

**COLUMBIA RIVER INTER-TRIBAL FISH COMMISSION**  
**JOINT STAFF REPORT - FALL FACT SHEET NO. 4a**  
**Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing**  
**September 10, 2024**

<b><i>Fisheries under consideration:</i></b>	Treaty Zone 6 commercial gillnet
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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 2024 Fall Report was distributed on July 5, 2024. 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 9, the five-day average outflow at Bonneville Dam is 90.5 kcfs compared to a five-year average of 88.8 kcfs. The five-day average water temperature at the Bonneville Dam forebay is 69.7°F which is the same as the recent five-year average for this time period. The five-day average visibility at Bonneville Dam is 6.8 feet.

### **STOCK STATUS**

- Stock status and forecast information was presented in Fall Fact Sheet #1.

#### ***Fall Chinook***

- Bonneville Dam passage totals 334,482 adult and 62,366 jack fall Chinook through September 9. Based on the recent 10-year average passage typically reaches 50% complete by September 9. The clip rate for adult Chinook at Bonneville Dam is 40%.
- Based on sampling at Bonneville Dam through September 9 these counts include 216,295 bright stock fish and 80,114 adult tules and 38,070 jack aged tules that are just above the adult size limit.
- McNary Dam passage totals 57,653 adult and 8,670 jack fall Chinook through September 9. Based on 10-year average, passage at McNary Dam would be 25% complete on September 9 and would reach 50% complete on September 18.

#### ***Upriver Summer Steelhead***

- Counts of A and B-Index steelhead at Bonneville Dam from July 1 through September 9 total 129,539 fish. Passage at Bonneville Dam (July–October) is 75% complete by September 9 based on the recent 10-year average timing. The count of unclipped steelhead from that same time period totals 47,258 fish (37% of total).
- From July 1 – September 6, a total of 645 steelhead have been sampled at the Bonneville Dam Adult Fish Facility (AFF). Of the steelhead sampled since July 1, 570 have been A-Index fish (323 clipped and 247 unclipped) and 75 have been B-Index fish (48 clipped and 27 unclipped). The proportions of A- and B-Index fish in the sample are typical for this point in the run.
- Through September 9 a total of 82,689 adult and 7,406 jack Coho have been counted at Bonneville Dam for this run year. Coho counted at Bonneville through September 30 are

considered early run. Based on 10-year average run timing, early run coho would be expected to reach 50% completion at Bonneville Dam on September 11. The clip rate for coho at Bonneville is 28%.

- The *U.S. v. Oregon* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met on Monday September 9 to review and discuss information relative to the upriver A-/B-Index summer steelhead, upriver fall Chinook, and upriver coho returns.
- TAC updated the current in-season projection for the expected A-Index steelhead abundance at Bonneville Dam to 130,300 total fish (including 45,700 unclipped). It is too early to provide an in-season assessment of the B-Index steelhead return.
- TAC provided the first in-season update to the 2024 upriver bright and tule stock fall Chinook Bonneville Dam passage expectation. Given the information currently available, TAC expects the Columbia River mouth return of adult-aged fall Chinook to total 588,350 adult fish (7% higher than preseason forecast). This total includes 299,500 URBs, 67,500 PUBs, and 122,600 BPH. The bright stock return is expected to be 13% greater than the preseason forecast while the BPH stock component is expected to be 5% less than forecast.
- TAC does not typically update upriver-origin coho returns in-season but did note that this year's passage of 78,579 adult coho at Bonneville Dam through September 8 has already exceeded the preseason expectation for early-stock coho passage. Upriver early-stock coho are defined as those fish passing Bonneville Dam prior to October 1.
- TAC will continue to monitor and assess the upriver A-/B-Index summer steelhead, upriver fall Chinook, and upriver coho returns during the fall management period and will provide updates as warranted. TAC is scheduled to meet again on Monday September 16.

## MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

### *Salmon/Steelhead*

- The 2018–2027 *U.S. v. Oregon* Management Agreement (MA) provides specific fishery management guidelines for upriver stocks of fall Chinook, summer steelhead, and Coho.
  - The allowable harvest rate for combined treaty Indian and non-treaty fisheries is 45% of the URB run based on the preseason forecast. This limit is allocated 30% for treaty Indian fisheries and 15% for non-treaty fisheries.
  - The escapement goal at Spring Creek Hatchery is 6,000 adult fall Chinook (BPH stock).
  - The management goal for adult fall Chinook passage at McNary Dam is 60,000 fish.
  - Based on the pre-season forecast, treaty Indian fisheries are limited to 13% of the total B-Index steelhead and catches of A-Index steelhead are expected to remain within historic rates.
  - The goal for upriver Coho passage at Bonneville Dam is 50% of the ocean abundance.
- Fisheries are managed based on preseason forecasts unless updated in-season abundance projections are available from TAC.
- The ESA-impact limit Snake River wild fall Chinook is 45% for combined treaty Indian and non-treaty fisheries based on preseason forecasts. Of this, 30% is allocated for treaty Indian fisheries and 15% for non-treaty fisheries.

- The impact rates for B-Index steelhead in treaty fisheries fall fisheries is 15% at the pre-season forecast run size.

## 2024 TREATY FALL FISHERIES

### *Platform and Hook-and-Line Fisheries*

- Treaty platform and hook-and-line fall fisheries generally harvest only a small proportion of the total ESA impacts allowed in treaty mainstem fisheries. Most impacts occur in commercial gillnet fisheries adopted in mid-August.
- The commercial sale of fish caught with hoop net, dip net, or hook-and-line was previously allowed by the Columbia River treaty tribes during the fall season beginning August 1.
- During the fall season, some tribes may open fisheries in the area below Bonneville Dam consistent with tribal regulations and MOUs/MOAs between the states and tribes. Harvest downstream of Bonneville Dam is expected to be relatively low. Catch downstream of Bonneville is counted as part of the total tribal mainstem catch. No catch has been observed below Bonneville Dam to date for this fall season.
- Preliminary catches for the treaty platform and hook and line fishery for August 1-17 (Weeks 31-33) included 431 Chinook and 459 steelhead. This catch included 431 URB's and 20 B-Index steelhead). CWT data are available for week's 34 and 35. The week 35 stock composition indicated lower URB and higher BPH catches than modeled. There were minor changes in the total catches compared to what was reported last week based on reviewing creel data. B-Index steelhead catches in Week 36 were also less than modeled.
- The treaty fall fishery model has been set to use the average scalars from the first three gillnet openings to project catches for this week and next week. Based on past years, this practice results in more reasonable catch projections. Given the relatively low total harvest rates for the planned fisheries, the planned fishery is still conservative. The projected catches for weeks with commercial gillnet fisheries include the expected catch in the platform and hook and line fishery for those weeks. Because of the large expected remaining allowed catch after these openings, the model is sufficiently precautionary to allow for uncertainties in catches or run sizes.
- With the actual and modeled gillnet fisheries, the remaining Chinook and B-Index steelhead projected to be available after these planned gillnet openings would be sufficient for at least some additional gillnet fishing time and to keep the platform fishery open through the remainder of the fall management period.

2024 Treaty Indian Fall Season Fisheries (preliminary through 9/7 and modeled through 9/21)										
Week		Fishery	Dates	Set Net Count	Total Adult Chinook	URB Chinook	Total Steelhead	B Steelhead	Coho	
31-33	Preliminary	Platform/ H&L	August 1- 17	na	431	229	486	20	3	
		Gillnet Fishery	Dates							
34	Preliminary		8/19	8/22	163	6,550	3,477	393	68	219
35	Preliminary		8/26	8/30	281	9,823	5,834	1,299	236	868

36	Preliminary	9/2	9/6	300	13,979	8,302	1,251	313	1,541
37	Projected	9/9	9/13	336	32,200	13,100	1,510	530	1,800
				Subtotal	62,983	30,942	4,939	1,167	4,431
38	Projected	9/16	9/20	350	27,900	11,500	2,300	920	3,700
				Total	90,883	42,442	7,239	2,087	8,131
	<b>Allowed at Updated URB and pre-season B-Index run sizes</b>					89,850		4,830	
				<b>Harvest Rate as of Sept 14</b>		10.3%		3.6%	
				<b>Remaining after Sept 14</b>		58,908		3,663	
				<b>Expected Harvest Rate by Sept 21</b>		14.2%		6.5%	
				<b>Remaining Available After Sept 21</b>		47,408		2,743	

- Based on these catch projections, the planned fisheries are well within their allowed harvest. At the end of the proposed fisheries, the treaty fishery would be within the allowed URB harvest rate down to a run size of 141,000 and within the B-Index harvest rate down to a run size of 16,000. Through September 8, TAC estimated that just over 18,900 B-Index steelhead have passed Bonneville Dam. Tribal staff estimate based on TAC estimates of bright stock fish at Bonneville that over 170,000 URB's have already passed Bonneville Dam.
- The four Columbia River treaty tribes have adopted or will adopt regulations consistent with the following:

<b>2024 Treaty Indian Commercial Gillnet Fishery</b>	
Season:	6:00 AM Monday September 16 through 6:00 PM Friday September 20 (4.5 days)
Area:	Zone 6
Gear:	Set and Drift Gillnets with an 8-inch minimum mesh size
Allowable Sales:	Salmon (any species), steelhead, shad, yellow perch, bass, walleye, catfish, and carp may be sold or retained for subsistence. Fish landed during the open periods are allowed to be sold after the period concludes. 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 may be kept for subsistence purposes.
Sanctuaries:	Standard closed areas applicable to gillnets are in place. The small Spring Creek Hatchery sanctuary (150-feet around the hatchery ladder) is in place.
Additional:	24-hour quick reporting required for Washington buyers, pursuant to WAC 220-352-315 except landings 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. Setnet effort will be monitored by aerial surveys each week. Driftnet 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.

- No Compact action is needed for Zone 6 platform fisheries, fisheries downstream of Bonneville Dam or Yakama tributary fisheries.
- 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 treaty tribes request a Compact hearing during the week of September 16 to consider additional treaty Indian commercial gillnet fisheries.