

COLUMBIA RIVER INTER-TRIBAL FISH COMMISSION
JOINT STAFF REPORT - WINTER FACT SHEET NO. 7
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
March 10, 2022

<i>Fisheries under consideration:</i>	Zone 6 treaty commercial fisheries
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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 report is the 2022 Spring Chinook, Summer, Chinook, Sockeye, Steelhead and Other Species Report (February 2, 2022) available at:

<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/columbia-river/reports> and <https://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/OSCRP/CRM/jsmreports.asp>

RIVER CONDITIONS

- The recent five-day average river temperature at the John Day Dam tailrace is 39.0 degrees which is the same as the recent five-year average for this time period.
- The recent five-day average outflow at the John Day Dam is approximately 166 Kcfs, which is not unusual for this time of year and is similar to last week.

STOCK STATUS

White Sturgeon -- Zone 6 (Bonneville Dam to McNary Dam)

- Sturgeon Stock Assessment information has been presented in Winter Fact Sheets 1, 2 and 3.

Steelhead and Salmon

- Through March 7, a total of 2,047 including 903 unclipped winter steelhead have been counted at Bonneville Dam (44.1% unclipped). The total count is the fifth highest to date in the last 10 years and the unclipped count is the third highest to date in the last 10 years. There are no dam counts available this time of year for The Dalles, John Day, or McNary Dams. TAC does not forecast winter steelhead at Bonneville Dam although the river mouth forecast for winter steelhead is 13,400.
- Chinook counts at Bonneville Dam in January include one fish passing downstream and one upstream. These fish may have actually been fall chinook.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Zone 6 Sturgeon

- The treaty commercial guidelines are shown in the harvest table below.
- There is no harvest guideline for the treaty subsistence catch of sturgeon, but these catches are accounted for and used in population assessments. Subsistence harvest typically occurs in

association with fisheries targeting other species and is generally low. The 2021 subsistence harvest estimate was 233 fish for all three Zone 6 reservoirs combined.

Steelhead and Salmon

- Steelhead caught upstream of The Dalles Dam from November 1-June 30 are counted as part of the A/B-Index summer steelhead return. There are no specific harvest limits for steelhead in winter season fisheries, but the steelhead catch is low averaging 51 fish annually in The Dalles and John Day Pools combined since 2008 with no recorded catch during the winter gillnet fishery in the past nine years, although there has been some harvest in spring fisheries. The highest observed catch since 2001 was 306 in 2008. Because of generally low steelhead harvest in the winter gillnet fishery, no specific management actions regarding steelhead are expected. There are no dam counts available this time of year for The Dalles, John Day, or McNary Dams.
- Steelhead caught in the Bonneville Pool from November 1 through March 31 are counted as winter steelhead. There is no specific harvest limit for winter steelhead, but harvest is generally low. Winter steelhead harvest has averaged 104 fish per year since 2001 and was 40 fish in 2021. Because harvest is generally low, no specific management actions regarding steelhead are expected to be needed.
- Chinook are not expected to be present during the winter gillnet fishery.

2022 TREATY INDIAN WINTER FISHERIES

- A setline fishery occurs each January in all three Zone 6 Pools under permanent regulations through January 31. This fishery generally has low effort and catch. The setline catches were below average in the Bonneville and John Day Pools, and near average in The Dalles Pool. Gillnet fisheries were set in The Dalles Pool from February 1 through February 5, February 10 through 12, and February 16 through 18. A gillnet fishery was set in the John Day Pool from February 1 through February 28. A gillnet fishery was also set in the Bonneville Pool from March 2 through March 4. Preliminary catch estimates through March 4 are shown in the table below. These include both ticketed landings and direct to public sales. The Bonneville Pool and The Dalles Pool are currently closed except for ceremonial and subsistence fishing.

	January Setline	Winter Gillnet	Total	Guideline	Remaining	% of guideline
Bonneville	12	812	824	675	-149	122%
The Dalles	96	681	777	560	-217	139%
John Day	0	82	82	210	128	39%
Total	108	1,575	1,683			

- Currently both the Bonneville and The Dalles Pool commercial fisheries are closed and will remain closed. C&S use of any incidental sturgeon caught remains allowed, but this catch is normally very low.

- One steelhead has been reported caught in the winter gillnet fishery to date in the Bonneville Pool.

The four Columbia River treaty tribes will adopt regulations consistent with the following:

<i>2022 Treaty Indian Winter Season Commercial Gillnet Fishery – John Day Pool</i>	
Season:	6 AM Saturday March 12 to 6 PM Wednesday March 16 (4.5 days)
Area:	The John Day Pool only
Gear:	Gillnets with no minimum mesh size restriction
Sanctuaries:	Closed areas include standard closed dam and river mouth areas applicable to gillnet gear
Allowable Sales:	Salmon (any species), steelhead, shad, yellow perch, bass, walleye, catfish, and carp may be sold or retained for subsistence. Sturgeon from 43 to 54 inches fork length in The John Day Pool may be sold or kept for subsistence purposes. Fish landed during the open periods are allowed to be sold after the period concludes.
Additional:	24-hour quick reporting required for Washington buyers, pursuant to WAC 220-352-315 except that landings must be reported within 24-hours of completing the fish ticket.

- No action regarding the platform and hook and line fishery is needed at this time.
- The intent of the platform fishery regulation is to allow any sturgeon caught incidentally with platform or hook and line gear to be sold if they are caught in a Pool with an open commercial gillnet fishery and to allow the sale of any steelhead that may be caught.
- Previous weekly catch rates for the John Day Pool ranged from 1.7 to 4.3 fish per day per statistical week. This next opening has assumed a daily catch rate of 20.7 based on an average of the higher past catch rates observed late in previous years’ fisheries. These rates are dramatically higher than what we have observed to date. At the end of the proposed fisheries, the expected sturgeon catch in the John Day Pool fishery is 175 fish. The expected catch of steelhead is zero.
- Catch will be monitored to ensure the tribal fisheries remain within management limits. The tribes may set additional fishing time after this period or may extend this period if appropriate. The tribes will take action to close fisheries early if harvest limits are projected to be met early.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- No additional Compact Hearings are anticipated for treaty fisheries at this time.
- A Joint State Hearing is scheduled for 2 PM March 30, 2022 to consider the Estuary recreational white sturgeon fishery.
- The Joint Staff will monitor fisheries and recommend additional hearings as needed.