

**OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT: SUMMER FACT SHEET NO. 2b
Columbia River Compact/Joint State Hearing
June 28, 2023**

<i>Fisheries under consideration:</i>	Recreational summer Chinook downstream of Priest Rapids 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 online. The most recent report is the 2023 Spring Chinook, Summer Chinook, Sockeye, Steelhead and Other Species Report (February 2, 2023) 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 27, the five-day average outflow at Bonneville Dam is 153 kcfs, compared to the recent 5-year average of 265 kcfs. The current five-day average water temperature is 66° F which is warmer than the recent 5-year average of 63° F. Visibility is about 5.5 feet, compared to the recent 5-year average of 4.9 feet.

STOCK STATUS

Upper Columbia Summer Chinook

- Upper Columbia summer Chinook pass Bonneville Dam during June 16 through July 31 destined for areas above Priest Rapids Dam (PRD). These Chinook are not listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the population is considered healthy.
- Bonneville passage during June 16–27 totals 23,858 adult Chinook. The run is typically 50% complete by June 28 (recent 5-year average).
- The *U.S. v. Oregon* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) met on Monday, June 26 and concurred that the summer Chinook return is tracking less than expected compared to the preseason forecast. TAC did not provide an in-season abundance projection, but is scheduled to meet again on Thursday June 29 expects to update the summer Chinook return to the Columbia River mouth at that time.

Sockeye

- Current year Bonneville Dam passage through June 27 totals 138,537 sockeye. The average 50% passage date is June 27 (recent 5-year). At their June 26 meeting, TAC agreed that the return was tracking close to the preseason forecast and expects to provide an in-season return projection on June 29.

Summer Steelhead

- Upriver stocks of summer steelhead migrate past Bonneville Dam during April 1 through October 31. Summer steelhead passing Bonneville Dam prior to July 1 are considered

Skamania stock, and steelhead passing between July 1 and October 31 are classified by length as either A-Index or B-Index.

- Summer steelhead handled in Columbia River fisheries downstream of Bonneville Dam are considered lower river stock during May-June and upriver stock during July-October.
- Bonneville Dam passage from April 1 through June 27 totals 2,457 Skamania summer steelhead, less than expected given the preseason forecast (4,400). A total of 63,400 upriver summer steelhead are expected to pass Bonneville Dam this year during July through October, which is 41% of the 2013–2022 average of 152,994 fish.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Management Agreements

- The 2018-2027 *U.S. v Oregon* Management Agreement (MA) provides specific fishery management guidelines for treaty Indian and non-treaty summer season fisheries.
- Washington’s Upper Columbia Management Agreement (UCMA) provides additional harvest and management guidelines for sharing of upper Columbia summer Chinook among non-treaty recreational and commercial fisheries and non-treaty tribal fisheries.

Summer Chinook

- Mainstem Columbia River Chinook fisheries occurring from June 16 through July 31 are 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.
- Oregon and Washington commission policy guidance regarding allocations of summer Chinook and sockeye harvest impacts for commercial and recreational fisheries is not concurrent for either species. Due to the nonconcurrent guidance, staff is modeling both summer Chinook and sockeye fisheries with an ESA-impact allocation of 70% recreational and 20% commercial, leaving the balance (10%) unallocated.
- Summer Chinook harvest was initially allocated based on the preseason forecast, the harvest rate schedule in the MA, and guidelines in WA’s Upper Columbia Management Agreement (UCMA). However, as suggested but not yet formalized by TAC, the actual return is tracking less than expected. Therefore, staff applied a 30% reduction to the preseason forecast in order to calculate potential in-season harvest allocations by fishery (see table below).

2023 Upper Columbia Summer Chinook Allocations		
	Preseason	In-season
CR Run Size	85,387	59,771
Non-treaty Ocean Harvest	5,318	5,318
Total Abundance (w/ocean harvest)	90,706	65,089
Available Treaty Indian Harvest	25,765	16,159
Available Non-treaty Harvest (in-river)	20,446	10,840
Below Priest Rapids Dam Allocation	7,581	3,202
<i>Recreational below Bonneville</i>	<i>4,511</i>	<i>1,905</i>
<i>Recreational BON to PRD</i>	<i>796</i>	<i>336</i>
<i>Non-treaty Commercial</i>	<i>1,516</i>	<i>640</i>
<i>Unallocated Non-treaty (10%)</i>	<i>758</i>	<i>320</i>
Above Priest Rapids Dam Allocation	12,865	7,638
<i>Wanapum Non-treaty Tribal</i>	<i>343</i>	<i>100</i>
<i>Colville Non-treaty Tribal</i>	<i>7,076</i>	<i>3,819</i>
<i>Recreational PRD to Chief Joseph Dam</i>	<i>5,447</i>	<i>3,719</i>

Summer Steelhead

- The non-treaty ESA impact limit on wild summer steelhead is 2% during January through July.
- Due to the low expected returns for upriver summer steelhead, additional protective regulations have continued in 2023. These measures include a daily bag limit of one hatchery steelhead when retention is allowed in recreational summer-season fisheries in the mainstem between the Astoria/Megler Bridge and the Highway 395 Bridge (near Pasco, WA).

Sockeye

- The *U.S. v. Oregon* management goal for upper Columbia River sockeye is 65,000 fish at Priest Rapids Dam, which under average migration conditions requires passage of 75,000 fish over Bonneville Dam. The Washington escapement goal for the Wenatchee River system is 23,000 sockeye.
- The ESA-impact limit on the Columbia River return of federally-listed sockeye is 1% for non-treaty fisheries and 7% for treaty Indian fisheries. For 2023, Commission guidance allocates the non-treaty impacts approximately 20% to commercial, 70% to recreational fisheries, and leaves 10% unallocated.

2023 NON-TREATY FISHERIES

Columbia River Recreational Fisheries

- Recreational fisheries opened for summer Chinook, sockeye, and hatchery steelhead on June 16 in most areas of the mainstem downstream of Priest Rapids Dam. Summer Chinook catch rates are tracking lower than expected, but the sockeye catch has been consistent with preseason expectations in the lower river while tracking less than expected for the fisheries upstream of Bonneville Dam.

- The estimated catch for the summer recreational fishery below Bonneville Dam through June 25 includes 1,559 summer Chinook kept (421 released), 651 sockeye kept (40 released), and 347 summer steelhead kept (128 released) from approximately 20,000 angler trips.
- The estimated catch for the recreational fishery from Bonneville Dam to the Hwy. 395 Bridge near Pasco, WA includes 77 summer Chinook (7 released), 40 sockeye kept (4 released), and zero summer steelhead encounters from about 1,000 angler trips. The Hanford Reach recreational fishery has caught 37 summer Chinook (10 released) and 359 sockeye (zero released) from an estimated 3,700 angler trips.
- Non-treaty fisheries downstream of the Snake River confluence have accrued a total of 699 sockeye mortalities through June 25. Full season expectation is for a total of 1,500 mortalities which represents an ESA-impact rate of 0.64% at the preseason forecast.

Accounting of upper Columbia summer Chinook mortalities in 2023 in-river non-treaty fisheries						
Fishery	Summer Chinook Mortalities (k+r)			Current Allocation	Percent of Allocation	Balance
	Through June 25	Proj. June 26-30	Total Expected*			
<i>Comm. downstream of BON</i>	<i>na</i>	<i>na</i>	40	640	6%	600
Rec. downstream of BON	1,622	719	2,342	1,905	123%	-436
Rec. BON - PRD	117	29	146	336	43%	190
<i>Rec. below PRD</i>	<i>1,739</i>	<i>749</i>	<i>2,488</i>	<i>2,242</i>	<i>111%</i>	<i>-246</i>
<i>Unallocated subtotal below PRD**</i>				320		320
<i>Total below PRD</i>			2,528	3,202	79%	675
Rec. above PRD	na	na	3,719	3,719	100%	0
Colville and Wanapum tribal fisheries	na	na	3,919	3,919	100%	0
<i>Total in-river non-treaty</i>	<i>1,739</i>		<i>10,125</i>	<i>10,840</i>	<i>93%</i>	<i>675</i>

* Total expected includes mortalities through remainder of the summer season.

** Unallocated balance is a result of non-concurrent OR/WA Commission guidance.

- Total non-treaty summer Chinook mortalities for recreational fisheries from Astoria/Megler Bridge upstream to PRD through June 30 are projected to be 2,488 fish, or 111% of available allocation at the reduced return expectation.
- Recreational and tribal fisheries upstream of PRD are expected to utilize their full fishery-specific allocations of summer Chinook. These fisheries are scheduled to begin July 1.
- Given the current harvest projections, anticipated run size downgrade and resultant allocations, staff recommends closing Chinook retention from the Astoria/Megler Bridge upstream to Priest Rapids Dam effective July 1.

Recommendation: 2023 mainstem recreational summer Chinook fisheries downstream of Priest Rapids Dam

Effective Saturday July 1 through July 31, retention of adult Chinook is prohibited in the mainstem Columbia River from the Astoria/Megler Bridge upstream to Priest Rapids Dam deadline.

- Sockeye and jack Chinook retention will remain open from PRD downstream to the Hwy. 395 Bridge near Pasco, WA. Sockeye, hatchery jack Chinook, and hatchery steelhead retention will remain open from the Hwy. 395 Bridge downstream to the Astoria/Megler Bridge.

FUTURE MEETINGS

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