

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT - SPRING FISHERY UPDATE #1
April 17, 2023

RIVER CONDITIONS

- As of April 17, the recent five-day average outflow at Bonneville Dam is 163 kcfs compared to the five-year average of 186 kcfs. The current five-day average water temperature at Bonneville Dam is 46°F compared to the five-year average temperature of 48°F. The five-day average visibility at Bonneville Dam is 5.6 feet which is greater than the five-year average of 4.6 feet.

STOCK STATUS

- Adult Chinook passage at Bonneville Dam through April 16 totals 830 adult fish, compared to the recent 10-year average of 3,680 fish and the recent five-year average cumulative adult count of 862 fish (range 250–1,956). It is still very early in the return; the 10-year average proportion complete at Bonneville Dam is approximately 2.2% by April 16.
- Weekly test fishing in the lower Columbia River using tangle nets began on March 13 this year, with five weeks completed to date. Weekly catch rates have been 0.0, 0.1, 0.2, 0.9 and 1.8 Chinook per drift, which are consistently lower when compared to the same timeframe in 2022 but are steadily increasing. All test fishing results are available on the WDFW test fishing webpage ([click here](#)).

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

- Detailed information on stock status and management guidelines for Columbia River fisheries are presented in Joint Staff Reports, which are produced annually and available at the ODFW and WDFW websites. The most recent report is the 2022 Spring Chinook, Summer Chinook, Sockeye, Steelhead and Other Species Report (February 2, 2023).
- Forecasts and management guidelines for 2023 spring Chinook fisheries were presented in Winter Fact Sheets #5 and #6a.

2023 NON-TREATY FISHERIES

Columbia River Recreational Spring Chinook Fishery – Downstream of Bonneville Dam

- The lower Columbia River (LCR) mainstem recreational spring Chinook fishery was open under temporary regulations from March 1 – April 11 between Buoy 10 and Bonneville Dam.
- Water conditions were favorable (low and clear) throughout the season but colder than average.
- The preliminary kept catch through April 11 is estimated to be about 2,910 adult spring Chinook from approximately 42,900 angler trips.
- Total mortalities of upriver-origin spring Chinook in the fishery through April 11 are estimated to be 1,715 adult Chinook, or 26% of the 6,487 available to this fishery prior to a run-size update.

- During the Compact/Joint State Hearing on April 4, 2023, the states extended the LCR recreational fishery for four additional days past the original closure date of April 8 to allow for additional opportunity before catches became too volatile in mid to late April. With the current low passage at Bonneville and potential for very high catch rates, fishery managers are not prepared to consider additional fishing time until we get closer to the run size update. The run size update is provided by *U.S. v. Oregon* Technical Advisory Committee and typically occurs in mid-May, when substantial numbers of upriver spring Chinook have crossed Bonneville Dam. The Joint State Staff will continue to evaluate the return and make recommendations for additional angling opportunity when more Chinook have passed Bonneville Dam and catch volatility has decreased.

Columbia River Spring Chinook Recreational Fishery – Bonneville Dam to OR/WA Border

- The recreational spring Chinook fishery is currently open under temporary regulations through May 6 in the mainstem Columbia River from Bonneville Dam upstream to the OR/WA border (upstream of McNary Dam). The pre-run-update guideline for this fishery is 927 upriver Chinook mortalities.
- Through April 16, no catch has been observed from approximately 200 angler trips in the recreational fishery above Bonneville Dam.
- ***Select Area Commercial Fisheries***
- Select Area winter season commercial fisheries concluded April 14 with restricted times and area openings. Spring season fisheries are scheduled to open April 17.
- Winter-season landings through April 14 total 1,168 spring Chinook (163% of the recent five-year to-date average).
- Through April 14, 44% of the landed spring Chinook have been sampled for visual stock identification with 97% being classified as lower-river origin. After application of the CWT-based correction, an estimated 33 upriver spring Chinook have been landed through April 14 (5% of the Select Area commercial allocation).

FUTURE MEETINGS

- No Compact or Joint State hearings are scheduled at this time. The Joint State Staff will continue to monitor fish runs and ongoing fisheries and recommend additional hearings as needed.