

COLUMBIA RIVER INTER-TRIBAL FISH COMMISSION
JOINT STAFF REPORT – SUMMER FACT SHEET NO. 2a
Columbia River Compact Hearing
June 30, 2022

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 online. The most recent report is the 2022 Spring Chinook, Summer Chinook, Sockeye, Steelhead and Other Species Report (February 2, 2022) available at:

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

RIVER CONDITIONS

- As of June 29, the five-day average outflow at Bonneville Dam is 396 kcfs compared to the five-year average of 248 kcfs.
- The current five-day average water temperature at Bonneville Dam forebay is 60.5°F compared to the five-year average of 64.4°F.
- The five-day average visibility at Bonneville Dam is 4.0 feet.

STOCK STATUS AND MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Upper Columbia Summer Chinook, Sockeye, and Steelhead

- Pre-season salmon and steelhead forecasts applicable to the summer management were presented in spring fact sheet #4a.

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 time 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 Okanagan River as well as Chief Joseph Hatchery. Harvest is managed based on an escapement goal of 29,000 hatchery- and natural-origin adult upper Columbia summer Chinook, as measured at the Columbia River mouth. Based on 10-year average run timing the run at Bonneville would be expected to be 50% complete on June 30. Through June 29, the preliminary adult summer chinook count at Bonneville Dam is 37,016. The jack count is 5,185. Counts are preliminary at this time because the USACE is concerned there may have been some erroneous counts in recent days and is currently reviewing data to ensure counts are correct. At this time COE does not expect significant corrections to sockeye or chinook counts.

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 July 29, the preliminary total sockeye count at Bonneville Dam is 343,953 which is the highest count to date in the last ten years even without Monday's count. Based on 10-year average run timing the run is expected to be 50% complete on June 26. The run may or may not have been 50% complete on that date.

Steelhead

- Steelhead passing Bonneville Dam from April 1 through June 30 or that are caught in this time period in the Bonneville Pool are considered upriver Skamania stock steelhead. Through June 29, there have been a total of 7,071 Skamania steelhead preliminarily counted at Bonneville Dam including 2,476 unclipped fish. The cumulative counts are higher than the pre-season forecasts.
- 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.

Summer Management Limits

- TAC met on June 27 and upgraded the sockeye run size at the Columbia River mouth to 426,000 fish compared to the pre-season forecast of 198,700. TAC also upgraded the upper Columbia summer Chinook run size to 66,800 adults at the Columbia River mouth, compared to the pre-season forecast of 56,300 adults. TAC will continue to monitor and assess the sockeye and summer Chinook returns and will provide run size updates as warranted. TAC is scheduled to meet again next Tuesday July 5 and is expected to provide additional updates.
- Any sockeye harvested in mainstem fisheries downstream from the mouth of the Snake River count against the Sockeye harvest rate limit. Based on the current forecasts the harvest rate limit will be 7% for treaty fisheries and 1% for non-treaty fisheries downstream of the mouth of the Snake River. This equates to harvest limits of 29,820 and 4,260 respectively.
- 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 forecasts, both treaty and non-treaty fisheries expect to be allowed harvest of 19,755 fish each.
- 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 allow commercial sales of platform and hook and line fish 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.
- Fisheries have been modeled and projected catches are shown in Table 4 below. The model assumes average recent set net effort and average weekly harvest rates. The model will be 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. Historically, the summer model tends to over predict harvest early in the season which is viewed as a precautionary approach.

Table 1. Preliminary 2022 Summer Season Treaty Harvest and Projected Future Catches

2022 Treaty Indian Summer Season Fisheries									
Fishery					Adult Chinook	Harvest Rate	Sockeye	Harvest Rate	Steelhead
Spring season through 6/15					na		190	0.0%	na
Week	Gillnet Fisheries	Start	End	Effort (Set Nets)		0.0%		0.0%	
25	Preliminary	16-Jun	18-Jun	116	1,183	1.8%	435	0.1%	15
26	Preliminary	20-Jun	24-Jun	161	3,291	4.9%	2,932	0.7%	48
27	Projected	27-Jun	1-Jul	200	3,400	5.1%	4,000	0.9%	90
Subtotal Current fisheries					7,874	0	7,557	1.8%	153
28	Projected	4-Jul	8-Jul	220	3,100	4.6%	2,200	0.5%	180
29	Projected	11-Jul	15-Jul	220	2,200	3.3%	4,800	1.1%	380
Total					13,174	19.7%	14,557	3.4%	713
Allowed at Updated Forecast					19,755	29.6%	29,820	7.0%	
Remaining After Planned Fisheries					6,581	9.9%	15,263	3.6%	

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

- The modeled Chinook and sockeye remaining after these planned openings would be sufficient to keep the platform fishery open through the end of the summer management period. Based on the expected catches for the proposed fisheries, the overall treaty fishery would be within its allowed catches down to a run size of 47,500 Chinook and 205,900 sockeye.
- The tribes have adopted regulations for the Zone 6 platform and hook and line fishery consistent with the following plan. The tribes will authorize sales for fish caught after 6:00 AM on June 4 (Saturday) through July 31. Some tribal regulations may specify that the platform fishery allows commercial sales “until further notice”. The tribes expect to seek consistent state regulations authorizing platform sales at the first fall season Compact hearing to extend sales into the fall management period.
- The tribes may choose to open fisheries downstream of Bonneville Dam according to agreements with the States of Oregon and Washington. The harvest downstream of Bonneville is expected to be no more than 50 Chinook and 100 sockeye and very small numbers of steelhead in the summer management period. These catches are included in the total weekly projections. The catch downstream of Bonneville Dam is counted as part of the total tribal mainstem catch.

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

<i>Recommendation: 2022 Summer Season Treaty Commercial Gillnet Fishery</i>		
Season	6:00 AM Monday July 4 to 6:00 PM Friday, July 8 6:00 AM Monday July 11 to 6:00 PM Friday, June 15	(4.5 days) (4.5 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 in the July 4-8 opening but no mesh restriction in the July 11-15 opening.	
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 is required for Washington wholesale dealers for all areas as provided in WAC 220-352-315, except that all landings from treaty fisheries described above must be reported within 24-hours of completing the fish ticket.	

- 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.
- Treaty commercial fishing provides important economic benefits to tribal members and their families as well as to communities along the river and on reservations.

Future Meetings

- The tribes request another Compact Hearing during the week of July 11 to consider additional commercial gillnet openings to begin on July 18 assuming sufficient impacts remain.