OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT - FALL FACT SHEET NO. 2
Columbia River Compact
August 13, 2020

Fisheries under Consideration: Treaty Commercial Gillnet

Detailed information on stock status and management guidelines for Columbia River fisheries are presented in Joint Staff Reports, which are produced annually and available on-line. The 2020 Fall Report was distributed on July 22, 2020. Links to the on-line reports are:
https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/columbia-river/reports or
http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/OSCRP/CRM/jsmreports.asp

RIVER CONDITIONS

- The recent five-day average Columbia River flows at Bonneville Dam as of August 12 are 156 kcfs which is greater than the five-year average of 139 kcfs on this date. Water temperature is 70°F, which is cooler than the recent five-year average of 72°F. Temperatures have been below the five-year average throughout much of 2020. Water temperatures typically peak in the last half of August.

STOCK STATUS

- Stock status information was presented in Fall Fact Sheet 1.

Fall Chinook

- Bonneville Dam passage through August 12 totals 4,671 adult and 876 jack fall Chinook. This is the third lowest cumulative count to date in the last 10 years. The clip rate is approximately 43%, which is higher than average. Adult passage is typically 1.5% complete on August 12.

Upriver Summer Steelhead

- Upriver summer steelhead pass Bonneville Dam from April through October of each year. Fish passing during July through October are categorized as A-Index or B-Index based on fork length (A-Index: <78 cm, B-Index: ≥78 cm). Passage during July is primarily A-Index fish; B-Index passage normally begins around the end of August. B-Index steelhead primarily return to Snake River tributaries in Idaho, while A-Index steelhead return to tributaries throughout the Columbia and Snake river basins.
- Counts of steelhead at Bonneville Dam since July 1 total 50,017 fish, which is 46% of the recent 10-year average (85% of recent 5-year). It is the seventh lowest count to date in the last 10 years but more than expected (~44,950) given the 2020 forecast assuming average run timing. Passage of the total run at Bonneville Dam (July–October) is typically 47% complete by August 12 (recent 10-year average). The count of unclipped steelhead since July 1 totals 24,511 fish which is also greater than the expected passage (~22,540) based on the forecast assuming average run timing. The ad-clip rate is 51% which is lower than average for this time period.
- During July 1-August 11, 526 steelhead have been sampled at Bonneville Dam. Nine unclipped B-Index steelhead and 4 clipped B-Index steelhead have been sampled in this timeframe. All of the other steelhead sampled since July 1 have been A-Index fish (250 clipped and 263 unclipped). A and B sized fish proportions are not unusual for this point in the run.

Coho

- Through August 12 a total of 38 adult and 25 jack coho have passed Bonneville Dam for this run year. The coho run at Bonneville is typically 0.1% complete by this date.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Salmon/Steelhead

- The 2018-2027 *U.S. v Oregon* Management Agreement (MA) provides specific fishery management guidelines for fall Chinook, summer steelhead, and Coho.
    - The allowable impact rate for combined treaty Indian and non-treaty fisheries is 45% of the URB run based on the preseason forecast (URB stock is the surrogate for SRW Chinook). This impact limit is allocated 30% for treaty Indian fisheries and 15% for non-treaty fisheries. If the actual URB return is less than 200,000, the impact limits drop to 23% for treaty Indian fisheries and 8.25% for non-treaty fisheries.
    - The escapement goal at Spring Creek Hatchery is 7,000 adult fall Chinook (BPH stock).
    - The management goal for adult fall Chinook passage at McNary Dam is 60,000 fish.
    - Based on the pre-season forecast, treaty Indian impacts are limited to 13% of the total B-Index steelhead.
    - The goal for upriver Coho passage at Bonneville Dam is 50% of the ocean abundance.
    - Fisheries are managed based on preseason forecasts until in-season run size updates become available.

2020 TREATY FISHERIES

Fall Season Fisheries

- Treaty platform and hook and line fisheries have been open for both subsistence and commercial purposes since August 1.
- Table 1 below shows projected 2020 fall season treaty harvest and projected catches. The model assumes average effort and average catch rates. As actual effort and catches become available projected future catches will be scaled to actual catch rates.
- The tribes have chosen to set just two initial openings as a cautionary approach to beginning the fall season. The tribes anticipate commercial gillnet fisheries should be able to occur through at least late September.

Table 1. 2020 Treaty Indian Fall Season Fisheries (Preliminary and Modeled catches)									
Week		Gillnet Fishery	Dates	Expected Effort (Nets)	Total Adult Chinook	URB Chinook	Total Steelhead	B Steelhead	Coho
31-32	Preliminary	Platform/ H&L	August 1-8	na	55	55	99	0	0
33-34	Projected	Platform/ H&L	August 9-22	na	920	445	331	0	10
35	Projected	8/24	8/27	475	11,300	7,100	700	30	60
36	Projected	8/31	9/3	550	18,900	10,600	800	60	260
		Total			31,175	18,200	1,930	90	330
	Allowed at Forecast run size					68,280		1,235	
		Expected Harvest by Sept 5				18,200		90	
		Remaining after Sept 5				50,080		1,145	
		Expected Harvest Rate by Sept 5				8.0%		0.9%	
		Remaining Harvest Rate After Sept 5				22.0%		12.1%	

Note: projected catches for statistical weeks with gillnet fisheries include platform and hook and line catch for those entire weeks.

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

2020 Treaty Indian Commercial Gillnet Fishery	
Seasons:	6:00 AM August 24 through 6:00 PM August 27 (3.5 days) 6:00 AM August 31 through 6:00 PM September 3 (3.5 days)
Area:	Zone 6
Gear:	Set and Drift Gillnets with an 8-inch minimum mesh size
Allowable Sales:	Salmon (any species), steelhead, shad, yellow perch, bass, walleye, catfish, and carp may be sold or retained for subsistence. Fish landed during the open periods are allowed to be sold after the period concludes. Sturgeon from 38 to 54 inches fork length in the Bonneville Pool and sturgeon from 43 to 54 inches fork length in The Dalles and John Day Pools may be kept for subsistence purposes.
Sanctuaries:	Standard sanctuaries applicable to gillnet gear. The standard Spring Creek Hatchery Sanctuary is in place.
Additional:	24-hour quick reporting required for Washington buyers, pursuant to WAC 220-352-315 except that landings must be reported within 24-hours of completing the fish ticket.

- Fisheries will be monitored, and catches reported regularly. Fisheries will be modified as needed to keep harvest impacts within allowed limits for the treaty fall season fisheries.
- Aerial flights will be conducted each week to count set nets.
- There is no action needed for platform and hook and line fisheries, Yakama tributary fisheries or fisheries downstream of Bonneville Dam.
- Commercial fishing provides numerous economic benefits for tribal and non-tribal communities.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- The tribes request a Compact hearing on Wednesday September 2 or Thursday September 3 to consider additional treaty Indian commercial gillnet fisheries.