

COLUMBIA RIVER INTER-TRIBAL FISH COMMISSION
JOINT STAFF REPORT – SUMMER FACT SHEET NO. 2a
Columbia River Compact Hearing
June 28, 2023

Fisheries Under Consideration: Summer 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 online. The most recent report is the 2023 Spring Chinook, Summer Chinook, Sockeye, Steelhead and Other Species Report (February 2, 2023) available at:

<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/columbia-river/compact/other-information#2023> and <https://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/OSCRP/CRM/jsmreports.asp>

STOCK STATUS AND MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Upper Columbia Summer Chinook, Sockeye, and Steelhead

- Pre-season salmon and steelhead forecasts applicable to the summer management period were provided in Fact Sheet #1.

Upper Columbia Summer Chinook

- Upper Columbia Summer Chinook are counted at Bonneville Dam from June 16 through July 31. Chinook salmon passing Bonneville Dam or harvested during this time period are managed as Upper Columbia summer Chinook and are not ESA listed. These fish are destined for mainstem and tributary areas from the Yakima River upstream to the Okanagan River as well as Chief Joseph Hatchery. Based on 10-year average run timing the run at Bonneville would be expected to be 50% complete on June 29. Through June 27, a total of 23,858 adult and 2,642 jack summer Chinook have passed Bonneville Dam. The adult clip rate is 79.3% which is higher than average. The run would be expected to be 45% or 43% complete respectively on June 27, based on the 5 or 10-year average run timing. The 5 and 10-year average 50% complete date at Bonneville are both on June 29.
- TAC has indicated that the summer Chinook run is tracking less than pre-season forecast and expects to update the run size when they meet tomorrow.

Sockeye

- Sockeye caught during any management period all count as part of the current year’s sockeye run. All sockeye in fisheries and dam counts are treated as adult fish. Through June 27, a total of 138,537 sockeye have been counted at Bonneville Dam which is the sixth highest count in the last ten years. Based on 5 or 10-year average run timing the run is expected to be 51% or 54% complete on June 27. TAC has indicated that the sockeye run is tracking consistent to the pre-season forecast and expects to update the run tomorrow.
- Fourteen sockeye have been counted at Lower Granite Dam to date.

Steelhead

- Steelhead passing Bonneville Dam from April 1 through June 30 or that are caught in this time period in the Bonneville Pool are considered upriver Skamania stock steelhead. Through June 27, there have been a total of 2,457 Skamania steelhead counted at Bonneville Dam including 1,117 unclipped fish. The total count and unclipped count are both the third lowest

steelhead count to date in the last 10 years. Based on the 10-year average timing, the total run would be about 82% complete and the unclipped run would be about 79% complete at Bonneville on June 27. While TAC has not updated the Skamania run size, tribal staff estimate that both the total run and the unclipped run are tracking at less than 70% of the pre-forecast.

- Steelhead passing Bonneville Dam from July 1 through October 31 are considered part of this year's A and B-Index steelhead run. Steelhead caught upstream of the Dalles Dam from January 1 through June 30 are considered part of the previous year's A and B-Index steelhead run.

Summer Management Limits

- Any sockeye harvested in mainstem fisheries downstream from the mouth of the Snake River count against the Sockeye harvest rate limit. Based on the pre-season forecasts the harvest rate limit will be 7% for treaty fisheries and 1% for non-treaty fisheries. Based on the pre-season forecast this equates to harvest limits of 16,415 and 2,345 respectively. Actual harvest limits are determined based on in-season run sizes.
- Treaty and non-treaty summer Chinook impacts are shared equally. Both PFMC non-treaty ocean fisheries and in-river fisheries count as part of the non-treaty share. Based on the pre-season forecast, both treaty and non-treaty fisheries expect to be allowed to harvest 25,765 fish each. The actual harvest limits are based on the in-season abundance estimates and will be less if the run size is less.
- There is no specific harvest rate limit for steelhead in summer season treaty fisheries, but harvest of steelhead is low in the summer and is expected to remain within recent average rates.

SUMMER SEASON TREATY FISHERIES

Treaty Mainstem Summer Management Period Commercial Fisheries

- The treaty tribes allowed commercial sales of platform and hook and line fish on June 16 and expect sales to run continuously through the summer management period and into the fall.
- The treaty tribes began commercial gillnet fisheries on June 19. As a precautionary step, the tribes only authorized two short gillnet openings to start the season compared to the three initial openings authorized last year. Set net effort was less than projected at the beginning of the season and normally begins to decline after the second week of fishing.
- Fisheries have been modeled and projected catches are shown in Table 1 below. The tribes have chosen to model fisheries based on a presumed Summer Chinook run size of 55,000 at the Columbia River mouth which is a cautious approach. Catches for Chinook, sockeye, and steelhead were all less than projected through June 24. Instead of scaling down future harvest projections in the model based on these early catches, tribal staff have continued to use the pre-season harvest scalars which is also a cautious approach. TAC indicated on Monday that the sockeye run is tracking consistent with the pre-season forecast, however the Bonneville counts in the last two days suggest the sockeye run may actually be tracking above the pre-forecast. Because of this tribal staff have continued to model sockeye fisheries using the pre-season forecast. The projected sockeye catches for weeks with commercial gillnet fisheries include the expected catch in the platform and hook and line fishery. The tribes are planning fisheries using conservative estimates to avoid catches being higher than expected.

Table 1. Preliminary Catch to Date and Projected 2023 Summer Season Treaty Harvest Using Pre-season Forecast Abundance for Sockeye and a River Mouth Run size of 55,000 for Summer Chinook

2023 Treaty Indian Summer Season Fisheries									
Fishery					Adult Chinook	Harvest Rate	Sockeye	Harvest Rate	Steelhead
Platforms June 16-17 (preliminary)					440	0.8%	451	0.2%	88
Week	Gillnet Fisheries	Start	End	Effort (Set Nets)					
26	Preliminary	19-Jun	21-Jun	206	2,389	4.3%	1,417	0.6%	11
27	Projected	26-Jun	28-Jun	233	2,500	4.5%	3,600	1.5%	60
28	Projected	3-Jul	6-Jul	235	2,500	4.6%	2,400	1.0%	170
Platforms after Planned Gillnet Fishing					2,500	4.5%	3,500	1.5%	450
Total Projected					10,344	18.8%	11,388	4.9%	783
Allowed at Pre-Season Sockeye Forecast and 55K Chinook run size					14,164	25.8%	16,415	7.0%	
Remaining After Planned Fisheries					3,820	6.9%	5,027	2.1%	

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

- The projected total Chinook catch of 10,344 would be within the allowed harvest down to a river mouth run size of 44,400. The projected total sockeye catch of 11,388 would be within the allowed harvest down to a river mouth run size of 162,700.
- If the modeled fisheries sockeye and Chinook harvest is accurate, the remaining Chinook and sockeye after these planned openings would be sufficient to keep the platform fishery open through the remainder of the summer management period and will likely be sufficient to provide additional commercial gillnet opportunity.

- The four Columbia River treaty tribes will adopt gillnet regulations consistent with the following:

<i>Recommendation: 2023 Summer Season Treaty Commercial Gillnet Fishery</i>		
Season	6:00 AM Monday July 3 to 6:00 PM Thursday, July 6	(3.5 days)
Area	Zone 6	
Sanctuaries:	Standard river mouth and dam closed areas applicable to gillnet gear, except the Spring Creek Hatchery sanctuary is not in effect during the summer management period.	
Gear:	Set and Drift Gill nets with a 7” minimum mesh size restriction	
Allowable Sales:	Salmon (any species), steelhead, shad, yellow perch, bass, walleye, catfish and carp may be sold or retained for subsistence. Sturgeon may not be sold, but 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 and may be kept for subsistence purposes. Fish landed during the open periods are allowed to be sold after the period concludes.	
Additional:	24-hour quick reporting is required for Washington wholesale dealers for all areas as provided in WAC 220-352-315, except that all landings from treaty fisheries described above must be reported within 24-hours of completing the fish ticket.	

- Zone 6 platform and hook and line fisheries, Yakama Zone 6 tributary fisheries, and treaty fisheries downstream of Bonneville Dam do not require Compact action at this time.
- Catch and effort will be monitored to ensure the fishery remains within management limits. Total catch is determined through a tribal creel program. Fish ticket data are used as a supplement to the creel program. Set net effort will be monitored by aerial surveys each week. Drift net effort is estimated through the creel monitoring program. Catches for the platform fishery are typically summed with and reported with gillnet catches for any week with a commercial gillnet opening. Any harvest downstream of Bonneville Dam is part of the total allowed catch for any species. Tributary harvest is managed under separate limits.
- Treaty commercial fishing provides important economic benefits to tribal members and their families as well as to communities along the river and on reservations.

Future Meetings

- The tribes request another Compact Hearing on July 6 to consider additional commercial gillnet openings that may begin on July 10 assuming sufficient impacts remain.

**OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT: SUMMER FACT SHEET NO. 2b
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
June 28, 2023**

<i>Fisheries under consideration:</i>	Recreational summer Chinook downstream of Priest Rapids Dam
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RIVER CONDITIONS

- As of June 27, the five-day average outflow at Bonneville Dam is 153 kcfs, compared to the recent 5-year average of 265 kcfs. The current five-day average water temperature is 66° F which is warmer than the recent 5-year average of 63° F. Visibility is about 5.5 feet, compared to the recent 5-year average of 4.9 feet.

STOCK STATUS

Upper Columbia Summer Chinook

- Upper Columbia summer Chinook pass Bonneville Dam during June 16 through July 31 destined for areas above Priest Rapids Dam (PRD). These Chinook are not listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the population is considered healthy.
- Bonneville passage during June 16–27 totals 23,858 adult Chinook. The run is typically 50% complete by June 28 (recent 5-year average).
- The *U.S. v. Oregon* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met on Monday, June 26 and concurred that the summer Chinook return is tracking less than expected compared to the preseason forecast. TAC did not provide an in-season abundance projection, but is scheduled to meet again on Thursday June 29 expects to update the summer Chinook return to the Columbia River mouth at that time.

Sockeye

- Current year Bonneville Dam passage through June 27 totals 138,537 sockeye. The average 50% passage date is June 27 (recent 5-year). At their June 26 meeting, TAC agreed that the return was tracking close to the preseason forecast and expects to provide an in-season return projection on June 29.

Summer Steelhead

- Upriver stocks of summer steelhead migrate past Bonneville Dam during April 1 through October 31. Summer steelhead passing Bonneville Dam prior to July 1 are considered

Skamania stock, and steelhead passing between July 1 and October 31 are classified by length as either A-Index or B-Index.

- Summer steelhead handled in Columbia River fisheries downstream of Bonneville Dam are considered lower river stock during May-June and upriver stock during July-October.
- Bonneville Dam passage from April 1 through June 27 totals 2,457 Skamania summer steelhead, less than expected given the preseason forecast (4,400). A total of 63,400 upriver summer steelhead are expected to pass Bonneville Dam this year during July through October, which is 41% of the 2013–2022 average of 152,994 fish.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Management Agreements

- The 2018-2027 *U.S. v Oregon* Management Agreement (MA) provides specific fishery management guidelines for treaty Indian and non-treaty summer season fisheries.
- Washington’s Upper Columbia Management Agreement (UCMA) provides additional harvest and management guidelines for sharing of upper Columbia summer Chinook among non-treaty recreational and commercial fisheries and non-treaty tribal fisheries.

Summer Chinook

- Mainstem Columbia River Chinook fisheries occurring from June 16 through July 31 are managed based on an escapement goal of 29,000 hatchery- and natural-origin adult upper Columbia summer Chinook, as measured at the Columbia River mouth.
- Oregon and Washington commission policy guidance regarding allocations of summer Chinook and sockeye harvest impacts for commercial and recreational fisheries is not concurrent for either species. Due to the nonconcurrent guidance, staff is modeling both summer Chinook and sockeye fisheries with an ESA-impact allocation of 70% recreational and 20% commercial, leaving the balance (10%) unallocated.
- Summer Chinook harvest was initially allocated based on the preseason forecast, the harvest rate schedule in the MA, and guidelines in WA’s Upper Columbia Management Agreement (UCMA). However, as suggested but not yet formalized by TAC, the actual return is tracking less than expected. Therefore, staff applied a 30% reduction to the preseason forecast in order to calculate potential in-season harvest allocations by fishery (see table below).

2023 Upper Columbia Summer Chinook Allocations		
	Preseason	In-season
CR Run Size	85,387	59,771
Non-treaty Ocean Harvest	5,318	5,318
Total Abundance (w/ocean harvest)	90,706	65,089
Available Treaty Indian Harvest	25,765	16,159
Available Non-treaty Harvest (in-river)	20,446	10,840
Below Priest Rapids Dam Allocation	7,581	3,202
<i>Recreational below Bonneville</i>	<i>4,511</i>	<i>1,905</i>
<i>Recreational BON to PRD</i>	<i>796</i>	<i>336</i>
<i>Non-treaty Commercial</i>	<i>1,516</i>	<i>640</i>
<i>Unallocated Non-treaty (10%)</i>	<i>758</i>	<i>320</i>
Above Priest Rapids Dam Allocation	12,865	7,638
<i>Wanapum Non-treaty Tribal</i>	<i>343</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Colville Non-treaty Tribal</i>	<i>7,076</i>	<i>3,819</i>
<i>Recreational PRD to Chief Joseph Dam</i>	<i>5,447</i>	<i>3,719</i>

Summer Steelhead

- The non-treaty ESA impact limit on wild summer steelhead is 2% during January through July.
- Due to the low expected returns for upriver summer steelhead, additional protective regulations have continued in 2023. These measures include a daily bag limit of one hatchery steelhead when retention is allowed in recreational summer-season fisheries in the mainstem between the Astoria/Megler Bridge and the Highway 395 Bridge (near Pasco, WA).

Sockeye

- The *U.S. v. Oregon* management goal for upper Columbia River sockeye is 65,000 fish at Priest Rapids Dam, which under average migration conditions requires passage of 75,000 fish over Bonneville Dam. The Washington escapement goal for the Wenatchee River system is 23,000 sockeye.
- The ESA-impact limit on the Columbia River return of federally-listed sockeye is 1% for non-treaty fisheries and 7% for treaty Indian fisheries. For 2023, Commission guidance allocates the non-treaty impacts approximately 20% to commercial, 70% to recreational fisheries, and leaves 10% unallocated.

2023 NON-TREATY FISHERIES

Columbia River Recreational Fisheries

- Recreational fisheries opened for summer Chinook, sockeye, and hatchery steelhead on June 16 in most areas of the mainstem downstream of Priest Rapids Dam. Summer Chinook catch rates are tracking lower than expected, but the sockeye catch has been consistent with preseason expectations in the lower river while tracking less than expected for the fisheries upstream of Bonneville Dam.

- The estimated catch for the summer recreational fishery below Bonneville Dam through June 25 includes 1,559 summer Chinook kept (421 released), 651 sockeye kept (40 released), and 347 summer steelhead kept (128 released) from approximately 20,000 angler trips.
- The estimated catch for the recreational fishery from Bonneville Dam to the Hwy. 395 Bridge near Pasco, WA includes 77 summer Chinook (7 released), 40 sockeye kept (4 released), and zero summer steelhead encounters from about 1,000 angler trips. The Hanford Reach recreational fishery has caught 37 summer Chinook (10 released) and 359 sockeye (zero released) from an estimated 3,700 angler trips.
- Non-treaty fisheries downstream of the Snake River confluence have accrued a total of 699 sockeye mortalities through June 25. Full season expectation is for a total of 1,500 mortalities which represents an ESA-impact rate of 0.64% at the preseason forecast.

Accounting of upper Columbia summer Chinook mortalities in 2023 in-river non-treaty fisheries						
Fishery	Summer Chinook Mortalities (k+r)			Current Allocation	Percent of Allocation	Balance
	Through June 25	Proj. June 26-30	Total Expected*			
<i>Comm. downstream of BON</i>	<i>na</i>	<i>na</i>	40	640	6%	600
Rec. downstream of BON	1,622	719	2,342	1,905	123%	-436
Rec. BON - PRD	117	29	146	336	43%	190
<i>Rec. below PRD</i>	<i>1,739</i>	<i>749</i>	<i>2,488</i>	<i>2,242</i>	<i>111%</i>	<i>-246</i>
<i>Unallocated subtotal below PRD**</i>				320		320
<i>Total below PRD</i>			2,528	3,202	79%	675
Rec. above PRD	na	na	3,719	3,719	100%	0
Colville and Wanapum tribal fisheries	na	na	3,919	3,919	100%	0
<i>Total in-river non-treaty</i>	<i>1,739</i>		<i>10,125</i>	<i>10,840</i>	<i>93%</i>	<i>675</i>

* Total expected includes mortalities through remainder of the summer season.

** Unallocated balance is a result of non-concurrent OR/WA Commission guidance.

- Total non-treaty summer Chinook mortalities for recreational fisheries from Astoria/Megler Bridge upstream to PRD through June 30 are projected to be 2,488 fish, or 111% of available allocation at the reduced return expectation.
- Recreational and tribal fisheries upstream of PRD are expected to utilize their full fishery-specific allocations of summer Chinook. These fisheries are scheduled to begin July 1.
- Given the current harvest projections, anticipated run size downgrade and resultant allocations, staff recommends closing Chinook retention from the Astoria/Megler Bridge upstream to Priest Rapids Dam effective July 1.

Recommendation: 2023 mainstem recreational summer Chinook fisheries downstream of Priest Rapids Dam

Effective Saturday July 1 through July 31, retention of adult Chinook is prohibited in the mainstem Columbia River from the Astoria/Megler Bridge upstream to Priest Rapids Dam deadline.

- Sockeye and jack Chinook retention will remain open from PRD downstream to the Hwy. 395 Bridge near Pasco, WA. Sockeye, hatchery jack Chinook, and hatchery steelhead retention will remain open from the Hwy. 395 Bridge downstream to the Astoria/Megler Bridge.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- No Compact or Joint State hearings are scheduled at this time. Joint Staff will monitor fisheries and schedule additional hearings as needed.