

Joint-State Columbia River Fishery Policy Review Committee
Recommendation Transmission

The Joint-State Columbia River Fishery Policy Review Committee (PRC) met on February 26, 2019 at the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife office in Salem, Oregon. This was the third meeting held for the purpose of striving to develop a recommendation for concurrent policies and regulations for Columbia River salmon fishery management. The initial goal has been to develop a recommendation for 2019 fisheries by mid-March, for use in the 2019 North of Falcon Process; an additional goal has been to develop a more comprehensive recommendation for a long-term policy for 2020 and beyond. Any recommendations of the PRC are to be transmitted to the full Commissions of the Washington and Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commissions for their consideration for adoption and implementation.

The following motion and amendment passed.

Motion

Towards concurrent policies and regulations for 2019, I move to adopt Option 1, Transition Period, to also include a change in sports fisheries from mandatory barbless to voluntary barbless hooks effective as soon as practical but by June 1, 2019 at the latest.

The motion also calls for good faith progress towards recommending a comprehensive Columbia River salmon fishery policy for 2020 and beyond, to be completed as soon as possible. The policies embodied in this motion are intended to be in place until such comprehensive policy is adopted.

Amendment (referring to spring Chinook seasons)

To be used only in 2019, the main motion is amended such that the 80%/20% sport/commercial allocation, with no buffer applied to the commercial share and no mainstem commercial fishing, is to be used unless the Upriver run size update is more than 129% of the Upriver spring Chinook pre-season forecast of 99,300.

The vote on the amended motion was:

- Aye - Commissioner Kehoe (WDFW), Commissioner Akenson (ODFW), Commissioner Buckmaster (ODFW)
- Nay - Commissioner Graybill (WDFW), Commissioner Webber (ODFW)
- Commissioner Mclsaac (WDFW) announced the motion would pass without the Chair voting and did not vote

Following is the narrative description of the recommended policy language that was viewed at the PRC meeting, as modified by the motion that passed, including the amendment and a technical clarification on the summer Chinook harvestable surplus description as presented by staff at the meeting.

Analytical information on the three evaluation criteria (achieving conservation goals, conducting orderly fisheries, and the economic metrics of angler trips and ex-vessel commercial value), along with rationale for or against the motion that passed, will be provided by agency staff and PRC Members at the next full Commission meetings of the Washington and Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commissions.

Narrative Description of Option 1
As Modified by Motion Passed by the
Joint-State Columbia River Fishery Policy Review Committee
February 26, 2019

Option 1: Transition Period Policies

The intent of this option is to essentially freeze the fishery management policies in effect in 2016, which was the last year of a 2013 – 2016 period in which the mainstem Columbia River commercial fishery would transition from a gillnet gear or alternative gear fishery to an alternative gear-only fishery. The fishery management policies for sport/commercial allocations, allowable commercial fishing gear in the mainstem Columbia River by season, and other fishery management measures for this option are as follows:

- Spring Chinook Seasons: 70%/30% sharing of allowable non-Treaty Upriver Run ESA impacts; both fisheries to be constrained by the pre-run size update buffer mechanism; tangle nets allowed pre-update and post-update, with gillnet gear allowable in the post update period; of the 70% of Upriver Run ESA impacts allocated to the sport fishery, 25% (17.5% of the total allocation) is allocated to sport fisheries above Bonneville Dam. Within that 25% upriver allocation, 40% is allocated to OR/WA fisheries from Bonneville Dam up to the state line and 60% is allocated to the WA fishery in the Snake River and Upper Columbia River areas. The remaining amount of the 70% (52.5% of the total allocation) is allocated to sport fisheries below Bonneville Dam.
 - For 2019 only, an allocation of allowable non-Treaty impacts of 80%/20% sport/commercial allocation is to be used, with no buffer applied to the commercial share and no mainstem commercial fishing, unless the Upriver run size update is more than 129% of the Upriver spring Chinook pre-season forecast of 99,300.
- Summer Chinook Seasons: The amount of the non-Treaty harvestable surplus under the US v OR Management Agreement shall be allocated between fisheries above and below Priest Rapids Dam based on a sliding scaleⁱ; the harvestable amount for the areas below Priest Rapids Dam are to be shared 70% /30% between sport and commercial fisheries; 5% of the commercial share (1.5% of the total allocation below Priest Rapids Dam) is to be set aside for incidental take in SAFE area fisheries; allowable commercial fishing gear includes gillnets and alternative gear.
- Sockeye Seasons: 70%/30% sharing of allowable non-Treaty Snake River ESA impacts; the 30% commercial share is to be used for incidental impacts in commercial fisheries directed at summer Chinook salmon.
- Fall Chinook Seasons: ≤70%/≥30% sharing of allowable LRH ESA impacts and allowable non-Treaty Snake River ESA impacts (whichever is more constraining in a given year); the commercial share of such ESA impacts is to cover mainstem Columbia River and SAFE area fisheries; allowable commercial fishing gear in the mainstem Columbia River includes gillnet, tangle net, and seine gear.
- Coho Seasons: While there is no explicit numerical sharing of Lower Columbia River Natural ESA impacts, the allocation was prioritized as follows: commercial fisheries are to be assigned sufficient impacts to implement SAFE coho and fall Chinook fisheries and mainstem fall Chinook fisheries; and the balance to in-river mainstem recreational fisheries. If these fisheries are

expected to be unable to use all of the impacts, the remainder will be assigned to mainstem commercial coho fisheries. Allowable commercial fishing gear is to include gill net, tangle net, beach seine, and purse seine fishing gear.

- The use of barbless hooks in Columbia River salmonid sport fisheries shall be voluntary and not mandatory as soon as practical but by June 1, 2019 at the latest.

This option also calls for specific hatchery releases in SAFE areas as follows, which represent a net increase from the 2016 actual program, to the level specified in current Oregon policy.

- Spring Chinook: 3.7 M smolts (1.5 M greater than the 2018 actual release; increased to enhance commercial economics and offset Mitchell Act-related coho reductions since 2016).
- Fall Chinook: 1.0 M smolts (decreased from 2.2 M smolt due to Mitchell Act related reductions and brood limitations).
- Coho: 5.255 M smolts (somewhat reduced due to Mitchell Act related reductions).

ⁱ Based on current Washington Policy Document C-3620 *Columbia River Basin Salmon Management*.