

COLUMBIA RIVER INTER-TRIBAL FISH COMMISSION
JOINT STAFF REPORT - FALL FACT SHEET NO. 6a
Columbia River Compact
September 10, 2020

Fisheries under Consideration: Treaty Commercial Gillnet

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 2020 Fall Report was distributed on July 22, 2020. 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/jsmreports.asp>

RIVER CONDITIONS

- The recent five-day average Columbia River flow at Bonneville Dam as of September 9 is 107 kcfs which is slightly higher than the five-year average flow of 99 kcfs on this date.
- The recent 5-day average water temperature at Bonneville is 69.5°F, which is similar to the five-year average.
- The recent 5-day average temperature measured at Elliot Point in the estuary by CMOP¹ (Center for Coastal Margin Observation and Prediction) is approximately 68°F.

STOCK STATUS

- Stock status information was presented in Fall Fact Sheet 1.

Fall Chinook

- Bonneville Dam passage through September 9 totals 221,171 adult and 28,402 jack fall Chinook. This is the fifth largest cumulative adult count to date and fifth largest jack count to date in the last 10 years. The clip rate is approximately 56%, which is higher than average.
- Based on visual stock sampling, a total of 177,474 adult bright stock fish (comprised of the URB and PUB stocks) have passed Bonneville Dam. A total of 29,527 adult tules (primarily BPH stock) have also passed Bonneville Dam. Bright stock passage is typically 45% complete on September 9 based on 10-year average run timing but has been as much as 65% complete on this date within the last 10 years. Tule passage is typically 64% complete on September 9 based on 10-year average run timing but has been as much as 85% complete in the last 10 years.
- McNary Dam passage through September 9 totals 52,789 adult chinook. The fall chinook run at McNary is typically 21% complete based on 10-year average run timing.
- Spring Creek Hatchery reports that approximately 10,500 fish have entered the hatchery, but the male/female/jack composition is not available yet. Spawning will begin on September 14.

Upriver Summer Steelhead

- Upriver summer steelhead pass Bonneville Dam from April through October of each year. Fish passing during July through October are categorized as A-Index or B-Index based on fork length (A-Index: <78 cm, B-Index: ≥78 cm). Passage during July is primarily A-Index fish; B-Index passage normally begins around the end of August. B-Index steelhead primarily return to

¹ http://www.stccmop.org/datamart/observation_network

Snake River tributaries in Idaho, while A-Index steelhead return to tributaries throughout the Columbia and Snake river basins.

- Counts of steelhead at Bonneville Dam since July 1 total 82,809 fish, which is 47% of the recent 10-year average (79% of recent 5-year). It is the fourth lowest count to date in the last 10 years. Passage of the total run at Bonneville Dam (July–October) is typically 78% complete by September 9 (recent 10-year average). The count of unclipped steelhead since July 1 totals 34,745 fish which is the fifth lowest cumulative count to date in the last 10 years. The ad-clip rate is 57.8% which is slightly lower than average for this time period.
- During July 1-September 9, 793 steelhead have been sampled at Bonneville Dam by CRITFC. 28 unclipped B-Index steelhead and 60 clipped B-Index steelhead have been sampled in this timeframe. All of the other steelhead sampled since July 1 have been A-Index fish (369 clipped and 336 unclipped). A and B sized fish proportions are not unusual for this point in the run.

Coho

- For this season's return through September 9, a total of 38,250 adult and 8,908 jack coho have passed Bonneville Dam this run year. The adult count to date is the third highest in the last 10 years and the jack count to date is a record high count. The coho run at Bonneville is typically 29% complete by this date based on 10-year average run timing. The adult clip rate is 36% which is higher than average.

Run Size Updates

- The U.S. vs OR Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met Tuesday, September 8 to review run size and harvest information for summer steelhead and fall Chinook. The returns of bright and tule fall Chinook appear to be early and both are expected to meet or exceed the pre-season forecasts. However, TAC did not update the run size for either fall Chinook stock. TAC updated the in-season projection for total A-Index steelhead to 82,000 (this includes an estimated 34,300 natural-origin fish). This update is an increase from last week's projection but still less than the preseason forecast of 85,900 A-Index steelhead. The return of B-Index steelhead appears to be tracking ahead of expectations. Passage includes an estimated 10,200 B-Index steelhead to-date (compared to 9,600 forecasted) but it is too early to provide an update to the B-Index steelhead return. TAC will continue to meet weekly throughout the fall management period and will provide further updates as information becomes available.
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MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Salmon/Steelhead

- The 2018-2027 *U.S. v Oregon* Management Agreement (MA) provides specific fishery management guidelines for fall Chinook, summer steelhead, and Coho.
- The allowable impact rate for combined treaty Indian and non-treaty fisheries is 45% of the URB run based on the preseason forecast (URB stock is the surrogate for SRW Chinook). This impact limit is allocated 30% for treaty Indian fisheries and 15% for non-treaty fisheries. If the actual URB return is less than 200,000, the impact limits drop to 23% for treaty Indian fisheries and 8.25% for non-treaty fisheries.
- The escapement goal at Spring Creek Hatchery is 7,000 adult fall Chinook (BPH stock).
- The management goal for adult fall Chinook passage at McNary Dam is 60,000 fish.

- Based on the pre-season forecast, treaty Indian impacts are limited to 13% of the total B-Index steelhead.
- The goal for upriver Coho passage at Bonneville Dam is 50% of the ocean abundance.
- Fisheries are managed based on preseason forecasts until in-season run size updates become available.

2020 TREATY FISHERIES

Fall Season Fisheries

- Treaty platform and hook and line fisheries have been open for both subsistence and commercial purposes since August 1.
- Table 1 below shows preliminary 2020 fall season treaty harvest and projected catches. The model assumes average effort and average catch rates. As actual effort and catches become available projected future catches will be scaled to actual catch rates.
- The model uses the pre-season forecast for URB chinook and uses the TAC estimate of B-Index steelhead passage through Sunday as a minimum B-Index run size.
- Chinook stock composition estimates are preliminary as CWT data are not complete yet.
- The tribes anticipate commercial gillnet fisheries should be able to occur through at least late September.

Table 1. Fall Chinook Harvest Model Output

2020 Treaty Indian Fall Season Fisheries (preliminary and modeled)										
Week		Gillnet Fishery	Dates	Set Net Count	Total Adult Chinook	URB Chinook	Total Steelhead	B Steelhead	Coho	
31-34	Preliminary	Platform/H&L	August 1-22	na	466	170	630	70	66	
35	Preliminary	8/24	8/27	409	6,116	2,234	328	39	168	
36	Preliminary	8/31	9/4	489	22,308	8,147	661	147	1,200	
37	Projected	9/7	9/11	600	35,200	13,700	830	240	1,500	
				Subtotal	64,090	24,251	2,449	496	2,934	
38	Projected	9/14	9/18	600	31,400	13,700	1,100	330	4,400	
				Total	95,490	37,951	3,549	826	7,334	
		Allowed at Pre-season forecast URB and Adjusted B run size					68,280		1,339	
		Harvest Rate as of Sept 12					10.7%		4.8%	
		Remaining after Sept 12					44,029		843	
		Expected Harvest Rate by Sept 19					16.7%		8.0%	
		Remaining Available After Sept 19					30,329		513	

Note: projected catches for statistical weeks with gillnet fisheries include platform and hook and line catch for those entire weeks.

- The four Columbia River treaty tribes have adopted regulations consistent with the following:

<i>2020 Treaty Indian Commercial Gillnet Fishery</i>	
Seasons:	The scheduled gillnet fishery will be 6:00 AM September 14 through 6:00 PM September 18 (4.5 days)
Area:	Zone 6
Gear:	Set and Drift Gillnets with an 8-inch minimum mesh size.
Allowable Sales:	Salmon (any species), steelhead, shad, yellow perch, bass, walleye, catfish, and carp may be sold or retained for subsistence. Fish landed during the open periods are allowed to be sold after the period concludes. 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 may be kept for subsistence purposes.
Sanctuaries:	Standard sanctuaries applicable to gillnet gear. The standard Spring Creek Hatchery Sanctuary is in place.
Additional:	24-hour quick reporting required for Washington buyers, pursuant to WAC 220-352-315 except that landings must be reported within 24-hours of completing the fish ticket.

- Fisheries will be monitored, and catches reported regularly. Fisheries will be modified as needed to keep harvest impacts within allowed limits for the treaty fall season fisheries.
- Aerial flights will be conducted each week to count set nets.
- There is no action needed for platform and hook and line fisheries, Yakama tributary fisheries or fisheries downstream of Bonneville Dam.
- Commercial fishing provides numerous economic benefits for tribal and non-tribal communities.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- The tribes request a Compact hearing on Thursday, September 17 to consider additional treaty Indian commercial gillnet fisheries.