

**COLUMBIA RIVER INTER-TRIBAL FISH COMMISSION
JOINT STAFF REPORT - WINTER FACT SHEET NO. 3a
Columbia River Compact
January 16, 2025**

<i>Fisheries under consideration:</i>	Zone 6 treaty commercial setline fisheries Zone 6 treaty platform and hook and line 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 2025 Sturgeon/Smelt Report (January 7, 2025) available at:

<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/columbia-river/reports> and <https://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/OSCRP/CRM/jsmreports.asp>

RIVER CONDITIONS

- The recent 5-day average river temperature at the Dalles Dam tailwater has averaged 43.3 degrees which is the highest since at least 2014.
- The recent 5-day average outflow at The Dalles Dam is approximately 126 kcfs which is not unusual for this time of year.

STOCK STATUS

Zone 6 Sturgeon

- The states and tribes work cooperatively to complete white sturgeon stock assessments, which rotate between the three Zone 6 reservoirs on an annual basis. The 2024 survey was conducted in the Bonneville Pool and will be reviewed by the Sturgeon Management Task Force on January 22. The Sturgeon Management Task Force which is a joint state-tribal body is tasked with reviewing Zone 6 sturgeon stock assessments and management issues. The stock assessment in 2024 showed an increase in abundance in the legal sized slot limit to 18,700 compared to the last assessment in 2021 which indicated a legal sized abundance of 10,100.

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

- The Sturgeon Management Task Force is scheduled to meet January 22 to recommended 2025 harvest guidelines for the Bonneville Pool based on current stock assessment information. The 2024 guidelines were 675 each for treaty commercial and recreational retention. These are subject to possible revision in 2025. Current guidelines for The Dalles and John Day reservoirs are presented in the table below.

Pool	Current Zone 6 Harvest Guidelines		
	Overall Guideline	Treaty Commercial	Recreational Retention
Bonneville	1,350	675	675

The Dalles	1,100	825	275
John Day	315	210	105

- 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.

2025 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 January setline catches have been above average in the Bonneville and The Dalles pools. The tribes previously took action to close the Bonneville Pool fishery on January 8 and The Dalles Pool fishery on January 11. Preliminary catch estimates through January 11 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.

Reservoir	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Preliminary Total To- Date	Guideline	Remaining	% of Guideline Harvested
Bonneville	329	356	closed	685	675	-10	101.5%
The Dalles	21	307	closed	328	825	497	39.8%
John Day	0	20	6	26	210	184	12.4%
Total	350	704	6	1,039			

- Catch rates have started out high as weather has remained moderate and water temperature has been warm and effort has been good.
- There have been no observed steelhead harvest in platform fisheries to date. Any steelhead harvest will be reported when available. Normally, catches and effort are very low in the winter.

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

2025 Treaty Indian Winter Season Commercial Setline Fishery (The Dalles Pool)	
Season:	7:00 AM Saturday February 1 through 6:00 PM Tuesday February 4. (3.5 days)
Area:	The Dalles Pool only
Gear:	Setlines Only
Sanctuaries	Closed areas include standard closed areas applicable to setline gear.
Allowed Sales	Sturgeon between 43 and 54 inches fork length in The Dalles Pool may be sold or kept for subsistence purposes. Fish landed during open periods are allowed to be sold after the period concludes.

Additional	24-hour quick reporting is required for Washington buyers, pursuant to WAC 220-352-315 except that landings must be reported within 24-hours of completing the fish ticket.
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<i>2025 Treaty Indian Winter Platform and Hook and Line Fishery</i>	
Season:	6 AM Saturday February 1 to 6 PM Friday March 21
Area:	All of Zone 6
Gear:	Hoop Nets, Dip Nets, Hook and Line
Sanctuaries:	Closed areas include standard closed standard dam and river mouth areas applicable to platform and hook and line gear
Allowable Sales:	Sturgeon from 38 to 54 inches fork length in the Bonneville Pool and from 43 to 54 inches fork length in The Dalles and John Day pools may be kept for subsistence purposes. Sturgeon within the legal-size limits and caught in the platform and hook and line fishery may be sold only if caught during the open period and open Pool of an open setline fishery. Fish landed during the open periods are allowed to be sold after the period concludes.
Additional:	24-hour quick reporting is required for Washington buyers, pursuant to WAC 220-352-315 except that landings must be reported within 24-hours of completing the fish ticket.

- Projecting sturgeon catch in The Dalles Pool fishery is difficult but is conservatively estimated at up to 413 based on the highest setline catch rate observed in last year’s fishery of 118 fish per day. The expected catch of steelhead is zero. The tribes may consider additional fishing time in The Dalles Pool after this opening if sufficient fish remain on the harvest guideline.
- The language for the platform and hook and line fishery provides that legal sized sturgeon caught with platform gears can only be sold if there is an open setline fishery in that pool.
- Catch information for the John Day Pool is preliminary and effort and creel reports continue to be low. Therefore, the tribes are not modifying the ongoing setline fishery in the John Day Pool at this time. The fishery in the John Day Pool is set to close on January 31. An additional opening for the John Day Pool may be considered depending on the number of fish remaining on the harvest guideline after January 31.
- Any planned openings for the Bonneville Pool will be dependent on the 2025 commercial harvest guideline.
- Catch will be monitored to ensure the tribal fisheries remain within management limits. Fishery opening will be modified or closed if needed to stay within the allowed harvest guidelines.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- The tribes may request additional hearings if additional fishery actions are needed.