

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT: SPRING FACT SHEET NO. 1
Columbia River Compact
April 9, 2012

<i>Fisheries under Consideration:</i> Non-Indian Mainstem Commercial Salmon
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Stock status and management guidelines for 2012 Chinook fisheries were presented in Winter Fact Sheet #1 (January 26, 2012).

Water Conditions

- The Willamette River crested at 16.2 feet on April 2 and is projected to drop to 10.2 feet by Saturday April 14.
- The Columbia River crested at 16.0 feet (Vancouver) with a projected drop to 12 feet by Tuesday April 10. Discharge at Bonneville Dam is currently at 327 kcfs (99 kcfs of which is spill) compared to a 5-year average of 191 kcfs for this date. Water temperature is currently 45.0° F compared a 5-year average of 46.2° F for this date. So far, monthly (Jan-Apr) average water temperatures have been colder than both the 5 and 10-year averages.

Stock Status

- Bonneville Dam passage of Chinook through April 8 totals 98 adults. Passage at Bonneville averages less than 1% complete through April 8, and has been late-timed for six of the past ten years. The average 50% passage date is May 7, ranging from April 24 to May 12 over the past ten years. It is still too early in the run to make any conclusions regarding run size.
- Winter steelhead abundance typically peaks in mid-March, then declines as the fish move into the tributaries. Passage at Bonneville Dam and Willamette Falls indicates the run is tracking at or above expectations.

Commercial Fisheries

- The number of upriver spring Chinook (kept plus release mortalities) available to the mainstem commercial fishery prior to a run size update is 5,900 adult fish. An additional 9,600 Willamette spring Chinook are available to commercial fisheries for the 2012 spring season.
- A 12-hour fishing period occurred on April 3 in Zones 1-5 (Buoy10-Beacon Rock). Mesh size was restricted to 4 ¼-inch maximum mesh size. Landings (2,470 Chinook) and stock composition (63% upriver) were similar to expectations. Upriver spring Chinook mortalities totaled 1,597 fish, or 27% of the pre-update allocation for mainstem commercial fisheries. Impacts to wild winter steelhead were 0.23%.
- Test fishing has occurred once weekly since February 14 mainly in Zones 2-3. Test fishing has been conducted with both tangle net (4.25-inch mesh) and large mesh gear (8-inch gear). The most recent test fishery occurred on Sunday April 8 with tangle net gear (17 drifts).

2012 Spring Chinook Observation Summary_ All data preliminary																
Chinook Adult Data																
						Lower R.			UpRiver						Steelhead	
# of						Ad-	No	Ad-	No	Ttl	Chin/	Chin/	Sthd/	Total	Ad-	
Fishery	Month	Date	Mesh	Drifts	Zones	Clip	Clip	Clip	Clip	Chin	Drift	Sthd	Drift	Sthd	Clip	
Test	Mar	4	4.25	8	2-3			1		1	0.1	0.1	1.0	8	2	
Test	Mar	4	8	8	2-3	2	1	1		4	0.5	4.0	0.1	1	1	
Test	Mar	11	4.25	12	1-3			4		4	0.3	0.2	2.2	26	16	
Test	Mar	11	8	5	1-3	1		2		4	0.8	2.0	0.4	2	2	
Test	Mar	18	4.25	18	2	11	3	8	3	25	1.4	0.6	2.2	40	25	
Test	Mar	18	8	2	2	3				3	1.5	0.0	0.0	0		
Test	Mar	25	4.25	18	2	21	2	11	4	38	2.1	1.3	1.6	29	20	
Test	Apr	1	4.25	16	2	25	3	24	2	55	3.4	4.6	0.8	12	8	
FullFleet	Apr	3	4.25	99	1-5	82	14	93	15	213	2.2	5.2	0.4	41	27	
Test	Apr	8	4.25	17	2	23	2	31	6	62	3.6	3.4	1.1	18	15	

- Based on the balance of the commercial allocation available (73%), the Chinook per drift, the Chinook mark rate and Chinook: steelhead ratio, and the April 10 sport angling closure, staff recommends the following commercial fishing period:

Joint Staff Recommendation- Non-Indian Salmon Commercial Fishery	
Season:	Noon to 6:00 PM Tuesday April 10, 2012 (6 hours)
Gear:	Drift nets only. 4¼" maximum mesh size restriction. Net length not to exceed 150 fathoms. Net length can increase from 150 to 175 fathoms for nets constructed with a steelhead excluder panel, weedlines, or droppers. Nets not specifically authorized for use in this fishery may be onboard the vessel if properly stored.
Area:	Zones 1-5
Sanctuaries:	Grays River, Elochoman-B, Abernathy Creek, Cowlitz River, Kalama-B, Lewis-B, Sandy and Washougal as applicable.
Allowable Sales:	Adipose fin-clipped Chinook salmon, shad and white sturgeon (43-54 inch fork length). A maximum of 6 white sturgeon may be possessed or sold by each participating vessel during each calendar week (Sunday through Saturday) that the fishery is open.

Standard regulations typically in place for spring Chinook commercial fisheries are in effect, including but not limited to: net length, use of recovery boxes, limited soak times, red corks, lighted buoys, tangle-net certification, etc.

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 45 minutes.

Red corks are required at 25 fathom intervals, and red corks must be in contrast to the corks used in the remainder of the net.

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

Recovery Box: Each boat will be 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 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 fish 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.

Additional Rules:

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.

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.

24-hour **quick reporting** required for Washington wholesale dealers, per WAC 220-69-240.

- The expected kept catch is 3,000 Chinook (2,500-3,500 range). Chinook catch is expected to include 2,350 upriver fish (kept and release mortalities) which represents 40% of the 5,900 upriver Chinook allowed pre-update and 27% of the 0.444% impact allowed pre-update. Combined with the April 3 fishery, the mainstem commercial fishery would be at 67% of the pre-update upriver spring Chinook allocation.
- Wild winter steelhead release mortalities are expected to be 31 fish (0.20% impact), or 10% of the 2.00% impact limit for wild winter steelhead, for a season total of 0.43% impact.

Preliminary Summary of 2012 Non-Indian Upriver Chinook Catch				
Fishery	UR Catch (kept + rel mort)	% of Allowable CB	Upriver Impact %	% of Allowable Impact
L. Col. R. Sport (Feb)	20	0.16%	0.001%	0.15%
L. Col. R. Sport (Mar)	1,060	8.37%	0.040%	5.98%
<i>L. Col. R. Sport (April 1-6, proj)</i>	83	0.66%	0.003%	0.47%
<i>L. Col. R. Sport (April 7- 13, proj.)</i>	875	6.91%	0.033%	4.90%
Mainstem Commercial (April 3)	1,597	26.99%	0.086%	19.37%
<i>Mainstem Commercial (April 10, proj.)</i>	2,350	40%	0.120%	46%
Actual and Projected Season Total	5,985	32.2%	0.283%	25.5%
Allowable Pre-Update	18,850		1.11%	

- An upriver runsize of 107,000 is required to meet catch balance provisions for the actual and proposed mainstem commercial and ongoing recreational fisheries downstream of Bonneville Dam.
- A balance of 428 fish, or 89% of the 480 white sturgeon allocated to winter/spring commercial fisheries remain available. Sturgeon harvest is expected to be less than 25 fish.

Future Meetings

- A Joint State hearing is scheduled for 12 PM noon Thursday April 12 to review the ongoing sport fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam.