

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT - FALL FACT SHEET NO. 13
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
September 28, 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 of adult fall Chinook at Bonneville Dam through September 27 totals 822,195 fish. The 2015 Columbia River return is currently projected to reach 1,181,100 adult fall Chinook (128% of preseason), including 736,800 Upriver Bright (URB) and 164,000 Bonneville Pool Hatchery (BPH) Chinook.
- The Columbia River return for Lower River Hatchery (LRH) fall Chinook is challenging to update inseason. Ocean fisheries are nearly complete and harvestable surpluses may not be available. The majority of LRH fish have typically moved out of the mainstem and into the lower river tributaries by the end of September. LRH is the most constraining Chinook stock due to limited ESA impacts.
- Passage of upriver summer steelhead at Bonneville Dam through September 27 totals 236,895 fish. Passage has been less than expectations. Upriver summer steelhead passage (July-October) is currently projected to reach 247,000 fish at Bonneville Dam, including 20,000 Group B stock (5,200 wild; 44% of preseason).
- Passage of adult upriver Coho at Bonneville Dam through September 27 totals 25,854 fish. The counting period for this early stock component continues through September 30. Upriver early-stock Coho passage at Bonneville is projected to reach 27,000 adult fish, compared to a preseason expectation of 146,200 fish.
- Lower river Coho (including lower Columbia naturally-produced fish (LCN)) are just beginning to enter the tributaries and return to the hatcheries, so information on run strength is currently limited.
- Chum salmon are typically later-timed and return to the Columbia during early October through December. Chum salmon are primarily from natural production, although there are hatchery enhancement programs in place. Columbia River chum are ESA-listed. The chum population is relatively small compared to the abundant Coho and Chinook stocks.

Non-Indian Commercial Fishery

- The early fall season consisted of 10 fishing periods in Zones 4-5 during August 9-31. Catch estimates total 33,400 fall Chinook.
- The late fall season has consisted of four fishing periods to date. Landings through September 23 total 35,439 Chinook (estimated 0.8% ER on LCR wild fish). Landings and associated impacts for September 27 are currently unavailable; therefore, the commercial impact balances of LCR Chinook and B-run steelhead for future Chinook-directed fisheries in Zone 4/5 will not be known until later this week.
- The seine fishery is ongoing and scheduled to continue through September 30. The number of participants has been decreasing as the individual fish quotas are reached or fishers have opted to cease seine operations. Landed catch includes about 2,760 hatchery adult Chinook

and 560 hatchery adult Coho through September 23. Additionally, 4,160 adult Chinook, 730 adult Coho, and 480 steelhead have been released.

- The Select Area commercial fisheries are ongoing and generally are scheduled to continue through October. Catch of both Chinook and Coho have been less than expected to date. Combined catch includes 15,287 Chinook and 17,047 Coho through September 22.
- Based on pre-season planning, mainstem Coho fishing in 2015 is expected to occur in Zones 1-3 during daylight hours and include a fishery during early October using small mesh tangle nets (1.30 LCN ER). Additional target Coho periods are expected to occur with unslackened 6-inch maximum mesh (5.18 LCN ER). The pre-season catch expectation for all mainstem commercial fisheries included a harvest of up to 51,600 Coho.
- Current estimates for early stock Coho abundance are less than expected, given the reduced Bonneville passage and low Select Area harvest to date.
- If the early run is significantly less than forecasted preseason, fewer impacts may be available for inriver fisheries. Updated impacts from ocean fisheries are not currently available.
- Given the uncertainty in the impacts available to inriver fisheries, staff is recommending only a few tangle net periods be set until more information on the Coho return and impacts is available.

<i>Recommendation – 2015 Non-Indian Coho Tangle Net Commercial Fishery</i>	
Season:	6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Thursday October 1 (12 hours each) 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Monday October 5 6:00 AM to 6:00 PM Wednesday October 7
Area:	Zones 1-3. Upper deadline 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:	Elokomin-A, Cowlitz River, Kalama-A and Lewis-A
Gear:	Drift nets only. Maximum mesh size is 3-3/4 inches. Unslackened, single-wall, multi-filament floater nets only. Monofilament nets are not allowed. Net length not to exceed 150 fathoms. A red cork must be placed on the corkline every 25 fathoms as measured from the first mesh of the net. Red corks at 25-fathom intervals must be in color contrast to the corks used in the remainder of the net. There are no restrictions on the hang ratio. The hang ratio is used to horizontally add slack to the net. The hang ratio is determined by the length of the web per length of the corkline. The use of slackers or stringers to slacken the net vertically is <u>prohibited</u> . Rip lines are allowed providing they do not vertically slacken the net
Allowable Sales:	Adipose fin-clipped Coho salmon; Chinook, Pink, and Sockeye salmon and shad.

<p>Regulations:</p>	<p>Regulations typically in place for mark-selective commercial fisheries are in effect, including but not limited to: net length, use of recovery boxes, limited soak times, red corks, tangle-net certification, etc.</p> <p>Soak times, defined as the time elapsed from when the first of the gill net web is deployed into the water until the gill net web is fully retrieved from the water, must not exceed <u>30 minutes</u>.</p> <p>Recovery Box: Each boat is required to have on board two operable recovery boxes or one box with two chambers that meet the flow and size requirements standard for the winter/spring season. Each box and chamber and associated pump shall be operating during any time that the net is being retrieved or picked. All non-legal fish must be released immediately unharmed to the river or placed into an operating recovery box. All non-legal salmon and all steelhead that are bleeding, lethargic, or appear lifeless 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.</p> <p>Measuring mesh size: 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>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 an open fishery.</p> <p>Live Capture workshop: 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.</p>
<p>Additional Rules:</p>	<p>Multiple net rule in effect: 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.</p> <p>Lighted Buoys: Nets 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 a lighted buoy on the opposite end of the net is required</p> <p>24-hour quick reporting required for Washington buyers per WAC 220-69-240.</p> <p>Electronic submission of fish receiving tickets required for Oregon buyers pursuant to OAR 635-006-0210</p>

- Effort is expected to be limited. Staff estimates about 40 vessels may participate.
- Pre-season modeling assigned up to 16,000 hatchery Coho for the tangle net fishery. Estimating actual catch is difficult, since there is limited historical data to draw on. Given inseason information, catches for the season may be less than expected and could be closer to 10,000 total.
- Staff will monitor catch as the season progresses and make adjustments if needed.
- The overall Coho mark rate is expected to be 66%. If the actual mark rate is significantly different from expectations, then the number of hatchery fish available changes accordingly.
- Steelhead handle is estimated at less than 200 fish for the season.
- The interim mortality rate used for this fishery is 30% for salmon and steelhead.

Non-Indian Fisheries ESA Impact Estimates

- Considering all the data in hand, non-Indian fisheries (including completed, on-going, proposed, and planned fisheries) are expected to remain within the ESA constraints for both salmon and steelhead.
 - Impacts to lower Columbia natural (LCN) Chinook are currently projected to not exceed 40.6%.
 - Impacts to wild Group B steelhead are currently projected at 2.0% compared to the 2% ESA impact limit.
 - URB impacts are projected to be 10% compared to the 15% ESA impact limit.
 - Impacts to Lower Columbia River (LCN) coho are limited to a 23% exploitation rate for ocean and in-river fisheries.

Future Meetings

- The Joint staff will recommend additional hearings as needed.