

OREGON AND WASHINGTON DEPARTMENTS OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
JOINT STAFF REPORT - FALL FISHERY UPDATE #1
August 23, 2023

RIVER CONDITIONS

- As of August 22, the recent five-day average outflow at Bonneville Dam is 142 kcfs compared to a five-year average of 146 kcfs. The current five-day average water temperature at Bonneville Dam is 72°F compared to a five-year average temperature of 71°F. The five-day average visibility at Bonneville Dam is 7.0 feet which is greater than the five-year average of 6.5 feet.
- River temperatures in the lower Columbia measured near Tongue Point have averaged 72°F 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 August 22, a total of 34,779 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 28,950 adult bright stock fish (URB and PUB stocks) have passed Bonneville Dam. A total of 5,128 adult tules and 701 adult-sized tule jacks (primarily BPH stock) have also passed Bonneville Dam. Bright stock passage is 6% complete and tule passage is 4% complete on August 22, based on recent 10-year average run timing.

Upriver Summer Steelhead

- Passage of upriver summer steelhead at Bonneville Dam since July 1 totals 60,640 A/B-Index fish. The recent 10-year average 50% passage date is August 18.
- From July 1 through August 11, CRITFC staff have sampled 232 total steelhead at Bonneville Dam including 225 A-Index fish (115 unclipped) and seven B-Index fish (one unclipped). Stock composition is tracking as expected at this point in the return.

Coho

- Coho counts at Bonneville Dam through August 22 total 491 adult early stock Coho (defined as Coho passing prior to October 1). Passage of upriver early stock Coho is typically only 1.2% complete by August 22.

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. It is still too early in the return for TAC to provide abundance updates for upriver fall Chinook stocks.
- TAC met on August 21 and updated the A-Index steelhead run size expectation at Bonneville Dam to 91,300 including 34,000 unclipped fish. This compares to a pre-season forecast of 55,400 total A-Index and 19,700 unclipped A-Index steelhead. TAC will continue to monitor and assess the A/B-Index steelhead, upriver fall Chinook, and upriver Coho returns and will provide additional run size updates as warranted. TAC is scheduled to meet again next Monday, August 28.

MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

- Detailed information on stock status and management guidelines for Columbia River fisheries are presented in Joint Staff Reports, which are produced annually and available at the ODFW and WDFW websites.
- 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 allowable impact rate for combined treaty Indian and non-treaty Chinook fisheries is a 45% harvest rate (HR) on the URB return based on preseason forecasts. URB stock is the surrogate for Snake River Wild (SRW) Chinook. This limit is allocated 30% for treaty Indian fisheries and 15% for non-treaty fisheries.
- The ESA impact limit to Lower Columbia River (LCR) tule fall Chinook is 38% in 2023 given the pre-season forecast. The handle rate of LRH stock is the surrogate for handle of LCR Chinook. The exploitation rate (ER) limit includes impacts in ocean and Columbia River fisheries combined.
 - For 2023 in-river fisheries, the most constraining stock is LCR tule fall Chinook and is limited to 9.41% ER.
- Additional management guidelines for 2023 fall fisheries were presented in Fall Fact Sheet #1.

2023 NON-TREATY FALL FISHERIES

Mainstem Fall Commercial Fisheries

- Early-fall Zone 4-5 commercial fisheries began on August 9 with a Monday and Wednesday nightly schedule through August 24. This fishery is scheduled to resume Sunday August 27 with a Sunday, Tuesday, and Thursday nights schedule through September 1.
- Preliminary catch estimates through August 17 include 1,726 Chinook and 5 Coho. Additionally, 62 steelhead have been handled. The preliminary LCR Chinook ER and SRW HR through August 17 is tracking similar to preseason expectations.

- Preliminary catch estimates for the fishing period on August 21 include 2,220 Chinook and 14 Coho. Stock composition of Chinook landed during this fishing period is not yet available.

Select Area Fall Commercial Fisheries

- Fall Select Area commercial fisheries in Youngs Bay opened August 21. Initial landings are not yet available. Blind Slough/Knappa Slough and Tongue Point/South Channel commercial fisheries are scheduled to begin Monday August 28. The Deep River commercial fishery is scheduled to open Monday September 4.

Buoy 10 and Mainstem Fall Recreational Salmon Fisheries

- The Buoy 10 to west Puget Island fishery is planned to be 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 is closed, but the daily bag limit increases to three hatchery Coho.
 - Preliminary catch estimates through August 20 include 10,627 Chinook kept, 7,674 Chinook released, 2,057 Coho kept, and 1,663 Coho released from approximately 48,300 angler trips. The preliminary estimates of LCR Chinook ER and SRW HR through August 20 are tracking within preseason expectations.
- Fall recreational salmon fisheries from the west end of Puget Island upstream to the Highway 395 Bridge (Pasco, WA) also opened August 1 with a two fish, one Chinook daily adult bag limit. Preliminary estimates of catch and effort through August 20 by area include:
 - West Puget Island to Warrior Rock: 833 kept and 50 released Chinook, no kept or released Coho, and 296 released steelhead from about 10,200 angler trips.
 - Warrior Rock to Bonneville Dam: 341 kept and 15 released Chinook, two kept and two released Coho, and 137 released steelhead from about 5,600 angler trips.
 - Bonneville Dam upstream to Highway 395 Bridge (Pasco, WA): 82 Chinook kept and 41 released Chinook, zero Coho kept and 13 released, and 193 summer steelhead have been released from approximately 1,900 angler trips.

FUTURE MEETINGS

- A Compact hearing is scheduled for 1 PM Wednesday, August 30, 2023 to consider Treaty Indian commercial gillnet fisheries.
- The Joint Staff will monitor fisheries and recommend additional hearings as necessary.