

**OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND  
WILDLIFE  
JOINT STAFF REPORT: FALL FACT SHEET #9  
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing  
September 14, 2015**

Fisheries under consideration:	Non-Indian mainstem commercial salmon
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*Detailed information on stock status and management guidelines for Columbia River fisheries are presented in Fall Factsheet #1, dated July 29, 2015.*

***Stock Status***

- Passage at Bonneville Dam through September 13 totals 534,295 adult fall Chinook and has generally been tracking ahead of expectations. TAC has provided a Chinook run update of 1,095,900 fish to the Columbia River, which is greater than the preseason forecast of 925,300 Chinook. The inseason forecast includes 685,000 upriver bright (URB) Chinook and 139,500 Bonneville Pool Hatchery (BPH) tule Chinook (518,300 and 163,900 preseason, respectively).
- Passage of upriver summer steelhead at Bonneville Dam since July 1 totals 213,356 fish and has been tracking behind expectations. TAC currently estimates a steelhead run of about 250,000 fish to Bonneville Dam, which is less than the preseason forecast of 298,800 fish. TAC has not updated the Group B run size, but noted the run is tracking less than expected. Additionally, TAC expects the Group A run to come in higher than the prior inseason update of 206,100 fish.
- The Lower River Hatchery (LRH) stock is the indicator stock for lower Columbia Natural (LCN) tule stock. The pre-season forecast for LRH adults to the Columbia River is 96,800 fish, which allows for a total exploitation rate (ER) of 41%. Updating the run in-season is challenging since escapement is based on hatchery returns, which are typically not complete until after the fall fishing season concludes. So far, the run appears to be tracking at or above preseason projections.
- Data on LRH escapement to hatcheries and weirs is just beginning to become available as the fish move into the tributaries.
  - Escapement to Washington tributaries is currently tracking ahead of expectations, especially in the Kalama and Washougal rivers which account for over half of the Washington abundance.
  - In Oregon, Big Creek escapement is tracking similar to expectations with about 65% of the female broodstock collection goal in hand.
  - Bonneville Hatchery has collected 9,200 tule fall Chinook as of last Friday. Typically about half of the total return has been collected by mid-September.
- North of Falcon ocean fisheries are ongoing; the recreational fisheries in this area are projected to use approximately 83% of the 3.7% preseason LCN tule allocation, leaving a balance of around 0.63% which could be applied to in-river fisheries.

- The preseason forecast is for nearly 540,000 adult Coho to return to the Columbia River and includes a strong upriver component. The counting period at Bonneville Dam for the ‘early’ component continues through September 30. Counts are tracking behind expectations, and currently total 18,087 fish.

### ***Recreational Fisheries***

- Catch estimates for the Buoy 10 (B10) recreational fishery include 29,700 Chinook kept from 65,500 angler trips during Aug 1–23. Estimated catch during the August 24–28 mark-selective fishery is 6,400 Chinook kept (7,400 released) from 18,600 angler trips. The fishery closed to Chinook retention effective August 29 via in-season action. The fishery reopens for Chinook retention October 1.
  - CWT data indicates stock composition for this fishery was higher for LRH than expected preseason (22% v 17%). Total Chinook mortalities are estimated at nearly 40,000 (35,000 preseason) and LCN tule impacts to-date are estimated at 5.4% (4.1% preseason).
  - The Coho fishery at B10 is on-going; estimated harvest through September 7 totals 35,000 Coho (including release mortalities) compared to the 56,500 fish estimated preseason.
- Catch estimates for the lower Columbia River (LCR) recreational fishery include 18,900 Chinook, 3,800 steelhead, and 330 Coho kept from 73,400 angler trips during the non-mark-selective fishery (August 1–September 7). This fishery transitioned to mark-selective regulations for Chinook during September 8–14 in the area from Tongue Point upstream to Warrior Rock.
- The area from Warrior Rock upstream to Bonneville Dam is scheduled to remain open for Chinook through December. Catch rates have also improved recently in this area.
- Based on in-season modeling, the LCR fishery is projected to accrue 40,000 Chinook mortalities and use approximately 80% (1.6%) of the preseason allocation (2.0%) of LCN tule impacts.
- The recreational fishery from Bonneville Dam upstream to the Highway 395 opened August 1 and is scheduled to remain open through December 31. The season total catch expectation for this fishery is 11,700 Chinook.

### ***Non-Indian Commercial Fisheries***

- Select Area fisheries are ongoing and scheduled to continue through October. Harvest to date includes 10,100 Chinook and 9,700 Coho, which is very low and much less than average.
- Nine fishing periods occurred in Zones 4-5 from August 9–28. These periods were nine hours in duration and restricted to a 9-inch minimum mesh size. A final period (4-hour) occurred on August 31 with the same regulations as the prior periods. CWT data indicates stock composition for this fishery was slightly higher for LRH than expected preseason (6% v 4.5%). Catch estimates for the early-fall fishery total 33,400 fall Chinook (47,500 preseason expectation) and LCR tule impacts are estimated at 1.6% (1.7% preseason).
- Columbia River seine fisheries are underway and scheduled for various dates and times through September 30. A total of ten seine permits (6 beach and 4 purse) were allowed for

2015, and currently seven permits have been awarded. Preseason harvest expectations for adult hatchery fish included 5,000 Chinook and 1,700 Coho. Landings as of last Friday total 819 Chinook and 70 Coho.

- Preseason plans included a late-fall commercial gillnet season in Zones 4-5 scheduled to begin the week of September 13. About 0.6% LCR tulle impacts were allocated to Chinook-directed fisheries in September/October which translated to a catch expectation of 19,400 Chinook.

<b><i>Recommendation: 2015 Non-Indian Mainstem Commercial Late Fall Fishery</i></b>	
Season:	9 PM September 15 to 6 AM Wednesday September 16 (9 hours)
Area:	Zones 4-5. The deadline at the lower end of Zone 4 is defined as a straight line projected from the Warrior Rock Lighthouse on the Oregon shore easterly through the green navigation Buoy #1 and continuing to the Washington shore.
Sanctuaries:	Washougal and Sandy Rivers. The lower end of the Washougal sanctuary is extended and defined as: a line originating at USCG green marker #1 near the Washington shore due south to the downstream Fisher Quarry Channel range light on the western end of Ackerman Island then from the upstream tip of Ackerman Island (Sand Island) across to the downstream (western) tip of Lady Island.
Gear:	Drift gillnets only. 8-inch minimum mesh size restriction. Multiple net rule in effect, which means nets not specifically authorized for use in this fishery may be onboard the 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. Lighted buoys required.
Allowable Sales:	Chinook, Coho, Pink, and Sockeye salmon, and shad.
Additional Rules:	Washington buyers: 24-hour quick reporting required pursuant to WAC 220-69-240. Oregon buyers: Electronic submission of fish receiving tickets required pursuant to OAR 635-006-0210

- The proposed fishery is consistent with the 2015 Fall Allocation Agreement.
- Catch estimates for the proposed periods include about 10,000 – 15,000 Chinook ( $\leq 0.42\%$  LCR impacts).

***Non-Indian ESA impacts***

- Based on the inseason upriver Chinook run size forecast and actual, on-going, and planned non-Indian fisheries, ESA impacts are expected to total 10% for URB Chinook (15% allowed), 40.6% for LRH Chinook (40% management guideline) and 1.9% for wild Group B steelhead at an assumed reduced run size of 30,000 fish (2% allowed).
- Positive abundance indicators for LRH tulle indicate the run will likely meet the preseason forecast. Unused impacts from ocean and in-river fisheries are expected to largely cover the overage of the LCR ESA allocation in the Buoy 10 fishery, however it may be necessary to use a portion of the LCR tulle buffer in order to remain within the overall limit.

- Staff will continue to monitor the progress of the salmon and steelhead run sizes, especially LRH Chinook and wild Group B steelhead.

#### **Future Meetings**

- The Joint Staff will recommend future Compact hearings as needed. The tribes have requested a hearing for the week of September 21.