

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT - FALL FACT SHEET NO. 9
Columbia River Compact
September 12, 2011

Fisheries Under Consideration: Non-Indian Mainstem Commercial and Recreational
--

Management guidelines, allocations, and preseason run forecasts for the 2011 fall season were presented in Fall Fact Sheet #1, dated July 28, 2011.

STOCK STATUS

Fall Chinook

- Bonneville Dam passage is expected to total 504,100 fall Chinook adults based on the preseason forecasts. Passage is typically 50% complete by September 7.
- Chinook passage at Bonneville through September 11 totals 221,367 adults, including 176,979 bright stock and 44,151 tule stock. Based on the average 10-year timing curve, bright passage is typically 59% complete and tule passage is typically 77% complete by this date.
- Chinook escapement to Spring Creek Hatchery through September 9 totals 2,877 females (4,000 goal), 2,416 males, and 5,946 jacks.
- Chinook passage (adults) through September 11 is 41,459 at McNary Dam and 5,961 at Lower Granite Dam.
- Adult Chinook returns to Big Creek Hatchery through September 9 total 3,354 fish including 1,700 females (1,500-1,800 goal).

Upriver Summer Steelhead

- The forecast for the combined Group A/B steelhead returns to Bonneville Dam totals 366,800 fish, including 105,600 wild fish (29%). The Group A forecast is similar the recent 10-year average, while the Group B forecast is 80% of the 10-year average.
- Counts of steelhead at Bonneville Dam since July 1 total 309,616 fish. Passage at Bonneville Dam (July-October) is typically 50% complete by August 15.

Lower Columbia River Coho

- The 2011 river mouth return of Columbia River coho (following expected ocean fisheries) is projected to be 270,800 adults, which includes 168,500 early stock and 102,300 late stock.
- Bonneville Dam passage is predicted to be 81,500 adult coho. Passage through September 11 totals 63,882 fish. Based on the average 10-year timing curve, total adult passage is 37% complete by this date.

Run size updates

- TAC reviewed salmonid stock status and fishery data on September 6 and September 12. Based on the Bonneville Dam counts through September 11, TAC updated the fall Chinook river mouth run sizes to 354,000 URBs, 56,000 PUBs, 36,650 BUBs and 73,000 BPH. TAC is estimating that the fall Chinook passage over Bonneville is 2-3 days late, but also notes that we are still in the peak passage time therefore future in-season projections will likely change.

2011 NON-INDIAN FALL FISHERY UPDATE

Recreational Fall Salmon Fisheries

- The Buoy 10 fishery opened August 1 with a daily bag limit of two fish/one Chinook. The fishery was open as scheduled for Chinook retention August 1-28. Chinook retention is currently scheduled to re-open October 1 through December 31 with a two Chinook bag limit. Preseason catch expectations (kept fish) were 10,950 Chinook and 7,000 hatchery coho. Catch (plus release mortalities) through September 7 includes 11,200 Chinook and 6,700 hatchery coho.
- The lower Columbia River (LCR) fishery from the Rocky Point/Tongue Point line upstream to Bonneville Dam opened August 1 with a two fish/one Chinook daily limit. Chinook retention was allowed through September 9 downstream of the Lewis River (Warrior Rock boundary line). Chinook retention remains open upstream of the Warrior Rock line with a two fish/two Chinook daily bag limit effective September 10. Beginning October 1, the area from Tongue/Rocky Point upstream to Warrior Rock is scheduled to re-open to Chinook retention (two fish/two Chinook). The total catch expectation for this fishery is 20,700 Chinook and 1,000 hatchery coho. Kept catch through September 4 totals 12,290 Chinook, 540 coho, and 11,630 steelhead from 94,200 angler trips.
- The mainstem fishery from Bonneville Dam upstream to Highway 395 Bridge (in Pasco, Washington) began on August 1 with a two fish/two Chinook daily limit and a catch expectation of 3,400 Chinook.
- The Snake River opened for retention of hatchery fall Chinook September 1 and is scheduled to continue through October. The open area includes the Hwy. 12 Bridge near Pasco, WA upstream to the Oregon state line. Daily bag limits include three hatchery adult Chinook.

Select Area Commercial Fall Salmon Fisheries

- Expected returns of SAFE stocks to Select Area fishing sites include 39,800 coho and 7,100 SAB fall Chinook. Fisheries began in August and continue through October, with specific time, area and gear restrictions for each area.
- Landing through September 2 total about 8,500 Chinook and 3,000 coho. Sturgeon retention in Select Area fisheries has been prohibited since June 27 when the annual quota was met. Coho landings are tracking less than expected.

Mainstem Commercial Fall Salmon Fisheries

- Early fall (August) fisheries included eight 9-hour fishing periods. Gear was restricted to a 9-inch minimum mesh and all but the first period was restricted to the area upstream of the Warrior Rock line. Weekly sturgeon landing limits were in place throughout the season. Catch included 25,300 Chinook, compared to the 42,500 set aside for August. A total of 1,700 coho and 1,300 white sturgeon were also landed.
- Preseason planning for the late fall season included an expectation to begin around September 18 in Zones 4-5 and continue through September and possibly extend into October. No Zone 1-5 target Chinook season was planned due to expected LCN tule limitations. The preseason catch expectation for the late fall Zones 4-5 fishery was 21,600 Chinook. The preseason plan included expectations for an 8-inch minimum mesh size and fishing hours of 8 PM to 6 AM.

- Coho fishing in 2011 is expected to be limited. Target coho periods would occur the week of October 3 or 10 in Zones 1-3 during daylight hours with unslackened 6-inch maximum mesh. The preseason catch expectation is 8,700 coho for all mainstem non-Indian commercial fisheries. Additional coho would be available if harvest in other fisheries is less than expected.
- The 2011 annual commercial allocation of white sturgeon is 3,400 fish. A total of 1,292 fish remain on the commercial allocation.

Non-Indian Fisheries Stock Composition

- The table below illustrates the stock composition of adult fall Chinook in completed fisheries (August and early September) and planned fisheries in SAFE and Zone 6 sport. The number allowed is based on current URB and preseason LRH run size forecasts. The number of URBs remaining is based on a 14% harvest rate, reserving 1% for Snake River sport fisheries.

Stock	Available	Used	Remaining
LRH	10,483	5,162	5,321
URB	49,560 (<McNary)	32,496	17,064

FISHERY RECOMMENDATIONS

<i>2011 Non-Indian Mainstem Commercial Early Fall Fishery</i>		
Season 1	10 PM Sunday September 18 to 6 AM Monday September 19	(8 hours)
Area:	Zones 1-5	
Season 2	8 PM Monday September 19 to 6 AM Tuesday September 20	(10 hours)
	8 PM Tuesday September 20 to 6 AM Wednesday September 21	(10 hours)
	8 PM Thursday September 22 to 6 AM Friday September 23	(10 hours)
Area:	Zones 4-5. The deadline at the lower end of Zone 4 is defined as a straight line projected from the Warrior Rock Lighthouse on the Oregon shore easterly through the green navigation buoy #1 and continuing to the Washington shore. Only Washougal and Sandy sanctuaries apply.	
Applies to all seasons:		
Sanctuaries:	Grays River, Elokomina-A, Cowlitz River, Kalama-A, Lewis-A, Washougal, and Sandy Rivers as applicable.	
Gear:	Drift gillnets only. 8" minimum mesh size restriction. Multiple net rule in effect, which means nets not specifically authorized for use in this fishery may be onboard the vessel if properly stored. A properly stored net is defined as a net on a drum that is fully covered by a tarp (canvas or plastic) and bound with a minimum of ten revolutions of rope with a diameter of 3/8 (0.375) inches or greater. Nets fished any time between official sunset and official sunrise must have lighted buoys on both ends of the net. If the net is attached to the boat, then one lighted buoy on the end of the net opposite the boat is required.	

Allowable Sales:	Salmon and white sturgeon. A maximum of 7 white sturgeon may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel during each calendar week (Sunday through Saturday) in the remaining openers. The white sturgeon possession and sales limit includes mainstem fisheries only. Sales of white sturgeon from fall Select Area fisheries is prohibited.
Additional Rules:	24-hour Quick Reporting Rule will be in effect for Washington buyers.

- ✓ This proposal is consistent with the preseason plan with the exception of additional opportunity for a Zone 1-5 fishery. This fishery is possible because additional LCN tule Chinook impacts are available that were not used in previous fisheries.
- ✓ The recommended boundary line at the lower end of Zone 4 is modified from previous years and is the same as the boundary adopted for the August fisheries. The Lewis-A sanctuary will be in place during the all Zone fishery.
- ✓ The start time on Sunday night (September 18) is delayed to 10 PM to minimize interactions with recreational boaters and will help moderate the catch.
- ✓ Catch expectations are: 20,000 Chinook and 800-1,100 white sturgeon
- ✓ Additional fishing opportunity is expected but the extent will be dependent upon future in-season run updates. If the URB run size is close to the preseason expectations, an additional week of fishing periods similar to what is proposed for September 18-23 may be considered.

<i>Recommendation: 2011 Mainstem Columbia River Fall Chinook Recreational Fishery</i>	
Buoy 10	
Season:	Friday September 16 through Saturday December 31, 2011
Area:	Buoy 10 (Buoy 10 line upstream to a line projected from Rocky Point on the Washington bank through red buoy#44 to a navigation light at Tongue Point on the Oregon bank)
Catch limit:	Two adult salmonids per day, but only one may be a Chinook through September 30, 2011. Beginning October 1, the daily limit may include up to two Chinook.

<i>Recommendation: 2011 Mainstem Columbia River Fall Chinook Recreational Fishery</i>	
Downstream of Bonneville Dam (Tongue/Rocky Point to Warrior Rock)	
Season:	Friday September 16 through Sunday September 18, 2011
Area:	Tongue/Rocky Point line upstream to the Warrior Rock line (a line from the Warrior Rock Lighthouse on the Oregon shore through red buoy#4 to a marker on the lower end of Bachelor Island.
Catch limit:	Two adult salmonids per day, but only one may be a Chinook. Chinook retention re-opens beginning October 1 when the daily limit may include up to two Chinook.

- ✓ Unused LCN tule impacts are available to provide for additional recreational opportunity.
- ✓ The proposed fisheries provide an additional 15 days (September 16-30) of Chinook retention for Buoy 10 and an additional 3 days (September 16-18) of Chinook retention for the lower Columbia fishery below the Lewis River. Both areas are scheduled to re-open to Chinook retention (two fish/two Chinook daily bag) beginning October 1.

- ✓ Kept catch expectations are 100-400 Chinook for Buoy 10 and 1,500 Chinook for the mainstem (Tongue/Rocky Point to Warrior Rock).
- ✓ Although coho catch (kept + release mortalities) at Buoy 10 is nearing preseason expectations, additional coho are expected to remain unused from ocean fisheries.

Comments on Fishery Proposals

- Stock composition based on CWTs has been completed for all of the August commercial fisheries, the Buoy 10 fishery, and the August and early September portion of the mainstem sport fishery.
- The fishery recommendations above provide additional opportunity resulting from unused LCN tule Chinook impacts, while considering the preseason fishery plans and sharing of LCN Chinook and URB Chinook.
- The proposed fisheries (including the ongoing mainstem recreational fishery upstream of Warrior Rock) would result in the expected harvest of an additional 13,807 URB stock and 4,771 LRH leaving a balance of 3,257 URBs (at the current run size) and 550 LRH.

FUTURE HEARINGS

A hearing is scheduled for 1:00 PM Thursday September 15, 2011 to consider additional treaty Indian fisheries. The Joint staff requests an additional hearing on Thursday September 22 (AM) to review treaty Indian and non-Indian commercial fisheries.