

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT – SPRING FACT SHEET NO. 2
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
May 25, 2021

<i>Fisheries under consideration:</i>	Mainstem recreational salmonid
--	--------------------------------

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 25, the five-day average outflow at Bonneville Dam is 209 kcfs compared to a five-year average of 354 kcfs. The current five-day average water temperature at Bonneville Dam is 57.0°F compared to a five-year average of 56.6°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 24 totals 60,237 fish, which is 53% of the 10-year (2011-20) average cumulative count and 82% 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 24 to review the upriver spring Chinook return and maintained the forecast of 87,000 adults at the Columbia River mouth. TAC's next scheduled meeting is Tuesday, June 1. 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 24 a total of 464 Skamania steelhead have been counted at Bonneville including 217 unclipped fish. This is the lowest count to date since Bonneville Dam construction. The clip rate to date is 53% which is lower than average. The Skamania run is typically about 25% complete on May 24.
- 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 River are below expectations to-date, while returns to the Kalama and Lewis are tracking ahead. Approximately 93% of these stocks are expected to have entered their corresponding tributary by late-May.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

- 2021 forecasts and management guidelines for spring Chinook fisheries were presented in Winter Fact Sheets #3 and #4a, and Spring Fact Sheet #1.
- 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 initially open through April 4 and with 2,943 adult spring Chinook kept (329 released) from 43,934 angler trips. The fishery reopened May 21-23 with an additional 472 adult spring Chinook kept (177 released) which was 94% of the expected handle. To date, the below Bonneville area has accrued 2,502 out of an allowed 4,692 upriver mortalities (53%).
- From Bonneville Dam to the OR/WA border, the spring Chinook fishery was open March 16 through May 5 with 532 adult spring Chinook kept (253 released) from 2,745 angler trips. The fishery reopened May 22-23 and is scheduled to be open again this coming weekend (May 29-30). Catches this past weekend were about 2/3rds of expectations with 74 adult spring Chinook kept (39 released) from 712 angler trips. To date, this fishery has accrued 635 out of an allowed 838 upriver mortalities (76%). No steelhead were handled in the fishery during the past weekend.
- 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. This fishery is scheduled to reopen May 25 and May 28 with a catch expectation of 155 adults kept and 15 released.
- Wanapum tribal fisheries in the upper Columbia have kept a total of seven adult fish.
- Retention of hatchery steelhead and jack Chinook opened on May 16 from the Tongue Point/Rocky Point line upstream to the I-5 Bridge under permanent regulations. Given the low passage of upriver Skamania stock steelhead at Bonneville Dam, the steelhead daily bag limit was reduced from two to one effective May 21 to align with summer-season regulations beginning June 16. Since May 16, an estimated 19 steelhead have been retained (three released) in recreational fisheries downstream of Bonneville Dam from 6,021 angler trips (including the open Chinook-retention days).
- Shad angling and retention opened in the lower Columbia below Bonneville Dam on May 16 and is open upstream of 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 23		current upriver allocation	percent of allocation	balance
	total kept	upriver morts (k+r)			
downstream of BON	3,415	2,502	4,692	53%	2,190
BON - OR/WA border	606	635	838	76%	203
Snake River (WA waters)	233	235	604	39%	369

- Given the balance remaining on the upriver spring Chinook allocations 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:	Saturday May 29 1 retention day
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 June 5 through Sunday June 6 2 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 216 adult Chinook, with 169 kept, and would accrue about 147 additional upriver mortalities. Projected season total upriver mortalities would be approximately 4,252 fish, or 91% of the allocation for this fishery at the current projected run size.
- Staff considered alternatives to the below Bonneville fishery proposal that would merge additional adult Chinook opportunity with the previously adopted June 1-15 season but were limited by the

effort flight schedule and staff availability on Sunday and Monday. The proposed Saturday-only fishery will unfortunately result in inconsistent regulations for adult Chinook in the near-term.

- The proposed two-day season extension for the fishery from Bonneville to OR/WA border is expected to accrue 78 additional upriver mortalities. Projected season total mortalities are projected to be 792, or 95% of the allocation for this fishery at the current projected run size.

Non-Treaty Commercial Fisheries

- Combined Select Area landings through week 21 total 3,267 Chinook and 269 white sturgeon. Chinook landings are approximately 67% of the recent 5-year average cumulative total for the same timeframe. Select Area fisheries have accrued 257 upriver spring Chinook mortalities through May 21. 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 completed, on-going, proposed, and planned 2021 non-treaty fisheries							
Fishery		total upriver morts (k+r)			Current Allocation	Percent of allocation	Projected Balance
		thru May 23	Recommendation	Total Expected			
Recreational	Downstream of BON	2,502	147	4,252	4,692	91%	440
	BON - OR/WA border	635	78	792	838	95%	46
	Snake River (WA waters)	235	na	604	604	100%	0
Tribal	Wanapum	7	na	26	26	99%	0
<i>subtotal</i>		3,379	225	5,674	6,160		486
Commercial	Select Areas	257	na	278	278	100%	0
	Mainstem	0	na	0	0		0
<i>subtotal</i>		257	0	278	278		0
SUM		3,636	225	5,952	6,438	92%	486

- 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. Through May 22, 2021 in the Columbia River estuary, sturgeon anglers made 6,867 trips and kept 414 white sturgeon, or about 14% of the guideline. Anglers have also released about 828 sublegal and 818 over-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.
- A white sturgeon retention fishery is scheduled for June 12 and June 19 (Saturdays) in the lower Willamette River (including Multnomah Channel and Scappoose Bay).

FUTURE MEETINGS

- A Compact Hearing is tentatively scheduled for 10:30 AM June 8 to consider summer-season Treaty commercial fisheries. The Joint Staff will monitor fisheries and recommend additional hearings as necessary.