

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT – FALL FACT SHEET NO. 7
October 1, 2024

<i>Fisheries under consideration:</i>	Select Area commercial fisheries
--	----------------------------------

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 30, the five-day average outflow at Bonneville Dam is 80 kcfs which is lower than the recent the recent five-year average of 95 kcfs. The five-day average water temperature at Bonneville Dam is 66.0°F compared to a five-year average of 65.6°F. The five-day average visibility at Bonneville Dam is 7 feet which is similar to the recent five-year average of 6.8 feet.

STOCK STATUS

Coho

- The 2024 forecasted return of coho to the Columbia River is 279,900 adults, which includes 171,800 early stock and 108,100 late stock fish. The forecast is 71% of the recent 10-year average return of 394,100 adult fish.
- The preseason forecast for the coho return to the Select Area commercial fishing sites was 30,900 adult fish. This included 15,200 to Youngs Bay, 6,900 to Blind Slough/Knappa Slough, 3,700 to Tongue Point/South Channel, and 5,100 to Deep River.
- The preseason 2024 Bonneville Dam passage was forecasted to be approximately 60,000 adult coho, consisting of 47,200 early stock and 12,900 late stock fish. The total early-stock adult coho passage at Bonneville Dam totaled 143,767 fish, three times higher than forecast. Late coho passage at Bonneville Dam begins today.
- The *U.S. v. OR* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) monitors passage of coho at Bonneville Dam but does not currently make in-season abundance projections for these fish.

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.
- Additional management guidelines for 2024 fall fisheries were presented in Fall Fact Sheet #1.

2024 NON-TREATY FISHERIES

Select Area Commercial Fisheries

- Fall Select Area commercial fisheries in Youngs Bay opened August 6, Blind Slough/Knappa

Slough and Tongue Point/South Channel fisheries opened August 26, and Deep River opened September 5. Preliminary catch estimates for the combined Select Areas through September 28 (week 39) include 11,045 Chinook and 52,525 coho.

Blind Slough/Knappa Slough

- Fall-season Select Area fisheries in Blind Slough and Knappa Slough target fall Chinook and coho produced by the Select Area Fisheries program.
- Landings in Blind Slough and Knappa Slough fall commercial fisheries total 1,323 Chinook and 7,716 coho through September 28 (week 39).
- On average, coho harvest in Blind/Knappa Slough is about 72% complete through week 39 and 82% through week 40.
- Big Creek Hatchery (BCH) is the primary broodstock source for Select Area coho production. The hatchery requires a minimum broodstock of 4,600 adult coho each year to fulfill the egg-take goal of 5.5 million eggs.
- Return of adult coho to BCH occurs from early-September to November. Adult coho collection at BCH occurs from late September through October with peak spawning from late-October to early-November.
- Typically, BCH has collected about 700 coho by the third week of September, representing approximately 13% of their total broodstock collection. Currently, BCH staff can account for approximately 300 adult coho in the hatchery trap and in the area directly downstream of the hatchery. If the remaining broodstock collection follows the normal pattern, this suggests total escapement would be near half of what is needed to fulfill the egg-take goal.
- Coho migration into the tributaries is highly influenced by rainfall. The 5-year average September rainfall at BCH is 3.29 inches. However, this year’s rainfall measured at BCH has only totaled 1.25 inches for the month and there are no significant precipitation events forecasted for the next 7-10 days.
- Given concerns expressed by the BCH manager on the lack of significant rainfall and considering the importance of this program to the Select Area fisheries, staff are recommending a closure of the commercial fishery in Knappa Slough as a precautionary measure to facilitate escapement of adult coho to the hatchery.

Recommendation: 2024 Select Area Fall Season - Knappa Slough Fishery

Effective 6 PM Wednesday, October 2 the remaining 17 periods scheduled for the Knappa Slough Select Area commercial fishery **are rescinded**.

All previously-adopted periods and regulations for the Blind Slough fall-season fishery remain in effect.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- No additional Compact/Joint State hearings are scheduled at this time. Joint staff will continue to monitor fisheries and recommend additional hearings as needed.