

COLUMBIA RIVER INTER-TRIBAL FISH COMMISSION
JOINT STAFF REPORT – SUMMER FACT SHEET NO. 4
Columbia River Compact Hearing
July 10, 2024

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

<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/columbia-river/compact/other-information#2024> and <https://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/OSCRP/CRM/jsmreports.asp>

RIVER CONDITIONS

- As of July 10, the five-day average outflow at Bonneville Dam is 167 kcfs compared to the five-year average of 190 kcfs for the same time period.
- The current five-day average water temperature at Bonneville Dam forebay is 68.0°F compared to the recent five-year average of 66.5°F for this time period.

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 presented in Summer Fact Sheet #1.
- The U.S. v. Oregon Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met on Monday July 8 to review the Sockeye and upper Columbia summer Chinook returns. TAC updated the Sockeye run to 757,000 and updated the summer Chinook run to 40,100 at the Columbia River mouth.
- TAC will meet again on Monday July 15 for the final scheduled in-season update for the summer season.

Upper Columbia Summer Chinook

- Upper Columbia Summer Chinook continued to return less than forecast and consistent with the most recent run update of 40,100 at the mouth of the Columbia River. Passage at Bonneville Dam is 31,779 through July 9, has dropped to less than 600 per day. The Bonneville count to date is the second lowest in the last 10 years.

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 July 9, the total of 697,707 sockeye is the highest count since the construction of Bonneville Dam. Daily Sockeye passage at Bonneville Dam has declined to less than 16,000 per day and is expected to decline steadily as is typical at this time of year.
- Sockeye passage at Lower Granite Dam to date is 250.

Steelhead

- 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. A and B-Index Passage at Bonneville Dam through July 9 is 8,065 total with daily counts exceeding 1,000 per day on July 8.

Summer Management Limits

- All sockeye harvested in mainstem fisheries downstream from the mouth of the Snake River count against the Sockeye harvest rate limit. Based on the updated run size, the harvest rate limit of 7% equates to a harvest limit of 52,990 for treaty fisheries.
- 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 updated run size, treaty fisheries are allowed harvest of 8,095 fish each.
- 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

- Commercial sales of platform and hook and line fish were allowed on June 17 continuously through the summer management period and are expected to continue into the fall.
- The treaty commercial gillnet fishery has had four scheduled weekly openings from June 17 through July 10, for a total of 12.0 fishing days. Through July 6, chinook catches were below projections and sockeye catches were higher than expected but harvest rates were similar to projections.
- The treaty summer fishery model has been scaled to catches and effort to date and projected catches for subsequent weeks are shown in Table 1 below. The model will continue to be adjusted to account for actual fishery performance as the season progresses. The projected catches for weeks with commercial gillnet fisheries include the expected catch in the platform and hook and line fishery for those weeks. The summer model continued the historic pattern of over-predicting harvest early in the season, and the model was updated using conservative estimates to minimize risk catches being significantly higher than expected.
- The harvest downstream of Bonneville through July 6 includes 50 chinook and 1,450 sockeye. These catches are included within the catches shown in Table 1.

Table 1. 2024 Summer Season Treaty Harvest Using Updated Forecast Abundance

2024 Treaty Indian Summer Season Fisheries									
Fishery					Adult Chinook	Harvest Rate	Sockeye	Harvest Rate	Steelhead
Spring season through 6/15					na		53	0.0%	na
Week	Gillnet Fisheries	Start	End	Effort (Set Nets)		0.0%		0.0%	
25	Preliminary	17-Jun	19-Jun	196	1,810	4.5%	4,129	0.5%	243
26	Preliminary	24-Jun	27-Jun	241	2,404	6.0%	16,056	2.1%	377
27	Preliminary	1-Jul	4-Jul	165	1,511	3.8%	10,219	1.3%	334
Subtotal Current fisheries					5,725	14.3%	30,457	4.0%	954
28	Projected	8-Jul	10-Jul	140	1,000	2.5%	2,900	0.4%	390
29	Projected	15-Jul	17-Jul	140	800	2.0%	6,100	0.8%	1,370
30	Projected	22-Jul	Platforms only		100	0.2%	400	0.1%	180
31	Projected	29-Jul	Platforms only		100	0.2%	200	0.0%	170
Total					7,525	18.7%	39,457	5.2%	2,714
Allowed at Updated Forecast					8,095	20.2%	52,990	7.0%	
Remaining After Planned Fisheries					570	1.4%	13,533	1.8%	

- The model projects platform and hook and line fisheries for weeks without current planned gillnet fisheries. With the actual and modeled gillnet fisheries, the remaining Chinook and sockeye after these planned gillnet openings would be sufficient to keep the platform fishery open through the remainder of the summer management period leaving a small buffer to address uncertainties in catch projections.
- The four Columbia River treaty tribes will adopt gillnet regulations consistent with the following:

<i>Recommendation: 2024 Summer Season Treaty Commercial Gillnet Fishery</i>		
Season	6:00 AM Monday July 15 to 6:00 PM Wednesday, July 17	(2.5 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 no mesh size restriction	

Allowable Sales: Salmon (any species), steelhead, shad, yellow perch, bass, walleye, catfish and carp may be sold or retained for subsistence. Fish landed during the open periods are allowed to be sold after the period concludes. 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.

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.

- 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 may request another Compact Hearing during the week of July 15 to consider additional commercial gillnet openings assuming sufficient impacts remain.