

Columbia River Basin Salmon Management Policy C-3620

*2016 Update
November 5, 2016*



Policy Summary

- Commission adopts Columbia Basin Salmon Management Policy (C-3620) in January, 2013
- Policy effective through 2023
- Transition period 2013-2016
- Annual review beginning in 2014 and a comprehensive review after 2016

Transition Period (2013-16)

- Progressive shift of mainstem salmon allocation to the sport fishery
- Further development of selective gear for the mainstem commercial fishery
- Implement pilot alternative gear commercial fisheries
- Increase salmon production in the off-channel areas
- Investigate expansion of off-channel fishing area for the commercial fishery
- Begin development of a commercial buyback program
- Consider additional measures to enhance fishery management effectiveness

Development/Implementation of Alternative Gear

- Test fisheries have shown that purse and beach seines can be an effective gear for salmon harvest in the fall
 - Steelhead handle can be relatively high
 - Current ESA permit release mortality rates significantly higher than anticipated for salmon
 - Pilot commercial seine fishery conducted in fall 2014-2016 with mixed results - low participation in 2015 and 2016
- Seines fished in the summer handle moderate numbers of Chinook but sockeye handle is high
 - Snake River sockeye are ESA-listed and allowable impacts are limited

Development/Implementation of Alternative Gear

- Coho tanglenets evaluated in 2009 - 2011 and showed promise for mark-selective fishery
- Full fleet fisheries implemented in 2013 - 2015
 - Structure similar to spring Chinook seasons with live-capture regulations in place

Development/Implementation of Alternative Gear

- Three-year seine mortality study complete in 2015
 - ESA permit includes a high interim mortality rate
 - New mortality rate study being analyzed by TAC
 - Applying for funding through S-K Grant
- Pound Net deployed in the fall of 2016
 - Preliminary encounters were 816 Steelhead, 787 Coho, 534 Chinook, 5 Chum, and 2 Sockeye
 - Report expected in 2017

Washington Select Area Plans

- Deep River spring Chinook releases (350K) discontinued in 2014
- Spring Chinook smolts (all with CWTs) released from Cathlamet Channel net pens include (~200K) in 2014, (142K) in 2015, and (107.9K) in 2016
- Continue to investigate the Cathlamet Channel as a new spring Chinook Select Area site – (No tags were recovered in 2016)
- Deep River releases in 2016 included 920K Coho and 875K tule fall Chinook

Oregon Select Area Plans

- Expand season opportunities
- Provide additional hatchery fish for release by shifting current production and/or providing new production
 - Enhanced production generally on track in 2014-16, except SAB fall Chinook
- Expand area boundaries – research ongoing since 2011
- Establish new Select Area sites - initiated in 2014
 - Four areas investigated; work concluded in 2016

Additional Plan Elements

- Barbless hooks required to aid in the safe release of wild fish
 - Oregon Commission rejected a proposal allow barbed hooks in the Willamette and Select Area sites
 - Washington Commission approved exceptions during certain times and areas in some lower river tributaries
- To increase management certainty, the Department continues to work to secure funding sources to support fishery monitoring, data collection and analysis
- Improve accuracy of preseason forecasts and in-season run size updates - ongoing in TAC reviews
- Improve in-season tracking of ESA impacts of each fishery

Adaptive Management

- Commissions track implementation through annual reviews; if policy expectations not achieved:
 - determine causes & identify action to correct course
 - make adjustments needed to stay on track
- Cohesive package - the key elements and principles of the plan would remain intact

Adaptive Management *(continued)*

- Reconsideration of state-managed mainstem fisheries may take place under the following circumstances:
 - Lower than anticipated catch and economic expectations to the commercial industry
 - Insufficient space in off-channel sites to accommodate the commercial fleet
 - Biological, fiscal and/or legal circumstances that delay or preclude implementation of alternative gear, buyback of commercial permits, and/or additional off-channel hatchery investments
 - Management objectives are not achieved for sport or commercial fisheries
 - Conflicts with the terms of the *US v Oregon* Management Agreement with Columbia River tribes
 - Failure to meet conservation objectives

2016 Spring Season

- Upriver spring Chinook forecast – 188,800 fish
- Actual return – 187,800 fish; 99.5% of forecast
- ESA impacts shared 70/30 sport/commercial
- LCR sport season open for 120 possible days from Jan 1- Jun15
- Zone 6 Sport season open 56 days March 16-May 8 and May 13-15
- Snake River Sport open in three areas, staggered openers beginning in late May - total of 20 days open
- Adaptive management implemented to transfer fish from LCR sport to upper fisheries for continued opportunity

2016 Spring Season *(Continued)*

- Commercial fisheries - six periods during March 29- June 7
- Tanglenets used through mid-May
- Adaptive management implemented to allow use of large-mesh gear to avoid shad and increased salmonid handle time
- Select Areas – emergency closures necessary to remain within allocated ESA limits

2016 Summer Season

- Upper Columbia summer Chinook Forecast - 93,300 fish
- Actual return – 91,200 fish
- Fisheries upstream of Priest Rapids Dam allocated 66-60%
- Non-Indian fisheries downstream of PRD are allocated 70/30 sport /commercial
- Sockeye forecast – 101,600 fish
- Actual return - 342,500 fish
 - ESA limit 1%; allocated 70/30 sport/commercial
 - Retention allowed in mainstem fisheries

2016 Fall Season

- Preseason forecast – 960, 200 Chinook (579.6K URBs)
 - ESA impacts allocated ~ 70/30 for URB and LRH
 - Preseason planning - 53% URBs and 70% LRH to sport
- Actual estimate - ~ 701,100 Chinook (73% of forecast)
- Preseason Forecast - 322,600 Coho
- Actual estimate – less than forecast
- Fisheries constrained by ESA limits on wild Snake River fall Chinook

2016 Fall Fishery

- Sport Objectives
 - Buoy 10 season Aug 1 to Labor Day (Exceeded)
 - Tongue Pt to Warrior Rock season Aug 1-Sep 7 non-MSF and Sep 8-14 MSF (Exceeded)
 - Warrior Rock to Bonn. Dam season August 1 to Oct 31 (not Achieved)
- Commercial Fishery
 - Season Aug 7 – Sep 23 Total of 13 days
 - Opener on Sep 28 rescinded (ESA Concerns)
 - No Coho fishery (No ESA impact available)

Pilot Commercial Seine Fishery

- 20-day season (Aug 22-Sep 30) to address research-related questions on implementing seines
- A Lottery drawing for 2 beach and 2 purse seines permits.
- Individual Fish Quotas (IFQs) assigned to each permit
- Landings include 1,000 Chinook and 500 coho
- Mixed results for success of all permittees
- High start-up costs, low mark rates, and conflict with sport fishery were most significant issues

Key Outcomes for Success

- *US v Oregon* and other management protocols are met; remain within ESA conservation limits
- Commercial Fisheries:
 - Select Area enhancements result in increased harvest
 - Alternative gear is successfully used to harvest additional hatchery salmon and assist in conservation objectives
 - maintain access to surplus upriver bright fall Chinook
 - restores access to late stock hatchery coho
- Recreational fisheries:
 - increases angler trips and meet season objectives
 - maintain opportunity throughout basin

Questions?

