



FACT SHEET

WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, WA 98501-1091

February 29, 2000

Joint Staff Report Winter Fact Sheet No. 6

Columbia River Compact

Oregon Dept. of Fish and Wildlife / Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife

Purpose:

To review salmon, sturgeon, and smelt stock status and consider commercial fishing seasons in the mainstem Columbia River.

2000 MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

- Because no CRFMP or corresponding Management Agreement is in place, non-Indian and treaty Indian fisheries proposed for January 1-July 31, 2000 are described in separate Biological Assessments.
- The states' intent is to manage non-Indian winter/spring season fisheries in accordance with the Applications/Assessments that were submitted to the NMFS on December 20, 1999 and revised and resubmitted, at NMFS request, on January 14, 2000.
- In a letter provided at the January 27, 2000 Compact hearing the NMFS approved fisheries through February 29, 2000 under Section 7(D).
- The Biological Opinion concerning non-Indian and treaty Indian fisheries is expected to be completed today.

NON-INDIAN FISHERIES

Commercial Smelt Test Fishery

- The following standard smelt test fishery was adopted at the December 21, 1999 Compact hearing and extended at the February 18, 2000 Compact hearing.



Mainstem Zones 1-5 open, Washington tributaries closed to commercial fishing.

- This year's catch per unit effort is higher than recent poor return years and below historic levels.
- Effort has generally remained similar to last year with up to 40 boats participating.
- Effort dropped during the two most recent fishing periods with only 10-20 fishers participating.
- During the most recent fishing period total catch and CPUE dropped to the lowest levels observed since early January.
- Landings to date have totaled 30,987 lbs. and average weight has ranged between 7-9 smelt per pound.

Mainstem Columbia River Smelt Landings and CPUE's				
			Average CPUE's	
Time Period	Pounds Landed	2000 CPUE	94-99	88-93
December	1,778	56.3	19	0
Week 2	338	35.7	41	409
Week 3	1,827	144.7	38	219
Week 4	1,139	60.1	128	642
Week 5	8,725	360.7	216	48
Week 6	1,742	88.8	147	184
Week 7	9,514	352.0	339	400
Week 8	5,693	324.8	83	2,136
Week 9	231	31.4	147	1,190

- Monitoring data from week nine indicates that 47% of the catch were females and 52% of the females were spent.
- Migration conditions have generally been good with water temperatures exceeding 40°F since December 1, 1999, except for week six.
- During week nine water temperature remained stable at 41°F and visibility decreased to 42".
- The Cowlitz River was open to sport smelt fishing on Fridays and Saturdays from December 31, 1999 through February 26, 2000.
- During last weekends fishery, effort and catch were low with most dippers not getting limits. Sampling

results indicate that catch was comprised of mostly spawned-out males.

Joint Staff Recommendation	
Season:	Remain closed effective Wednesday February 23, 2000 as per previously adopted season.
Rationale:	CPUE has not reached 500 pounds per delivery during this fishery. Total catch and CPUE dropped significantly during the most recent fishing period.

Non-Indian Commercial Sturgeon/Salmon Fishery



*Zones 1-5, sales of salmon and sturgeon allowed, 8" minimum and 9-3/4" maximum mesh size restrictions below Kelley Point and 9" minimum and 9-3/4" maximum mesh size restrictions above Kelley Point.
Sanctuaries: Grays, Elokomin-A, Cowlitz, Kalama-A, Lewis-A, Gnat Creek, Washougal, and Sandy rivers.*

- Fishery is designed to access the 1,200 Willamette spring chinook allocated to mainstem commercial fisheries by the OFWC.
- Catches to date have been less than expected.
- Through February 27 zero salmon have been caught above Kelley Point.
- Effort to date has been low with 30-50 fishers participating.
- VSI analyses indicates that the salmon catch was comprised of 4% upriver fish during February 13-18, and 15% upriver fish during February 20-25, and 23% upriver fish during February 27-28.

2000 Commercial Salmon and Sturgeon Landings			
Time Period	Chinook	White Sturgeon	Green Sturgeon
Jan 10-Feb 11	14	1,215	0
Feb 13-14	22	66	0
Feb 15-16	22	110	0
Feb. 17-18	32	214	0
Feb. 20-22	114	342	0
Feb 24-25	64	141	0
Feb 27-29 (proj)	250	200	0
Total to date	518	2,288	0

- Through the end of current fishing period an estimated 88 upriver fish are estimated to have been caught with a harvest rate of .07%.
- 8" minimum mesh size restriction below Kelley Point effectively targets spring chinook and limits impacts on listed winter steelhead.
- 9" minimum mesh size restriction above Kelley Point effectively targets sturgeon and minimizes impacts on listed upriver spring chinook.

Joint Staff Recommendation

Season:	6 PM Tuesday, February 29, 2000 - 6 PM Wednesday, March 1, 2000. 6 PM Thursday, March 2, 2000 - 6 PM Friday, March 3, 2000.
Sanctuaries:	Grays River, Elokomín-A, Cowlitz River, Kalama-A, Lewis-A, and Gnat Creek.
Areas:	Mouth to Kelley Point (In effect since 1975)
Gear:	8" minimum and 9-3/4" maximum mesh size restrictions.
Allowable Sales:	Salmon and sturgeon.
Expected Catch:	200-500 spring chinook 46-115 upriver spring chinook 100-200 white sturgeon
Rationale:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1,200 Willamette spring chinook catch allocation has not been achieved. • SRW impacts would be less than the 2% set forth in draft Biological Opinion. • SRW impacts would be similar to preseason expectations • Less than expected catches have extended fishery beyond timeframe planned preseason and identified in NMFS 7(D) letter. • Assumes appropriate ESA processes are completed.

Select Area Commercial Salmon Fisheries



- The initial fishing periods resulted in catches of one spring chinook and two white sturgeon in Youngs Bay and one spring chinook in Blind Slough.

NEXT COMPACT HEARING

- Emergency Compact hearings will be scheduled as necessary to modify ongoing fisheries.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
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