

**OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT - SPRING FACT SHEET NO. 2
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
April 17, 2019**

<i>Fisheries under consideration:</i>	Mainstem recreational salmon downstream of Bonneville Dam
--	---

Detailed information on stock status and management guidelines for Columbia River fisheries are presented in Joint Staff Reports, which are produced annually and available on-line. The most recent reports are the 2019 Sturgeon/Smelt Report (January 18, 2019) and the 2019 spring/summer report for Chinook, sockeye, steelhead and other species (February 8, 2019). Links to the on-line reports are: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/columbia-river/reports> or <http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/OSCRP/CRM/reports.asp>

RIVER CONDITIONS

- Columbia River conditions recently measured at Bonneville Dam are lower, colder, and more turbid than recent 5-year averages for this time in April. Current outflow is 219 kcfs (including 113 kcfs spill), which is lower than the recent 5-year average of 277 kcfs. Water temperature currently measures 48° F, which is slightly colder than the average of 49° F. Visibility is 2.0 feet which is less than the average of 4.2 feet. The river stage at Vancouver is currently 10.0 feet and is forecasted to continue receding through this weekend to an average of about 8.5 feet after cresting at nearly 16.0 feet on April 12 (Action Stage is 15.0 feet and Flood Stage is 16.0 feet).

STOCK STATUS

- Adult Chinook passage at Bonneville Dam through April 16 totals 267 fish, which is the 2nd lowest passage in the last 10 years and only 4% of the 10-year (2009-2018) average count (6,564) for this date. On average, 2.8% of the run has passed Bonneville Dam by April 16 (range: 0.2% - 10.7%). As evidenced by the variability in proportion passage complete by this date, cumulative counts in mid-April are not a reliable indicator of final passage. The recent 10-yr average 50% passage date at Bonneville Dam is May 9.
- Weekly test fishing in the lower Columbia River began on Monday, March 18, with five days completed so far. Catch rates (Chinook per drift) increased for the first three Mondays (0.3, 0.7, and 0.9) consistent with 2018, but dropped to 0.5 on April 8 (2.3 in 2018). Catch rates improved significantly on April 15 to 5.0 Chinook per drift (6.8 in 2018).
- Tributary returns of spring Chinook are typically minimal this early in the year; a handful of fish have already returned to the Lewis and Cowlitz hatcheries.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

- Forecasts and management guidelines for 2019 spring Chinook fisheries were presented in Winter Fact Sheet #4 (February 20, 2019).

2019 NON-TREATY FISHERIES

Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Recreational Fishery - Below Bonneville Dam

- The lower Columbia River recreational spring Chinook fishery was open under temporary regulations from March 1 – April 10 and again for two additional days (April 13-14). Due to low projected returns to the Cowlitz and Lewis rivers, the fishery has been restricted to the area from Warrior Rock line (just upstream of the Lewis River) upstream to Bonneville Dam.
- Water temperatures for a majority of the season were much colder than average but otherwise favorable for fishing. Heavy rains and runoff negatively affected the last part of the season. The estimated recreational Chinook kept catch through Wednesday April 10 is 1,531 adult spring Chinook from 25,600 angler trips. Both effort and catch were very low on April 13-14 due to poor water conditions. The combined kept catch through April 14 is estimated at 1,551 adult spring Chinook from 27,400 angler trips.
- Upriver mortalities through April 14 are estimated at 1,366 adult Chinook, or 37% of the 3,689 available to this fishery prior to a run update.
- Given the significant balance on the pre-season buffered allocation of upriver spring Chinook (2,323 fish remain available), there is potential for additional angling opportunity. Considering the limited in-season information available regarding the upriver spring Chinook run, staff recommends continuing with a conservative approach moving forward with this fishery. This will provide additional recreational opportunity while allowing staff the time to closely monitor the run and harvest. The Columbia River Recreational Advisory Group has previously prioritized weekend day re-openings when possible.

<i>Recommendation: 2019 Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Recreational Fishery</i>	
Downstream of Bonneville Dam	
Season:	Friday April 19 through Sunday April 21 3 retention days
Area:	<p>Warrior Rock line upstream to Beacon Rock (boat and bank) plus bank angling only from Beacon Rock upstream to the Bonneville Dam deadline. Angling for and retention of steelhead, salmon, and shad is prohibited from the Warrior Rock line downstream to Buoy 10.</p> <p>Legal downstream boundary defined as: A line projected from the Warrior Rock lighthouse on the Oregon shore to red USCG buoy #4, then to the piling dolphin on the lower end of Bachelor Island (Warrior Rock line).</p> <p>Legal upstream boat boundary defined as: A deadline marker on the Oregon bank (approximately four miles downstream from Bonneville Dam Powerhouse One) in a straight line through the western tip of Pierce Island to a deadline marker on the Washington bank at Beacon Rock.</p>
Daily Bag Limit:	Two adult salmonids (Chinook or steelhead) per day, but only one may be a Chinook. Only hatchery fish may be kept. Shad may also be retained. All other permanent regulations apply.

- The estimated kept catch for the proposed fishery of 696 adult Chinook (657 upriver mortalities) is based on an expected handle of 800 fish total (200-300 fish per day).
- With the proposed extension, projected cumulative upriver mortalities (2,023 adults) would represent 55% of the 3,689 mortalities available to the recreational fishery below Bonneville prior to a run update.
- An upriver spring Chinook run size of 53,300 adults would cover the projected cumulative mortalities for this fishery and pre-update set-asides for other non-treaty fisheries.
- Impacts to other listed stocks are expected to remain within take limitations based on recent year results. Fishery-specific impact rate expectations can found in the latest Spring/Summer Joint Staff Report in the 2019 Winter, Spring, and Summer Season Expectations section.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- The Joint Staff request a hearing be scheduled for Wednesday May 8, 2019 to consider Columbia River recreational salmon fishery upstream of Bonneville Dam.