

**OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT – SPRING FACT SHEET NO. 4
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
June 10, 2021**

<i>Fisheries under consideration:</i>	Mainstem recreational salmonid Estuary recreational white sturgeon
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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 June 10, the five-day average outflow at Bonneville Dam is 276 kcfs compared to a five-year average of 322 kcfs. The current five-day average water temperature at Bonneville Dam of 60.2°F is the same as the five-year average. The five-day average visibility at Bonneville Dam of 5.6 feet is greater than the five-year average of 3.8 feet.

STOCK STATUS

- Adult Chinook passage at Bonneville Dam through June 9 totals 77,493 fish, which is 55% of the 10-year (2011-20) average cumulative count and 80% 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, June 7 to review the upriver spring Chinook return and maintained the current in-season forecast of 91,800 adults at the Columbia River mouth. Some information about the Snake River wild component suggests it could be near the 10% *U.S. 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 June 9, a total of 612 Skamania steelhead have been counted at Bonneville including 294 unclipped fish. This is the lowest count to date since Bonneville Dam construction. The clip rate to date is 52% which is lower than average. The Skamania run is typically about 38% complete on June 9.
- 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 have recently improved and are now expected to meet broodstock collection goals, while returns to the Kalama and Lewis continue to track ahead of preseason expectations. Approximately 98% of these stocks are expected to have entered their corresponding tributary by early June.

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:
 - 4,951 fish for the recreational fishery below Bonneville Dam
 - 884 fish for the recreational fishery from Bonneville Dam to the OR/WA state line
 - 637 fish for recreational fisheries in the Snake River (Washington waters)
 - 28 fish for Wanapum tribe (Upper Columbia)
 - ≤294 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 with 2,943 adult spring Chinook kept (329 released) from 43,934 angler trips. The fishery reopened May 21-23, May 29, and again June 1 through June 15 (end of spring management period). So far, catch during these reopeners has been less than expected. Through June 6, an estimated 3,963 Chinook have been kept (839 released) from 56,234 angler trips. The below Bonneville area has accrued 2,677 out of an allowed 4,951 upriver mortalities (54%) pending the results of CWT recoveries.
- 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 approximately 2,700 angler trips. The fishery reopened May 22-23, May 29-30, and June 5-6. Catches during the season extensions were less than expected. To date, this fishery has kept an estimated 666 adult Chinook (310 released) from about 4,000 angler trips. Upriver mortalities are estimated at 697 out of 884 allowed (79%). No steelhead have been handled in the fishery this spring season.
- The Snake River recreational fishery (downstream of Little Goose Dam only) was open for seven days (May 4, 7, 11, 25, 28 and June 4, 6) with 443 adults kept and 123 released. Given the recent observed decreased mark rate of 40%, this fishery is not expected to reopen this year.
- Wanapum tribal fisheries in the upper Columbia have kept a total of 11 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 80 steelhead have been retained (32 released) in recreational fisheries downstream of Bonneville Dam from 12,300 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 June 6		current upriver allocation	percent of allocation	balance
	total kept	upriver morts (k+r)			
downstream of BON	3,963	2,677	4,951	54%	2,273
BON - OR/WA border	666	697	884	79%	187
Snake River (WA waters)	443	455	637	71%	182

- Given the balance remaining on the upriver spring Chinook allocations at the current runsize projection, there is potential for additional recreational opportunity in the fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam and in the Bonneville to OR/WA border fishery.

<i>Recommendations: 2021 Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Recreational Fishery</i>	
Downstream of Bonneville Dam	
Effective Saturday June 12 through Tuesday June 15, the daily adult salmonid bag limit may include up two hatchery Chinook. All previously adopted regulations remain in effect.	
Bonneville Dam to Oregon/Washington Border	
Season:	Saturday June 12 through Tuesday June 15 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 steelhead.
Limit:	All other permanent regulations apply.

- The increased daily bag limit for adult Chinook, combined with the previously adopted rule limiting hatchery steelhead retention to one fish per day (within the daily bag), will align the daily adult bag limit for the remainder of the spring management period with bag limit regulations previously adopted for the summer season (June 16 start).
- The proposed season extension for the fishery from Bonneville to OR/WA border is expected to accrue about 80 additional upriver mortalities. Projected season total mortalities are projected to be 777, or 88% of the allocation for this fishery at the current projected run size.

ESA and Catch Balance

- Catches in all non-treaty fisheries combined are projected to remain within the allowable catch balance (6,426) 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								
		total upriver morts (k+r)						
	Fishery	thru June 6	Recommendation	Total Expected	Current Allocation	Percent of allocation	Projected Balance	
Recreational	Downstream of BON	2,677	50	3,227	4,951	65%	1,723	
	BON - OR/WA border	697	80	777	884	88%	107	
	Snake River (WA waters)	455	na	455	637	71%	182	
Tribal	Wanapum	11	na	26	28	94%	2	
<i>subtotal</i>		<i>3,840</i>	<i>130</i>	<i>4,485</i>	<i>6,499</i>		<i>2,014</i>	
Commercial	Select Areas	348	na	355	294	121%	-61	
	Mainstem	0	na	0	0		0	
<i>subtotal</i>		<i>348</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>355</i>	<i>294</i>		<i>-61</i>	
SUM		4,188	130	4,840	6,793	71%	1,953	

- 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 Fisheries

- Abundance estimates and harvest guidelines for 2021 white sturgeon fisheries were presented in Winter Fact Sheet #6.

Below Wauna Powerlines (Estuary)

- The recreational white sturgeon retention fishery in the Columbia River Estuary (waters downstream of the Wauna Powerlines) was open May 10 through June 5 (12 days) on a Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday rotation with a catch guideline of up to 2,960 legal-sized white sturgeon.
- The preliminary 2021 harvest estimate for this fishery is 2,160 kept from approximately 16,350 angler trips. The kept catch represents 73% of the 2,960 fish harvest guideline for this fishery. Anglers have also released an estimated 3,016 sublegal and 5,008 over-legal sized white sturgeon.
- Effort throughout the fishery has averaged about 70% of expectations while the average catch rate has been slightly above expectations.
- Based on a balance of 800 fish remaining on the harvest guideline, additional retention opportunity exists for this fishery.

<i>Recommendation - 2021 Sturgeon Recreational Fishery for Below Wauna Powerlines</i>		
Season:	Saturday, June 12	1 day
Area:	Mainstem Columbia River from the Wauna powerlines downstream to the mouth at Buoy 10, including Youngs Bay, and all adjacent Washington tributaries	
Allowable Catch:	Up to 800 white sturgeon Legal size: 44-inch minimum and 50-inch maximum fork length (Fork length is measured in a straight line from the tip of the nose to the fork in the caudal fin (tail) with the fish laying on its side on a flat surface, with the tape measure/ruler positioned flat <u>under</u> the fish) Daily bag limit: One fish Annual bag limit: Two fish Retention of green sturgeon is prohibited	
Additional Regulations:	On days open to white sturgeon retention, angling for sturgeon is prohibited after 2 PM, including catch and release.	

- Saturday, June 12th provides a second weekend day in June for anglers and presents the best opportunity for staff to monitor this fishery. We have a flight scheduled to count effort and samplers available to creel on this date. Sampler coverage becomes reduced during weekday fisheries due to conflicts with other monitoring programs.
- Although recent data for a mid-June retention fishery is limited, the expected kept catch for the proposed one-day season extension considering actual results to date is about 500 fish, with the potential of up to 600 fish harvested. Season total harvest would be approximately 2,660, or 90% of the harvest guideline. Based on the catch projection, no additional retention opportunity would be expected for the 2021 estuary fishery.
- Due to the lower Willamette fishery opening on the same date (June 12), actual effort and catch in the estuary fishery may be reduced.
- June 5-6 was an Oregon Free Fishing Weekend and June 12-13 is a Washington Free Fishing Weekend. Washington does require catch-record-cards to be filled out during a Free Fishing day, therefore we expect no additional complications associated proposed date.

Above Wauna Powerlines and Lower Willamette River

- 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

- No additional Compact/Joint State hearings are currently scheduled. A Compact Hearing may be needed the week of June 21 to consider additional treaty commercial fisheries. The Joint Staff will monitor fisheries and recommend additional hearings as necessary.