

**OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT - SPRING FACT SHEET NO. 4
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
May 8, 2019**

<i>Fisheries under consideration:</i>	Select Area commercial Mainstem recreational salmon upstream of Bonneville Dam Mainstem recreational salmon downstream of Bonneville Dam
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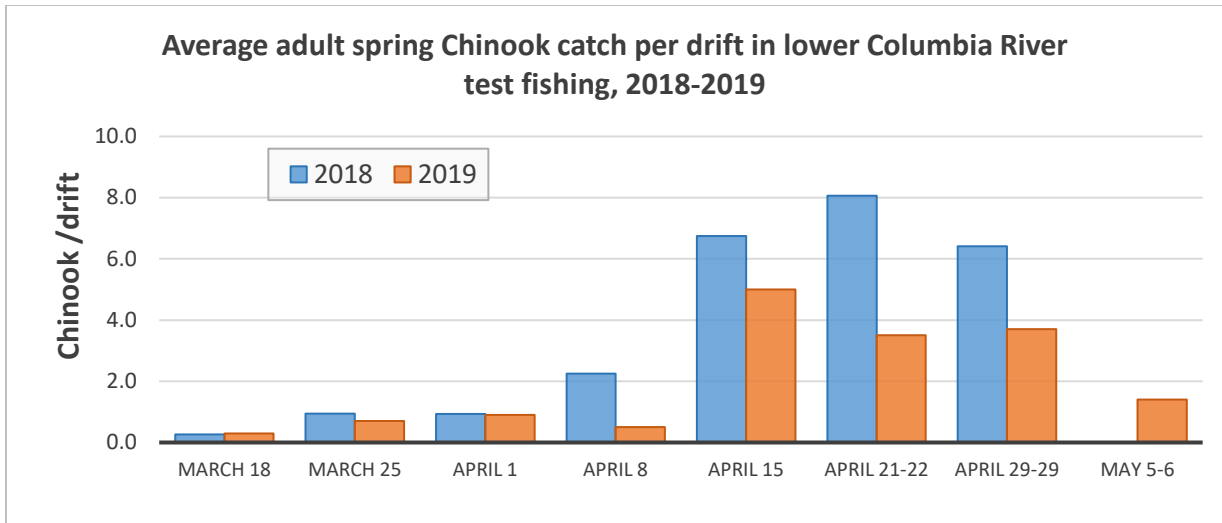
Detailed information on stock status and management guidelines for Columbia River fisheries are presented in Joint Staff Reports, which are produced annually and available on-line. The most recent reports are the 2019 Sturgeon/Smelt Report (January 18, 2019) and the 2019 spring/summer report for Chinook, 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 and more turbid than recent 5-year averages for this date in May. Current outflow is 244 kcfs (including 120 kcfs spill), which is lower than the recent 5-year average of 322 kcfs. Visibility is 3.0 feet which is less than the average of 4.5 feet. Water temperature currently measures 55° F, which is slightly warmer than the recent 5-year average of 54.4° F. The river stage at Vancouver is currently about 6.5 feet and is forecasted to remain at about the same level through this weekend.

STOCK STATUS

- Adult Chinook passage at Bonneville Dam through May 7 totals 25,073 fish, which is the 2nd lowest passage in the last 10 years and 28% of the 10-year (2009-2018) average cumulative count (88,476) for this date. On average, 45% of the run has passed Bonneville Dam by May 7 (range: 21%–66%). As evidenced by the variability in proportion passage complete by this date, cumulative counts in early May are not a reliable indicator of final passage. The recent 10-year average 50% passage date at Bonneville Dam is May 9.
- The *U.S. v Oregon* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met on Monday to review information relative to the upriver spring Chinook return. Passage at Bonneville Dam has improved over the past week; however, TAC agreed it is too early to provide a reliable in-season run-size update. This year’s return will need to be later timed than average to meet the pre-season forecasted return of 99,300 adult upriver spring Chinook to the Columbia River mouth.
- Test fishing in the lower Columbia River occurred weekly from March 18 through May 6 (8 weeks). Catch rates were lower than 2018 as presented in the figure below (the most recent test fishing event of May 5-6 represents a time that was not fished in 2018):



- Through May 7, Cowlitz and Lewis hatcheries report 219 and 208 adults have returned, respectively.

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

Select Area Commercial Fisheries

- Select Area commercial fisheries are currently open in all Oregon sites.
- Winter season landings totaled 695 spring Chinook (74% of recent 5-year average) and 18 sturgeon. Spring season landings through May 6 include 800 Chinook, which is well below average for this point in the season, and 75 sturgeon.
- Upriver mortalities through May 5 are estimated at 170 fish, or 53% of the 318 available at the pre-season run size. Interception of upriver-origin Chinook has been low since last week.
- The spring Select Area fishing schedule adopted in February includes expanded fishing opportunity in early May in Youngs Bay (open Monday–Friday) and Blind/Knappa sloughs (3 nights per week), whereas Tongue Point/South Channel is scheduled for two nights per week.
- Industry has requested additional fishing time in Tongue Point/South Channel to match the Blind/Knappa Slough schedule.

Recommendation: 2019 Select Area Commercial Fisheries

Adopt the following spring season periods for Tongue Point/South Channel (Zone 71):

7 PM Wednesday to 7 AM Thursday weekly from May 15 through June 13 (five periods).
All other previously adopted regulations for this site remain in effect.

- Based on results from 2017 and 2018, the proposed fishery modification is expected to add 10 upriver spring Chinook mortalities, or 3% of the total allowable commercial upriver spring Chinook impacts for 2019.
- With 47% of the Select Area commercial impacts remaining based on the preseason forecast, and low upriver fish interceptions, staff believes there are adequate impacts to accommodate the proposed additional fishing time.

Mainstem Spring Chinook Recreational Fishery – Bonneville Dam to OR/WA Border

- The recreational spring Chinook from Bonneville Dam upstream to the OR/WA border was open under temporary regulations through May 5.
- Catch for most of the season was very low due to late-timed spring Chinook passage and poor water conditions. The estimated catch through May 5 totals 119 adult Chinook kept and 20 released from 1,551 angler trips, most of which occurred this past weekend.
- Upriver mortalities are estimated to be 121 adult Chinook, or 25% of the 492 available to this fishery prior to a run update.
- With 75% (371 fish) of the pre-season buffered allocation available for this fishery, there is potential for some additional fishing opportunity.

<i>Recommendation: 2019 Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Recreational Fishery</i>		
Bonneville Dam to Oregon/Washington Border		
Season:	Saturday May 11 through Monday May 13	3 retention days
Area:	Tower Island power lines (approximately 6 miles below The Dalles Dam) upstream to Oregon/Washington border, plus the Oregon and Washington banks between Bonneville Dam and the Tower Island power lines.	
Daily Bag Limit:	Two adult salmonids (Chinook or steelhead) per day, but only one may be a Chinook. Only adipose fin-clipped fish may be kept. All other permanent regulations apply.	

- The combined upriver mortalities for the proposed fishery are not expected to exceed 340 fish, which would bring the season total to 461 fish, or 94% of the preseason (i.e. buffered) guideline for this fishery.
- An upriver spring Chinook run size of 52,500 adults would cover the projected cumulative mortalities for this fishery, estimated mortalities to date for the lower river recreational fishery, and pre-update set-asides for other non-treaty fisheries. To achieve this minimum run size, the 50% passage date could be no earlier than May 7.

Mainstem Columbia River Spring Chinook Recreational Fishery - Below Bonneville Dam

- The lower Columbia River (LCR) recreational spring Chinook fishery was open under temporary regulations from March 1 – April 10, April 13-14, April 20-21, and April 27-28. Due to low projected returns to the Cowlitz and Lewis rivers, the fishery was restricted to the area from Warrior Rock line (just upstream of the Lewis River) upstream to Bonneville Dam.

- The combined season kept catch is estimated at 1,676 adult spring Chinook from 31,707 angler trips.
- Upriver mortalities are estimated to be 1,471 adult Chinook, or 40% 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 (2,218 fish remain available) for this fishery, there is potential for additional angling opportunity.
- Given the current uncertainty regarding the upriver spring Chinook run size, the most conservative approach is to postpone additional LCR Chinook openings until an in-season upriver run update is available (which may not occur until May 20). At that time, additional information will be available regarding updated allocations of upriver Chinook and the run timing and/or abundance of Cowlitz and Lewis river hatchery fish. This information would help inform decisions regarding additional angling opportunity.
- If a LCR fishery was considered for this coming weekend (May 11-12), the fishery should still be restricted to the area upstream of the Lewis River. Past coded-wire tag information indicates Lewis- and Cowlitz-origin spring Chinook could still be intercepted downstream of Warrior Rock, although the majority of these returns should be entering terminal tributaries. In addition, hatchery escapement goals for these facilities have not been achieved.
- Given projected water conditions and assumed Chinook abundance, the combined kept catch for a weekend fishery from Warrior Rock upstream to Bonneville Dam (bank-only upstream of Beacon Rock) would be 250 total adult Chinook (246 upriver mortalities). Total upriver mortalities (1,717 adults) would represent 47% 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 the recreational fisheries above and pre-update set-asides for other non-treaty fisheries. To achieve this minimum run size, the 50% passage date could be no earlier than May 8.
- 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.

Snake River Spring Chinook Recreational Fishery – Washington waters

- The spring Chinook salmon fishery is scheduled to be open in two sections of the lower Snake River until further notice on a two days per week schedule (Saturday and Sunday) beginning May 11, 2019.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- No additional Compact or Joint State hearings are scheduled at this time. The Joint Staff will monitor fisheries and recommend additional hearings as needed.