

The Dipnetter

News of the River from the
Columbia River Inter-Tribal
Fish Commission



July 2013

FISHERIES UPDATE AND FORECAST

STUART ELLIS, CRITFC FISHERY SCIENTIST

SPRING FISHERIES

The spring chinook run started slow but increased toward the end. While it was still well below forecast, the final river mouth run size will be around 120,000 fish. This stronger than expected finish enabled the tribes to re-open their Zone 6 fisheries and still keep the overall catch within the allowed limit under the *US v. Oregon* Management Agreement. That limit depends on the final actual run size. The total allowed tribal catch will be close to 10,000 fish and the tribal fishery will have caught almost all of this share. There was also a sturgeon set-line fishery in early June in The Dalles Pool. Effort and catches were low with a final catch of fewer than 30 sturgeon.

SUMMER FISHERIES

SUMMER CHINOOK & SOCKEYE ESTIMATES

	Pre-season Run Size Estimate	Tribal Fishery Harvest Rate at Predicted Run Size	Estimated catch size (based on forecast run size and harvest rate)
Upriver Summer Chinook	73,500	28.4%	20,910
Sockeye	180,500	7%	12,635

These are preliminary estimates. The actual allowed harvest rate will be different and will be dependent on the actual river mouth run size.

The summer management period goes from June 16 through July 31. Based on the pre-season forecast run sizes, it is reasonable to expect good fishing opportunities for both chinook and sockeye during the summer period. The summer season fisheries are managed according to abundance-based harvest rate schedules for chinook and sockeye in the *US v. Oregon* Management Agreement. The *US v. Oregon* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) will begin to update sockeye and summer chinook run sizes in late June and early July. Normally the highest summer



A Yakama fisher on the Klickitat River.

chinook counts at Bonneville occur in the last two weeks of June and then gradually drop throughout July. Sockeye counts tend to peak in late June and drop quickly after that. There is no specific harvest rate limit for steelhead in summer season tribal fisheries.

The first two summer commercial gillnet fishing periods of the year occurred on June 17-21 and June 24-27. There was a 7" or larger mesh size requirement for both openings to maximize the chance that sockeye catches would not limit fishing for summer chinook. If the run sizes are close to forecast and the catches in the first two gillnet openings are as expected, two additional gillnet openings are likely, along with continued sale of platform and hook and line fish through the summer season.

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FALL SEASON

A very large return of **Upriver Bright fall chinook** is expected this year. If it comes in close to forecast, it may be one of the largest runs in the past 30 years. Upriver Bright fish are fall chinook from any area upstream of McNary along with Deschutes fall chinook.

The expected returns of the **mid-Columbia bright stock** are closer to average levels. Mid-Columbia bright fish are bright stock fish from Bonneville Hatchery and the other Zone 6 tributaries.

Unfortunately only a small return of **tules** are expected, returning to Spring Creek Hatchery and the Wind and White Salmon rivers.

A below average run of **B steelhead** is expected. B steelhead are any steelhead with a fork length of 78 cm or larger. This will produce some challenges for managing the fall fisheries. The tribes will likely choose to use an 8" minimum mesh size requirement to avoid steelhead. There are some other possible ideas such as starting the commercial gillnet fishing a little earlier before a lot of the B steelhead show up. Fishing might not be all that great in the upper pools with an early start, but it may increase the chance of catching as many of the harvestable fall chinook as possible. It is not always possible to perfectly balance having really good fishing opportunity in all three pools with the goal of catching as many of the harvestable chinook as possible. It is not too early for fishers to start thinking about how they think fall fisheries should be structured. Let your tribe know if you think you have some good ideas. 🐟

No Fishers Expo This Year

Due to budget constraints caused by the federal sequestration, there will be no Columbia River Indian Fishers Expo this year. Look for a mailing in the fall asking for your thoughts and ideas on options and changes to the event that would allow us to hold this event in the future. Many of the classes and trainings that were held at the Expo will still take place, but spread throughout the year. These trainings will be announced in the Dipnetter and on the CRITFC website. 🐟

CRITFC is Moving

On July 1, CRITFC moved into a new office space two blocks north of the building that had been the Commission's headquarters for 22 years. Please update your address book:

CRITFC
700 NE Multnomah St., Suite 1200
Portland, OR 97232

All phone and fax numbers and Internet addresses will remain unchanged. 🐟

Lamprey Flume System Installed

BRIAN McILRAITH, CRITFC LAMPREY PROJECT LEAD

On June 4, 2013 the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers completed a Lamprey Flume System at the Washington Shore fish ladder entrance of Bonneville Dam. This is the largest and most complex structural improvement yet made for lamprey and is significant due to the fact that historically, lamprey have had the most trouble successfully navigating the fish ladder on the Washington Shore. —continued on next page

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WARM SPRINGS



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YAKAMA



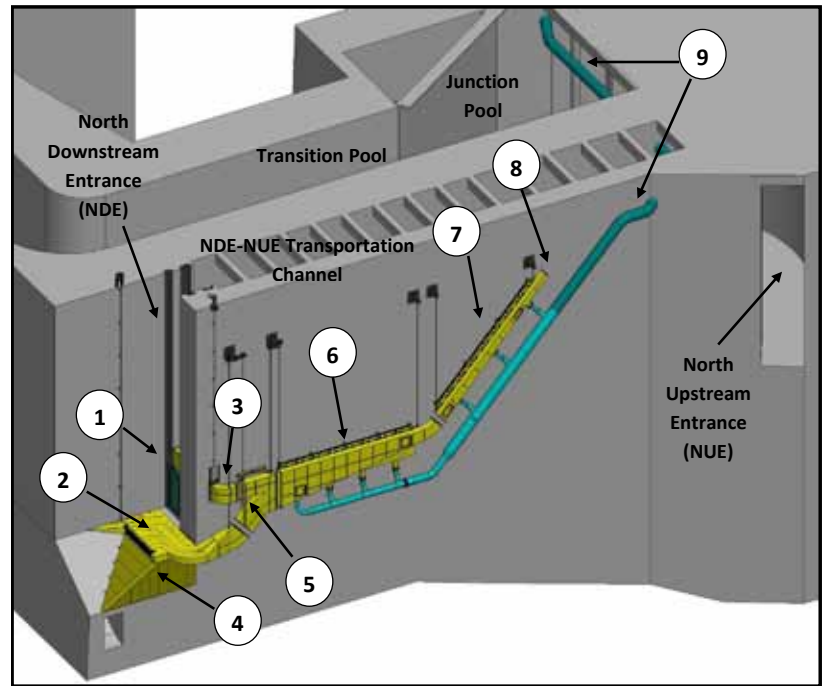
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The Lamprey Flume System is unique in that it has lower and upper ports that span the entire fishway entrance, which are designed to funnel lamprey into the flume system allowing adults to avoid the difficult passage environment located within the Washington Shore fish ladder.

Since becoming fully operational, multiple lamprey have been observed using the system. Ideally this number will increase as the lamprey run at Bonneville builds towards its historical peak in mid to late July. Lamprey returns have increased each of the last two years.

It will take a unique combination of structural and operational fixes at mainstem and tributaries dams to improve the passage environment for lamprey. Hopefully the lessons learned from the implementation and monitoring of the Bonneville Washington Shore can be used to benefit lamprey throughout the Columbia River basin. 🐟



Bonneville Dam Washington Short Fish Ladder Lamprey Flume System

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| ① Upper entrance | ⑤ Flow splitter flume section | ⑧ Lamprey Flume System and Lamprey Passage Structure |
| ② Lower entrance | ⑥ Downstream "school bus" flume section | ⑨ Gravity water supply pipe |
| ③ Thimble, closure gate, and elbow flume section | ⑦ Upstream "school bus" flume section | |
| ④ Filler plate | | |

—image courtesy US Army Corps of Engineers

—Words of Our Elders, continued from back page

Maybe I'll have to relocate and hope I can find a better stream. I still cannot get over what my parents had shared with me. They said our great grandparents had multitudes of fish, bugs, insects, and different berries. How could that be true? They said the creek used to be much larger, the grasses greener, the shrubbery dense cover for bugs and the fish to hide near, that the trees used to be greener and much larger. They even told of different bands of raccoons, the bears eating the fish; I believe they said the bull trout were water wolves and there were many.

Of course, coyote was always involved. He wasn't a good fisher but he could steal what he needed, and he did. The

eagles and the crows were always competing to get the leftovers from the bears.



Where have they all gone? Was all my parents told me a lie?

I wonder what the grass, the trees, the leaves would say? What would Mr. Creek say? I guess I'll never understand the truth. What a troubled world, where is my next meal to come from?

I heard one of the crows say that it's easy picking in the lower country where there are tons and tons of piled up foods. But they also said that too many of them were causing a crowding problem.

My parents said that the big fish in this creek were the key to a better life for all of us. The fish leave as babies and return later to spawn and die, their decaying bodies replenishing the earth, the creek, the birds, and bigger animals.

Kingfisher decides that he will stay where he is. He will live out his life as his parents also did.

Return swimmer, return. I am lonely and I am hungry. My heart is saddened. If only the past could return, or at least a good part of it. Was all I heard, really real? 🐟

Belted Kingfisher
shax shax [Sahaptin]
Ceryle alcyon
photo courtesy Robert Schantz



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The Dipnetter

Yakama • Warm Springs
Umatilla • Nez Perce 

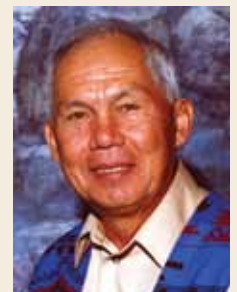
Words of Our Elders

This essay was written in 2004 by Warm Springs tribal elder Terry Courtney, Jr., who passed away on June 15. Mr. Courtney served on the Warm Springs Fish & Wildlife Commission, representing his tribe at CRITFC for over five years and continuing to participate in CRITFC outreach efforts for years afterward. His work in service to the tribes was wide ranged. He testified on tribal issues before Congress to testify on tribal issues as well as patiently showed groups of children how to tie traditional nets. His untiring dedication to the cause of salmon and tribal culture will be missed.

The slender stalks of grass sway to and fro as a gentle breeze blows up alongside the small creek. Some of the smaller limbs on the nearby trees move ever so slightly, their leaves twist and turn. Farther back into the tree line grows the evergreens and the larger limbs move ever so gently. A lone kingfisher lands on a dead limb of a tall tree watching the water in the creek in hopes of a meal. There is no movement in the water; the kingfisher reluctantly flies farther upstream. He doesn't have to worry about another kingfisher encroaching in his area. He doesn't even have to worry about the eagles, the crows, and the chickenhawks that used to run him off when there were lots of small baby fish to live on.

The kingfisher felt so sad that even crafty coyote wasn't around. Where did grouchy bear go? Oh yes, I remember when the family of otters used to play games in pools in the creek. And of course, the trio of bandits, the raccoons, where are they? Let me think who else is missing? Ah-ha—the osprey—they were pretty darn good fishers, too.

It is so silent and it has been this way for quite a few years—decades. Kingfisher is thoughtful. Hmmm! The first to vanish were the beavers. My, my—and they were such hard, energetic workers. After they vanished, so many of the small bugs and water plants also are no more.



Terry Courtney, Jr.
WARM SPRINGS
1936–2013

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