

**COLUMBIA RIVER INTER-TRIBAL FISH COMMISSION  
 JOINT STAFF REPORT - WINTER FACT SHEET NO. 7  
 Columbia River Compact  
 February 27, 2024**

<b><i>Fisheries under consideration:</i></b>	Zone 6 treaty commercial 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 relevant to this fishery is the 2024 Sturgeon/Smelt Report (January 12, 2024) available at: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/columbia-river/compact/other-information#2024> and <https://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/OSCRP/CRM/jsmreports.asp>*

**RIVER CONDITIONS**

- The recent 5-day average river temperatures at The Dalles Dam have averaged 42.1 degrees F which is about 3.7 degrees higher than the 5-year average for this time period. Water temperatures have been increasing over the last week.
- The recent 5-day average outflow at The Dalles Dam is approximately 131 kcfs compared to a five year average outflow of 147 kcfs for this time period.

**STOCK STATUS**

***Zone 6 Sturgeon***

- Recent stock status information was described in Fact Sheet #4 and in the Joint Staff Reports

***Steelhead and Salmon***

- No chinook or steelhead are handled in sturgeon setline fisheries and are therefore not discussed in this Fact Sheet

**MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES**

***Zone 6 Sturgeon***

- Zone 6 Sturgeon harvest guidelines are shown in the box below.

Pool	Treaty Commercial	Recreational Retention	Total
Bonneville	675	675	1,350
The Dalles	825	275	1,100
John Day	210	105	315
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,710</b>	<b>1,055</b>	<b>2,765</b>

- There is no harvest guideline for the treaty subsistence catch of sturgeon, but these catches are accounted for and used in population assessments. Subsistence harvest typically occurs in association with fisheries targeting other species and is generally low.

## 2024 TREATY INDIAN WINTER FISHERIES

- A setline fishery occurs each January in all three Zone 6 Pools under permanent regulations through January 31. This fishery generally has low effort and catch. The 2024 January setline catches were above average in each of the three Zone 6 Pools. Additional setline fishing was set in February. These catches were within expectations or less than predicted. Preliminary catch estimates through February 26 are shown in the table below. These include both ticketed landings and direct to public sales. No salmonids are handled in setline fisheries.

Table 1. Preliminary Sturgeon Harvest to Date

Pool/Statistical Week	Bon	TD	JD	Grand Total
Week 1	28	138	44	210
Week 2	117	38	0	155
Week 3	0	0	0	0
Week 4	77	82	27	186
Week 5	83	53	0	136
Week 6	0	0	0	0
Week 7	133	218	4	355
Week 8	0	251	5	256
Grand Total	438	780	80	1,298
Guideline	675	825	210	
Remaining	237	45	130	
Percent of Guideline caught	64.9%	94.5%	38.1%	

- Catch rates generally start out slow and increase over time as water temperature and effort increase.
- In order to plan fisheries, the tribes have used conservative estimates of likely average daily catches based on actual catches in the past two years as well as harvest data from this year. For the Bonneville Pool fishery, the tribes are assuming catches will increase from the last openings catch rates of 52 fish per day. Tribal staff assume catches will increase and have scaled the expected catches up to 76 fish per day based on past increases as the season progresses. The tribes assume effort will increase in the John Day Pool since The Dalles Pool is no longer open. Tribal staff expect the expected catch rates from the highest observed this year of 8 fish per day to increase to 16 fish per day.

The four Columbia River treaty tribes have or will adopt regulations consistent with the following:

<b>2024 Treaty Indian Winter Season Commercial Setline Fishery (Bonneville Pool)</b>	
Season:	6 AM Saturday March 2 to 6 PM Monday March 4 (2.5 days)
Area:	The Bonneville Pool only
Gear:	Setline gear only
Sanctuaries:	Closed areas include standard closed areas applicable to setline gear
Allowable Sales:	Sturgeon from 38 to 54 inches fork length in Bonneville Pool may be sold or kept for subsistence purposes. Fish landed during the open periods are allowed to be sold after the period concludes.
Additional:	24-hour quick reporting required for Washington buyers, pursuant to WAC 220-352-315 except that landings must be reported within 24-hours of completing the fish ticket.

<b>2024 Treaty Indian Winter Season Commercial Setline Fishery (John Day Pool)</b>	
Season:	6 AM Thursday March 7 to 6 PM Monday March 11 (4.5 days)
Area:	The John Day Pool only
Gear:	Setline gear only
Sanctuaries:	Closed areas include standard closed areas applicable to setline gear
Allowable Sales:	Sturgeon from 43 to 54 inches fork length in the John Day Pool may be sold or kept for subsistence purposes. Fish landed during the open periods are allowed to be sold after the period concludes.
Additional:	24-hour quick reporting required for Washington buyers, pursuant to WAC 220-352-315 except that landings must be reported within 24-hours of completing the fish ticket.

- Sales are restricted to legal sized sturgeon caught with setline gear. There are no regulatory changes for the ongoing subsistence platform and hook and line fishery.
- Expected catches from the planned fisheries are shown in the table below.

Pool	Total Harvested to Date	Expected Catch in Planned Fisheries	Expected Total Catch After Planned Fisheries	Guideline	Remaining Available After Planned Fisheries
Bon	438	190	628	675	47
TD	780	--	780	825	45
JD	80	72	152	210	58
Total	1,298	262	1,560		

- With the expected catches, there are sufficient remaining available fish to act as a buffer in case catch rates are higher than planned.
- Catch will be monitored to ensure the tribal fisheries remain within management limits. The tribes expect to set additional fishing time after this period or may extend this period if appropriate. The tribes will take action to close fisheries early if harvest limits are projected to be met early.

## **FUTURE MEETINGS**

- If catches are less than predicted and sufficient numbers remain on any of the commercial guidelines, the tribes may request an additional hearing around March 14.