

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT: SPRING FACT SHEET NO. 4a
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
May 10, 2016

<i>Fisheries under Consideration:</i> Lower Columbia River recreational salmon Zone 6 recreational salmon Mainstem commercial salmon Select Area commercial salmon – Youngs Bay

Stock status and management guidelines for 2016 Chinook fisheries were presented in Winter Fact Sheet #1a (January 27, 2016).

Stock Status and Management Guidelines

- Bonneville Dam passage through May 9 totals 95,559 adult Chinook. Based on the 5-year average the 50% passage date is May 7, ranging from April 30 to May 11.
- The *U.S. v. Oregon* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met Monday May 9 to review the status of the upriver spring Chinook run. TAC officially updated the run to 188,800 adult fish. TAC will continue to meet weekly to review stock status and is scheduled to meet again Monday May 16.
- Under the *U.S. v Oregon* Management Agreement, a Columbia River return of 188,800 adult upriver fish allows for a non-Indian ESA impact rate of 1.9% and a catch balance limit of 17,181 upriver mortalities. Commission guidance directs fishery managers to allocate the impacts 70% sport/30% commercial.
- The 2016 Willamette forecast is 68,700 adults to the Columbia River. Adult spring Chinook passage at Willamette Falls through May 7 totals 7,861 fish, which is less than the 5-year average of 11,500 fish. The 5-year average 50% passage date is May 19.
- A total of 31,100 adult spring Chinook are forecasted to return to Washington tributaries in the lower river (Cowlitz, Kalama and Lewis). In Oregon, the Sandy River forecast is approximately 4,000 fish.
- Similar to 2015, the 2016 forecasted Lewis River return is less than the hatchery escapement goal of 1,380 adult fish.
- Management action has been taken to minimize the shortfall, and other contributing factors may also help to improve escapement:
 - The Lewis River is closed to retention of Chinook for the second year in a row due to low escapement.
 - Lewis River spring Chinook migrate earlier than upriver Columbia River stocks with the majority of the run passing through the lower Columbia River during March and April.
 - Mainstem Columbia River fisheries downstream of Bonneville have been closed since April 8 which will allow Lewis River fish to escape to the tributary.
 - Despite the low return in 2015, the egg-take goal of 1.7 million was met due to a higher-than-average number of eggs per female.

- Of nearly 5,100 coded-wire-tag recoveries from mainstem fisheries during 2012-2015, only 13 tags (0.26%) were of Lewis River origin. The latest recovery date was May 8 for the commercial fishery and May 17 for the recreational fishery.

Non-Indian Fishery Update

- Two mainstem commercial salmon fishing periods have occurred to date (19 hours total). Landings totaled 1,490 adult Chinook. Kept and release mortalities of upriver Chinook is estimated at 1,143 fish, or 37% of the current allocation of 3,077 fish.
- 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).
- Select Area fisheries are ongoing and expected to continue through June 15. Combined winter/spring season landings through May 6 total 3,801 Chinook. Upriver Chinook mortalities total 169 fish, or 60% of the current allocation of 283 fish.
- The lower Columbia River recreational Chinook fishery was open from January 1 through April 8. Catch estimates total 10,114 kept from 85,626 angler trips. Kept and release mortalities of upriver Chinook is estimated at 7,642 fish, or 70% of the current allocation of 10,877 fish.
- Under permanent rules, the lower Columbia River from the Tongue Point/Rocky Point line upstream to the I-5 Bridge opens 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 Chinook fishery from Bonneville Dam upstream to the Oregon/Washington border was open from March 16 through May 8. Catch estimates total 926 kept from more than 3,200 angler trips. Kept and release mortalities of upriver Chinook is estimated at 950 fish, or 66% of the current allocation of 1,450 fish.
- The recreational fisheries on the Snake River (Washington waters) are open on a days-per-week basis in three sections of the river. The fisheries are ongoing until the harvest allocation is met. Catch estimates through May 9 total 290 kept adult fish. Kept and release mortalities of upriver Chinook is estimated at 295 fish or 20% of the current allocation of 1,454 fish.

Non-Indian Fishery Recommendations

Non-Indian Recreational - Lower Columbia River:

- An estimated 3,236 upriver mortalities remain available for this fishery which provides flexibility when considering how best to utilize this balance.
- During pre-season discussions with the Columbia River Recreational Advisory Group (CRRAG), there has been a strong desire to open adult Chinook retention concurrent with the steelhead opener (May 16), or at a later date if necessary to continue the fishery through the

remainder of the spring season (June 15). However, staff estimates that in order to re-open Chinook retention on May 16, about 4,100 upriver fish would be needed. Staff projects the current available balance would allow for a start date of May 23 to continue the fishery through June 15.

- A more conservative approach would be to provide some opportunity soon and use the balance (following subsequent in-season run updates) to provide a second, longer season that would connect with the summer fishery.

<i>Joint Staff Recommendation: 2016 Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Recreational Fisheries</i>	
Downstream of Bonneville Dam	
Season:	Open Saturday May 14 and Sunday May 15
Area:	Tongue Point/Rocky Point line upstream to Beacon Rock (boat and bank) plus bank angling only from Beacon Rock upstream to the Bonneville Dam deadline. Legal upstream boat boundary defined as: A deadline marker on the Oregon bank (approximately four miles downstream from Bonneville Dam Powerhouse One) in a straight line through the western tip of Pierce Island to a deadline marker on the Washington bank at Beacon Rock.
Daily Bag Limit:	Two adult salmonids per day, but only one may be a Chinook. Sockeye must be released. Only adipose fin-clipped fish may be kept. All other permanent regulations apply.
Additional regulations	
The mainstem Columbia River will be open for retention of adipose fin-clipped steelhead and shad during days and seasons open for retention of adipose fin-clipped spring Chinook.	
When the 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 closed to Chinook retention, permanent salmonid bag limit regulations apply.	

- The proposed season provides some recreational opportunity when Chinook abundance is relatively high while allowing staff additional time to estimate catches for a second season based on the balance available at an updated upriver run size.
- Catch estimates total 1,200 Chinook handled including 895 upriver mortalities. Season total upriver mortalities would be 8,537 fish, or 78% of the total below Bonneville sport allocation at the current run size. If Friday May 13 was added, season total upriver mortalities would be 8,985, or 83% of the allocation.
- Considering the current balance, the proposed fishery would delay the start date for a second season until approximately May 30.
- Given the mid-May start, encounters of Lewis River spring Chinook are expected to be at or near zero based on CWT data from recent years.

Non-Indian Recreational - Bonneville to OR/WA border:

- During preseason discussions with the Columbia River Recreational Advisory Group (CRRAG), there has been a strong desire to re-open adult Chinook retention at date that would allow the fishery to continue through the remainder of the spring season (June 15).
- Given current estimates of catch for the season which ended on May 8, 500 upriver mortalities remain available for this fishery.

<i>Joint Staff Recommendation: 2016 Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Recreational Fisheries</i>	
Upstream of Bonneville Dam	
Season:	Open Saturday May 14 and Sunday May 15
Area:	Tower Island power lines (approximately 6 miles below The Dalles Dam) upstream to Oregon/Washington border, plus the Oregon and Washington banks between Bonneville Dam and the Tower Island power lines.
Daily Bag Limit:	Two adult salmonids per day, but only one may be a Chinook. Only adipose fin-clipped fish may be kept. All other permanent regulations apply.
Additional Regulations:	All other permanent regulations apply.

- Catch estimates for this season addition total 300 adults kept (plus release mortalities). This would bring the season total projection up to 1,250 fish, or 86% of the current allocation.
- Similar to the proposal for the lower river recreational fishery, the proposed season provides some recreational opportunity now, but also leaves a balance that could be used for second season that would link to the summer period as desired by the CRRAG.

Non-Indian Mainstem Commercial:

- An estimated 1,934 upriver mortalities remain available for this fishery.

<i>Joint Staff Recommendation- 2016 Non-Indian Salmon Commercial Fishery</i>	
Season:	12:00 PM (noon) Wednesday May 11 until 2:00 AM Thursday May 12 (14 hours)
Area:	Zones 1-5
Sanctuaries:	Grays River, Elochoman-B, Abernathy Creek, Cowlitz River, Kalama-B, Lewis-B, Sandy and Washougal.

Gear:	<p>Drift nets only. 4¼-inch maximum mesh size restriction. Single-wall multi-filament nets only. Monofilament tangle nets are not allowed. 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.</p> <p>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 inside of the opposite knot of the center mesh. Hand tension means sufficient linear tension to draw opposing knots of meshes into contact</p> <p>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.</p>
Allowable Sales:	Adipose fin-clipped Chinook salmon and shad.
Regulations:	<p>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.</p> <p><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.</p> <p><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.</p> <p><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</p> <p><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. Each box and chamber and associated pump shall be operating during any time that the net is being retrieved or picked. 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 non-legal 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.</p>
Additional Rules:	<p>Observer program: 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. Additionally, cooperation with department personnel prior to a fishing period is expected.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>24-hour quick reporting required for Washington wholesale dealers, per WAC 220-69-240. Oregon buyers are required to submit fish receiving tickets electronically pursuant to OAR 635-006-0210.</p>

- The catch is not expected to exceed 1,400 hatchery Chinook based on an expected 85 deliveries. Upriver mortalities are estimated at 1,200 fish or less. Season total upriver mortalities would be 2,343 fish, or 76% of the total commercial allocation at the current run size.

- Given the start date of May 11 and the large ‘B’ sanctuaries, encounters of Lewis River spring Chinook are expected to be near zero based on CWT data from recent years.
- A Wednesday fishery avoids conflict with the Monday night and Thursday night fisheries in Select Areas.
- Based on Commission guidance to use tangle nets in this fishery, if possible staff may recommend an additional fishing period early next week in advance of significant shad abundance in the lower river.

Non-Indian Select Area Commercial:

- The proposed mainstem fishery avoids conflict with the Monday and Thursday night fisheries in most Select Areas, except for Youngs Bay where staff recommends the following action:

<i>Oregon State Staff Recommendation - Youngs Bay Select Area Commercial Fishery</i>
Retention and sales of non -adipose fin-clipped Chinook from Youngs Bay is prohibited from 12:00 PM (noon) May 11 through 12:00 PM (noon) May 12, 2016.

Non-Indian Catch Balance Summary:

Summary of 2016 Non-Indian Upriver Chinook Mortalities - preliminary						
Upriver Catch (kept plus release mortalities)						
Non-Indian Fishery	in-Season Allocated (188.8 K)	In hand	Projected Through May 16	Total	Balance	% Used
Mainstem	3,077	1,143		1,143	1,934	37%
Select Area <i>(season total)</i>	283	169	114	283	0	100%
<i>Total</i>	<i>3,360</i>	<i>1,312</i>	<i>114</i>	<i>1,426</i>	<i>1,934</i>	<i>42%</i>
Below Bonneville	10,877	7,642	895	8,537	2,340	78%
Bonn to OR/WA border	1,450	950	300	1,250	200	86%
Snake River/Wanapum <i>(season total)</i>	1,494	295	1,199	1,494	0	100%
<i>Total</i>	<i>13,821</i>	<i>8,887</i>	<i>2,394</i>	<i>11,281</i>	<i>2,540</i>	<i>82%</i>
Grand Total	17,181	10,199	2,508	12,707	4,474	74%

Future Hearing

- The Joint Staff may recommend a hearing as early as Tuesday May 17 to review stock status and non-Indian fisheries.