

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT - FALL FACT SHEET NO. 6
September 13, 2023

<i>Fisheries under consideration:</i>	Non-treaty mainstem commercial salmon 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 online. The 2023 Fall Report was distributed on July 10, 2023. Links to the 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

- As of September 11, the recent five-day average outflow at Bonneville Dam is 83 kcfs compared to a five-year average of 103 kcfs. The current five-day average water temperature at Bonneville Dam is 68°F compared to a five-year average temperature of 69°F. The five-day average visibility at Bonneville Dam is 7 feet which is the same as the five-year average.
- River temperatures in the lower Columbia measured near Tongue Point have averaged 68°F at 0.3 meters over the past three days.

STOCK STATUS

- Run size forecasts for 2023 and stock descriptions for salmon and steelhead were presented in Fall Fact Sheet #1.

Fall Chinook

- Columbia River fall Chinook are comprised of multiple management components: Select Area Brights (SAB), Lower River Hatchery (LRH), Lower River Wild (LRW), Bonneville Pool Hatchery (BPH), Upriver Bright (URB), Pool Upriver Bright (PUB), and Lower River Bright (LRB). The LRH and BPH stocks are referred to as tule stock and the remaining stocks are referred to as bright stock.
- Through September 11, a total of 362,047 adult-sized fall Chinook have passed Bonneville Dam. The recent 10-year average 50% passage date is September 9.
- Based on visual stock sampling, a total of 243,038 adult bright stock fish (URB and PUB stocks) have passed Bonneville Dam. A total of 104,378 adult tules and 14,632 adult-sized tule jacks (primarily BPH stock) have also passed Bonneville Dam. Bright stock passage is typically 56% complete and tule passage about 77% complete on September 11, based on recent 10-year average run timing.

Upriver Summer Steelhead

- Passage of upriver summer steelhead at Bonneville Dam since July 1 totals 93,257 A/B-Index fish.
- From July 1 through September 5, CRITFC staff have sampled 331 total steelhead at Bonneville Dam including 294 A-Index fish (128 unclipped) and 37 B-Index fish (7 unclipped). Stock composition is generally tracking as expected at this point in the return.

Coho

- Coho counts at Bonneville Dam through September 11 total 63,554 adult early stock Coho (defined as Coho passing prior to October 1). Passage of upriver early stock Coho is typically about 51% complete by September 11.

In-Season Run Size Updates

- Preseason abundance estimates for upriver-origin fall Chinook stocks (BPH, PUB, and URB) and upriver summer steelhead (A- and B-Index) are updated in-season by the *U.S. v. OR* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC). Lower river Chinook stocks (SAB, LRH, LRW, and LRB) are not updated in-season.
- TAC met on September 11 and reviewed Chinook and steelhead passage at Bonneville Dam and associated sampling data along with Chinook harvest data from lower river fisheries.
 - TAC did not make any changes to the A-Index steelhead run size expectation at Bonneville Dam provided on August 21 (91,300 total A-Index fish including 34,000 unclipped fish) nor did it update the B-Index steelhead run size.
 - TAC updated the upriver Chinook run size expectations to 377,000 URBs, 62,000 PUBs and 151,000 BPH stock fish at the Columbia River mouth.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

- Based on information available preseason and input from the public, a fishing plan was developed for Columbia River non-treaty fisheries during the North of Falcon management process. This fishing plan is available on the ODFW and WDFW websites.
- The respective Washington and Oregon Fish and Wildlife commission policies provide guidance for 2023 non-treaty fall fisheries management.
 - Current policy guidance regarding fall Chinook allocation is concurrent. Allocation of fall Chinook ESA impacts for the most constraining stock is no more than 70% to recreational fisheries and no less than 30% to commercial fisheries.
 - Current policy guidance regarding use of gillnets in commercial salmon fisheries is not concurrent. Washington's policy allows for the use of gillnets in any zone downstream of Bonneville Dam, while Oregon's policy allows for the use of gillnets in Zones 4-5 only. Therefore, Chinook-directed gillnet fisheries will be restricted to Zones 4-5 this year.
- Additional management guidelines for 2023 fall fisheries were presented in Fall Fact Sheet #1 and Fall Fishery Update #1.

2023 NON-TREATY FALL FISHERIES

Select Area Fall Commercial Fisheries

- Fall Select Area commercial fisheries in Youngs Bay opened August 21, both Blind Slough/Knappa Slough and Tongue Point/South Channel commercial fisheries opened August 28, and Deep River opened September 4. Preliminary catch estimates for the combined Select Areas through September 9 include 5,939 Chinook and 17,643 Coho.

Mainstem Fall Commercial Fisheries

- Early-Fall Zone 4-5 commercial fisheries began on August 9 and continued through September 1, with one to three fishing periods per week totaling eight fishing periods.
 - Preliminary catch estimates include 27,183 Chinook and 1,613 Coho. Additionally, an estimated 308 steelhead were handled. The preliminary LCR Chinook exploitation rate (ER) for this fishery is 1.23% (as compared to 1.90% ER pre-season) and SRW harvest rate (HR) is 2.14% (as compared to 3.06% HR pre-season).
- The Late-Fall commercial fishery in Zones 1-3 targeting hatchery Coho using 3.75-inch tangle nets and other live-capture techniques was adopted at the Compact Hearing on September 7. The fishery is scheduled to start September 18.
- The preseason plan assumed a Late Fall Chinook-target fishery in Zones 4-5 likely to begin the week of September 17 based on the remaining commercial allocation of LCR impacts and an in-season URB run size. Periods were expected to be 10-hours (8 PM–6 AM); gear regulations would include an 8-inch minimum mesh restriction.
- Considering actual use in the Early Fall fishery and expected needs for Select Area and Late Fall tangle net fisheries, an ER balance of 1.10% for LCR fall Chinook remains available for additional mainstem commercial fisheries.
- Given the remaining commercial balance, staff recommend the following Late Fall fishing periods:

<i>Recommendation: 2023 Non-Treaty Mainstem Commercial Late-Fall Fishery</i>		
Season:	8 PM Sunday September 17 to 6 AM Monday September 18	10 hours
	8 PM Tuesday September 19 to 6 AM Wednesday September 20	10 hours
Area:	Zones 4-5. The deadline at the lower end of Zone 4 is defined as a straight line projected from the Warrior Rock Lighthouse on the Oregon shore easterly through the green navigation Buoy #1 and continuing to the Washington shore.	
Sanctuaries:	Washougal and Sandy rivers.	
Gear:	Drift gillnets only. 8-inch minimum mesh size restriction. Multiple net rule is in effect. Nets not specifically authorized for use in this fishery may be onboard the vessel if properly stored. A properly stored net is defined as a net on a drum that is fully covered by a tarp (canvas or plastic) and bound with a minimum of ten revolutions of rope with a diameter of 3/8 (0.375) inches or greater. Lighted buoys required.	
Allowable Sales:	Salmon (except chum) and shad.	
Additional:	24-hour quick reporting required for Washington buyers, pursuant to WAC 220-352-315. Oregon buyers are required to electronically submit fish receiving tickets pursuant to OAR 635-006-0210. Electronic fish tickets must be submitted within 24 hours of closure of the fishing period, or within 24 hours of landing for fishing periods lasting longer than 24 hours.	

- Chinook catch for the recommended fishery is expected to include 10,360 adults. The LCR Chinook ER is expected to be 0.91% and SRW HR is expected to be 1.30%.
 - Given the 1.10% ER balance available, the remaining LCR commercial allocation is expected to be 0.19% ER.
- ESA impacts to wild upriver summer steelhead are expected to be 0.02% for A-Index and 0.12% for B-Index for the recommended fishery.
- Additional Late-Fall Zone 4-5 commercial periods are expected to be considered after review of fishery performance and an assessment of the remaining ESA impacts.
- The fishery will be managed to remain within the ESA impacts allocated; actual harvest may be more or less than modeled. Catch expectations are a reflection of the number of fish that may be harvested given the ESA constraints.

Buoy 10 and Mainstem Fall Recreational Salmon Fisheries

- The Buoy 10 to west Puget Island (WPI) fishery was open August 1 through September 4, except closed August 21-23 and August 28-29, to both adult Chinook and Coho retention under mark-selective regulations with a two fish, one Chinook daily bag limit. Beginning September 5, Chinook retention closed and the hatchery Coho limit increased to three fish per day. Additional adult Chinook retention opportunity beginning September 8 was adopted as in-season action at the Joint State Hearing last week.
 - Preliminary catch estimates through September 10 include 18,269 kept and 15,389 released Chinook, and 8,565 kept and 5,570 released Coho from approximately 73,100 angler trips.
- Fall recreational salmon fisheries from WPI upstream to the Highway 395 Bridge (Pasco, WA) also opened August 1 with a two fish, one Chinook daily adult bag limit consistent with the preseason plan.
 - WPI to Warrior Rock (WR) fishery was open August 1 through September 4 to both adult Chinook and hatchery Coho retention. The fishery is closed September 5-30, then re-opens for hatchery Coho October 1. Preliminary estimates of catch and effort through September 4 include 7,455 kept and 563 released Chinook, 347 kept and 198 released Coho, and 423 released steelhead from approximately 33,300 angler trips.
 - WR to Bonneville Dam (BO) fishery is planned to be open August 1 through September 14 to both adult Chinook and hatchery Coho retention. The fishery is closed September 15-30, then re-opens for hatchery Coho October 1. Preliminary estimates of catch and effort through September 10 include 7,410 kept and 738 released Chinook, 268 kept and 241 released Coho, and 175 released steelhead from approximately 27,300 angler trips.
 - BO upstream to Highway 395 Bridge (Pasco, WA) fishery is planned to be open August 1 through October 15 for adult Chinook and Coho retention (wild Coho caught downstream of the Hood River Bridge must be released). Beginning October 16, only Coho may be retained (wild Coho caught downstream of the Hood River Bridge must be released). Preliminary estimates of catch and effort through September 10 include 4,532 Chinook kept and 447 released Chinook, 16 kept and 13 released Coho, and 231 released steelhead from approximately 16,600 angler trips.

- At this time, the preliminary projected in-season LCR Chinook ER is 3.81% (as compared to 6.57% ER pre-season) and SRW HR is 6.98% (as compared to 7.41% HR pre-season) for these recreational fisheries. Given these balances, there is room to consider additional Chinook retention opportunity at this time.
- Based on historical CWT data, LRH tulle Chinook are typically present in the Columbia River mainstem through September, although abundance declines in the latter half of the month. Higher LRH abundance occurs near the mouths of their natal tributaries which are primarily in the WPI to WR area. Therefore, staff recommend an initial short re-opener for the WPI to WR area as a cautious approach to provide immediate opportunity while limiting the potential risk of exceeding available recreational LCR tulle ESA impacts.
- The WR-BO fishery is ongoing and while catch rates have been good recently, effort has been lower than expected. Given the performance of this fishery to date, staff have determined an extension can be considered at this time. However, we recommend a limited initial extension in order to minimize the risk of exceeding available recreational LCR tulle ESA impacts.

<i>Recommendation: 2023 Lower Columbia River Recreational Salmon Fishery</i>
Effective Friday, September 15 through Sunday, September 17, retention of Chinook and hatchery Coho is allowed in the mainstem Columbia River from the west Puget Island line upstream to the Warrior Rock/Bachelor Island line. The daily adult bag limit is two salmon (Chinook or hatchery coho) but only one may be a Chinook. All other relevant permanent regulations remain in effect.
Effective Friday, September 15 through Thursday, September 21, retention of Chinook and hatchery Coho is allowed in the mainstem Columbia River from the Warrior Rock/Bachelor Island line upstream to Bonneville Dam. The daily adult bag limit is two salmon (Chinook or hatchery coho) but only one may be a Chinook. All other relevant permanent regulations remain in effect.

- Chinook catch is projected to be about 7,400 adults for the two proposed fisheries. ESA impact expectations include up to 2.41% LCR ER and 1.11% SRW HR.
- Staff will continue to monitor Chinook abundance, stock composition, and fishery performance. Based on these factors and typical tributary migration timing additional Chinook retention opportunity is expected to be considered this fall.

Non-treaty ESA Impacts

- Non-treaty fisheries will be managed to remain within the ESA impacts allocated for all listed species. A summary of impacts to ESA-listed fall Chinook in completed, on-going, planned, and proposed 2023 non-treaty fisheries is provided in the table below:

Summary of expected LCR and SRW fall Chinook ESA impacts in non-treaty mainstem fisheries.						
Area	LCR			SRW		
	Current ^a	Proposed	Total ER	Current ^a	Proposed	Total HR
Buoy 10 +TP-WPI	2.64%	--	2.64%	1.71%	--	1.71%
WPI-WR	0.78%	0.83%	1.61%	1.60%	0.21%	1.81%
WR-BO	0.09%	1.57%	1.66%	2.75%	0.90%	3.65%
BO-Hwy 395	n/a	n/a	n/a	0.92%	--	0.92%
Tributaries	0.30%	--	0.30%	n/a	n/a	n/a
<i>Recreational Total</i>	<i>3.81%</i>	<i>2.41%</i>	<i>6.22%</i>	<i>6.98%</i>	<i>1.11%</i>	<i>8.09%</i>
Zone 4-5 Early Fall	1.23%	--	1.23%	2.14%	--	2.14%
Zone 4-5 Late Fall week 38	--	0.91%	0.91%	--	1.30%	1.30%
Zone 4-5 Late Fall weeks 39+	0.19%	--	0.19%	0.51%	--	0.51%
Zone 1-3 Tangle net	0.10%	--	0.10%	0.56%	--	0.56%
Select Areas	0.40%	--	0.40%	0.12%	--	0.12%
<i>Commercial Total</i>	<i>1.92%</i>	<i>0.91%</i>	<i>2.83%</i>	<i>3.33%</i>	<i>1.30%</i>	<i>4.63%</i>
Non-Treaty Total	5.74%	3.31%	9.05%	10.31%	2.41%	12.72%

^a includes completed, ongoing, and planned fisheries

- ESA impacts to LCR tule fall Chinook, including ocean fisheries, are expected to remain within the 38% ER limit. LCR tule fall Chinook are the most constraining fall Chinook stock in 2023 and the in-river rate is limited to 9.41% ER.
- The expected URB HR is projected to be 13.29% out of the 15% allowed. The SRW HR is projected remain within the 15% allowed.
- Cumulative impacts for A- and B-Index steelhead in non-treaty fall-season fisheries are expected to be 0.24% and 0.47% out of the allowed 2% HR, respectively.
- Impacts to LCN Coho, including ocean fisheries, are expected to remain within the 23% ER limit with pre-season expectations of 19% ER. The in-river rate is expected to be 4.60% ER.
- Impacts to Chum from in-river fisheries are expected to be 1.14% compared to the 5% limit.
- Staff will review catch estimates and Chinook stock composition as fisheries progress and will determine if additional opportunities exist within current management guidelines.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- A Compact hearing is scheduled for 1 PM Wednesday September 20, 2023 to consider Treaty Indian commercial gillnet fisheries.
- The Joint Staff will monitor fisheries and recommend additional hearings as necessary.