

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT – SPRING FACT SHEET NO. 1
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
May 18, 2021

<i>Fisheries under consideration:</i>	Mainstem recreational salmonid
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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 online. The most recent reports are the 2021 Sturgeon/Smelt Report (January 14, 2021) and the 2021 Spring/Summer salmon, steelhead, and other species report (February 4, 2021) available at: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/columbia-river/reports> or <https://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/OSCRP/CRM/jsmreports.asp>.

RIVER CONDITIONS

- As of May 18, the five-day average outflow at Bonneville Dam is 223 kcfs compared to a five-year average of 363 kcfs. The current five-day average water temperature at Bonneville Dam is 57°F compared to a five-year average of 56°F. The five-day average visibility at Bonneville Dam is 6.8 feet which is greater than the five-year average of 3.5 feet.

STOCK STATUS

- Adult Chinook passage at Bonneville Dam through May 17 totals 54,075 fish, which slightly more than half of the 10-year (2011-20) average cumulative count and 92% of the 5-year (2016-20) average for this date. The recent 10-year average 50% passage date at Bonneville Dam is May 10.
- The *U.S. v. Oregon* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met most recently on Monday, May 17 to review the upriver spring Chinook return and upgraded the forecast to 87,000 adults at the Columbia River mouth. TAC's next scheduled meeting is Monday, May 24. Some information about the Snake River wild component suggests it could be near the 10% *US vs. Oregon* Management Agreement threshold.
- Steelhead passing Bonneville Dam between April 1 and June 30 (including Bonneville Pool harvest during this timeframe) are considered upriver Skamania stock steelhead. Steelhead caught in the lower Columbia through April are counted as winter steelhead and from May 1-June 30 are counted as lower river Skamania stock steelhead. Through May 17 a total of 448 Skamania steelhead have been counted at Bonneville including 209 unclipped fish. This is the lowest count to date since Bonneville Dam construction. The clip rate to date is 47% which is lower than average. The Skamania run is typically about 21% complete on May 17.
- Weekly test fishing in the lower Columbia River using tangle nets occurred primarily on Mondays from March 15 through May 10. All test fishing results are available on the WDFW test fishing webpage ([click here](#)).
- Spring Chinook hatchery returns to the Cowlitz are below expectations to-date, while the Kalama and Lewis are tracking ahead. Approximately 90% of these stocks are expected to have entered their corresponding tributary by mid-May.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

- 2021 forecasts and management guidelines for spring Chinook fisheries were presented in Winter Fact Sheets #3 and #4a.
- OR and WA policies are concurrent on recreational/commercial allocation of ESA impacts to upriver spring Chinook (80%/20%). However, preseason guidance specific to recreational fishery sub-allocations were not concurrent. Under the WA Policy, no more than 70% of the recreational allocation could be allocated to the LCR, and under Oregon rule, no more than 25% could be allocated to recreational fisheries upstream of Bonneville Dam. Therefore, preseason modelling by staff only utilized 95% of the recreational share of upriver spring Chinook impacts.
- Subsequent Director-Director guidance has achieved concurrency regarding recreational sub-allocations, with 70% of the recreational allocation available for the fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam, 12.5% for Bonneville to the OR/WA state line, and 17.5% for the Snake River.
- At the projected upriver run size and updated guidance for ESA impact sharing, allocation of upriver fish (including release mortalities) for non-treaty fisheries is:
 - 4,692 fish for the recreational fishery below Bonneville Dam
 - 838 fish for the recreational fishery from Bonneville Dam to the OR/WA state line
 - 604 fish for recreational fisheries in the Snake River (Washington waters)
 - 26 fish for Wanapum tribe (Upper Columbia)
 - ≤278 fish for Select Area commercial fisheries

2021 NON-TREATY FISHERIES

Mainstem Columbia River Recreational Spring Chinook Fishery

- The recreational spring Chinook fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam was open through April 4 with 2,943 adult spring Chinook kept (329 released) from 43,934 angler trips. Pre-update fisheries accrued 2,045 out of an allowed 2,234 upriver mortalities (92%).
- From Bonneville Dam to the OR/WA border, the spring Chinook fishery was open March 16 through May 5 with 541 adult spring Chinook kept (269 released) from 2,912 angler trips. Pre-update fisheries accrued 568 out of an allowed 399 upriver mortalities (142%).
- The Snake River recreational fishery (downstream of Little Goose Dam only) was open for three days (May 4, 7, and 11) with 233 adults kept and 23 released. Wanapum tribal fisheries began last week with 6 adult fish kept.
- Retention of hatchery steelhead and jack Chinook opened on May 16 from the Tongue Point/Rocky Point line upstream to the I-5 Bridge. Shad angling and retention opened throughout the lower Columbia below Bonneville Dam on May 16 and is open above Bonneville Dam under permanent regulations.

- Recreational spring Chinook catches are summarized in the table below:

Accounting of upriver spring Chinook mortalities in 2021 recreational fisheries							
Fishery	adult Chinook through May 15			current allocation	percent of allocation	balance	
	total kept	upriver kept	upriver morts (k+r)				
downstream of BON	2,943	2,024	2,045	4,692	44%	2,647	
BON - OR/WA border	541	541	568	838	68%	270	
Snake River (WA waters)	233	233	235	604	39%	369	

- Given the balance remaining on the upriver spring Chinook allocation at the current runsize projection, there is potential for additional angling opportunity.

Recommendations: 2021 Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Recreational Fishery		
Downstream of Bonneville Dam		
Season:	Friday May 21 through Sunday May 23, and June 1-15	18 retention days
Area:	Tongue Point/Rocky Point line upstream to the Bonneville Dam deadline (boat and bank), except salmonid angling from a boat is prohibited in the spring salmonid boat-angling area closure adjacent to the Cowlitz River mouth. Spring Salmonid Boat-Angling Area Closure: Defined as the area of the mainstem Columbia River between boundary lines as described and includes all of Carrolls Channel. Downstream boundary – From a point on the Washington shore projected through Dolphin Marker J (near Shipping Terminal 9), southerly across the Columbia River to Columbia Park Boat Ramp in Rainier, Oregon. Upstream boundary – From a point on the Washington shore projected through Cottonwood Island Dike Light “31”, southerly across the Columbia River to a deadline marker on the Oregon shore.	
Daily Bag Limit:	Two adult hatchery salmonids (Chinook or steelhead) per day, but only one may be a Chinook and only one may be a steelhead. All other permanent regulations apply.	
Bonneville Dam to Oregon/Washington Border		
Season:	Saturday May 22, Sunday May 23, Saturday May 29, and Sunday May 30	4 retention days
Area:	Tower Island power lines (approximately six 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.	
Daily Bag Limit:	Two adult hatchery salmonids (Chinook or steelhead) per day, but only one may be a Chinook and only one may be a steelhead. All other permanent regulations apply.	

- The proposed fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam is expected to handle about 3,165 adult Chinook, with 2,374 kept, and would accrue about 2,091 additional upriver mortalities. Projected season total mortalities would be approximately 4,188, or 89% of the allocation for this fishery at the current projected run size.

- The proposed fishery upstream of Bonneville Dam is expected to handle about 308 adult Chinook, with 231 kept, and would accrue about 240 additional upriver mortalities. Projected season total mortalities would be approximately 808, or 96% of the allocation for this fishery at the current projected run size.
- The proposal for the fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam provides both near-term weekend opportunity as well as an early June fishery leading into the summer season. The Columbia River Recreational Advisory Group has previously supported providing fishing opportunity in June to tie into the summer season.
- Given the low passage of Skamania stock steelhead over Bonneville Dam to-date, staff are recommending reducing the daily bag limit to align with regulations beginning June 16.

Recommendation: 2021 Mainstem Columbia River Steelhead Recreational Fisheries

Effective May 21 – June 15:
 The daily steelhead bag limit is one hatchery steelhead from the Tongue Point/Rocky Point line upstream to the I-5 Bridge.

- Since 1999, post-season harvest rate estimates on unclipped lower river Skamania stock steelhead have not exceeded 1.0% of an allowed 2.0% for non-treaty fisheries. Non-treaty harvest rates on unclipped upriver Skamania stock steelhead have also been very low (<0.1%) during this timeframe.

Non-Treaty Commercial Fisheries

- Combined Select Area landings through May 15 total 2,829 Chinook and 248 white sturgeon. Chinook landings are approximately 65% of the recent 5-year average cumulative total for the same timeframe. Select Area fisheries have accrued 233 upriver spring Chinook mortalities through May 16. Based on the current run-size projection, nearly all of the commercial allocation of upriver spring Chinook is expected to be utilized in winter-spring Select Area commercial fisheries.

ESA and Catch Balance

- Catches in all non-treaty fisheries combined are projected to remain within the allowable catch balance (6,090) and allowable ESA impact rate (1.5%) if the Snake River wild component comes in less than 10% of the upriver run.

Expected upriver spring Chinook mortalities in 2021 non-treaty fisheries							
Fishery	total upriver morts (k+r)			Current Allocation	Percent of allocation	Balance	
	thru May 15	Recommendation	Total Expected				
Recreational	Downstream of BON*	2,045	2,091	4,188	4,692	89%	504
	BON - OR/WA border	568	240	808	838	96%	30
	SNAKE RIVER (WA waters)	235	na	604	604	100%	0
Tribal	Wanapum	6	na	26	26	100%	0
<i>subtotal</i>		2,854	2,331	5,626	6,160		534
Commercial	Select Areas	233	na	278	278	100%	0
	Mainstem	0	na	0	0		0
<i>subtotal</i>		233	0	278	278		0
SUM		3,087	2,331	5,904	6,438	92%	534

* Includes non-target release mortalities during steelhead season.

- Impacts to other listed stocks, including steelhead, are expected to remain below ESA take limitations. Pre-season expectations were outlined in the 2021 Spring/Summer Joint Staff Report in the 2021 Winter, Spring, and Summer Season Expectations section.

Recreational White Sturgeon Fishery

- The recreational white sturgeon retention fishery in the Estuary (waters downstream of the Wauna Powerlines) opened May 10 and is currently scheduled to continue on a Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday rotation through June 5 (12 retention days) with a catch guideline up to 2,960 legal-sized white sturgeon.
- The recreational white sturgeon retention fishery in the above Wauna Powerlines is scheduled to be open on September 11 and 18 (Saturdays) with a catch guideline up to 1,230 legal-sized white sturgeon.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- No additional Compact/Joint State hearings are currently scheduled. The Joint Staff will monitor fisheries and recommend additional hearings as necessary.