

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT – SPRING FACT SHEET NO. 1
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
May 17, 2023

<i>Fisheries under consideration:</i>	Mainstem recreational spring Chinook
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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 report is the 2023 Spring Chinook, Summer Chinook, Sockeye, Steelhead and Other Species Report (February 2, 2023) 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

- As of May 17, the five-day average outflow at Bonneville Dam is 353 kcfs compared to the five-year average of 318 kcfs. The current five-day average water temperature at Bonneville Dam is 55°F, which is the same as the five-year average. The five-day average visibility at Bonneville Dam is 3.0 feet compared to the five-year average of 4.4 feet.

STOCK STATUS

- Adult Chinook passage at Bonneville Dam through May 16 totals 83,598 fish, which is 96% of the 10-year (2013-22) average cumulative count and 136% of the 5-year (2018-22) average for this date. The recent 10-year average 50% passage date at Bonneville Dam is May 11.
- The *U.S. v. Oregon* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met most recently on Monday, May 15 to review the upriver spring Chinook return and provided a minimum return expectation of 139,000 adults at the Columbia River mouth compared to the pre-season forecast of 198,600 adults. Passage of this year’s upriver spring Chinook run at Bonneville Dam appears to be late-timed, and projections from various forecast models have been dynamic. TAC’s next scheduled meeting is Monday, May 22.
- 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 16 a total of 497 Skamania steelhead have been counted at Bonneville Dam, which is 43% of the 10-year average cumulative count to this date. On average, the upriver Skamania run is 20% complete on May 16.
- Weekly test fishing in the lower Columbia River using tangle nets is scheduled to occur on Mondays from mid-March through May. Chinook catch per drift peaked during the week of April 24 and has declined since then, although recent results have been affected by river conditions. All test fishing results are available on the WDFW test fishing webpage ([click here](#)).

- The 2023 forecasts for the Cowlitz, Kalama, Lewis, and Sandy (CKLS) rivers are sufficient to meet escapement goals. It is too early to update spring Chinook hatchery returns to the CKLS rivers.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

- Forecasts and management guidelines for 2023 spring Chinook fisheries were presented in Winter Fact Sheets #5 and #6a.
- At TAC’s projected minimum upriver spring Chinook run size, and commission guidance for ESA impact sharing, allocation of upriver fish (including release mortalities) for non-treaty fisheries is:
 - 1,030 unallocated non-treaty
 - 6,660 fish for the recreational fishery below Bonneville Dam
 - 951 fish for the recreational fishery from Bonneville Dam to the OR/WA state line
 - 686 fish for recreational fisheries in the Snake River (Washington waters)
 - 38 fish for Wanapum tribe (Upper Columbia)
 - 476 unallocated recreational
 - ≤445 fish for Select Area commercial fisheries

2023 NON-TREATY FISHERIES

Mainstem Columbia River Recreational Spring Chinook Fishery

- The recreational spring Chinook fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam was open through April 11 with 2,866 adult spring Chinook kept (440 released) and 132 winter steelhead kept (151 released) from 43,757 angler trips.
- From Bonneville Dam to the OR/WA border, the spring Chinook fishery was open April 1 through May 6 with 557 adult spring Chinook kept (110 released) from 5,308 angler trips.
- The Snake River recreational fishery (Washington waters) opened May 2 on a two days per week and per location (Little Goose and Ice Harbor areas) approach with 153 adults kept and 28 released from 8,206 angler hours through May 12, when the fishery closed. WDFW will consider more recreational opportunity in the Snake River later in the season.
- Wanapum Band (tribal) fisheries opened May 8 and are expected to fish through June 9. No fish have been harvested.
- Recreational spring Chinook catches are summarized in the table below:

Accounting of upriver spring Chinook mortalities in 2023 recreational fisheries						
Fishery	Total Kept	adult Chinook through May 8		Current Allocation	Percent of Allocation	Balance
		Upriver Kept	Upriver Mortalities (k+r)			
downstream of BON	2,866	1,752	1,780	6,660	27%	4,880
BON - OR/WA border	557	557	568	951	60%	383
Snake River (WA waters)	153	153	156	686	23%	530

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

Recommendations: 2023 Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Recreational Fishery		
Downstream of Bonneville Dam		
Season:	Saturday May 20 through Wednesday May 24	5 days
Area:	Tongue Point/Rocky Point line upstream to Beacon Rock (boat and bank) plus bank angling only from Beacon Rock upstream to the Bonneville Dam deadline. Legal upstream boat boundary defined as: A deadline marker on the Oregon bank (approximately four miles downstream from Bonneville Dam Powerhouse One) in a straight line through the western tip of Pierce Island to a deadline marker on the Washington bank at Beacon Rock.	
Daily Bag Limit:	Two adult hatchery salmonids (Chinook or steelhead) per day, but only one may be a Chinook.	
	All other permanent regulations apply.	
Bonneville Dam to Oregon/Washington Border		
Season:	Saturday May 20 through Wednesday May 24	5 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.	
	All other permanent regulations apply.	

- This fishery proposal downstream of Bonneville Dam is expected to handle about 1,900 adult Chinook, including 1,520 kept, and would accrue 1,170 additional upriver mortalities. Projected season total upriver mortalities would be 2,950 or 44% of the current allocation for this fishery.
- This fishery proposal upstream of Bonneville Dam is expected to handle about 250 adult Chinook, including 188 kept, and would accrue 194 additional upriver mortalities. Projected season total upriver mortalities would be 762 or 80% of the current allocation for this fishery.
- Due to uncertainties surrounding both the abundance of upriver spring Chinook and fishery performance, staff is recommending some opportunity now while fish abundance is still high with the possibility to add more opportunity as information becomes available next week.

Non-Treaty Commercial Fisheries

- Combined Select Area landings through May 14 total 9,528 spring Chinook. Chinook landings are approximately four times greater than the recent 5-year average cumulative total for the same timeframe. Select Area fisheries have accrued an estimated 327 upriver spring Chinook mortalities through May 14.

Catch Balance and ESA

- Catches in all non-treaty fisheries combined are projected to remain within the allowable *U.S. vs. OR* catch balance sharing and ESA impact rate (0.81% as compared to the allowed 1.6%) of the upriver spring Chinook run.

Expected upriver spring Chinook mortalities in 2023 non-treaty fisheries.								
Sector	Fishery	Upriver Mortalities (k+r)			Current Allocation	Percent of Allocation	Projected Balance	Projected ESA Impact**
		through May 14	Recommendation	Total Expected				
Recreational	Downstream of BON*	1,780	1,170	2,950	6,660	44%	3,710	0.25%
	BON - OR/WA border	568	194	762	951	80%	189	0.07%
	Snake River (WA waters)	156	na	686	686	100%	0	0.17%
Tribal	Wanapum Band (Upper Columbia)	0	na	38	38	100%	0	0.17%
<i>subtotal</i>		2,504		4,436	8,335	53%	3,899	0.49%
Commercial	Select Areas	327	na	445	445	100%	0	0.32%
	Mainstem	0	na	0	0		0	0.00%
<i>subtotal</i>		327		445	445	100%	0	0.32%
NT unallocated				1,030				
Sport unallocated				476				
Total unallocated				1,506				
TOTAL		2,831		4,881	8,780	56%	3,899	0.81%

* Includes non-target release mortalities during steelhead season.
 ** Includes 10% unallocated balance between OR/WA Commission guidance (non-concurrence) and 5% unallocated sport.

- Impacts to other listed stocks, including steelhead, are expected to remain below ESA-impact limitations. Pre-season expectations were outlined in the 2023 Spring/Summer Joint Staff Report in the 2023 Winter, Spring, and Summer Season Expectations section.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- The Joint Staff request a hearing to be scheduled for 1 PM May 24, 2023 to consider additional non-treaty spring Chinook fisheries.