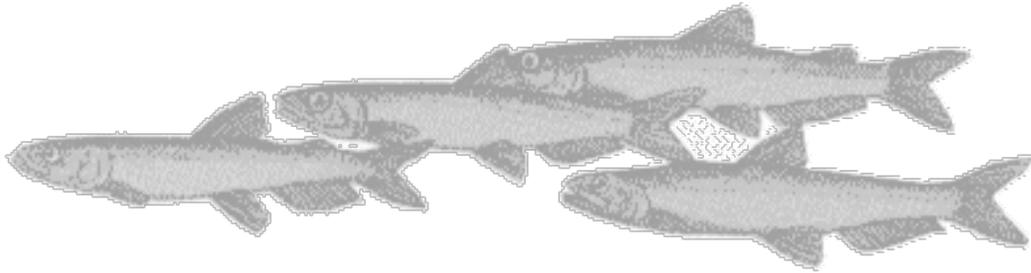


**2026 JOINT STAFF REPORT
CONCERNING
EULACHON SMELT STOCK STATUS AND FISHERIES**



Joint Columbia River Management Staff

*Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife*

December 22, 2025

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This Joint Staff Report provides an overview of the status of Columbia River eulachon (smelt), summarizes recent and anticipated run performance, and outlines management expectations for the 2026 season. The report includes a review of stock status, monitoring results, fishery performance, and application of current management frameworks.

Regulatory Context

The southern Distinct Population Segment (DPS) of eulachon has been listed as *Threatened* under the U.S. Endangered Species Act since 2010, covering populations from the Skeena River (BC) to the Mad River (CA). While no federal protective “take” regulations have been issued, the states of Washington and Oregon retain authority to manage fisheries consistent with conservation and recovery objectives as described in the current Washington and Oregon Eulachon Management Plan (WOEMP).

Stock Status and Monitoring

The Columbia River supports the largest eulachon spawning aggregation, with adults typically returning at ages 2–7 (primarily ages 3–4). Runs generally peak in February–March, with presence documented from late fall into spring depending on environmental conditions.

Spawning occurs mainly in the mainstem Columbia downstream of Bonneville Dam and in the Cowlitz River, with intermittent use of several lower-Columbia tributaries. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife conducts annual surveys to estimate spawning stock biomass (SSB) based on larval outflow.

- **2025 SSB Estimate: 6.94 million pounds**, marking the fourth consecutive year of decline.

2025 Fisheries and Management Performance

The states of Washington and Oregon utilize the 2023 WOEMP framework, which applies preseason abundance indicators and in-season triggers to manage fishery harvest rates.

- **2025 Fisheries:** Columbia River commercial – three days per week schedule from January 20 through March 27; Cowlitz River recreational – four days in latter half of March; Sandy River recreational – one day, March 27; Cowlitz River tribal ceremonial and subsistence.
- **2025 Harvest: 127,014 pounds** across all state-managed fisheries.
- **2025 Harvest Rate: 1.8%**, below the allowable **5%** limit threshold specified for Harvest Phase 3.

2026 Run Forecast

The 2026 return will largely consist of Age-3 and Age-4 fish from the 2022 and 2023 brood years, with some added contribution from the stronger 2021 cohort (Age-5). Marine conditions important to eulachon survival, including upwelling patterns and copepod community structure, have been mixed and trending negative since 2023.

- **Outlook:** The 2026 return is expected to continue the downward trajectory of the past three years and fall below the 10-year average run size of 8.1 million pounds.

2026 Fishery Expectations

The Columbia River eulachon fisheries will enter 2026 under **Harvest Phase 2**, corresponding to a **2% harvest rate**. Based on the forecast and preseason evaluation, limited commercial and recreational fisheries may be supported in the Columbia, Cowlitz, and Sandy rivers.

Managers will apply the WOEMP decision framework and adjust fisheries in-season as warranted by observed run strength.

INTRODUCTION

This report describes smelt (eulachon) stock status in the mainstem Columbia River and includes a review of fisheries, current management plan and guidelines, and past management actions and strategies. This report is the first in an annual series produced by the joint Columbia River Management staff. Staff from the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW) and the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife (ODFW) are authors of this report; staff from the Columbia River Intertribal Fish Commission (CRITFC), and CRITFC's member tribes (the Nez Perce Tribe, the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation, the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs Reservation of Oregon, and the Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation) contribute tribal catch data in this report and are included as authors in the other reports in this series. The *U.S. v. Oregon* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) has reviewed this report.

Previously, eulachon smelt and white sturgeon stock status and fishery information were presented in a single report. Beginning with this edition, these materials have been separated, and white sturgeon information is now provided in a dedicated report. For white sturgeon information, please refer to the 2026 Joint Staff Report Concerning White Sturgeon Stock Status and Fisheries, which will be publicly available in mid-January 2026.

THE COMPACT/JOINT STATE PROCESS

The Columbia River Compact is an agreement between the states of Oregon and Washington through which the two states set commercial fishing regulations for concurrent jurisdiction waters of the Columbia River. The Columbia River Compact was established in 1915 by the respective state legislatures to resolve the difficulties which arose from the states unilaterally establishing commercial fishing seasons and regulations. The Compact provides that neither state may make, change, alter, or amend its fishing regulations without the consent and approbation of the other. Congress ratified the Compact in 1918.

The Compact is interpreted as being applicable only to commercial fisheries; however, in practice, the states also apply the principle of joint state management to regulation of recreational fisheries occurring in concurrent jurisdiction waters of the Columbia River.

Typically, public hearings are convened to provide a forum in which the states may discuss, negotiate, and reach agreement on specific fishing regulations. The states are typically represented by delegates of the Oregon and Washington agency directors, acting on behalf of the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission (OFWC) and the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission (WFWC). The Columbia River treaty tribes have authority to regulate treaty fisheries.

When addressing regulations for Columbia River fisheries, the states consider the effect on escapement, sustainable harvest, treaty rights, and the impact on species listed under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA). Working together under the principles of the Columbia River Compact, the states have the responsibility to address the allocation of limited resources between recreational, commercial, and treaty fishers. This responsibility has become increasingly demanding in recent years. The states maintain a conservative management approach when considering Columbia River fisheries that will affect species listed under the ESA.

SEASONS CONSIDERED

Non-treaty commercial fisheries for eulachon in the Columbia River will be considered at a Compact hearing in early January 2026. WDFW will also consider recreational fisheries in the Cowlitz River in January 2026. ODFW will address recreational fisheries in the Sandy River in-season if smelt are observed entering the Sandy. In September 2023, the states completed an updated Washington and Oregon Management Plan and will use this management framework to guide fishery planning.

ENDANGERED SPECIES ACT (ESA)

Salmon and Steelhead

The majority of Columbia Basin salmon and steelhead stocks are listed under the federal ESA as shown in the table below. Impacts on listed salmonid species from the eulachon fisheries described in this report are expected to be zero.

<i>Federally-Listed Fish Species Found in Columbia River Fishery Management Areas</i>			
Species – ESU/DPS	Current Designation	Listing Date	Effective Date
<u>Chinook</u>			
Snake River Fall	Threatened	April 22, 1992	May 22, 1992
Snake River Spring/Summer	Threatened	April 22, 1992	May 22, 1992
Upper Columbia River Spring	Endangered	March 24, 1999	May 24, 1999
Upper Columbia Summer/Fall	Not warranted	--	--
Middle Columbia Spring	Not warranted	--	--
Lower Columbia River	Threatened	March 24, 1999	May 24, 1999
Upper Willamette River Spring	Threatened	March 24, 1999	May 24, 1999
Deschutes River Summer/Fall	Not warranted	--	--
<u>Steelhead</u>			
Snake River Basin	Threatened	August 18, 1997	October 17, 1997
Upper Columbia River	Threatened ¹	August 18, 1997	October 17, 1997
Lower Columbia River	Threatened	March 19, 1998	May 18, 1998
Middle Columbia River	Threatened	March 25, 1999	May 24, 1999
Southwest Washington	Not warranted	--	--
Upper Willamette	Threatened	March 25, 1999	May 24, 1999
<u>Sockeye</u>			
Snake River	Endangered	November 20, 1991	Dec. 20, 1991
Okanogan River	Not warranted	--	--
Lake Wenatchee	Not warranted	--	--
<u>Chum</u> – Columbia River	Threatened	March 25, 1999	May 24, 1999
<u>Coho</u> – Columbia River	Threatened	June 28, 2005	August 26, 2005
<u>Green Sturgeon</u> – Southern DPS	Threatened	April 7, 2006	July 7, 2006
<u>Eulachon</u> – Southern DPS	Threatened	March 18, 2010	May 17, 2010

¹. Status downgraded to threatened per U.S. District Court order in June 2009.

Eulachon

In March 2010, the NMFS published a rule (75 FR 13012) to list the southern Distinct Population Segment (DPS) of eulachon (*Thaleichthys pacificus*) as threatened under the ESA, which became effective May 17, 2010. This DPS encompasses all populations within the states of Washington, Oregon, and California and extends from the Skeena River in British Columbia (inclusive) south to the Mad River in northern California (inclusive). In December 2011, NMFS designated critical habitat which, in the Columbia basin, encompasses the mainstem Columbia River from the mouth upstream to Bonneville Dam as well as the Grays River, Skamokawa Creek, Elochoman River, Cowlitz and lower Toutle rivers, Kalama River, Lewis River, and Sandy River (76 FR 65323).

In 2016 and 2022, NMFS issued five-year reviews of the status of the southern DPS of eulachon and determined that no change in the threatened status was warranted (NMFS 2016; NMFS 2022). As stated in the 2016 five-year review, “For threatened species, the ESA does not automatically prohibit take, but instead authorizes the agency to adopt regulations it deems necessary and advisable for species conservation including regulations that prohibit take (ESA section 4(d)). At this time, NMFS has not issued protective regulation for eulachon. Following issuance of the recovery plan for eulachon, NMFS will start the process to consider protective regulations for eulachon.”

In September 2017, NMFS released their recovery plan for the southern DPS of eulachon (NMFS 2017). The recovery plan identifies various threats to persistence for the Columbia sub-population; commercial and recreational harvest were considered “low” threats, and tribal fisheries were considered “very low” threats. Climate change impacts on ocean conditions are considered the leading threat to eulachon persistence. To date, NMFS has not issued protective regulations for eulachon that would prohibit take, allowing the agencies to adopt regulations consistent with the management and recovery goals of the population.

The 2018–2027 *U.S. v. Oregon* BO addresses the incidental take of ESA-listed eulachon in Columbia River salmon, steelhead, and sturgeon target fisheries.

Green Sturgeon

In April 2006, the NMFS published a rule (71 FR 17757) to list the southern DPS of the North American green sturgeon (those spawning in the Sacramento River, California) as threatened, which became effective June 6, 2006. Effective November 9, 2009, the Columbia River below river mile (RM) 46 was designated as critical habitat of the southern DPS (74 FR 52299). Impacts on green sturgeon from eulachon fisheries described in this report are expected to be zero.

Marbled Murrelet

The threatened status of the marbled murrelet has not changed since these seabirds were initially listed under the federal ESA on October 1, 1992 (57 FR 45328). On September 24, 1997, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) released a recovery plan for the threatened marbled murrelet covering the states of Washington, Oregon, and California (USFWS 1997). On October 5, 2011, revised critical habitat was designated for the marbled murrelet (76 FR 61599). In July 2021, the ODFW Commission reclassified the status of the marbled murrelet from threatened (as initially designated in May 1995) to endangered under the Oregon Endangered Species Act, aligning the species’ state status with that of both Washington and California. Fisheries described in this report are unlikely to adversely affect this species.

SMELT MANAGEMENT AND FISHERIES

Stock Status

Of the numerous streams and rivers occupied by the southern Distinct Population Segment of eulachon (locally referred to as Columbia River smelt), the Columbia River has historically supported the largest spawning run. Eulachon return to the Columbia River to spawn when they are 2–7 years old, with a majority returning at ages three and four. The fish may begin to enter the Columbia River in November and December and typically reach peak spawner abundance in February or March. Depending on environmental conditions and subsequent run timing, the presence of adult fish and larvae have been documented in the Columbia River through April and into May. Eulachon typically spawn in the mainstem Columbia River downstream of Bonneville Dam and in the Cowlitz River, with inconsistent runs and spawning events also occurring in the Grays, Skamokawa, Elochoman, Lewis, Kalama, and Sandy rivers.

Eulachon run sizes to the Columbia River during the past twenty-five years have varied, with noticeable peaks in 2001–2003 and 2013–2016 and a low in 2018. Spawning run size estimates in 2019–2024 were all above the 10-year average. 2022 and 2023 yielded the two largest run sizes since run size estimates were generated using modern methods, in 2011. Since 2022, Columbia River spawning run sizes have been decreasing.

Adult Returns and Larval Recruitment

Historically, commercial landings were used to estimate the size of the eulachon spawning run within the Columbia River basin; however, the documentation of effort, which would have provided the context necessary to evaluate biases of market demand and the size of the commercial fleet within a given year, does not exist. In current eulachon fisheries, catch per unit of effort (CPUE) is defined as the total weight (pounds) of eulachon caught per landing, providing the context necessary to inform an estimate of in-season run size. This estimate of CPUE is still subject to the effects of market demand and is, therefore, not considered the final run size estimate.

WDFW conducts annual surveys to derive an annual spawning stock biomass (SSB) estimate and evaluate the annual Columbia River spawning run size for smelt utilizing spawning areas upstream of the standard mainstem Columbia River sample site at RM 34 (Clifton Channel-Price Island). The SSB is a weight-based estimate of the minimum spawning adult abundances needed to produce the eulachon larval outflow observed. The SSB is estimated using a combination of daily Columbia River flow, adult biological data from samples collected from mainstem commercial or test fisheries, and egg and larval density data from weekly plankton tow surveys on the mainstem Columbia River, beginning as early as late-December and extending until larval counts approach zero, as late as mid-June. The plankton tow data are collected independently of fisheries and provide the least biased estimate of abundance currently available. These data are used post-season to evaluate run abundance through time and assess within-year harvest impacts.

Prior to 2024, the total number of spawning adult fish was estimated using the observed historical average of 11.16 adult eulachon per pound. Beginning in 2024, estimates were instead derived from in-season biological data collected from adult eulachon caught in the mainstem commercial or test fisheries to account for year-to-year variation in adult size at spawning. In 2025, adult eulachon averaged 9.4 fish per pound.

Age-composition data provide context to changes in length and weights of returning adult Eulachon and strengthen evaluations of environmental effects on specific brood classes and subsequent return abundances. Estimates of adult age composition, derived from the otoliths, indicate that the 2025 run was comprised of approximately 44% Age-4 fish and 37% Age-3 fish (Figure 1). Adults made up of ages 2, 5, and 6 cumulatively made up approximately 19% of the run.

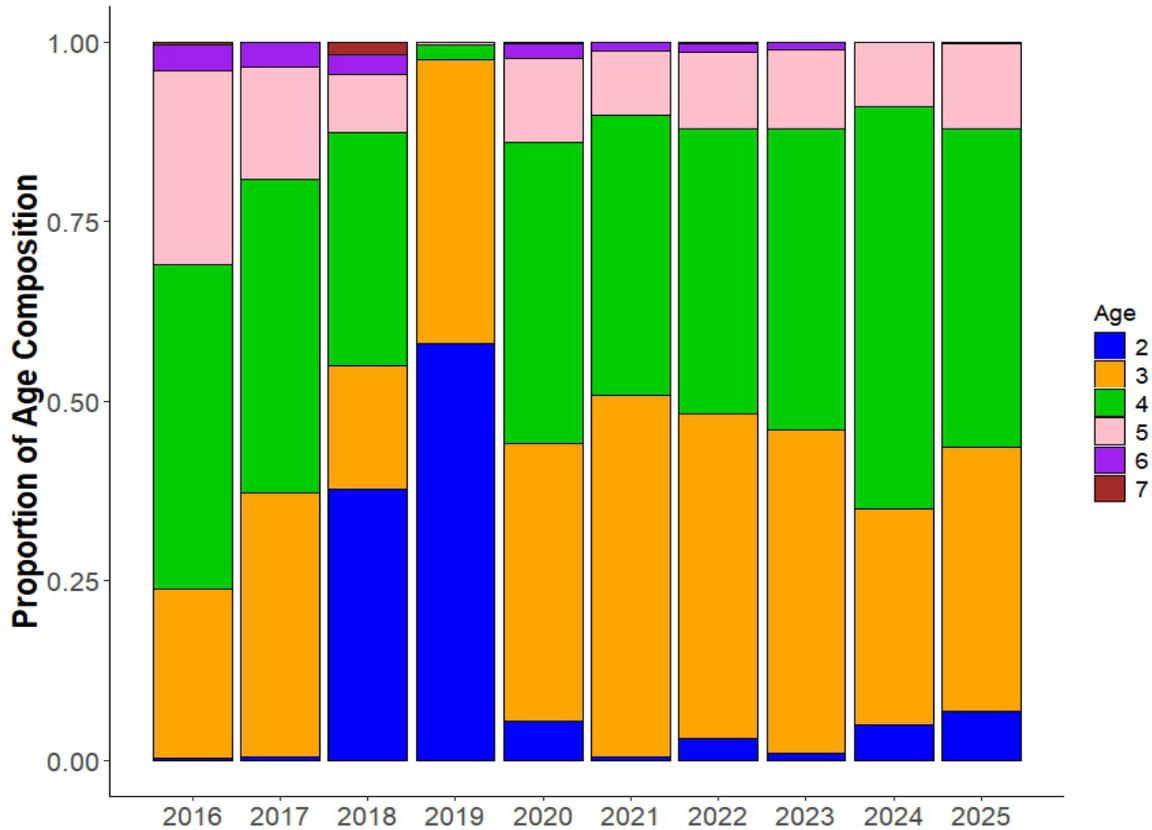


Figure 1. Columbia River adult eulachon spawning run age composition, using otoliths, 2016–2025.

The 2025 field season occurred December 30, 2024–June 4, 2025. Plankton tow net sampling was conducted every week of the 23-week period. To target anticipated peak larval outflow and improve the precision of the SSB estimate, sampling was increased to twice weekly during the weeks of April 7, 21, and 5, 2025. The highest observed larval outflow occurred during the week of April 21, 2025 (Figure 2). In recent years, the larval outflow timing has been variable, with peak outflow occurring during the first week of April in 2022 and 2024, but as late as the second week of May in 2023 (Figure 3).

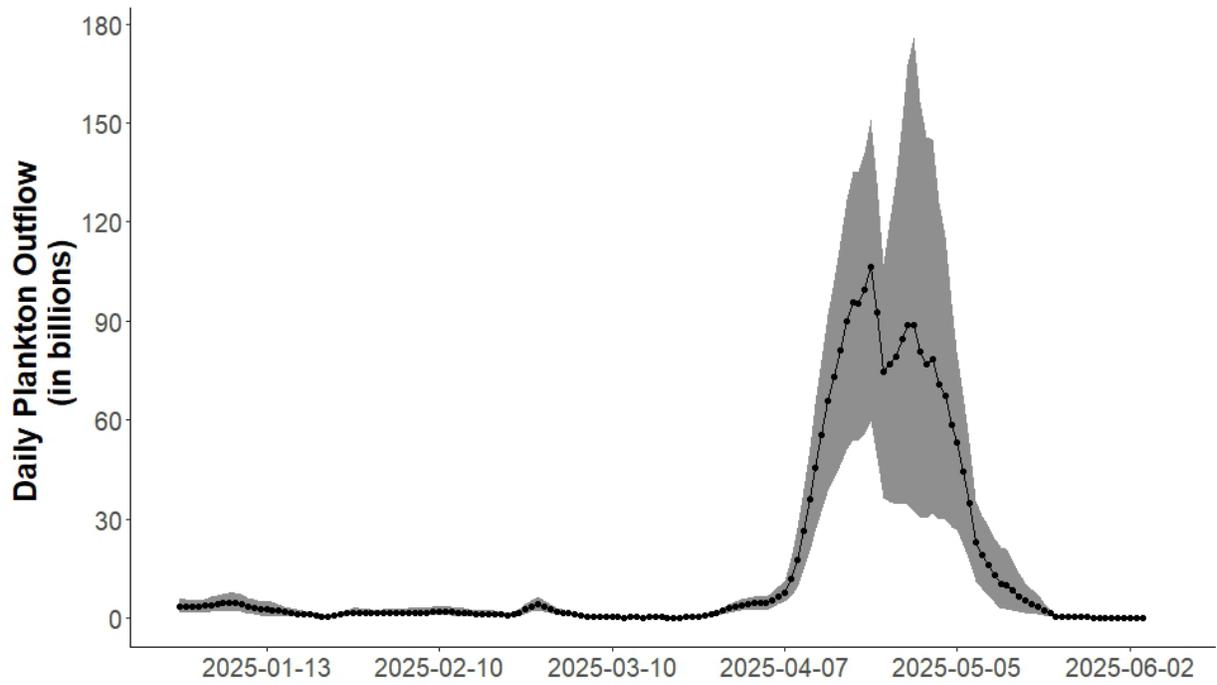


Figure 2. *The 2025 Columbia River expanded mean daily plankton outflow. In this context, plankton refers to eulachon eggs and larvae. The black line and points indicate the daily mean estimates, and the gray shaded area indicates the 95% confidence intervals on those mean estimates.*

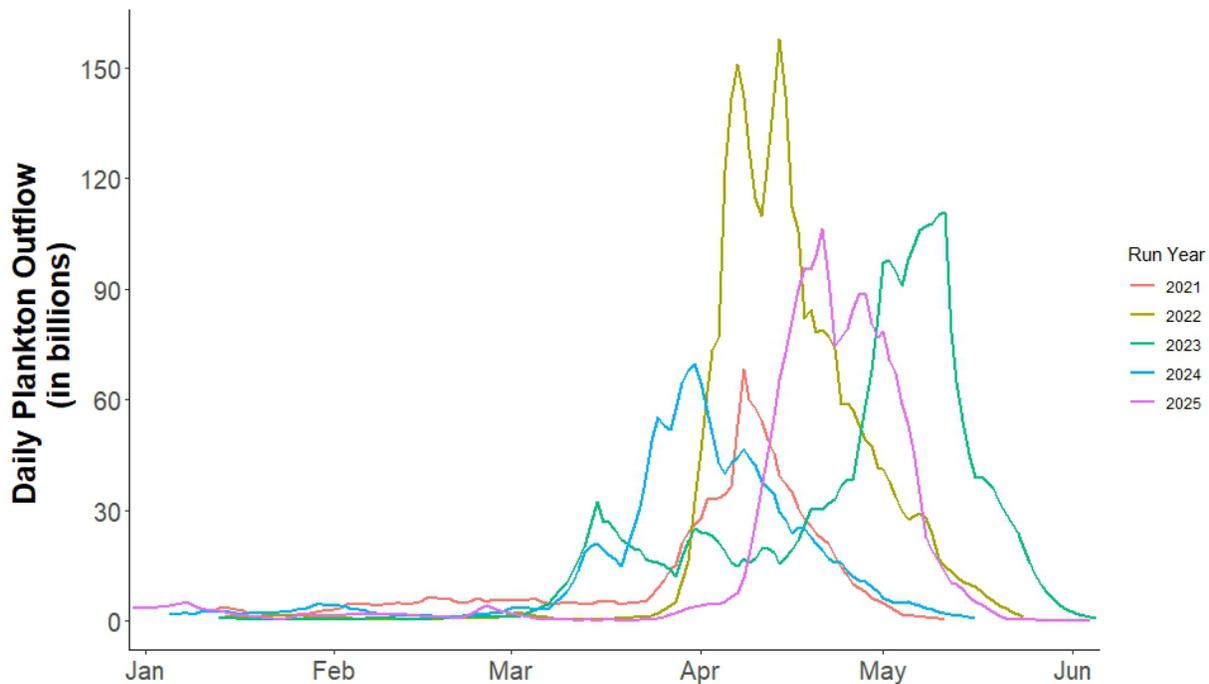


Figure 3. *The 2018–2025 Columbia River daily mean plankton outflow, highlighting the variation in larval outflow timing. In this context, plankton refers to eulachon eggs and larvae.*

The 2025 Columbia River SSB is estimated at 6,937,535 pounds, continuing the decreasing trend observed over the previous three years. Every year, the SSB estimate is considered a conservative estimate of abundance since it cannot account for spawning activity downstream of the sampling site and any sources of adult, egg, or larval mortalities that would diminish plankton yields before reaching the sampling transect.

The Columbia River historically supports the largest spawning aggregation of the southern DPS of eulachon across their range. Since 2011, the Fraser River has exceeded the Columbia River’s run size only once—in 2018, when the Columbia experienced its lowest run of eulachon in recent history. In most years, the Columbia River return is estimated to be one to three times greater in magnitude than what is observed in the Fraser River (Figure 4).

Larval outflow data is necessary to calculate SSB; however, it is not practical to use for predicting the strength of future runs due to the high variability in survival as a result of environmental conditions during downstream migration, transition from freshwater to saltwater, and marine survival.



Figure 4. The estimated number of eulachon spawning in the Columbia, Fraser, Chehalis, Naselle, Grays, and Lewis rivers in 2011–2025, as data is available. Estimates for the Fraser River are derived from data provided by the Canadian Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). The Fraser River estimate for 2025 was not finalized at the time of this publication.

Freshwater to Saltwater Transition

Environmental conditions in freshwater affect the incubation time (the period from egg fertilization to hatching), timing and duration of the larval out-migration, nearshore ocean distribution of larvae, and overall larval survival during the transition from freshwater to saltwater. Specifically, the timing and availability of adequate water temperatures and flow volume may affect where larvae are located (i.e., within the estuary or into marine waters) when transitioning from endogenous yolk-larvae to exogenously feeding larvae. Eulachon larvae have fully developed sensory systems, mouths, and digestive tracts at the time of yolk sac absorption, indicating that prey availability at the transition to first feeding is critical to survival.

From 2021 to 2024 the winter and spring temperatures in the Columbia River during larval out-migration were predominantly warm, with only 2022 being relatively cooler. These warmer temperatures create conditions conducive for faster than average larval development. The flows during this same period were between below average and average; however, they were consistently poor during the peak of larval outflow, resulting in slower than normal downstream transport times. Combined with the warmer temperatures, the cohorts in these year classes, which will be returning in 2026 as Age-2 through Age-5, likely experienced negative freshwater conditions that could have adversely impacted survival due to lack of prey availability at the conclusion of yolk sac absorption.

Ocean Phase

All southern DPS eulachon subpopulations have remained depressed since the coast-wide collapse, with deteriorating ocean conditions considered the biggest threat to eulachon survival (NMFS 2017). Various indices of oceanic environmental conditions, including the Pacific Decadal Oscillation Index (PDO), the Southern Oscillation Index (SOI), and the Oceanic Niño Index (ONI), as well other factors such as coastal hypoxia, may serve as indicators of eulachon survival during the ocean-phase. For example, warm PDO phases coincide with enhanced coastal ocean biological productivity in Alaska and inhibited productivity off the west coast of the contiguous United States. The PDO values from 2014–2016 were positive, indicating warmer and less favorable ocean conditions. Therefore, despite the larger number of spawning adults and plankton outflow observed in 2013–2015, they did not materialize as strong adult returns in the following years (2016–2018), highlighting the impact ocean conditions may have on eulachon survival. Beginning in 2017, there was a shift and a subsequent decreasing trend in PDO values. These favorable conditions have coincided with the relatively strong returns observed during recent years. Between 2021 and 2025, the PDO has remained in a cool phase, which signifies favorable ocean conditions for fish returning from those cohorts. Other indices of ocean environmental condition (SOI and ONI) likewise suggest that conditions since 2019 in the ocean have overall been favorable, particularly in 2021 and 2022, but have trended toward warmer, El Niño phases since 2023.

In addition to broader climate indices, more localized environmental conditions such as seasonal hypoxia may also impact eulachon during their ocean phase. From May through September, portions of the continental shelf (beyond the 30-meter depth contour) can become hypoxic (dissolved oxygen < 1.4 ml/L) in the lower 10–30 meters of the water column. The presence of hypoxic waters may be lethal to eulachon and the plankton they feed upon. The areas of hypoxia between 2021 and 2024 were relatively large, with 2021 experiencing the earliest observed onset of hypoxia in 35 years, beginning in April and lasting into early October. The recent upswing in and size of hypoxic events may be detrimental to all returning brood classes. Because eulachon behavior and movements in the ocean are poorly understood, it is unknown if eulachon and their prey can avoid or escape from these zones. We assume that when 25% or more of the shelf area experiences hypoxia, it is more likely that eulachon will be negatively affected.

The productivity of copepods, a primary prey base for eulachon off the Pacific Northwest coast, is highly affected by coastal upwelling; however, upwelling alone cannot predict copepod composition. Strong upwelling is a positive indicator for ocean survival of eulachon, but only if the deep source waters are cold and nutrient rich. Upwelling in 2021 and 2022 was moderate to strong, shifting to a more neutral upwelling in 2023. Copepods sampled off Newport, Oregon from 2021 through 2023 were primarily comprised of nutritionally rich, cold-water northern species. In 2024, the northern copepod anomaly remained positive, but declined by approximately half and was more variable, suggesting foraging conditions were not as suitable for eulachon.

Historically, eulachon have been one of the main species of bycatch encountered during the April–October Washington and Oregon pink shrimp fishery. Since eulachon were ESA-listed as a Threatened species in 2010, steps were taken to reduce the eulachon bycatch by the pink shrimp trawl fishery, including adjusting the existing bycatch reduction devices (BRDs) and implementing LED lights to deter eulachon from entering the shrimp trawl. These methods have proven very effective; however, eulachon bycatch still occurs and potentially remains a useful indicator of eulachon population trends. Increased bycatch in the pink shrimp fishery tends to occur during years with better smelt returns and suggests a higher abundance of eulachon in their ocean phase,

which is a positive indicator for future runs. In 2021, 245 metric tons of bycatch was reported for the OR/WA pink shrimp trawl fishery off the Washington coast, dropping to 98 metric tons in 2022, and further decreasing to 74 metric tons in 2023. When applying a one-year lag to this time series the trend of these reductions generally aligns with the decrease in overall run size since 2022. Bycatch slightly increased to 90 metric tons in 2024. Due to loss of observer coverage bycatch data will not be available for pink shrimp fisheries occurring from 2025 onward.

2026 Abundance Prediction

Eulachon returns to the Columbia River during the past two decades have varied, with noticeable peaks in 2001–2003 and 2013–2016 and a low in 2018. Each brood class contributing to a given return will have a different recruitment and survival profile. Since returns of Age-6 and Age-7 fish are typically minor, the 2026 forecast is based on brood years 2021–2024 that represent adult returns at ages 5, 4, 3, and 2, respectively (Table 9). The 2026 run is expected to be primarily comprised of returns from the 2022 and 2023 brood years (i.e., Age-4 and Age-3 returns) with greater than normal contributions from the 2021 brood (Age-5) given that this cohort encompassed a higher than usual proportion of eulachon returning in 2025. Environmental conditions for Age-2 fish were neutral in the saltwater phase and negative during the freshwater phase and they typically do not contribute substantially to adult returns, so minimal to no contribution is anticipated from the 2024 brood.

Cohorts representing ages that typically contribute the most to adult returns (3–4-year-olds) experienced mixed marine environmental conditions and these conditions have trended in a negative direction during recent years. Both upwelling and Northern copepod anomalies, which are typically considered positively correlated with eulachon survival, have been varied and less positive since 2023. Similar to 2025, the relative proportion of Age-4 fish was higher than Age-3 fish, suggesting more recent cohorts are experiencing lower survival rates. Environmental conditions remain more positive than those observed preceding the low run sizes in 2016 and 2017.

A summary of cohort survival factors used to forecast the Columbia River eulachon adult return in 2026 is shown below (+ = positive factor, - = negative factor, 0 = neutral factor):

Cohort Survival Factors				
Brood Year	Age at Spawn	Freshwater Phase	Ocean Phase	Forecasted Contribution
2021	5	-	+	+
2022	4	0	0	0
2023	3	-	0	-
2024	2	-	0	-

Overall, the 2026 return is expected to continue the downward trend observed over the past three years and will likely be lower in magnitude when compared to the 10-year average of 8.1 million pounds.

Fishery Management Actions

In 2001, WDFW, with input from ODFW, finalized the Washington and Oregon Eulachon Management Plan (WOEMP; WDFW and ODFW 2001) which contained recommended policies concerning eulachon fishery management. Columbia River eulachon harvest was regulated in accordance with the WOEMP from 2001 through March 2010, prior to closure of all Columbia River eulachon fisheries. When fisheries resumed in 2014, they were prosecuted at levels lower than that prescribed in the WOEMP. These very limited opportunities allowed managers to gather biological data on adult eulachon returns and maintain a connection between the public and this resource.

In 2023 the states finalized the [2nd edition of the WOEMP](#) which utilizes three preseason abundance indicators to inform target harvest rates for commercial and recreational fisheries (WDFW and ODFW 2023). The plan also includes in-season triggers that allow managers to alter harvest rates up or down depending on the apparent strength of that year's run.

Eulachon Fisheries

Past Commercial, Recreational, and Tribal Fisheries

Smelt fisheries historically occurred in the mainstem Columbia River and tributaries, primarily the Cowlitz River. Mainstem fisheries primarily consisted of the predominant commercial gillnet fishery, a smaller commercial fishery using small trawls, and a minimal recreational fishery. The Cowlitz River provided the most consistent recreational and commercial fishing opportunities of the Columbia tributaries; however, smaller fisheries also existed in the Grays, Kalama, Lewis, and Sandy rivers. Columbia River tributary commercial and recreational fisheries used dip nets to capture smelt; most recreational fishers targeted eulachon from the bank whereas commercial fishers primarily targeted eulachon by boat. Additionally, local tribes have harvested eulachon for ceremonial and subsistence purposes since time immemorial.

As Columbia River eulachon abundance began to decline during the early 1990s, fishery managers restricted fisheries to increase escapement to spawning areas (Table 1). Beginning in 1995, Columbia River mainstem and tributary commercial fisheries were greatly reduced in response to exceptionally poor landings. In 1997–2000, commercial fisheries were further restricted to fisheries with limited days per week and a short season. These restricted fisheries were intended to allow minimal eulachon catch and collection of biological data to provide fishery managers with data necessary to assess the annual run strength.

Mainstem and tributary commercial fisheries were managed according to the initial WOEMP from 2001–2023 and were updated to follow the framework found in the 2nd edition of the WOEMP starting in 2024 (Table 2; Table 3; Table 4). In response to the ESA listing in 2010, the states prohibited commercial sales of eulachon from Columbia River and tributary fisheries effective December 10, 2010, and closed all recreational eulachon fisheries effective January 1, 2011. In 2014–2018 and 2020–2023, the states worked closely with NMFS to adopt limited, conservation-minded commercial and recreational eulachon fisheries. Commercial fisheries were limited to the mainstem Columbia River, and tributary commercial fisheries were not re-established.

Recreational fisheries were limited to the Cowlitz River in Washington and the Sandy River in Oregon. These fisheries were research-based, closely monitored, and provided the opportunity to collect biological data to evaluate the run size and age structure of the Columbia River sub-population.

Due to reductions in abundance and the consequent tightening of harvest regulations, the average commercial harvest since 2000 is significantly lower than the average recorded prior to the turn of the century (Table 5). The commercial fishery catch-per-unit-effort (CPUE) data, measured in terms of landings per delivery, provide a rough estimate of in-season run size (Table 6). Overall, the fishery assessment data allows for a better understanding and calibration of the SSB estimation calculations and helps state agencies provide NMFS with improved data for a viability assessment as part of a eulachon recovery plan.

Beginning in 2024, the states transitioned to managing fisheries under the framework of the 2nd Edition of the WOEMP (2023; Table 3). This updated framework was developed to better accommodate annual variability in abundance by integrating multiple data inputs to inform harvest management decisions. Evaluation of the P1, P2, and P3 pre-season abundance indicators inform the selection of the Harvest Phase and target harvest rate at the onset of the season. Pre-season indicator 1 (P1) is the mean run-size over the previous three years. Pre-season indicator 2 (P2) is the recent two-year directional trend in abundance (i.e., has the abundance been increasing or decreasing). Pre-season indicator 3 (P3) is the directional trend in forecasted abundance for the upcoming season (i.e., is the run size projected to increase or decrease from the previous year). Under this framework, harvest rates scale with biological risk, beginning with a precautionary 1% HR in Phase 1 and increasing to 2%, 5%, and eventually 10% in Phases 2–4 as indicators demonstrate greater stock resilience.

2025 Commercial, Recreational, Test, and Tribal Fisheries

Based on the framework provided in the WOEMP, the states entered the 2025 eulachon season in Harvest Phase 2, which specifies a pre-season target harvest rate of two percent and allows for limited commercial and recreational fisheries. On January 23, the states adopted a commercial eulachon fishery in the lower Columbia River set for twenty-four 12-hour periods on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from January 20 through March 13 (Table 3). There were no eulachon harvested until Wednesday, March 5, after which catch increased quickly. Peak daily landings in this fishery occurred on March 10 at an average of 3,905 pounds per delivery. Since this was the third period in which the average catch rate exceeded 400 pounds, an in-season upgrade into Harvest Phase 3 was triggered, allowing for a five percent total harvest rate. At a Compact hearing on March 11, the states adopted a six-period extension for the commercial fishery spanning March 17–27. The commercial landings CPUE during the two weeks between March 10–20 was the highest observed since 2003 (Table 6). Catch slowed during the final week of the fishery to an average of 287 pounds per delivery. A total of 51,087 pounds of eulachon were harvested during the 2025 commercial fishery.

Historically, the average daily landings in the mainstem Columbia commercial fishery have had a strong, positive relationship with estimates of the overall return size and have been used to predict final abundance in-season to inform in-season management decisions (Figure 5). In addition to smelt abundance, commercial landings can be influenced by market effects such as demand, price, and operating costs, which can affect fishing effort and introduce bias into the relationship between abundance and harvest. During 2025, average daily landings were high relative to the abundance of smelt in the Columbia and, under this historical relationship, would have predicted a run size of 41.4 million pounds, far greater than the SSB-derived run size estimate of 7.1 million pounds. The in-season trigger of 400 pounds per delivery in the commercial fishery did accurately predict a final run size of greater than 5.9 million pounds, the minimum abundance specified for harvest phase 3 in the WOEMP.

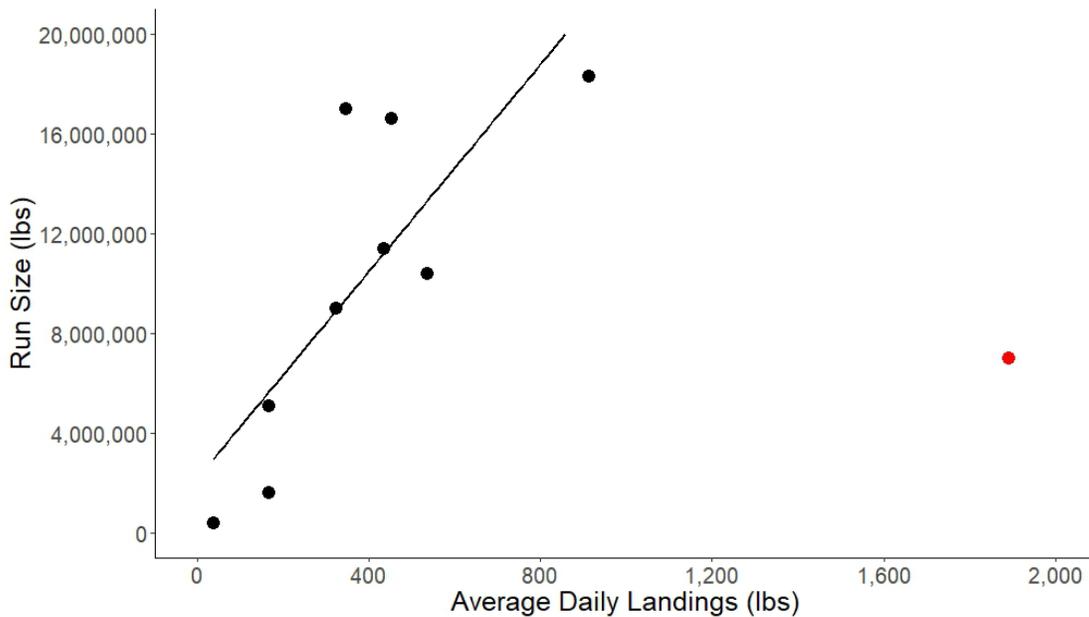


Figure 5. *The relationship between average daily landings in the mainstem Columbia River commercial smelt fishery and the total Columbia River smelt run size, 2014–2025. Displayed are the best fit line for data between 2014–2024. The data point for 2025 is displayed in red.*

During 2025 Washington contracted with an individual fisher to conduct a test fishery on the mainstem Columbia River to explore a fishery-independent sampling methodology for assessing in-season run abundance. The test fishery operated one day per week in commercial zones 2 and 3 between February 4 and April 8. A total of 1–3 sets were completed each day. All catch was either retained for biological data collection or donated to non-treaty tribes. In total, 853 pounds of smelt were caught in the test fishery, with CPUE peaking on March 11 (Figure 6), consistent with the timing of peak catch in the commercial fishery.

Peak catches of adults occurred approximately six weeks prior to the peak flux of smelt eggs and larvae observed in the SSB survey. Based on the typical amount of time it takes for fertilized eggs to hatch under seasonal water temperatures in the Columbia (approximately three to four weeks),

this suggests peak spawning activity occurred two to three weeks after the peak of CPUE in the test fishery.

After several years of data are available, staff plan to explore the relationship between test fishery CPUE and run size as a potential alternative to using the landings data from the commercial fishery to estimate in-season run size and inform potential management actions.

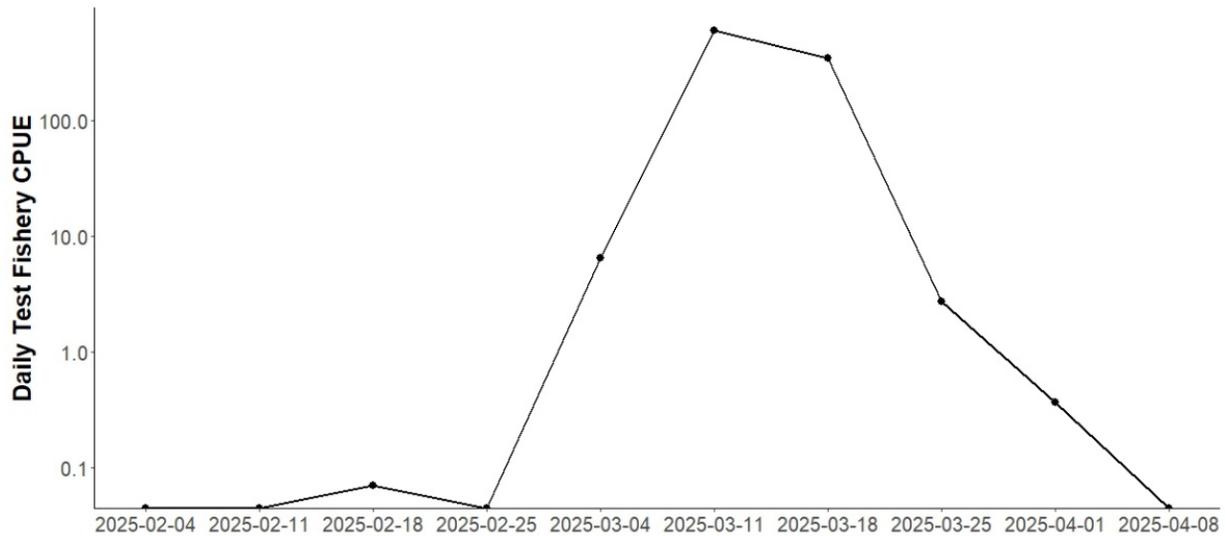


Figure 6. 2025 Columbia River test fishery daily catch-per-unit effort (CPUE; the number of pounds of smelt caught per one panel of gillnet–50 fathoms in length–multiplied by the amount of time fished).

In January, Washington announced a new approach for managing the popular Cowlitz River recreational eulachon fishery. Under this new strategy, a tentative preseason recreational eulachon dipping schedule was developed for Wednesdays and Saturdays from February 5 through March 22 and communicated to the public. Final approval of an open date was to be based on the minimum average of 200 pounds per delivery during at least one period of the mainstem Columbia commercial fishery as recommended for Harvest Phase 2. However, the decision did not take into consideration the presence of smelt in the Cowlitz River due to the unpredictable timing of eulachon entry into that tributary and a preference to set fisheries with more notice to the public.

The pounds-per-delivery threshold was achieved in the March 5 commercial fishery period and Washington adopted two days of recreational fishing for March 12 and 15 on the Cowlitz River (Table 7). The fishery was open for five hours between 8:00 AM and 1:00 PM with a daily limit of ten pounds per person. Although smelt were detected in the mainstem Columbia off the mouth of the Cowlitz River in the mainstem Columbia, no fish were observed in the Cowlitz River on the days open for harvest. As a result, no harvest occurred during these openers. Washington adopted a second set of recreational openers for March 19 and 22 under the same regulations, but, again, no smelt were observed in the Cowlitz River and no harvest occurred during these dates either. Across all four dates, there was a total of 2,227 trips and effort appeared to be highest at the onset of the openers, but quickly dropped off when it became apparent eulachon were not present. Eulachon were observed in the Cowlitz during early-April, but no further recreational eulachon

opportunity was considered due to the need to avoid encounters with out-migrating hatchery juvenile Chinook salmon and steelhead present in the Cowlitz during this timeframe.

Eulachon were observed in the Sandy River in late March and Oregon set a one-day recreational fishery on the Sandy River on March 27 from noon to 7 PM. During this seven-hour period an estimated 75,927 pounds of eulachon were harvested from approximately 7,700 trips. Most of the effort observed during this fishery was from the mouth of Sandy River upstream to I-84, encompassing 62% of the total effort recorded.

Tribal ceremonial and subsistence fisheries occurred in the Cowlitz River in 2025. The estimated tribal harvest of 5,460 pounds was the lowest since 2017.

Harvest totaled 132,474 pounds of eulachon from all fisheries during 2025 (Table 8). When compared against the total run size the harvest rate was 1.8%, less than the maximum harvest rate of 5% identified under Harvest Phase 3.

Expectations for 2026 Eulachon Fisheries

The current WOEMP calls for an evaluation of the P1, P2, and P3 pre-season abundance indicators to inform the selection of the Harvest Phase and target harvest rate prior to the start of fisheries (WDFW and ODFW 2023). Pre-season indicator 1 (P1) is the mean run-size over the previous three years. Pre-season indicator 2 (P2) is the two-year trend in abundance. Pre-season indicator 3 (P3) is the trend in forecasted abundance for the upcoming season.

The table from the WOEMP showing how each of these pre-season indicators contributes to a target harvest rate determination for the season is shown below:

Harvest Phase	Pre-Season Target Harvest Rate	P1 (in millions of pounds)		P2	P3
		min	max		
1	1%	-	1.5	--	--
		1.5	5.9	negative	negative
2	2%	1.5	5.9	positive	negative
		1.5	5.9	negative	positive
		6.0	20.5	negative	negative
3	5%	1.5	5.9	positive	positive
		6.0	20.5	positive	negative
		6.0	20.5	negative	positive
4	10%	6.0	20.5	positive	positive
		20.6	+	--	--

The 2026 pre-season indicators, as outlined in the WOEMP, are evaluated as follows:

- Pre-season indicator 1 (P1): A three-year average return of **11.5** million pounds.

- Pre-season indicator 2 (P2): A **negative** trend in returns observed over the previous two years.
- Pre-season indicator 3 (P3): A forecasted **negative** trend in 2026 abundance relative to the 2025 return.

Therefore, the states will begin the 2026 season in Harvest Phase 2, which specifies an allowable 2% harvest rate threshold.

This evaluation indicates the states may support limited eulachon fisheries in the Columbia, Cowlitz, and Sandy rivers during 2026. The states will use the decision-making framework provided in the WOEMP to guide harvest management recommendations and will continue to monitor the return in-season to evaluate potential adjustments to fisheries.

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TABLES

Table 1. Mainstem Columbia River commercial smelt seasons as managed prior to development of a management plan, 1960–2000.

Year	Season	Weekly Period	Days Open
1960–1964	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	12 PM Sat – 12 AM Wed	~255
1965–1966	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	12 PM Sat – 12 AM Wed	~307
1967–1977	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	12 PM Sat – 12 AM Wed	~255
1978–1984	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	7 days/week	365
1985	Jan. 1 – Dec. 31	downstream of Cowlitz R. - 7 d/wk	365
"	Feb. 22 – Mar. 1	upstream of Cowlitz R. - 7 d/wk	8
1986–1994	Dec. 1 – Mar. 31	7 days/week	121
1994/1995	Dec. 7 – Jan. 7	7 days/week	38
"	Jan. 7 – Mar. 31	8 PM Sat – 8 AM Wed	48
1995/1996	Dec. 1 – Feb. 2	7 days/week	64
"	Feb. 3 – Mar. 31	Noon Mon – 6 PM Fri	32
1996/1997	Dec. 1 – Jan. 27	7 days/week	58
"	Jan. 30 – Feb. 21	6 AM Thu – 6 PM Fri	8
1997/1998	Dec. 1 – Dec. 31	7 days/week	31
"	Jan. 2 – Feb. 13	6 AM – 6 PM Mon & Fri	13
1998/1999	Dec. 1 – Dec. 23	7 days/week	23
"	Dec. 30 – Feb. 10	7 AM – 7 PM Wed	7
"	Jan. 31, Feb. 7, & Feb. 18	7 AM – 7 PM	3
1999/2000	Dec 1 – Dec 26	7 days/week	26
"	Dec. 29 Feb. 23	7 AM – 7 PM Wed	9
2000	Dec 1 – Dec 31	7 days/week, 24 hrs/day	31

Table 2. Mainstem Columbia River commercial smelt seasons as managed under the Washington and Oregon Eulachon Management Plan, 1st Edition, 2001–2023.

Year	Season	Fishery Level	Open Hours	Open Days	Days Open
2001	Jan. 3 – Mar. 7	One	3 AM – 9 AM	Wed	10
"	Mar. 12 – Mar. 31	Two	3 AM – 9 PM	Mon & Wed	6
2001/2002	Dec. 1 – Dec. 31	--	24 hrs/day	7 days/week	31
"	Jan. 2 – Jan. 31	Two	3 AM – 9 AM	Sun & Wed	9
"	Feb. 1 – Mar. 31	Two	3 AM – 9 AM	Sun, Wed, & Fri	26
2002/2003	Dec. 1 – Dec. 31	--	24 hrs/day	7 days/week	31
"	Jan. 1– Mar. 31	Three	3 AM – 9 AM	Sun, Tues, Thurs, & Fri	51
2003/2004	Dec. 1– Dec. 31	--	24 hrs/day	7 days/week	31
"	Jan. 1 – Mar. 21	Three	3 AM – 9 AM	Sun, Tues, Thurs, & Fri	34
"	Mar. 22– Mar. 31	Two	3 AM – 9 AM	Fri & Sun	2
2004/2005	Dec. 1 – Dec. 31	--	24 hrs/day	7 days/week	31
"	Jan. 1– Feb. 23	Two	3 AM – 9 AM	Mon & Thurs	15
"	Feb. 24 – Mar. 31	One	3 AM – 9 AM	Thurs	6
2005/2006	Dec. 1 – Dec. 31	--	24 hrs/day	7 days/week	31
"	Jan. 1 – Mar. 2	One	7 AM – 4 PM	Mon & Thurs	20
"	Mar. 7	One	7 AM – 4 PM	Mon	1
"	Mar. 13 – Mar. 31	One	7 AM – 4 PM	Mon & Thurs	6
2006/2007	Dec. 1 – Dec. 31	--	24 hrs/day	7 days/week	31
"	Jan. 1 – Mar. 31	One	7 AM – 4 PM	Mon & Thurs	20
"	Mar. 11	One	7 AM – 4 PM	Sun	1
"	Mar. 15– Mar. 31	One	7 AM – 4 PM	Mon & Thurs	5
2007/2008	Dec. 1 – Dec. 31	--	24 hrs/day	7 days/week	31
"	Jan. 1 – Mar. 31	One	7 AM – 4 PM	Mon & Thurs	26
2008/2009	Dec. 1 – Dec. 31	--	24 hrs/day	7 days/week	31
"	Jan. 1 – Mar. 31	One	7 AM – 2 PM	Mon & Thurs	26
2009/2010	Dec. 1 – Dec. 31	--	24 hrs/day	7 days/week	31
"	Jan. 1 – Mar. 31	One	7 AM – 2 PM	Mon & Thurs	25
2011–2013	Closed ¹	--	--	--	0
2014	Feb. 10 – Mar. 6	< One	7 AM – 2 PM	Mon & Thurs	8
2015	Feb. 2 – Feb. 26	< One	7 AM – 2 PM	Mon & Thurs	8
2016	Feb. 1 – Feb. 25	< One	7 AM – 2 PM	Mon & Thurs	8
2017	Feb. 2 – Feb. 27	< One	7 AM – 2 PM	Mon & Thurs	8
2018	Feb. 1 – Feb. 26	< One	7 AM – 2 PM	Mon & Thurs	8
2019	Closed ¹	--	--	--	0
2020	Feb. 3 – Feb. 27	< One	5 AM – 5 PM	Mon & Thurs	8
2021	Jan. 28 – Mar. 11	< One	5 AM – 5 PM	Mon & Thurs	13
2022	Jan. 26 – Mar. 18	< One	5 AM – 5 PM	Mon, Wed, & Fri	23
2023	Jan. 25 – Mar. 16	< One	5 AM – 5 PM	Mon, Wed, & Fri	22

¹ Commercial fisheries were closed December 2010 through 2013, following the ESA listing of Eulachon as a threatened species, and again in 2019 due to projected low run abundance.

Table 3. Mainstem Columbia River commercial smelt seasons as managed under the Washington and Oregon Eulachon Management Plan, 2nd Edition, 2024–2025.

Year	Season	Initial Harvest Phase	Final Harvest Phase	Open Hours	Open Days	Days Open
2024	Jan. 24 - Mar. 28	Phase 2	Phase 3	5 AM – 5 PM	Mon, Wed, & Thurs	29
2025	Jan. 20 - Mar. 27	Phase 2	Phase 3	5 AM – 5 PM	Mon, Wed, & Thurs	30

Table 4. Washington and Oregon tributary commercial smelt seasons, 2002–2025. Washington tributaries not listed were closed by emergency regulation during this period. All tributary commercial fisheries are restricted to dip net gear.

Year	Cowlitz River ¹	Kalama River ²	Lewis River ³	Oregon Rivers
2002	<u>1/02–1/31:</u> 6 PM Sun – 6 AM Mon, and 6 PM Wed – 6 AM Thu <u>2/01–2/25:</u> 6 PM Sun – 6 AM Mon, and 6 PM Tue – 6 AM Wed, and 6 PM Wed – 6 AM Thu <u>2/26–3/31:</u> 6 PM Sun – 6 AM Mon, and 6 PM Tue – 6 AM Wed, and 6 PM Wed – 6 AM Thu, and 6 PM Thu – 6 AM Fri	<u>2/05–2/25:</u> 6 PM Sun – 6 AM Mon, and 6 PM Tue – 6 AM Wed, and 6 PM Wed – 6 AM Thu <u>2/26–3/31:</u> 6 PM Sun – 6 AM Mon, and 6 PM Tue – 6 AM Wed, and 6 PM Wed – 6 AM Thu, and 6 PM Thu – 6 AM Fri	<u>2/05–3/31:</u> 6 PM Sun – 6 AM Mon, and 6 PM Tue – 6 AM Wed, and 6 PM Wed – 6 AM Thu <u>2/26–3/31:</u> 6 PM Sun – 6 AM Mon, and 6 PM Tue – 6 AM Wed, and 6 PM Wed – 6 AM Thu, and 6 PM Thu – 6 AM Fri	24-hours daily
2003	<u>1/01–3/31:</u> 6 PM Sun – 6 AM Mon, and 6 PM Tue – 6 AM Wed, and 6 PM Wed – 6 AM Thu	<u>1/01–3/31:</u> 6 PM Sun – 6 AM Mon, and 6 PM Tue – 6 AM Wed, and 6 PM Wed – 6 AM Thu	<u>1/01–3/31:</u> 6 PM Sun – 6 AM Mon, and 6 PM Tue – 6 AM Wed, and 6 PM Wed – 6 AM Thu	24-hours daily
2004	<u>1/01–3/17:</u> 6 PM Sun – 6 PM Tue and 6 PM Wed – 6 PM Fri <u>3/18–3/31:</u> 6 PM Sun – 6 AM Mon and 6 PM Wed – 6 AM Thu	<u>1/01–3/17:</u> 6 PM Sun – 6 PM Tue and 6 PM Wed – 6 PM Fri <u>3/18–3/31:</u> 6 PM Sun – 6 AM Mon and 6 PM Wed – 6 AM Thu	<u>1/01–3/17:</u> 6 PM Sun – 6 PM Tue and 6 PM Wed – 6 PM Fri <u>3/18–3/31:</u> 6 PM Sun – 6 AM Mon and 6 PM Wed – 6 AM Thu	24-hours daily
2005	<u>1/01–2/22:</u> 6 PM Sun – 6 AM Mon and 6 PM Wed – 6 AM Thu <u>2/23–3/31:</u> 6 PM Wed – 6 AM Thu	Closed	<u>1/01–2/22</u> 6 PM Sun – 6 AM Mon and 6 PM Wed – 6 AM Thu <u>2/23–3/31:</u> 6 PM Wed – 6 AM Thu	24-hours daily
2006	<u>1/01–3/31:</u> 6 PM – 11:59 PM Sun and Wed	Closed	Closed	24-hours daily
2007	<u>1/01–3/31:</u> 6 PM – 11:59 PM, Sun and Wed	Closed	Closed	24-hours daily
2009	<u>1/01–3/31</u> 6 AM – 10: PM, Sat	Closed	Closed	24-hours daily
2010	<u>2/03–2/28</u> 7 PM – 10 PM Sun and Wed	Closed	Closed	24-hours daily through November
2011–2025	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed

¹ Area restricted to downstream of Peterson’s Eddy (approximately River Mile [RM] 8.0).

² Area restricted to downstream of Modrow Bridge (RM 2.9).

³ Area restricted to the mainstem and North Fork downstream from the overhead powerlines near Eagle Island (approximately RM 11.5).

Table 5. Columbia River and tributary commercial eulachon landings (in thousands of pounds), 1938–2025.

Year (s)		Columbia River ¹	Grays River	Cowlitz River	Kalama River	Lewis River	Sandy River	Total
1938–1949	Range	200–1,000	0–59	1–3,000	0–77	0–2,000	0–1,400	1,000–5,700
	Average	610	18	1,400	13	300	300	3,000
1950–1959	Range	400–1,300	0–16	0–2,000	0–44	0–900	0–500	1,300–2,600
	Average	800	3	700	11	200	100	1,800
1960–1969	Range	100–800	0–53	1,000	0–0	0–82	0–0	800–1,500
	Average	700	10	600	0	8	0	1,100
1970–1979	Range	900	0–6	100	0–300	0–900	0–800	500–3,200
	Average	300	1	1,400	4	100	100	2,000
1980–1989	Range	53–500	0–35	100–3,700	0–8	0–2,700	0–300	500–3,800
	Average	200	4	2,500	1	600	59	2,400
1990–1999	Range	0.2–37	0.0	0–3,673	0–67	0–22	0.0	9–3,674
	Average	13	0.0	1,029	7	2	0.0	1,051
2000–2009	Range	0.1–159	0.0	0–464	0.0	0–529	0–23	0.2–1083
	Average	37	0	102	0	102	2	244
2010–2019 ²	Range	0.0–18.6	--	--	--	--	--	0.0–18.6
	Average	5.2	--	--	--	--	--	5.2
2020		10.3	--	--	--	--	--	10.3
2021		11.0	--	--	--	--	--	11.0
2022		27.4	--	--	--	--	--	27.4
2023		1.7	--	--	--	--	--	1.7
2024		11.8	--	--	--	--	--	11.8
2025		51.1	--	--	--	--	--	51.1
2020–2025	Range	1.7–51.1	--	--	--	--	--	1.7–51.1
	Average	18.9	--	--	--	--	--	18.9

¹ Season totals prior to 2010 may contain landings from previous December.

² All commercial fisheries were closed December 2010 through 2013, following the ESA listing of Eulachon as a threatened species, and again in 2019 due to projected low run abundance. Tributary commercial fisheries have not reopened since the December 2010 closure.

Table 6. Eulachon CPUE (pounds per delivery) and landings in mainstem Columbia River commercial fisheries, 1990–2025.

Year	CPUEs by Calendar Week									Season Totals	
	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	12	CPUE	Pounds ¹
1990	0	0	0	0	0	0	--	--	--	709	6,381
1991	0	107	685	0	0	940	--	--	--	389	5,841
1992	344	232	290	0	0	50	--	--	--	203	2,644
1993	18	0	224	1,731	2,274	3,100	--	--	--	1,843	33,172
1994	0	0	0	0	35	109	--	--	--	59	235
1995	216	250	67	0	137	35	--	--	--	180	7,612
1996	122	0	445	59	150	20	--	--	--	95	7,208
1997	161	216	672	214	0	0	--	--	--	304	37,069
1998	94	30	17	0	0	0	--	--	--	134	11,866
1999	143	183	297	110	0	0	--	--	--	172	20,834
2000	371	123	330	241	37	0	--	--	--	211	31,042
2001	0	520	1,604	2,322	3,875	2,194	--	--	--	2,033	158,809
2002	1,401	2,014	106	0	2,057	7,320	--	--	--	1,920	57,980
2003	445	581	778	4,350	2,216	2,486	--	--	--	1,132	66,875
2004	34	693	368	47	21	153	--	--	--	548	15,431
2005	25	28	0	0	0	0	--	--	--	27	108
2006	194	209	14	0	0	0	--	--	--	157	13,099
2007	0	0	0	209	163	39	--	--	--	153	8,702
2008	0	63	210	58	1	0	--	--	--	133	11,381
2009	34	3	65	50	45	47	--	--	--	101	5,539
2010	43	22	7	3	0	0	--	--	--	96	3,539
2011–13	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
2014	--	--	0	32	631	200	--	--	--	453	18,558
2015	--	76	534	469	61	--	--	--	--	435	16,546
2016	--	146	225	148	36	--	--	--	--	166	4,822
2017	1	0	258	121	53	--	--	--	--	167	5,019
2018	51	8	0	0	0	--	--	--	--	37	110
2019	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
2020	--	198	402	261	81	--	--	--	--	250	10,255
2021	30	5	41	6	576	224	6	--	--	323	10,997
2022	0	0	0	354	945	1,304	856	140	--	913	27,398
2023	0	0	0	0	0	270	757	--	--	345	1,726
2024	36	828	354	78	65	1,067	113	--	--	535	11,768
2025	0	0	0	0	0	1,406	2,261	2,199	287	1,892	51,087

¹ Season totals prior to 2010 may contain landings from previous December.

Table 7. Lower Columbia River mainstem and tributary recreational smelt seasons, 2002–2025.

Year	Season Structure
2002	The Columbia River and Oregon tributaries open seven days per week the entire year. Washington tributaries open Saturdays, Sundays, and Wednesday from 6 AM to 10 PM during January 1–February 25, 2002. Washington tributaries open seven days per week from 6 AM to 10 PM during February 26–March 31, 2002.
2003	The Columbia River and Oregon tributaries open seven days per week the entire year. Washington tributaries open seven days per week from 6 AM to 10 PM during January 1–March 31, 2003.
2004	The Oregon portion of the Columbia River and Oregon tributaries open seven days per week the entire year (25-lbs. daily limit), and the Washington portion of the Columbia River was open seven days per week during January 1–March 31, 2004 (20-lbs. daily limit). Washington tributaries were open seven days per week from 6 AM to 10 PM during January 1–March 19, 2004, and on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 6 AM to 10 PM during March 19–31, 2004 (20-lbs. daily limit).
2005	The Oregon portion of the Columbia River and Oregon tributaries open seven days per week the entire year (25-lbs. daily limit), and the Washington portion of the Columbia River was open seven days per week during January 1–March 31, 2005 (25-lbs. daily limit). Washington tributaries (Grays River, Cowlitz River, Kalama River, and Lewis River) were open on Tuesdays and Saturdays from 6 AM to 10 PM during January 1–February 23, 2005 (10-lbs. daily limit), and in the Cowlitz River only, on Saturdays from 6 AM to 10 PM during February 26–March 31, 2005 (10-lbs. daily limit).
2006–2007	The Oregon portion of the Columbia River and Oregon tributaries open seven days per week the entire year (25-lbs. daily limit), and the Washington portion of the Columbia River was open seven days per week during January 1– March 31 (25-lbs. daily limit). Washington tributaries were closed with the exception of the Cowlitz River, which was open on Saturdays only, from 6 AM to 10 PM, during January 1–March 31 (10-lbs. daily limit).
2007–2009	The Oregon portion of the Columbia River and Oregon tributaries open seven days per week the entire year (25-lbs. daily limit), and the Washington portion of the Columbia River was open seven days per week during January 1 – March 31 (25-lbs. daily limit). Washington tributaries were closed with the exception of the Cowlitz River, which was open on Saturdays only, from 6 AM to 10 PM, during January 1 – March 31 (10-lbs. daily limit).
2009–2010	The Oregon portion of the Columbia River and Oregon tributaries open seven days per week the entire year (10-lbs. daily limit), and the Washington portion of the Columbia River was open seven days per week during January 1–March 31 (10-lbs. daily limit). Washington tributaries were closed with the exception of the Cowlitz River, which was open on Saturdays only from 7 AM to 3 PM, during February (10-lbs. daily limit).
2011–2013	Closed
2014	Columbia River closed. All tributaries closed except the Cowlitz River on the Washington shore, which was open on Saturdays (6 AM–noon) during February 8 – March 8 (10-lbs. daily limit) and the Sandy River on the Oregon shore, which was open on Saturdays (6 AM–noon) during March 1–22 (10-lbs. daily limit).
2015	Columbia River closed. All tributaries closed except the Cowlitz River on the Washington shore, which was open 6 AM–noon on Saturday February 7 and 14 (10-lbs. daily limit) and the Sandy River on the Oregon shore, which was open 6 AM–noon on Saturday March 7 and Sunday March 15 (10-lbs. daily limit).
2016	Columbia River closed. All tributaries closed except the Cowlitz River on the Washington shore, which was open 7 AM–1PM on Saturday February 6 (10-lbs. daily limit).
2017	Columbia River closed. All tributaries closed except the Cowlitz River on the Washington shore, which was open 8 AM–1 PM on Saturday February 25 (10-lbs. daily limit).
2018–2019	Closed
2020	Columbia River closed. All tributaries closed except the Cowlitz River on the Washington shore, which was open 8 AM–1 PM on Friday February 14 and Wednesday February 26 (10-lbs. daily limit).
2021	Columbia River closed. All tributaries closed except the Cowlitz River on the Washington shore, which was open 8 AM–1 PM on Tuesday March 2 (10-lbs. daily limit).
2022	Columbia River closed. All tributaries closed except the Cowlitz River on the Washington shore, which was open 8 AM–1 PM on Saturday March 5 (10-lbs. daily limit).
2023	Columbia River closed. All tributaries closed except the Sandy River on the Oregon shore, which was open noon–7 PM on Thursday March 30 (10-lbs. daily limit).
2024	Columbia River closed. All tributaries closed except the Cowlitz River on the Washington shore, which was open 8 AM-1 PM on Thursday, February 15th and 1 PM-6 PM on Tuesday March 5 (10-lbs. daily limit).
2025	Columbia River closed. All tributaries closed except the Cowlitz River on the Washington shore, which was open 8 AM-1 PM on Wednesdays and Saturdays between March 12th and March 22nd and the Sandy River on the Oregon shore which was open noon-7 PM on March 27 (10-lbs. daily limit)

Table 8. Eulachon run size and estimated harvest in Columbia River commercial, sport, and tribal fisheries, 2011–2025. Run size is calculated by summing the SSB and total harvest, rounded to the nearest 100,000 pounds.

Year	Run size	Harvest (pounds)						Grand Total
		State-Managed Fisheries				Other Harvest		
		Commercial	Sport	Combined	Harvest Rate	Tribal	Test	
2011	3,300,000	--	--	-	--	--	--	-
2012	3,200,000	--	--	-	--	--	--	-
2013	9,600,000	--	--	-	0.00%	7,470	--	7,470
2014	16,600,000	18,560	203,880	222,440	1.34%	6,970	--	229,410
2015	11,400,000	16,550	290,770	307,320	2.70%	10,400	--	317,720
2016	5,100,000	4,820	141,050	145,870	2.86%	8,560	--	154,430
2017	1,600,000	5,019	541	5,560	0.35%	1,900	--	7,460
2018	400,000	110	--	110	0.03%	--	--	110
2019	4,205,000	--	--	-	0.00%	23,660	--	23,660
2020	-- ¹	10,255	35,040	45,295	--	23,900	--	69,195
2021	9,000,000	10,997	91,250	102,247	1.14%	55,940	--	158,187
2022	18,300,000	27,398	169,543	196,941	1.08%	27,385	--	224,326
2023	17,000,000	1,726	55,595	57,321	0.34%	10,806	--	68,127
2024	10,400,000	11,768	53,675	65,443	0.63%	16,682	--	82,125
2025	7,100,000	51,087	75,927	127,014	1.79%	5,460	853	133,327

¹ The 2020 SSB estimate is incomplete due to truncated sampling during March due to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.