
Columbia River Recreational Advisor Group Meeting

February 8, 2023

4:00-6:00p

Hybrid (Ridgefield WDFW,
virtual)

Prepared by: Columbia River Joint Staff

Columbia River Recreational Advisor Group Meeting

Ridgefield WDFW office: 5525 S. 11th St., Ridgefield, WA

Join online: [Click here to join the meeting](#) ID: 279 952 149 747 Passcode: tGwjWu

Or call in (audio only): +1 564-999-2000 Phone ID: 741 853 069#

4:00p – 6:00p February 8, 2023

Agenda	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome and Introductions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ground rules ○ Introductions ○ Agenda review 	(15 minutes)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spring Fishery Planning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Summary of management guidelines ○ Lower Columbia River modeling ○ Bonneville-OR/WA state line modeling ○ Snake River season 	(60 minutes)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional Topics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lower Columbia River white sturgeon fishery update ○ 2023 Coho ocean abundance forecast ○ Preliminary angler survey results 	(30 minutes)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Future Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Compact/Joint State Hearing (John Day Pool white sturgeon), February 9, 10a ○ Compact Hearing (Select Area commercial salmon), February 14, 10a ○ Joint State Hearing (recreational spring Chinook), February 22, Ridgefield/virtual, 10a ○ Pacific Fishery Management Council, March 5-10, Seattle, WA ○ North of Falcon, March 14, Ridgefield/virtual, 10a ○ Pacific Fishery Management Council, April 2-7, Foster City, CA 	(15 minutes)

Ground rules

- For virtual meetings
 - *6 to mute/unmute
 - Chat will not be monitored or used except for technical assistance
- Focus on the task at hand – *stick to the agenda*
- One person at a time to speak – speak your name to be added to the speaking list
 - Non-advisers will observe meeting and stay on mute – *comments may be permitted at the end of the meeting if time permits*
- Be respectful of others
 - Mute phone or line
 - Be tough on issues and questions, not on people or organizations
 - No personal attacks, insults or threats
 - Listen

- Speak and act professional – *no offensive, disrespectful, or derogatory language, including profanity*
- Allow for a balance of speaking time – *limit length and number of times to speak on each topic*
- Be a conduit – *share information*

Columbia River Recreational Advisory Group (2021–2023)

First	Last	City	State
Harry	Barber	Washougal	WA
Suzi	Beer	Cascade Locks	OR
Pete	Boone	Forest Grove	OR
Jim	Bridwell	Cathlamet	WA
Nathan	Grimm	Pasco	WA
Kyle	Hawes	Vancouver	WA
Jeremy	Hull	Portland	OR
Rick	La Griede	Skamokawa	WA
Robert	Moxley	Dundee	OR
Pat	O'Grady	Astoria	OR
Bob	Rees	Clackamas	OR
Greg	Short	Hood River	OR
Kelly	Short	Hammond	OR
Butch	Smith	Ilwaco	WA
Jesse	Vassar	Tualatin	OR
Steve	Watrous	Battleground	WA
Chris (Clinton)	Winn	Kalama	WA
Randy	Woolsey	Tigard	OR

Spring Fishery Planning

<i>Columbia River Adult Salmon Returns: Actual and Forecasted</i> [†]				
		2022	2022	2023
		Forecast	Return	Forecast
Spring Chinook	Upriver Total *	122,900	185,209	198,600
	Upper Columbia	21,700	29,605	41,400
	<i>Upper Columbia natural-origin</i>	2,800	5,264	5,800
	Snake River Spring/Summer **	73,400	103,025	85,900
	<i>Snake River natural-origin**</i>	13,200	23,331	13,200
	Lower River Total	74,100	101,745	117,000
	Total Spring Chinook	197,000	286,954	315,600
	<u>Area-specific detail</u>			
	Willamette River	51,200	55,391	71,000
	Sandy River	5,600	10,289	7,800
	Select Areas ***	8,800	18,896	22,100
	Cowlitz River	4,100	7,146	9,000
	Kalama River	2,000	3,148	2,400
	Lewis River	2,400	6,875	4,700
	Wind River ***	4,200	6,530	4,400
	Drano Lake/Little White Salmon River ***	3,800	11,491	8,000
	Hood River ***	n/a	n/a	n/a
	Klickitat River ***	1,800	2,088	1,400
	Deschutes River ***	n/a	2,472	n/a
	John Day River ***	n/a	1,529	n/a
	Umatilla River ***	3,000	3,332	2,500
	Yakima River ***	4,700	5,430	5,500
Summer Chinook	Upper Columbia	56,300	78,494	84,800
Sockeye	Total Sockeye	198,700	664,935	234,500
	Wenatchee	19,200	147,473	44,300
	Okanogan	175,700	513,317	187,400
	Yakima	3,500	157	100
	Deschutes	100	35	100
	Snake River	200	2,329	2,600
Winter Steelhead	Wild	13,400	15,111	15,700

[†] All forecasts are rounded to the nearest 100s place.
 * Upriver totals are developed by TAC for use in management of *U.S. v. OR* fisheries. Wild components are included in the stock total. Area-specific estimates for upriver tributaries detailed here are provided by other agencies/entities and may not sum to TAC's upriver abundance estimates.
 ** 2022 return is based on current TAC run reconstruction methodology.
 *** Return to tributary mouth. The 2023 Deschutes forecast was for a range of 3,365-5,102 adults.

2/2/2023

Spring Chinook Management Guidelines

Upriver Chinook Stocks

- The 2018-2027 *U.S. v Oregon* Management Agreement (MA) provides the treaty Indian and non-treaty fishery harvest frameworks and harvest rate schedules for salmon and steelhead stocks destined for areas upstream of Bonneville Dam.
- Fisheries are also managed to meet the catch balance provision in the MA for upriver spring Chinook, which requires that mortalities in non-treaty fisheries not exceed the total allowable catch available for treaty Indian fisheries. The following table is derived from the harvest schedule within the MA and reflects the allowable catch and associated ESA impacts for treaty Indian and non-treaty fisheries.

Spring Management Period Harvest Rate Schedule						
Total Upriver Run Size	SNAKE RIVER Natural Run Size	Treaty Indian Harvest Rate	Treaty Indian Catch Guideline	Non-Treaty Harvest Rate	Non-Treaty Mortality Guideline	Total Harvest Rate
44,000	4,400	6.0%	2,640	1.0%	2,640	7.0%
55,000	5,500	7.0%	3,850	1.5%	3,850	8.5%
82,000	8,200	7.4%	6,068	1.6%	6,068	9.0%
109,000	10,900	8.3%	9,047	1.7%	9,047	10.0%
141,000	14,100	9.1%	12,831	1.9%	12,831	11.0%
217,000	21,700	10.0%	21,700	2.0%	21,700	12.0%
271,000	27,100	10.8%	29,268	2.2%	29,268	13.0%
326,000	32,600	11.7%	38,142	2.3%	38,142	14.0%
380,000	38,000	12.5%	47,500	2.5%	47,500	15.0%
434,000	43,400	13.4%	58,156	2.6%	58,156	16.0%
488,000	48,800	14.3%	69,784	2.7%	69,784	17.0%

- The MA also specifies that fisheries occurring prior to a run size update be managed for a run size that is at least 30% less than the predicted upriver spring Chinook run size. Buffering the 2023 preseason forecast of 198,600 fish results in an abundance of 139,020 fish for determining pre-update allocations.

Lower Columbia Chinook Stocks (spring run)

- The 2023 forecasts for the Cowlitz, Lewis, Kalama, and Sandy rivers are sufficient to meet escapement goals and allow for Columbia River mainstem fishing opportunities.

Willamette Spring Chinook

- The Willamette River Fisheries Management Evaluation Plan (FMEP) limits freshwater fishery impacts on wild Willamette River spring Chinook to $\leq 15\%$.
- The Willamette River FMEP includes a sliding scale for escapement goals based on abundance of hatchery fish which determines the allocation of surplus hatchery spring Chinook to recreational and commercial fisheries downstream of Willamette Falls. The escapement goals are also intended to allow for full recreational fisheries in the upper Willamette River. The forecasted hatchery fish surplus for recreational fisheries is about 20,000 fish and is not expected to be a constraint.

Preseason management guidelines

- Based on the MA, the preseason forecast of 198,600 upriver spring Chinook, and the preseason forecast for 13,200 Snake River natural-origin spring Chinook, ESA impacts for 2023 fisheries are limited to 10.0%, with 1.7% for non-treaty fisheries and 8.3% for treaty Indian fisheries.
- To allow for uncertainty in preseason forecasting, the MA requires a 30% reduction from the forecasts (i.e., a run-size buffer) to start the season, which equates to 139,020 upriver spring Chinook and 9,240 Snake River wild spring Chinook. At these run sizes, the MA allows for a non-treaty ESA limit of 1.6% and an allowable harvest (kept plus release mortalities) of 10,287 fish prior to a run size update.
- The allocation policies for 2023 specific to commercial-recreational ESA-impact sharing and within-recreational sub-allocations are not concurrent. All information in this document assumes the following: no more than 70% to recreational fisheries (WA Policy) and no more than 20% to commercial fisheries (OR Policy); within the recreational sub-allocation no more than 70% to the Lower Columbia River fishery (WA Policy) and no more than 25% for fisheries upstream of Bonneville Dam (OR Policy; Bonneville Dam to OR/WA state line, Snake River). If additional guidance is provided, staff will modify the results described below and adjust future staff recommendations at upcoming Compact/Joint State Hearings.

2023 Spring Chinook Preseason Management Guidelines			
	2022 postseason	2023 preseason	Difference
Upriver CHS abundance (adults)	122,900	198,600	+75,700
ESA impact rate (Non-treaty)	1.60%	1.70%	+0.1%
Willamette CHS abundance (adults)	51,200	71,000	+19,800

Commission Guidance (ESA impact allocation)	2022	2023	Difference
Sport allocation	70%	70%	0%
Commercial allocation	20%	20%	0%
U.S. v OR Catch Balance	preseason	preseason	
30% Buffered Run	86,030	139,020	+52,990
ESA Impact rate	1.60%	1.60%	0.0%
Unallocated Impact Rate	0.16%	0.16%	
Catch Balance Pre-update	6,366	9,259	+2,893
Unallocated Non-treaty	637	1,028	
Commercial Mainstem	TBD	TBD	
Commercial Select Area	≤418	≤675	+257
Sport Fisheries (LCR, Z6, Snake)	5,293	8,546	+3,253
Lower Columbia (below Bonneville)	3,913	6,487	+2,574
Bonneville to OR/WA border	559	927	+368
Snake River (WA waters)	542	669	+127
Sport unallocated	279	463	

- Weekly mainstem test fishing is expected to occur on Mondays beginning March 13 through May.
 - Provides stock composition, catch rate, and bycatch information and continues the long-term data set; test fishing is helpful in setting potential future commercial fisheries.
 - Hatchery fish are sold at fair market value to off-set test fishing operational costs.
 - All information can be found at: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/commercial/columbia-river-test>.

Recreational Lower Columbia River Fishery Modeling – preliminary considerations

- The 2022 actual season was season was January 1 – April 6, May 12–22, and May 24 – June 15. The boat angling boundary was moved to the permanent deadline and the daily bag limit was raised to two adult Chinook during June 4-15.
- For 2023, a total of 6,487 total upriver spring Chinook mortalities are available prior to an inseason run update under existing OR/WA guidance (3,913 in 2022).
- Since the projected escapement for lower Columbia Chinook stocks is expected to meet minimum hatchery broodstock needs, modeling assumes the recreational fishery will be open throughout the LCR fishing area as normal. Staff used data from 2022 and 2016 fisheries to model the 2023 fishery due to the similarity of the 2023 forecast with adult returns in those years.
- Assuming a seven-day per week fishery from Buoy 10 upstream to Bonneville Dam (bank only upstream of Beacon Rock), model results indicate the season would need to close after April 7 to remain within the pre-update guideline. Staff estimates this season structure could result in 9,829 fish handled (7,766 kept), including 6,411 upriver CHS mortalities (99% of pre-update guideline) from about 68,300 angler trips.
- As always, actual fishery results will be monitored in-season and recommended adjustments to the season will be made as necessary.

Recreational Bonneville-OR/WA State Line Fishery Modeling – preliminary considerations

- The 2022 preseason plan included the pre-update fishery being open April 1 – May 5, but the fishery was closed early in-season due to exceeding the catch allocation.
- The 2022 actual season dates were April 1 – May 3, May 26, May 28, and June 4–15 and the daily limit was raised to two adult Chinook during June 4–15.
- Based on the assumptions described above, the 2023 fishery will be managed for 927 total mortalities pre run update (559 in 2022).
- In recent years, the initial in-season run update has not been available from TAC until mid/late-May, with the initial 2022 update occurring on May 9.
- Permanent regulations during the spring management period typically allow steelhead retention through March 31 and closed thereafter except when spring Chinook is open. However due to the low abundance of upriver summer steelhead, the fishery is closed through March 31, 2023 in waters upstream of The Dalles Dam. Steelhead caught downstream of The Dalles Dam are managed as winter steelhead through March and Skamania stock from April through June.

Season scenarios for the BON-S/L (Zone 6) recreational spring Chinook fishery, 2023						
Scenario	Dates	Total Days	May Weekend days	Kept	Mortalities	% of Catch Balance
1	Mar 16-May 6	52	1	845	866	93%
2	April 1-May 6	36	1	845	866	93%
3	April 16-May 6	21	1	802	822	89%
4*	May 1-7	7	2	817	838	90%

*Accounts for potential effort shift.

Recreational Snake River (Washington) season – preliminary considerations

- Based on the assumptions described above, the fishery will be managed for 669 total mortalities pre run update in 2023 (542 in 2022). This total mortality allocation is dependent on the forecasted mark rate; the actual allocation will change if the observed fishery mark rate differs from forecasted.
- WDFW fishery managers to determine the structure for the lower Snake River season.
- This fishery typically opens in late April on a days-per-week basis in up to four areas.

Lower Columbia white sturgeon fishery update

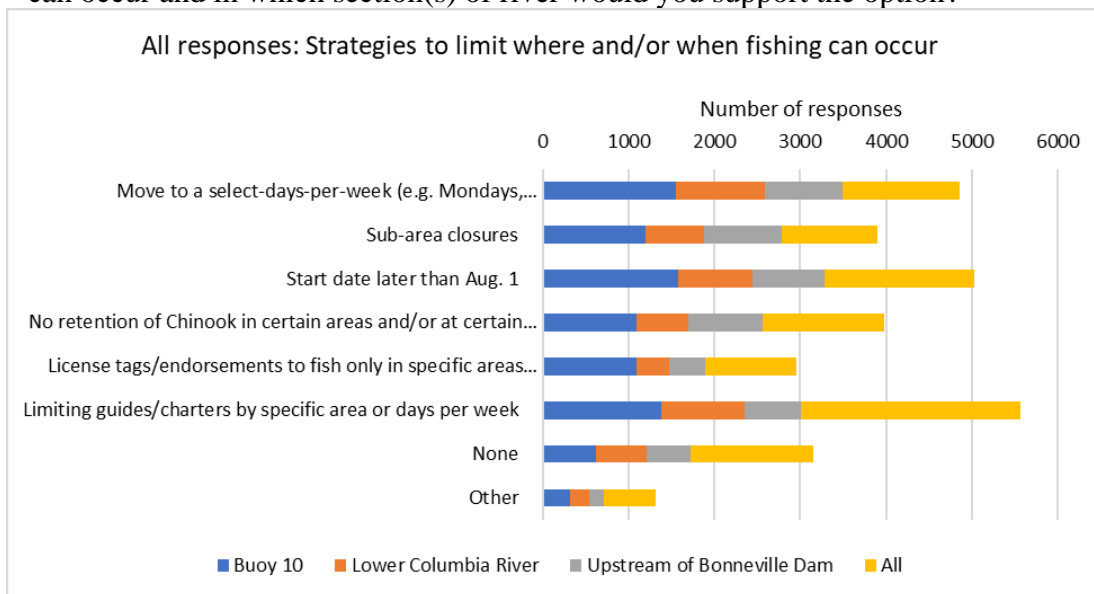
- OR/WA distributed the fishery update to both commercial and recreational advisory groups and the Compact/Joint State hearing email distribution list on February 7, 2023.
- Joint state staff will not be recommending retention of white sturgeon for either commercial or recreational fisheries downstream of Bonneville Dam in 2023.

2023 Coho ocean abundance forecast

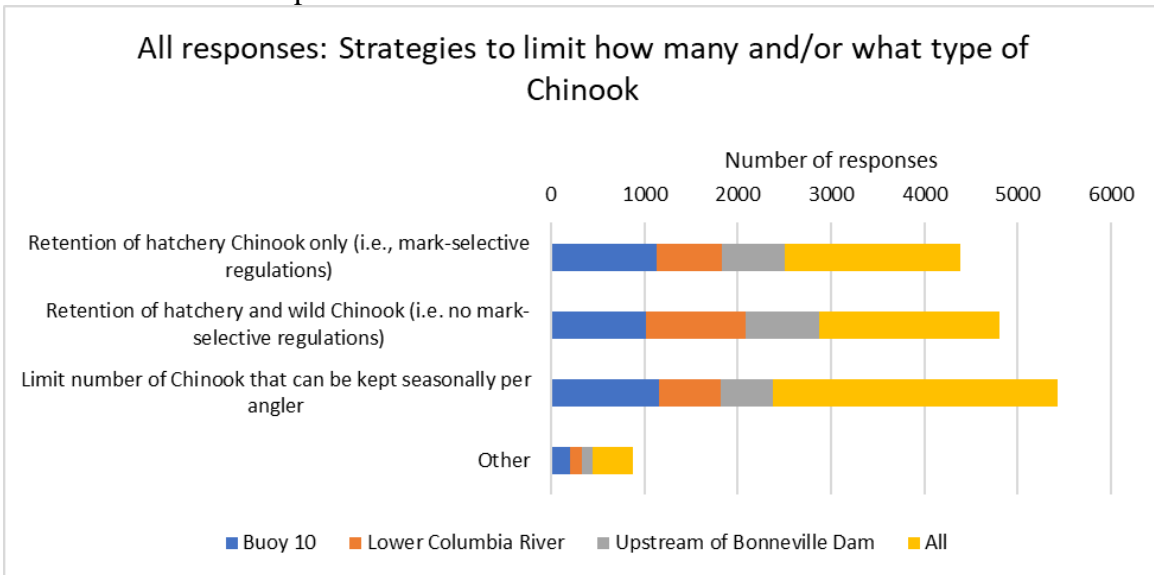
2022 abundance and 2023 forecast of ocean coho run components prior to harvest (thousands of fish)				
	2022			2023
	Pre	Post	Pre/Post	Forecast
Columbia River Early	592.5	434.3	136%	481.8
Columbia River Late	404.7	250.9	161%	404.3
<i>Columbia River Subtotal</i>	997.2	685.2	146%	886.1
<i>Coast Subtotal</i>	6.3	10.8	59%	10.8
Total (OPI-H)	1003.5	696.0	144%	896.9
<i>OCN Rivers</i>	209.0	182.0	115%	226.3
<i>OCN Lakes</i>	13.4	9.6	140%	12.5
<i>OCN Total</i>	222.4	191.5	116%	238.8
Grand Total	1,225.9	887.5	138%	1,135.7

Preliminary Angler Survey results

- WDFW and ODFW recently conducted an online survey intended to gather perspectives from anglers who participate in Columbia River recreational fisheries. The survey asks about potential management strategies and priorities to inform Columbia River fishery managers as they work to develop future fall recreational Chinook seasons.
- The survey was open from December 14, 2022 – January 15, 2023. During that time 7,619 people completed the survey. Results provided are very preliminary as staff are still reviewing the data. Information is subject to change.
- The following includes several preliminary analyses of the responses collected (note percentages may not equal 100% due to rounding and/or excluding ‘other’ categories):
 - Fished (or intended to) in 2022:
 - Yes: 76%
 - No: 23%
 - Mode of transportation for those who fished (or intended to) in 2022:
 - Boat: 67%
 - Bank: 15%
 - Rank the following Chinook fishing season criteria of personal importance:
 - Year-to-year season consistency (i.e., standard seasons): 23%
 - Quality of catch/opportunity (e.g., best catch rates): 18%
 - Maximum season length: 17%
 - Few in-season rule changes (i.e., predictability): 17%
 - Large blocks of time open to fishing (e.g., 7 days/week): 14%
 - Weekend/Holiday fishing opportunity: 7%
 - Would you support any of the following potential strategies to limit where and/or when fishing can occur and in which section(s) of river would you support the option?



- Would you support any of the following strategies to limit how many and/or what type of Chinook can be kept?



- There are other regulatory and management strategies that could be considered. Would you support any of these other options?

