

**OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT - FALL FACT SHEET NO. 11
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
September 25, 2019**

| | |
|--|---|
| <i>Fisheries under consideration:</i> | Non-treaty mainstem commercial salmon Non-treaty Select Area commercial sturgeon |
|--|---|

Detailed information on stock status and management guidelines for Columbia River fisheries are presented in Joint Staff Reports, which are produced annually and available on-line. The 2019 Fall Report was distributed on July 22, 2019. Links to the on-line reports are: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/columbia-river/reports> or <http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/OSCRP/CRM/reports.asp>.

RIVER CONDITIONS

- The Columbia River flows at Bonneville Dam are currently 80.7 kcfs, which is less than the recent ten-year average for this date.
- Water temperature at Bonneville Dam is currently 68°F which is higher than the recent 10-year average (67°F) for this date.

STOCK STATUS

Salmon/Steelhead

- Through September 24, an estimated 219,170 adult fall Chinook have passed Bonneville Dam which is similar to in-season expectations.
- Passage of upriver summer steelhead at Bonneville Dam since July 1 totals 63,995 total A/B-Index fish.
- Counts of early stock Coho at Bonneville Dam since August 1 total 47,780 adults which is less than expectations.
- The *U.S. vs OR* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met on September 23, 2019 to review and discuss the upriver A/B-Index summer steelhead return, the upriver fall Chinook return, and the upriver component of the early-stock Coho return.
 - TAC maintained the current 2019 aggregate A/B-Index return expectation of 69,200 fish including 34,300 unclipped natural- and hatchery-origin fish. TAC upgraded the B-Index projection which has the effect of reducing the expectation for the A-Index component. TAC now expects 64,700 A-Index steelhead (32,600 unclipped) and 4,500 B-Index steelhead (1,700 unclipped) to pass Bonneville Dam in 2019.
 - TAC updated the 2019 upriver fall Chinook Bonneville Dam passage expectation. Given the information available, TAC expects the Columbia River mouth return to total 355,900 adult fall Chinook (102% of preseason forecast) which includes 173,100 URBs, 68,900 PUBs, and 33,700 BPH. The bright stock return is expected to be greater than the preseason forecast while the BPH stock component is expected to be less than forecast.
 - TAC updated the expected passage of upriver early-stock Coho at Bonneville Dam to 53,500 adults. This in-season projection is about 40% of the preseason expectation.

- McNary Dam passage through September 24 total 79,837 adult fall Chinook. Based on the 10-year average timing, the run is 68% complete, projecting a total count over McNary of 117,000 adults.
- Washington hatcheries are projected to meet or exceed broodstock needs for LRH Chinook with the exception of the Cowlitz River. The Cowlitz Hatchery is tracking behind broodstock collection expectations and is currently expected to only achieve 50% of the full program needs.
- The 2019 preseason forecast for Coho at the Columbia River mouth was 611,400, including 388,000 early stock and 223,300 late stock. Upriver Coho, destined for above Bonneville Dam, were projected to be about 34% of the total run.
 - To date, ocean fisheries have used just over half of their expected Coho impact quota.
 - Washington hatcheries are projected to meet or exceed broodstock needs for early Coho. Oregon hatchery returns are not yet available. It is too early to project hatchery return expectations for late Coho.
 - Based on information to date, the early coho run appears to be tracking less than the preseason forecast.
- Run size forecasts and stock descriptions for salmon and steelhead were presented in the 2019 Fall Fact Sheet #1.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Salmon/Steelhead

- The 2018-2027 *U.S. vs Oregon* Management Agreement (MA) provides specific fishery management guidelines for fall Chinook, summer steelhead, and Coho.
 - The allowable impact rate for combined treaty Indian and non-treaty Chinook fisheries is 31.25% of the URB run based on preseason forecasts (URB stock is the surrogate for SRW Chinook). This impact limit is allocated 23% for treaty Indian fisheries and 8.25% for non-treaty fisheries.
 - The escapement goal at Spring Creek Hatchery is 7,000 adult fall Chinook (BPH stock).
 - The management goal for adult fall Chinook at McNary Dam is 60,000 fish.
 - The allowable non-treaty impact rates for wild summer steelhead (A-Index and B-Index) during fall fisheries is 2% each.
 - Based on the pre-season forecast, treaty Indian impacts are limited to 13% of the total B-Index steelhead.
 - The goal for upriver Coho passage at Bonneville Dam is 50% of the ocean abundance.
 - The ESA impact limit to LCR tule fall Chinook is 38% in 2019 given the pre-season forecast. Harvest of LRH stock is the surrogate for LCR Chinook. This exploitation rate (ER) limit includes impacts in ocean and Columbia River fisheries combined.
 - In 2019, fishery impacts to LCN Coho are limited to a 23% ER for combined ocean and Columbia River fisheries.

2019 NON-TREATY FALL FISHERIES

- Washington and Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission policies/regulations provide guidance for both preseason planning and in-season management of non-treaty fall fisheries. Commission guidance allocates fall Chinook ESA impacts of no more than 70% recreational and no less than 30% commercial of the most constraining stock (Upriver Bright for 2019) and allows the use of gillnets in Zones 4/5.

Mainstem Recreational Fall Salmon Fisheries

- URB harvest in combined recreational fisheries through today (September 25) are projected to be 10,835 fish, or 108% of the current allocation guideline of 9,997.
- Angling/retention of salmon in the Columbia River from the Tongue Point/Rocky Point line upstream to the Hwy 395 Bridge near Pasco, WA will close effective Thursday, September 26.
- The Buoy 10 fishery remains open to retention of hatchery Coho based on a projected 16 URB mortalities through December.

Mainstem Commercial Fall Salmon Fisheries

- Preseason plans for the commercial fishery included an August (Early Fall) Chinook fishery in Zones 4-5, Select Area fisheries, a Coho tangle net fishery to begin in late September/October in Zones 1-3, and if sufficient URBs were available, a Chinook fishery in late September/October in Zones 4-5.
- The August commercial season consisted of four fishing periods during August 14-27 in Zones 4-5. Gear was restricted to a 9-inch minimum mesh. Weekly sturgeon landing limits were in place throughout the season (7/vessel/week). Catch included 6,360 Chinook, 495 white sturgeon and 206 Coho. Deliveries ranged from 37-63 per period.
- The commercial sturgeon harvest guideline for 2019 is 1,230 fish.
- Based on the current URB run size, sufficient numbers of URBs are available within the commercial allocation for Coho-directed fisheries at a level planned preseason.

| <i>Recommendation: 2019 Non-Treaty Coho Tangle Net Commercial Fishery</i> | |
|--|--|
| Season: | 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Monday September 30 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Wednesday October 2 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Monday October 7 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Wednesday October 9 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Friday October 11 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Monday October 14 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Wednesday October 16 |
| Area: | Zones 1-3. Upper deadline defined as a straight line projected from the Warrior Rock Lighthouse on the Oregon shore easterly through the green navigation Buoy #1 and continuing to the Washington shore |
| Sanctuaries: | Elokomin-A, Cowlitz River, Kalama-A and Lewis-A |

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Gear: | <p>Drift nets only. Maximum mesh size is 3-3/4 inches. Unslackened, single-wall, multi-filament floater nets only. Monofilament nets are not allowed.</p> <p>Net length not to exceed 150 fathoms.</p> <p>A red cork must be placed on the corkline every 25 fathoms as measured from the first mesh of the net. Red corks at 25-fathom intervals must be in color contrast to the corks used in the remainder of the net.</p> <p>There are no restrictions on the hang ratio. The hang ratio is used to horizontally add slack to the net. The hang ratio is determined by the length of the web per length of the corkline.</p> <p>The use of slackers or stringers to slacken the net vertically is <u>prohibited</u>.</p> <p>Rip lines are allowed providing they do not vertically slacken the net</p> |
| Allowable Sales: | <p>Adipose fin-clipped coho salmon; pink salmon and Chinook salmon.</p> <p>Sturgeon and chum salmon may not be possessed or sold.</p> |
| Regulations: | <p>Regulations typically in place for mark-selective commercial fisheries are in effect, including but not limited to: net length, use of recovery boxes, limited soak times, red corks, tangle-net certification, etc.</p> <p>Soak times, defined as the time elapsed from when the first of the gill net web is deployed into the water until the gill net web is fully retrieved from the water, must not exceed <u>30 minutes</u>.</p> <p>Recovery Box: Each boat will be required to have on board two operable recovery boxes or one box with two chambers that meet the flow and size requirements standard for the winter/spring season. Each box and chamber and associated pump shall be operating during any time that the net is being retrieved or picked. All non-legal fish must be released immediately unharmed to the river or placed into an operating recovery box. All non-legal salmon and all steelhead that are bleeding, lethargic or appear lifeless must be placed in the recovery box prior to being released. All fish placed in recovery boxes must be released to the river prior to landing or docking.</p> <p>Measuring mesh size: Mesh size is determined by placing three consecutive meshes under hand tension and the measurement is taken from the inside of one knot to the outside of the opposite knot of the center mesh. Hand tension means sufficient linear tension to draw opposing knots of meshes into contact</p> <p>Live Capture workshop: Only licensed Columbia River commercial fishers that have completed the required state-sponsored workshop concerning live capture commercial fishing techniques may participate in this fishery. At least one fisher on each boat must have live capture certification.</p> |
| Additional Rules: | <p>Multiple net rule in effect: Which means 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> <p>Lighted Buoys: Nets that are fished at any time between official sunset and official sunrise must have lighted buoys on both ends of the net unless the net is attached to the boat. If the net is attached to the boat, then one lighted buoy on the opposite end of the net from the boat is required</p> <p>24-hour quick reporting required is for Washington wholesale dealers, per WAC 220-352-315.</p> |

- Season structures are consistent with preseason plans developed with constituents during the North of Falcon process in March and April. Preseason plans included up to three days of fishing per week for four weeks during the late-fall season.
- Depending on results for the proposed fishery, additional commercial fishing opportunity extending later into October will be considered.
- Harvest of LRH fall Chinook is expected to be low due to timing of the fishery; staff expects about 110 total LRH to be caught. Of these, less than 15 are expected to be Cowlitz fall Chinook.
- Impacts to upriver steelhead are also expected to be low since 96% of the combined upriver summer steelhead return is expected to have passed Bonneville Dam by the start of the proposed fishery.
- Agency staff intends to observe the fishery.

Select Area Commercial Fisheries

- Select Area fall commercial fisheries have been open since August 6 in Youngs Bay and August 26 in the other three sites.
- Landings to date have been well below preseason expectations. Through September 21, combined Select Area landings include 3,124 Chinook, 13,007 Coho, and 166 white sturgeon.
- Year-to-date white sturgeon landings total 644 fish. Combined non-treaty commercial sturgeon landings total 1,160 through September 21, or 94% of the commercial guideline.
- Given current landings of sturgeon in the Select Areas, staff expects the commercial guideline could be achieved by the end of next week.

| |
|--|
| <i>Recommendation: 2019 Select Area Commercial Fisheries</i> |
| Effective 12:01 AM Sunday October 6, the possession and sale of white sturgeon in Select Area commercial fisheries is prohibited. All other previously adopted rules for this fishery remain in effect. |

ESA Impact Summary for Non-Treaty Fisheries

- SRW/URB impacts for combined non-treaty fisheries (completed, ongoing, and planned) are projected to remain within the allowable ESA limits.
- Lower Columbia River wild tule impacts are projected to not exceed 33.5% for combined in-river and ocean fisheries compared to the ESA limit of 38%.
- LCN Coho exploitation rates (ER) are projected to not exceed 18% (ocean and in-river), based on preseason forecasts and planned fisheries, compared to the allowable ESA limit of 23%.
- Steelhead impacts for combined non-treaty fisheries are projected at 0.5% and 0.9% for A- and B-Index wild steelhead, respectively, compared to the ESA limit of 2% allowed for each stock.

| Projected fall Chinook mortalities (kept and release mortalities) in 2019 non-treaty fisheries. | | | | |
|---|---------------|--------|-------|----------------|
| | Total Chinook | URB | URB % | SRW/URB Impact |
| Recreational (actual and planned) | 27,520 | 10,835 | 75.9% | 6.26% |
| August Zone 4-5 (actual) | 6,360 | 2,501 | | |
| Late Fall Zone 4-5 (TBD) | TBD | TBD | | |
| Select Area (full season) | 3,200 | 150 | | |
| Coho tangle net (full season) | 933 | 574 | | |
| Commercial Sum | 10,493 | 3,225 | 22.6% | 1.86% |
| Non-treaty Sum | 38,013 | 14,060 | | 8.12% |
| Non-treaty allowed at 173.1K URB | | 14,281 | | |
| Balance | | 221 | 1.5% | |

FUTURE MEETINGS

- The Joint Staff will continue to monitor stock status and fisheries, and will recommend additional hearings as needed. Staff anticipates the need for a hearing on October 15 to consider additional commercial Coho-directed tangle net periods.