**OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE**
**JOINT STAFF REPORT - FALL FACT SHEET NO. 9**
**Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing**
**September 23, 2020**

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| ***Fisheries under consideration:*** | Non-treaty mainstem commercial salmon<br>Above Wauna recreational white sturgeon |

*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 available at the following linkst: 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 22, the flow at Bonneville Dam was 87 kcfs, which is similar than the recent ten-year average for this date (89 kcfs).
- Water temperature at Bonneville Dam is currently 66°F which matches the recent 10-year average of 66°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 22, a total of 326,451 adult and 46,269 jack fall Chinook have passed Bonneville Dam.
- McNary Dam fall Chinook passage through September 22 totals 126,141 adult Chinook. The fall Chinook run at McNary is typically 61% complete based on 10-year average run timing.
- Spring Creek Hatchery reports that nearly 18,600 Chinook have entered the hatchery, but the male/female/jack composition is not yet available. Spawning began on September 14. USFWS staff have indicated they will collect sufficient fish to meet their broodstock needs.
- Passage of upriver summer steelhead at Bonneville Dam since July 1 totals 99,758 A/B-Index fish.
- Passage at Bonneville Dam through September 22 totals 77,108 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 21 to review salmon and steelhead passage at Bonneville Dam and harvest in fall season fisheries.
    - TAC updated the in-season projections for adult bright and tule fall Chinook returning to the Columbia River mouth. Projections for URB, PUB, and BPH stocks are now 282,300, 86,100, and 53,300, respectively (total of 421,700 upriver fish). Given the preseason forecasts for lower river stocks, the total fall Chinook return is now expected to include 499,700 adults (18% greater than the preseason forecast). Passage of bright and tule components are tracking several days earlier than recent-year averages.

- TAC updated the in-season projection for A-Index and B-Index steelhead passage at Bonneville Dam. Given current information, TAC now expects 79,100 total A-Index fish (including 34,100 unclipped) which is 92% of preseason forecast, and 33,500 B-Index fish (7,900 unclipped) which is 349% 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 112,600 fish.
- TAC updated the projected return of early-stock coho (defined as those passing prior to September 30) to 86,200 adults. The pre-season forecast for coho returning 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.
  - Based on the in-season URB forecast exceeding 200,000 fish, the allowable impact rate for combined treaty Indian and non-treaty fisheries is 45% of the upriver bright stock (URB) return (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.
  - 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 combined ocean and Columbia River fisheries.
- 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, September 11-13, and again effective September 19. The Buoy 10 fishery (and other fisheries upstream) are currently open to retention of hatchery Coho and Chinook with a two-fish/one Chinook daily

bag limit. Through September 13, total adult Chinook mortalities (kept + released) are approximately 15,151 fish. Coho catches through September 13 include an estimated 5,372 adult Coho kept and 6,970 released. Data for September 14-20 is not yet available but catches have been minimal.

***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 in-season action from September 11-13 and again effective September 19. Preliminary catch estimates through September 20 include 6,669 adult Chinook and 339 Coho kept from ~31,600 angler trips. An additional 159 Chinook, 229 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 and again effective Sept 19 via in-season action. Preliminary estimates through September 20 include 7,280 adult Chinook and 223 Coho kept from ~30,700 angler trips. An additional 373 Chinook, 169 Coho, and 214 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 also reopened to Chinook retention for September 11-13 and again beginning September 19. Through September 20, approximately 2,720 adult Chinook and 104 adult coho have been kept from ~12,430 angler trips. An additional 164 Chinook, 166 Coho, and 76 steelhead have been released.

***Mainstem Commercial Salmon Fisheries***

- Landings for the early fall mainstem non-treaty commercial fishery which included six fishing periods during August 10-27 total 16,546 Chinook (4,765 URBs), 352 coho, and 405 white sturgeon.
- Preliminary landings for the September 15-16 late fall mainstem non-treaty commercial fishery include 5,858 Chinook, 1,100 coho, and 79 white sturgeon. A second fishing period occurred September 21-22; preliminary landings include 4,696 Chinook, 490 coho, and 64 white sturgeon.
- Combined white sturgeon landings in 2020 non-treaty commercial fisheries total 1,095 fish (547 SAFE and 548 mainstem), or 96% of the annual guideline (1,140 fish).
- Cumulative URB impacts for combined non-treaty commercial fisheries (mainstem to date and full-season Select Area fisheries) are estimated at 3.45%, compared to no less than 4.5% allowed. Based on the current run size, sufficient numbers of URBs are available within the commercial allocation for additional Chinook and Coho-directed fisheries at a level consistent with preseason expectations.

| *Recommendation: 2020 Non-Treaty Zone 4-5 Mainstem Commercial Fishery* | |
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| Season: | 8 PM Thursday September 24 through 6 AM Friday September 25 (Week 39) 1 night<br>8 PM Wednesday September 30 through 6 AM Thursday October 1 (Week 40) 1 night |
| 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. 8-inch minimum mesh size restriction.<br>Multiple net rule in effect beginning September 30 which means nets not specifically authorized for the fishery may be onboard the 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. Lighted buoys required. |
| Allowable Sales: | Salmon (except chum) and shad. **Sturgeon may not be possessed or sold.** |
| Additional: | 24-hour quick reporting required for Washington buyers, pursuant to WAC 220-352-315. 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, or within 24 hours of landing for fishing periods lasting longer than 24 hours. |

| *Recommendation: 2020 Non-Treaty Coho Tangle Net Commercial Fishery* | |
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| **Season:** | 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Wednesday September 30 (12 hours each)<br>6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Friday October 2<br><br>6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Monday October 5<br>6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Wednesday October 7<br>6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Friday October 9<br><br>6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Monday October 12<br>6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Wednesday October 14<br>6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Friday October 16<br><br>6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Monday October 19<br>6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Wednesday October 21<br>6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Friday October 23 |
| **Area:** | Zones 1-3. Upper deadline 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:** | Elokomin-A, Cowlitz River, Kalama-A and Lewis-A |

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| **Gear:** | Drift nets only. Maximum mesh size is 3-3/4 inches. Unslackened, single-wall, multi-filament floater nets only. Monofilament nets are not allowed.<br>Net length not to exceed 150 fathoms.<br>A red cork must be placed on the corkline every 25 fathoms as measured from the first mesh of the net. Red corks at 25-fathom intervals must be in color contrast to the corks used in the remainder of the net.<br>There are no restrictions on the hang ratio. The hang ratio is used to horizontally add slack to the net. The hang ratio is determined by the length of the web per length of the corkline.<br>The use of slackers or stringers to slacken the net vertically is prohibited. Rip lines are allowed providing they do not vertically slacken the net |
| **Allowable Sales:** | Salmon (except chum) and shad; all coho must be adipose fin-clipped. **Sturgeon may not be possessed or sold.** |
| **Regulations:** | Regulations typically in place for mark-selective commercial fisheries are in effect, including but not limited to: net length, use of recovery boxes, limited soak times, red corks, tangle-net certification, etc.<br>**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 30 minutes.<br>**Recovery Box**: Each boat will be required to have on board two operable recovery boxes or one box with two chambers that meet the flow and size requirements standard for the winter/spring season. Each box and chamber and associated pump shall be operating during any time that the net is being retrieved or picked. All non-legal fish must be released immediately unharmed to the river or placed into an operating recovery box. All non-legal salmon and all steelhead that are bleeding, lethargic or appear lifeless 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.<br>**Measuring mesh size**: Mesh size is determined by placing three consecutive meshes under hand tension and the measurement is taken from the inside of one knot to the outside of the opposite knot of the center mesh. Hand tension means sufficient linear tension to draw opposing knots of meshes into contact<br>**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. |
| **Additional Rules:** | **Multiple net rule in effect**: Nets not specifically authorized for use in this fishery may be onboard the 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.<br>**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<br>**24-hour** quick reporting required is for Washington wholesale dealers, per WAC 220-352-315. 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, or within 24 hours of landing for fishing periods lasting longer than 24 hours. |

- The open hours for the proposed tangle net periods are consistent with previous years. There has been some interest expressed by industry for an earlier start time (5 AM) or slightly longer fishing periods (5 AM-7 PM), which are both feasible but input has been limited.
- The Chinook catch is projected to be ~4,800 adults (2,400 URBs) in the Zone 4-5 fishery and 1,160 adult Chinook (850 URBs) in the tangle net fishery. The cumulative ESA impact would be 4.6% in completed, on-going, and proposed commercial fisheries. LCR tule wild impacts are projected at 3.1%.
- ESA impacts to wild upriver summer steelhead are expected to be 0.2% for A-Index and 0.5% for B-Index for ongoing and proposed commercial fisheries. Total non-Treaty impacts are projected to be 0.5% and 1.1% for A-and B-Index steelhead, respectively.
- Based on review of fisheries performance and updated run-size projections, additional Zone 4-5 commercial opportunity (likely one day/week) could be considered moving into October. Staff views the fishing period proposed for next week (Wednesday night, September 30) as the first in a potential series of weekly Wednesday night periods in Zones 4-5.
- Due to the on-going Covid-19 situation, staff does not intend to conduct onboard monitoring of the proposed fisheries. Impacts to non-landed stocks will be estimated using models developed from onboard monitoring conducted in previous years (2020 abundances and expected effort are incorporated).

***Non-treaty ESA Fall Chinook Impacts***

- For completed, ongoing, and proposed non-treaty fisheries, projected impacts for LCR tule and URB fall Chinook are:
    - LCR: 13.7% (10.1% planned preseason) vs approximately 14.6% available
    - URB: 14.6% vs 15.0% allowed

| Non-Treaty LRH and URB Impact Summary | | | |
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| Fishery | LRH ER% | URB/SRW HR% | Fishery Status |
| Z4-5 Aug Comm. | 1.0% | 1.69% | Complete |
| Z4-5 Sep Comm. (wk 38) | 1.1% | 0.86% | Complete |
| Z4-5 Sep Projected (wk 39-40) | 0.5% | 1.67% | Complete/Proposed |
| Coho T-Net | 0.1% | 0.30% | Proposed |
| Select Area Comm. | 0.4% | 0.10% | Ongoing |
| ***NT Commercial Sum*** | ***3.1%*** | ***4.62%*** | |
| Buoy 10 | 7.4% | 2.17% | Ongoing |
| TP-WR | 1.7% | 1.59% | Ongoing |
| WR-Bonn | 1.3% | 5.14% | Ongoing |
| Bonn-McNary | - | 1.03% | Ongoing |
| Tributary | 0.2% | 0.00% | Ongoing |
| ***NT Recreational Sum*** | ***10.6%*** | ***9.93%*** | |
| **Non-Treaty Total** | **13.7%** | **14.55%** | |

- 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.

***Recreational White Sturgeon Fisheries – Above Wauna***

- Generally, catch rates in this river section are better during the spring and late fall months. The 2020 season to date has consisted of two retention days on Saturdays in mid-September (12th and 19th). Due to lower-than-expected effort, catches were 78% of expectations for the first period with an estimated 412 fish kept from approximately 1,850 angler trips. Angler success decreased well below expectations for the second period with approximately 230 fish kept from about 2,900 angler trips.
- The combined kept catch for the Above Wauna retention fishery is estimated at 656 fish, or 58% of the 1,140 fish harvest guideline.
- Based on the balance available for this fishery in 2020 (484 fish), staff is proposing additional harvest opportunity.

| ***Recommendation – 2020 White Sturgeon Recreational Fishery for Above Wauna*** | | |
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| **Season:** | Saturday September 26, Wednesday September 30, and Saturday October 3 | 3 days |
| **Area:** | Mainstem Columbia River from the Wauna powerlines upstream to Bonneville Dam, including the Cowlitz River | |
| **Allowable Catch:** | Up to 484 white sturgeon<br>Legal size: 44-inch minimum and 50-inch maximum fork length<br>(Fork length is measured in a straight line from the tip of the nose to the fork in the caudal fin (tail) with the fish laying on its side on a flat surface, with the tape measure/ruler positioned flat under the fish) | |
| **Additional Regulations:** | Daily bag limit: One fish<br>Annual bag limit: Two fish<br>Retention of green sturgeon is prohibited | |

- The expected kept catch for the three additional days is not expected to exceed the balance available for this fishery.

## 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 considered for Monday October 5 (PM) or Tuesday October 6 (AM) to consider additional non-treaty commercial fishing opportunity.
- Staff will continue to monitor the fisheries and stock status and recommend additional hearings as needed.