

**OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT
WINTER FACT SHEET NO. 5
Columbia River Compact
March 5, 2007**

Fisheries under consideration: Non-Indian commercial fisheries

Management guidelines and run forecasts for the 2007 spring season were presented in the Winter Fact Sheet #2 (January 25, 2007)

- To date, 1,424 white sturgeon and 194 Chinook have been harvested in 2007 winter commercial fisheries. A total of 376 sturgeon remain available for harvest from the winter/spring guideline.
- Based on VSI sampling of spring Chinook, 48% were of upriver origin. Several CWT's remain unread from the February 22-23 fishery.
- Upriver impacts to date represent 11% of the mainstem guideline.

2007 Spring Chinook Commercial Fishery -- Preliminary Observation Data																				
Fishery	Date	Mesh Size	# Drifts	Lower R.			UpRiver			No VSI			% Upriver	Total Chinook	Chk /Sthd	Total Steelhead	Steelhead			
				Clipped	No Clip	Unknown	Clipped	No Clip	Unknown	Clipped	No Clip	Unknown					Clipped	No Clip	Unknown	DNA count
Test	25-Feb	4¼"	14	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0.8	5	1	3	1	3
Test	04-Mar	4¼"	16	6	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	0.7	11	3	8	0	2

- Test fishing results indicates spring Chinook composition has shifted toward lower river stocks; however, some caution is warranted due to the high percentage of upriver Chinook in the winter sturgeon fishery.
- Use of tangle nets will likely increase steelhead handle but provides a precautionary measure if upriver spring Chinook are more abundant than test fishing results indicate. Use of large mesh nets minimizes steelhead handle (which are relatively abundant based on test fishing results) but could potentially contribute to increased upriver impacts.

Possible fishing scenarios and associated year-to date upriver Chinook and wild winter steelhead impacts.					
12-hour fishery	Chinook Kept Catch	Upriver %	Total Upriver Impacts	Steelhead Handle	Total Steelhead Impacts
Large Mesh	200	25% (best)	21%	25	1%
	200	40% (worst)	25%	25	1%
Tangle Net	150	25% (best)	15%	350	~10%
	150	40% (worst)	16%	350	~10%

Recommendation	
Season:	12 PM (noon) to 12 AM (midnight) Tuesday March 7, 2007 (12 hours)
Area:	Zones 1-4, upstream to Kelley Point.
Sanctuaries:	Grays River, Elokom-B, Abernathy Creek, Cowlitz River, Kalama-B, and Lewis-B.
Gear:	8" minimum and 9¾" maximum mesh size restriction. Use of monofilament nets is allowed. Net length not to exceed 150 fathoms.
Allowable Sales:	Adipose fin-clipped Chinook salmon, white sturgeon, and shad
Participants:	Columbia River commercial fishers with appropriate licenses and legal gear AND who have completed a state-sponsored workshop concerning live captive commercial fishing techniques.
New Regulations	<p>Multiple Net Rule:</p> <p>It will be legal to have onboard a commercial vessel more than one net as long as the nets are of legal size for the fishery, or the net has a minimum mesh size of 9 inches, and the length of any one net does not exceed 1,500 feet in length</p> <p>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.</p>
Additional Regulations:	<p>Use of recovery boxes is required on all lethargic or bleeding salmon or steelhead. Each vessel participating in this fishery is required to have 2 operable recovery boxes or one box with two chambers. Operable recovery boxes require a flow of 16-20 gallons per minute to each chamber of the box(es). Each box must be operating during any time that the net is being retrieved or picked.</p> <p>Soak times, defined as time elapsed from when first mesh enters the water to when last mesh leaves the water, must not exceed 45 minutes.</p> <p>Red corks 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>Lighted buoys are required on each end of nets being fished between sunset and sunrise. Cooperation of vessel operators to allow state monitors onboard to observe and collect data is also required.</p> <p>Quick Reporting Rule for Washington buyers.</p>

- Estimated catch from the proposed fishery includes 200-300 Chinook. Incidental mortalities to wild steelhead are estimated at about five fish.
- Impacts to steelhead based on the proposed fishery are estimated at 1% of the 2% limit.
- If tangle net gear (4¼") were used, staff estimate Chinook catch would drop to 150 fish and incidental mortalities to wild steelhead would be 32 fish (10% of the 2% limit).
- Some fishers are recommending we delay fishing until spring Chinook abundance increases.

2007 Summary of Upriver Spring Chinook ESA Impacts from Non- Indian Fisheries					
Non-Indian Fisheries	Preseason	To Date	Proposed	Total	Remaining
Mainstem	0.480	0.054	0.046	0.100	0.380
SAFE	0.100	0.004	0.000	0.004	0.096
Commercial Total	0.580	0.073	0.046	0.104	0.476

Commercial Mainstem Smelt Fishery Modification:

- The Joint Staff is recommending the ongoing commercial smelt fishing periods in the Columbia River be modified at the request of the industry to allow attendance at the Columbia River North of Falcon meeting scheduled for Monday March 12, 2007.

Current Season: 9-hour weekly fishing periods on Mondays and Thursdays from January 1 - March 31, 2007.

Open hours are 7 AM to 4 PM.

Modified Season *Rescind the fishing period previously adopted for Monday March and adopt a fishing period for 7 AM to 4 PM Sunday March 11*

Area: Zones 1-5.

Gear: Gill net, dip nets, or trawls as per permanent regulations.

Participants: Columbia River commercial fishers with appropriate licenses and legal gear.

Commercial SAFE Fisheries Gear Regulation Change

- Staff is recommending that properly stored nets be allowed on vessels participating in Select Area fisheries adopted previously at the January 25, Compact hearing:

Effective March 6- 31, 2007. Nets not specifically authorized for use in Select Area fisheries 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.

Future Hearings

- The Joint Staff is recommending a Compact hearing (via telephone) be scheduled for 2:00 PM Wednesday March 7 to consider a commercial fishing period for Thursday, March 8.
- The Joint Staff is also recommending a Compact hearing (via telephone) be scheduled for **5:00 PM** Monday March 12. The late hearing time would be to accommodate attendees at the NOF meeting.