

**COLUMBIA RIVER INTER-TRIBAL FISH COMMISSION
JOINT STAFF REPORT - WINTER FACT SHEET NO. 8b
Columbia River Compact
March 11, 2025**

<i>Fisheries under consideration:</i>	John Day Pool treaty commercial research fishery
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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 Joint Staff Report: Stock status and fisheries for spring Chinook, sockeye, steelhead, and other species (January 31, 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 river conditions are referenced in Fact Sheet 8a.

STOCK STATUS

Steelhead

- Steelhead in the John Day Pool between January 1 and June 30 are counted as A-Index and B-Index summer steelhead from the 2024-2025 run year. The run sizes at Bonneville Dam in 2024 are shown in the table below.

<i>Stock</i>	<i>2024 Bonneville Dam Return</i>
<i>A Index</i>	121,579
<i>Total Hatchery</i>	85,035
<i>Clip Hatchery</i>	77,103
<i>Unclip Hatchery</i>	7,933
<i>Wild</i>	36,543
<i>B Index</i>	48,166
<i>Total Hatchery</i>	44,052
<i>Clip Hatchery</i>	34,864
<i>Unclip Hatchery</i>	9,188
<i>Wild</i>	4,115

- Only a small portion of the run would be expected to be present in the John Day pool in the winter season. There are periodic years when the USACE counts fish at John Day or McNary Dams, but this year is not one of them.

Salmon

- Any adult salmon present in the John Day pool during this time period would be counted as part of the 2024 Upriver Spring and Snake River Spring Summer Chinook run. The pre-season forecast for spring chinook is 122,500. Additional stock status information is presented in Fact

Sheet #6. No spring Chinook have been counted at Bonneville Dam in 2025. The highest spring chinook count in recent years was 19 fish in 2014.

Sturgeon

- Sturgeon stock assessment was discussed in Fact Sheet #3a.

Non-Native Fish Species

- There are no stock status data for non-native fish species, but non-native fish are known to be present in the John Day pool especially in backwater areas.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Salmon and Steelhead

- There are no specific annual catch limits for steelhead in winter season fisheries although ESA impact rates are limited to recent year averages. Impact limits on Spring Chinook are based on the harvest rate framework of the U.S. v. Oregon Management Agreement. At the pre-season forecast, the treaty harvest rate would be 7.4% of the river mouth return.

Sturgeon

- Sturgeon mortalities in fisheries other than target commercial sturgeon fisheries are counted with subsistence catch which there is no annual limit for. Any such mortalities are documented and used in stock assessments.

Non-native fish species

- There are no harvest limits for non-native fish species, and it is the tribal policy to maximize the removal of these invasive fish to the extent feasible. Non-native fish species are known to prey on native fish including salmon and steelhead and juvenile sturgeon. Non-native fish cause ecological harm by changing predator prey relationships, providing forage for birds that also prey on salmon and steelhead. They can also modify the environment through their spawning and feeding behaviors. Any efforts to reduce numbers of non-native fish should provide benefits to the Columbia River ecosystem.

2025 TREATY INDIAN WINTER FISHERIES FOR SALMON AND STEELHEAD

- Only treaty subsistence platform and hook and line fisheries are currently open in the John Day pool and there has been no winter season catch identified in this pool to date.

2025 TREATY INDIAN WINTER RESEARCH FISHERY FOR NON-NATIVE FISH

- In an effort to test the feasibility and practicality of using commercial fishing techniques as a possible tool to assist in the control of non-native fish, the tribes will be issuing at least one research fishing permit to test gillnets in selected backwater areas of the John Day pool. One permit is expected, but more may possibly be issued.
- For this initial test, fishing will be limited to backwater areas to help ensure minimal risk of handling salmon, steelhead, or sturgeon. These backwater areas are areas known to contain non-native species including carp. The time period will be limited to March to help avoid any salmonid impacts and to reduce overlap with other fisheries.

- Carp are the target species, but any other non-native species as well as pikeminnow may be retained for commercial or other purposes. Permits will require that no non-native species be released alive.
- Logbooks will be the primary tool to assess the program although there will be daily requirements for permit holders to contact their tribe’s fishery managers. On the water monitoring will occur as staff availability allows. Permit holders will be required to attend gear while fishing. Exact permit language may vary by tribe, but permits will stipulate collection of data on number of fish handled by species including any juveniles. Descriptions of gear and number of gears used will be documented. The tribes may include various other limits for fishers as appropriate and these could include time or location limits and additional restrictions if salmonids are handled. The tribes will reserve the right to limit or modify permits as needed to ensure compliance with permits and ensure minimal risk to listed salmonids or sturgeon. Individual permits may or may not be valid for the full duration of the planned time period.

The four Columbia River treaty tribes will issue research fishing permits consistent with the following:

<i>2025 Treaty Indian Winter Season Research Commercial Fishery (The John Day Pool)</i>	
Season:	6:00 AM Thursday March 13 through 6:00 PM Saturday March 29 (16.5 days)
Area:	The following areas in the John Day Pool: Railroad Island slough (45.72504, -120.69580)- only the slough side waters up from the railroad tracks. Paterson Slough (45.70664, -120.46430)- only the slough side to the north of Hwy 14. Sundale slough (45.72008, -120.31364)- only the slough side waters up from the railroad tracks. Jones Canyon slough (45.71576, -121.24522)- only the slough south of the railroad tracks. Willow Creek slough (45.79306, -120.01470)- only waters south of the eastbound lanes of I-84. Alderdale slough (45.83741, -119.92876)- only waters north of Hwy 14.
Gear:	Gillnets Only.
Sanctuaries	These areas do not include any standard closed areas applicable to gillnet gear.
Allowed Sales	Yellow perch, bass, walleye, catfish, carp, and northern pikeminnow may be sold. These species may be sold after the permit fishing period concludes. All other species including salmon, steelhead and sturgeon must be released.
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. Multiple net rule is in effect. Nets not specifically authorized for use in this fishery may be onboard the vessel if properly stored.

- The planned permits are expected to have zero handle or mortality to adult or juvenile salmonids or sturgeon. Any mortality to these species will be accounted for under existing treaty fishery impacts for those species.
- The results of the permit research fishery will be shared with co-managers. Depending on the results, the tribes could propose additional research fisheries in other areas or at other times of year at some later date.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- The tribes do not request additional Compact Hearings at this time.