

**February 11, 2009**

## **Fishery managers set spring chinook seasons**

Fishery managers from Oregon and Washington set spring chinook salmon fishing seasons for March and April only for the **Columbia and Willamette rivers** today during a joint state hearing.

Several fisheries, including those in the Willamette River and in the Columbia River between Bonneville Dam and the river mouth, are currently open under permanent rules and will remain open through February. The seasons adopted today will take effect March 1.

On the Columbia below the Hayden Island powerlines (west towers), anglers will be able to fish 7 days a week from March 1-15 and three days a week (Thurs. - Sat.) from March 19-April 18.

From the Hayden Island powerlines (west towers) upstream to Bonneville Dam, the season will run 7 days a week from March 1-22, and four days a week (Wed. - Sat.) from March 25-April 22.

The daily bag limit for these areas will be two adipose fin-clipped salmon or steelhead, but only one may be a chinook. The mainstem Columbia will be open for retention of adipose fin-clipped steelhead and shad ONLY during days and seasons open for retention of adipose fin-clipped spring chinook.

The season for the area between Bonneville and McNary dams was set for March 16-April 30, with a bag limit of two adult adipose fin-clipped chinook or steelhead per day. Recognizing that chinook catches in this area are typically low through April, the two states intend to continue working together to set additional fishing time for this section of the river after April 30.

On the Willamette, ODFW modified the permanent season to allow retention of adipose-clipped chinook 7 days a week from March 1-15 and three days a week (Thurs. - Sat.) from March 19-April 30. These rules apply to the Willamette downstream from Willamette Falls, including Multnomah Channel and the lower Clackamas River downstream of the Highway 99 Bridge. The daily bag limit will be two adult adipose fin-clipped salmon or steelhead, but only one may be a chinook.

The Willamette River upstream of Willamette Falls and the Clackamas River upstream of the highway 99 bridge will remain open under permanent rules.

"Given the constraints we have, we are fortunate to be able to provide this opportunity," said Steve Williams deputy administrator of ODFW's fish division. "We have a high level of confidence that we will be able to meet the objectives of the season we've adopted."

The seasons are based on a forecast of 298,000 returning upriver spring chinook, and a combined estimated harvest of 17,300 fish in the sport fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam.

More than 90 people including sport and commercial fishermen showed up to listen and present testimony at the hearing, conducted at City Hall in Longview, Wash.

In other business the agencies took the following actions:

- Adopted the 2009 Winter/Spring Preseason Commercial Fishing Plan
- Set commercial fishing seasons for Select Area fisheries, including Blind Slough/Knappa Slough, Tongue Point/South Channel, Deep River and Young's Bay.
- Modified daily bag limits for chinook in Select Area recreational fisheries to be identical to those in the mainstem Columbia River downstream of Hayden Island when the Columbia is open for retention of chinook.

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These rules are subject to inseason changes. Please check the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Web site for the latest updates.

For more information or to book a trip please call **503-720-9033** (8am-7pm).