

# COMMISSION REPORT

## Annual Review: Columbia River Basin Salmon Management Policy

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**January 8, 2013**

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# **Annual Review: Columbia River Basin Salmon Management Policy**

## **Background:**

Columbia River recreational and commercial fisheries are a vital part of the social and economic fabric of Oregon and Washington, providing valuable jobs and economic vitality to rural and urban communities. Optimizing the economic value of both of these fisheries within a conservation-based framework that assists recovery of Columbia and Snake River fish species currently listed under the Endangered Species Act is a management priority.

In September, 2012 the Washington and Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commissions agreed to work together, along with agency staff and key stakeholders, in an effort to develop alternative approaches to management of the sport and commercial fisheries on the Columbia River. A Workgroup was formed consisting of three commissioners from each state. Advisors to the Workgroup included two sport and two commercial fishing stakeholders from each state and a Clatsop County Commissioner representing the four coastal counties of Pacific, Wahkiakum, Clatsop, and Columbia. The Workgroup met three times during September-November, 2012 to discuss and analyze proposed fishery strategies. A final document, 'Management Strategies for Columbia River Recreational and Commercial Fisheries: 2013 and Beyond', was completed on November 21 to reflect the agreed recommendations made by consensus of the Washington and Oregon Commission Workgroup members.

In January, 2013, The Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) utilized the November 21 Workgroup recommendations as guidance to adopt Policy C-3620. The policy is applicable to management by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) of Pacific salmon (spring Chinook, summer Chinook, fall Chinook, sockeye, chum, and coho) fisheries in the mainstem of the Columbia River and the lower Snake River. The policy term is January, 2013 through December, 2023.

The policy provides the Department a set of guiding principles and a progressive series of actions to improve the management of salmon in the Columbia River basin. The actions will be evaluated and, as appropriate, progressively implemented in a transitional period occurring from 2013-16. There is uncertainty in the presumptive path forward, including the development and implementation of alternative selective fishing gear, securing funding for enhanced hatchery production, and the expansion or development of off-channel fishing areas. Consequently, the Commission recognizes that management decisions in the transitional period, and subsequent years, must be modified as necessary to meet the stated purpose of the policy.

To address the uncertainties in some aspects of the presumptive path forward, the Commission included adaptive management procedures as an essential tool to achieve the purpose of the policy. The policy's adaptive management plan calls for the Commission to track implementation and results of fishery management actions and artificial production programs in the lower Columbia River during the transition period, with annual reviews beginning at the end of 2013 and a comprehensive review at the end of the transition period ( e.g. 2016).

The policy also calls for the Department to provide the Commission a briefing on the effectiveness of fishery management actions in meeting spring Chinook recreational fishery allocation objectives throughout the Columbia River basin, including recreational fisheries below Bonneville Dam, above Bonneville Dam, and in the Snake River.

## **2013 Review: Implementation of Policy C-3620**

The following review summarizes Columbia River fishery management events and outcomes related to implementation of the Columbia River basin Salmon management policy in 2013. The summary includes status of litigation, legislation, public processes, *U.S. v. Oregon*, C-3620 policy provisions, and fishery outcomes.

### ***Review of 2013 Events***

#### Litigation

Legal challenges of the revised fishery management direction adopted by the Washington and Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commissions were filed in both Washington and Oregon in 2013.

*Washington Litigation* – Columbia River commercial fishing interests filed a case in Wahkiakum County on March 13 asking the court to declare the Commission action invalid. The case was re-filed in Thurston County on April 8. The Thurston County Judge dismissed the case on April 23. The plaintiffs filed an appeal on December 16.

*Oregon Litigation* – Columbia River commercial fishing interests filed with the Oregon Court of Appeals on January 4, 2013 asking for a determination declaring the Oregon Administrative Rules invalid. On February 11, the Court granted the Petitioners a motion to stay enforcement of the rules. On June 6, 2013, the Oregon Commission held a rulemaking hearing to reconsider rules it adopted in December 2012 governing commercial and recreational fisheries in the Columbia River. On July 1, 2013, the petitioners asked the Court to stay certain rules the Commission adopted in June, 2013. The petition was denied on October 22, 2013 and upheld on appeal on December 2, 2013. The case is now focused on judicial review of the rules contested by the petitioners.

#### Legislative Actions

*Washington Legislation* – Policy C-3620 calls for the use of commercial fishing gear other than gillnets. Since a commercial fishery that uses a new gear type (seine nets) would be considered experimental, Washington law (RCW 77.70.160) requires a process to be followed under the ‘Emerging Fishery’ rule. Under this ‘Emerging Fishery’ rule, a five-member board representative of the affected commercial fishery industry is appointed to review and make recommendations to the Director on rules relating to the number and qualifications of the participants for such experimental fishery permits. Currently, the five-member board has been establishing and is working with Columbia River staff to develop recommendations for a pilot seine fishery in the fall of 2014.

*Oregon Legislation* – In addition to the rules adopted by the Oregon Commission in June 2013, implementation of the entire new framework also required new legislation, which was passed and signed into Oregon law this past summer as Senate Bill 830. The legislation: 1) repeals Oregon rules which made it unlawful to take salmon and steelhead “by means of fixed fishing gear or seines in any waters of the state, 2) establishes an Enhancement Fund to enhance fisheries, optimize economic benefits, and advance native fish conservation, and 3) establishes a Transition Fund to provide financial assistance to individual commercial fishermen affected by the new Columbia River fish management and reform rules.

## Public Processes

Throughout 2013, a series of public meetings and hearings occurred including;

1. WDFW and ODFW held 39 Compact hearings in 2013 to consider and implement commercial, recreational, and treaty tribal fisheries in joint state managed waters of the Columbia River.
2. WDFW and ODFW convened seven Columbia River Recreational and Commercial Advisor Group meetings to review run forecasts, receive input for fishery management strategies, as well as receive input regarding management strategies for alternative gear development.
3. A Spring Chinook recreational sub-allocation advisory group was established by WDFW to review the effectiveness of fishery management actions in meeting allocation and recreational opportunity objectives below Bonneville Dam, above Bonneville Dam, and in the lower Snake River. WDFW and ODFW staff convened the sub-allocation advisor group on September 16, 2013 and January 3, 2014. A follow-up discussion is scheduled with the full Columbia River Recreational Advisors Group on January 16, 2014. WDFW staff will provide a report to the Commission in February.
4. The annual North of Falcon (NOF) process occurred during March and April, 2013 where Washington and Oregon agency staff worked with constituents, tribes, and National Marine Fisheries Service to develop management plans for Columbia River summer and fall fisheries. The staffs advanced policy C-3620 transition period actions to the extent possible given the court ordered stay in Oregon and uncertainty in Oregon legislation required to legalize alternative gear.
5. As required under Washington state law, the Department has established a five-person advisory panel of Washington commercial fishers to assist them in developing recommendations for implementing pilot beach and purse seine fisheries in 2014. This panel has convened under a public setting twice over the past few months. Oregon staff members have attended these meetings as observers. During these meetings, a number of questions have arisen concerning who gets to participate in the fishery, how participants will be selected, how harvest quotas will be shared between the pilot fisheries and existing mainstem gill net fisheries, how gear and boats will be regulated, and when and where the fisheries will occur.

Oregon and Washington staff members have agreed to coordinate Washington's process with a more comprehensive planning effort involving the Columbia River Commercial Fishery Advisory Group and the public. Two Advisory Group meetings were held, one in October and one in December, as was a public meeting in Astoria in December to discuss options and solicit input from Columbia River gill netters, fish buyers and interested members of the public. Ultimately, staff plans to develop draft rules for 2014 pilot seine fisheries and bring the rules to the Director and Commission prior to the North of Falcon fishery planning process.

### Gill Net License Buyback Program

The Department is coordinating with ODFW to develop baseline data concerning historic effort, participation, and ex-vessel values associated with Columbia River gillnet licenses. The agencies are also researching information regarding the process and implementation of past buyback programs. The Department will continue to coordinate with ODFW and work with the industry to survey and evaluate the industry's interest level in such a program, as well as research potential funding sources.

### Development and Implementation of Alternative Gear

One of the guiding principles of the Commission policy reads, "In a manner consistent with the Department's licensing authority, develop and implement alternative selective-fishing gear and techniques for commercial mainstem fisheries to optimize conservation and economic benefits". Since 2009, Oregon and Washington fisheries managers have been evaluating different gear for use in Columbia River commercial fisheries. The gears tested to date are beach seines, purse seines, tangle nets, trolling gear, fish traps, and arrow nets. Evaluations for some of the gears are still ongoing. Of the gears tested to date, purse and beach seines during the fall season (August through October) are moving to the implementation (pilot fishery) stage. Some results to note are:

- a. Evaluations of purse and beach seines fished during the fall season handled a large number of Chinook and coho and appear to be a viable gear for the selective harvest of these stocks. Release mortality results will be a key factor in future management of this gear.
- b. Evaluations of purse and beach seines fished during the fall season also handled a fair amount of summer steelhead. Certain stocks of steelhead are ESA-listed and allowable impacts are limited. A low release mortality rate will be one of the a key factors in directing seine fisheries at hatchery Chinook and coho while minimizing impacts to released steelhead.
- c. Evaluations of purse and beach seines fished during the summer season handle both summer Chinook and sockeye. Snake River sockeye are listed ESA-listed and allowable impacts are limited. Sockeye impacts may be the constraining factor for any summer season seine fisheries.
- d. A three-year field study conducted by the Department to determine the appropriate release mortality rates for salmonids handled with seine gear concluded at the end of 2013. The field data, including 2013 radio tracking information from USGS, are currently in the summary and analysis phase. The analysis and conclusions from the three year study are being coordinated with the *U.S. v. Oregon* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), including NOAA and tribal technical staff. The results of this mortality study will need to be available for the 2014 NOF planning process beginning in March.

During the 2013 NOF process, the fishery scenarios modeled included the potential for conducting a mark-selective coho tangle net fisheries during the late fall season. Seine fisheries were not included in fishery scenarios modeled because Oregon legislation to legalize the gear was not yet finalized, and there was a court ordered stay in Oregon regarding new rules adopted by the Oregon Commission. Additionally, mortality studies were not complete and consequently NOAA ESA permits for a new gear could not be attained.

Once Oregon's legislation passed legalizing seine nets and the Oregon court-ordered stay was lifted, the Departments worked with NOAA to attain temporary ESA coverage to conduct a pilot seine fishery (if there were ESA impacts available after planned fisheries occurred). The Departments were unable to attain the ESA coverage, in part due to the October government shut-down.

The tangle-net gear was covered under current NOAA ESA permits and was legal gear in both states at the time of the NOF planning process. A pilot coho tangle-net season was included in the commercial fall season plan and allocated a portion of the Columbia River coho ESA impacts. The pilot coho tangle-net fishery was implemented in October 2013.

#### Off-Channel Development and Enhancement

**Washington-** Currently, the only Select Area site in Washington is Deep River. This site has limited space and although it has produced fair returns of coho, the spring Chinook smolt survival to adults, and harvest, has been minimal. In 2013, the Department initiated research to determine the feasibility of a new Select Area in the Cathlamet Channel, a lower river site adjacent to Cathlamet, WA. Test fishing in Cathlamet Channel was conducted twice a week from late March through late May. Data collected at this site was similar to mainstem test fishing, which collects biological data on Chinook to determine stock and origin, and also collects data measuring catch and release condition on all salmonids. The Department has worked closely with the city of Cathlamet to secure a city owned site for net pen rearing and release, as well as NOAA, Wahkiakum County, Department of Ecology (DOE), and the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to secure permits. The Department has also completed a SEPA process concerning the release of fish production from the Cathlamet site with a determination of non-significant impacts. The plan is to transfer spring Chinook smolts from the Grays River Hatchery to Cathlamet net pens in January for final rearing. The spring Chinook will be released this coming spring (2014).

Consistent with the off-channel enhancement plan, 250,000 spring Chinook smolts will be acclimated and released into the Cathlamet Channel instead of Deep River. The expectation is that these fish will produce more returning adults, and the inclusion of Cathlamet Channel as a Select Area site will provide additional space for more fishermen to participate. The success of this program will depend on these locally produced fish providing strong enough returns to support a fishery, and for outside stock interception to be at a level that can be managed within commercial ESA allocations. In-season test fishing and fishery management response will be a key part of the approach. The first return of adult spring Chinook from the Cathlamet Channel releases will be in 2016. Other programs in Deep River will continue, including the rearing and release of 800,000 coho and 1.0 million tule fall Chinook. The fall Chinook released in Deep River is connected to the hatchery reform and sustainable fisheries program.

**Oregon-** Opportunities to expand current seasons in existing Oregon Select Area (off-channel) sites primarily exist during the winter season in Tongue Point/South Channel and in Knappa Slough. In 2013, fisheries were opened in these two sites during the winter season. Effort and catch was minimal.

Since the fall of 2011, test fishing in areas adjacent to existing Oregon Select Area (off-channel) sites has been conducted. To determine if these sites are viable for expanded commercial

fisheries, the stock composition of the catch must be evaluated. Work is currently under way compile and report on the three years of test fishing.

One of the policy objectives adopted by the Oregon Commission is to enhance the economic benefits of off-channel commercial fisheries by “providing additional hatchery fish for release in off-channel areas by shifting currently available production, and where possible providing new production. Although not specified in rule, the Oregon Commission provided further guidance related to the numbers and stocks of hatchery fish that were to be released in Select Area sites. In the near term (2013 through 2016), the additional releases were to be as follows:

- 500,000 juvenile spring Chinook. Relocated from other hatchery programs.
- 600,000 juvenile coho. Relocated from other hatchery programs.
- 500,000 Select Area Bright (SAB) fall Chinook.

In 2013, the actual additional number of spring Chinook acclimated and released totaled 390,000 smolts and the actual additional number of Select Area Bright fall Chinook reared and released was 480,000 smolts. For Oregon, the expectation for 2014 is to meet release targets for spring Chinook (681,000), coho (630,900) and Select Area Bright fall Chinook (820,000)

#### Barbless Hooks

Part of the management strategy adopted in policy C-3620, is to make fisheries more selective by deploying gear that minimizes harm or allows for the safe release of imperiled wild fish. In light of this concept, effective January 2013, recreational anglers were required to use barbless hooks in the mainstem and Columbia River tributary fisheries for salmon and steelhead.

#### Increase Management Certainty

The Department is working to ensure that federal funding through NOAA and Bonneville Power Administration (BPA) continues to support monitoring of fisheries and collection of return data and analysis. These programs provide the information that is critical for developing run forecasts, fishery planning, and in-season fishery management. Additionally, the Department continues to engage with state, tribe, and federal biologists in the *U.S. v. Oregon* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to coordinate technical data that is relied upon for developing stock status data bases and in-season stock specific fishery impact analysis. These data are critical for the decision-making process of the Columbia River Compact in adopting fisheries that meet the *U.S. v. Oregon* mandated treaty Indian and non-Indian harvest sharing requirement, NOAA Requirements regarding non-Indian and treaty Indian ESA limits, Commission policy regarding commercial and recreational fishery allocation of ESA impacts, commercial sharing of ESA impacts between mainstem, Select Areas and different gear types, recreational sub-allocations of impacts by area, and recreational season objectives. There are typically 40-50 Columbia River Compact hearings per year to manage these fisheries in-season.

#### Improve Management Tools

One of the tools identified in policy C-3620 was to improve the accuracy of preseason forecasts and in-season run size updates, and the in-season tracking of ESA impacts accrued from harvest by individual fishery. The table below includes the 2013 preseason forecast compared to actual returns and the 2014 forecasts for spring Chinook and sockeye. The 2013 fall Chinook and coho returns are not finalized until mid-February.

<i>Columbia River Mouth Fish Returns Actual and Forecasts**</i>					
		<b>2013 Forecast</b>		<b>2013 Return</b>	<b>2014 Forecast</b>
<b>Spring Chinook</b>	<b>Total Spring Chinook</b>		<b>225,000</b>	<b>193,700</b>	<b>308,000</b>
	Willamette		59,800	47,300	58,700
	Sandy		6,100	5,700	5,500
	Cowlitz*		5,500	9,500	7,800
	Kalama*		700	1,300	500
	Lewis*		1,600	1,800	1,100
	Select Areas		9,900	5,000	7,400
	<b>Lower River total</b>		<b>83,600</b>	<b>70,600</b>	<b>81,000</b>
	Upper Columbia	Total	14,300	18,000	24,100
	<i>Upper Columbia</i>	<i>Wild</i>	<i>1,600</i>	<i>3,600</i>	<i>3,700</i>
	Snake River	Total	58,200	67,300	125,000
	Spring/Summer		58,200	67,300	125,000
	<i>Snake River</i>	<i>Wild</i>	<i>18,900</i>	<i>21,900</i>	<i>42,200</i>
	<b>Upriver Total</b>		<b>141,400</b>	<b>123,100</b>	<b>227,000</b>
<b>Summer Chinook</b>	<b>Upper Columbia</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>73,500</b>	<b>67,600</b>	<b>67,500</b>
<b>Sockeye</b>	Wenatchee		44,600	36,000	63,400
	Okanogan		134,500	149,000	282,500
	Snake River	<i>Wild</i>	<i>1,250</i>	<i>1,100</i>	<i>1,200</i>
	<b>Total Sockeye</b>		<b>180,500</b>	<b>186,100</b>	<b>347,100</b>
<b>Steelhead</b>	Wild winter steelhead	Wild	15,700		
	<b>Summer Upriver</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>339,200</b>	<b>231,300</b>	

\*Return to tributary mouth

\*\*Totals may not sum due to rounding

As each season progresses, runsize updates are provided by TAC. TAC is a comprised of multiple entities designed to equally represent all parties to *U.S. v Oregon*. During the course of 2013, TAC met almost every week from late April until early October to provide Columbia River fishery management staff run size updates. These run size updates allowed fishery managers to track ESA impacts and harvest shares, and allowed the Compact to make informed decisions in structuring fisheries in the Columbia River and the lower Snake River.

<b>2013 TAC runsize updates for upriver salmon and steelhead stocks (in thousands of fish)</b>										
	Spring Chinook	Summer Chinook			Sockeye		Fall Chinook	Upriver Steelhead		Coho
<b>Spring</b>	<i>Upriver</i>	<b>Summer</b>	<i>Upper Col.</i>	<i>Col R</i>		<b>Fall</b>	URB	Group B	Group A	early stock
<b>Preseason</b>	<b>141.4</b>	<b>Preseason</b>	<b>73.5</b>	<b>180.3</b>		<b>Preseason</b>	<b>434.6</b>	<b>31.6</b>	<b>291.0</b>	<b>288.5</b>
<b>22-Apr</b>	Too early	<b>24-Jun</b>	No Update			<b>12-Aug</b>		tracking behind		
<b>29-Apr</b>	No update	<b>1-Jul</b>	60.0	155.0		<b>19-Aug</b>		213.0		
<b>13-May</b>	107.5	<b>8-Jul</b>	64.0	165.0		<b>26-Aug</b>		199.0		
<b>20-May</b>	107.5	<b>15-Jul</b>	65.0	179.0		<b>3-Sep</b>		199.0		
<b>28-May</b>	107.5	<b>22-Jul</b>	66.0	184.0		<b>10-Sep</b>	663.6	205.0		
<b>6-Jun</b>	115.0					<b>16-Sep</b>	832.5	20.0	205.0	
						<b>23-Sep</b>	832.5	15.0	205.0	29.0 @ BON
						<b>2-Oct</b>		10.7	213.4	33.0 @ BON
						<b>7-Oct</b>		10.7	213.4	

### Adaptive Management Provision

The Adaptive Management provision of Policy C-3620 states that “State-managed fisheries pursuant to this policy will be adaptive and adjustments may be made to mainstem fisheries if policy objectives, including catch or economic expectations for commercial or recreational fisheries, are not achieved consistent with the principles of this plan. If these expectations are not achieved, efforts will be made to correct the course. Department staff may implement actions necessary to manage adaptively to achieve the objectives of this policy and will coordinate with the Commission, as needed, in order to implement corrective actions. Reconsideration of state-managed mainstem fisheries may take place under the following circumstances:”

1. Lower than anticipated catch and economic expectations to the commercial salmon fishing industry.
2. Insufficient space within off-channel sites to accommodate the commercial fleet.
3. Biological, fiscal and/or legal circumstances that delay or preclude implementation of alternative selective gear, buyback of commercial fishing permits, and/or additional off-channel hatchery investments.
4. Management objectives are not achieved for commercial or recreational fisheries.
5. Conflict with terms of *U.S. v. Oregon* Management Agreement.
6. Failure to meet conservation objectives.

The Columbia River Compact did exercise an in-season adaptive management action in late May of 2013 when large-mesh gillnet gear was approved for the commercial mainstem spring Chinook fishery to reduce handle time of ESA-listed salmonids. Because the interception of shad with tangle-net gear was so significant during this time-frame, it compromised the time it took to retrieve wild spring Chinook from the net. The mark-selective gear regulations require a limited net ‘soak time’ of 45 minutes to improve survival of released wild fish. The large-mesh gear enabled shad to pass through the net, allowing fishers to focus on salmonid handle time.

One year into the transition period of the policy is too soon to assess performance relative to the above adaptive management provisions. The Department will continue to coordinate with the Commission as more information is collected during the 2014-16 transition period. Current information includes:

- The commercial ex-vessel value for salmon harvest was above average in 2013 due to a record high upriver bright fall Chinook return and a corresponding large commercial harvest of fall Chinook in the mainstem Columbia River.
- Research to determine the feasibility of additional off-channel sites is on-going.
- The first pilot commercial seine fishery in the mainstem Columbia River will occur in 2014.
- Study to determine release mortality rates for salmonids in fall seine fisheries is complete. Results of study expected in early spring of 2014.
- Legal challenges by commercial fishing interests are on-going.
- The Department continues to coordinate with the Columbia River treaty tribes and NOAA through *U.S. v. Oregon* technical and policy committees.
- Success in meeting conservation objectives will be assessed as more information is collected in 2014-16.

## ***Review of 2013 Columbia River Fisheries***

The following review includes pre-season allocations, actual catch by user, ex-vessel for commercial, angler trips and seasons for recreational fisheries. Performance or success of these fisheries can be measured when compared to fishery objectives, harvest and impact sharing guidelines and overall economic value. In addition, the implementation of adaptive management during the course of the 2013 season recognizes the flexibility needed in managing Columbia River fisheries which are inherently dynamic in nature. All data for 2013 should be considered preliminary and subject to change.

### 2013 Columbia River Spring Chinook Season

#### **Spring season - Policy Guidelines**

Commission policy (C-3620) allocates the allowable impacts of ESA-listed upriver spring Chinook between recreational and commercial fisheries. The policy includes the following language:

- a. Transition Period (2013-2016): In 2013, assign 65% of the ESA-impact for upriver spring Chinook stocks to mainstem recreational fisheries and the balance (35%) to off-channel and mainstem commercial fisheries. During 2014-16, assign 70% of the ESA-impact for upriver spring Chinook stocks to mainstem recreational fisheries and the balance (30%) to off-channel and mainstem commercial fisheries.
- b. Long Term (2017 and beyond): Assign 80% of the ESA-impact to mainstem recreational fisheries to meet management objectives and the balance (20%) to off-channel and mainstem commercial fisheries.
- c. To ensure broad geographic distribution of recreational opportunity, 75% of the impacts allocated to recreational fisheries will be assigned to the recreational fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam, and the balance (25%) assigned and reserved for recreational fisheries upstream of Bonneville Dam (including the Snake River).
- d. The Department will seek in the long term to extend recreational opportunity downstream of Bonneville Dam as long into April as possible, with a high probability of an uninterrupted 45-day season beginning March 1.

#### **Spring season - Preseason Planning**

The 2013 pre-season forecast for upriver spring Chinook was 141,400 adult fish to the Columbia River. Based on the *U.S. v. Oregon* Management Agreement (MA), non-Indian fisheries were limited to an ESA impact of 1.9% and a catch balance limit of 12,800 upriver fish (kept plus release mortalities). After applying a 30% run size buffer (also mandated by the MA), non-Indian fisheries were planned based on a total of 7,325 upriver spring Chinook harvest mortalities available prior to a run-size update. Commission sharing formulas and buffers were applied to produce the allowable take by each fishery prior to a run size update.

On January 30, 2013, the Columbia River Compact adopted management guidelines for the harvest of upriver spring Chinook consistent with the Commission policy. These guidelines were modified slightly after an order was issued to stay the enforcement of the Oregon policy. This resulted in a slight adjustment in the shares allocated to recreational and commercial fisheries, but it did not change the management or structure of the fisheries already adopted.

**2013 spring Chinook fisheries were managed based on an ESA- sharing formula that allocated 60% to recreational and 35% to commercial fisheries, and 5% un-allocated (2012 guidelines).**

The final preseason catch guidelines for upriver spring Chinook (kept plus release mortalities) used for managing fisheries prior to a run-size update were:

- a. Recreational Fisheries (Total = 5,955)
  - Downstream from Bonneville Dam: 4,934
  - Bonneville Dam upstream to the Oregon/Washington border: 658
  - Snake River (Washington waters): 363
- b. Non-Indian Commercial Fisheries (Total = 1,370)
  - Mainstem: 1,222
  - Select Areas (Off-channel): 148

### **Spring Season - Actual Returns/Final Guidelines**

The actual return of adult upriver spring Chinook was 123,100 fish, which was 87% of the pre-season forecast. Almost 113,000 adults and 43,000 jacks passed Bonneville Dam through June 15. The jack count was the third highest on record. The actual return for lower river tributaries totaled 70,600 fish (84% of forecast) and included 47,300 Willamette spring Chinook.

Based on actual return of 123,100 upriver fish, the allowable ESA impact was 1.7% for non-Indian fisheries and the catch balance limit was 10,200 upriver Chinook mortalities. Both the ESA impact and catch balance limits were reduced from pre-season expectations. The post-season management guidelines (buffers removed with final runsize) for the spring season were:

- a. Recreational Fisheries (Total = 7,593).
  - Downstream from Bonneville Dam: 6,168.
  - Between Bonneville Dam and Oregon/Washington border: 822.
  - Snake River: 603.
- b. Non-Indian Commercial Fisheries (Total = 2,624).
  - Mainstem: 2,439.
  - Select Areas (Off-channel): 185.

### **Spring Season - Fisheries**

#### **Spring Season – Recreational Fisheries**

##### *Downstream of Bonneville Dam*

Seasons: Prior to a run-size update, this area was open for Chinook retention (under permanent rules) during January and February from Buoy 10 upstream to the I-5 Bridge. Under rules adopted through the Columbia River Compact, the fishery remained open from March 1 through April 12 from Buoy 10 upstream to Bonneville Dam, although the area between Beacon Rock and Bonneville Dam was open only to bank fishing. During this period, the fishery was closed on March 26, April 2, and April 9 to allow for possible commercial fishing periods. Initially, the season was scheduled to close April 5, but fishery managers were able to extend the season through April 12 based on lower than expected catch rates due to poor river conditions.

After a run-size update, the fishery reopened May 25 and continued through June 15 from Tongue Point upstream to Bonneville Dam. The area between Beacon Rock and Bonneville Dam was restricted to bank angling only through June 7. The bag limit included one (hatchery adult) Chinook per day throughout the season.

Harvest/Angler Trips: An estimated 6,900 adult spring Chinook were kept and 2,700 released from 109,700 angler trips. These totals include 3,300 angler trips and 100 adult Chinook released during May 16-24 when the steelhead fishery below the I-5 Bridge was open. During the spring season 700 jack Chinook and 1,900 steelhead were also kept. The catch rate averaged one adult Chinook kept for every 11 angler trips.

Of the 6,168 adult upriver spring Chinook allocated to recreational fisheries downstream of Bonneville, a total of 5,343 fish, or 87% of the catch balance guideline was used. ESA impacts associated with this fishery total 0.608%, or 79% of the 0.765% guideline for this fishery.

#### Upstream of Bonneville Dam

*Bonneville Dam upstream to the Washington/Oregon border:*

Seasons: Prior to a run size update, 0.091% ESA impacts were set aside for this fishery, which translated to nearly 700 Chinook (kept + release mortalities) allowed. The fishery opened with a two (hatchery adult) Chinook daily bag on March 16 and was scheduled to continue through May 5. Since 2010, the fishery has included the extended areas from McNary Dam upstream to the Oregon Washington border, and along the Oregon and Washington banks between Bonneville Dam and Tower Island. The fishery closed as scheduled on May 6.

When TAC provided an in-season run size estimate of 107,500 upriver spring Chinook fish on May 13, the total allowed catch for this fishery was around 650 fish, compared to the 607 fish in hand. Once TAC updated the run to 115,000 upriver spring Chinook on June 6, additional fish became available and the fishery was able to re-open with a one (hatchery adult) Chinook daily bag limit on June 8 and continue through June 15.

Harvest/Angler Trips: Season total catch estimates for adult Chinook include 600 kept and 300 released from 4,200 angler trips. Total catch represented 75% of the catch balance guideline for this fishery. ESA impacts associated with this fishery totaled 0.070%, or 68% of the 0.102% impact guideline for this fishery.

*Snake River upstream to the Washington/Idaho border:*

Seasons: Prior to a run size update, 0.137% ESA impacts were set aside for this fishery, which translated to nearly 400 Chinook (kept + release mortalities) allowed. The fishery was open in three sections of the Snake River. On April 26 the area below Ice Harbor Dam near Pasco, Washington opened to hatchery Chinook retention (1-fish bag) followed by the April 28 opening of the two remaining sections of the river near little Goose Dam and Clarkston. Each section was open only two days per week. No closure dates were set, but the fishery was expected to remain for at least a few weeks; with the closure date dependent on catch rates and associated impacts.

The two lower-most areas remained open until May 11 (Ice Harbor) and May 13 (Little Goose). The uppermost area near Clarkston, Washington remained open through May 27. All three areas did reopen on a days-per-week basis in mid-June to provide additional angler opportunity.

Harvest: Season total catch estimates for adult Chinook include 350 kept and 125 released. Total catch represented 62% of the catch balance guideline for this fishery. ESA impacts associated with this fishery totaled 0.083%, or 54% of the 0.153% impact guideline for this fishery.

## **Winter/Spring Season - Commercial Fisheries**

### Mainstem Columbia River

#### Seasons:

**Winter Sturgeon:** Three 24-hour commercial fishing periods occurred from January 31 through February 7 in Zones 1-5 with a 9-inch minimum mesh restriction.

**Winter/Spring Chinook:** Prior to a run size update, 0.249% ESA impacts were set aside for this fishery, which translated to 1,200 Chinook (kept + release mortalities) allowed. The first salmon-directed fishery for 2013 was a 9-hour opener on Tuesday April 9. The fishery was conducted with tanglenet gear in Zones 1-5. Tributary mouth sanctuaries were in place to protect ESA-listed steelhead and Chinook. Allowable sales included adipose fin clipped Chinook, shad and white sturgeon. Each participating vessel was limited to a maximum of nine adipose fin clipped adult Chinook. Because of the limited number of Chinook available for commercial harvest, the fishery was put on stand-by until a runsize update was available. By mid-May TAC had officially updated the run, which resulted in an allowed catch of 1,800 fish. The second fishing period was a 14-hour fishing period on May 15 in Zones 1-5 using tanglenet gear. Prior to adopting this fishing period, public testimony at the Compact hearing included the request to use large-mesh to avoid the building abundance of shad in the river. The Compact acknowledged the concern and recognized that an over-abundance of shad caught with tanglenets could potentially increase the handle time of chinook/steelhead required be released, but maintained the use of tanglenets. The following week at the May 20 Compact hearing, the Joint Staff recommended three 16-hour fishing periods in Zones 1-5 using tanglenet gear. Public testimony included the continued concern regarding high shad encounters and the challenges it posed in keeping wild chinook/steelhead handle time at a minimum. The Compact decided to implement the adaptive management clause within the current policy that allowed for policy adjustments when conservation/fishery objectives were at risk of not being met. Taking into account the economic value of the fishery and the prescribed regulations (including 45-minute soak times), the Compact decided that for this particular circumstance for this particular fishery, allowing large-mesh gear would be appropriate. Two additional fishing periods were conducted in late May (May 22 and May 29). Both periods were 12-hours long and conducted in Zones 1-5 with large mesh gear.

Harvest/ Number Deliveries: During the winter sturgeon season, harvest included 15 white sturgeon and no Chinook. Deliveries ranged from 2 to 4 per period. During the winter/spring Chinook season, harvest included 1,900 hatchery Chinook, nearly 300 white sturgeon, and 5,200 shad. Deliveries ranged from 47 to 130 per period (75 average).

Total catch included 1,500 upriver Chinook mortalities, which represented 61% of the (2,439) catch balance guideline for this fishery. ESA impacts associated with this fishery totaled 0.427%, or 96% of the 0.445% impact guideline for this fishery.

#### *Select Area (Off-channel)*

Seasons: Select Area winter and spring commercial fisheries were open in Youngs Bay, Tongue Point/South Channel, Blind/Knappa Sloughs, and Deep River. Season structure in 2013 was similar to recent years. Generally speaking, during the winter season Select Areas are open 2-3 nights per week from mid-February to mid-March. The Youngs Bay season does extend into late March. The spring season typically is open 2-3 nights per week from late April through June 15.

Harvest/ Number Deliveries: Harvest totaled 6,100 Chinook and 200 white sturgeon. Total catch included 260 adult upriver spring Chinook, which represented 141% of the (185) catch balance guideline for this fishery. ESA impacts associated with this fishery totaled 0.211%, or 141% of the 0.150% (fixed) impact guideline for this fishery.

#### 2013 Columbia River Summer Chinook Season

##### **Summer season - Policy Guidelines**

Commission policy (C-3620) allocates the harvestable surplus of upper Columbia summer Chinook between fisheries above and below Priest Rapids Dam, and between commercial and recreational fisheries downstream of Priest Rapids Dam. For fisheries downstream of Priest Rapids Dam, the policy includes the following language:

- a. Transition Period (2013-2016): Through 2014, assign 60%, of the harvestable surplus to mainstem recreational fisheries and the balance (40%) to mainstem commercial fisheries. During 2015-16, assign 70%, of the harvestable surplus to mainstem recreational fisheries and the balance (30%) to mainstem commercial fisheries
- b. Long Term (2017 and beyond): Determined following discussions with Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife.

Commission policy (C-3620) also allocates the allowable ESA-impact for Snake River sockeye between recreational and non-Indian commercial fisheries. The policy includes the following language:

- a. Transition Period (2013-2016): Assign 70% of the ESA-impact for Snake River sockeye to mainstem recreational fisheries and the balance (30%) to mainstem commercial fisheries for incidental harvest of sockeye in Chinook-directed fisheries.
- b. Long Term (2017 and beyond): Assign ~80% of the ESA-impact for Snake River sockeye to mainstem recreational fisheries to meet management objectives and the balance (~20%) to mainstem commercial fisheries for incidental harvest of sockeye in Chinook-directed fisheries.

##### **Summer Season - Preseason Planning**

The 2013 preseason forecast for upper Columbia summer Chinook was 73,500 adult fish to the Columbia River mouth. Based on the *U.S. v. Oregon* Management Agreement (MA), non-Indian Columbia River fisheries were limited to a harvest of 16,650 upriver fish (kept plus release mortalities). Commission sharing formulas were then applied to produce the allowable harvest

by each fishery. Sharing formulas were slightly modified due to the Oregon stay. **This resulted in a slight adjustment to the shares allocated to recreational and commercial fisheries. Harvestable summer Chinook were shared 55/45 between sport and commercial fisheries downstream of Priest Rapids Dam.** The allocation of harvestable upper Columbia summer Chinook assigned to each fishery preseason was:

- a. Fisheries upstream of Priest Rapids Dam (Total = 10,906)
- b. Fisheries downstream of Priest Rapids Dam (Total = 5,744)
  - Recreational Fisheries: 3,159 (2,525 below BON)
  - Commercial Fisheries: 2,585

The 2013 pre-season forecast for sockeye was 180,350 fish to the Columbia River mouth. Based on the *U.S. v. Oregon* Management Agreement (MA), non-Indian Columbia River fisheries were limited to a 1% allowable ESA impact rate. Based on the preseason forecast, Columbia River fisheries were limited to a harvest of 1,800 sockeye (downstream of the Snake River).

### **Summer Season - Actual Returns/Final Guidelines**

The actual return of upper Columbia summer Chinook was 67,600 adult fish (92% of forecast). Based on the actual return, the number of harvestable fish was slightly (12%) less than preseason (16,650 pre/14,651 post). The following outlines the harvestable fish allocated to fisheries based on the actual return of adult upper Columbia summer Chinook:

- a. Fisheries upstream of Priest Rapids Dam (Total = 9,885)
- b. Fisheries downstream of Priest Rapids Dam (Total = 4,767)
  - Recreational Fisheries: 2,621 (2,121 below BON)
  - Commercial Fisheries: 2,145

The actual return of sockeye was 186,100 fish (103% of forecast). Non-Indian fisheries were well within the ESA limit of 1%, with actual impacts estimated at 0.4%.

### **Summer Season – Fisheries**

#### **Summer Season Recreational Fisheries**

##### *Downstream from Bonneville Dam*

Seasons: The recreational fishery in this area was open for hatchery Chinook and sockeye retention from June 16 through June 30. Sockeye retention reopened July 13 through July 31. The area was also open for hatchery steelhead under permanent regulations.

Harvest/Angler Trips: During June 16-30 catch estimates for adult Chinook include 1,800 hatchery Chinook (1,200 released) and 400 sockeye from 26,500 angler trips. During July anglers made an additional 25,600 trips targeting steelhead and sockeye. Total Chinook catch in this area represented 97% of the guideline (2,058/2,121).

##### *Upstream of Bonneville Dam to Priest Rapids Dam*

Seasons: Summer season recreational fisheries were open June 16 through July 31 from Bonneville Dam upstream to Priest Rapids Dam. The fishery allowed retention of hatchery Chinook and sockeye. Sockeye retention was initially allowed only up to the Highway 395 Bridge, but was extended inseason upstream to Priest Rapids Dam beginning June 21.

Harvest: Anglers retained 30 hatchery Chinook and 10 sockeye. An additional 40 adult Chinook were released. Despite the full season, total Chinook catch in this area represented 7% of the guideline for this area. (36/500).

### **Summer Season Commercial Fisheries**

#### *Mainstem*

Based on the 2,600 chinook allocated to this fishery preseason, no more than two fishing periods were anticipated during the six-week summer season. Regulations included an 8-inch minimum mesh size and tributary mouth sanctuaries to protect ESA-listed steelhead. Sockeye sales were allowed since ESA impacts were available to cover the minimal catch expected with the gear restriction. The first summer Chinook fishing period was an eight-hour period conducted on June 16 in Zones 1-5. Fisheries were then put on stand-by pending a run size update. It wasn't until one month later that a sufficient run size update was available allowing for a second (8-hour) period to occur on July 15 in Zones 1-5.

Harvest/ Number Deliveries: During the summer season, harvest included nearly 1,900 Chinook and 100 sockeye. Deliveries totaled 117 the first period and 40 the second period. Total chinook harvest represented 87% of the (2,145) catch balance guideline for this fishery.

#### *Select Area (Off-channel)*

Season: Select Area summer commercial fisheries are open only in Youngs Bay. This fishery is designed to harvest the few Select Area spring Chinook remaining in the off-channel area and early returning Select Area Bright fall Chinook. Six 48-hour periods occurred from June 19 through July 26, which is a standard season for this area.

Harvest/ Number Deliveries: Harvest totaled nearly 2,000 Chinook. Deliveries ranged from 39 to 99 per period.

### 2013 Columbia River Fall Season

#### **Fall Season - Policy Guidelines**

Commission policy (C-3620) provides guidelines for allocation of salmon and fishery objectives that are categorized into four sections: 1) Lower Columbia River tule Chinook, 2) Upriver Bright Chinook, 3) coho and 4) chum. Policy language is as follows:

#### ***Lower Columbia River tule fall Chinook:***

- a. Transition Period (2013-2016): Assign no more than 70% of the ESA-impact for lower Columbia River (LCR) tule Chinook to mainstem recreational fisheries to meet management objectives and the balance (not less than 30%) to off-channel commercial fisheries, mainstem commercial fisheries that target Upriver Brights, and (if using selective gear) Lower River Hatchery fall Chinook.
- b. Long Term (2017 and beyond): Assign no more than 80% of the ESA-impact for LCR tule Chinook to mainstem recreational fisheries to meet management objectives and the balance (not less than 20%) to off-channel commercial fisheries and mainstem commercial fisheries that target Upriver Brights, and (if using selective gear) Lower River Hatchery fall Chinook.
- c. Management objectives for recreational fisheries by area include:

- Buoy 10 – August 1 through Labor Day
- Tongue Point to Warrior Rock – August 1 through September 7, then mark-selective for Chinook September 8-14
- Warrior Rock to Bonneville Dam - August 1 – October 31

***Upriver Bright fall Chinook:***

- a. Transition Period (2013-2016): Assign no more than 70% of the ESA-impact for Snake River Wild fall Chinook to mainstem recreational fisheries to meet management objectives and the balance (not less than 30%) to off-channel and mainstem commercial fisheries.
- b. Long Term (2017 and beyond): Assign no more than 80% of the ESA-impact for Snake River Wild fall Chinook to mainstem recreational fisheries to meet management objectives and the balance (not less than 20%) to off-channel and mainstem commercial fisheries.
- c. The Department will focus mainstem commercial fisheries to target Upriver Bright fall Chinook in the area upstream of the Lewis River where the incidental take of LCR tule Chinook is reduced
- d. Harvest of Upriver Bright fall Chinook in the area downstream of the Lewis River will occur in selective fisheries that target Washington Lower River Hatchery Chinook and coho.
- e. The presumptive path forward regarding targeted commercial harvest of Upriver Bright fall Chinook upstream of the Lewis River will be to access available Chinook with alternative selective gear and techniques. Because access to Upriver Bright Chinook will be important to ensuring the long-term economic viability of commercial fisheries, adaptive management will be used to ensure alternative selective gear and techniques are effective and that commercial fishers continue to have profitable mainstem access to these economically important stocks.

***Coho:***

- a. Transition Period (2013-2016): Assign commercial fisheries a sufficient share of the ESA-impact for Lower Columbia Natural coho to implement off-channel coho and fall Chinook fisheries and mainstem fall Chinook fisheries and the balance to in-river mainstem recreational fisheries. If these in-river mainstem recreational fisheries are expected to be unable to use all of the ESA-impact for Lower Columbia Natural coho, assign the remainder to mainstem commercial coho fisheries. As selective techniques are developed – provide additional mainstem commercial fisheries in October to access hatchery coho.
- b. Long Term (2017 and beyond): Assign commercial fisheries a sufficient share of the ESA-impact for Lower Columbia Natural coho to implement off-channel coho and fall Chinook fisheries and mainstem fall Chinook and hatchery coho fisheries. Assign the balance to in-river mainstem recreational fisheries. If these fisheries are unable to use all of the ESA-impact for Lower Columbia Natural coho, assign the remainder to mainstem commercial coho fisheries. It is expected that substantial new opportunities for selective mainstem commercial fisheries will be available for hatchery coho, particularly in October.

**Chum:** Maintain current practice of opening no fisheries that target Chum, and assign a sufficient share of ESA-impacts to cover incidental catch in commercial off-Channel and mainstem fisheries.

### **Fall Season - Preseason Planning**

In 2013, the Columbia River Compact adopted fisheries based on management guidelines and fisheries objectives developed through the North of Falcon process. The annual “Non-Indian Columbia River Summer/Fall Fishery Allocation” agreement outlines the results of the North and Falcon process, and includes allocation guidelines for ESA-listed salmon between commercial and recreational fisheries, as well as probable season structures based on preseason forecasts and ESA impact sharing.

Preseason planning was based on runsize forecasts that included a total of 678,600 adult Chinook to the Columbia River. Included in this forecast were 87,000 Lower River Hatchery (LRH) Chinook and 434,600 Upriver Bright Chinook (URB). Returns of this size allow for an ESA impact limit of 41% (shared between ocean and in-river) on the LRH fall Chinook (which is the surrogate for the LCR tule stock) and an ESA limit of 15% on Snake River wild (SRW) fall chinook (URBs are the surrogate). **The 2013 preseason final model allocated 69% of lower Columbia River (wild) tule ESA-impacts and 44% of SRW ESA-impacts to recreational fisheries.** The catch expectations (including any release mortalities) were as follows:

- a. Recreational Fisheries (Total =55,600 Chinook, 14,800 hatchery coho).
  - Buoy 10 to Tongue Point: 21,800 Chinook, 13,100 hatchery coho.
  - Tongue Point to Bonn. Dam: 26,500 Chinook, 1,700 hatchery coho.
  - Upstream from Bonneville Dam: 7,300 Chinook.
- b. Non-Indian Commercial Fisheries (Total = 55,400 Chinook, 29,200 coho).
  - Early Fall (August): 38,800 Chinook
  - Late Fall (Sep-Oct): 13,200 Chinook,
  - Season total: 29,200 coho (includes pilot coho tanglenet MSF expectation).

### **Fall Season - Actual Returns/Final Guidelines**

The actual return of adult fall Chinook is preliminary, but is expected to approach 1.2 million or about 177% of the pre-season forecast. Over 80% of the return is mid-Columbia and Upriver Bright fall Chinook destined for areas upstream of Bonneville Dam. Almost 953,000 adults passed Bonneville Dam through November 15.

The Columbia River coho return is not finalized, but preliminary estimates indicate the run was less than the 433,600 forecasted to return. Much of the shortfall was from the upriver component, evident by reduced coho passage over Bonneville Dam. Lower River hatchery coho returns are still being tallied, and most are slightly less than expected.

Given the record breaking Chinook return, the actual catch of Chinook was greater than pre-season expectations. Because the increased Chinook return included mainly upriver fish, fisheries in the area downstream of Warrior Rock remained somewhat curtailed due to limited

LCR tule impacts. Preliminary catch estimates (including any release mortalities) are listed below:

b. Recreational Fisheries (Total =79,400 Chinook/ hatchery coho).

- Buoy 10 to Tongue Point: 25,900 Chinook.
- Tongue Point to Bonneville Dam: 39,600 Chinook.
- Upstream from Bonneville Dam: 13,900 Chinook.

c. Non-Indian Commercial Fisheries (Total = 86,400 Chinook).

- Early Fall (August, Zones 4-5): 45,600 Chinook.
- Late Fall (mid-Sep-Oct, Zones 4-5): 41,800 Chinook.
- Season total: 9,600 coho.

ESA impact sharing of ESA-listed salmon and coho is pending, but preliminary results indicate Sharing of Snake River wild impacts was 42% sport/ 58% commercial and Sharing of in-river ESA impacts of lower river natural tules was 68% sport/ 32% commercial. Sharing of wild coho impacts generally followed the preseason plan, as fisheries were not modified in order to remain within allowable impacts, although catch was less than expected.

## **Fall Season - Fisheries**

### **Fall Season Recreational Fisheries**

#### *Buoy 10*

Season: The Buoy 10 fishery (Columbia River mouth upstream to Tongue Point) was open for Chinook retention August 1 through September 1 with a daily bag limit of two fish/one Chinook. In order to meet the fishery objective (open through September 1), mark-selective regulations for Chinook were implemented in-season from August 23 through September 1. The fishery closed for Chinook retention as scheduled on September 2. Although not scheduled to open for Chinook again until October 1 (with a 1 Chinook daily bag limit), the fishery reopened on September 13 under mark-selective regulations for Chinook; the bag limit was also increased to two Chinook. On September 26, the mark-selective regulations for Chinook were lifted, allowing anglers to harvest any Chinook. The season continued through December 31.

Harvest/Angler Trips: An estimated 22,800 Chinook and 8,000 hatchery coho were kept from 64,500 angler trips. An additional 16,600 Chinook and 7,300 coho were released. During the Chinook mark-selective fishery (MSF) retention periods, Chinook harvest included 7,000 kept and 10,800 released from 23,500 angler trips (included in totals mentioned above).

Season objectives for this fishery were met or exceeded; due in part to the initial mark-selective period (Aug 23-Sep 1). Additional retention opportunity for Chinook was also increased in response to the strong upriver Chinook return.

#### *Tongue Point to Bonneville Dam:*

Season: This area opened for Chinook retention on August 1 with a daily bag limit of two fish/one Chinook. This area is split into two sections (above and below Warrior Rock) that each have different regulations to help reduce handle of LCR tule Chinook. For both areas, in-season adjustments were adopted effective September 13 that included an increase to the daily bag limit

(up to two Chinook) and a ‘party rule’ that allowed each legal angler aboard a vessel to deploy angling gear until the daily bag limit of salmon/steelhead for all anglers aboard the vessel was achieved.

*-Tongue Point to Warrior Rock:* Open from August 1 through September 5 for Chinook and hatchery coho. Beginning September 6, the area opened under MSF regulations for hatchery Chinook retention. The MSF regulations were initially scheduled to continue through September 12, but were extended in-season through September 25 (in lieu of a complete closure to Chinook). Effective September 26, the MSF regulations were lifted allowing the retention of any Chinook (clipped or un-clipped).

*-Warrior Rock to Bonneville Dam:* This area was open for Chinook retention from August 1 through December 31. In-season modifications mentioned above liberalized Chinook retention rules.

Harvest/Angler Trips: An estimated 31,900 adult Chinook and 1,000 adult hatchery coho were kept from 141,500 angler trips. An additional 9,700 Chinook and 400 coho were released.

Season objectives for each area were met or exceeded. By extending the mark-selective regulations in the area below Warrior Rock, the fishery was able to continue without a closure period (as was initially planned). The increased bag limit and party rule also liberalized chinook retention rules in response to the strong upriver Chinook return.

*Bonneville Dam to Highway 395 Bridge near Pasco, Washington:*

Season: The fishery was open for Chinook retention from August 1 through December 31 with a daily bag limit of two fish/two Chinook. On September 13, each legal angler aboard a vessel was allowed to deploy angling gear until the daily bag limit of salmon/steelhead for all anglers aboard the vessel was achieved (party rule).

Harvest: Actual catch of adult Chinook in this area are based on average harvest rates and run size projections. Based on this data, actual catch is modeled to reach 14,000 Chinook. A catch of this size would be over twice the average, based on catch record card data.

*Hanford Reach*

Season: Season structure for the 2013 Hanford Reach fishery was similar to past years, with opening day on August 1 and the season continuing through October 22. Anglers were allowed to keep up to two adult Chinook daily.

Harvest/angler trips: Harvest in 2013 was a record-breaker – a total of 19,300 adult Chinook were kept from 33,100 angler trips. Catch in this area has consecutively improved since 2007, and the huge return of fall Chinook in 2013 help continue this positive trend.

## **Fall Season Commercial Fisheries**

*Mainstem*

Early Fall (August)

Season: Preseason planning included an expectation of the 2013 fall season to begin around August 13 in Zones 4-5. The fishery was expected to continue through the end of the month with fishing periods occurring two to four times a week (~8-9 periods total). The actual Early Fall season consisted of eight (seven 9-hour and one 5-hour) periods from August 11 through

August 29. All periods occurred in Zones 4-5 with a 9-inch minimum mesh restriction, consistent with preseason planning.

Harvest/number of deliveries: Harvest included 45,600 Chinook, 400 coho and 700 white sturgeon. Deliveries ranged from 67 to 125 per period.

Late Fall (September/October)

Season: Preseason planning for the Late Fall portion of the 2013 commercial season included both Chinook and coho directed fisheries. The Late Fall season was expected to begin the week of September 15 in Zones 4-5 focusing on Chinook. Coho-directed fisheries were expected to begin in early October and include a mark-selective period encompassing two weeks in early October using tangle-net gear.

The actual Late Fall season included twenty-one (6-12 hour) Chinook-directed periods from September 15 through November 1. Two openers (September 26-27 and 29-30) occurred in Zones 1-5, and the rest were in Zones 4-5. Coho-directed fisheries occurred in Zones 1-3 and included eight (12-hour) mark-selective periods during October 2 through October 15 with a 3¾-inch tangle-net mesh gear and five (12-hour) periods during October 16-25 using the standard 6-inch gear. Observers on board commercial fishing boats that participated in the tangle-net fisheries monitored 357 drifts from 61 boats. Of the 897 coho observed, 77% were marked, which met expectations. Immediate mortality rate observed for released adult coho was 7%, which also met expectations. Nearly 20% of the coho landed in tangle-net fisheries were observed.

Harvest/number of deliveries: Harvest during the Late Fall included 41,800 Chinook, 9,200 coho and 300 white sturgeon. Deliveries ranged from 3 to 127 per period.

Season total harvest estimates include 87,400 Chinook, 9,600 coho, and 1,000 white sturgeon. Coho-directed fisheries resulted in a catch of 6,700 coho (including release mortalities), which was much less than the assumed catch for coho-directed fisheries. The low coho catch was a function of a reduced run size, and low participation in the tangle-net fishery (deliveries were about one-third of what was assumed in planning). Chinook harvest exceeded expectations in response to the record breaking return.

*Select Area (Off-channel)*

Select Area fall commercial fisheries were open in Youngs Bay, Tongue Point/South Channel, Blind/Knappa Sloughs, and Deep River (Washington). Seasons in each specific area ranged from 30-71 days, and deliveries ranged from 0-179, with the greatest effort occurring in Youngs Bay. The season was considered average, with harvest including 23,700 Chinook, 42,500 coho and 100 sturgeon. Select Area fisheries exceeded the catch expectations for both Chinook and coho.

## 2013 Columbia River White Sturgeon Recreational Seasons

### **White Sturgeon Fisheries - Preseason planning**

In 2013, the Columbia River Compact adopted management guidelines for white sturgeon consistent with amendments to the 2011-2013 Joint State Sturgeon Accord negotiated by the Directors of the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife. Management guidelines were calculated based on a 13.6% harvest rate and a sharing formula that assigned 80% of the white sturgeon available for harvest to recreational fisheries and 20% to commercial fisheries. The harvest rate was 85% of the maximum rate allowed in Oregon's white sturgeon conservation plan and effectively held 15% of the harvestable surplus in reserve as a conservation buffer. Based on the forecasted abundance of 74,300 legal-sized white sturgeon, a total of 10,105 fish were available for harvest. The 2013 harvest sharing guidelines were:

- a. Recreational Fisheries (Total =8,084)
  - Estuary: 4,042 (converted from 4,850 to reflect difference in min. size limit).
  - Wauna to Bonneville Dam: 2,021
  - Willamette River: 1,733 (includes 520 baseline)
- b. Commercial Fisheries (Total =2,021).
  - Mainstem: 1,621
  - Select Areas: 400

The actual abundance of legal-sized white sturgeon in 2013 was 114,200 fish or 154% of the forecast. This estimate is based on recaptures of fish marked in the spring and summer of 2013, and made available in November each year. The harvestable surplus in 2013, with a 15% conservation buffer, was over 5,400 fish, or 54%, greater than the 10,105 fish guideline used to manage the fisheries.

### **Recreational Fisheries**

#### Seasons:

The annual white sturgeon bag limit statewide was reduced to two fish in Washington beginning April 1, 2013. Oregon started the year with a one fish bag on January 1, but revised the limit to two on April 1 to remain concurrent with Washington.

Estuary: The fishery was open for white sturgeon retention seven days per week from January 1 through April 30 and May 11 through June 20. Although the states intended for the second season to extend through June 30, the guideline was reached, and actually exceeded, before then. Similar to past years, the minimum legal-size fork length was 38 inches from January 1 through April 30 and 41 inches from May 11 through June 30. This change in fork length is designed to help maximize the season length.

Wauna to Bonneville Dam: The fishery was open for white sturgeon retention three days per week (Thursday, Friday and Saturday) from January 1 through June 15. The fishery was scheduled to reopen on October 19, but less than 80 fish remained on the guideline, so the fishery remained closed. Angling for white sturgeon from Bonneville Dam downstream nine miles was prohibited from May 1 through August 31 to protect spawning sturgeon.

Willamette River: The fishery was open for white sturgeon retention Thursday, Friday and Saturday, July 11 through July 13, and July 18 through July 20, and on Saturday October 19. Angling for white sturgeon from Willamette Falls downstream to the I-205 Bridge was prohibited from May 1 through August 31 to protect spawning sturgeon.

Harvest/Angler Trips: In total, recreational fisheries slightly exceeded their share of the management guideline by 115 fish, or 1.5%. However, given that the number of legal-sized white sturgeon available for harvest in 2013 was significantly higher than forecasted, the actual harvest rate in recreational fisheries was 7.7%, compared to a planned harvest rate of 10.9%.

Estuary: An estimated 4,559 white sturgeon were kept from about 17,200 angler trips. This was 113% of the guideline.

Wauna to Bonneville Dam: An estimated 1,942 white sturgeon were kept from about 15,900 angler trips. This was 96% of the guideline.

Willamette River: An estimated 1,410 white sturgeon were kept from about 12,400 angler trips. This was 81% of the guideline. Although over 300 fish remained on the guideline after the last retention fishery, no additional fisheries were conducted because the estuary fishery exceeded its guideline by over 500 fish.

### **Commercial Fisheries**

Except for a mainstem winter fishery that targeted white sturgeon, sturgeon harvest occurred incidentally to salmon fisheries in the mainstem and Select Areas. In total, commercial fisheries harvested 2,012 white sturgeon or 99.5% of their share of the management guideline. Given that the number of legal-sized white sturgeon available for harvest in 2013 was significantly higher than forecasted, the actual harvest rate in commercial fisheries was 1.8%, compared to a planned harvest rate of 2.7%.

A total of 15 white sturgeon were landed during the winter mainstem commercial season. Spring summer and fall commercial mainstem fisheries harvested an additional 1,643 white sturgeon. Select Area fisheries harvested 354 white sturgeon in Select Area salmon fisheries.

### Summary of Recreational Catch and Effort; Summary of Commercial Ex-Vessel Value

One of the Guiding Principles in Washington Commission Policy C-3620 reads “in a manner that is consistent with conservation and does not impair the resource, seek to enhance the overall economic well-being and stability of Columbia River fisheries”.

Recreational fishery objectives include season stability and duration. The 2013 sport fisheries included some in-season adjustments from pre-season planned structure, but overall were successful in meeting recreational objectives.

2013 Lower Columbia River Sport - Angler Trips and Harvest					
Fishery	Trips	Chinook	Coho	Sockeye	Steelhead
Winter/Spring	109,700	6,900			1,900
Summer	52,100	1,800		500	5,100
Buoy 10	64,500	22,800	8,000		
Fall LCR	134,300	30,500	1,000		6,100
<b>LCR Total</b>	<b>360,600</b>	<b>62,000</b>	<b>9,000</b>	<b>500</b>	<b>13,100</b>

2013 Columbia River Above BON Sport - Angler Trips and Harvest					
Fishery	Trips	Chinook	Coho	Sockeye	Steelhead
Spring Z6/Snake R	4,200	950			1,500
Summer Z6/>PRD		2,440		5,700	700
Fall Z6		13,900	1,000		6,200
Hanford Reach	33,100	19,300	100		300
<b>Above BON total</b>	<b>37,300</b>	<b>36,590</b>	<b>1,100</b>	<b>5,700</b>	<b>8,700</b>

An economic measure for commercial fisheries considered during the Columbia River fisheries reform process was ex-vessel value, i.e. the price per pound paid to fishers upon delivery of their catch. In general, the expectation was that during the transition period (2013 through 2016), the overall ex-vessel value of commercial landings was to be at least similar to recent years, with the potential for some increase associated with off-channel enhancements, although it was recognized that there may be significant variation due to annual variation in the number of each salmon stock returning to the Columbia River.

The preliminary 2013 ex-vessel value (displayed below) totals nearly \$3.4 million from mainstem fisheries and nearly \$2.3 million from Select Area fisheries. These values are above average. The increased Columbia River commercial value is associated mainly to the large fall Chinook harvest, in particular the mainstem large-mesh gillnet fishery upstream of the Lewis River, where commercial fisheries focused on the record high upriver bright Chinook return.

2013 Columbia River Mainstem Commercial Ex-vessel Value				
	Chinook	Coho	Sturgeon	Total
Winter/Spring	\$190,530		\$30,382	\$220,912
Summer	\$141,208		\$39,190	\$180,399
Early Fall	\$1,808,323	\$5,260	\$77,846	\$1,891,428
Late Fall	\$945,615	\$116,715	\$33,382	\$1,095,712
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$3,085,676</b>	<b>\$121,975</b>	<b>\$180,801</b>	<b>\$3,388,452</b>

*All data preliminary*

2013 Columbia River Select Area Commercial Ex-vessel Value				
	Chinook	Coho	Sturgeon	Total
Winter/Spring	\$603,957		\$22,220	\$626,177
Summer	\$137,638		\$2,931	\$140,570
Fall	\$925,011	\$578,996	\$10,820	\$1,514,828
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,666,606</b>	<b>\$578,996</b>	<b>\$35,972</b>	<b>\$2,281,575</b>

*All data preliminary*

## 2014 Fishery Planning and Policy Implementation

Following is a general schedule that highlights the processes for managing 2014 Columbia River fisheries in the Washington/Oregon concurrent jurisdictional waters. These events capture main events, some scheduled, and some anticipated for 2014. There will undoubtedly be additional processes not listed here; including regular TAC meetings, special issue-specific *U.S. v. Oregon* meetings, Columbia River Advisor meetings, WDFW and ODFW coordination meetings, constituent meetings, ESA coordination with NOAA, and further dialogue between the Departments and the Washington and Oregon Commissions.

**January 16- Columbia River Commercial Advisors:** Staff and Advisors meet to discuss outlook and options for spring Chinook seasons and recommendations for rules to implement pilot seine fisheries in 2014.

**January 16- Columbia River Recreational Advisors:** Staff and Advisors meet to discuss outlook and options for spring Chinook season and allocation of upriver spring Chinook recreational ESA impacts and harvest above and below Bonneville Dam, and in the lower Snake River.

**January 29- Columbia River Compact:** Meet to review stock status and set initial non-Indian spring Chinook recreational seasons, commercial Select Area seasons, and commercial spring season planning guidance.

**January 30-31- U.S. v. Oregon Quarterly Policy Meeting:** Parties meet to review several fishery and production related policy issues, including discussions concerning technical and policy aspects of management of 2014 fisheries. The Policy Committee will receive reports from the Technical Advisory Committee regarding technical issues concerning monitoring and management of the fisheries. Status of the seine fishery mortality study will be discussed in this forum.

**February 7/8- Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission:** The Department will present to the Commission the information the Department received from the Emerging Commercial Fishery public process, and in coordination with ODFW and the Commercial Advisors, with regard to recommendations to the Director for limited entry rules pertaining to experimental permits to be issued to participants by the Director for 2014 fall seine fisheries.

The Department will also report to the Commission the results of a public review process that has reviewed the Columbia River and Snake River spring Chinook recreational fisheries with respect to the effectiveness in meeting recreational objectives throughout the Columbia River basin. This process has involved a recreational advisory sub-group with representatives of the lower Snake River, Columbia River above Bonneville Dam, and Columbia River below Bonneville Dam. The process has included coordination with ODFW and the full Columbia River Recreational Advisor Group.

**March/April- NOF process:** develop plans for summer and fall fisheries in the ocean and Columbia River. This process will include planning for selective commercial and recreational fisheries, including pilot fall seine fisheries.

**March-June- Columbia River Compact:** will conduct several in-season management hearings to regulate treaty Indian and non-Indian spring Chinook fisheries

**May-**U.S. v. Oregon Quarterly Policy meeting: Parties will work through on-going issues including conduct of 2014 fisheries.

**June-** Columbia River Compact: will meet to set initial recreational and commercial summer Chinook and sockeye seasons for treaty Indian and non-Indian fisheries.

**June-July-** Columbia River Compact: will conduct several in-season hearings to modify summer seasons as necessary.

**July-** Columbia River Compact: will meet to set initial early fall Chinook mainstem and Select Area commercial and treaty-Indian fisheries with guidance from North of Falcon planning process. Non-Indian commercial mainstem seine fisheries expected to be implemented with Washington Experimental Fishery permits issued by the WDFW Director and ESA permit from NOAA.

**August-** Columbia River Compact: will conduct in-season hearings to adjust recreational, commercial, and treaty-Indian fisheries as necessary based on in-season data.

**August-** U.S. v. Oregon Quarterly Policy meeting- Parties will work through on-going issues including conduct of 2014 fisheries.

**September-** Columbia River Compact: will meet to review TAC update of run-sizes, set late fall commercial and treaty Indian seasons, and consider modification or extensions of the recreational seasons. Several additional Compacts will occur to review in-season information and adjust fisheries as necessary.

**October-** Columbia River Compact: will meet as necessary to adjust coho directed commercial season and treaty Indian late fall seasons.

**November-** U.S. v. Oregon Quarterly Policy meeting- Parties will work through on-going issues including conduct of 2014 fisheries.

**December-** WDFW and ODFW staff will meet with Commercial and Recreational Advisors to review 2014 actual salmon and steelhead returns, fisheries performance, and pre-season spring and summer salmon forecasts for 2015. Staff will also attend the annual Northwest Sport Fishing Industry Association (NSIA) meeting and the annual Salmon for All (SFA) meeting.

Annual Commission Report - The Department's review of 2014 fisheries and policy C-3620 implementation will include the results of the pilot commercial seine fishery, and a review of the requirements for issuing 2015 Experimental Fishery permits.