

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT – SPRING FACT SHEET NO. 2
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
May 24, 2023

<i>Fisheries under consideration:</i>	Mainstem recreational spring Chinook downstream of Bonneville Dam
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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 24, the five-day average outflow at Bonneville Dam is 424 kcfs compared to the five-year average of 330 kcfs. The current five-day average water temperature at Bonneville Dam is 57°F, compared to the five-year average of 56°F. The five-day average visibility at Bonneville Dam is 2.8 feet compared to the five-year average of 4.1 feet.

STOCK STATUS

- Adult Chinook passage at Bonneville Dam through May 23 totals 99,585 fish, which is 100% of the 10-year (2013-22) average cumulative count and 137% 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 22 to review the upriver spring Chinook return and provided an in-season run-size update of 153,000 adults at the Columbia River mouth compared to the pre-season forecast of 198,600 adults. TAC’s next scheduled meeting is Tuesday, May 30.
- 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 23 a total of 543 Skamania steelhead have been counted at Bonneville Dam, which is 39% of the 10-year average cumulative count to this date. On average, the upriver Skamania run is 21% complete on May 23.
- Weekly test fishing in the lower Columbia River using tangle nets is scheduled to occur primarily on Mondays from mid-March through May. Chinook catch per drift peaked during the week of April 24, declined, and has recently stabilized, 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 estimate spring Chinook hatchery returns to the CKLS rivers but at this time the Cowlitz, Kalama, and Lewis rivers appear to be on track to meet or exceed escapement goals.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

- Forecasts and management guidelines for 2023 spring Chinook fisheries were presented in Winter Fact Sheets #5 and #6a.
- At TAC’s projected upriver spring Chinook run size, and commission guidance for ESA impact sharing, allocation of upriver fish (including release mortalities) for non-treaty fisheries is:
 - 1,133 unallocated non-treaty
 - 7,331 fish for the recreational fishery below Bonneville Dam
 - 1,047 fish for the recreational fishery from Bonneville Dam to the OR/WA state line
 - 755 fish for recreational fisheries in the Snake River (Washington waters)
 - 42 fish for Wanapum tribe (Upper Columbia)
 - 524 unallocated recreational
 - ≤490 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 initially open through April 11 and was re-opened on May 19. This fishery is scheduled to close after May 24. Catches through May 21 total 3,345 adult spring Chinook kept (601 released), 162 steelhead kept (161 released), and zero sockeye released from about 49,200 angler trips.
- From Bonneville Dam to the OR/WA border, the spring Chinook fishery was initially open April 1 through May 6 and was re-opened on May 19. This fishery is also scheduled to close after May 24. Catches through May 21 total 806 adult spring Chinook kept (305 released) from about 6,500 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) rotation with 153 adults kept and 28 released from 8,206 angler hours through May 12. WDFW closed the fishery from May 13 through May 22. The has fishery reopened May 23 through May 26 with the same schedule.
- Wanapum Band (tribal) fisheries opened May 8 and are expected to fish through June 9. No fish have been harvested.
- Recreational spring Chinook catches as of May 21 are summarized in the table below:

Accounting of upriver spring Chinook adult mortalities in 2023 recreational fisheries									
Fishery	Actual through May 21			Projected through May 24					
	Total Kept	Upriver Kept	Upriver Mortalities (k+r)	Total Kept	Upriver Kept	Upriver Mortalities (k+r)	Current Allocation	Percent of Allocation	Balance
downstream of BON	3,345	2,043	2,077	3,750	2,347	2,391	7,331	33%	4,940
BON - OR/WA border	806	806	836	963	963	999	1,047	95%	48
Snake River (WA waters)	153	153	156	na	na	na	755	21%*	599*

* Snake River percent of allocation and balance are through May 21, current projections are unavailable at this time.

- Given the balance remaining on the upriver spring Chinook allocation at the current run size projection, there is potential for additional angling opportunity downstream of Bonneville Dam.
- Staff projects that the recreational fishery upstream of Bonneville Dam will reach 95% of its catch guideline as of May 24, which does not leave a sufficient balance for additional opportunity at this time.

<i>Recommendations: 2023 Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Recreational Fishery</i>		
Downstream of Bonneville Dam		
Season:	Thursday May 25 through Sunday June 4	11 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	Two adult hatchery salmonids (Chinook or steelhead) per day, but only one may be a Chinook.	
Limit:	All previously adopted regulations, including permanent regulations, remain in effect.	

- This fishery proposal downstream of Bonneville Dam is expected to handle about 2,800 adult Chinook, including 2,115 kept, and would accrue 1,639 additional upriver mortalities. Projected season total upriver mortalities would be 4,030 or 55% of the current allocation for this fishery.
- Due to uncertainties surrounding the abundance of upriver spring Chinook and fishery performance, staff continues to recommend a cautious approach with the possibility to add more opportunity as additional information on fishery performance and upriver spring Chinook abundance becomes available next week.

Non-Treaty Commercial Fisheries

- Combined Select Area landings through May 20 total 12,039 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 364 upriver spring Chinook mortalities through May 21.

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 (0.89% 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***
		proj thru May 24	Recommendation	Total Expected				
Recreational	Downstream of BON*	2,391	1,639	4,030	7,331	55%	3,301	0.32%
	BON - OR/WA border	999	0	999	1,047	95%	48	0.08%
	Snake River (WA waters)	156	na	755	755	100%	0	0.17%
Tribal	Wanapum Band (Upper Columbia)	0	na	42	42	100%	0	
<i>subtotal</i>		<i>3,546</i>		<i>5,826</i>	<i>9,175</i>	<i>63%</i>	<i>3,349</i>	<i>0.57%</i>
Commercial	Select Areas	364	na	490	490	100%	0	0.32%
	Mainstem	0	na	0	0		0	0.00%
<i>subtotal</i>		<i>364</i>		<i>490</i>	<i>490</i>	<i>100%</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0.32%</i>
NT unallocated **				1,132				
Sport unallocated **				524				
Total unallocated				1,656				
TOTAL		3,910		6,316	9,665	65%	3,349	0.89%

* Includes non-target release mortalities during steelhead season.
** Includes 10% unallocated balance between OR/WA Commission guidance (non-concurrence) and 5% unallocated sport.
*** Recreational/Tribal 'subtotal' and 'TOTAL' sum of 'Projected ESA Impact' represents rates for both the Snake River natural-origin and Upper Columbia River natural-origin ESA-listed stocks.

- 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 11 AM June 1, 2023 to consider additional non-treaty spring Chinook fisheries.