

WSR 23-11-091
EMERGENCY RULES
DEPARTMENT OF
FISH AND WILDLIFE

[Order 23-80—Filed May 18, 2023, 9:02 a.m., effective May 19, 2023]

Effective Date of Rule: May 19, 2023.

Purpose: The purpose of this emergency rule is to reopen spring Chinook fishing on the Columbia River.

Citation of Rules Affected by this Order: Repealing WAC 220-312-06000L and 220-312-03000Y; and amending WAC 220-312-060 and 220-312-030.

Statutory Authority for Adoption: RCW 77.04.012, 77.04.020, 77.12.045, and 77.12.047.

Under RCW 34.05.350 the agency for good cause finds that immediate adoption, amendment, or repeal of a rule is necessary for the preservation of the public health, safety, or general welfare, and that observing the time requirements of notice and opportunity to comment upon adoption of a permanent rule would be contrary to the public interest.

Reasons for this Finding: On May 15, 2023, the *U.S. v. Oregon* technical advisory committee (TAC) updated the Columbia River upriver spring Chinook return and provided a minimum return expectation of 139,000 compared to the preseason forecast of 198,600. The preseason buffer has been removed and when combined with preupdate catches, sufficient recreational allocation of upriver spring Chinook Endangered Species Act (ESA) impacts remain available from Rocky Point/Tongue Point upstream to Highway 730 at the Washington/Oregon border.

The fishery is consistent with the *U.S. v. Oregon* Management Agreement and the associated biological opinion. Conforms Washington state rules with Oregon state rules. The regulation is consistent with the compact actions of February 22, April 4, and May 17, 2023. The general public welfare is protected with the immediate and limited duration opening of recreational salmon fishing. This limited harvest allows for public use of the resource as well as the maintenance of a sustainable fish population.

Washington and Oregon jointly regulate Columbia River fisheries under the congressionally ratified Columbia River Compact. Four Indian tribes have treaty fishing rights in the Columbia River. The treaties preempt state regulations that fail to allow the tribes an opportunity to take a fair share of the available fish, and the states must manage other fisheries accordingly. *Sohappy v. Smith*, 302 F. Supp. 899 (D. Or. 1969). A court order sets the current parameters. *United States v. Oregon*, Civil No. 68-513-KI (D. Or.), Order Adopting 2018-2027 *United States v. Oregon* Management Agreement (February 26, 2018) (Doc. No. 2607-1). Some salmon and steelhead stocks in the Columbia River are listed as threatened or endangered under ESA. On February 23, 2018, the National Marine Fisheries Service issued a biological opinion under 16 U.S.C. § 1536 that allows for some incidental take of these species in the fisheries as described in the 2018-2027 *U.S. v. Oregon* Management Agreement.

Some Columbia River Basin salmon and steelhead stocks are listed as threatened or endangered under ESA. The Washington and Oregon fish and wildlife commissions have developed policies to guide the implementation of such biological opinions in the states' regulation of nontreaty fisheries.

Columbia River nontreaty fisheries are monitored very closely to ensure compliance with federal court orders, ESA, and commission guidelines. Because conditions change rapidly, the fisheries are managed almost exclusively by emergency rule. Representatives from the Washington (WDFW) and Oregon (ODFW) departments of fish and wildlife convene public hearings and take public testimony when considering proposals for new emergency rules. WDFW and ODFW then adopt regulations reflecting agreements reached. There is insufficient time to promulgate permanent rules.

Number of Sections Adopted in Order to Comply with Federal Statute: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; Federal Rules or Standards: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; or Recently Enacted State Statutes: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted at the Request of a Nongovernmental Entity: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted on the Agency's own Initiative: New 2, Amended 0, Repealed 2.

Number of Sections Adopted in Order to Clarify, Streamline, or Reform Agency Procedures: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Number of Sections Adopted using Negotiated Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; Pilot Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0; or Other Alternative Rule Making: New 0, Amended 0, Repealed 0.

Date Adopted: May 18, 2023.

Kelly Susewind
Director

NEW SECTION

WAC 220-312-06000M Freshwater exceptions to statewide rules—Columbia. Effective May 19 through May 24, 2023, the provisions of WAC 220-312-060 regarding Columbia River salmon and steelhead seasons from the Rocky Point/Tongue Point line upstream to Hwy. 730 at the Washington/Oregon border shall be modified as described below, except in areas closed to fishing for salmon and steelhead year-round in WAC 220-312-060. All other provisions of WAC 220-312-060 not addressed herein remain in effect unless otherwise amended by emergency rule:

(1) From a projected line from Rocky Point on the Washington bank through Red Buoy 44 to the red navigation marker 2 at Tongue Point on the Oregon bank (Rocky Point/Tongue Point line) upstream to a deadline marker on the Oregon bank (approximately four miles downstream from Bonneville Dam Powerhouse One) in a straight line through the western tip of Pierce Island to a deadline marker on the Washington bank at Beacon Rock.

(a) Salmon and steelhead: Effective May 19 through May 24, 2023: Daily limit is 6, no more than 2 adults may be retained of which no more than 1 may be an adult Chinook. Release all salmon other than hatchery Chinook.

(2) From a deadline marker on the Oregon bank (approximately four miles downstream from Bonneville Dam Powerhouse One) in a straight line through the western tip of Pierce Island to a deadline marker on the Washington bank at Beacon Rock upstream to Bonneville Dam: Salmon and steelhead:

(a) Closed to angling from a floating device or by any method except hand-cast lines from shore.

(b) Effective May 19 through May 24, 2023: Daily limit is 6, no more than 2 adults may be retained of which no more than 1 may be an adult Chinook. Release all salmon other than hatchery Chinook.

(3) From Bonneville Dam to Tower Island power lines (approximately 6 miles below The Dalles Dam): Salmon and steelhead:

(a) Effective May 19 through May 24, 2023: Closed to angling from a floating device or by any method except hand-cast lines from shore.

(b) Effective May 19 through May 24, 2023: Daily limit is 6, no more than 2 adults may be retained of which no more than 1 may be an adult Chinook. Release all salmon other than hatchery Chinook.

(4) From Tower Island power lines to The Dalles Dam: Salmon and steelhead:

(a) Effective May 19 through May 24, 2023: Daily limit is 6, no more than 2 adults may be retained of which no more than 1 may be an adult Chinook. Release all salmon other than hatchery Chinook.

(5) From The Dalles Dam to Hwy. 730 at the Washington/Oregon border: Salmon and steelhead:

(a) Effective May 19 through May 24, 2023: Daily limit is 6, no more than 2 adults may be retained of which no more than 1 may be an adult Chinook. Release all salmon other than hatchery Chinook.

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NEW SECTION

WAC 220-312-03000A Freshwater exceptions to statewide rules—Southwest. Effective May 19 through May 24, 2023, the provisions of WAC 220-312-030 regarding Deep River salmon and steelhead seasons shall be modified as described below. All other provisions of WAC 220-312-030 not addressed herein remain in effect unless otherwise amended by emergency rule:

Deep River (Wahkiakum Co.): Salmon and steelhead:

Daily limit is 6, no more than 2 adults may be retained of which no more than 1 may be an adult Chinook. Release all salmon other than hatchery Chinook.

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REPEALER

The following sections of the Washington Administrative Code are repealed:

WAC 220-312-06000L Freshwater exceptions to statewide rules—Columbia River. (23-50)

WAC 220-312-03000Y Freshwater exceptions to statewide rules—Southwest. (23-50)