

**OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE**  
**JOINT STAFF REPORT - WINTER FACT SHEET NO. 3a**  
**Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing**  
**February 19, 2020**

<b><i>Fisheries under consideration:</i></b>	Mainstem recreational salmon
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*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 most recent reports are the 2020 Sturgeon/Smelt Report (January 16, 2020) and 2020 Spring/Summer salmon, steelhead, and other species report (February 7, 2020) available at (<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/OSCRP/CRM/jsmreports.asp>) and (<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/columbia-river/reports>).*

**STOCK STATUS**

***Upriver Spring Chinook***

The upriver spring Chinook run is defined as all spring Chinook destined for areas above Bonneville Dam and Snake River summer Chinook. Chinook passing Bonneville Dam between January 1 and June 15 are managed as upriver spring Chinook. Snake River wild spring/summer Chinook and upper Columbia wild spring Chinook are components of this run and are federally-listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Spring Chinook returning to other tributaries above Bonneville Dam are part of this run but are not ESA-listed. Based on the recent ten-year average, Bonneville Dam passage is usually 50% complete by May 9. Over the past ten years, adult runs have averaged around 188,600 (range 73,101 to 315,346).

***Willamette Spring Chinook***

Willamette River spring Chinook exhibit broader migration timing than upriver spring Chinook. Wild spring Chinook destined for portions of the Willamette River and its tributaries are ESA-listed. Over the past ten years, adult runs have averaged around 58,900 fish (range 27,292 to 107,675).

***Lower Columbia Spring Chinook***

Spring Chinook returning to other tributaries of the lower Columbia River are destined for the Cowlitz, Kalama, Lewis, and Sandy rivers and the Select Areas. Wild components of this group are ESA-listed, with the exception of the Select Area fish. Over the past ten years, the combined adult return of these lower river stocks has averaged around 19,700 fish (range 6,867 to 34,323) to the tributaries and 10,200 fish (range 2,479 to 22,955) to the Select Areas.

***Winter Steelhead***

The geographic range of winter steelhead includes all tributaries of the Columbia River upstream to Fifteenmile Creek on the Oregon shore and the Klickitat River on the Washington shore. Wild populations from the Cowlitz River upstream to Fifteenmile Creek and from specific areas above Willamette Falls are ESA-listed. Steelhead handled downstream of Bonneville Dam during November through April are managed as winter steelhead. Over the past ten years, wild winter steelhead returns have averaged around 15,700 fish (range 9,440 to 22,379).

***Summer Steelhead***

Lower Columbia River (LCR) summer steelhead abundance in the mainstem Columbia peaks during May and June. The Skamania stock hatchery summer steelhead are widely planted in the lower Columbia tributaries, including the Willamette Basin. Skamania stock hatchery fish are also released

annually in some tributaries upstream of Bonneville Dam. Wild lower river summer steelhead are present in the Kalama, Lewis, Washougal, and Wind rivers in Washington and in the Hood River in Oregon. The lower Columbia River steelhead DPS is listed as threatened by the NMFS. All steelhead handled in fisheries downstream of Bonneville Dam during May and June are managed as lower river Skamania stock.

<i>Columbia River Adult Salmon Returns: Actual and Forecasted</i>				
		2019	2019	2020
		Forecast	Return	Forecast
<b>Spring Chinook</b>	<b>Upriver Total *</b>	<b>99,300</b>	<b>73,101</b>	<b>81,700</b>
	Upper Columbia	11,200	14,651	13,600
	<i>Upper Columbia natural-origin</i>	<i>2,100</i>	<i>1,668</i>	<i>2,300</i>
	Snake River Spring/Summer **	48,100	43,077	56,400
	<i>Snake River natural-origin **</i>	<i>8,200</i>	<i>7,480</i>	<i>9,600</i>
	<b>Lower River Total</b>	<b>58,200</b>	<b>36,707</b>	<b>54,100</b>
	<b>Total Spring Chinook</b>	<b>157,500</b>	<b>109,808</b>	<b>135,800</b>
	<u>Area-specific detail</u>			
	Willamette River	40,200	27,292	40,800
	Sandy River	5,500	3,260	5,200
	Select Areas ***	8,200	2,548	4,300
	Cowlitz River	1,300	1,563	1,400
	Kalama River	1,400	997	1,000
	Lewis River	1,600	1,047	1,400
	Wind River ***	2,800	1,598	2,000
	Drano Lake/Little White Salmon River ***	5,600	3,571	4,600
	Hood River ***	2,300	1,207	2,300
	Klickitat River ***	1,100	404	1,800
	Deschutes River ***	1,455	863	--
	John Day River ***	--	2,170	2,800
	Umatilla River ***	2,400	522	900
	Yakima River ***	3,000	1,756	2,800
<b>Summer Chinook</b>	<b>Upper Columbia</b>	<b>36,340</b>	<b>34,619</b>	<b>38,300</b>
<b>Sockeye</b>	<b>Total Sockeye</b>	<b>94,400</b>	<b>63,222</b>	<b>246,300</b>
	Wenatchee	18,300	7,900	39,400
	Okanogan	74,500	54,300	201,800
	Yakima	1,300	600	2,500
	Deschutes	100	200	300
	Snake River	200	342	2,300
<b>Winter Steelhead</b>	<b>Wild</b>	<b>14,400</b>	<b>9,440</b>	<b>10,100</b>
* Upriver totals are developed by TAC for use in management of U.S. v. OR fisheries. Wild components are included in the stock total. Area-specific estimates for upriver tributaries detailed here are provided by other agencies/entities and may not sum to TAC's upriver abundance estimates.				
** 2019 return is based on standard TAC run reconstruction methodology.				
*** Return to tributary mouth.				
				2/3/2020

## MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

### *U.S. v Oregon Management Agreement*

- The 2018-2027 *U.S. v Oregon* Management Agreement (MA) provides the treaty Indian and non-treaty fishery harvest frameworks and harvest rate schedules for salmon and steelhead stocks destined for areas upstream of Bonneville Dam.
- Fisheries are managed to meet the catch balance provision in the MA for upriver spring Chinook which requires upriver mortalities in non-treaty fisheries to not exceed the total allowable catch available for treaty Indian fisheries.
- The MA includes an abundance-based sliding scale harvest schedule for upriver spring Chinook. Based on the MA and the preseason forecast, ESA impacts for 2020 fisheries occurring prior to the run update are limited to 8.5% with 1.5% for non-treaty fisheries and 7.0% for treaty Indian fisheries.
- The MA also specifies non-treaty fisheries occurring prior to an in-season run size update be managed for a run size that is at least 30% less than the forecasted upriver spring Chinook run size.
- A 30% reduction to the preseason forecast (81,700 adults) equates to a run size of 57,190 fish, which allows for an allowable harvest (kept plus release mortalities) of 4,003 upriver spring Chinook and an ESA limit of 1.5% for non-treaty fisheries prior to a run size update.

### *Endangered Species Act*

- A Biological Opinion (BO) based upon the management actions outlined in the MA was issued by NMFS in 2018.
- Impacts to wild winter steelhead are limited to 2% for all mainstem Columbia River non-treaty fisheries. Impacts to wild LCR summer steelhead are also limited to 2%.
- Compliance with ESA take authorization for fisheries impacting listed lower Columbia River Chinook (spring run) is determined by the ability to perpetuate these stocks individually over time. The specific numeric hatchery escapement goals listed below are used as a metric of compliance.
  - Cowlitz Hatchery: 1,337 adults
  - Kalama Hatchery: 300 adults
  - Lewis Hatchery: 1,380 adults
- The 2020 spring Chinook forecasts for the Cowlitz and Lewis rivers are not sufficient to meet the hatchery escapement goals for those systems.
- From NMFS Guidance letter to the Pacific Fishery Management Council in 2019: “The Cowlitz Salmon Hatchery and Lewis River Salmon Hatchery are being used ... for reintroduction of LCR spring-run Chinook salmon into the upper basins above the existing dams. The hatchery programs are critical to the overall recovery effort. Given the circumstances, maintaining the hatchery brood stocks for the Cowlitz and Lewis River Hatcheries is essential for implementation of specified recovery actions.”

### ***Willamette Spring Chinook Management***

- The Willamette River Fisheries Management Evaluation Plan (FMEP) limits freshwater fishery impacts on wild Willamette River spring Chinook to  $\leq 15\%$ .
- The Willamette River FMEP includes a sliding scale for escapement goals based on abundance of hatchery fish, which determines the allocation of surplus hatchery spring Chinook to recreational and commercial fisheries downstream of Willamette Falls. The escapement goals are also intended to allow for full recreational fisheries in the upper Willamette River.
- Based on FMEP guidance, an expected return of 33,000 hatchery spring Chinook, and the FMEP escapement goal of 23,000 hatchery fish, the harvestable surplus totals 10,000 hatchery fish.

### ***2020 Spring Chinook Management***

- The Washington and Oregon Fish and Wildlife commissions delegated authority to their respective Directors to provide guidance on spring Chinook management for 2020. Allowed ESA impacts to upriver spring Chinook are allocated 75% to recreational fisheries and 25% to commercial fisheries; the commercial allocation is not subject to the *U.S. v OR* run-size buffer provision. This direction, prior guidance on sub-allocations, and the catch balance provisions in the MA, result in the following guidelines:

**Prior to an in-season run update**, allocation of upriver fish (including release mortalities) for non-treaty fisheries will be:

- 2,899 fish for the recreational fishery below Bonneville Dam
  - 387 fish for the recreational fishery from Bonneville Dam to the OR/WA state line
  - 400 fish for recreational fisheries in the Snake River (Washington waters)
  - 11 fish for Wanapum tribe (Upper Columbia)
  - $\leq 306$  fish for Select Area commercial fisheries
- With the expected shortfall of Cowlitz Hatchery and Lewis River spring Chinook, the states are proposing fisheries for areas upstream of the Lewis River where the probability of harvesting Cowlitz and Lewis river spring Chinook is significantly reduced.
  - The approach to 2020 fishery structure is consistent with the ESA management strategies in the Columbia River Basin – fisheries are managed to limit the impacts to ESA-listed fish while providing harvest opportunity for healthy and harvestable stocks.
  - Fisheries are also managed by time and area to reduce the potential for handling ESA-listed species or other stocks of concern.

## **2020 NON-TREATY FISHERIES**

### ***Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Recreational Fisheries***

- The Columbia River downstream of the I-5 Bridge is currently open through March 31 for hatchery salmon and hatchery steelhead under permanent regulations.
- The Columbia River from the I-5 Bridge upstream to McNary Dam is currently open through March 31 for hatchery steelhead under permanent regulations. The Columbia River between

McNary Dam and the Highway 395 Bridge at Pasco, WA is closed to steelhead angling and retention through March 31 under temporary rules.

- Washington spring Chinook stocks typically comprise a small proportion of the lower Columbia catch of spring Chinook; however, considering the current situation regarding the expected returns to the Cowlitz and Lewis rivers, a conservative approach to 2020 spring Chinook fisheries is warranted.
- Spring season fisheries were discussed with the Columbia River Recreational Advisory Group (CRRAG) on February 11, 2020.

<b><i>Recommendations: 2020 Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Recreational Fishery</i></b>	
<b>Downstream of Bonneville Dam</b>	
<b>Season:</b>	Sunday March 1 through Friday April 10 <span style="float: right;">41 retention days</span>
<b>Area:</b>	Warrior Rock line upstream to Beacon Rock (boat and bank) plus bank angling only from Beacon Rock upstream to the Bonneville Dam deadline. Angling for and retention of steelhead, salmon, and shad is prohibited from the Warrior Rock line downstream to Buoy 10.  Legal downstream boundary defined as: A line projected from the Warrior Rock lighthouse on the Oregon shore through red buoy #4 to a marker on the lower end of Bachelor Island (Warrior Rock line).  Legal upstream boat boundary defined as: A deadline marker on the Oregon bank (approximately four miles downstream from Bonneville Dam Powerhouse One) in a straight line through the western tip of Pierce Island to a deadline marker on the Washington bank at Beacon Rock.
<b>Daily Bag Limit:</b>	Two adult hatchery salmonids (Chinook or steelhead) per day, but only one may be a Chinook. Shad may also be retained. All other permanent regulations apply.
<b>Bonneville Dam to Oregon/Washington Border</b>	
<b>Season:</b>	Wednesday April 1 through Tuesday May 5 <span style="float: right;">35 retention days</span>
<b>Area:</b>	Tower Island power lines (approximately 6 miles below The Dalles Dam) upstream to Oregon/Washington border, plus the Oregon and Washington banks between Bonneville Dam and the Tower Island power lines.
<b>Daily Bag Limit:</b>	Two adult hatchery salmonids (Chinook or steelhead) per day, but only one may be a Chinook. All other permanent regulations apply.

- Catch expectations are approximately 2,540 adult Chinook kept (2,220 upriver mortalities) for the fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam (77% of the pre-update guideline for this fishery) and 340 adult Chinook kept (350 mortalities, all upriver stock) for the fishery upstream of Bonneville Dam (90% of the pre-update guideline for this fishery).

- Adding Saturday April 11 to the fishery below Bonneville is projected to add an additional 443 upriver mortalities for a cumulative total of 2,663, or 92% of the pre-update guideline for this fishery.
- The season recommendation for the fishery upstream of Bonneville Dam is based on the available pre-update allocation, estimated catch rates, and input from the Columbia River Recreational Advisor Group (CRRAG). The April 1 start date was used last year and provides continuity with the permanent steelhead season in this area. An alternative season structure with a May 1 start date had some support from by upriver representatives on the CRRAG because modeling indicated it could add some time in May; however, this would result in a month gap between the steelhead season and Chinook retention season.
- Adding Wednesday May 6 to the fishery upstream of Bonneville Dam is expected to add an additional 38 upriver mortalities for a cumulative total of 388, or 100% of the pre-update guideline for this fishery.
- Fishery recommendations were developed to remain within and comply with:
  - ✓ Impact limits for species listed under the ESA.
    - The most constraining stocks for the fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam are Cowlitz and Lewis river hatchery spring Chinook. The recommended season for the fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam will minimize the harvest of Cowlitz and Lewis river spring Chinook and will maximize hatchery broodstock returns.
    - Upriver spring Chinook are also a management concern for both fisheries. Staff estimates the recommended fisheries will accrue 0.37% impacts to upriver spring Chinook.
    - Fishery-specific impact rate expectations for other species and stocks are expected to remain within the estimates provided in the latest Spring/Summer Joint Staff Report in the 2020 Winter, Spring, and Summer Season Expectations section.
  - ✓ Run-size buffer and catch balance provisions are outlined in the MA.
  - ✓ Policy guidance and management objectives are provided by the Commissions.
- Oregon requires the use of barbless hooks when angling for salmon or steelhead in the mainstem Columbia River. Effective March 1, Washington will require the use of barbless hooks from the mouth upstream to the OR/WA state line.
- Although a key management goal is to minimize the need for in-season emergency action, due to the dynamic nature of fisheries and fish runs, none of the seasons recommended guarantee that in-season action will not be necessary in order to remain within ESA limits and/or catch balancing requirements.
- Staff will monitor the fisheries in-season. If they are tracking within preseason expectations, the intent would be to allow the fisheries to run through the proposed end dates. After closure of each fishery, staff will review catches and determine if additional fishing opportunity is warranted.

***Tributary Spring Chinook Fisheries Downstream of Bonneville Dam***

- No changes to permanent regulations are recommended for spring Chinook recreational fisheries in the Sandy, Clackamas, and Willamette rivers.

- Washington tributary seasons are currently open and modifications will be made through emergency rules.
  - WDFW expects to close the Cowlitz and Lewis rivers to Chinook retention beginning March 1.

#### **FUTURE MEETINGS**

- No additional Compact/Joint State hearings are currently scheduled. Staff will continue to review available information and request additional hearings as necessary.