

## Congressional Visit to Zone 6 Tribal Fishing Sites



Yakama leader Wilbur Slockish (center) explains to Oregon Senator Merkley (left) and Oregon Congressman Blumenauer (right) how difficult the situation is at the Lone Pine In-lieu Fishing Site near The Dalles, Oregon. [below] The entrance to the Lone Pine In-lieu Fishing Site. Photos courtesy Sara Thompson.

On March 29, Representative Earl Blumenauer and Senator Jeff Merkley were guided on a tour by tribal leaders to four Zone 6 in-lieu and treaty fishing access sites that highlighted the tribal river housing crisis.

The tour was requested by the two congressional leaders, who wanted to see firsthand the conditions after the situation was detailed in a recent Oregonian feature story about the sites.

In an article about the tour in the Oregonian, Senator Merkley said, "I was unaware of the dimension of the villages until the story that has been shared this last year. What better time than now to tackle this."

Many tribal members along the river today suffer in substandard living conditions as a



consequence of displacement by the construction and operation of the federal Columbia River dams. The loss of tribal villages and homes has been a contentious issue for decades. The tribes continue to insist that as long as the dams exist, the United States has a continuing obligation for the impacts caused by the dams, including the loss of villages and homes along the river.

Since the tour, the Senate and House have included language in appropriations bills to secure funding

for tribal housing at The Dalles Dam. Representative Blumenauer has also proposed legislation to provide emergency funding to address immediate issues with safety and sanitation. The tribes remain hopeful that legislation is passed soon to address these needs. 🏞️



# Boat safety classes and inspections

by Jerrod Daniel, CRITFE Boat Safety Lead Officer

Fishing on the Columbia River is quite dangerous. The tribes are working to help prevent any more fatal accidents in the future, but we all need to work together to make the river a safer place.

The Washington Fatality Assessment & Control Evaluation program conducted a study of work-related fatalities in 2009 to 2011. An average of 15 boating-related deaths occurred per year—a rate about four times the national average. Of the boating-related drowning deaths in Washington during these three years, eight were commercial fishers. Commercial fishers have the highest occupational fatality rate, and about 80% of deaths while on the job are due to drowning.

Among U.S. boating accident drownings in 2011, 84 percent were not wearing a life jacket. The most effective thing anyone out in a boat can do to prevent drowning is to wear a life jacket. Wearing a life jacket while boating cuts the risk of drowning in half. A Washington State study found that boaters who died were 60 percent less likely to be wearing a life jacket compared to those who were non-fatally injured. There are many different types of life jackets available and fishers often ask which one is the best. The answer is: the one you are willing to wear.

Drinking alcohol while engaged in boating activities is a major risk factor for drowning. In 2011, alcohol was involved in about 20 percent of all reported boating

fatalities in the U.S. The likelihood of drowning death increases with increasing blood alcohol levels. Alcohol influences balance, coordination, and risk taking. All four member tribes prohibit operating or fishing from a boat while intoxicated.

All fishers are encouraged to have their boat inspected for safety. The inspection is mandatory for Umatilla fishers and voluntary for Yakama, Warm Springs, and Nez Perce fishers. The 2010 Umatilla Emergency Regulations requires all Umatilla members' boats to have their safety inspection before July 1. CRITFC Enforcement, Umatilla Fish & Game Enforcement, and the Corps of Engineers are certified to conduct these free boat safety inspections. This is an annual inspection, so the certification decals are a different color each year. Officers at the inspections will also provide information on boat safety, free whistles, and other safety-related materials.

CRITFC Enforcement is working with Boat Ed to provide free boater education training for tribal fishers. The first 20 fishers who present a copy of their course completion certificate to a CRITFE officer will receive a portable navigation light kit, donated by the BIA. To access the test, visit [www.boat-ed.com](http://www.boat-ed.com) and select Oregon or Washington. For more information or to schedule a boat safety inspection, call CRITFC Enforcement at (800) ITS FISH. 🎣

## Boat Safety Regulations

CRITFC does not set any boat safety regulations. Each tribe has its own boat safety regulations that its members are subject to. This is a list of the primary boat safety practices along with which tribes have a regulation requiring their members to follow each one. Every one of these practices is potentially life saving and we encourage every fisher on the river to follow all of these guidelines. If your tribe doesn't require compliance of a particular practice, you can still follow it voluntarily for the safety of yourself and your boat crew.



A <b>life jacket or personal flotation device</b> for each person on the boat	✓	✓	✓	✓
Have <b>running lights</b> and use from dusk to dawn	✓	✓	✓	✓
Have a <b>sound-producing device</b> on board	✓		✓	
Have a <b>fire extinguisher</b> on board	✓	✓	✓	✓
Have a <b>first aid kit and flashlight</b> on board	✓			
Have a <b>radio, cell phone</b> , or other communication device on board	✓	✓		
Operating or fishing from a boat while <b>intoxicated</b> is strictly forbidden	✓	✓	✓	✓
Boats must pass a <b>boat safety inspection</b>		✓		

# Where are the Fish?

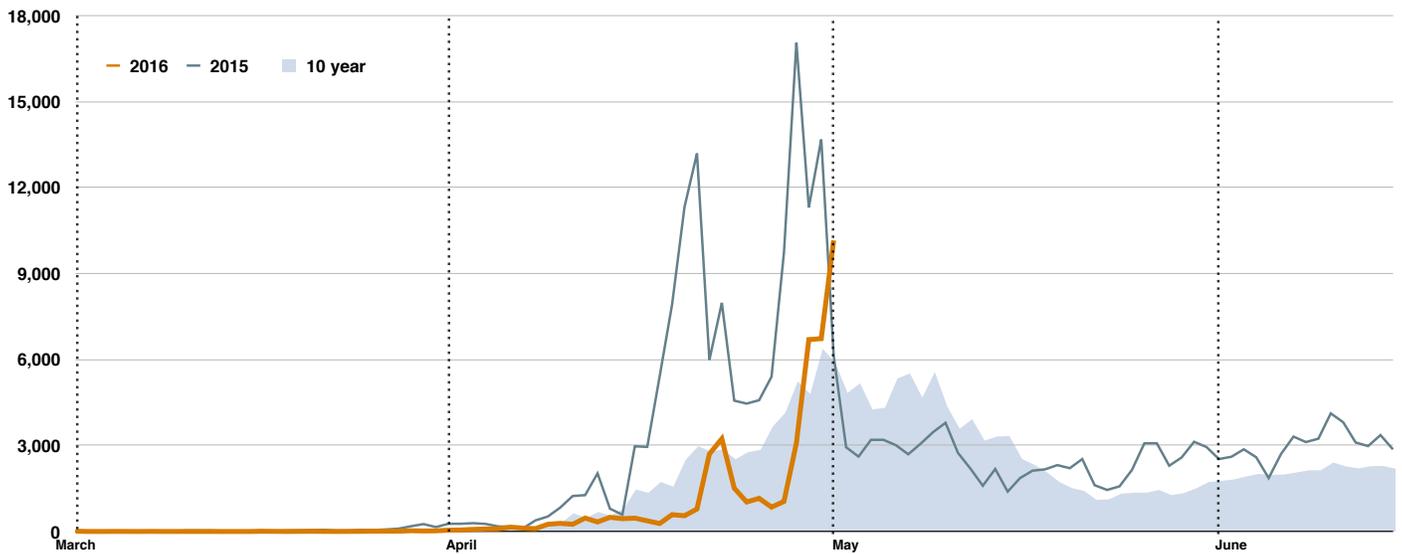
by Stuart Ellis, CRITFC Harvest Specialist

We all have been getting anxious about this year's spring chinook return. The counts at Bonneville have been lagging behind expectations. Through May 1, we had just over 44,693 adult chinook over Bonneville. If the run were both at the forecast size of 188,800 and normally timed, we would have expected around 60,000 fish over Bonneville by that date. There have been a couple of recent years where the run started out extremely slow and then caught up, but unfortunately this run could still be below the forecast size. In recent years, we have had 50 percent of the spring chinook over Bonneville

anywhere between April 27 and May 12. So sometime before May 12 we will almost certainly get half the fish we are going to get. Hopefully counts continue at the levels of the past few days.

The ceremonial permit fisheries are proceeding. Modest numbers of fish are being caught in the Zone 6 platform fishery. Two tribes had fisheries downstream of Bonneville, but they took action to close these fisheries last week. The tribes will be watching the run size and the fisheries. Keeping the Zone 6 platform fishery open at least for subsistence has always been a priority. 🏹

## Spring chinook count at Bonneville Dam through May 1



Daily fish counts at all the Columbia/Snake river dams with fish passage are available on the CRITFC website. Check there for the latest numbers.

## CRITFC Officers and Commissioners

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### Warm Springs



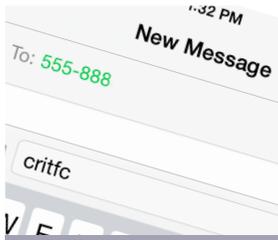
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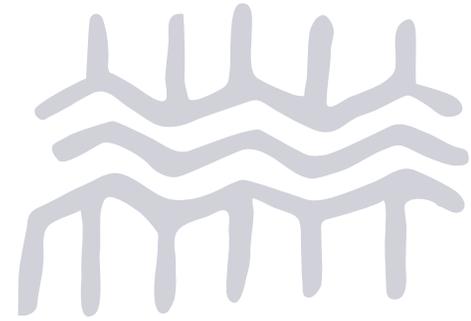
# The Dipnetter

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Yakama • Warm Springs  
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## An Intertribal Effort to Address an Intertribal Issue

The Columbia River tribal housing crisis affects members of all four of the CRITFC member tribes. Chairmen from the Yakama, Umatilla, and Warm Springs tribes, along with the CRITFC chairman and executive director took the opportunity of a recent congressional visit to the sites to share with Senator Merkley and Representative Blumenauer some of the harsh realities of life on the in-lieu and treaty fishing access sites.

See inside for more about this important tour. 



Some of the tribal and congressional leadership on the tour. Left to right: CRITFC Executive Director Paul Lumley, CRITFC Chairman Jeremy Wolf, Yakama Nation Tribal Council Chairman JoDe Goudy, Congressman Earl Blumenauer, Senator Jeff Merkley, Confederated Umatilla Tribes Board of Trustees Chairman Gary Burke, and Confederated Warm Springs Tribal Council Chairman Austin Greene.