

**OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE  
JOINT STAFF REPORT - FALL FACT SHEET NO. 7b  
September 20, 2023**

<b><i>Fisheries under consideration:</i></b>	Non-treaty mainstem commercial salmon Recreational salmon downstream of Bonneville Dam
--	---

*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 2023 Fall Report was distributed on July 10, 2023. Links to the reports are:  
<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/columbia-river/reports> or  
<http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/OSCRP/CRM/jsmreports.asp>*

**RIVER CONDITIONS**

- As of September 20, the recent five-day average outflow at Bonneville Dam is 77 kcfs compared to a five-year average of 93 kcfs. The current five-day average water temperature at Bonneville Dam is 68°F which is the same as the five-year average. The five-day average visibility at Bonneville Dam is 7 feet which is also the same as the five-year average.

**STOCK STATUS**

- Run size forecasts for 2023 and stock descriptions for salmon and steelhead were presented in Fall Fact Sheet #1.

***Fall Chinook***

- Columbia River fall Chinook are comprised of multiple management components: Select Area Brights (SAB), Lower River Hatchery (LRH), Lower River Wild (LRW), Bonneville Pool Hatchery (BPH), Upriver Bright (URB), Pool Upriver Bright (PUB), and Lower River Bright (LRB). The LRH and BPH stocks are referred to as tule stock and the remaining stocks are referred to as bright stock.
- Through September 19, a total of 454,249 adult-sized fall Chinook have passed Bonneville Dam.
- McNary Dam passage through September 19 includes 126,192 adult fall Chinook.
- Based on visual stock sampling, a total of 315,427 adult bright stock fish (URB and PUB stocks) have passed Bonneville Dam. A total of 120,310 adult tules and 18,512 adult-sized tule jacks (primarily BPH stock) have also passed Bonneville Dam. Bright stock passage is typically 76% complete and tule passage about 94% complete on September 19, based on recent 10-year average run timing.

***Upriver Summer Steelhead***

- Passage of upriver summer steelhead at Bonneville Dam since July 1 totals 101,414 A/B-Index fish.
- From July 1 through September 15, CRITFC staff have sampled 385 total steelhead at Bonneville Dam including 327 A-Index fish (136 unclipped) and 58 B-Index fish (14 unclipped).

## ***Coho***

- Coho counts at Bonneville Dam through September 19 total 85,803 adult early stock Coho (defined as Coho passing prior to October 1). Passage of upriver early stock Coho is typically about 77% complete by September 19.

## ***In-Season Run Size Updates***

- Preseason abundance estimates for upriver-origin fall Chinook stocks (BPH, PUB, and URB) and upriver summer steelhead (A- and B-Index) are updated in-season by the *U.S. v. OR* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). Lower river Chinook stocks (SAB, LRH, LRW, and LRB) are not updated in-season.
- TAC met on September 18 and reviewed Chinook and steelhead passage at Bonneville Dam and associated sampling data along with Chinook harvest data from lower river fisheries.
  - TAC did not make any changes to the A-Index steelhead run size expectation at Bonneville Dam provided on August 21 (91,300 total A-Index fish including 34,000 unclipped fish). TAC updated the total B-Index steelhead run size to 24,100 including 6,000 unclipped fish.
  - TAC updated the upriver Chinook run size expectations to 394,000 URBs, 64,000 PUBs and 155,000 BPH stock fish at the Columbia River mouth.

## **MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES**

- Based on information available preseason and input from the public, a fishing plan was developed for Columbia River non-treaty fisheries during the North of Falcon management process. This fishing plan is available on the ODFW and WDFW websites.
- The respective Washington and Oregon Fish and Wildlife commission policies provide guidance for 2023 non-treaty fall fisheries management.
  - Current policy guidance regarding fall Chinook allocation is concurrent. Allocation of fall Chinook ESA impacts for the most constraining stock is no more than 70% to recreational fisheries and no less than 30% to commercial fisheries.
  - Current policy guidance regarding use of gillnets in commercial salmon fisheries is not concurrent. Washington's policy allows for the use of gillnets in any zone downstream of Bonneville Dam, while Oregon's policy allows for the use of gillnets in Zones 4-5 only. Therefore, Chinook-directed gillnet fisheries will be restricted to Zones 4-5 this year.
- Per the WDFW Director statement prior to the Compact/Joint State hearing on September 13, 2023, WDFW intends to reserve a portion of the allocated commercial impacts for escapement of the most constraining fall Chinook stock (LCR tule fall Chinook). The amount is based upon what was associated with licenses retired in the WA commercial license reduction program and equates to a 0.46% LCR exploitation rate (ER) this fall.
- Additional management guidelines for 2023 fall fisheries were presented in Fall Fact Sheet #1 and Fall Fishery Update #1.

## 2023 NON-TREATY FALL FISHERIES

### *Select Area Fall Commercial Fisheries*

- Select Area commercial fisheries are on-going in all four sites (Youngs Bay, Blind Slough/Knappa Slough, Tongue Point/South Channel, and Deep River). Preliminary catch estimates for the combined Select Areas through September 16 include 7,325 Chinook and 28,505 Coho.

### *Mainstem Fall Commercial Fisheries*

- Preliminary catch estimates for the Early-Fall Zone 4-5 fishery include 27,597 Chinook and 1,617 Coho. Additionally, an estimated 336 steelhead were handled.
- The Late-Fall commercial fishery in Zones 1-3 targeting hatchery Coho using 3.75-inch tangle nets began on September 18. Preliminary catch estimates are not yet available.
- The preseason plan assumed a Late-Fall Chinook-target fishery in Zones 4-5 likely to begin the week of September 17 based on the remaining commercial allocation of LCR impacts and an in-season URB run size. Initial periods were considered at the Compact/Joint State hearing on September 13; the Sunday period was adopted by both states while the Tuesday period was adopted by Oregon-only action.
  - Preliminary catch estimates for the September 17 period include 1,787 Chinook and 449 Coho from 31 deliveries. Additionally, an estimated 41 steelhead were handled.
  - Preliminary catch estimates from last night’s period are not yet available.
- Cumulative LCR and SRW impacts for combined non-treaty commercial fisheries (mainstem to-date and adopted, and full season Select Area fisheries) are projected to be 2.01% ER and 3.12% HR, respectively. Sufficient allocation of LCR and SRW impacts are available for additional Chinook-directed fisheries.
- Given the remaining commercial balance, staff recommend the following Late-Fall fishing periods:

<b><i>Recommendation: 2023 Non-Treaty Mainstem Commercial Late-Fall Fishery</i></b>		
Season:	8 PM Sunday September 24 to 6 AM Monday September 25	10 hours
	8 PM Tuesday September 26 to 6 AM Wednesday September 27	10 hours
Area:	Zones 4-5. The deadline at the lower end of Zone 4 is defined as a straight line projected from the Warrior Rock Lighthouse on the Oregon shore easterly through the green navigation Buoy #1 and continuing to the Washington shore.	
Sanctuaries:	Washougal and Sandy rivers.	
Gear:	Drift gillnets only. 8-inch minimum mesh size restriction. Multiple net rule is in effect. Nets not specifically authorized for use in this fishery may be onboard the vessel if properly stored. A properly stored net is defined as a net on a drum that is fully covered by a tarp (canvas or plastic) and bound with a minimum of ten revolutions of rope with a diameter of 3/8 (0.375) inches or greater. Lighted buoys required.	

Allowable Sales: Salmon (except chum) and shad.

Additional: 24-hour quick reporting required for Washington buyers, pursuant to WAC 220-352-315. Oregon buyers are required to electronically submit fish receiving tickets pursuant to OAR 635-006-0210. Electronic fish tickets must be submitted within 24 hours of closure of the fishing period, or within 24 hours of landing for fishing periods lasting longer than 24 hours.

- Chinook catch for the recommended fishery is expected to include about 2,800 adults. The LCR Chinook ER is expected to be 0.32% and SRW HR is expected to be 0.37%.
  - The pre-season commercial allocation was 2.83% LCR ER. Given completed and on-going fisheries, a balance of 0.82% ER is available. With this recommendation, the remaining allocation is expected to be 0.50% ER.
- ESA impacts to wild upriver summer steelhead are expected to be 0.01% for A-Index and 0.05% for B-Index for the recommended fishery.
- Additional Late-Fall Zone 4-5 commercial periods are expected to be considered after review of fishery performance and an assessment of the remaining ESA impacts.
- The fishery will be managed to remain within the ESA impacts allocated; actual harvest may be more or less than modeled. Catch expectations are a reflection of the number of fish that may be harvested given the ESA constraints.

#### ***Buoy 10 and Mainstem Fall Recreational Salmon Fisheries***

- The Buoy 10 to west Puget Island (WPI) fishery is ongoing. Preliminary catch estimates through September 17 include 18,383 kept and 15,449 released Chinook, and 9,363 kept and 6,717 released Coho from approximately 76,100 angler trips.
- WPI to Warrior Rock (WR) fishery was open consistent with the preseason plan and re-opened with in-season action September 15-17. Preliminary estimates of catch and effort through September 17 include 8,403 kept and 633 released Chinook, 666 kept and 386 released Coho, and 428 released steelhead from approximately 36,900 angler trips.
- WR to Bonneville Dam (BO) fishery was also open consistent with the preseason plan and was extended in-season through September 21. Preliminary estimates of catch and effort through September 17 include 12,877 kept and 1,189 released Chinook, 655 kept and 492 released Coho, and 181 released steelhead from approximately 40,800 angler trips.
- BO upstream to Highway 395 Bridge (Pasco, WA) fishery is on-going. Preliminary estimates of catch and effort through September 17 include 7,445 Chinook kept and 852 released Chinook, 99 kept and 21 released Coho, and 240 released steelhead from approximately 24,300 angler trips.
- At this time, the preliminary projected full season LCR Chinook ER is 4.35% (as compared to 6.57% ER pre-season) and SRW HR is 8.32% (as compared to 7.41% HR pre-season) for these recreational fisheries.

- Based on the updated URB run size, declining Chinook abundance, recent fishery performance, catch projections, and available ESA balances, additional Chinook retention opportunity in the lower Columbia River can be considered at this time.

***Recommendation: 2023 Lower Columbia River Fall Season Recreational Salmon Fishery***

Effective Friday September 22, until further notice, retention of Chinook and hatchery Coho is allowed in the mainstem Columbia River from the west Puget Island line upstream to Bonneville Dam. The daily adult bag limit is two salmon (Chinook or hatchery coho) but only one may be a Chinook. All other relevant regulations remain in effect.

- Chinook catch is projected to be about 9,300 adults for the recommended LCR recreational fishery. ESA impact expectations include up to 0.53% LCR ER and 1.75% SRW HR.
- Staff will continue to monitor Chinook abundance, stock composition, and fishery performance.

***Non-treaty ESA Impacts***

- Non-treaty fisheries will be managed to remain within the ESA impacts allocated for all listed species. A summary of impacts to ESA-listed fall Chinook in completed, on-going, planned, and proposed 2023 non-treaty fisheries is provided in the table below:

Summary of expected LCR and SRW fall Chinook ESA impacts in non-treaty mainstem fisheries.						
Area	LCR			SRW		
	Current <sup>a</sup>	Proposed	Total ER	Current <sup>a</sup>	Proposed	Total HR
Buoy 10 +TP-WPI	2.18%	--	2.18%	0.62%	--	0.62%
WPI-WR	0.83%	0.19%	1.02%	1.58%	0.42%	2.00%
WR-BO	0.51%	0.34%	0.85%	3.00%	1.33%	4.33%
BO-Hwy 395	n/a	n/a	n/a	1.37%	--	1.37%
Tributaries	0.30%	--	0.30%	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>Recreational Total</i>	<i>3.82%</i>	<i>0.53%</i>	<i>4.35%</i>	<i>6.57%</i>	<i>1.75%</i>	<i>8.32%</i>
Zone 4-5 Early Fall	1.23%	--	1.23%	2.05%	--	2.05%
Zone 4-5 Late Fall week 38	0.27%	--	0.27%	0.39%	-	0.39%
Zone 4-5 Late Fall week 39	--	0.32%	0.32%	--	0.37%	0.37%
Zone 4-5 Late Fall weeks 40+	0.00%	--	0.00%	0.28%	--	0.28%
Zone 1-3 Tangle net	0.10%	--	0.10%	0.56%	--	0.56%
Select Areas	0.40%	--	0.40%	0.12%	--	0.12%
<i>Commercial Total</i>	<i>2.01%</i>	<i>0.32%</i>	<i>2.33%</i>	<i>3.40%</i>	<i>0.37%</i>	<i>3.78%</i>
<b>Non-Treaty Total</b>	<b>5.83%</b>	<b>0.85%</b>	<b>6.68%</b>	<b>9.97%</b>	<b>2.12%</b>	<b>12.10%</b>

<sup>a</sup> includes completed, ongoing, and planned fisheries

- ESA impacts to LCR tule fall Chinook, including ocean fisheries, are expected to remain within the 38% ER limit. LCR tule fall Chinook are the most constraining fall Chinook stock in 2023 and the in-river rate is limited to 9.41% ER.
- The expected URB HR is projected to be 12.64% out of the 15% allowed. The SRW HR is projected remain within the 15% allowed.
- Cumulative impacts for A- and B-Index steelhead in non-treaty fall-season fisheries are expected to be 0.26% and 0.50% out of the allowed 2% HR, respectively.
- ESA impacts to LCN Coho, including ocean fisheries, are expected to remain within the 23% ER limit with pre-season expectations of 19% ER. The in-river rate is expected to be 4.60% ER.
- ESA impacts to Chum from in-river fisheries are expected to be 1.14% compared to the 5% limit.
- Staff will review catch estimates and Chinook stock composition as fisheries progress and will determine if additional opportunities exist within current management guidelines.

#### **FUTURE MEETINGS**

- The Joint Staff request a Compact hearing on Wednesday, September 27 to consider additional non-treaty mainstem commercial fisheries.