
Columbia River Recreational Advisor Group Meeting

February 6, 2024

4:00-6:00p

Hybrid (Clackamas ODFW,
virtual)

Prepared by: Columbia River Joint Staff

Columbia River Recreational Advisor Group Meeting

Clackamas ODFW office: 17330 SE Evelyn Street, Clackamas, OR 97015

Join online: [Click here to join the meeting](#) ID: 278599311568 Passcode: sNvKB3

Or call in (audio only): 1-564-999-2000 Conference ID: 670952897#

4:00p – 6:00p February 6, 2024

| Agenda | |
|--|--------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome and Introductions | (15 minutes) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Ground rules○ Introduction○ Agenda review | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Spring Fishery Planning | (60 minutes) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Summary of management guidelines○ Lower Columbia River modeling○ Bonneville-OR/WA state line modeling○ Snake River season | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Additional Topics | (45 minutes) |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Lower Columbia River white sturgeon fishery update○ Z6 recreational sturgeon update○ North of Falcon (NOF) orientation | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Future Meetings | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Compact Hearing (Select Area commercial), February 13, virtual, 10a○ Joint State Hearing (spring Chinook sport), February 21, Vancouver/virtual, 10a○ WDFW NOF Forecast, March 1, Olympia, 9a○ Pacific Fishery Management Council, March 5-11, Fresno, CA○ Columbia River NOF, March 21, Ridgefield/virtual, 10a○ NE McNary NOF (Snake, Hanford Reach, Upper Columbia), March 27, Clarkston, 6p○ Pacific Fishery Management Council, April 5-11, Seattle, WA | |

Ground rules

- Focus on the task at hand – *stick to the agenda*
- Be a conduit and collaborator – *share information*
- One person at a time to speak – speak your name to be added to the speaking list
 - Non-advisers will observe meeting and stay on mute – *comments may be permitted at the end of the meeting if time permits*
- Be respectful of others
 - Mute phone or line; take side conversations into another room
 - Be tough on issues and questions, not on people or organizations
 - No personal attacks, insults or threats
 - Listen to others
 - Speak and act professional – *no offensive, disrespectful, or derogatory language, including profanity*
 - Allow for a balance of speaking time – *limit length and number of times to speak on each topic*
- For virtual meetings
 - *6 to mute/unmute
 - Chat will not be monitored or used except for technical assistance

Columbia River Recreational Advisory Group (2024–2026)

| <u>Name</u> | <u>City</u> | <u>State</u> |
|----------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Harry Barber | Washougal | WA |
| Jim Bridwell | Cathlamet | WA |
| Kyle Hawes | Vancouver | WA |
| Jeremy Hull | Portland | OR |
| Les Kipper | The Dalles | OR |
| Don McBride | Richland | WA |
| Bill Monroe Jr. | Oregon City | OR |
| Robert Moxley | Dundee | OR |
| Pat O’Grady | Astoria | OR |
| Larry Phillips | Olympia | WA |
| Bob Rees | Clackamas | OR |
| David Sass | Warren | OR |
| Alexander Shar | Long Beach | WA |
| Greg Short | Hood River | OR |
| Jesse Vassar | Tualatin | OR |
| Steve Watrous | Battle Ground | WA |
| Chris (Clinton) Winn | Kalama | WA |
| Randy Woolsey | Tigard | OR |

Spring Fishery Planning

| <i>Columbia River Adult Salmon Returns: Actual and Forecasted</i> | | | | |
|---|---|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | | 2023 | 2023 | 2024 |
| | | Forecast | Return | Forecast |
| Spring Chinook | Upriver Total * | 198,600 | 141,179 | 121,000 |
| | Upper Columbia | 41,400 | 24,917 | 19,400 |
| | <i>Upper Columbia natural-origin</i> | <i>5,800</i> | <i>2,836</i> | <i>2,700</i> |
| | Snake River Spring/Summer ** | 85,900 | 82,433 | 63,500 |
| | <i>Snake River natural-origin**</i> | <i>13,200</i> | <i>10,826</i> | <i>9,200</i> |
| | Lower River Total | 117,000 | 75,407 | 84,600 |
| | Total Spring Chinook | 315,600 | 216,586 | 205,600 |
| | <u>Area-specific detail</u> | | | |
| | Willamette River | 71,000 | 38,373 | 48,800 |
| | <i>Willamette River hatchery-origin</i> | <i>53,100</i> | <i>26,094</i> | <i>39,300</i> |
| | Sandy River | 7,800 | 6,312 | 7,700 |
| | Select Areas*** | 22,100 | 18,789 | 18,100 |
| | Cowlitz River | 9,000 | 6,217 | 4,700 |
| | Kalama River | 2,400 | 2,525 | 1,900 |
| | Lewis River | 4,700 | 3,191 | 3,400 |
| | Wind River*** | 4,400 | 5,068 | 4,200 |
| | Drano Lake/Little White Salmon River*** | 8,000 | 7,550 | 5,300 |
| | Hood River*** | n/a | 2,038 | n/a |
| | Klickitat River*** | 1,400 | 651 | 1,300 |
| | Deschutes River*** | n/a | 2,387 | n/a |
| | John Day River*** | n/a | 2,686 | n/a |
| | Umatilla River*** | 2,500 | 2,502 | n/a |
| | Yakima River*** | 5,500 | 2,670 | 2,400 |
| Summer Chinook | Upper Columbia | 85,400 | 54,722 | 53,000 |
| Sockeye | Total Sockeye | 234,500 | 329,040 | 401,700 |
| | Wenatchee | 44,300 | 146,875 | 97,000 |
| | Okanogan | 187,400 | 179,655 | 288,700 |
| | Yakima | 100 | 443 | 12,100 |
| | Deschutes | 100 | 68 | 100 |
| | Snake River | 2,600 | 1,999 | 3,800 |
| Winter Steelhead | Wild | 15,700 | 14,699 | 14,400 |

* Upriver totals are developed by TAC for use in management of *U.S. v. OR* fisheries. Wild components are included in the stock total. Area-specific estimates for upriver tributaries detailed here are provided by other agencies/entities and may not sum to TAC's upriver abundance estimates.

** 2023 return is based on current TAC run reconstruction methodology.

*** Return to tributary mouth.

1/31/2024

Spring Chinook Management Guidelines

Upriver Chinook Stocks

- The 2018-2027 *U.S. v Oregon* Management Agreement (MA) provides the treaty Indian and non-treaty fishery harvest frameworks and harvest rate schedules for salmon and steelhead stocks destined for areas upstream of Bonneville Dam.
- Fisheries are also managed to meet the catch balance provision in the MA for upriver spring Chinook, which requires that mortalities in non-treaty fisheries not exceed the total allowable catch available for treaty Indian fisheries. The following table is derived from the harvest schedule within the MA and reflects the allowable catch and associated ESA impacts for treaty Indian and non-treaty fisheries.

| Spring Management Period Harvest Rate Schedule | | | | | | |
|--|------------------------------|----------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| Total Upriver Run Size | Snake River Natural Run Size | Treaty Indian Harvest Rate | Treaty Indian Catch Guideline | Non-Treaty Harvest Rate | Non-Treaty Mortality Guideline | Total Harvest Rate |
| 44,000 | 4,400 | 6.0% | 2,640 | 1.0% | 2,640 | 7.0% |
| 55,000 | 5,500 | 7.0% | 3,850 | 1.5% | 3,850 | 8.5% |
| 82,000 | 8,200 | 7.4% | 6,068 | 1.6% | 6,068 | 9.0% |
| 109,000 | 10,900 | 8.3% | 9,047 | 1.7% | 9,047 | 10.0% |
| 141,000 | 14,100 | 9.1% | 12,831 | 1.9% | 12,831 | 11.0% |
| 217,000 | 21,700 | 10.0% | 21,700 | 2.0% | 21,700 | 12.0% |
| 271,000 | 27,100 | 10.8% | 29,268 | 2.2% | 29,268 | 13.0% |
| 326,000 | 32,600 | 11.7% | 38,142 | 2.3% | 38,142 | 14.0% |
| 380,000 | 38,000 | 12.5% | 47,500 | 2.5% | 47,500 | 15.0% |
| 434,000 | 43,400 | 13.4% | 58,156 | 2.6% | 58,156 | 16.0% |
| 488,000 | 48,800 | 14.3% | 69,784 | 2.7% | 69,784 | 17.0% |

- The MA specifies that when the Snake River natural spring/summer Chinook return is less than 10% of the total upriver run size, the allowable mortality rate will be based on the Snake River natural spring/summer Chinook run size. The 2024 forecast of Snake River natural spring/summer Chinook represents 7.6% of the total upriver run size.
- The MA also specifies that fisheries occurring prior to a run size update be managed for a run size that is at least 30% less than the predicted upriver spring Chinook run size.

Lower Columbia Chinook Stocks (spring run)

- The 2024 forecasts for the Cowlitz, Lewis, Kalama, and Sandy rivers are sufficient to meet escapement goals and allow for Columbia River mainstem fishing opportunities.

Willamette Spring Chinook

- The Willamette River Fisheries Management Evaluation Plan (FMEP) limits freshwater fishery impacts on wild Willamette River spring Chinook to $\leq 15\%$.
- The Willamette River FMEP includes a sliding scale for escapement goals based on abundance of hatchery fish which determines the allocation of surplus hatchery spring Chinook to recreational and commercial fisheries downstream of Willamette Falls. The escapement goals are also intended to allow for full recreational fisheries in the upper Willamette River. The forecasted hatchery fish surplus available for recreational fisheries is about 13,000 fish and is not expected to be a constraint.

Preseason management guidelines

- Based on the MA, the preseason forecast of 121,000 upriver spring Chinook, and the preseason forecast for 9,200 Snake River natural-origin spring Chinook, ESA impacts for 2024 fisheries are limited to 9.0%, with 1.6% for non-treaty fisheries and 7.4% for treaty Indian fisheries.
- To allow for uncertainty in preseason forecasting, the MA requires a 30% reduction from the forecasts (i.e., a run-size buffer) to start the season, which equates to 84,700 upriver spring Chinook. At these run sizes, the MA allows for a non-treaty ESA limit of 1.6% and an allowable harvest (kept plus release mortalities) of 6,268 fish prior to a run size update.

| 2024 Spring Chinook Preseason Management Guidelines | | | |
|--|----------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| | 2023 postseason | 2024 preseason | Difference |
| Upriver CHS abundance (adults) | 141,179 | 121,000 | -20,179 |
| ESA impact rate (Non-treaty) | 1.60% | 1.60% | 0.00% |
| Willamette CHS abundance (adults) | 38,373 | 48,800 | +10,427 |

- The allocation policies for 2024 specific to commercial-recreational ESA-impact sharing and within-recreational sub-allocations are not concurrent. All information in this document assumes the following: no more than 70% to recreational fisheries (WA Policy) and no more than 20% to commercial fisheries (OR Policy); within the recreational sub-allocation no more than 70% to the Lower Columbia River fishery (WA Policy) and no more than 25% for fisheries upstream of Bonneville Dam (OR Policy; Bonneville Dam to OR/WA state line, Snake River). Due to this nonconcurrency, 10% of the non-treaty allocation will not be available for use by either the recreational or commercial fisheries, and within the recreational fishery allocation, 5% will not be available for use by any of the recreational fisheries. If additional guidance is provided, staff will modify the results described below and adjust future staff recommendations at upcoming Compact/Joint State Hearings.

| Commission Guidance (ESA impact allocation) | 2023 | 2024 | Difference |
|--|------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Sport allocation | 70% | 70% | 0% |
| Commercial allocation | 20% | 20% | 0% |
| U.S. v OR Catch Balance | preseason | preseason | |
| 30% Buffered Run | 139,020 | 84,700 | -54,320 |
| ESA Impact rate | 1.60% | 1.60% | 0.00% |
| Unallocated Impact Rate | 0.16% | 0.16% | |
| Catch Balance Pre-update | 10,287 | 6,268 | -4,019 |
| Unallocated Non-treaty | 1,028 | 627 | |
| Commercial Mainstem | TBD | TBD | |
| Commercial Select Area | ≤675 | ≤387 | -288 |
| Sport Fisheries (LCR, Z6, Snake) | 8,546 | 5,237 | -3,309 |
| Lower Columbia (below Bonneville) | 6,487 | 3,906 | -2,581 |
| Bonneville to OR/WA border | 927 | 558 | -369 |
| Snake River (WA waters) | 669 | 493 | -176 |
| Sport unallocated | 463 | 279 | |

- Weekly mainstem test fishing is expected to occur on Mondays beginning March 11 through the month of May.
 - Provides stock composition, catch rate, and bycatch information and continues the long-term data set; test fishing is helpful in setting potential future commercial fisheries.
 - Hatchery fish are sold at fair market value to off-set test fishing operational costs.
 - All information can be found at: <https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/commercial/columbia-river-test>.
- Typically, while OR/WA staff monitors fishery performance closely in-season, catch estimates are evaluated after the initial open period concludes and compared to the allowable ESA impact rates and catch balance for each of the non-treaty fisheries. If staff determine there are sufficient ESA impacts and catch balance remaining for use by a particular fishery, staff model scenarios to determine what opportunities might be considered. Following this, a Compact/Joint State Hearing is scheduled to consider these fisheries or staff may distribute a fishery update if no action is warranted.
- The pre-season buffer is removed once the *U.S. v Oregon* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) provides an initial run size update which typically occurs in mid-May. TAC typically meets on Mondays from early May through the rest of the spring season and reviews passage counts, catch information, test fishing data, and other pertinent information in order to assess the run and project the final abundance expectation.

Recreational Lower Columbia River Fishery Modeling – preliminary considerations

- The 2023 actual season was January 1 – February 28 from Buoy 10 to the I-5 Bridge and March 1 – April 11 from Buoy 10 to Beacon Rock plus bank only between Beacon Rock and Bonneville Dam. The area from Tongue/Rocky Point to Beacon Rock plus the banks between Beacon Rock and Bonneville Dam reopened May 19 and continued through May 31. The daily bag limit was one adult Chinook for the duration with the exception of a two adult Chinook daily bag limit for the January 1 – February 28 timeframe.
- Regulations during the early portion of the spring management period allow for steelhead retention in the mainstem downstream of Bonneville Dam through March 31 and closed thereafter except when spring Chinook is open. Steelhead caught downstream of Bonneville Dam are managed as winter steelhead through April.
- For 2024, a total of 3,906 total upriver spring Chinook mortalities are available prior to an in-season run update under existing OR/WA guidance (6,487 in 2023).
- Since the projected escapement for lower Columbia Chinook stocks is expected to meet minimum hatchery broodstock needs, modeling assumes the recreational fishery will be open throughout the LCR fishing area as normal. Staff used data from the 2018 fishery to model the 2024 fishery due to the similarity of the 2024 forecast with adult returns in that year.
- Assuming a seven-day per week fishery from Buoy 10 upstream to Bonneville Dam (bank only upstream of Beacon Rock), modeling results indicate the season would need to close after April 5 to remain within the pre-update guideline. Staff estimates this season structure could result in 5,271 fish handled (4,424 kept), including 3,334 upriver CHS mortalities (85% of pre-update guideline) from about 55,000 angler trips.
- Actual fishery results will be monitored in-season and recommended adjustments to the season will be made as necessary.

| 2024 Model Output for Spring Chinook Recreational Fisheries below Bonneville (Buoy 10 to Beacon Rock + Bank to Bonneville) | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--------------------|------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------|------------|-----------------|
| Run # | Model Scenario | Last Retention Day | Total Days | | | Angler Trips | Upriver (UR) | | Kept Catch | Comments |
| | | | March Days | April Days | March +April | | Used | Balance | | |
| 1 | Removing the first weekend of April | 5-Apr | 31 | 5 | 36 | 54,736 | 3,334 | 572 | 4,424 | Under by 572 UR |
| 2 | Including Saturday April 6 | 6-Apr | 31 | 6 | 37 | 59,778 | 4,002 | -96 | 5,250 | Over by 96 UR |
| 3 | Including the entire weekend (Saturday + Sunday) | 7-Apr | 31 | 7 | 38 | 64,820 | 4,671 | -765 | 6,077 | over by 765 UR |
| Upriver Fish Available Pre-Update to LCR: | | | | | | | 3,906 | | | |
| Notes/Comments | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1) Model Run #1 is the general approach used for the past seven years (2011 - 2023). | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2) Model Run #2 is following the same approach but with the inclusion of Saturday. | | | | | | | | | | |
| 3) Model Run #3 is following the same approach but with the inclusion of Saturday and Sunday. | | | | | | | | | | |

Recreational Bonneville-OR/WA State Line Fishery Modeling – preliminary considerations

- The 2023 preseason plan included the pre-update fishery being open April 1 – May 6. The fishery remained open as planned with 537 kept and 105 released adult Chinook from about 6,000 angler trips. The daily bag limit included up to one adult Chinook.
- The 2023 post-update fishery season dates of May 19-24 were adopted on May 17 via Joint State Hearing. The fishery remained open as adopted with 522 kept and 276 released adult Chinook from about 2,100 angler trips. The one adult Chinook daily bag limit continued for this period.
- Based on the assumptions described above, the 2024 fishery will be managed for 558 total mortalities prior to the in-season run update (927 in 2023).
- In recent years, the initial in-season run update has not been available from TAC until mid/late-May, with the initial 2023 update occurring on May 15 which TAC provided a minimum run-size expectation to the Columbia River mouth. TAC met weekly thereafter and updated the return as necessary.
- 2024 regulations during the spring management period allow for steelhead retention through March 31 and closed thereafter except when spring Chinook is open. Steelhead caught downstream of The Dalles Dam are managed as winter steelhead through March and Skamania stock from April through June.

| Season model outputs for the BON-S/L (Zone 6) recreational spring Chinook fishery, 2024 | | | | | | |
|---|----------------|------------|------------------|------|-------------|--------------------|
| Model Output | Dates | Total Days | May Weekend days | Kept | Mortalities | % of Catch Balance |
| 1 | April 1-May 2 | 32 | 0 | 503 | 516 | 92% |
| 2 | April 1-May 3 | 33 | 0 | 574 | 589 | 106% |
| 3 | April 16-May 3 | 18 | 0 | 557 | 571 | 102% |
| 4 | April 22-May 3 | 12 | 0 | 539 | 552 | 99% |
| 5* | May 1-5 | 5 | 2 | 483 | 496 | 89% |
| 6* | May 1-6 | 6 | 2 | 583 | 596 | 107% |

**Accounts for potential effort shift.*

- The recent 3-year (2021-2023) average percent of adult mortalities post-season by pool are as follows: 15% Bonneville Pool, 48% The Dalles Pool, and 37% John Day Pool. The distribution of effort is very similar to the catch.
- Actual fishery results will be monitored in-season and recommended adjustments to the season will be made as necessary.

In-season lower Columbia River and Bonneville to OR/WA state line spring Chinook recreational fisheries management

- Following the first in-season TAC run size update, which typically occurs by mid-May, the pre-season buffering stipulation is removed. However, TAC will continue to evaluate the run size weekly throughout the spring management period and provide updated projections as necessary.
- OR/WA staff re-evaluate non-treaty catches as compared to the allowable ESA impact rates and catch balance given the current in-season abundance projection. If it is determined there is sufficient ESA impact and catch balance for use by a particular fishery, staff model scenarios to determine what opportunities might be considered. Following this, a Joint State Hearing is scheduled to consider the fisheries or staff may distribute a fishery update if no action is warranted and no hearing occurred.
 - In recent years, if sufficient catch is available, initial limited re-openers have occurred within a week of the run size update. This allows for opportunity when Chinook abundance is high while also balancing uncertainty to the final run size and available catch balance.
 - This pattern of re-openers can often continue for several weeks or even the remainder of the spring season. However, OR/WA will open the fishery through the remainder of the spring season when the remaining catch balance is sufficient.
 - Additionally, the Columbia River Recreational Advisory Group has previously supported providing fishing opportunity in June to merge with the summer season which begins June 16.

Recreational lower Snake River (Washington waters) fishery – preliminary considerations

- Based on the assumptions described above, the fishery will be managed for 493 total mortalities pre run update in 2024 (669 in 2023). This total mortality allocation is dependent on the forecasted mark rate; the actual allocation will change if the observed fishery mark rate differs from forecasted.
- WDFW fishery managers in Region 1 determine the structure for the lower Snake River season.
- This fishery typically opens in late April on a days-per-week basis in up to four areas.
- WDFW discussion with constituents will occur at the scheduled NE McNary meeting in Clarkston on March 27.

Lower Columbia white sturgeon fishery update

- OR/WA will distribute a fishery update to both commercial and recreational advisory groups and the Compact/Joint State hearing email distribution list by mid-February.
- Joint state staff will not be recommending retention of white sturgeon for either commercial or recreational fisheries downstream of Bonneville Dam in 2024.

Zone 6 recreational sturgeon update

- On January 18, 2024 the U.S. v. OR Sturgeon Management Task Force met to discuss the results of the 2023 white sturgeon stock assessment conducted in The Dalles Pool. Reflective of an increase in the abundance of legal-sized fish, a new non-treaty recreational harvest guideline of 275 fish was adopted, this revised guideline is 85 fish higher than the prior guideline.
- Current recreational sturgeon guidelines and harvest estimates for 2024 Zone 6 recreational fisheries are summarized below:

Current sturgeon harvest estimates in Zone 6 reservoirs through Monday, February 5, 2024.

| Pool | Angler Trips | Harvest | Recreational Guideline | Percent of Guideline |
|------------|--------------|---------|------------------------|----------------------|
| Bonneville | 1,364 | 692 | 675 | 103% |
| The Dalles | 652 | 189 | 275 | 69% |
| John Day | 1,336 | 52 | 105 | 50% |

- Catch rates in these fisheries are strongly influenced by environmental conditions such as water temperature.
- There is an updated balance of 86 fish now remaining on The Dalles Pool guideline. Catch projections under current conditions suggest an approach of either one weekend day and one weekday or three weekdays of retention could fit given the number of fish remaining on the recreational guideline.
 - These projections are based on expected effort shifts while Bonneville Pool is closed and John Day Pool is open to retention and before water temperatures typically increase during March.
 - An approach of scheduling retention opens several days apart would allow staff time to react if the guideline is expected to be exceeded.

North of Falcon (NOF) Orientation

- NOF background information
 - <https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/north-falcon>
 - <https://wdfw.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2024-01/wdfw-salmon-fisheries-faqs-and-glossary-1182024-pdf-ver.pdf>
 - <https://wdfw.medium.com/a-guide-to-the-salmon-season-setting-process-north-of-falcon-cbc7d4251874>
- 2023 OR/WA Columbia River Pre-season Plan (example)
 - <https://www.dfw.state.or.us/fish/OSCRP/CRM/Recent%20News/2023%20WDFW-ODFW%20Columbia%20River%20summer-fall%20fishery%20plan.pdf>
 - <https://wdfw.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2023-05/2023-wdfw-odfw-columbia-river-summer-fall-fishery-plan.pdf>