

COLUMBIA RIVER INTERTRIBAL FISH COMMISSION
JOINT STAFF REPORT – SUMMER FACT SHEET NO. 1
Columbia River Compact
June 23, 2021

Fisheries Under Consideration: Summer 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 most recent reports for salmon are the 2021 spring/summer report for Chinook, sockeye, steelhead, and other species (February 4, 2021). Links to the on-line reports are at:

<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/columbia-river/reports> and <http://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/OSCRP/CRM/jsmreports.asp>

RIVER CONDITIONS

Columbia River conditions as measured at Bonneville Dam are similar in temperature but with lower flows than the recent 5-year averages for early June. Current outflow is 180.2 kcfs, compared to the recent 5-year average of 247.9 kcfs. The recent 5-day average water temperature currently measures 64.6° F which is just above the 5-year average of approximately 63.2° F¹.

STOCK STATUS AND MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

- Pre-season salmon and steelhead forecasts applicable to the summer management period are shown in tables 1 and 2 below. Chinook and sockeye forecasts are to the Columbia River mouth and steelhead forecasts are to Bonneville Dam.

Table 1. Columbia River Summer Chinook and Sockeye Forecasts to Columbia River Mouth

<i>Columbia River Adult Salmon Returns: Actual and Forecasted Annual Returns *</i>				
		2020 Forecast	2020 Return	2021 Forecast
Summer Chinook	Upper Columbia	38,000	65,494	78,800
Sockeye	Total Sockeye	246,300	345,018	155,600
	Wenatchee	39,400	56,111	27,300
	Okanagan	201,800	237,667	127,300
	Yakima River	2,500	11,790	200
	Deschutes River	300	na	100
	Snake River	2,300	734	700

¹ Temperature data from: <http://pweb.crohms.org/tmt/documents/ops/temp/202106.lcol.html>

Table 2. The 2020 forecasted abundance of summer steelhead at Bonneville Dam

	2020 Forecast	2020 Actual Return	2020 Actual / 2020 Forecast	2021 Forecast
Skamania	4,400	4,101	93%	4,600
<i>Total Hatchery</i>	2,600	2,047	79%	2,500
<i>Clip Hatchery</i>	2,500	1,591	64%	2,200
<i>Unclip Hatchery</i>	100	456	456%	300
<i>Natural Origin</i>	1,800	2,054	114%	2,100
A Index	85,900	75,392	88%	89,200
<i>Total Hatchery</i>	52,600	47,260	90%	61,700
<i>Clip Hatchery</i>	49,900	42,542	85%	57,700
<i>Unclip Hatchery</i>	2,700	4,718	175%	4,000
<i>Natural Origin</i>	33,300	28,132	84%	27,500
B Index	9,600	32,199	335%	7,600
<i>Total Hatchery</i>	8,200	26,921	328%	6,600
<i>Clip Hatchery</i>	6,800	23,001	338%	5,600
<i>Unclip Hatchery</i>	1,300	3,920	302%	1,000
<i>Natural Origin</i>	1,400	5,278	377%	1,000
Total A/B Index	95,500	107,591	113%	96,800
<i>Total Hatchery</i>	60,800	74,181	122%	68,300
<i>Clip Hatchery</i>	56,800	65,543	115%	63,300
<i>Unclip Hatchery</i>	4,000	8,638	216%	5,000
<i>Natural Origin</i>	34,800	33,410	96%	28,500
All summer steelhead	99,900	111,692	112%	101,400
<i>Total Hatchery</i>	63,400	76,228	120%	70,800
<i>Clip Hatchery</i>	59,200	67,134	113%	65,500
<i>Unclip Hatchery</i>	4,100	9,094	222%	5,300
<i>Natural Origin</i>	36,500	35,464	97%	30,600

Rounded numbers of each component may not sum to the rounded totals.

Steelhead

- Steelhead passing Bonneville Dam from April 1 through June 30 or that are caught in this period in the Bonneville Pool are considered upriver Skamania stock steelhead. Through June 22, there have been a total of 1,046 Skamania steelhead counted at Bonneville including 555 unclipped fish. These are the lowest steelhead counts on record. Based on the 10-year average timing, the total run would normally be about 68% complete and the unclipped run would be about 62% complete at Bonneville on June 22. While TAC has not updated the Skamania run size, the tribes project that the total run and the unclipped run are tracking much less than forecast based on average timing.

- Steelhead passing Bonneville Dam from July 1 through October 31 are considered part of this year's A and B-Index Steelhead run. Steelhead caught upstream of The Dalles Dam from January 1 through June 30 are considered part of the previous year's A and B-Index steelhead run.

Upper Columbia Summer Chinook

- Upper Columbia Summer Chinook are counted at Bonneville Dam from June 16 through July 31. Chinook salmon passing Bonneville Dam or harvested during this period are managed as Upper Columbia summer Chinook and are not ESA listed. These fish are destined for mainstem and tributary areas from the Yakima River upstream to the Okanogan River as well as Chief Joseph Hatchery. Through June 22, a total of 16,441 adult summer chinook have passed Bonneville dam. The clip rate is 71.2%. The count to date is the 5th largest in the last ten years. Based on 10-year average run timing the run at Bonneville will be 50% complete on June 30. The jack count to date is 2,378.

Sockeye

- Sockeye caught during any management period all count as part of the current year's sockeye run. All sockeye in fisheries and dam counts are treated as adult fish. Through June 22, a total of 30,446 sockeye have been counted at Bonneville Dam which is the second lowest count in the last ten years. Based on 10-year average run timing the run is expected to be about 30% complete on June 22 and 50% complete on June 27.

Summer Management Limits

- Any sockeye harvested in mainstem fisheries downstream from the mouth of the Snake River count against the Sockeye harvest rate limit. Based on the pre-season forecasts the harvest rate limit will be 7% for treaty fisheries and 1% for non-treaty fisheries. This equates to harvest limits of 10,892 and 1,556 respectively. Actual harvest limits are determined based on in-season run sizes. TAC expects to begin to update in season run sizes in late June.
- Treaty and non-treaty summer chinook impacts are shared equally. Both PFMC non-treaty ocean fisheries and in-river fisheries count as part of the non-treaty share. Based on current pre-season forecasts, both treaty and non-treaty fisheries expect to be allowed harvest of 24,077 fish each. Actual harvest limits are based on in-season abundance estimates.
- There is no specific harvest rate limit for steelhead in summer season treaty fisheries, but harvest of steelhead is low in the summer and is expected to remain within recent average rates.

SUMMER SEASON TREATY FISHERIES

Treaty Mainstem Summer Management Period Commercial Fisheries

- The treaty tribes allowed commercial sales of platform and hook and line fish beginning on June 8 and expect sales to run continuously through the summer management period and into the fall.
- The treaty tribes began commercial gillnet fisheries on June 16 and are in the second opening currently.
- Fisheries have been modeled and projected catches are shown in Table 3 below. For projected fisheries, the model assumes average recent set net effort along with average

weekly harvest rates scaled to current year catch rates. The model is adjusted to account for actual fishery performance as the season progresses. The projected catches for weeks with commercial gillnet fisheries include the expected catch in the platform and hook and line fishery for those weeks.

Table 3. Projected 2021 Summer Season Treaty Harvest

2021 Treaty Indian Summer Season Fisheries									
Fishery					Adult Chinook	Harvest Rate	Sockeye	Harvest Rate	Steelhead
Spring season through 6/15					na		10	0.0%	na
Week	Gillnet Fisheries	Start	End	Effort (Set Nets)					
25	Preliminary	16-Jun	19-Jun	289	1,752	2.2%	199	0.1%	16
26	Projected	21-Jun	24-Jun	340	4,900	6.2%	1,900	1.2%	20
27	Projected	28-Jun	1-Jul	320	4,700	6.0%	2,400	1.5%	20
28	Projected	5-Jul	8-Jul	300	3,700	4.7%	1,400	0.9%	40
Total Projected					15,052	19.1%	5,909	3.8%	96
Allowed at Pre-season Forecast					24,077	30.6%	10,892	7.0%	
Remaining After Planned Fisheries					9,025	11.5%	4,983	3.2%	

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

- The four Columbia River treaty tribes will adopt regulations consistent with the following:

2021 Treaty Indian Summer Season Commercial Gillnet Fishery		
Season	6 AM Monday June 28 to 6 PM Thursday, July 1 6 AM Monday July 5 to 6 PM Thursday, July 8	(3.5 days) (3.5 days)
Area	Zone 6	
Sanctuaries:	Standard river mouth and dam closed areas applicable to gillnet gear, except the Spring Creek Hatchery sanctuary is not in effect during the summer management period.	
Gear:	Set and Drift Gill nets with a 7” minimum mesh size restriction	
Allowable Sales:	Salmon (any species), steelhead, shad, yellow perch, bass, walleye, catfish and carp may be sold or retained for subsistence. Sturgeon may not be sold, but 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 and may be kept for subsistence purposes. Fish landed during the open periods are allowed to be sold after the period concludes.	
Additional:	24-hour quick reporting required for Washington buyers, pursuant to WAC 220-352-315 and landings must be reported within 24-hours of completing the fish ticket.	

- The projected total catch from proposed and ongoing fisheries are expected to be within allowed harvest limits for run sizes of as low as 54,900 summer chinook and 84,400 sockeye.

- Catch and effort will be monitored to ensure the fishery remains within management limits. Total catch is determined through a tribal creel program. Fish ticket data are used as a supplement to the creel program. Set net effort will be monitored by aerial surveys each week. Drift net effort is estimated through the creel monitoring program. Catches for the platform fishery are typically summed with and reported with gillnet catches for any week with a commercial gillnet opening. Any harvest downstream of Bonneville Dam is part of the total allowed catch for any species. Tributary harvest is managed under separate limits.
- The Compact previously took action on the Zone 6 platform and hook and line fishery, the fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam and the Yakama Nation tributary fisheries and does not need to take further action on these fisheries.
- Treaty commercial fishing provides important economic benefits to tribal members and their families as well as to communities along the river and on reservations.
- The tribes do urge recreational river users to be cautious around treaty set nets and other treaty fishing gear to avoid damaging the gear or risking injury.

Future Meetings

The tribes request another Compact Hearing during the week of July 5, preferably on July 8, to consider additional commercial gillnet openings that may begin on July 12.