

**COLUMBIA RIVER INTER-TRIBAL FISH COMMISSION
 JOINT STAFF REPORT - WINTER FACT SHEET NO. 4
 Columbia River Compact
 January 29, 2026**

<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 The Dalles Dam tailrace has averaged 41.0 degrees which is the highest 5-day average temperature for these dates since 2016.
- The recent 5-day average outflow at The Dalles Dam is approximately 184.7 kcfs compared to the 5-year average for these dates of 149.4 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 was reviewed by the Sturgeon Management Task Force (SMTF) on January 27.

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, met January 27 to review the stock assessment for the John Day Pool. Updated harvest guidelines for the John Day Pool are still under discussion. Current guidelines 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 WINTER FISHERIES

- The setline fishery was adjusted in January for separate openings between The Dalles and John Day Pools and the Bonneville Pools that were both less than the full month openings that occurred prior to 2025. 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. A setline opening occurred from January 8 through January 17 in The Dalles and John Day Pools and there is an ongoing fishery in the Bonneville Pool that began on January 19 and ends today. Catches through January 26 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 to date.

Reservoir	Projected Total	Guideline	Remaining	% of Guideline Harvested after planned fisheries
Bonneville	221*	1,250	1029	17.7%
The Dalles	110	825	715	13.3%
John Day	78	210	132	37.1%
Total	409			

* through Jan 26

- Catch rates for The Dalles and Bonneville pools have started lower than in recent years although water temperature has been warm and effort has been good and it is unclear whether catch rates will increase. Catch rates for the John Day Pool highest observed in recent years for January.
- Catches and effort for steelhead harvest in platform fisheries are normally very low in the winter and will be reported when available.

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

2026 Treaty Indian Winter Season Commercial Setline Fishery (The Dalles Pool)	
Season:	6:00 AM Monday February 2 through 6:00 PM on Saturday February 7, 2026 (5.5 days).
Area:	The Dalles Pool only
Gear:	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 within 24-hours of completing the fish ticket. Oregon buyers are required to electronically submit fish receiving tickets pursuant to OAR 635-006-0210.

- The tribes have used conservative estimates of likely average daily catches based on higher than average observed catches from recent years.
- The expected total sturgeon catch in The Dalles Pool is 90 fish based on this years observed catch rate for the last opening, but could be as high as 532 based on the highest setline catch rates from recent years. The expected catch of steelhead is zero.
- 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 February 9, 2026.