

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT: FALL FACT SHEET #9
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
September 29, 2016

Fisheries under consideration:	Treaty commercial gillnet fishery Select Area commercial gillnet fishery Non-Indian commercial mainstem salmon fishery review Recreational mainstem salmon fishery review
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Detailed information on stock status and management guidelines for the 2016 fall season were presented in Fall Factsheet #1 (July 27,2016).

STOCK STATUS

- Passage at Bonneville Dam since August 1 totals 416,503 adult fall Chinook. For the third consecutive week, the *U.S. v OR* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) downgraded the fall Chinook return on September 26 and currently estimates 729,200 adult fish will return to the Columbia River, including 432,300 upriver bright (URB) Chinook and 50,700 Bonneville Pool Hatchery (BPH) tule Chinook.
- Passage at Bonneville Dam since July 1 totals 157,929 upriver summer steelhead. TAC currently estimates a steelhead run of 168,500 fish to Bonneville Dam, which is slightly improved over last week’s projection. The current forecast includes 128,000 Group A stock (31,900 wild), and 40,500 Group B stock (5,700 wild). All components of the return are less than preseason forecasts except for the Group B hatchery return, which is greater than forecasted.
- The 2016 Coho forecast to the Columbia River is for a return of 322,600 adults, which includes 132,900 early stock and 189,700 late stock. The forecast is 73% of the 2006-2015 average of 441,400 fish. Bonneville Dam passage is expected to total 84,300 adult Coho, which represents 76% of the total ocean abundance of Columbia River Coho destined for areas upstream of Bonneville Dam.
- At Bonneville Dam, the counting period for early-stock Coho continues through September 30 and transitions to late-stock Coho beginning October 1. Preseason passage expectations included 47,200 early- and 37,100 late-stock Coho. Passage of early-stock Coho is well behind expectations with 28,482 adult fish counted at Bonneville Dam.
- Lower river Coho (including lower Columbia naturally-produced fish (LCN)) are just beginning to enter the tributaries, so current information on run strength is limited.

RIVER CONDITIONS

- The Columbia River flows at Bonneville Dam are currently 108 kcfs, which is higher than the ten-year average of 94 kcfs.
- Water temperature at Bonneville Dam is 65° F, which is slightly lower than the recent ten-year average of 66° F.

TREATY INDIAN FISHERIES

- Based on the updated Columbia River mouth forecasts of 432,300 URB fall Chinook and 40,500 Group B steelhead, the corresponding impact limits under the MA for treaty Indian fisheries are 129,690 adult upriver bright fall Chinook (30%) and 8,100 Group B steelhead (20%). Actual allowed catches are based on actual, not forecasted run sizes.
- The tribes are currently in the sixth weekly commercial gillnet fishery. Preliminary catches are available for the first five weeks along with a projection for the current week. The tribes have also modeled catches for a fishery next week. The Chinook stock composition for last week's fishery will change when CWT data are available. The preliminary and projected catches are shown in the table below.

2016 Treaty Indian Fall Season Fisheries (preliminary catches)					
Fishery	Expected Effort (Nets)	Total Adult Chinook	URB Chinook	Total Steelhead	B Steelhead
Platforms through Aug. 21	na	1,358	962	950	60
Aug. 22-26 (4.5 days)	423	9,136	8,007	725	88
Aug. 29-Sep 2 (4.5 days)	454	19,444	13,804	514	74
Sept. 5-9 (4.5 days)	644	47,324	32,089	1,641	336
Sept. 8-12 (4.5 days)	703	29,336	20,346	1,691	331
Sept. 19-23 (4.5 days) prelim.	586	16,787	11,616	2,236	950
Sept. 26-30 (4.5 days) proj.	440	10,900	9,100	1,400	700
Subtotal		134,285	95,924	9,157	2,539
Oct. 3-7 (4.5 days) Modeled	400	7,100	5,700	1,900	1,000
Total		141,385	101,624	11,057	3,539
Allowed at updated run size			129,690		8,100
Expected Harvest Rate by Sept. 30			22%		6%
Remaining after Sept. 30			33,766		5,561
Remaining Harvest Rate After Sept. 30			8%		14%
Expected Harvest Rate by Oct. 7			24%		9%
Remaining After Oct. 7			28,066		4,561
Remaining harvest rate after Oct. 7			6%		11%

- The above table includes a small amount of harvest from bank fishing downstream of Bonneville totaling 280 Chinook, 250 steelhead, and 40 Coho.
- Additionally, the total tribal Coho catch is 2,350 fish.
- The projected catch rates for this week and next week are based on recent-year average harvest rates scaled to observed catch rates so far this fall. Platform and hook and line harvest is included in the weekly gillnet projections for weeks with gillnet fishing.
- These fisheries are similar in structure to recent years. The tribes expect that there will be remaining URB Chinook and Group B steelhead impacts after next week and that there could be another fishing period the following week.
- The Spring Creek Hatchery continues to collect broodstock and spawn fish. In an effort to help increase broodstock collection, the tribes will continue to use the larger Spring Creek Hatchery sanctuary next week.
- The four Columbia River treaty tribes have adopted regulations consistent with the following:

2016 Treaty Indian Fall Commercial Gillnet Fishery		
Season:	6 AM Monday October 3 to 6 PM Friday October 7	(4.5 days)
Area:	Zone 6	
Sanctuaries:	Closed areas in effect include standard dam and river mouth areas applicable to gillnet gear including the standard Spring Creek Hatchery sanctuary.	
Gear:	Gill nets. 8-inch minimum mesh restriction.	
Allowable Sales:	Salmon (any species), steelhead, shad, yellow perch, bass, walleye, catfish, and carp may be sold or retained for subsistence. Sturgeon may not be sold, but sturgeon from 38 to 54 inches fork length in the Bonneville Pool and sturgeon from 43 to 54 inches fork length in The Dalles and John Day Pools and may be kept for subsistence purposes. Fish landed during the open periods are allowed to be sold after the period concludes.	
Additional:	24-hour quick reporting required for Washington buyers, pursuant to WAC 220-69-240 except that landings must be reported within 24-hours of completing the fish ticket.	

–Catch and effort will be monitored to ensure the fishery remains within management limits. Set-net effort will be monitored by aerial surveys each week. The tribes expect to set additional gillnet fishing time after this period.

–Zone 6 platform and hook-and-line fisheries and Yakama Nation tributary fisheries are open for both subsistence and commercial use and do not require Compact action.

NON-TREATY FISHERIES

Recreational Fisheries

- The Buoy 10 recreational fishery is scheduled to be open for Chinook retention through December 31; mark-selective Chinook regulations will be lifted October 1. Season total catch projections (including release mortalities) include 19,200 Chinook and 10,100 Coho from 93,400 angler trips.
- The lower Columbia River (LCR) recreational fishery downstream of Warrior Rock is scheduled to be open for Chinook retention through December 31; mark-selective Chinook regulations will be lifted October 1. The catch estimate through September 25 includes 11,929 Chinook and 473 Coho kept from 71,604 angler trips. Season total catch projections (including release mortalities) include 13,700 Chinook and 600 Coho.
- The LCR recreational fishery from Warrior Rock upstream to Bonneville Dam is scheduled to be open for Chinook retention through December 31. Catch estimates through September 25 include 10,373 Chinook and 238 Coho kept from 49,700 angler trips. Season total catch projections (including release mortalities) include 12,900 Chinook and 400 Coho.
- The recreational fishery from Bonneville Dam upstream to the Highway 395 is scheduled to remain open through December 31. The season total catch projection for this fishery is 5,800 Chinook.

Mainstem Commercial Fisheries

- The Early Fall fishery consisted of 11 fishing periods in Zone 4-5 during August 7-31. These periods were nine hours in duration and restricted to a 9-inch minimum mesh size. Catch includes 46,615 Chinook and 427 Coho.
- The Late Fall fishery to date has consisted of two fishing periods in Zone 4-5 (September 18 and September 22). Catch includes 11,622 Chinook and 283 Coho.
- The seine fishery is scheduled to be open through September 30. Landings through September 26 total 985 adult Chinook and 392 adult Coho. Season total catch projections (including release mortalities) include 1,300 adult Chinook and 1,000 adult Coho
- Preseason modeling included Chinook-directed fishing periods and Coho tangle net fishing periods in October. With the reduced Chinook runsize, and Coho passage at Bonneville Dam less than forecast, the number of salmon remaining available for harvest is difficult to project.
- At this time staff is not making any recommendations for additional non-treaty commercial fishing periods. TAC will update the salmon and steelhead run sizes on Monday, October 3. Staff will model potential fisheries once the run update is available.
- Currently, around 3,000 Chinook (0.42% URB impact) remain for October commercial fisheries. The balance of harvestable fish will change with any adjustments to the Chinook run size.

Select Area Commercial Fisheries

- Select Area fisheries are ongoing and scheduled to continue through October. Catch is less than expected preseason. Harvest through September 24 includes 13,351 Chinook and 28,845 Coho.
- Tule fall Chinook returns to Big Creek Hatchery are currently less than broodstock needs. Approximately 2.5 million eggs have been collected which is 42% of the 6.0 million goal.
- Coho returns to date are low which is normal for the date, but the egg take goal at Big Creek has increased to 6.0 million which requires approximately 2,700 females (nearly double the 2015 actual return).
- Although harvest of both Chinook and Coho in the Knappa/Blind Slough fisheries is low compared to recent years and is currently declining, maximizing egg collections at Big Creek Hatchery is a priority so action to reduce interception of adult returns is warranted.

<i>Recommendation: Select Area Commercial Fisheries</i>
Rescind all 16 fishing periods currently scheduled to occur in the Knappa Slough Select Area fishery from October 3 through October 28, 2016. Knappa Slough fishing area includes all waters bounded by a line from the north marker at the mouth of Blind Slough, westerly to a marker on Karlson Island downstream to boundary lines defined by markers on the west end of Minaker Island to markers on Karlson Island and the Oregon shore.

- The Blind Slough Select Area fishery located upstream of Big Creek remains open as previously scheduled.

- Oregon will be extending the current recreational angling closure in Big Creek from the hatchery deadline downstream to the railroad trestle (inclusive) through October 31 (standard annual closure is from Sept. 1-30).

Non-Treaty Impact Summary

- Given current run size estimates, season total ESA impacts for actual, on-going, and planned non-treaty fisheries are projected as follows:
- LRH impacts at 31.7% (41.0% limit)
- URB impacts at 15.0% (of 15.0% limit).
- Group A Wild steelhead at 0.9% (2.0% limit)
- Wild Group B steelhead at 1.2% (of 2.0% limit).

Future Hearings

- The Joint Staff is not recommending any hearings at this time.
- The tribes request a Compact hearing Wednesday or Thursday October 5 or 6 to consider a possible additional commercial gillnet opening.