

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

JOINT STAFF REPORT WINTER FACT SHEET NO. 11 Columbia River Compact March 23, 2005

Fisheries under Consideration: Non-Indian Spring Chinook Commercial Salmon

STOCK STATUS

Spring Chinook

- The preseason spring Chinook run size forecasts include returns of 254,100 upriver stock and 116,900 Willamette stock.
- The impact limit of 2.00% for upriver stock is allocated 0.80% for commercial fisheries and 1.2% for recreational fisheries.
- The upriver spring Chinook count through March 21 at Bonneville Dam was 29 spring Chinook. Passage is less than that of recent years.
- Willamette spring Chinook counts over Willamette Falls total 125 Chinook passing as of March 18th. Passage is ahead of recent years and is on track to meet the preseason forecast.
- Run sizes cannot be updated until late April for upriver stock and early May for Willamette stock.

Wild Winter Steelhead

- The preseason forecast was for a return of 27,000 wild winter steelhead to the Columbia River mouth. The management guideline is 2.00%.
- Passage at Willamette Falls totaled 3,272 wild winter steelhead as of March 18, 2005. On average 50% of the run is past Willamette Falls by this date. The current run appears to be about 60% of what would be needed to meet the preseason forecast.
- Willamette wild winter steelhead typically represents 40% of the total wild winter steelhead return to the Columbia River.
- The Willamette run size will be updated in late March. Other winter steelhead populations have later run times and cannot be updated until mid April.

COLUMBIA RIVER WATER CONDITIONS

- Temperature during March 1-22 has ranged from 41-46 F and has averaged 43.5 F, which is equal to the 10-year average temperature for this time of year.
- Flow has ranged from 120 to 144 kcfs with an average of 129 kcfs, compared to the 10-year average of 199 kcfs for this time of year.
- Visibility remains at 7 feet.

FISHERY UPDATES

Non-Indian Salmon Commercial Fishery

- Mainstem landings to date total 1,701 spring Chinook with a 29.3% average upriver stock component. The fishery has also handled an estimated 80 wild winter steelhead to date.
- Mainstem impacts to date are 0.111% for upriver Chinook and 0.089% for wild winter steelhead. These impacts represent 18.5% of the mainstem commercial upriver spring Chinook impact guideline (0.6%) and 4.5% of the non-Indian wild winter steelhead impact limit (2.00%).

<i>Chinook and Steelhead Data from 2005 Winter Commercial Season</i>							
Fishing Period	Gear	Deliveries	White	Total Chinook	% Upriver	Steelhead Handle	
			Sturgeon	Kept	Stock	Total	Wild Winter
Winter Sturgeon Jan 18-Feb 25	9"	110	473	83	30%	0	0
Mar 1-2 (12 hr) + Mar 3-4 (12 hr)	9"	118	9	300	29%	80	59
Mar 8-9 (12 hr) + Mar 10-11 (20 hrs)	9"	217	33	674	27%	0	0
Mar 15-16 (12 hr)	9"	128	14	644	32%	43	21
Total		573	529	1,701	29.3%	123	80

- Catch rates (fish/drift) for spring Chinook have increased but remain below levels observed in 2004. Steelhead catch rates are similar to levels observed in 2004.

Spring Chinook Fishery 2005																					
Preliminary Test / Observation Data*																					
Date	Mesh size	# Drifts	Lower R.			UpRiver			Chinook no VSI			Total Chinook	Ratio Chinook / Steelhead	Total Steelhead	Steelhead				Steelhead per Drift	% Upriver Chinook	% Marked Chinook
			Clipped	No Mark	Undetermined	Clipped	No Mark	Undetermined	Clipped	No Mark	Undetermined				Hatchery	Wild	Undetermined	DNA count			
Feb 27 Test	4.25"	15	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	3	2	1	0	0	0.20	0%	0%	
Mar 1-2 Obsv	9"	56	2	3	0	2	0	0	0	0	7	3.50	2	1	1	0	0	0.04	29%	57%	
Mar 3-4 Obsv	9"	57	9	2	0	1	0	0	1	0	13	6.50	2	0	2	0	1	0.04	8%	85%	
Mar 6 Test	4.25"	16	6	3	0	0	1	0	0	0	10	2.50	4	2	2	0	0	0.25	10%	60%	
Mar 8-9 Obsv	9"	53	29	11	0	3	2	0	1	0	46	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	11%	72%	
Mar 10-11 Obsv	9"	48	20	5	0	2	1	0	2	0	30	0.00	0	0	0	0	0	0.00	11%	80%	
Mar 13 Test	4.25"	10	7	3	0	2	0	0	0	1	13	1.18	11	5	6	0	6	1.10	17%	75%	
Mar 15-16 Obsv	9"	69	25	7	0	5	2	0	0	1	40	20.00	2	0	1	1	1	0.03	18%	77%	
Mar 20 Test	4.25"	20	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	0.50	8	5	3	0	2	0.40	0%	75%	
Mar 22 Test/Research	4.25"	44	34	6	1	8	1	0	0	1	51	2.22	23	5	18	0	18	0.52	18%	86%	
Totals		388	135	41	1	23	7	0	4	0	3214	3.89	55	20	34	1	28	0.14	14%	77%	

*ALL DATA IS PRELIMINARY. Only fish observed are reported. Catch from drifts made prior to on-board monitoring are not included.

Select Area Fisheries

- Preliminary landings for Select Area winter fisheries include 144 spring Chinook and 6 white sturgeon landed in Youngs Bay and 46 spring Chinook and 3 white sturgeon landed in Blind Slough.
- The estimated upriver spring Chinook impact rate for Select Area winter fisheries is currently 5% of the Select Area impact guideline (0.1%).
- Spring Select Area fisheries are scheduled to begin on April 21, 2005.

FISHERY RECOMMENDATIONS

Non-Indian Salmon Commercial Fishery

Recommendation	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Joint Staff is proposing the following additional fishing period for the commercial fishery.
Season:	6 PM Thursday March 24 through 1 AM Friday March 25, 2005 (7 hours)
Area:	Mouth to Kelley Point (Zones 1-4)
Sanctuaries:	Grays River, Elokomina –B, Abernathy Creek, Cowlitz River, Kalama-B, and Lewis-B.
Gear:	<p>4¼” maximum mesh size restriction. Drift nets only.</p> <p>Net length not to exceed 150 fathoms. Use of monofilament tangle nets not allowed. Optional use of a steelhead excluding panel hung between the cork line and the tangle net mesh is allowed. Excluder panel must be a minimum of 5’ in depth and not exceed 10’ in depth with a 12” minimum mesh size restriction in effect.</p> <p>Use of weedlines or droppers, used in smelt bobber nets, are allowed in place of a steelhead excluder panel. Weedlines or droppers must extend a minimum of 5’ above the tangle net mesh.</p> <p>Net length can increase from 150 to 175 fathoms for nets constructed with a steelhead excluder panel, weedlines, or droppers.</p>
Allowable Sales:	Adipose fin-clipped Chinook salmon and sturgeon.
Participants:	Columbia River commercial fishers with appropriate licenses and legal gear that attended a state-sponsored workshop concerning live captive commercial fishing techniques and possess a certificate that allows participation in this fishery.
Expected Catch:	<p>1,300-1,800 spring Chinook,</p> <p>Expected upriver impacts 0.037% - 0.051% (6.2-8.5% of 0.6% impact guideline)</p> <p>Expected steelhead impacts 0.0027% - 0.004% (13.5%-20% of 2.0% guideline)</p>
New Regulation	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 their intent to board the commercial vessel for observation and sampling during an open fishery
Miscellaneous Regulations:	<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>Use of recovery boxes will be required on all lethargic or bleeding salmonids.</p> <p>Each participant will be required to have 2 operable recovery boxes or one box with</p>

two chambers in place to participate in this fishery. Operable recovery boxes will require a flow of 16-20 gallons per minute to the box or each chamber. Each box shall be operating during any time that the net is being retrieved or picked.

Lighted buoys required on each end of nets being fished between sunset and sunrise.

Quick reporting rule in effect for Washington buyers.

- The proposed season would result in combined year-to-date impacts of approximately 25-27% of the mainstem commercial upriver spring Chinook guideline (0.6%) and 18-25% of the non-Indian wild winter steelhead impact limit (2.0%)

NEXT COMPACT HEARING

The Joint Staff is recommending a Compact hearing for Monday March 28 at 3:00 pm, via telephone.