OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT – SPRING FACT SHEET NO. 3
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
May 20, 2020

Fisheries under consideration:	Mainstem recreational salmon Mainstem commercial salmon

Detailed information on stock status and management guidelines for Columbia River fisheries are presented in Joint Staff Reports, which are produced annually and available online. The most recent reports are the 2020 Sturgeon/Smelt Report (January 17, 2020) and the 2020 spring/summer report for Chinook, sockeye, steelhead, and other species (February 7, 2020). Links to the online reports are *https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/columbia-river* *and* *http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/OSCRP/CRM/jsmreports.asp*

RIVER CONDITIONS

- Most Columbia River conditions as measured at Bonneville Dam are similar to the recent 5-year averages for early/mid-May. Current outflow is 339 kcfs, compared to the recent 5-year average of 343 kcfs. Water temperature currently measures 55° F which is cooler than the 5-year average of 57° F. Visibility is 4.0 feet, compared to the 5-year average of 3.4 feet. The current river stage at Vancouver is nearly 10 feet and is forecasted to rise over the next few days, cresting at about 12 feet on Saturday (Action Stage is 15.0 feet and Flood Stage is 16.0 feet).

STOCK STATUS

- Adult Chinook passage at Bonneville Dam through May 19 totals 43,029 fish, which is approximately one third of the 10-year (2010-19) average cumulative count and almost half of the 5-year (2015-19) average for this date. The recent 5-year average 50% passage date at Bonneville Dam is May 12.
- The *U.S. v. Oregon* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met on Monday, May 18 to review the upriver spring Chinook return and downgraded the forecast to 72,000 adults at the Columbia River mouth. TAC's next scheduled meeting is Tuesday, May 26. TAC was informed by IDFG about concerns regarding projections for hatchery broodstock returns and notes that the *U.S. v. Oregon* Production Advisory Committee (PAC) will be meeting to discuss this issue. PAC will be providing more information about projections for hatchery returns in the near future.
- Similar to 2019, the below average Chinook return has raised concern regarding broodstock escapement at several hatchery facilities.
- Projected returns of adult spring Chinook to Cowlitz Hatchery continue to be poor.
- During the spring management period, shad abundance tends to increase substantially in late May and peak in June. Cumulative shad passage at Bonneville Dam through May 19 is approaching 38,000 fish; 45% higher than the 2019 cumulative count and 3-times the 10-year average. Based on the 10-year average for passage, shad passage is usually about 1% complete through May 20 and 50% complete by June 7.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

- Forecasts and management guidelines for 2020 spring Chinook fisheries were presented in Winter Fact Sheets #2b and #3a on February 11 and February 19, respectively. Commission guidance for 2020 upriver spring Chinook management included ESA impact sharing for upriver spring Chinook of 75% to recreational fisheries and 25% to commercial fisheries.
- Policy direction from both OR and WA commissions provides for mainstem commercial fisheries using standard spring season live capture techniques after an in-season run update if Select Area fisheries are not projected to use the full commercial allocation of impacts to upriver Chinook.

2020 NON-TREATY FISHERIES

Mainstem Columbia River Recreational Spring Chinook Fishery

- Recreational fisheries were open on May 5, 7, 9, 13, and 15–17 between Warrior Rock and Bonneville Dam and from Bonneville Dam to the OR/WA border. Both areas are open again today (May 20).
- Recreational fisheries on the Snake River were open on May 5-6, 8-9, 12-13, 15 and 19. The Clarkston area closed last week, while the Little Goose area remains open on Tuesdays and Fridays. Wanapum tribal fisheries have occurred as permitted.
- Recreational catches are summarized in the table below:

Accounting of upriver spring Chinook mortalities in 2020 recreational fisheries

	adult Chinook through May 17		projected through May 20*	current	percent of	
Fishery	kept	upriver morts (k+r)	total upriver morts (k+r)	allocation	allocation	balance
downstream of BON	1,359	1,291	1,386	3,384	41%	1,998
BON - OR/WA border	529	545	600	451	133%	(149)
Snake River (WA waters)	211	214	386	467	83%	81

*through 5/22 for Snake River

- Given the balance remaining on the upriver spring Chinook allocation at the current runsize projection, there is potential for additional angling opportunity. However, to consider an extension of the fishery between Bonneville Dam and the OR/WA border additional fish would need to be provided from the LCR fishery's allocation.

Recommendations: 2020 Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Recreational Fishery		
Downstream of Bonneville Dam		
Season:	Saturday May 23 through Wednesday May 27	5 days
Area:	Warrior Rock line upstream to the Bonneville Dam deadline (boat and bank). Legal downstream boundary defined as: A line projected from the Warrior Rock lighthouse on the Oregon shore through red USCG buoy #4 then to the piling dolphin on the lower end of Bachelor Island (Warrior Rock line).	
Daily Bag Limit:	Two adult salmonids (Chinook, sockeye, or steelhead only) per day, but only one may be a Chinook. Retained Chinook and steelhead must be hatchery fish. All sockeye are considered adults. All other permanent regulations apply.	

Bonneville Dam to Oregon/Washington Border		
Season:	Saturday May 23 through Wednesday May 27	5 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 hatchery salmonids (Chinook or steelhead only) per day, but only one may be a Chinook. All other permanent regulations apply.	

- Staff continues to recommend a conservative approach moving forward with these fisheries, including a limited days-per-week structure. This will provide additional recreational opportunity while allowing staff the time to monitor the run, harvest, and provide more clarity on upriver hatchery broodstock escapements.

- Considering catch rates during the recent re-openings, the proposed fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam is expected to handle about 500 adult Chinook, with 325 kept, and would accrue an additional 326 upriver mortalities. The recommended fishery upstream of Bonneville Dam is projected to handle about 550 adult Chinook (375 kept) and result in an additional 393 upriver mortalities.
- With the proposed extensions, projected cumulative upriver mortalities (2,705 adults) would represent 71% of the 3,835 mortalities available to the combined recreational fisheries downstream of the OR/WA border prior at the current run-size.
- Staff will review the fishery early next week to determine if additional opportunity is warranted based on an updated run size projection and fishery performance.
- Retention of adult spring Chinook remains closed downstream of Warrior Rock, but retention of hatchery steelhead, sockeye, and jack Chinook opened on May 16 from the Tongue Point/Rocky Point line upstream to the I-5 Bridge. Shad angling and retention opened throughout the lower Columbia below Bonneville Dam on May 16 and is open above Bonneville Dam under permanent regulations.
- Impacts to other listed stocks are expected to remain within take limitations based on recent year results. Fishery-specific impact rate expectations can be found in the latest Spring/Summer Joint Staff Report in the 2020 Winter, Spring, and Summer Season Expectations section.

Non-Treaty Commercial Fisheries

- Combined Select Area landings through May 17 total 1,422 Chinook and 324 white sturgeon. Chinook landings are approximately two thirds of the cumulative total for the same timeframe in 2019, and about 26% of the recent 5-year average. Select Area fisheries have accrued 52 upriver spring Chinook mortalities through May 17. The season total projection through June 15 is for 80 upriver mortalities to be used in Select Area commercial fisheries, which is well below preseason expectations.
- No landings occurred in the Area 2S commercial shad fishery for May 10–17.

- Given the current upriver spring Chinook run size projection, allocation sharing guidance, the post-update timeframe, and expected usage in Select Area commercial fisheries, a mainstem non-treaty commercial fishery could be considered at this time based on the available commercial balance (0.264% ESA impact rate, or 645 upriver mortalities).

Recommendation: 2020 Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Commercial Fishery	
Season:	10:00 AM to 9:00 PM Thursday May 21, 2020 (11 hours)
Area:	Zones 4-5. Hayden Island power lines (west towers) upstream to the upper commercial fishing deadline at Beacon Rock
Sanctuaries:	Sandy and Washougal river sanctuaries in effect.
Gear:	Drift tangle nets only. 4¼-inch maximum mesh size restriction. Single-wall multi-filament net only. Monofilament tangle nets are not allowed. 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. An optional use of a steelhead excluder panel of mesh may be hung between the corkline and the 4¼-inch maximum mesh size tangle net. The excluder panel web must be a minimum mesh size of 12-inch 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 below. Mesh size is determined by placing three consecutive meshes under hand tension, and the measurement is taken from the inside of one vertical knot to the inside of the opposite vertical knot of the center mesh. Hand tension means sufficient linear tension to draw opposing knots of meshes into contact. 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. 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.

Allowable Sales:	Adipose fin-clipped (hatchery) Chinook salmon, white sturgeon, and shad. A maximum of 16 (16) adult adipose fin-clipped Chinook may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel. The first sixteen (16) adult hatchery fish must be retained and no additional drifts may be conducted once the Chinook limit has been retained. Jacks (Chinook less than 24-inches in total length) do not count against the adult landing limit. A maximum of four white sturgeon with a fork length of 44-50 inches may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel during each calendar week (Sunday through Saturday). The white sturgeon possession and sales limit applies to mainstem fisheries only.
Regulations:	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. 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 non-legal sized 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.
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. 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, pursuant to WAC 220-352-315. Oregon buyers are required to submit fish receiving tickets electronically pursuant to OAR 635-006-0210. Electronic fish tickets must be submitted within 24 hours of closure of the fishing period, or within 24 hours of landing for fishing periods lasting more than 24 hours.

- Given the timing, location, high flows, short-notice, and potential for shad encounters in the proposed fishery, effort is expected to be relatively low.
- Catches for this period are not expected to exceed half of allowable. This would result in a kept catch expectation of 350 adult spring Chinook, including 320 upriver mortalities.
- Additional opportunity may be available if sufficient catch is remaining within the commercial allocation.
- Due to the Covid-19 situation, staff does not intend to conduct onboard monitoring of the fishery but agency boats will be deployed to conduct boat-based observation. In addition, logbooks will be distributed to commercial fishers and utilized as the primary means of data collection (kept/released adult Chinook, steelhead released, etc.) and can be compared with other data sources (sport fishery mark rate, Bonneville Dam mark rate, fishery models, etc.).
- Shad passage at Bonneville Dam is tracking ahead of average and is at or above counts observed in past years (2013-2016) when the final spring tangle net fisheries of the season were prosecuted, prior to switching to large-mesh gear due to shad handle.
- Since the commercial allocation of Willamette hatchery spring Chinook at the current run size is low (<310 fish) and some of those fish have been harvested in Select Area fisheries, the staff proposal includes a reduced area (upstream of Hayden Island) to limit the interception of Willamette-origin spring Chinook.
- Any steelhead encountered in this fishery would be classified as lower river Skamania stock. Based on observations in prior year fisheries during May, few steelhead are expected to be impacted in this fishery and aggregate impacts to wild lower river Skamania steelhead are expected to remain will within the 2.0% ESA limit.
- The proposed mainstem fishery overlaps all Select Area fisheries, therefore staff recommends the following action:

Staff Recommendation - Select Area Commercial Fisheries
Retention and sales of **non**-adipose fin-clipped Chinook from ongoing Select Area commercial fisheries is prohibited from 10:00 AM May 21 through 12:00 PM (noon) May 22, 2020.

ESA and Catch Balance

- Catches in all non-treaty fisheries combined will remain within the 1.5% ESA limit for listed upriver spring/summer Chinook stocks.
- An upriver spring Chinook run size of 56,000 adults would cover the projected cumulative mortalities for these fisheries and pre-update set-asides for other non-treaty fisheries.

Expected upriver spring Chinook mortalities in 2020 non-treaty fisheries							
		total upriver morts (k+r)			current	percent of	
	Fishery	through May 20*	recommendation	total expected	allocation	allocation	balance
Recreational	Downstream of BON	1,386	326	1,712	3,384	51%	1,672
	BON - OR/WA border	600	393	993	451	220%	(542)
	Snake River (WA waters)	386	na	386	467	83%	81
Tribal	Wanapum	3	na	13	13	100%	0
subtotal		2,375	719	3,104	4,315		1,211
Commercial	Select Areas	52	na	80	80	100%	0
	Mainstem	0	320	320	645	50%	325
subtotal		52	320	400	725		325
Grand Total		2,427	1,039	3,504	5,040	70%	1,536
*through 5/17 for Select Areas and Wanapum, 5/22 for Snake River							

FUTURE MEETINGS

- No additional Compact/Joint State hearings are currently scheduled. The Joint Staff anticipates a hearing may be needed next week to consider additional opportunities.