

**JOINT STAFF REPORT  
Fall FACT SHEET No. 2  
Columbia River Compact**

**August 12, 2003**

**Purpose:** To review chinook salmon stock status and consider non-Indian commercial fishing options for the mainstem Columbia River.

**MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES**

***Salmon***

- A Management Agreement for upper Columbia River fall chinook, steelhead, and coho was reached by the *U.S. v Oregon* parties for fall fisheries occurring in 2003.
- The 2003 Fall Management Agreement allocates the 31.29% URB impact rate 23.04% for treaty Indian fisheries and 8.25% for non-Indian fisheries; however, sharing impacts could change based on inseason updates.
- Non-Indian fisheries occurring during August will be managed in accordance with the "2003 Non-Indian Columbia River Fall Fishery Chinook Allocation Agreement" completed through the North of Falcon negotiation process.

***Excerpts From the 2003 Non-Indian Columbia River Fall Fishery Chinook Allocation Agreement***

- ✓ URB fall chinook impacts in fisheries downstream of the Snake River are allocated pre-season at 52% (4.29%) to the sport fishery and 48% (3.96%) to the commercial fishery. The Columbia River Compact/Joint States will use this URB impact allocation as guidance for making in-season management decisions concerning the Columbia River sport and commercial fisheries. Actual URB impacts in the fisheries may differ from pre-season estimates based on actual fishery catches, stock composition, and run-size updates. The *U. S. v. Oregon* TAC will update the URB run-size beginning in mid-September.
- ✓ Expectations for the commercial fishery include:
  - An early August salmon fishery up to 4 nights (modeled dates were August 5, 7, 11, 13). Mesh size is 8-inch minimum and area is below the Longview Bridge. URB allocation for this fishery is 0.76% (19% of the total commercial impacts of 3.96%) and total chinook catch expectation is 10,400 fish. Chinook/URB impacts not used in this fishery will transfer to future commercial fisheries.
  - Late August Zone 4-5 fishery during the last two weeks of August. Fishing is expected to occur up to 3 nights per week with breaks in between fishing days. Mesh size is 9-inch minimum and area is above the I-205 Bridge. URB allocation for this fishery is 0.83% (21% of the total commercial impact of 3.96%) and total chinook catch expectation is 6,500 fish. Chinook/URB impacts not used in this fishery will transfer to September fisheries.
  - Fishing areas and days in August fisheries may change based on in-season updates.
  - Sturgeon management will be consistent with sturgeon protocol adopted at the February 6, 2003 Compact hearing.

- Based on pre-season run size forecasts and North of Falcon negotiations, the catch allocation for commercial fisheries occurring during August is 16,860 chinook, including 3,980 URB's.

## Sturgeon

- Sturgeon fisheries between the Columbia River mouth and Bonneville Dam during 2003-2005 are guided by a Joint State management plan adopted by the Oregon and Washington Fish and Wildlife Commissions and the Columbia River Compact.
- The annual allocation for commercial fisheries, including Select Area fisheries, is 8,000 white sturgeon which represents 20% of the annual harvestable number of 40,000.
- Commercial fisheries will be further managed based on protocol adopted at the February 6, 2003 Compact hearing.

<i>Protocol for Management of White Sturgeon in 2003-2005 Commercial Fisheries</i>	
✓	Fisheries should be managed for white sturgeon catch expectations of 2,000 for the winter-summer timeframe (January-July), 2,000 for the early fall timeframe (August), and 3,600 for the late fall timeframe (September-October).
✓	Landings during SAFE fisheries are not to exceed 400 white sturgeon for the entire year with winter/spring/summer fisheries not to exceed 300.
✓	Allow some level of incidental sturgeon harvest to occur during all target salmon seasons.
✓	Conduct limited target sturgeon fisheries during winter and early fall timeframes if feasible.
✓	Conduct target sturgeon fisheries during October if necessary to access commercial allocation.
✓	Adopt white sturgeon possession and landing limits if necessary to remain within season specific catch expectation or to provide white sturgeon for harvest during subsequent salmon seasons.
✓	Until further discussion occurs with the OFWC and the WFWC regarding sturgeon allocation among individual commercial fishers landings and possession limits will be in the form of per vessel limits and these limits will include both mainstem and Select Area fisheries.
✓	Joint Staff will conduct an annual post season evaluation of white sturgeon retention with industry.

## STOCK STATUS

- The fall chinook salmon return in 2003 is expected to be near 600,000 adults, with brights comprising the majority of the return.
- The 2003 fall chinook return is forecasted to be comprised of 376,400 brights (63%) and 218,800 tules (37%).

<i>Summary of Columbia River Adult Chinook Salmon Returns in 2002 and Forecast for 2003</i>			
Species, stock	2002 Return	2003 Forecast	Comments
<b>Fall chinook</b>	<b>733,100</b>	<b>595,200</b>	Fifth largest since 1948
Upriver bright (URB)	276,900	258,400	Second largest since 1989
Snake River wild (SRW)	NA	NA	
Mid-Columbia bright (MCB)	106,000	86,600	Third largest on record (since 1980)
Bonneville upriver bright (BUB)	57,900	43,100	Fourth largest on record (since 1980)
Pool upriver bright (PUB)	48,100	43,500	Second largest on record (since 1985)
Lower river bright (LRB)	2,400	1,800	Formerly a component of the BUB stock
Bonneville pool hatchery (BPH)	160,800	101,900	Fourth largest since 1976
Lower river hatchery (LRH)	156,400	116,900	Second largest since 1989
Lower river wild (LRW)	24,900	23,400	Second largest since 1989
Select area bright (SAB)	5,700	6,200	Based on recent 5-year average

- Passage over Bonneville Dam has remained relatively stable with daily counts ranging between 390-949 adults during the first 10 days of August.
- Through August 10 a total of 6,500 adult fall chinook have passed Bonneville Dam. Typically about 2% of the adult passage occurs prior to August 11.

## COMMERCIAL FISHERY UPDATES

### *Early August Fishery*

- The preseason catch expectation for this fishery was 10,350 chinook, including 1,970 URBs (19%).
- At the July 30 hearing the Compact adopted three 12-hour nightly (7 pm-7 am) fishing periods beginning on the nights of Monday August 4, Wednesday August 6, and Monday August 11.
- The first three fishing periods occurred in all of Zones 1-3 with an 8-inch minimum mesh size restriction in effect to target chinook salmon. In accordance with the white sturgeon protocol, a 7-sturgeon per calendar week retention limit was in effect.

<i>Early August Season Commercial Fishery Landings</i>					
Date	Deliveries	Chinook	Coho	White Sturgeon	Green Sturgeon
Aug 4-5	134	847	1	604	4
Aug 6-7	106	1,077	7	260	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>240</b>	<b>1,924</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>864</b>	<b>4</b>

- Based on VSI data, chinook landings during the first week of the fishery were comprised of 71% brights and 29% tules. Based on LV fin clips SAB fall chinook accounted for 65% of the bright catch and 47% of the total catch.
- Based on VSI and LV fin clip data URB's comprised 14% of the fall chinook landings during the first two fishing periods, as compared to the preseason expectation of 19% for the entire season.
- White sturgeon landings during the first week of the August mainstem fishery were similar to preseason expectations with a total of 864 white sturgeon and four green sturgeon landed.
- Based on results observed during 2002 early August fishery the Joint Staff projects that landings during the third fishing period will include 2,500-4,000 chinook and 600-900 white sturgeon. Landings during the first three fishing periods are projected to total 4,500-6,000 chinook and 1,500-1,800 white sturgeon.

<i>2003 Lower Columbia River Commercial White Sturgeon Catch Summary</i>		
Fishery	Guideline	Catch
Mainstem Winter Gillnet	2,000	1,517
Select Area Gillnet (thru 8/7)	400	251
August Gillnet (thru 8/7)	2,000	864
Mainstem Late Fall Gillnet	3,600	0
	Cumulative Catch to Date =	2,632
	Quota Remaining =	5,368

### *Select Area Fisheries*

- The first fishing period of the fall season occurred in Youngs Bay from noon Wednesday August 6 to 6 pm Thursday August 7 (30 hours).
- Fall chinook landings were less than expected due to low effort. Chinook landings totaled 21 fish during the first 30-hour fishing period and based on LV fin clips SAB fall chinook comprised 95% of the catch.
- Due to mainstem fishing opportunities zero sturgeon were landed in Youngs Bay during the first fall season fishing period.

## FISHERY PROPOSALS

### *Early August Non-Indian Salmon Fishery*

<i>Recommendation</i>	
The Joint Staff recommends adoption of the following salmon fishing period for the mainstem Columbia River:	
Season:	7 PM Wednesday August 13 to 7 AM Thursday August 14 (12 hours)
Area:	Mouth upstream to the lower Zone 4 commercial fishing boundary extending from Warrior Rock on the Oregon shore to the Lewis River on the Washington shore (Zones 1-3).
Sanctuaries:	Grays River, Elokomina-A, Cowlitz River, Kalama -A, and Lewis -A.
Gear:	8" minimum and 9¾ maximum mesh size restrictions.
Allowable Sales:	Salmon and sturgeon. A maximum of seven sturgeon may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel during each calendar week (Sunday through Saturday) that the fishery is open. The seven sturgeon possession and sales limit includes both mainstem and Select Area fisheries during August 3-16.
Expected Catch:	3,000-5,000 chinook 200-300 white sturgeon <10 green sturgeon
Miscellaneous Rules:	Quick Reporting Rules will be in effect for Washington buyers.

- ✓ The proposed fishery is consistent with the Fall Management Agreement and results of the North of Falcon negotiation process.
- ✓ The proposed fishery allows additional opportunity to catch chinook with minimal impacts to URB stock fall chinook.
- ✓ Chinook catch during this fishery is expected to remain within 0.76% URB impact expectation while achieving the 10,400 chinook catch estimate.
- ✓ Preseason modeling and results of past fisheries during early August indicate that the majority of the catch should be tule fall chinook.
- ✓ The proposed fishery provides access to tule fall chinook in the lower river when in a more marketable condition.
- ✓ The proposed fishery allows opportunity to gain information and collect data concerning salmon fisheries during the early August time frame.
- ✓ The increased area from the Longview Bridge upstream to the lower Zone 4 boundary will open an additional 20 miles of river and provide increased opportunity. Based on landings during the first week of this fishery the additional fishing area did not compromise management plans for salmon or sturgeon, nor did it result in a significantly greater harvest.
- ✓ The proposed weekly sturgeon retention regulation is consistent with the white sturgeon protocol, is expected to maintain total sturgeon landings within the 2,000 fish allocation for August fisheries, and will allow for sturgeon retention during Area 2S fisheries occurring in late August.

***Late August Non-Indian Salmon Fishery***

<b><i>Recommendation</i></b>	
The Joint Staff recommends adoption of the following salmon fishing periods for the mainstem Columbia River:	
Season:	8 PM Monday August 18 to 6 AM Tuesday August 19 (10 hours) 8 PM Thursday August 21 to 6 AM Friday August 22 (10 hours) 8 PM Monday August 25 to 6 AM Tuesday August 26 (10 hours) 8 PM Wednesday August 27 to 6 AM Thursday August 28 (10 hours)
Area:	The lower Zone 4 commercial fishing boundary extending from Warrior Rock on the Oregon shore to the Lewis River on the Washington shore upstream to the upper Zone 5 boundary at Beacon Rock (Zones 4-5).
Sanctuaries:	Washougal River and Sandy River.
Gear:	9" minimum and 9¾ maximum mesh size restrictions.
Allowable Sales:	Salmon and sturgeon. A maximum of seven sturgeon may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel during each calendar week (Sunday through Saturday) that the fishery is open. The seven sturgeon possession and sales limit includes only mainstem fisheries during August 17-31.
Expected Catch:	6,000 - 8,000 chinook 200 - 400 white sturgeon
Miscellaneous Rules:	Quick Reporting Rules will be in effect for Washington buyers.

- ✓ The proposed fishery is consistent with the Fall Management Agreement and results of the North of Falcon negotiation process.
- ✓ Chinook catch during these fishing periods is expected to remain within 6,510 chinook and 0.83% URB impact expectations for this fishery.
- ✓ Based on the location of this fishery impacts to listed tule fall chinook are expected to be negligible.
- ✓ The increased area from the I-5 Bridge downstream to the lower Zone 4 boundary will open an additional 20 miles of river and will reduce congestion observed during other late August fisheries occurring above the I205 Bridge. The additional fishing area is not expected to compromise preseason management plans for salmon or sturgeon, nor is it expected to significantly increase harvest or URB impacts associated with this fishery.
- ✓ The proposed fishery is consistent with the white sturgeon protocol and is expected to maintain total landings within the 2,000 fish allocation for August fisheries. The weekly sturgeon landings restriction does not include the ongoing Youngs Bay Select Area fishery due to the geographical separation of the two fisheries and the historically low white sturgeon catch rates observed in Youngs Bay during late August.
- ✓ Closed days between fishing periods will allow for fishery checkpoints to update and modify the ongoing fishery as needed.

***Treaty Indian Subsistence Fisheries***

<b><i>Recommendation</i></b>	
Season:	6 AM Thursday August 14 until further notice
Area:	All of Zone 6.
Gear:	Legal subsistence gear consisting of hoop net, dip net, and hook and line
Allowable Sales:	Chinook, coho, steelhead, walleye, carp, and shad.
Miscellaneous Rules:	Sturgeon between 4-5 feet in length may not be sold but may be retained for subsistence purposes.  Effective 6 AM August 14 salmon and steelhead landed in tributary fisheries in the Klickitat and Big White Salmon rivers may be sold during regular scheduled fishing periods.

- ✓ The Klickitat River is open Tuesday through Saturday and the Big White Salmon River is open Monday through Saturday.
- ✓ Under previous regulations, sturgeon setline fisheries in the Bonneville and John Day pools will close effective 6 PM Saturday August 23 and will remain closed through the remainder of the fall commercial gillnet fishing season.

**Scheduled Compact Hearings**

- A Columbia River Compact hearing has been scheduled for 10 AM Friday, August 22, 2003 at the Water Resources Education Center located at 4600 SE Columbia Way, Vancouver, Washington for the purposes of reviewing salmon, steelhead, and sturgeon stock status and considering August 2S and treaty Indian commercial fishing seasons in the mainstem Columbia River.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife  
August 12, 2003