

COLUMBIA RIVER INTER-TRIBAL FISH COMMISSION
JOINT STAFF REPORT – SUMMER FACT SHEET NO. 1
Columbia River Compact Hearing
June 7, 2023

Fisheries Under Consideration: Summer Treaty commercial gillnet Summer Treaty commercial Zone 6 platform and hook and line Summer Treaty commercial platform and hook and line downstream of Bonneville Dam Yakama Nation Zone 6 Tributary 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 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/compact/other-information#2023> and
<https://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/OSCRP/CRM/jsmreports.asp>

RIVER CONDITIONS

- As of June 6, the five-day average outflow at Bonneville Dam is 230 kcfs compared to the five-year average of 339 kcfs.
- The current five-day average water temperature at Bonneville Dam is 61°F compared to the five-year average of 59°F.

STOCK STATUS AND MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Upper Columbia Summer Chinook, Sockeye, and Steelhead

- Pre-season salmon and steelhead forecasts applicable to the summer management period are shown in Tables 1 and 2 below. Chinook and sockeye forecasts are to the Columbia River mouth and steelhead forecasts are to Bonneville Dam.

Table 1. Upper Columbia River Summer Chinook and Sockeye Forecasts to the Columbia River Mouth

Columbia River Adult Salmon Returns: Actual and Forecasted Annual Returns *				
		2022 Forecast	2022 Return	2023 Forecast
Summer Chinook	Upper Columbia	56,300	78,494	85,400
Sockeye	Total Sockeye	198,700	664,935	234,500
	Wenatchee	19,200	147,473	44,300
	Okanagan	175,700	513,317	187,400
	Yakima River	3,500	157	100
	Deschutes River	100	35	100
	Snake River	200	2,329	2,600

Table 2. Summer Steelhead Forecasts to Bonneville Dam

	2022 BON Forecast	2022 BON Actual Return	2022 Actual / 2022 Forecast	2023 BON Forecast
Skamania	4,400	6,902	157%	4,400
<i>Total Hatchery</i>	2,300	3,923	171%	2,300
<i>Clip Hatchery</i>	2,100	3,923	187%	2,100
<i>Unclip Hatchery</i>	200	0	0%	200
<i>Wild</i>	2,100	2,979	142%	2,100
A Index	81,000	76,691	95%	55,400
<i>Total Hatchery</i>	52,900	53,503	101%	38,100
<i>Clip Hatchery</i>	49,800	50,996	102%	35,700
<i>Unclip Hatchery</i>	3,100	2,506	81%	2,400
<i>Wild</i>	28,100	23,189	83%	17,300
B Index	15,600	40,278	258%	8,000
<i>Total Hatchery</i>	13,700	33,541	245%	6,700
<i>Clip Hatchery</i>	11,600	31,037	268%	6,000
<i>Unclip Hatchery</i>	2,100	2,504	119%	700
<i>Wild</i>	1,900	6,737	355%	1,300
Total A/B Index	96,600	116,969	121%	63,400
<i>Total Hatchery</i>	66,600	87,043	131%	44,800
<i>Clip Hatchery</i>	61,400	82,033	134%	41,700
<i>Unclip Hatchery</i>	5,200	5,010	96%	3,100
<i>Wild</i>	30,000	29,926	100%	18,600
All summer steelhead	101,000	123,871	123%	67,800
<i>Total Hatchery</i>	68,900	90,966	132%	47,100
<i>Clip Hatchery</i>	63,500	85,956	135%	43,800
<i>Unclip Hatchery</i>	5,400	5,010	93%	3,300
<i>Wild</i>	32,100	32,905	103%	20,700

Upper Columbia Summer Chinook

- Upper Columbia Summer Chinook are counted at Bonneville Dam from June 16 through July 31. Chinook salmon passing Bonneville Dam or harvested during this time period are managed as Upper Columbia summer Chinook and are not ESA listed. These fish are destined for mainstem and tributary areas from the Yakima River upstream to the Okanagan River as well as Chief Joseph Hatchery. Based on 10-year average run timing the run at Bonneville would be expected to be 50% complete on June 29.

Sockeye

- Sockeye caught during any management period all count as part of the current year's sockeye run. All sockeye in fisheries and dam counts are treated as adult fish. Through June 6, a total of 542 sockeye have been counted at Bonneville Dam which is the third lowest count in the last ten years. Based on 10-year average run timing the run is expected less than 1% complete on June 6 and 50% complete on June 27.

Steelhead

- Steelhead passing Bonneville Dam from April 1 through June 30 or that are caught in this time period in the Bonneville Pool are considered upriver Skamania stock steelhead. Through June 6, there have been a total of 775 Skamania steelhead counted at Bonneville Dam including 386 unclipped fish. The total count and unclipped count are both the second lowest steelhead counts to date in the last 10 years. Based on the 10-year average timing, the total run would be expected to be about 32% complete and the unclipped run would be about 28% complete at Bonneville on June 6. Based on 10-year average run timing the total Skamania run would be 50% complete on June 18. While TAC has not updated the Skamania run size, the tribes project that the total run and the unclipped run are tracking lower than forecast based on average timing.
- Steelhead passing Bonneville Dam from July 1 through October 31 are considered part of this year's A and B-Index steelhead run. Steelhead caught upstream of the Dalles Dam from January 1 through June 30 are considered part of the previous year's A and B-Index steelhead run.

Summer Management Limits

- Any sockeye harvested in mainstem fisheries downstream from the mouth of the Snake River count against the Sockeye harvest rate limit. Based on the pre-season forecasts the harvest rate limit will be 7% for treaty fisheries and 1% for non-treaty fisheries. Based on the pre-season forecast this equates to harvest limits of 16,415 and 2,345 respectively. Actual harvest limits are determined based on in-season run sizes. TAC expects to begin to update in season run sizes in late June or early July.
- Treaty and non-treaty summer Chinook impacts are shared equally. Both PFMC non-treaty ocean fisheries and in-river fisheries count as part of the non-treaty share. Based on current pre-season forecasts, both treaty and non-treaty fisheries expect to be allowed harvest of 25,765 fish each. Actual harvest limits are based on in-season abundance estimates.
- There is no specific harvest rate limit for steelhead in summer season treaty fisheries, but harvest of steelhead is low in the summer and is expected to remain within recent average rates.

SUMMER SEASON TREATY FISHERIES

Treaty Mainstem Summer Management Period Commercial Fisheries

- The treaty tribes plan to allow commercial sales of platform and hook and line fish on June 16 and expect sales to run continuously through the summer management period and into the fall.

- The treaty tribes will begin commercial gillnet fisheries on June 19. As a precautionary step, the tribes plan to authorize two gillnet openings to start the season compared to the three initial openings authorized last year.
- Fisheries have been modeled and projected catches are shown in Table 3 below. The model assumes the highest recent set net effort but with average weekly harvest rates. The model will be adjusted to account for actual fishery performance as the season progresses. The projected catches for weeks with commercial gillnet fisheries include the expected catch in the platform and hook and line fishery for those weeks. Historically, the summer model tends to over predict harvest early in the season which is viewed as a precautionary approach. The modeled catch per net per day in these models is higher than any observed catches since 2004 when summer season commercial fishing began on a regular basis. The tribes are planning fisheries using very conservative estimates to avoid catches being higher than expected.

Table 3. Projected 2023 Summer Season Treaty Harvest Using Pre-season Forecast Abundance

2023 Treaty Indian Summer Season Fisheries									
Fishery					Adult Chinook	Harvest Rate	Sockeye	Harvest Rate	Steelhead
Platforms June 16-17					700	0.8%	500	0.2%	0
Week	Gillnet Fisheries	Start	End	Effort (Set Nets)					
26	Projected	19-Jun	21-Jun	400	10,100	11.8%	4,200	1.8%	50
27	Projected	26-Jun	28-Jun	390	6,700	7.8%	6,100	2.6%	100
Projected Platforms after Planned Gillnet Fishing					2,500	2.9%	3,500	1.5%	450
Total					20,000	23.4%	14,300	6.1%	600
Allowed at Reduced Forecast					25,765	30.2%	16,415	7.0%	
Remaining After Planned Fisheries					5,765	6.8%	2,115	0.9%	

- As a test of what the planned fisheries would catch if the run sizes are less than expected, tribal staff modeled Chinook and sockeye impacts assuming run sizes 30% less than the preseason forecasts (Table 4). Both Chinook and sockeye impacts would still be within the allowed limits under these conditions.

Table 4. Projected 2023 Summer Season Treaty Harvest Using Pre-season Forecast Abundance Reduced by 30%

2023 Treaty Indian Summer Season Fisheries									
Fishery					Adult Chinook	Harvest Rate	Sockeye	Harvest Rate	Steelhead
Platforms June 16-17					700	1.2%	500	0.3%	0
Week	Gillnet Fisheries	Start	End	Effort (Set Nets)					
26	Projected	19-Jun	21-Jun	400	4,800	8.0%	2,900	1.8%	50
27	Projected	26-Jun	28-Jun	390	3,200	5.4%	4,300	2.6%	100
Projected Platforms after Planned Gillnet Fishing					1,000	1.7%	1,800	1.1%	375
Total					8,700	14.6%	7,700	4.7%	525
Allowed at Reduced Forecast					16,158	27.0%	11,491	7.0%	
Remaining After Planned Fisheries					7,458	12.5%	3,791	2.3%	

Note: projected catches for statistical weeks with gillnet fisheries include platform and hook and line catch for those weeks.

- With the modeled fisheries, the remaining Chinook and sockeye after these planned openings would be sufficient to keep the platform fishery open through the remainder of the summer management period.
- The tribes have adopted regulations for the Zone 6 platform and hook and line fishery consistent with the following plan. The tribes will authorize sales for fish caught after 6:00 AM on June Friday 16 through July 31. Some tribal regulations may specify that the platform fishery allows commercial sales “until further notice”. The tribes expect to seek consistent state regulations authorizing platform sales at the first fall season Compact hearing to extend sales into the fall management period.

Recommendation: 2023 Zone 6 Spring and Summer Season Treaty Commercial Platform and Hook and Line Fishery

Season:	Fish harvested after 6:00 AM Friday June 16 through 11:59 PM Monday July 31 may be sold.
Area:	Zone 6
Gear:	Hoop Nets/Bag Nets, Dip Nets, and rod and reel with hook and Line.
Allowable Sales:	Salmon (any species), steelhead caught after 6:00 AM on June 16 may be sold or kept for subsistence. Shad, yellow perch, bass, walleye, catfish and carp may also be sold or retained for subsistence. Fish landed during the open periods are allowed to be sold after the period concludes. Sturgeon may not be sold, but sturgeon from 38 to 54 inches fork length in the Bonneville Pool and sturgeon from 43 to 54 inches fork length in The Dalles and John Day Pools and may be kept for subsistence purposes.
Sanctuaries:	Standard closed areas for these gear types.

Additional: 24-hour quick reporting is required for Washington wholesale dealers for all areas as provided in WAC 220-352-315, except that all landings from treaty fisheries described above must be reported within 24-hours of completing the fish ticket.

- The tribes may choose to open fisheries downstream of Bonneville Dam according to agreements with the States of Oregon and Washington. The harvest downstream of Bonneville is expected to be no more than 50 Chinook and 100 sockeye and very small numbers of steelhead in the summer management period. These catches are included in the total weekly projections. The catch downstream of Bonneville Dam is counted as part of the total tribal mainstem catch.

<i>Recommendation: 2023 Summer Season Treaty Commercial Platform and Hook and Line Downstream of Bonneville Dam Fishery</i>	
Season	6:00 AM Friday June 16 through 11:59 PM Monday July 31 and only during days and times opened under tribal rules.
Area	Area defined in tribal/state MOUs/MOAs.
Gear:	Hook and line and/or platform gear identified in tribal rules.
Allowable Sales:	Salmon (any species), steelhead, shad, yellow perch, bass, walleye, catfish and carp caught after 6:00 AM on June 16 may be sold or retained for subsistence. Sturgeon may not be retained in fisheries downstream of Bonneville Dam. Sales of fish are not authorized on COE property downstream of Bonneville Dam. Fish must be transported elsewhere for sale. Fish landed during the open periods are allowed to be sold after the period concludes.
Additional:	24-hour quick reporting is required for Washington wholesale dealers for all areas as provided in WAC 220-352-315, except that all landings from treaty fisheries described above must be reported within 24-hours of completing the fish ticket.

- The Yakama Nation will allow commercial sales of its Zone 6 tributary fisheries for fish caught during open tributary fishing periods that overlap with open sales periods for the mainstem. These are as follows:

<i>Recommendation: 2023 Yakama Nation Zone 6 Tributary Fishery</i>	
Season:	Beginning 6:00 AM Friday June 16 until further notice, and only during those days and hours when the tributaries listed below are open under lawfully enacted Yakama Nation tribal subsistence fishery regulations for enrolled Yakama Nation members.
Area:	Wind River, Drano Lake, and Klickitat River
Gear:	Hoop Nets/Bag Nets, Dip Nets, and Rod and reel with hook and Line. Gillnets may only be used in Drano Lake.
Allowable Sales:	Salmon (any species), steelhead, shad, carp, catfish, walleye, bass, and yellow perch. Sturgeon from 38 to 54 inches fork length in the Bonneville Pool may be kept for subsistence. Sales of fish are allowed after the open period concludes, as long as the fish were landed during the open period.
Additional:	24-hour quick reporting is required for Washington wholesale dealers for all areas as provided in WAC 220-352-315, except that all landings from treaty fisheries described above must be reported within 24-hours of completing the fish ticket.

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

<i>Recommendation: 2023 Summer Season Treaty Commercial Gillnet Fishery</i>		
Season	6:00 AM Monday June 19 to 6:00 PM Wednesday, June 21 6:00 AM Monday June 26 to 6:00 PM Wednesday, June 28	(2.5 days) (2.5 days)
Area	Zone 6	
Sanctuaries:	Standard river mouth and dam closed areas applicable to gillnet gear, except the Spring Creek Hatchery sanctuary is not in effect during the summer management period.	
Gear:	Set and Drift Gill nets with a 7” minimum mesh size restriction	
Allowable Sales:	Salmon (any species), steelhead, shad, yellow perch, bass, walleye, catfish and carp may be sold or retained for subsistence. Sturgeon may not be sold, but sturgeon from 38 to 54 inches fork length in the Bonneville Pool and sturgeon from 43 to 54 inches fork length in The Dalles and John Day Pools and may be kept for subsistence purposes. Fish landed during the open periods are allowed to be sold after the period concludes.	
Additional:	24-hour quick reporting is required for Washington wholesale dealers for all areas as provided in WAC 220-352-315, except that all landings from treaty fisheries described above must be reported within 24-hours of completing the fish ticket.	

- Catch and effort will be monitored to ensure the fishery remains within management limits. Total catch is determined through a tribal creel program. Fish ticket data are used as a supplement to the creel program. Set net effort will be monitored by aerial surveys each week. Drift net effort is estimated through the creel monitoring program. Catches for the platform fishery are typically summed with and reported with gillnet catches for any week with a commercial gillnet opening. Any harvest downstream of Bonneville Dam is part of the total allowed catch for any species. Tributary harvest is managed under separate limits.
- Treaty commercial fishing provides important economic benefits to tribal members and their families as well as to communities along the river and on reservations.

Future Meetings

- The tribes request another Compact Hearing at 1 PM on June 28 to consider additional commercial gillnet openings that may begin on July 3 assuming sufficient impacts remain.