

COLUMBIA RIVER INTER-TRIBAL FISH COMMISSION
JOINT STAFF REPORT - FALL FACT SHEET NO. 5a
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
September 18, 2024

<i>Fisheries under consideration:</i>	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 18, the five-day average outflow at Bonneville Dam is 79.2 kcfs compared to a five-year average of 73.7 kcfs. The five-day average water temperature at the Bonneville Dam forebay is 67.7°F which is the slightly less than the recent five-year average for this time period of 68.7°F. The five-day average visibility at Bonneville Dam is 7 feet.

STOCK STATUS

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

Fall Chinook

- Bonneville Dam passage totals 413,856 adult and 78,366 jack fall Chinook through September 17. Based on the recent 10-year average passage typically reaches 75% complete by September 17. The clip rate for adult Chinook at Bonneville Dam is 39%.
- Based on sampling at Bonneville Dam through September 17 these counts include 287,238 bright stock fish and 86,592 adult tules and 40,023 jack aged tules that are just above the adult size limit.
- McNary Dam passage totals 100,609 adult and 15,424 jack fall Chinook through September 17. Based on 10-year average, passage at McNary Dam would be 49% complete on September 17 and would reach 50% complete on September 18.
- Through September 17, a total of 24,910 adult and 3,776 jack fall Chinook have passed Lower Granite Dam. The adult count is the third highest to date on record. 2024 marks the 30th anniversary the implementation of the Snake River Fall Chinook supplementation program which has led to significant progress in recovering this population.

Upriver Summer Steelhead

- Counts of A and B-Index steelhead at Bonneville Dam from July 1 through September 17 total 147,346 fish. Passage at Bonneville Dam (July–October) is 84% complete by September 17 based on the recent 10-year average timing. The count of unclipped steelhead from that same time period totals 51,927 fish (35% of total).
- From July 1 – September 13, a total of 716 steelhead have been sampled at the Bonneville Dam Adult Fish Facility (AFF). Of the steelhead sampled since July 1, 590 have been A-Index fish

(335 clipped and 255 unclipped) and 126 have been B-Index fish (87 clipped and 39 unclipped). The proportions of A- and B-Index fish in the sample are typical for this point in the run.

- Through September 17 a total of 107,370 adult and 9,881 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 73% completion at Bonneville Dam on September 17. The clip rate for coho at Bonneville is 34%.
- The *U.S. v. Oregon* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met on Monday September 16 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 126,500 total fish (including 45,200 unclipped). TAC also made the first in-season projection of the B-Index steelhead abundance and now expects 52,100 total B-Index fish (including 11,800 unclipped) to return to Bonneville Dam. This compares to the preseason forecast of 32,200 total B-Index fish (including 7,300 unclipped).
- TAC updated the 2024 upriver bright and tule stock fall Chinook Bonneville Dam passage expectation. Given the information currently available, TAC now expects the Columbia River mouth return of adult-aged fall Chinook to total 606,850 adult fish. This total includes 322,600 URBs, 70,400 PUBs, and 115,100 BPH.
- 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 23.

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 updated in-season run size, treaty Indian fisheries are limited to 20% 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 for 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 increased to 20% at the updated in-season 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 typically low during the fall. 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 and for Week’s 34-37 are available. CWT data are available for week’s 34, 35 and 36. The stock composition for Week 37 is used to project stock composition of Week’s 38-40. There were minor changes in the total catches compared to what was reported last week based on reviewing creel and CWT data.
- 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 future weeks. 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 fisheries are 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 9/14 and projected through 10/5)									
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	Dates						
34	Preliminary		8/19 8/22	163	6,566	3,485	393	68	219
35	Preliminary		8/26 8/30	281	9,836	5,842	1,308	238	876
36	Preliminary		9/2 9/6	300	16,698	8,104	1,307	321	1,880
37	Preliminary		9/9 9/13	336	18,685	9,091	1,316	433	1,822

2024 Treaty Indian Fall Season Fisheries (preliminary through 9/14 and projected through 10/5)									
Week	Fishery	Dates	Set Net Count	Total Adult Chinook	URB Chinook	Total Steelhead	B Steelhead	Coho	
38	Projected	9/16	9/20	288	16,300	8,700	1,800	730	2,600
				Subtotal	68,517	35,451	6,610	1,810	7,400
39	Projected	9/23	9/28	300	10,800	6,100	2,400	1,010	3,800
40	Projected	9/30	10/4	300	5,700	3,400	2,800	1,350	5,800
				Total	85,017	44,951	11,810	4,170	17,000
				Allowed at Projected URB and B run size		96,780		10,420	
				Harvest Rate as of Sept 21		11.0%		3.5%	
				Remaining after Sept 21		61,329		8,610	
				Expected Harvest Rate by October 5		13.9%		8.0%	
				Remaining Available After October 5		51,829		6,250	

- For the fisheries to date, plus planned fisheries the expected total season harvest rates for the PUB and BPH stocks are shown in the box below. These harvest rates are based on the current TAC run size estimates and expectations at Bonneville Dam.

Stock	River Mouth Harvest Rate	Harvest Rate based on Bonneville Dam Run Size
PUB Harvest Rate	7.2%	7.9%
BPH Harvest Rate	30.1%	40.1%

- Based on these catch projections, the planned fisheries are well within allowed harvest rates. At the end of the proposed fisheries, the treaty fishery would be within the allowed URB harvest rate down to a run size of 196,000 and within the B-Index harvest rate down to a run size of 27,800. Through September 15, TAC estimated that just over 30,300 B-Index steelhead have passed Bonneville Dam. Tribal staff estimate based on TAC estimates of bright stock fish at Bonneville that over 235,000 URB's have already passed Bonneville Dam.
- The four Columbia River treaty tribes have adopted or will adopt regulations consistent with the following:

2024 Treaty Indian Commercial Gillnet Fishery	
Season:	6:00 AM Monday September 23 through 6:00 PM Friday September 28 (5.5 days) 6:00 AM Monday September 30 through 6:00 PM Friday October 4 (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 may request a Compact hearing during the week of September 30 to consider additional treaty Indian commercial gillnet fisheries.