

**OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE**  
**JOINT STAFF REPORT: SPRING FACT SHEET NO. 3**  
**Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing**  
**May 13, 2014**

<b><i>Fisheries under Consideration:</i></b> Mainstem commercial salmon Lower River Recreational salmon
--

*Stock status and management guidelines for 2014 Spring Chinook fisheries were presented in Winter Fact Sheet #2 (January 29, 2014).*

***Stock Status and Management Guidelines***

- Bonneville Dam passage through May 12 totals 149,535 adult Chinook. Based on the 10-year average passage is 50% complete by May 7 and 60% complete by May 12.
- The U.S. v. Oregon Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met Monday May 12 to review the status of the upriver spring Chinook run. TAC provided an in season run size update of 224,000 adult fish. TAC is scheduled to meet again Monday May 19.
- Although the point estimate was 224,000 upriver fish, the models ranged from around 214,000 up to nearly 240,000 returning to the Columbia River. The run timing appears to be earlier than recent years.
- Under the *U.S. v Oregon* Management Agreement, a Columbia River return of 224,000 adult upriver fish allows for a non-Indian ESA impact rate of 2.0% and a catch balance limit of 22,400 upriver mortalities. Commission guidance directs managers to allocate the impacts 70% sport/30% commercial. ESA impacts increase for runsizes of 217,000 fish or greater.
- Adult spring Chinook passage at Willamette Falls through May 7 totals 7,904 fish, which is below the 5-year average of 9,224 fish for this date. The 5-year average 50% passage date is May 22. The run is currently tracking behind expectations. Sport harvest in the lower Willamette through May 4 totals 5,300 Chinook.
- Lower River Chinook escapement to Washington tributaries reported through May 4 totals 600 adult fish. Although it is early in the migration period, the run appears to tracking within expectations.

***Treaty Fisheries Update***

- The Columbia River treaty tribes have fulfilled the ceremonial permits. Resulting harvest is estimated at 6,100 adult Chinook
- The treaty tribes opened commercial sales in the Zone 6 platform and hook & line fishery on May 6. For ease of regulations, this fishery is scheduled to continue until the end of the summer management period on July 31. Currently no catch estimate is available.
- The Yakama Nation Zone 6 tributary fisheries are also ongoing and sales are allowed when authorized through Yakama Nation tribal regulations. Catch from these fisheries through May 7 is estimated at 1,100 adult Chinook.
- The area immediately downstream of Bonneville Dam is currently closed for treaty Indian fishing under tribal regulations. If lawfully enacted tribal regulations are adopted to open the area (in accordance with each tribal MOU/MOA), the Compact has rules in place to allow sales consistent with tribal rules/MOU/MOAs.

- Total catch of upriver spring Chinook through May 7 is currently estimated at 7,200 fish minimum, or 32% of the 22,400 fish allowed.

### ***Non-Indian Fishery Update***

- Mainstem commercial fishing periods occurred on April 1 and May 7. Combined Chinook landings total 2,486 adult fish. Kept and release mortalities of upriver Chinook is estimated at 2,110 fish, or 50% of the 4,209 allocated at the updated runsize.
- Mainstem commercial shad fisheries are open under permanent regulations in Area 2S from 3 PM to 10 PM daily Monday through Friday from May 10 through June 20 (except on the observed Memorial Day holiday). Additional shad harvest is expected to occur under an experimental permit issued by the state of Oregon.
- Select Area fisheries are ongoing and expected to continue through June 13. Landings through May 11 total 1,571 Chinook. Upriver Chinook mortalities through May 9 total 208 fish. The projected total is 300 fish for the season, or 89% of the 336 allocated.
- The lower Columbia River recreational fishery was open for Chinook retention January 1 through April 14, April 19, and May 9-10. Catch estimates total 11,932 kept and 2,976 released adult fish from 84,000 angler trips. Kept and release mortalities of upriver Chinook is estimated at 10,084 fish, or 69% of the 14,523 allocated.
- The lower Columbia River from the Tongue Point/Rocky Point line upstream to the I-5 Bridge will open May 16 for hatchery steelhead and hatchery jack Chinook. Shad retention opens May 16 from Buoy 10 upstream to Bonneville Dam under permanent regulations.
- The recreational spring Chinook fishery from Bonneville Dam upstream to the Oregon/Washington border was open through May 9. Catch estimates total 1,945 kept and 803 released adult fish. Kept and release mortalities of upriver Chinook is estimated at 2,025 fish, or 105% of the 1,936 allocated.
- Recreational fisheries on the Snake River (Washington waters) are open on a days-per-week basis in four sections of the river. The fisheries are ongoing until the harvest allocation is met. Preliminary catch estimates through May 10 total 857 kept and 228 released adult Chinook. Kept and release mortalities of upriver Chinook is estimated at 880 fish or 65% of allocated.

### ***Non-Indian Fishery Recommendations***

#### **Non-Indian Mainstem Commercial:**

- Based on the improved inseason forecast for upriver spring Chinook, staff is providing two options to provide access to hatchery Chinook allocated to the commercial mainstem fishery.

**Non-Indian Salmon Commercial Fishery - Recommendation**

Option 1	7:00 P.M. Wednesday May 14 to 5:00 A.M. Thursday May 15, 2014 (10 hours)
Gear	Drift nets only. 8” minimum mesh size restriction. Net length not to exceed 150 fathoms.
Option 2	5:00 P.M. Wednesday May 14 to 5:00 A.M. Thursday May 15, 2014 (12 hours)
Gear	Drift nets only. 4¼” maximum mesh size restriction. Single-wall multi-filament net only. Monofilament tangle nets are not allowed. Mesh size is determined by placing three consecutive meshes under hand tension, and the measurement is taken from the inside of one knot to the <u>inside</u> of the opposite knot of the center mesh. Hand tension means sufficient linear tension to draw opposing knots of meshes into contact. Net length not to exceed 150 fathoms. Net length can increase from 150 to 175 fathoms for nets constructed with a steelhead excluder panel, weedlines, or droppers.
<b>Following applies to both options:</b>	
Area:	Zones 1-5
Sanctuaries:	Grays River, Elochoman-B, Cowlitz River, Kalama-B, Lewis-B, Sandy and Washougal.
Allowable Sales:	Adipose fin-clipped Chinook salmon and shad
Regulations:	Nets not specifically authorized for use in these areas may be onboard a 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 <b>Standard regulations typically in place for spring Chinook commercial fisheries are in effect, including but not limited to: net length, use of recovery boxes, limited soak times, red corks, lighted buoys, tangle-net certification, etc.</b>  <u>Soak times</u> , defined as the time elapsed from when the first of the gill net web is deployed into the water until the gill net web is fully retrieved from the water, must not exceed 45 minutes. <u>Red corks</u> are required at 25 fathom intervals, and red corks must be in contrast to the corks used in the remainder of the net. <u>Lighted Buoys</u> : Nets that are fished at any time between official sunset and official sunrise must have lighted buoys on both ends of the net unless the net is attached to the boat. If the net is attached to the boat, then one lighted buoy on the opposite end of the net from the boat is required <u>Recovery Box</u> : Each boat will be required to have on board two operable recovery boxes or one box with two chambers that meet the flow and size requirements standard for the winter/spring season. <u>Each box and chamber and associated pump shall be operating during any time that the net is being retrieved or picked.</u> All sturgeon, non-adipose fin-clipped salmon, and steelhead must be released immediately to the river with care and with the least possible injury to the fish, or placed into an operating recovery box. Any salmonid that is bleeding or lethargic must be placed in the recovery box prior to being released. All fish placed in recovery boxes must be released to the river prior to landing or docking.
Additional Rules:	<b>Observer program:</b> As a condition of fishing, owners or operators of commercial fishing vessels must cooperate with department observers or observers collecting data for the department, when notified by the observer of his or her intent to board the

commercial vessel for observation and sampling during an open fishery. In addition, cooperation with department personnel prior to a fishing period is expected.

**Live Capture workshop:** Only licensed Columbia River commercial fishers that have completed the required state-sponsored workshop concerning live capture commercial fishing techniques may participate in this fishery. At least one fisher on each boat must have live capture certification.

24-hour **quick reporting** required for Washington wholesale dealers WAC 220-69-240).

- The catch estimate for both options is 500 to 750 hatchery Chinook based on an expected 75 deliveries. Upriver mortalities are estimated at 672 fish or less. Season total upriver mortalities would be 2,780 fish, or 66% of the total commercial allocation.
- Option 1 proposes a 10-hour fishery with large (8-inch) gear. Some pro/cons are:
  - Adoption of a fishery with large mesh gear would require the Compact to initiate the adaptive management clause outlined in the current Columbia River policy.
  - Large mesh gear has a higher mortality rate – allowable kept catch is estimated at ~ 1,450 hatchery Chinook before ESA-limit reached.
  - Gear efficiency for Chinook may decrease due to the small average size, but the average weight of Chinook caught with large mesh gear generally increases.
  - The intercept rate of shad is significantly reduced.
  - If Option 1 is preferred, the actual start date could be delayed until Tuesday May 19 or later. Delaying would allow the industry more time to prepare for a gear change.
- Option 2 proposes a 12-hour fishery with tanglenet gear. Some of the pro/cons are:
  - Tanglenet gear has a lower mortality rate – allowable kept catch is estimated at ~ 2,550 hatchery fish before the catch balance limit is met.
  - Tanglenet gear may be more efficient for small Chinook which seems to be currently more abundant.
  - Tanglenet gear is much more efficient for shad which could increase drift times beyond the 45 minute limit. Recent test fishing indicates an increase in shad abundance since the last commercial opener.
- Average weight of kept chinook is expected to be around 12-16 pounds per fish and ex-vessel value is estimated at \$5 to \$7 per pound for Grade-A adult size fish.
- Tuesday or Wednesday mainstem fisheries avoid conflict with the Monday/Thursday night fisheries in most Select Areas (excluding Youngs Bay).
- The proposed options conflict with the Youngs Bay Select Area fishery previously adopted. Therefore staff recommends the following action:

***Youngs Bay Select Area Commercial Fishery- Oregon State Staff Recommendation***

Retention and sale of **non**-adipose fin-clipped Chinook from Youngs Bay is prohibited from 8:00 AM May 14 to 12:00 PM (noon) May 15, 2014

**Non-Indian Recreational:**

<i>2014 Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Recreational Fisheries - Recommendation</i>	
<b>Downstream of Bonneville Dam</b>	
Season	Open Friday May 16 through Sunday June 15, 2014.
Area:	Tongue Point/Rocky Point line upstream the Bonneville Dam deadline.
Daily Bag Limit:	Two adult salmonids per day, but only one may be a Chinook. Release sockeye. Only adipose fin-clipped fish may be kept. All other permanent regulations apply.
Additional Regulations	Effective through June 15, 2014: the mainstem Columbia River will be open for retention of adipose fin-clipped steelhead <b>ONLY</b> during days and in areas open for retention of adipose fin-clipped spring Chinook.  Effective through June 15, 2014: On days when the mainstem Columbia River recreational fishery below Bonneville Dam is open to retention of Chinook, the salmonid daily bag limit in Oregon and Washington Select Areas will be the same as mainstem Columbia River bag limits. On days when the mainstem Columbia River fishery is <u>closed</u> to Chinook retention, permanent salmonid bag limit regulations apply

- Catch estimate includes 3,664 upriver kept plus release mortalities. Combined total (actual plus proposed) represents 95% of the LCR sport allocation.
- By removing the Beacon Rock boundary for boats on May 16, an additional 453 upriver mortalities are expected.

***Actual and Proposed Non-Indian Catch Balance***

<b>Summary of 2014 Non-treaty upriver Chinook catches _ preliminary Actual , projected and proposed</b>						
Fishery	Inseason Allocated (224.0 K)	In Hand	Projected	Total	Balance	% of Allocated
Mainstem	4,209	2,110	672	2,782	1,427	66%
Select Area ( <i>Proj through June 13</i> )	336	208	92	300	36	89%
<b>Commercial Total</b>	4545	2318	764	3082	1463	68%
					0	
LCR Sport ( <i>proj. through June 15</i> )	14,523	10,084	3,664	13,748	775	95%
Z6 Sport	1,936	2,025	0	2,025	-89	105%
Snake River ( <i>Proj. through end of season</i> )	1,358	880	478	1,358	0	100%
Wanapum Tribal	38	0	38	38	0	100%
<b>Recreational Total</b>	17,855	12,989	4,179	17,168	686	96%
Non-Indian Total	22,400	15,307	4,943	20,250	2,150	90%

***Future Hearing***

- The Joint Staff may recommend a hearing as early as Monday afternoon May 19 to review stock status and treaty and non-Indian fisheries.