

**COLUMBIA RIVER INTER-TRIBAL FISH COMMISSION
 JOINT STAFF REPORT - WINTER FACT SHEET NO. 2
 Columbia River Compact
 December 17, 2025**

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| <i>Fisheries under consideration:</i> | Zone 6 treaty commercial setline fisheries |
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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 relevant to this fishery is the 2026 Sturgeon/Smelt Report will be available in January 2026 at:

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

RIVER CONDITIONS

- The recent 5-day average river temperatures at Bonneville Dam has averaged 50°F which is higher than the recent five-year average of 44.5°F.
- The recent 5-day average outflow at The Dalles Dam is approximately 192 kcfs which is higher than the recent five-year average of 143 kcfs.

STOCK STATUS

Zone 6 Sturgeon

- The states and tribes work cooperatively to complete white sturgeon stock assessments, which rotate between the three Zone 6 reservoirs on an annual basis. The 2025 survey was conducted in the John Day Pool and will be reviewed by the Sturgeon Management Task Force (SMTF) on January 21.

Steelhead and Salmon

- No chinook or steelhead are handled in sturgeon setline fisheries and are therefore not discussed in this Fact Sheet.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Zone 6 Sturgeon

- The SMTF which is a joint state and tribal body is scheduled to meet January 21 to review the stock assessment for the John Day Pool. While it's unknown what recommendation will be regarding updated harvest guidelines for the John Day pool sturgeon fisheries, the current guidelines for the Bonneville and The Dalles Pools and the 2025 guideline for the John Day Pool are presented in the table below.

| Pool | Current Zone 6 Harvest Guidelines | | |
|------------|-----------------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| | Overall Guideline | Treaty Commercial | Recreational Retention |
| Bonneville | 2,500 | 1,250 | 1,250 |
| The Dalles | 1,100 | 825 | 275 |
| John Day | 315 | 210 | 105 |

- There is no harvest guideline for the treaty subsistence catch of sturgeon, but these catches are accounted for and used in population assessments. Subsistence harvest typically occurs in association with fisheries targeting other species.

2026 TREATY INDIAN WINTER FISHERIES

- A setline fishery occurs each January in all three Zone 6 pools under permanent regulations through January 31. Historically, this fishery has low effort and catch. In recent years, the January setline catches have been above average in Bonneville and The Dalles Pools. Catch projections through January 29 are shown in the table below. These include both ticketed landings and direct to public sales. No salmonids are handled in setline fisheries.

Table 1. Projected Sturgeon Harvest in proposed fisheries.

| Reservoir | Projected Total | Guideline | Remaining | % of Guideline Harvested after planned fisheries |
|------------|-----------------|-----------|-----------|--|
| Bonneville | 1,060 | 1,250 | 190 | 85% |
| The Dalles | 440 | 825 | 385 | 53% |
| John Day | 70 | 210 | 140 | 33% |
| Total | 1,390 | | | |

- Catch rates have started out high in recent years as water temperature has been warm and effort has been good.
- In 2025 catch rates were relatively high in the winter fisheries.
- Catches and effort for steelhead harvest in platform fisheries are normally very low in the winter.
- The tribes have used conservative estimates of likely average daily catches based on actual observed catches from this season.

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

| <i>2026 Treaty Indian Winter Season Commercial Setline Fishery (The Dalles and John Day Pools)</i> | |
|---|---|
| Season: | 6:00 AM Thursday January 8 through 6:00 PM on Saturday January 17, 2026 (9.5 days). |
| Area: | The Dalles and John Day Pools only |
| Gear: | Sturgeon Setlines |
| Sanctuaries: | Closed areas include standard closed areas applicable to setline gear. |
| Allowed Sales: | Sturgeon between 43 to 54 inches fork length may be sold or kept for subsistence. Fish landed during open periods are allowed to be sold after the period concludes. |
| Additional: | 24-hour quick reporting is required for Washington buyers, pursuant to WAC 220-352-315 except that landings must be reported withing 24-hours of completing the fish ticket. Oregon buyers are required to electronically submit fish receiving tickets pursuant to OAR 635-006-0210. |

| <i>2026 Treaty Indian Winter Season Commercial Setline Fishery (Bonneville Pool)</i> | |
|---|---|
| Season: | 6:00 AM Monday January 19 through 6:00 PM Thursday January 29, 2026 (10.5 days). |
| Area: | The Bonneville Pool only |
| Gear: | Sturgeon Setlines |
| Sanctuaries: | Closed areas include standard closed areas applicable to setline gear. |
| Allowed Sales: | Sturgeon between 38 to 54 inches fork length may be sold or kept for subsistence. Fish landed during open periods are allowed to be sold after the period concludes. |
| Additional: | 24-hour quick reporting is required for Washington buyers, pursuant to WAC 220-352-315 except that landings must be reported withing 24-hours of completing the fish ticket. Oregon buyers are required to electronically submit fish receiving tickets pursuant to OAR 635-006-0210. |

- The expected total sturgeon catch in The Dalles Pool is 440 fish based on observed catch rates from recent years which were higher than normal. The expected sturgeon catch in the Bonneville Pool fishery is 1,060 based on recent average catch rates. The expected catch of steelhead is zero.
- The expected sturgeon catch in the John Day Pool is 70 which is expected to continue to be low based on an average of recent years.
- Catch will be monitored to ensure the tribal fisheries remain within management limits. The tribes expect it may be possible to set additional fishing time after these openings close.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- The tribes may request a hearing during the week of January 26, 2026.