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Need for more public input by April 15

on proposed 2013 Snake River Spring Chinook Fishery Regulations

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is planning for a very limited spring Chinook salmon fishery on the Snake River in late April and May. The 2013 run forecast is low, and following the restrictions of federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), the harvest allocation available for the Snake River is just 360 adipose-fin-clipped hatchery adults, at least until the in-season run update is available the first week of May. About 200 additional hatchery fish could be available for harvest if the run comes in at the pre-season prediction level.

With attendance only about 40 at our public meeting in Kennewick on March 27 (which included discussion of this fishery), we want more public input on options developed for the Snake River fishery.

Please consider the following options and answer the following three questions via e-mail:

As currently proposed, fishing in portions of the Snake River would begin on Friday, April 26, below Ice Harbor Dam (A), and Friday, May 3, for Little Goose Dam area (B), **plus one up-river area, either:** 1) below Lower Granite Dam (C), **or** 2) Clarkston area, from the Washington state line down to Steptoe Canyon, excluding boundary waters (D). *(These four locations are described below.)*

There are three options for this additional fishery:

1. Open Friday, Apr 26 – Ice Harbor (IHR), and Friday, May 3 -- Little Goose (LGO) and **one** of the upper zone areas (either Lower Granite (LGR) or near Clarkston). *This staggered schedule will allow for fish movement into up-river zones. **Or,** open only IHR and LGO as in the past, but don't open an up-river zone at all.*
2. Open the two lower zones, IHR and LGO, two days per week and one upper zone either two **or** three days per week. *This additional day in the upper zone will allow for enhanced up-river opportunity as fish move into this area. Using 2-3 day fishing periods will allow for more precise evaluation of harvest level versus available fishery harvest allotment and ESA impact levels, and also promote available fish movement into upper fishery zones.*
3. Open Friday and Saturday at IHR, and Sunday and Monday at LGO **and** an upper zone. *Possibly could alternate days from IHR and upper two zones, but that could significantly limit the response time if a closure is necessary, so closure notice might be very short.*

We are requesting public response to three questions, choose A or B for each:

1. **A) Open two areas -- IHR and LGO as in the past, but don't open an up-river zone**
 B) Open an up-river zone for additional opportunity

2. **If an up-river zone is opened**
 A) Lower Granite (LGR)
 B) Near Clarkston

3. **A) Open fishery two days per week for all open areas**
 B) Allow three days per week in an upper zone

Responses should be submitted via e-mail, using a subject line of "Spring Chinook Fishery", to teamspokane@dfw.wa.gov by Monday, April 15, 5 p.m.

Snake River location descriptions:

A) Snake River from the South Bound Highway 12 Bridge at Pasco upstream about 7 miles to the fishing restriction boundary below Ice Harbor Dam;

B) Snake River from the railroad bridge approximately ½ mile downstream of Tucannon River mouth, up-river to the fishing restriction boundary below Little Goose Dam, and from Little Goose Dam to the Corps of Engineers boat launch approximately 1 mile upstream of Little Goose Dam (along the south shoreline). This zone includes the area between the juvenile bypass return pipe and Little Goose Dam along the south shoreline of the facility (includes the walkway area locally known as "the Wall" in front of the juvenile collection facility);

Up-River Zones Being Considered

C) Snake River from Casey Creek Canyon Road on the Garfield County shore (approximately 6 miles downstream of Lower Granite Dam) to the fishing restriction boundary downstream of Lower Granite Dam.

D) Snake River from the intersection of Steptoe Canyon Road with the Hwy 193 (Snake River Road) on the Whitman County shore up-river approximately 12 miles to the Idaho state line (from the east levee of the Greenbelt boat launch in Clarkston northwest across the Snake River to the WA / ID boundary marker on the Whitman County shore).