OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT - FALL FACT SHEET NO. 8
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
September 17, 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 16, the flow at Bonneville Dam was 114 kcfs, which is higher than the recent ten-year average for this date (105 kcfs).
- Water temperature at Bonneville Dam is currently 67°F which is slightly lower than the recent 10-year average of 68°F. This year, water temperatures at Bonneville Dam have been below average most of the year but briefly peaked at 72°F in early August.

STOCK STATUS

Salmon/Steelhead

- Run size forecasts and stock descriptions for salmon and steelhead were presented in Fall 2020 Fact Sheet #1.
- Through September 16, a total of 287,018 adult and 38,343 jack fall Chinook have passed Bonneville Dam.
- McNary Dam passage through September 16 totals 90,328 adult Chinook. The fall Chinook run at McNary is typically 41% complete based on 10-year average run timing.
- Spring Creek Hatchery reports that over 13,000 Chinook have entered the hatchery, but the male/female/jack composition is not yet available. Spawning began on September 14. USFWS have indicated they will collect sufficient fish to meet their broodstock needs.
- Passage of upriver summer steelhead at Bonneville Dam since July 1 totals 91,046 A/B-Index fish.
- Passage at Bonneville Dam through September 16 totals 62,326 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.
- The *U.S. vs OR* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met on Monday, September 14 to review and discuss salmon and steelhead passage at Bonneville Dam and harvest in fall season fisheries.
  - TAC updated the expected Columbia River mouth abundances of URB, PUB, and BPH stock fall Chinook to 267,300, 80,100, 51,100 adults, respectively (total of 398,500 upriver fish). Given the preseason forecasts for lower river stocks, the total fall Chinook return is now expected to include 476,680 adults (13% greater than the preseason forecast). Passage of bright and tule components are both tracking several days earlier than recent-year averages.

- A-Index and B-Index steelhead passage at Bonneville Dam was also updated. Given current information, TAC now expects 81,300 total A-Index fish (including 34,400 unclipped) which is 95% of preseason forecast and 28,800 B-Index fish (6,100 unclipped) which is 300% of forecast. The A-Index projections were based on the recent 10-year average run timing while the B-Index passage projections assumed their timing is five days earlier than the recent 10- year average. The aggregate A-/B-Index abundance is expected to total 110,100 fish.
- TAC updated the projected return of early-stock coho (defined as those passing prior to September 30) to a minimum of 66,700 adults. The pre-season total coho forecasted return to Bonneville Dam was 42,300 fish (33,880 early stock and 9,400 late stock coho).

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. In-season action was taken to increase the daily bag limit to two fish effective September 5 and allow Chinook retention (1 fish per day) on September 5-6 and September 11-13. The fishery is currently open to retention of hatchery Coho with a two-fish daily bag limit. Through September 13, total adult Chinook mortalities (kept + released) are approximately 15,151 fish. Coho catch rates have improved and are currently averaging around 0.43 kept/angler; through September 13 an estimated 5,372 adult Coho have been kept and an additional 6,970 released.

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. The full area from Tongue Point/Rocky Point to Warrior Rock was opened via inseason action from September 11-13. Preliminary estimates include 5,836 adult Chinook and 222 Coho kept from ~28,300 angler trips. An additional 135 Chinook, 182 Coho, and 111 steelhead have been released.
- For the area from Warrior Rock upstream to Bonneville Dam, Chinook and hatchery Coho retention was open on a three-day-per-week schedule (Friday-Sunday) during August 7 through September 6. As with the other areas, Chinook retention was allowed during September 11-13 via in-season action. Preliminary estimates include 6,150 adult Chinook and 83 Coho kept from ~27,100 angler trips. An additional 311 Chinook, 97 Coho, and 213 steelhead have been released.
- The recreational fishery from Bonneville Dam upstream to McNary Dam was open for Chinook retention from August 1 through September 8, as planned preseason. This area was also reopened to Chinook retention for September 11-13. Through September 13, approximately 2,800 adult Chinook have been kept (200 released) and about 20 Coho kept from 11,000 angler trips.

Non-treaty ESA Fall Chinook Impacts

- For completed and ongoing non-treaty fisheries, projected impacts for LCR tule and URB fall Chinook are:
    - LCR: 13.1% vs 10.1% planned preseason
    - URB: 15.0% vs 15.0% allowed based on the current URB return expectation

Summary of LRH and URB fall Chinook mortalities in non-treaty mainstem fisheries through September 13, 2020.										
TAC-267,000 URB										
LRH - 14.6% ER max										
			LRH				URB			
Area	Angler Trips	Total Catch[1]	Actual	Current ER %	Sep19-Dec31 ER %	Total ER %	Actual	Current HR %	Sep19-Dec31 HR %	Total HR %
Buoy 10	63,340	15,151	5,010	7.2%	0.2%	7.4%	5,854	2.2%	0.1%	2.3%
TP-WR	28,314	5,862	1,101	1.6%	0.1%	1.7%	2,486	0.9%	0.7%	1.6%
WR-Bonn	27,118	6,209	442	0.7%	0.5%	1.2%	4,133	1.6%	3.7%	5.3%
Bonn-McNary	11,000	2,800	-	-	-	-	1,068	0.4%	0.6%	1.0%
Non-Treaty Rec. Sum	*129,772*	*30,022*	*6,553*	*9.5%*	*0.8%*	*10.3%*	*13,541*	*5.1%*	*5.1%*	*10.2%*
Z4-5 Commercial[2]			2,610	1.7%	0.4%	2.1%	7,710	2.9%	1.5%	4.4%
SAFE				-	3,633	0.4%		0.0%	0.1%	0.1%
Coho T-Net				-	58	0.1%		0.0%	0.3%	0.3%
Non-Treaty Comm. Sum				*1.7%*	*3,691*	*2.6%*	*7,710*	*2.9%*	*1.9%*	*4.8%*
Non-Treaty Total				**11.2%**	**3,691**	**12.9%**	**21,251**	**8.0%**	**7.0%**	**15.0%**
1 - Includes release mortalities										
2 - Includes week 38 landings										

- 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 is expected to cover projected 2020 in-river fisheries.
- Based on the preseason forecast, the allowed LCN Coho ER is 18%. Harvest to date is well below that limit and the return appears on track to exceed the forecast.
- Based on the updated upriver fall Chinook run sizes and allowed harvest rate of 15% on URB/SRW Chinook, additional recreational opportunity can be considered at this time. The potential exists that providing additional fishing time prior to the preseason planned date of September 23 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 Saturday September 19 through Thursday December 31, 2020, retention of Chinook and Coho salmon is allowed in the mainstem Columbia River from Buoy 10 to the Highway 395 Bridge near Pasco, WA. All Coho retained downstream of the Hood River Bridge must be hatchery-origin. All steelhead must be released. The daily adult bag limit is two salmon of which only one may be a Chinook. All other permanent regulations remain in effect.

- Staff will continue to monitoring catch and effort and will recommend adjustments to this season structure as necessary.

Recreational White Sturgeon Fisheries – Above Wauna

- Retention of white sturgeon in the area from the Wauna powerlines to Bonneville Dam was open on September 12 and is scheduled to be open again on September 19. The catch estimate

for last Saturday's fishery is 412 fish kept with 927 sublegal and 335 overlegal fish released from approximately 1,900 angler trips. The catch guideline for this fishery is 1,140 fish in 2020.

Non-Treaty Commercial Fisheries

- Fall commercial fisheries occurred on Monday and Wednesday nights from August 10 – 26 (six 9-hour periods). The period planned for the night of Monday, August 31 was rescinded via in-season action.
- Catches over the six August periods included 16,546 Chinook (including 4,765 URB, 2,156 LRH, and 7,526 BPH adults), 352 Coho, and 405 white sturgeon.
- Consistent with the preseason plan, additional late-fall periods were adopted when it was apparent the URB runsize would allow non-treaty fisheries access to the full 15% HR on URB/SRW fall Chinook. The first of these periods occurred on the night of September 15; preliminary landings include approximately 6,000 fall Chinook. The next period is scheduled for the night of September 21.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- A Compact hearing is scheduled for 10:00 AM Thursday September 24 to consider treaty commercial fisheries. Staff recommends a Compact hearing be scheduled for the morning of Wednesday September 23 to consider non-treaty commercial fisheries.
- Staff will continue to monitor the fisheries and stock status and recommend additional hearings as needed.