 51,600 Chinook were expected to be landed given the 2.5% LRH and 3.9% URB impacts allocated to August commercial fisheries.
- Harvest through August 22 includes 12,892 Chinook and 71 Coho. Landings for August 23-24 and August 25-26 are projected at 15,000 Chinook.
- Analysis of the coded-wire tags (CWTs) for August 7-19 indicated that stock composition was tracking within expectations.
- Considering the projected harvest through August 26 and the CWT data in hand, staff estimates a total of 24,000 Chinook remain available for harvest in August.

<i>Recommendation: 2016 Non-Indian Mainstem Commercial Early Fall Fishery</i>		
Season:	9 PM Sunday August 28 to 6 AM Monday August 29	(9 hours)
	9 PM Tuesday August 30 to 6 AM Wednesday 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:	24-hour quick reporting required for Washington buyers, pursuant to WAC 220-69-240. Oregon buyers are required to electronically submit fish receiving tickets pursuant to OAR 635-006-0210. Electronic fish tickets must be submitted within 24 hours of closure of the fishing period.	

- Catch could range from 18,000 to 22,000 Chinook. Late August/early September is very volatile as Chinook abundance is rapidly increasing. This volatility makes estimating catch difficult.
- If harvest exceeds the remaining balance for the August fishery, the additional fish would be transferred from the September commercial Zone 4-5 fisheries which are allocated about 16,000 Chinook. If harvest is on the low-end of the range, there is potential for an additional fishing period on Thursday September 1.
- Consistent with preseason planning, late fall commercial mainstem fisheries are expected to begin the week of September 18.

Non-Indian Commercial Seine Fishery

- The commercial seine fishery is underway and scheduled to continue through September 28. Season structure consists of two to five (10-hour) periods per week in Zones 1-3. Catch expectations include 2,700 Chinook (4,100 released).
- Staff has developed a plan to evaluate visual stock identification (VSI) as a tool to potentially increase the harvest of unmarked bright Chinook in the seine fisheries. This evaluation would ask the seine fishers to identify bright and tule stock Chinook based on external characteristics. Based on the fisher's stock call, unclipped Chinook deemed bright stock could be kept.

<i>Recommendation: 2016 Commercial Seine Fishery</i>	
Action #1:	Wednesday September 7 only: retention of unclipped Chinook caught with purse seine gear is allowed.
Action #2:	Wednesday September 14 only: retention of unclipped Chinook caught with beach seine gear is allowed
Allowable Sales	Are consistent with regulations currently in place, EXCEPT: All fin-clipped Chinook salmon caught must be retained and sold on days when unclipped Chinook salmon retention is allowed.

- The IFQs established for each gear type would remain in place.
- The one-day period for each gear type will provide information over a two week period on the relative accuracy of VSI in the seine fishery.
- DNA samples will be collected from retained unmarked (and presumed bright stock) Chinook to determine accuracy of unmarked Chinook stock calls. Unmarked, presumed tule stock, Chinook would be released alive.

Recreational Fisheries

- Catch estimates for the lower Columbia River (LCR) recreational fishery include 541 Chinook and 654 Steelhead kept from 10,575 angler trips during August 1-14. Catch rates are expected to improve as the season progresses. This fishery transitions to mark-selective regulations for Chinook during September 10–14 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 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 7,900 Chinook.
- The Buoy 10 fishery opened August 1 and Chinook retention is scheduled to be open through September 5. Chinook retention is limited to hatchery fish on Sundays and Mondays through September 5. Preseason modeling for Chinook harvest (including release mortalities) totaled 48,500 fish given the 6.5% LRH and 2.6% URB impacts allocated to the fishery. Nearly 22,000 hatchery Coho (plus release mortalities) are also allocated to this fishery.
- The Buoy 10 kept catch through August 23 includes about 10,200 Chinook and 1,600 Coho from 56,900 angler trips. Effort has been high, but catch rates through week 34 have been less than modeled.
- CWT data through August 18, combined with projected stock composition for the Buoy 10 fishery, indicate that stock composition is tracking high for LRH and low for URB.
- This week and next week typically have the highest Chinook catch in the Buoy 10 fishery. Staff has projected catch for the remainder of this week (Aug 24-28) at 14,500 Chinook mortalities and 14,800 mortalities for next week (Week 36) plus Labor Day. Projections for Chinook mortalities during September 6-December 31 total 2,600 fish. Total catch projections for August 24 through December 31 total 31,900 Chinook mortalities.
- Season total catch projections total 42,900 Chinook mortalities compared to the 48,500 fish available (88%).
- ESA impacts based on actual and projected stock composition includes 6.8% LRH and 2.2% URB impacts. This represents 105% and 85% of the Buoy 10 allocation respectively.
- Based on the projected harvest and ESA impacts available, there is some room for additional harvest. Staff has reviewed the catch estimates for the four remaining Chinook mark-selective days and is making the following recommendation.

Recommendation: 2016 Buoy 10 Recreational Fishery

Action:	Effective Sunday September 4 and Monday September 5: retention of clipped and unclipped Chinook is allowed.
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.

- Removing the mark-selective regulations at Buoy 10 will bring the catch projection up to 44,000 Chinook mortalities, which is 91% of the preseason estimate. ESA impacts are expected to total the 7.2% LRH and 2.3% URB impacts allocated to the Buoy 10 fishery.
- If adopted, the projected total exploitation rate for LRH Chinook is 39.6% (41% max limit) and the non-Indian impact rate for URB Chinook is projected to total 14.97% (15% limit).
- Staff will continue to closely monitor Chinook catch and stock composition as well as Coho catch.
- Chinook retention is scheduled to re-open at Buoy 10 on October 1. The area remains open to hatchery Coho.

Future Hearings

- The Joint Staff may recommend a hearing for Wednesday August 31 to consider additional non-treaty commercial fishing periods.
- The tribes have requested a hearing be scheduled September 14 or September 15 to consider sales of fish in additional treaty commercial fisheries.