

Columbia River Salmon Fishery Management Policy 3630: Annual Update 2023

January 26, 2024

Dr. Charlene Hurst and Ryan Lothrop,
Columbia River Management Unit



Presentation Outline

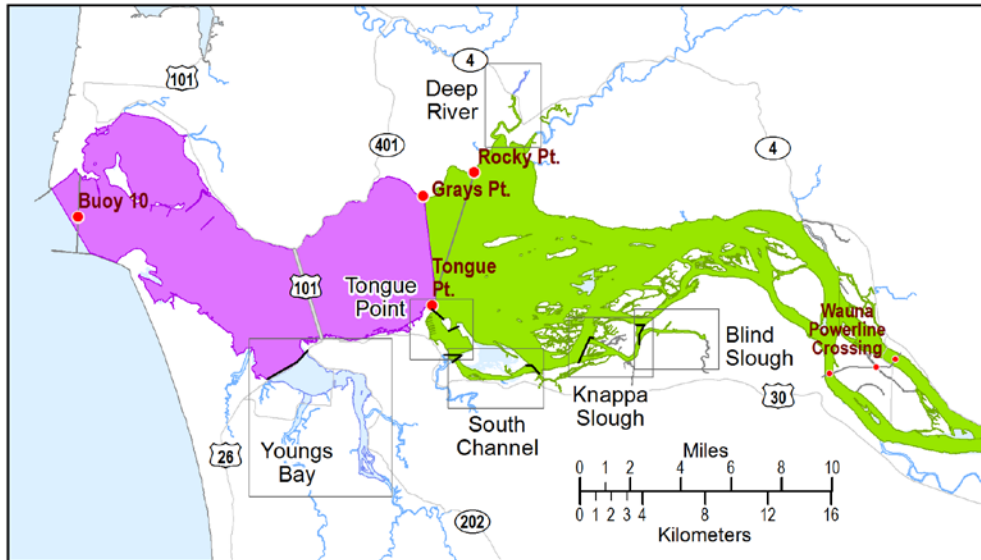
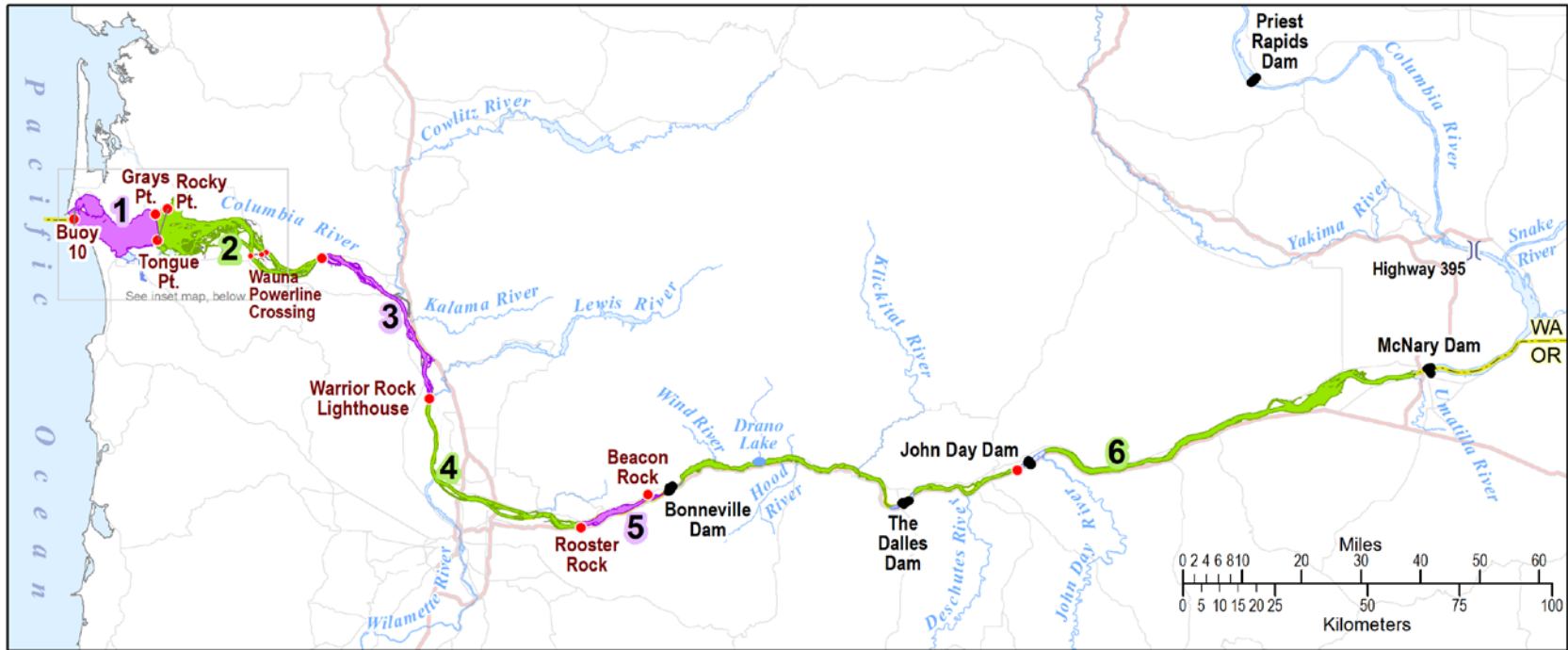
- Review of 2023 Fisheries
- Updates on other C-3630 Elements
 - Alternative commercial gear
 - Commercial license reduction
 - Scientific monitoring
- Staff recommendations for two director delegation items



Mainstem Fisheries Review

- Includes fisheries described in the ‘Fishery Specific Provisions’ of C-3630.
- Statistics provided are considered preliminary, and subject to change, as run reconstruction is currently on-going through the winter.
- Run sizes and impact rates are based on Columbia River mouth run size unless otherwise indicated and are subject to change pending run reconstruction.





WDFW Fish Science, 11/23/2021



Upriver Spring Chinook



Run size

- Preseason: 198,600 (13,200 Snake River natural-origin)
- Final run size: 141,179 (10,826 Snake River natural-origin)

Allocation & Gears

- WA (policy): 70% recreational (70% Lower Columbia River (LCR; downstream of Bonneville Dam), 10% Bonn-OR/WA state line, 20% Snake), 30% commercial (any gear any period)
- OR (rule): 80% recreational (75% LCR, 10% Bonn-OR/WA state line, 15% Snake), 20% commercial (post-update tangle net only)
- **2023 (Management Approach): 70% recreational (70% LCR, 10% Bonn-OR/WA state line, 15% Snake, 5% unallocated); 20% commercial (post-update tangle net only); 10% unallocated**

ESA Impacts

- Recreational: 0.49% out of 1.06% ESA impacts allocated (46% of allocation)
- Commercial: 0.31% out of 0.32% allocated (97%)
- **Final (in-river) non-treaty ESA impacts: 0.80% out of 1.60% allowed**



Upper Columbia Summer Chinook



Run size

- Preseason: 85,400
- Preliminary final run size: 54,722

Allocation & Gears

- WA: below (<) Priest Rapids Dam (PRD): 70% recreational, 30% commercial (gillnets allowed)
- OR: <PRD: 80% recreational, 20% commercial (gillnets not allowed)
- **2023: <PRD: 70% recreational; 20% commercial (no gillnets); 10% unallocated**

Catch Sharing

- <PRD
 - Recreational: 2,298 of 1,218 allocated (189%)
 - Commercial: 51 of 348 allocated (15%)
- **Preliminary non-treaty (in-river, ocean) harvest rate: 28.2% out of 26.1% allowed**



Sockeye



Run size

- Preseason: 234,500 (2,600 Snake River)
- Final run size: 329,040 (1,999 Snake River)

Allocation

- WA: 70% recreational, 30% commercial
- OR: 80% recreational, 20% commercial
- **2023: 70% recreational; 20% commercial; 10% unallocated**

ESA Impacts

- Recreational: 0.43% out of 0.70% ESA impacts allocated (62% of allocation)
- Commercial: 0.001% out of 0.20% allocated (0.6%)
- **Final non-treaty (in-river) Snake River ESA impacts: 0.44% out of 1.0% allowed**



Fall Chinook



Run size

- Lower River Hatchery; surrogate for ESA-listed Lower Columbia River
Preseason: 73,100 (no current ability to update the run size)
- Upriver Bright; surrogate for ESA-listed Snake River Wild
Preseason: 278,500; Inseason run size: 378,000
- Final run size for aggregate and stock specific runs are not available yet.

Allocation & Gears

- WA: $\leq 70\%$ recreational, $\geq 30\%$ commercial of most constraining fall stock; gillnet Zones 1-5
- OR: $\leq 70\%$ recreational, $\geq 30\%$ commercial of most constraining fall stock; alternative gear sub-allocation; gillnet Zones 4-5; recreational season objectives
- **2023: $\leq 70\%$ recreational, $\geq 30\%$ commercial of most constraining fall stock; gillnet Zones 4-5**

ESA Impacts

- Lower River Hatchery (Lower River Natural ESA component); most constraining fall stock
Recreational: 4.35% out of $\leq 6.57\%$ allocated ESA impacts (66% of allocation)
Commercial: 1.73% out of $\geq 2.83\%$ allocated (61%)
Inseason (in-river, ocean, northern) ESA impacts: 34.7% out of 38.0% allowed
- Upriver Bright (URB)/Snake River Wild (SRW ESA component)
Inseason non-treaty (in-river): 13.4% URB and 12.8% SRW ESA out of 15.0% allowed each



Subsection b: Fall 2023

September 13 Compact

- Director's statement provides direction for staff to focus on most constraining stock (LCR tules)
- Staff must reserve 16% (0.46%) of allowable non-treaty commercial share of LCR ER
- WDFW cannot agree to a second zone 4/5 gillnet period, ODFW decides to set an OR waters only fishery for the second period

September 20 Compact

- WDFW can agree to 2 more zone 4/5 periods and still reserve 16% of non-treaty commercial share
- Effort was much less than staff projected at the previous compact

September 27 Compact

- WDFW can agree to 7 more zone 4/5 periods and still reserve 16% of non-treaty commercial share
- Tule Chinook impacts are estimated at 0% starting in October



Coho



Run size

- Preseason
 - Early stock: 354,000
 - Late stock: 241,300
- Not updated in-season and final season run size is unavailable at this time.

Allocation & Gears

- WA: ESA impacts prioritized by fishing sector with no numerical allocation; gillnets allowed
- OR: ESA impacts prioritized by fishing sector with no numerical allocation; gillnets not allowed
- **2023: ESA impacts are prioritized by fishing sector with no specific numerical allocation; no gillnet fishery; coho-directed fishery using tangle net gear and live-capture techniques**

ESA Impacts

- **Pre-season (in-river, ocean, northern) ESA impacts: 19.0% out of 23.0% allowed**



Chum



Run size

- Preseason: 5-year average run size is 20,714.

Allocation

- Commercial fisheries assign sufficient share to prosecute fisheries.
- No retention in commercial or recreational fisheries.

ESA Impacts

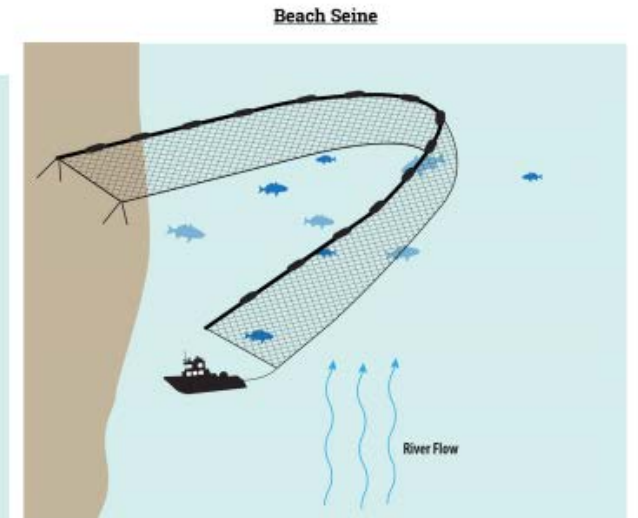
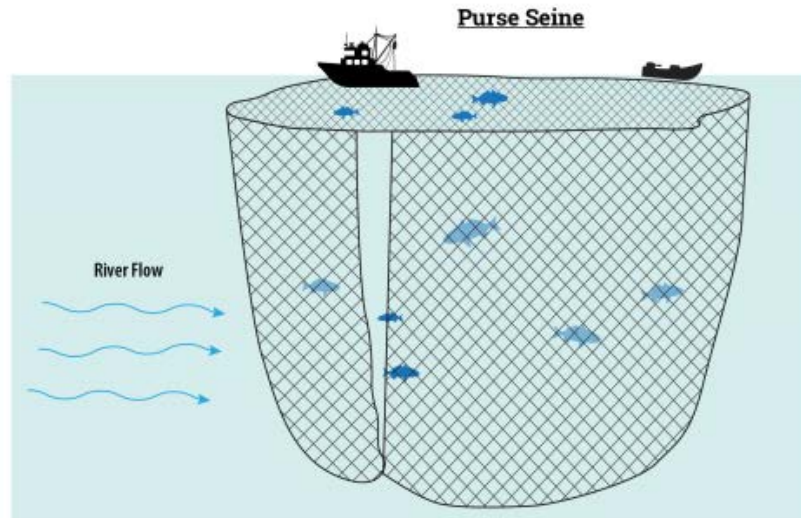
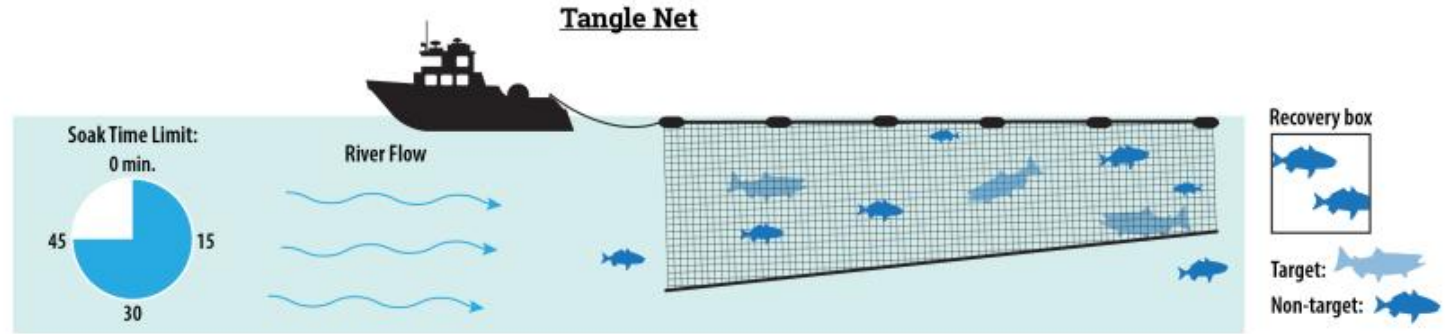
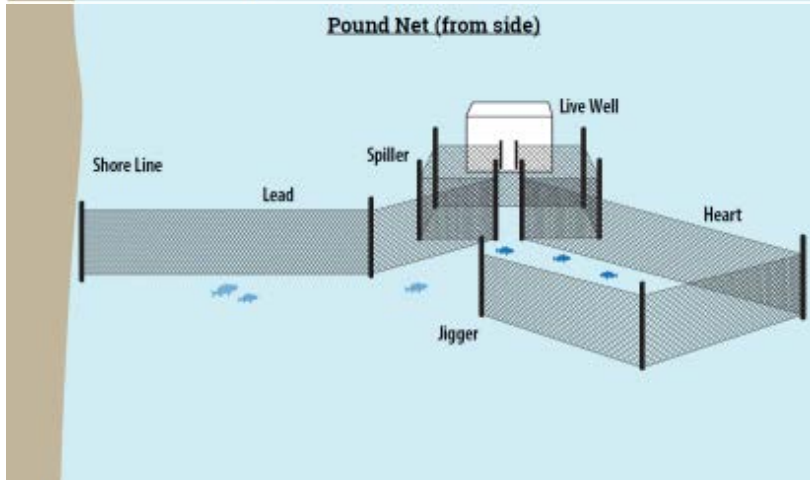
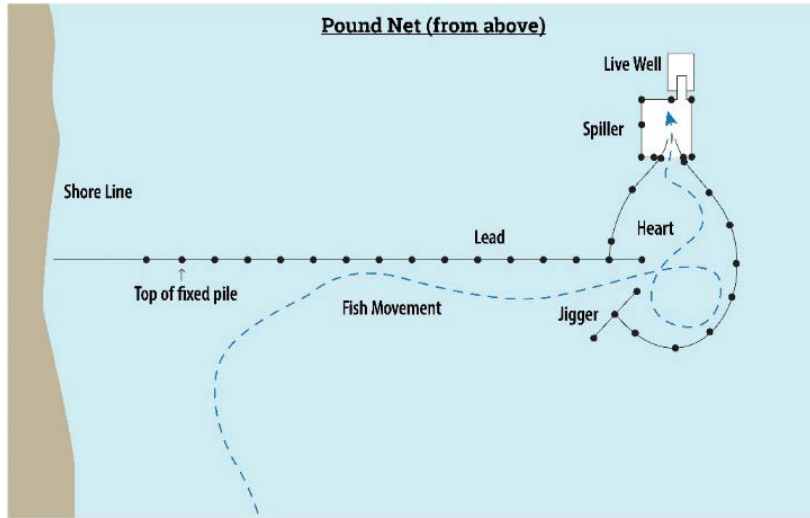
- **Inseason non-treaty (in-river) ESA impacts: 1.1% out of 5.0% allowed**



Alternative Commercial Gear



Alternative Commercial Gear



Emerging Commercial Fishery Purpose

WDFW is using the Emerging Commercial Fishery (ECF) process established by the legislature to test alternative gear commercially - RCW 77.65.400

- WDFW has completed rulemaking to designate the fishery: WAC 360-220-(510-540)
- Questions remain around economic viability, permitting and licensing structure, and commercial operations
 - RCW requires a report to the legislature after the ECF ends to recommend whether a gear should be legalized
- Successful gears will need to be economically viable; gillnets are currently the only proven tool for the commercial fishery



ECF Proviso (23-25) Language

28 (51) \$250,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal
29 year 2024 and \$250,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for
30 fiscal year 2025 are provided solely for grants to commercial fishers
31 to modify fishing gear in order to facilitate participation in the
32 emerging commercial fishery in the lower Columbia river, and to fund
33 staffing and supplies needed to monitor the emerging commercial
34 fishery on the lower Columbia river. The purpose of the grants to
35 modify fishing gear is to support the state's efforts to develop
36 fishing tools that allow for increased harvest of hatchery fish while
37 minimizing impacts to salmonid species listed as threatened or
38 endangered under the federal endangered species act. The department
39 must provide a report of goods and services purchased with grant

Code Rev/KS:lel

435

H-2006.4/23 4th draft

1 funds to the appropriate committees of the legislature by June 30,
2 2025.



Fisher Gear Grant

- Planned for up to 6 participants; 4 have been selected
 - Up to 3 pound nets
 - Up to 3 seines (beach/purse)
- Provide \$20k each fisher for modified gear
- Provide an additional ~\$5k each fisher for other associated costs (other fund source)



Resources

- [Columbia River fisheries and management | Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife](#)
- [Selective Fishing on the Columbia River \(wa.gov\):
https://wdfw.wa.gov/sites/default/files/publications/02353/wdfw02353.pdf](#)
- [Subsection C Report to Legislature: Columbia River Commercial Fisheries and Gear | Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife](#)



Fall Tangle-Net Study

Purpose: An additional year of fishing occurred in 2023 to evaluate the release mortality rate of tangle net gear targeting hatchery coho using monofilament nets.

- Columbia River commercial fisher concept
- OR/WA joint state effort
- At the conclusion of the study, fishing results will be posted on our webpage.



Commercial License Reduction



2022 License Reduction Proviso

(65) \$14,400,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2023 is provided solely for the department to reduce the number of nontribal commercial gillnet fishing licenses on the Columbia River through a voluntary buy-back program.

- (a) Until November 30, 2022, the department may pay up to \$25,000 each for licenses that have been inactive since 2019 and up to \$120,000 each for licenses that have been active since 2019. After November 30, 2022, the department may pay up to \$20,000 each for licenses that have been inactive since 2019 and up to \$96,000 each for licenses that have been active since 2019. It is the intent of the legislature that this will be the last appropriation made to buy back licenses for the Columbia River gillnet fishery.
- (b) For all licenses purchased, the department shall calculate the reduced impacts to wild and endangered stocks based on the most recent five-year average of harvest and reserve those impacts for conservation through increased wild salmonid escapement or mark selective fisheries capable of harvesting surplus hatchery-reared salmon where needed to meet federal genetic protection requirements for wild salmon populations in a manner consistent with state-tribal fishery management agreements.
- (c) The department must make recommendations to the legislature for any necessary changes in statute, regulations, or program funding levels to transition lower Columbia River mainstem gillnet fisheries to alternative, selective fishing gears, including pound nets or other gears capable of benefitting wild salmon conservation through mark-selective harvest practices. The recommendation must be submitted to the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2022.

[Columbia River license reduction program | Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife](#)



Subsection a - Program Structure

Eligibility

- Accessible to all interested license holders
- Based on license status
 - Active – license holder renew w/ full fishing privileges in 2019, 2020 or 2021
 - Inactive – license holder in waiver status 2019, 2020 and 2021

Program structure

Round 1 – fixed bid

- Inactive – \$25,000
- Active – \$90,835, based on interest

Round 2 – reverse auction, bids accepted lowest to highest (\$180,000 total to spend)

- Inactive – price set by license holder, max \$20,000
- Active – price set by license holder, max \$90,000



70% Licenses Retired

	Willapa Bay - Columbia River	Grays Harbor – Columbia River	Total
Beginning # Washington Columbia River Gillnet Licenses (January 2022)	181	59	240
Active licenses retired	116	38	154
Inactive licenses retired	13	5	18
License not renewed in 2022	1		1
Remaining	51	16	67*

*13 had landings within the Columbia River from 2017-2021



Scientific Monitoring (Data Collection)



Pacific Salmon Treaty funds

- WDFW was awarded Mark-Selective Funds (\$94k) during 2023 to supplement mainstem mark-selective sampling during the Buoy 10 fishery in coordination with the Ocean Sampling Team.
- WDFW received an additional \$95k to supplement annual mainstem non-treaty fishery sampling to improve CWT recoveries and collect mark status of released salmon during summer/fall fisheries.



Recreational Angler Survey

- Lower river fishery closures in recent years.
- Special Fish Committee report on Nov 30, 2022.
- ODFW/WDFW staff conducted an online survey during winter 2022-2023.
- Intent was to gather perspectives from anglers who participate in recreational fall Chinook fisheries to inform pre-season planning process.

[columbia-river-angler-opinion-survey.pdf \(wa.gov\)](#)



Commercial Logbook WAC Development

WDFW has initiated rule-making to require fishers with a Washington commercial fishery license to complete and submit a logbook in the Columbia River.

- CR-101 filed January 3, 2024
- Requires coordination with ODFW as fisheries are jointly managed.
- Stakeholder outreach will include the ODFW/WDFW Columbia River Commercial advisory group.



Guide License Limitation

- WA made logbooks mandatory for guides beginning in 2020.
- Data from logbooks and creel may inform future direction.
- This topic would benefit from continued coordination with OR at the Commission level.



Hatchery and Natural Production Goals

Goals exist in a variety of places:

- The Columbia Basin Partnership
 - Further supported by a Presidential Memo in September 2023
- Recovery plans
- Management agreements
- HGMPs/FMEPs/Biological Opinions

Work through the Columbia Basin Collaborative (CBC) recommends actions needed to help achieve the goals defined in the Columbia Basin Partnership.



Thermal Angling Sanctuaries

WDFW staff completed a white paper, posted on our website:
[Fishery Management in Columbia River Cold Water Refuge for Salmonids | Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife](#)



Find out more!

- We are continually updating our Columbia River Fisheries and Management webpages with new information:
[Columbia River fisheries and management | Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife](#)
- You can sign up for our Columbia River updates e-mail list serve:
[WDFW mailing lists | Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife](#)



Director Delegation Requests

- Staff Recommend: The Commission take action to approve director delegation for the WDFW Director to work with the ODFW Director to implement concurrent fishing regulations in jointly managed waters of the Columbia River for 2024.
- Staff Recommend: The Commission take action to approve director delegation for the Columbia River commercial logbook rule-making.



Motion Language

- I move to approve Director Delegation for the WDFW Director to work with the ODFW Director to implement concurrent fishing regulations in jointly managed waters of the Columbia River for 2024.
- I move to approve Director Delegation for the Columbia River commercial logbook rule-making.

