

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT - WINTER FACT SHEET NO. 9
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
April 4, 2024

<i>Fisheries under consideration:</i>	Select Area commercial Mainstem recreational salmon downstream of Bonneville Dam
--	---

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 2024 Spring Chinook, Summer Chinook, Sockeye, Steelhead and Other Species Report (February 1, 2024) available at:

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

RIVER CONDITIONS

- As of April 2, the five-day average outflow at Bonneville Dam is 157 kcfs compared to the recent five-year average of 150 kcfs. The current five-day average water temperature at Bonneville Dam is 47°F compared to the five-year average of 44°F. The five-day average visibility at Bonneville Dam is 6.6 feet compared to the five-year average of 5.4 feet.

STOCK STATUS

Spring Chinook

- Adult Chinook passage at Bonneville Dam through April 2 totals 105 adult fish, compared to the recent 10-year average of 454 fish and the recent five-year average cumulative adult count of 252 fish. It is still very early in the return; the recent 5- and 10-year average proportions complete at Bonneville Dam are approximately 0.2% by April 2.
- Weekly test fishing in the lower Columbia River using tangle nets began on March 18 this year, with three weeks completed. Observed catch rates have been 0.1, 0.3, and 0.2 adult Chinook per drift to date, respectively. Catch rates during the first two weeks of test fishing were similar to 2023 catch rates for the same timeframe but were lower during the most recent week. All test fishing results are available on the WDFW test fishing webpage ([click here](#)).

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

- Forecasts and management guidelines for 2024 spring Chinook fisheries were presented in Winter Fact Sheets #5 and #6.

2024 NON-TREATY FISHERIES

Select Area Commercial Spring Chinook Fisheries

- Combined Select Area winter-season landings through March 30 total 574 Chinook.
- Winter-season fishing periods (with restricted area and time) are scheduled to continue in Youngs Bay through April 4 and in the other Select Area sites through April 12; spring-season

fisheries open April 16 in some sites and April 18 in all sites.

- Ex-vessel price for Chinook has remained stable since the onset of the winter season, currently averaging \$13.47/pound.
- Through March 30, 54% of the landed spring Chinook have been sampled for visual stock identification with 99% being classified as lower-river origin. An estimated four upriver spring Chinook have been landed through March 30 (1% of the total allocation).
- Given the low interception rate for upriver spring Chinook and high fish value, commercial fishers have requested a modest expansion of fishing area and time.

Recommendation: 2024 Select Area Commercial Fisheries

Youngs Bay (Zone 70)

Adopt the following fishing periods for Upper Youngs Bay:

- 6:30 PM to 10:30 PM Monday April 8 (4 hours)
- 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM Thursday April 11 (4 hours)
- 1:30 PM to 5:30 PM Tuesday April 16 (4 hours)

South Channel (Zone 71)

Modify the hours for the previously-adopted fishing periods for South Channel as follows:

- 7 PM Thursday April 4 to 7 AM Friday April 5 (12 hours)
- 7 PM Monday April 8 to 7 AM Tuesday April 9 (12 hours)
- 7 PM Thursday April 11 to 7 AM Friday April 12 (12 hours)
- 7 PM Tuesday April 16 to 7 AM Wednesday April 17 (12 hours)
- 7 PM Thursday April 18 to 7 AM Friday April 19 (12 hours)

All other previously adopted regulations for these sites remain in effect.

- The recommendation adds three four-hour periods in upper Youngs Bay and extends the hours for five periods in South Channel.
- Staff believes this additional proposed fishing time will utilize a limited number of the upriver spring Chinook mortalities intended for the winter season, while providing a sufficient balance for prosecution of spring season fisheries.

Columbia River Recreational Spring Chinook Fishery – Downstream of Bonneville Dam

- The lower Columbia River (LCR) recreational spring Chinook fishery is open under temporary regulations from March 1 – April 5.
- Through Tuesday April 2, the combined season kept catch is estimated at about 1,000 adult spring Chinook from approximately 23,500 angler trips.
- Mortalities of upriver-origin Chinook are estimated to be 551 adults, or 14% of the 3,906 available to this fishery prior to a run size update.

- Modeling indicates this fishery may accrue up to 1,000 upriver Chinook mortalities during April 3-5, when the fishery is scheduled to close. This would bring the total to 1,551, or 40% of the pre-update allocation.
- Given the balance on the pre-season buffered allocation of upriver spring Chinook (2,355 fish expected to remain available) for this fishery, there is potential for additional angling opportunity.

<i>Recommendation: 2024 Mainstem Columbia River Recreational Spring Chinook Fishery</i>	
Downstream of Bonneville Dam	
Season:	Saturday April 6 through Tuesday April 9 4 retention days
Area:	Buoy 10 line upstream to Beacon Rock (boat and bank) plus bank angling only from Beacon Rock upstream to the Bonneville Dam deadline. Legal upstream boat boundary defined as: A deadline marker on the Oregon bank (approximately four miles downstream from Bonneville Dam Powerhouse One) in a straight line through the western tip of Pierce Island to a deadline marker on the Washington bank at Beacon Rock.
Daily Bag Limit:	Two adult hatchery salmonids (Chinook or steelhead) per day, but only one may be a Chinook. Shad may also be retained. All other permanent regulations apply.

- Based off a conservative modeling approach, kept catch associated with this recommendation is around 2,600 adult Chinook (including 2,150 upriver-origin Chinook mortalities). Total mortalities of upriver Chinook (3,701 adults) would represent 95% of the 3,906 mortalities available to the LCR recreational fishery prior to a run update.
- An upriver spring Chinook run size of about 84,700 adults would cover the projected cumulative mortalities for the LCR recreational fishery recommendation, pre-update allocations for other non-treaty fisheries (1,456 total), and the unallocated components from non-concurrent commission guidance. This analysis accounts for the fact that Snake River wild abundance is constraining the allowed harvest rates this year.
- Impacts to other listed stocks are expected to remain within take limitations based on recent year results. Fishery-specific impact rate expectations can be found in the latest Spring/Summer Joint Staff Report in the 2024 Winter, Spring, and Summer Season Expectations section.

FUTURE MEETINGS

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