

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT: SPRING FACT SHEET NO. 4
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
May 11, 2015

<i>Fisheries under Consideration:</i> Mainstem commercial salmon Zone 6 recreational sturgeon - The Dalles Pool

Stock status and management guidelines for 2015 Chinook fisheries were presented in Winter Fact Sheet #2a (January 28, 2015).

- River conditions are lower, warmer, and clearer than recent five and ten year averages. Current outflow at Bonneville Dam was measured at 146 kcfs on May 10 which is about half of what would be expected based on the recent five- and ten-year averages. Water temperatures have been approximately two and a half to three degrees above normal and currently measure 56° F. Visibility is about two feet clearer than usual for this time of year.
- Bonneville Dam passage through May 10 totals 173,264 adult Chinook. The *U.S. v. Oregon* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met today to review the status of the upriver spring Chinook run and provided an in-season run update of 250,000 adult fish to the Columbia River.
- Shad passage at Bonneville Dam is minimal to date (~50). Passage averages about 500 fish per day on May 11 and increases dramatically to 8,000 fish per day by May 18.

Non-Indian Fishery Update

- Four mainstem commercial salmon fishing periods have occurred to date (45 hours total). Landings total 4,120 adult Chinook. Kept and release mortalities of upriver Chinook is estimated at 3,165 fish, compared to the current allocation of 4,660 fish.
- Mainstem commercial shad fisheries are open under permanent regulations in Area 2S from 3 PM to 10 PM daily Monday through Friday from May 10 through June 20 (except on the observed Memorial Day holiday).
- Select Area fisheries are ongoing and expected to continue through June 13. Fishing periods are scheduled to occur on Monday and Thursday nights, except in Youngs Bay which is open 2-4 days per week through mid-June. Combined winter-spring landings through May 8 total 5,407 Chinook. Upriver Chinook mortalities total 388 compared to the current allocation of 375 fish. Season total upriver mortalities may approach 475 fish.
- The lower Columbia River recreational fishery will re-open May 16 and continue for the remainder of the spring season (June 15). Season total kept and release mortalities of upriver Chinook are projected at 15,500 fish, compared to the current allocation of 16,086 fish.
- The recreational fishery from Bonneville Dam upstream to the Oregon/Washington border is currently closed, but may re-open later in the season if future run updates provide sufficient fish for harvest. Season total kept and release mortalities of upriver Chinook are projected at 1,982 fish, compared to the current allocation of 2,145 fish.
- Snake River sport fisheries currently open in the two most upper areas. The fisheries will continue until the allocation is met. Kept and release mortalities of upriver Chinook through May 5 is estimated at 1,065 fish, compared to the current allocation of 1,688 fish.

- The recreational sturgeon fishery in The Dalles Pool opened under permanent regulations January 1 and continues until the harvest guideline of 100 fish is met. Typical for this fishery, harvest is minimal in the winter months and increases rapidly by the end of April. Harvest estimates through April 30 total 86 fish. Harvest estimates through May 10 total 112 fish.

Non-Indian Fishery Recommendations

Non-Indian Commercial

<i>Joint Staff Recommendations- 2015 Non-Indian Salmon Commercial Fishery</i>	
Season:	4:00 PM Tuesday May 12 to 6:00 AM Wednesday May 13, 2015 (14 hours)
Area:	Zones 1-5
Sanctuaries:	Grays River, Elochoman-B, Cowlitz River, Kalama-B, Lewis-B, Sandy, and Washougal.
Allowable Sales:	Adipose fin-clipped Chinook salmon, and shad.
Gear:	<p>Drift nets only. 4¼-inch maximum mesh size (tangle net). Single-wall multi-filament net only. Monofilament tangle nets are not allowed.</p> <p>Mesh size is determined by placing three consecutive meshes under hand tension, and the measurement is taken from the inside of one knot to the inside of the opposite knot of the center mesh. Hand tension means sufficient linear tension to draw opposing knots of meshes into contact.</p> <p><u>Net length not to exceed 150 fathoms.</u> There are no restrictions on the use of slackers or stringers to slacken the net vertically. There are no restrictions on the hang ratio. The hang ratio is used to horizontally add slack to the net and is determined by the length of the web per length of the corkline.</p> <p>Net length may be increased from 150 to 175 fathoms for nets constructed with a steelhead excluder panel, weedlines, or droppers. An optional use of a steelhead excluder panel of mesh may be hung between the corkline and the 4¼-inches maximum mesh size tangle net. The excluder panel web must be a minimum mesh size of 12 inches stretched measure when taut under hand tension. Monofilament mesh is allowed for the excluder panel only. The excluder panel must be a minimum of five feet in depth and must not exceed ten feet in depth as measured from the corkline to the upper margin of the tangle net mesh as the net hangs naturally from a taut corkline. Weedlines or droppers (bobber type) may be used in place of the steelhead excluder panel. A weedline-type excluder means the net is suspended below the corkline by lines of no less than five feet in length between the corkline and the upper margin of the tangle net. A dropper-type excluder means the entire net is suspended below the surface of the water by lines of no less than five feet in length extending from individual surface floats to a submersed corkline. The corkline cannot be capable of floating the net in its entirety (including the leadline) independent of the attached floats. Weedlines or droppers must extend a minimum of five feet above the 4¼ inch maximum mesh size tangle net. Tangle nets constructed with a steelhead excluder panel, weedlines, or droppers must have two red corks at each end of the net, as well as the red corks as required.</p> <p><u>Red corks are required</u> at 25-fathom intervals, and red corks must be in contrast to the corks used in the remainder of the net.</p> <p><u>Multi net rule in place:</u> Nets not specifically authorized for use in these areas may be onboard a vessel if properly stored. A properly stored net is defined as a net on a drum that is fully covered by a tarp (canvas or plastic) and bound with a minimum of ten revolutions of rope with a diameter of 3/8 (0.375) inches or greater.</p>

Regulations:

Soak times are defined as the time elapsed from when the first of the gillnet web is deployed into the water until the gillnet web is fully retrieved from the water, must not exceed 45 minutes.

Recovery Box: Each boat will be required to have on board two operable recovery boxes or one box with two chambers. Each chamber of the recovery box(es) must include an operating water pumping system capable of delivering a minimum flow of 16 gallons per minute, not to exceed 20 gallons per minute of freshwater per chamber. Each box and chamber and associated pump shall be operating during any time that the net is being retrieved or picked. Each chamber of the recovery box must meet the following dimensions as measured from within the box: the inside length measurement must be at or within 39 ½ inches to 48 inches; the inside width measurements must be at or within 8 to 10 inches; and the inside height measurement must be at or within 14 to 16 inches. Each chamber of the recovery box must include a water inlet hole between ¾ inch and 1 inch in diameter, centered horizontally across the door or end wall of the chamber and 1¾ inches from the floor of the chamber. Each chamber of the recovery box must include a water outlet hole that is a least 1½ inches in diameter located on either the same or opposite end as the inlet. The center of the outlet hole must be located a minimum of 12 inches above the floor of the box or chamber. The fisher must demonstrate to WDFW and ODFW employees, fish and wildlife enforcement officers, or other peace officers, upon request, that the pumping system is delivering the proper volume of fresh river water into each chamber.

All sturgeon, non-adipose fin-clipped salmon, and steelhead must be released immediately to the river with care and with the least possible injury to the fish, or placed into an operating recovery box.

Any salmonid that is bleeding or lethargic must be placed in the recovery box prior to being released. All fish placed in recovery boxes must be released to the river prior to landing or docking.

Observer program: As a condition of fishing, owners or operators of commercial fishing vessels must cooperate with department observers or observers collecting data for the department, when notified by the observer of his or her intent to board the commercial vessel for observation and sampling during the fishery. In addition, cooperation with department personal prior to a fishing period is expected.

Live Capture workshop: Only licensed Columbia River commercial fishers that have completed the required state-sponsored workshop concerning live-capture commercial fishing techniques may participate in this fishery. At least one fisher on each boat must have live-capture certification.

Lighted Buoys: Nets that are fished at any time between official sunset and official sunrise must have lighted buoys on both ends of the net unless the net is attached to the boat. If the net is attached to the boat, then one lighted buoy on the opposite end of the net from the boat is required.

24-hour quick reporting is in effect for Washington buyers (WAC 220-69-240(14)(d)).

- Catch is estimated at around a 900 hatchery Chinook based on an expected 70 deliveries. Upriver mortalities are estimated at 800 fish. Season total upriver mortalities would be 4,487 fish, or 89% of the total commercial allocation at the current run size. Total commercial upriver impacts would be 0.484%, or 81% of the 0.6% allocation.
- Based on Commission guidance to use tangle nets in this fishery, staff is recommending a fishing period this week in advance of significant shad returns. Additional commercial opportunity is unlikely given the current upriver runsizes and the projected balance of ESA impacts and upriver chinook mortalities. The expected need for using large mesh gear in the future also reduces the likelihood of future openers.
- Catch estimates for the recommended fishing period with large mesh gear would not change, but the number of upriver mortalities would increase. This would bring the season total upriver mortalities to 4,554 fish, or 90% of the total commercial allocation at the current run size. However, total commercial upriver impacts would be 0.587%, or 98% of the 0.6% allocation.

- With the clear water conditions, fishing during hours of darkness is needed for the fleet to gain access to the harvestable allocation of hatchery Chinook.
- The proposed mainstem fishery avoids conflict with the Monday/Thursday night fisheries in most Select Areas, except Youngs Bay where staff recommends the following action:

<i>Youngs Bay Select Area Commercial Fishery- Oregon State Staff Recommendation</i>
Retention and sale of non -adipose fin-clipped Chinook from Youngs Bay is prohibited from 4:00PM May 12 through noon May 13, 2015.

Recreational Sturgeon - The Dalles Pool

- Current harvest estimates through May 10 project that the harvest guideline of 100 fish will likely be exceeded.

<i>Recreational Sturgeon Fishery - The Dalles Pool</i>
Effective 12:01 AM May 14, 2015: the retention of sturgeon in The Dalles Pool and adjacent tributaries is prohibited.

- Allowing the fishery to continue through Wednesday will allow for ample time to notify the public of the closure.
- Catch and release remains allowed when The Dalles Pool closes to sturgeon retention except sturgeon fishing is prohibited from May through July in the sturgeon spawning sanctuary that runs from John Day Dam 2.4 miles downstream to the Rufus grain elevator.

Actual and Proposed Non-Indian Catch Balance

Summary of 2015 Non-treaty upriver Chinook catches _ preliminary						
Fishery	Upriver Catch (kept plus release mortalities)					
	Pre-Update Allocated (167.7/ 232.5K)	Inseason Allocated (250.0 K)	In hand/ Season total estimates	Proposed	Total	Balance
Commercial						
Mainstem	1,760	4,660	3,218	900	4,118	542
Select Area (actual and proj.)	244	375	475		388	-100
Recreational						
Below Bonneville	10,318	16,086	15,500		15,500	586
Bonn to OR/WA border	1,376	2,145	1,982		1,982	163
Snake River (actual and proj.)	1,083	1,688	1,688		1,688	0
Wanapum Tribal	30	46	46		46	0
Total Upriver Mortalities	14,810	25,000	22,909	900	23,722	1,191

Future Hearing

- The Joint Staff is not recommending a hearing at this time; however, the Columbia River treaty tribes requested a tentative hearing for Monday May 18.