

COLUMBIA RIVER INTER-TRIBAL FISH COMMISSON
JOINT STAFF REPORT - FALL FACT SHEET NO. 7
September 30, 2026

<i>Fisheries under consideration:</i> Treaty commercial gillnet
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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 2026 Fall Report was distributed on July 10, 2026. Links to the reports are: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/columbia-river/reports> or <http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/OSCRP/CRM/jsmreports.asp>

RIVER CONDITIONS

- The recent five-day average outflow at Bonneville Dam is 89.1 kcfs compared to a five-year average of 87.3 kcfs for these days.
- The recent five-day average water temperature Bonneville Dam is 66.0°F compared to a five-year average of 65.6°F.
- The five-day average visibility at Bonneville Dam is 7 feet.

STOCK STATUS

- Run size forecasts for 2026 and stock descriptions for salmon and steelhead encountered in fall-season fisheries were presented in Fall Fact Sheet #1a.

Fall Chinook

- Through September 29, a total of 415,221 adult-sized fall Chinook have passed Bonneville Dam. This is the fourth largest count to date in the last 10 years. The adult count is comprised of 264,495 bright stock fish, 99,908 adult sized tule stock fish and 50,818 jack aged tules that are just over the adult size limit. The adult sized jack aged tule count is the largest on record. The jack count at Bonneville totals 124,486 which is third largest to date on record. The ad-clip rate for adult chinook is 61.6% which is higher than average.
- Spring Creek National Fish Hatchery staff have indicated that they collected over 104,000 fish. Staff spawned 3,964 females, collecting over 15 million eggs and finished spawning late last week. Program totals of fish handled through Sept 24, were 20,335 males, 29,224 females, and 54,118 jacks.
- McNary Dam count of adult fall chinook totals 80,684 through September 29. This is the second lowest count to date in the last 10 years. Based on 10-year average run timing, the run would be expected to reach 79% complete on September 29.
- The adult fall chinook count at Lower Granite dam through September 29 is 21,768. This is the 5th largest count to date in the last 10 years. Based on 10-year average run timing, the run would be expected to reach 83% complete on September 29.

Upriver Summer Steelhead

- Passage of summer steelhead at Bonneville Dam during July 1 – September 29 totals 55,184 A- and B-Index fish (including 18,559 unclipped fish). Both the total and unclipped cumulative count counts to date are the lowest A/B Index counts on record.

- From July 1 through September 29, CRITFC staff have sampled 444 total A and B-Index steelhead at Bonneville Dam including 390 A-Index fish (173 unclipped) and 54 B-Index fish (13 unclipped).

Coho

- Coho counts at Bonneville Dam for this run year through September 29 total 68,684 adult early-stock coho (defined as coho passing prior to October 1). The adult count is the fourth lowest count to date in the last 10 years. The coho jack count totals 10,086. The jack count to date is the fifth largest to date in the last 10 years. The Ad-clip rate for coho to date is 31.1% which is lower than average.

In-Season Run Size Updates

- Preseason abundance estimates for upriver-origin fall Chinook stocks (BPH, PUB, and URB) and upriver summer steelhead (A- and B-Index) are updated in-season by the *U.S. v. Oregon* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).
- TAC met on September 28 to review and discuss information relative to the upriver A-/B-Index summer steelhead and upriver fall Chinook returns including Bonneville Dam passage information and outputs from passage projection models. In addition to reviewing run size information, TAC also discussed ongoing fall fisheries.
- Based on the passage to date and assumptions of passage timing, TAC updated the total expected steelhead return at Bonneville Dam to 56,900 fish. The total includes 50,400 total A-Index steelhead of which 17,400 are unclipped fish, and 6,500 total B-Index steelhead of which 1,500 are unclipped fish.
- Based on passage to date, assumptions of passage timing at Bonneville Dam, and harvest downstream of Bonneville Dam, TAC expects the total return of adult-aged fall Chinook to be 605,900 fish at the Columbia River mouth. The total includes 231,700 URB, 99,300 PUB, and 135,300 BPH fall Chinook.
- TAC will continue to monitor and assess the upriver A-/B-Index summer steelhead, upriver fall Chinook, and upriver coho returns during the fall management period and will provide updates as appropriate. TAC is scheduled to meet again on Monday, October 5.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

- Based on the 2017-2027 *U.S. v. Oregon* Management Agreement the treaty fishery has a 30% harvest rate on the URB run based on the updated forecast. Additionally, based on the updated forecast for B-Index steelhead, the allowed treaty harvest rate is 13%.
- There is also a 60,000 fall Chinook management goal at McNary Dam which has been met.
- The broodstock goal at Spring Creek National Fish Hatchery is 6,000 fish which has been met.

2026 TREATY FALL FISHERIES

Treaty Mainstem Fall Management Period Commercial Fisheries

- The treaty tribes allowed fall season commercial sales of platform and hook and line fish on August 1 which was a continuation from sales from the summer management period. The tribes expect sales to run continuously through the end of the fall management period. The treaty

platform and hook and line fisheries harvest only a small portion of the total allowed impacts in fall season fisheries. Most impacts occur in the fall season commercial gillnet fishery.

- During the fall season, some tribes may open fisheries in the area below Bonneville Dam consistent with tribal regulations and MOUs/MOAs between the states and tribes. Harvest downstream of Bonneville Dam is expected to be relatively low. Catch downstream of Bonneville is counted as part of the total tribal mainstem catch and is included in the totals presented below.
- The treaty tribes previously set seven initial commercial gillnet openings for the fall management period and the seventh opening is currently in progress.
- The tribes use a spreadsheet model to project catches in the fall fisheries. The model also tracks catches to date. The model uses set net counts as an index of expected fishing effort as well as recent average weekly harvest rates. The model assumes set net counts will gradually decline from this week's count as it the typical pattern for this time of year. The model uses adjusted harvest rates for future openings to account for actual fishery performance and actual run sizes. The projected catches for weeks with commercial gillnet openings include the expected catches in the platform and hook and line fishery during those weeks.
- Fishing plans include the reduced Spring Creek Hatchery Sanctuary because the broodstock needs have been met. These plans also include continuing to use an 8" minimum mesh size restriction to help control the harvest of B-Index steelhead.
- Catches to date along with modeled catches are shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Projected 2026 Fall Season Treaty Harvest (Using updated forecasts for all stocks)

2026 Treaty Indian Fall Season Fisheries (Modeled catches)									
Week		Fishery	Dates	Set Net Count	Total Adult Chinook	URB Chinook	Total Steelhead	B Steelhead	Coho
31-34	Preliminary	Platform/ H&L Gillnet	August 1- 16 Dates	na	966	402	656	91	6
34	Preliminary	8/17	8/20	161	5,555	2,311	464	38	66
35	Preliminary	8/24	8/29	216	13,896	5,537	319	35	270
36	Preliminary	8/31	9/5	241	23,418	7,801	714	78	918
37	Preliminary	9/7	9/11	290	28,466	6,165	667	46	1,074
38	Preliminary	9/14	9/18	328	19,278	6,514	393	44	794
39	Preliminary	9/21	9/23	214	6,764	1,151	345	51	555
40	Projected	9/28	9/30	169	4,000	600	320	40	700
				Subtotal	102,343	30,481	3,878	427	4,383
41	Projected	10/5	10/8	170	3,700	600	310	30	800
				Subtotal	106,043	31,081	4,188	458	5,183
		Late Fall Platforms			300	200	200	100	100
				Total	106,343	31,281	4,388	553	5,283
		Allowed at Projected URB and B run size				69,510		845	
		Harvest Rate as of Oct 3				13.2%		6.5%	
		Remaining after Oct 3				39,029		422	

Expected Harvest Rate through end of season	13.4%	8.5%
Remaining Available at End of Season	38,229	292

- CWT stock composition estimates for chinook are through last week.
- With the modeled gillnet fisheries, the remaining Chinook and steelhead available after these planned gillnet openings is sufficient to provide a buffer to address uncertainties in catch projections and possible changes in run sizes.
- The four Columbia River treaty tribes have or will adopt gillnet regulations consistent with the following:

<i>2026 Fall Season Treaty Commercial Gillnet Fishery</i>		
Season	6:00 AM Monday October 5 to 6:00 PM Thursday October 8	(3.5 days)
Area	Zone 6	
Sanctuaries:	Standard river mouth and dam closed areas applicable to gillnet gear. The Spring Creek Hatchery sanctuary will be a 150 feet radius around the hatchery ladder.	
Gear:	Set and Drift Gill nets with an 8” minimum 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. Oregon buyers are required to electronically submit fish receiving tickets pursuant to OAR 635-006-0210.	

- The impacts associated with the proposed fisheries fit within the harvest limits for URB run sizes down to 136,000 and for B-Index steelhead run sizes down to 4,200. These run sizes are 45% of the current URB forecast and 65% of the current B-Index steelhead forecast and are both less than the numbers of fish TAC has already accounted for in the runs.
- 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 to 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 mainstem catch for any species. Tributary harvest is managed under separate limits.
- No Compact action is needed for Zone 6 platform fisheries, fisheries downstream of Bonneville Dam or Yakama tributary fisheries.

- 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 October 5 to present plans for additional fall season commercial gillnet fisheries if sufficient impacts remain available.