OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT - FALL FACT SHEET NO. 5
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
September 9, 2020

Fisheries under consideration:	Recreational 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 pertaining to fall fisheries are available at the following links to online Joint Staff Report: https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/columbia-river/reports or https://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/OSCRP/CRM/jsmreports.asp

RIVER CONDITIONS

- As of September 8, the flow at Bonneville Dam was 108 kcfs, which is the similar to the recent ten-year average for this date.
- Water temperature at Bonneville Dam is currently 70°F which is similar to the recent 10-year average of 69.5°F. This year, water temperatures at Bonneville Dam have been below average most or the year but briefly peaked at 72°F in early August, and may be increasing again.

STOCK STATUS

Salmon/Steelhead

- Run size forecasts and stock descriptions for salmon and steelhead were presented in Fall 2020 Fact Sheet #1.
- Through September 8, a total of 209,673 adult fall Chinook have passed Bonneville Dam which is higher than would be expected given the preseason forecasts and average run timing. Over the last 10 years, the average 50% complete date has been September 10.
- Passage of upriver summer steelhead at Bonneville Dam during July 1 – September 8 totals 81,444 A/B-Index fish.
- The *U.S. vs OR* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met yesterday Tuesday, September 8 to review run size and harvest information for summer steelhead and fall Chinook. The returns of bright and tule fall Chinook appear to be early and both are expected to meet or exceed the pre-season forecasts. However, TAC did not update the run size for either fall Chinook stock. TAC updated the in-season projection for total A-Index steelhead to 82,000 (this includes an estimated 34,300 natural-origin fish). This update is an increase from last week's projection but still less than the preseason forecast of 85,900 A-Index steelhead. The return of B-Index steelhead appears to be tracking ahead of expectations. Passage includes an estimated 10,200 B-Index steelhead to-date (compared to 9,600 forecasted) but it is too early to provide an update to the B-Index steelhead return. TAC will continue to meet weekly throughout the fall management period and will provide further updates as information becomes available.
- Counts at Bonneville Dam through September 8 total 34,629 adult early stock Coho (defined as Coho passing prior to October 1), which is higher than expected. Passage of upriver early stock Coho is typically 50% complete by September 11.

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 upriver bright stock (URB) return based on preseason forecasts (URB stock is the surrogate for Snake River wild (SRW) Chinook). This impact limit is allocated 30% for treaty Indian fisheries and 15% for non-treaty fisheries.
  - However, due to non-treaty fisheries exceeding allowed harvest rates in recent years, and the breakpoint in the harvest rate schedule being well within the margin of historical forecast error, a conservative approach to preseason fishery planning is being utilized. All fisheries incorporate a split-season structure which limits the combined non-treaty URB/SRW harvest rate (HR) to 8.25% prior to an in-season run-size update. The initial URB run-size update typically occurs in mid-September. Additional fishing opportunity is planned to access the full 15% HR if the URB run size is projected to be at least 200,000 adults in-season.
  - The escapement goal at Spring Creek Hatchery is 7,000 adult fall Chinook (BPH stock).
  - The management goal for adult fall Chinook at McNary Dam is 60,000 fish.
  - The allowable non-treaty impact rates for wild summer steelhead (A-Index and B-Index) during fall fisheries is 2% each.
  - 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.
- The ESA impact limit to lower Columbia River (LCR) tule fall Chinook is 38% in 2020 given the pre-season forecast. Harvest of LRH stock is the surrogate for LCR Chinook. This exploitation rate (ER) limit includes impacts in ocean and Columbia River fisheries combined.
- In 2020, fishery impacts to LCN Coho are limited to an 18% ER for combined ocean and Columbia River fisheries.

2020 NON-TREATY FISHERIES

Buoy 10 Recreational Fishery

- The Buoy 10 fishery was open to Chinook and hatchery Coho retention August 14-27 as planned preseason but based on in-season action, the daily bag limit was increased to two fish effective September 5 and Chinook retention (1 fish per day) was allowed September 5-6. The fishery is currently open to retention of hatchery Coho with a two-fish daily bag limit. Through September 7, total adult Chinook mortalities (14,947 fish) are at 97% of preseason expectations for the pre-update portion of the season; URB mortalities are at 85% of expectations (stock composition not available for 9/5-6), and LRH mortalities were higher than expected. Coho catch rates have improved and are currently averaging around 0.33 kept/angler.

Mainstem Recreational Salmon Fisheries

- The lower Columbia River recreational salmon fishery from the West Puget Island line upstream to Warrior Rock was open to retention of Chinook and hatchery Coho August 1-31. The subarea between Tongue Point/Rocky Point and West Puget Island was open August 14-27. Preliminary estimates include 4,347 adult Chinook and 36 coho kept from ~24,800 angler trips. An additional 85 Chinook, 20 Coho, and 111 steelhead were released. Currently, total adult Chinook mortalities are at 85% of preseason expectations, with URB mortalities at 46% and LRH mortalities much higher than expected.
- For the area from Warrior Rock upstream to Bonneville Dam, Chinook and hatchery Coho retention has been open on a three-day-per-week schedule (Friday-Sunday) during August 7 through September 6. Preliminary estimates include 4,302 adult Chinook and 56 coho kept from ~23,600 angler trips. An additional 203 Chinook, 35 Coho, and 203 steelhead were released. Chinook mortalities are at 107% of preseason expectations, but stock composition is not available yet.
- The recreational fishery from Bonneville Dam upstream to McNary Dam is ongoing and is planned to be open for Chinook and Coho retention through September 8 with a one salmonid daily bag limit. Through September 6, an estimated 1,122 adult Chinook have been kept (46 released) from approximately 6,300 angler trips. Chinook mortalities are at 90% of preseason expectations, but stock composition is not available yet.

Non-treaty ESA Fall Chinook Impacts

- For completed and ongoing non-treaty fisheries, projected impacts for LCR tule and URB fall Chinook are:
    - LCR: 9.90% vs 10.06% planned preseason (97% of preseason expectations)
    - URB: 6.7% vs 15.0% allowed based on the URB return expectation (82%; pre-update + SAFE)

Summary of LRH and URB fall Chinook mortalities in non-treaty mainstem fisheries through September 7, 2020.

	LRH					URB				
Area	Actual	ER %	Sep. 23 - Dec. 31	Full Season ER %	Remaining Balance ER %	Actual	HR %	Sep. 23 - Dec. 31	Full Season HR %	Remaining Balance HR %
Buoy 10	4,798	6.9%	6,077	8.8%	1.9%	4,882	2.1%	7,754	3.4%	1.3%
TP-WR	973	1.4%	1,149	1.7%	0.3%	1,612	0.7%	5,165	2.3%	1.6%
WR-Bonn	342	0.6%	561	0.9%	0.3%	3,325	1.5%	8,985	3.9%	2.5%
Bonn-McNary	-	-	-	-	-	553	0.2%	1,975	0.9%	0.6%
Non-Treaty Rec. Sum	6,113	0	7,787	11.4%	2.5%	10,372	4.6%	23,879	10.5%	5.9%
Z4-5 Commercial	2,156	1.0%	2,798	2.0%	1.0%	4,765	2.1%	9,447	4.2%	2.1%
SAFE	-	-	3,633	0.4%	0.4%	-	-	292	0.1%	0.1%
Coho T-Net	-	-	58	0.1%	0.1%	-	-	525	0.2%	0.2%
Non-Treaty Comm. Sum	2,156	1.0%	6,489	2.5%	1.5%	4,765	2.1%	10,264	4.5%	2.4%
Non-Treaty Total	**8,269**	**9.9%**	**14,276**	**13.9%**	**4.0%**	**15,137**	**6.7%**	**34,143**	**15.0%**	**8.4%**

- The LCR/LRH run size is not updated in-season. Although impacts to date are higher than expected a rollover of approximately 4.5% impact is available from PFMC ocean fisheries for use in-river (~14.6% total ER). This balance should cover 2020 in-river fisheries.
- Based on current projected run sizes and availability of ESA impacts, additional recreational opportunity can be considered at this time. However, preseason expectations assumed that combined pre and post-update recreational fisheries (that did not include Chinook retention during September 9-22) would fully utilize the recreational sub-allocation of the 15% total URB impacts available (at the preseason URB run size). Providing additional fishing time now could reduce opportunity later in the season. However, there may be interest in some fishing opportunity now while catch rates are better.

Recommendation: 2020 Mainstem Recreational Salmon Fishery
Effective Friday September 11 through Sunday September 13, 2020, retention of Chinook salmon is allowed in the mainstem Columbia River from Buoy 10 to the Highway 395 Bridge near Pasco, WA. Only coho and Chinook may be retained. All coho retained downstream of the Hood River Bridge must be hatchery-origin. All steelhead must be released. The daily adult bag limit is one salmon (coho and Chinook only) except at Buoy 10 where the daily adult bag limit is two salmon of which only one can be a Chinook. All other permanent regulations remain in effect. Temporary regulations regarding thermal angling sanctuaries in and adjacent to the mouths of Eagle Creek, Herman Creek, and the Deschutes River remain in effect.

- Staff will continue monitoring catch, and the first in-season run-size update of fall Chinook will provide additional clarity about any remaining balances.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- A Compact hearing is scheduled for 11:30 AM Thursday September 10 to consider treaty and non-treaty commercial fisheries. Staff will continue to monitor the fisheries and stock status and recommend additional hearings as needed.