

JOINT STAFF REPORT
SPRING CHINOOK SPORT FISHERY FACT SHEET
Compact/Joint State Hearing
April 22, 2003

Purpose: To review salmon stock status, review the ongoing spring chinook sport and commercial fisheries, and consider sport and commercial fishing options.

TAC: This Fact Sheet was not reviewed by the TAC.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Endangered Species Act (ESA)

- Fisheries being considered at this Compact are addressed in a Section 7/10 Application outlining proposed non-Indian fisheries that the states of Washington and Oregon submitted to the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) on November 3, 2000.
- The ESA limits aggregate fishery impacts to $\leq 2\%$ for listed wild steelhead.

Interim Management Agreement

- An Interim Management Agreement covering fisheries for upriver spring chinook, summer chinook, and sockeye is in effect for 2001-2003.
- The Interim Management Agreement includes a sliding scale spring chinook harvest matrix for 2001-2005 and allocates upriver impacts between non-Indian and treaty Indian fisheries for 2001-2003.
- Based on preseason run size forecasts, the Interim Management Agreement limits impacts to listed upriver spring chinook to $\leq 2\%$ for non-Indian fisheries and $\leq 9\%$ for treaty Indian fisheries in 2003.

Non-Indian Upriver Impact Allocation

- Non-Indian fisheries will be managed in accordance with the guiding principles, fishery management objectives, and impact sharing matrix adopted by the Oregon and Washington Fish and Wildlife Commissions and the Columbia River Compact.
- Non-Indian impacts are allocated 1.7% for fisheries below McNary Dam and 0.3% for fisheries above McNary Dam and Select Area fisheries or as a management buffer.
- Upriver impacts for non-Indian fisheries below McNary Dam in 2003 are further allocated 35% (0.59% impact) for commercial fisheries and 65% (1.11% impact) for sport fisheries.

Willamette Spring Chinook Management

- The Fisheries Management and Evaluation Plan (FMEP) for Willamette spring chinook limits impacts for all freshwater fisheries in 2002 to $\leq 15\%$ on wild Willamette River spring chinook.
- Based on the preseason run size forecast of 109,800 the Willamette River Basin Fish Management Plan (WFMP) allocates surplus hatchery Willamette River spring chinook 70% for sport fisheries (40,900 fish) and 30% for commercial fisheries (17,500 fish) in 2003.

WATER CONDITIONS

Lower Columbia River

- Columbia River water conditions at Bonneville Dam have remained relatively stable during early April but changed dramatically with the initiation of the spill test on April 14.
- The spill test will provide a fluctuating pattern of spill with alternating periods (2-4 days) of high or low spill. Spill ranged between 70 kcfs and 95 kcfs during April 14-15, 140 kcfs and 150 kcfs during April 16-19, and 103 kcfs and 104 kcfs on April 20-21.
- Since April 14 flow has ranged between 198 kcfs and 253 kcfs as compared to April 1-13 when flow ranged between 181 kcfs and 208 kcfs.
- During April 1-19 in 2001 flows ranged between 97 kcfs and 137 kcfs with spill levels at 0.0 kcfs on all days.
- Water temperatures measured at Bonneville Dam have steadily increased from 46°F on April 1 to 51°F on April 21. In 2001 temperature ranged between 40°F-50°F during the first 18 days of April.
- Visibility measured at Bonneville Dam increased from 2.0 feet on April 12 to 5 feet on April 16. Visibility has ranged between 4-5 feet since April 16. Visibility can fluctuate widely during April, typically ranging between 2-5 feet.

Lower Willamette River

- Willamette River water conditions have been relatively stable during April.
- Flows measured at Salem ranged between 31,500-41,500 cfs during the first 18 days of April.
- Temperature measured at Willamette Falls has ranged between 48°F-52°F during the first half of April.
- Visibility measured at Willamette Falls has ranged between 1.8 feet and 3.8 feet during April.

STOCK STATUS

Spring Chinook

- The preseason spring chinook run size forecasts include returns of 145,400 upriver stock and 109,800 Willamette stock to the Columbia River mouth.
- Upriver spring chinook passage over Bonneville Dam is tracking ahead of preseason expectations with 101,500 adults passing through April 21. During 2000-2002 spring chinook counts at Bonneville Dam through April 21 ranged between 50,100-254,900 adults.
- Upriver spring chinook passage over Bonneville Dam typically peaks in late April.
- The TAC met on Monday April 21 and upgraded the spring chinook run size to 180,000 adults passing Bonneville Dam. This results in a return to the river mouth of 193,000 adults.

NON-INDIAN FISHERY UPDATES

Commercial Salmon Fisheries

- The commercial demonstration fishery consisted of three daylight fishing periods on February 17, February 19, and March 21.

- Select Area fisheries occurred during the winter time frame in Blind Slough and Youngs Bay select areas.
- Ongoing Select Area spring seasons occurring in Tongue Point, Blind Slough, Deep River, and Youngs Bay are scheduled to continue through mid-June.
- Upriver catch estimates for Select Area fisheries are based on VSI methodology and have not been corroborated with CWT recovery data.

<i>Spring Chinook Landings During 2003 Winter and Spring Fisheries</i>					
Fishery	Time Period	Total Catch	Kept Catch	Upriver %	Stock Impacts
Winter Demonstration	Feb 17-March 21	5,667	3,173 (56%)	74	0.668%
Winter Select Area	Feb 18-March 2	89	89 (100%)	34	0.018%
Spring Tongue Point	April 16-17	317	317 (100%)	(60)	(0.031%)
Spring Blind Slough	April 17-18	329	329 (100%)	(28)	(0.015%)
Spring Youngs Bay	April 16-18	2,389	2,389 (100%)	(224)	(0.116%)
Spring Deep River	April 17-18	19	19 (100%)	(4)	(0.002%)

Below Bonneville Spring Chinook Sport Fishery

- The mainstem Columbia River was originally scheduled to be open for adipose fin-clipped salmon, adipose fin-clipped steelhead, and shad angling from the mouth at Buoy 10 upstream to McNary Dam (excluding salmon angling from a boat and from the Washington shore between Bonneville Dam and Tower Island power lines) during January 1-May-15 below I-5 Bridge and during February 15-May 15 above I-5 Bridge.
- Fishing was typically slow during February but improved significantly during March, especially in the gorge just below Bonneville Dam. Poor water conditions reduced fishing opportunities below the mouth of the Willamette during the last half of March and focussed the fishery to the gorge where fishing conditions were good.

<i>Catch and Effort During the 2003 Mainstem Spring Chinook Sport Fishery Below Bonneville Dam</i>					
Time Period	Angler Trips	Total Catch	Kept Catch	Upriver Stock	
				%	Impact
February	9,600	432	209 (48%)	100%	0.023%
March	65,800	8,790	5,597 (64%)	81%	0.369%
April 1-19	57,800	11,675	7,481 (64%)	59%	0.357%
Total	133,200	20,897	13,287 (64%)	64%	0.749%

- Due to large catches and high proportion of upriver fish in the catch a Joint State meeting was held on Tuesday April 1 to consider modifications to the ongoing spring chinook sport fishery. At this meeting the states of Oregon and Washington modified the ongoing season to be closed between the I-5 Bridge and Bonneville Dam seven days per week and remain open between the mouth at Buoy 10 and the I-5 Bridge four days per week (Wednesday through Saturday). The modified season was adopted with the intent of maintaining a partial sport fishery until the first upriver run size update that was expected to occur in mid to late April.
- Fishing remained good during April 1-5 with a 0.30% impact on upriver spring chinook during the first five days of April.
- Fishing conditions deteriorated during April 9-12 with increased turbidity and poor fishing tides. Catch and effort dropped significantly during these four days and the impact to upriver spring chinook also dropped to 0.07% during this time period.

- Fishing conditions, primarily visibility and fishing tides, improved during April 16-19 and catch rates were fair. Effort declined primarily due to excellent fishing opportunities in tributaries, especially the Willamette River.

Bonneville to McNary Spring Chinook Sport Fishery

- Preseason expectations were for a catch of 1,600 spring chinook in this fishery, which would result in a 0.9% impact on upriver spring chinook.
- Effort and catch in this fishery are typically minor prior to mid-April.
- The fishery will intensify in late April and May coincident with increased passage of upriver spring chinook.
- Through April 20 a total of 772 spring chinook have been handled with 475 kept, which results in a 0.26% impact on upriver spring chinook.

<i>Spring Chinook Catch and Impacts Summary</i>				
Fishery	Total Handle	Kept Catch		Upriver Impact
		Total	Upriver	
Commercial Demonstration	5,700	3,200	2,000	0.67%
Winter Select Area Commercial	89	89	34	0.02%
Spring Select Area (thru 4/18)	3,100	3,100	300	(0.14%)
Below Bonneville Sport (thru 4/19)	20,900	13,300	8,000	0.75%
Bonneville to McNary Sport	800	500	500	0.04%
Total to Date (4/23-4/26)	30,589	17,089	10,834	(1.62%)
Spring Select Area Commercial	9,000	9,000	NA	NA
Below Bonneville Sport (4/16-4/19)	2,000	1,500	700	0.04%
Bonneville to McNary Sport	800	500	500	0.05%
Projected Total	11,800	11,000	1,200	(0.33%)
Grand Total	42,389	28,089	(12,034)	(1.71%)

Lower Willamette Spring Chinook Fishery

- The mainstem Willamette River below Willamette Falls is open for adipose fin-clipped chinook salmon and adipose fin-clipped steelhead the entire year.
- Poor fishing conditions have limited effort and catch during March. Fishing conditions have been good during early April and catches have increased dramatically in response to improved fishing conditions.
- Since April 3 fishing has been excellent throughout the entire lower river, including Multnomah Channel, with catch rates ranging between one chinook per every 1-5 boats.

FISHERY RECOMENDATIONS

Below Bonneville Spring Chinook Sport Fishery

<i>Recommendation</i>	
•	The Joint Staff is recommending no modifications to the ongoing four-day per week sport fishery in the lower Columbia River.

- ✓ The fishery is consistent with guiding principles, fishery management objectives, and allocation plan adopted by the Oregon and Washington Fish and Wildlife Commissions.
- ✓ The fishery provides a sport fishing opportunity to access surplus hatchery spring chinook and limits impacts to listed species.

- ✓ Allows fishery to remain open until next upriver run size update which is scheduled for Monday April 28.

Select Area Commercial Fisheries

<i>Recommendation</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Joint Staff is recommending that the opening in Youngs Bay select area be delayed to 6 PM Thursday April 24.

- ✓ Provide time to verify upriver impact levels in Select Area fisheries.
- ✓ Provide fishery managers time to determine appropriate management actions for Select Area fisheries.
- ✓ Provides consistent opening for all Select Area fisheries.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- The Joint Staff recommends that the next Compact/Joint State Sport hearing to update spring chinook stock status, review ongoing spring chinook sport fishery, and consider modifications to the ongoing sport fishery occur via telephone at 3 pm Monday April 28.

Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
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