

**OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE  
JOINT STAFF REPORT – SPRING FACT SHEET NO. 2  
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing  
May 29, 2024**

<b><i>Fisheries under consideration:</i></b>	Mainstem recreational spring Chinook downstream of Bonneville Dam Non-treaty mainstem commercial salmon
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*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 May 27, the five-day average outflow at Bonneville Dam is 203.5 kcfs compared to the five-year average of 292.0 kcfs. The current five-day average water temperature at Bonneville Dam is 57°F, compared to the five-year average of 56°F. The five-day average visibility at Bonneville Dam is 5.7 feet compared to the five-year average of 4.3 feet.

**STOCK STATUS**

- Adult Chinook passage at Bonneville Dam through May 27 totals 88,347 fish, which is 81% of the 10-year (2014-23) average cumulative count and 107% of the 5-year (2019-23) average for this date. The recent 5-year average 50% passage date at Bonneville Dam is May 12.
- The *U.S. v. Oregon* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met on May 28 to review the 2024 upriver spring Chinook return. Based on the information to date and discussion of the output from several Bonneville Dam passage projection models, TAC decreased the 2024 in-season expected return of adult upriver-origin spring Chinook to 114,100 adults at the Columbia River mouth for the *U.S. v. OR* parties to use for management of fisheries during the spring management period. TAC’s next scheduled meeting is June 3.
- The 2024 forecasts for the Cowlitz, Kalama, Lewis, and Sandy (CKLS) rivers are sufficient to meet escapement goals. It is too early to estimate spring Chinook hatchery returns to the CKLS rivers but at this time the Cowlitz, Kalama, and Lewis rivers appear to be on track to meet or exceed escapement goals.
- The preseason forecast is for a return of 401,700 sockeye to the Columbia River mouth. As of May 27, four sockeye have been counted at Bonneville Dam. Based on the recent 5-year average passage timing, the sockeye return is 50% complete by June 28.
- Steelhead passing Bonneville Dam between April 1 and June 30 (including Bonneville Pool harvest during this timeframe) are considered upriver Skamania stock steelhead. Steelhead caught in the lower Columbia through April are counted as winter steelhead and from May 1 – June 30 are counted as lower river Skamania stock steelhead. Through May 27 a total of 1,319 Skamania

steelhead (including 555 unclipped) have been counted at Bonneville Dam, which is 94% of the 10-year average cumulative count to this date. On average, the upriver Skamania run is 24% complete on May 27.

- Weekly test fishing in the lower Columbia River using tangle nets is scheduled to occur primarily on Mondays from mid-March through May. Chinook catch per drift peaked April 22 – May 6 and has since declined. All test fishing results are available on the WDFW test fishing webpage ([click here](#)).
- During the spring management period, shad abundance tends to increase in late May and peak in June. Cumulative shad passage at Bonneville Dam through May 27 is 153,154 fish. Based on the 10-year average, shad passage is usually about 1% complete through May 27 and 50% complete by June 17.

### MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

- The 2018-2027 *U.S. v Oregon* Management Agreement (MA) provides treaty Indian and non-treaty fishery harvest frameworks and harvest rate schedules for salmon and steelhead stocks destined for areas upstream of Bonneville Dam.
- Forecasts and management guidelines for 2024 spring Chinook fisheries were presented in Winter Fact Sheets #5 and #6.
- At TAC's current projected upriver spring Chinook abundance, and commission guidance for ESA-impact sharing, allocation of upriver fish (including release mortalities) for non-treaty fisheries is:
  - 844 unallocated non-treaty
  - 5,244 fish for the recreational fishery below Bonneville Dam
  - 723 fish for the recreational fishery from Bonneville Dam to the OR/WA state line
  - 639 fish for recreational fisheries in the Snake River (Washington waters)
  - 23 fish for Wanapum tribe (upper Columbia)
  - 181 unallocated recreational
  - 220 fish for Select Area commercial fisheries
  - 569 fish for mainstem commercial fisheries
- The current Oregon and Washington policies pertaining to allowable gears for use in a spring mainstem commercial fishery are not concurrent. However, if Select Area fisheries are not projected to use the full commercial allocation of impacts to upriver spring Chinook, policy direction from both commissions provides for mainstem commercial fisheries, using standard spring season live capture techniques, after an in-season run update.
- The impact limit on the Columbia River run of ESA-listed sockeye is 1% for non-treaty fisheries. Given the preseason forecast, a total of 4,017 sockeye mortalities are allowed in non-treaty fisheries this year.

- Under the WA policy, no more than 70% of the non-treaty allowable harvest of sockeye can be allocated to recreational fisheries, and under Oregon rule, no more than 20% can be allocated to commercial fisheries. Therefore only 70% can be allocated to the recreational fishery, 20% can be allocated to the commercial fishery, and 10% will be unallocated.
  - The commercial share is to be used for incidental harvest in Chinook-directed fisheries.

**2024 NON-TREATY FISHERIES**

***Mainstem Columbia River Recreational Spring Chinook Fishery***

- The recreational spring Chinook fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam was open under temporary regulations March 1 through April 11. Catches through April 11 totaled 3,688 adult spring Chinook kept (336 released), and 398 steelhead kept (317 released) from about 42,000 angler trips.
- The fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam reopened under temporary regulations May 17-19 and May 24-27. Combined catches during these May periods totaled 660 spring Chinook kept (246 released), and 390 steelhead kept (26 released) from about 12,700 angler trips. The fishery is currently scheduled to reopen June 12-15.
- From Bonneville Dam to the OR/WA border, the spring Chinook fishery was open April 1-29 with 1,440 adult spring Chinook kept (193 released) from about 4,500 angler trips. This fishery is currently closed.
- The Snake River recreational fishery (Washington waters) was open May 7-10 on a two day per location schedule (Little Goose and Ice Harbor) with 784 adults kept and 77 released from 7,164 angler hours of effort. This fishery is currently closed.
- Recreational spring Chinook catches as of May 27 are summarized in the table below:

Accounting of upriver spring Chinook mortalities in 2024 recreational fisheries						
Fishery	adult Chinook through May 27			Current Allocation	Percent of Allocation	Balance
	Total Kept	Upriver Kept	Upriver Mortalities (k+r)			
downstream of BON	4,348	2,939	2,970	5,244	57%	2,274
BON - OR/WA border	1,440	1,440	1,459	723	202%	-736
Snake River (WA waters)	784	784	792	639	124%	-153
<b>Total</b>	<b>6,572</b>	<b>5,163</b>	<b>5,221</b>	<b>6,629</b>	<b>79%</b>	<b>1,385</b>

- The recreational fishery from Bonneville Dam upstream to the OR/WA border achieved its unbuffered catch guideline as of April 30, which does not leave a balance to support additional opportunity at this time.
- Given the balance remaining on the upriver spring Chinook recreational allocation at the current abundance projection, there is potential for additional angling opportunity downstream of Bonneville Dam.

- Fishery projections have been rescaled to incorporate Chinook catch rates observed during the recent May open days along with previously observed June effort and catch rates. These projections are reasonable expectations given current season conditions.

<b>Recommendation: 2024 Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Recreational Fishery</b>		
<b>Downstream of Bonneville Dam</b>		
<b>Season:</b>	Saturday June 1 through Tuesday June 11.	11 days
<b>Area:</b>	Tongue Point/Rocky Point 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.	
<b>Daily Bag Limit:</b>	Two adult hatchery salmonids (Chinook or steelhead) per day, but only one may be a Chinook.	
	All previously adopted regulations, including permanent regulations, remain in effect.	

- This fishery is expected to result in a handle of up to 1,450 adult Chinook, including about 1,100 kept, and is expected to accrue up to 955 additional upriver spring Chinook mortalities. Projected season total upriver spring Chinook mortalities would be 4,313 adults (this includes expected catches in the previously-adopted June days).
- Due to catches in the fisheries between Bonneville Dam and the OR/WA state line and in the lower Snake River, we expect non-treaty recreational fisheries to meet their catch balance allocations given this recommendation.

**Non-Treaty Commercial Fisheries**

- Combined Select Area landings through May 24 total 9,361 spring Chinook. Chinook landings are 63% greater than the recent 5-year average cumulative total for the same timeframe. Select Area fisheries have accrued an estimated 160 upriver spring Chinook mortalities through May 26.
- Landings from the mainstem fishery on May 20 total 42 adult Chinook and 6,140 shad. Staff estimates there were 17 adult Chinook released, 29 released steelhead (5 unmarked), 11 sturgeon released, and no sockeye. Total upriver spring Chinook mortalities are estimated to be 36 and total unmarked steelhead mortality was one fish.

Fishery	Total Kept	Upriver Kept	Upriver Mortalities (k+r)	Current Allocation	Percent of Allocation	Balance
Select Areas	9,361	160	160	220	73%	60
Mainstem	42	34	36	569	6%	533
<b>Total</b>	<b>9,403</b>	<b>194</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>789</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>593</b>

- The most recent test fishery occurred in Zones 2/3 on May 28 and resulted in 0.2 Chinook, 0.2 steelhead, and 63 shad handled per drift; no sockeye were handled.
- No landings have occurred in the Area 2S commercial shad fishery to date.
- Given the current upriver spring Chinook run size projection, allocation sharing guidance, the post-update timeframe, and expected usage in Select Area commercial fisheries, additional mainstem non-treaty commercial fishery periods can be considered at this time based on the available commercial balance (0.12% ESA impact rate). Fishers have expressed interest in additional opportunity this spring.

<b><i>Recommendation: 2024 Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Commercial Fishery</i></b>	
<b>Season:</b>	Thursday May 30 and Tuesday June 4 from 7:00 AM to 7:00 PM (Two - 12 hour periods)
<b>Area:</b>	Zones 1-5
<b>Sanctuaries:</b>	Grays River, Elochoman-B, Abernathy Creek, Cowlitz River, Kalama-B, Lewis-B, Sandy River, and Washougal sanctuaries in effect.
<b>Gear:</b>	<p>Drift tangle nets only. 4¼-inch maximum mesh size restriction. Single-wall multi-filament net only. Monofilament tangle nets are not allowed. Red corks are required at 25 fathom intervals, and red corks must be in contrast to the corks used in the remainder of the net. Net length not to exceed 150 fathoms, except under the following conditions: Tangle nets constructed with a steelhead excluder panel, weedlines, or droppers can be up to 175 fathoms.</p> <p>An optional use of a steelhead excluder panel of mesh may be hung between the corkline and the 4¼-inch maximum mesh size tangle net. The excluder panel web must be a minimum mesh size of 12-inch stretched measure when taut under hand tension. Monofilament mesh is allowed for the excluder panel only. The excluder panel must be a minimum of five feet in depth and must not exceed ten feet in depth as measured from the corkline to the upper margin of the tangle net mesh as the net hangs naturally from a taut corkline. Weedlines or droppers (bobber type) may be used in place of the steelhead excluder panel. A weedline-type excluder means the net is suspended below the corkline by lines of no less than five feet in length between the corkline and the upper margin of the tangle net. A dropper-type excluder means the entire net is suspended below the surface of the water by lines of no less than five feet in length extending from individual surface floats to a submersed corkline. The corkline cannot be capable of floating the net in its entirety (including the leadline) independent of the attached floats. Weedlines or droppers must extend a minimum of five feet above the 4¼-inch maximum mesh size tangle net. Tangle nets constructed with a steelhead excluder panel, weedlines, or droppers must have two red corks at each end of the net, as well as the red corks as required below.</p> <p>Mesh size is determined by placing three consecutive meshes under hand tension, and the measurement is taken from the inside of one vertical knot to the inside of the opposite vertical knot of the center mesh. Hand tension means sufficient linear tension to draw opposing knots of meshes into contact.</p> <p>There are no restrictions on the use of slackers or stringers to slacken the net vertically. There are no restrictions on the hang ratio. The hang ratio is used to horizontally add slack to the net and is determined by the length of the web per length of the corkline.</p> <p>Nets not specifically authorized for use in these areas may be onboard a vessel if properly stored. A properly stored net is defined as a net on a drum that is fully covered by a tarp</p>

(canvas or plastic) and bound with a minimum of ten revolutions of rope with a diameter of 3/8 (0.375) inches or greater.

**Allowable Sales:**

Adipose fin-clipped (hatchery) Chinook salmon and shad. A maximum of twenty-five (25) adult adipose fin-clipped Chinook may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel. The first twenty-five (25) adult hatchery fish must be retained and no additional drifts may be conducted once the adult Chinook limit has been retained. Jacks (Chinook less than 24-inches in total length) do not count against the adult landing limit.

**Regulations:**

Soak times, defined as the time elapsed from when the first of the web is deployed into the water until the web is fully retrieved from the water, must not exceed 45 minutes.

**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.

**Recovery Box:** Each boat will be required to have on board two operable recovery boxes or one box with two chambers. Each chamber of the recovery box(es) must include an operating water pumping system capable of delivering a minimum flow of 16 gallons per minute, not to exceed 20 gallons per minute of freshwater per chamber. Each box and chamber and associated pump shall be operating during any time that the net is being retrieved or picked. Each chamber of the recovery box must meet the following dimensions as measured from within the box: the inside length measurement must be at or within 39½ inches to 48 inches; the inside width measurements must be at or within 8 to 10 inches; and the inside height measurement must be at or within 14 to 16 inches. Each chamber of the recovery box must include a water inlet hole between ¾ inch and 1 inch in diameter, centered horizontally across the door or end wall of the chamber and 1¾ inches from the floor of the chamber. Each chamber of the recovery box must include a water outlet hole that is a least 1½ inches in diameter located on either the same or opposite end as the inlet. The center of the outlet hole must be located a minimum of 12 inches above the floor of the box or chamber. The fisher must demonstrate to WDFW and ODFW employees, fish and wildlife enforcement officers, or other peace officers, upon request, that the pumping system is delivering the proper volume of fresh river water into each chamber.

All sturgeon, salmon other than adipose fin-clipped Chinook, and steelhead must be released immediately to the river with care and with the least possible injury to the fish, or placed into an operating recovery box. Any salmonid that is bleeding or lethargic 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.

**Additional Rules:**

**Observer program:** As a condition of fishing, owners or operators of commercial fishing vessels must cooperate with department observers or observers collecting data for the department. Additionally, cooperation with department personnel prior to a fishing period is expected.

**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.

24-hour quick reporting required for Washington wholesale dealers, pursuant to WAC 220-352-315. Oregon buyers are required to submit fish receiving tickets electronically 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 more than 24 hours.

- Given effort observed in the May 20 period plus the timing of the proposed fishery, effort is expected to be relatively low.
- Staff used conservative assumptions to project effort and catch for this recommendation. Based on these assumptions, up to 300 spring Chinook may be kept (including 277 upriver spring Chinook mortalities).
- The agencies will conduct onboard observation of the fishery.
- Any steelhead encountered in this fishery would be classified as lower river Skamania stock. Based on observations in prior year fisheries during May and recent test fishing, few steelhead are expected to be impacted in this fishery and aggregate impacts to wild lower river Skamania steelhead are expected to remain well within the 2.0% ESA limit for non-treaty fisheries. Similarly, based on typical migration timing and recent test fishing, few sockeye are expected to be handled in this fishery.
- The proposed mainstem fishery overlaps commercial Select Area periods in all sites, therefore staff recommends the following action:

***Recommendation: 2024 Select Area Commercial Fisheries***

Retention and sales of **non**-adipose fin-clipped Chinook from ongoing Select Area commercial fisheries is prohibited from 7:00 AM Thursday May 30 through 12:00 PM (noon) Friday May 31 and 7:00 AM Tuesday June 4 through 12:00 PM (noon) Wednesday June 5.

***Catch Balance and ESA***

- Catches in all non-treaty fisheries combined are projected to remain within the allowable *U.S. vs. OR* catch balance sharing (7,481 out of 8,443 allowed) and ESA impact rate (0.995% as compared to the allowed 1.6%) on the upriver spring Chinook run.

Expected upriver spring Chinook mortalities in 2024 non-treaty fisheries.							
Fishery	Upriver Mortalities (k±)			Current Allocation	Percent of Allocation	Projected Balance	Projected ESA Impact**
	through May 27	Recommendation	Total Expected				
Downstream of BON* recreational	2,970	955	4,313	5,244	82%	931	0.444%
BON - OR/WA border recreational	1,459	na	1,459	723	202%	-736	0.143%
Snake River recreational (WA waters)	792	na	792	639	124%	-153	0.089%
Wanapum Band (Upper Columbia)	9	na	23	23	100%	0	0.168%
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>5,230</i>	<i>955</i>	<i>6,587</i>	<i>6,629</i>	<i>99%</i>	<i>42</i>	<i>0.755%</i>
Select Areas commercial	160	na	220	220	100%	0	0.193%
Mainstem commercial	36	277	313	569	55%	256	0.047%
<i>Subtotal</i>	<i>196</i>	<i>277</i>	<i>533</i>	<i>789</i>	<i>68%</i>	<i>256</i>	<i>0.240%</i>
<i>Allocated subtotal</i>	<i>5,426</i>	<i>1,232</i>	<i>7,120</i>	<i>7,418</i>	<i>96%</i>	<i>298</i>	<i>0.995%</i>
<i>Unallocated subtotal**</i>				<i>1,025</i>			<i>0.188%</i>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<i>5,426</i>	<i>1,232</i>	<i>7,120</i>	<i>8,443</i>	<i>84%</i>		

\* Includes expected mortalities from previously adopted timeframe June 12-15 (379 mortalities) and non-target release mortalities during steelhead-only fisheries (9 mortalities)

\*\* Unallocated balance from 10% difference resulting from non-concurrent OR/WA Commission guidance between recreational/commercial (844 fish) and 2.5% difference within recreational (181 fish).

- Impacts to other listed stocks, including steelhead, are expected to remain below ESA-impact limitations. Pre-season expectations were outlined in the 2024 Spring/Summer Joint Staff Report in the 2024 Winter, Spring, and Summer Season Expectations section.

### FUTURE MEETINGS

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