

WSR 24-20-003
EMERGENCY RULES
DEPARTMENT OF
FISH AND WILDLIFE

[Order 24-194—Filed September 18, 2024, 7:03 p.m., effective September 18, 2024, 7:03 p.m.]

Effective Date of Rule: Immediately upon filing.

Purpose: This emergency rule will allow nontreaty commercial fishing opportunities in the Columbia River while protecting fish listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). This rule implements federal court orders governing Washington's relationship with treaty Indian tribes, federal law governing Washington's relationship with Oregon, and Washington fish and wildlife commission policy guidance for Columbia River fisheries.

Citation of Rules Affected by this Order: Repealing WAC 220-358-03000H; and amending WAC 220-358-030.

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

Other Authority: *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). *Northwest Gillnetters Ass'n v. Sandison*, 95 Wn.2d 638, 628 P.2d 800 (1981); Washington fish and wildlife commission policies concerning Columbia River fisheries; 40 Stat. 515 (Columbia River Compact).

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: This rule sets an additional late fall nontreaty commercial gill net season upstream of the Lewis River confluence and adds one period to the ongoing tangle net fishery. These fisheries are consistent with the 2024 nontreaty fall fisheries plan that was developed in conjunction with the annual North of Falcon management process, the *U.S. v. Oregon* Management Agreement and the associated biological opinion. Conforms Washington state rules with Oregon state rules. Regulation is consistent with Compact Action of July 18, August 14, September 4, September 10, and September 18, 2024. This harvest opportunity allows for public access to the resource as well as the maintenance of sustainable fish populations. There is insufficient time to promulgate permanent rules.

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.

Number of Sections Adopted in Order to Comply with Federal Statute: New 1, Amended 0, Repealed 1; Federal Rules or Standards: New 1, Amended 0, Repealed 1; or Recently Enacted State Statutes: New 1, Amended 0, Repealed 1.

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 1, Amended 0, Repealed 1.

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: September 18, 2024.

Kelly Susewind
Director

NEW SECTION

WAC 220-358-03000I Columbia River seasons below Bonneville.

Notwithstanding the provisions of WAC 220-358-030, WAC 220-358-040, and WAC 220-335-050, it is unlawful for a person to take or possess salmon, sturgeon, and shad for commercial purposes from Columbia River Salmon Management and Catch Reporting Areas 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E and Select Areas, except during the times and conditions listed below:

(1) Mainstem Gillnet:

Open Dates	Open Days	Open Time	Open Duration
September 19 - September 20	Thursday (night)	8:00 pm - 6:00 am	10 hrs
September 22 - September 23	Sunday (night)	8:00 pm - 6:00 am	10 hrs
September 24 - September 25	Tuesday (night)	8:00 pm - 6:00 am	10 hrs
September 26 - September 27	Thursday (night)	8:00 pm - 6:00 am	10 hrs

(a) **Area:** Catch Reporting Areas 1E and 1D (Zones 4-5). The dead-line at the lower end of Area 1E (Zone 4) is defined as a straight line projected from the Warrior Rock Lighthouse on the Oregon shore

easterly through the green navigation Buoy #1 and continuing to the Washington shore. Sanctuaries: Washougal and Sandy River.

(b) **Gear:** Drift gillnets only. 8-inch minimum mesh size restriction. Nets not specifically authorized for use in this fishery may be onboard the vessel if properly stored. A properly stored net is defined as a net on a drum that is fully covered by a tarp (canvas or plastic) and bound with a minimum of ten revolutions of rope with a diameter of 3/8 (0.375) inches or greater. Lighted buoys required.

(c) **Allowable Sales:** Salmon (except Chum) and shad.

(2) Emerging Commercial Fishery - Mainstem Seine:

Open Dates	Open Days	Open Time	Open Duration
Immediately - October 31	Monday - Friday	6:00 am - 5:00 pm	11 hrs

(a) **Area:** Catch Reporting Areas 1A, 1B, and 1C (Zones 1-3). The deadline at the upper end of Area 1C (Zone 3) is defined as a straight line projected from the Warrior Rock Lighthouse on the Oregon shore easterly through the green navigation Buoy #1 and continuing to the Washington shore. Sanctuaries: Elokomina-B, Cowlitz, Kalama-B, Lewis-B and Select Area commercial fishing sites.

(b) **Gear:** Beach seines or purse seines only. Only one seine net per primary vessel. Mesh size restricted to a 3.5-inch maximum (inside of knot to outside of knot using hand tension stretched measure). Net material to consist of 3-strand nylon; twine size ≥#12. Seines may include a bunt of 1.0-2.0 inch knotless mesh. Net length not to exceed 200 fathoms (NOT including associated lead nets). Net depth not to exceed 200 meshes (approximately 50 feet). Seine and lead lines may not be connected. Lead nets must be retrieved daily. No restrictions on corkline, leadline or use of stringers and slackers. A chafing strip panel consisting of non-monofilament webbing (such as nylon seine web or polyethylene trawl web) is allowed on bottom of net; maximum panel depth is 5-feet. Chafing mesh not to exceed 3.5-inch stretched measure for beach and 5-inch stretched measure for purse. There are no restrictions associated with hangings used to connect the net to the chafing panel or the net or chafing panel to the leadline or corkline. Red corks are required at 25-fathom intervals and red corks must be in contrast to the corks used in the remainder of the net. Lead net (optional for both gear types). Only one lead net is allowed per fishing operation. Lead nets may not exceed 100 fathoms in length. Lead nets may be constructed of 3-strand nylon webbing, twine size ≥#12, ≤3.5-inch mesh size (inside of knot to outside of knot using hand tension stretched measure) OR nylon or cotton webbing with mesh size ≥14-inches. Lead nets may not be vertically slackened. Seine net and lead net may not be connected. Lead nets must be retrieved daily.

(c) **Allowable Possession and Sales:** Subject to IFQs as defined on individual permits. Except as noted below, allowable sales limited to adipose fin-clipped Chinook, adipose fin-clipped Coho, sockeye, and pink salmon and shad. All legal adult Chinook and legal adult Coho caught must be kept and sold. Adult salmon defined in WAC 220 300-010. Retained Chinook and Coho must have a healed scar at the location of the adipose-clipped fin.

(d) **Handling of Catch:** Hand sorting or use of a knotless dip net is required when sorting fish. All fish must be sorted and/or released prior to removing entire seine from water. Dry sorting not permitted.

(e) **Sort time not to exceed 75 minutes:**

(i) Beach seine - defined as the elapsed time from when the outer towed end of the net first contacts the shore or block until the net is emptied of fish.

(ii) Purse Seine - defined as the elapsed time from when all rings are pursed and out of the water until the net is emptied of fish.

(f) **Observer Program:** Agency observers must be present during all fishing operations.

(3) Mainstem Tangle Net:

Open Dates	Open Days	Open Time	Open Duration
Immediately - October 31	Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays	4:00 am - 10:00 pm	18 hrs
September 20 - October 25	Fridays	4:00 am - 6:00 pm	14 hrs

(a) **Area:** SMCRA 1A, 1B, and 1C. Upper deadline defined as a straight line projected from the Warrior Rock Lighthouse on the Oregon shore easterly through the green navigation Buoy #1 and continuing to the Washington shore. Sanctuaries include Elokomina-A, Cowlitz River, Kalama-A and Lewis-A.

(b) **Gear:** Drift nets only. Maximum mesh size is 3.75 inches. Un-slackened, single-wall, multi-filament floater nets only. Monofilament nets are not allowed. Net length not to exceed 150 fathoms. A red cork must be placed on the corkline every 25 fathoms as measured from the first mesh of the net. Red corks at 25-fathom intervals must be in color contrast to the corks used in the remainder of the net. There are no restrictions on the hang ratio. The hang ratio is used to horizontally add slack to the net. The hang ratio is determined by the length of the web per length of the corkline. The use of slackers or stringers to slacken the net vertically is prohibited. Rip lines are allowed providing they do not vertically slacken the net.

(c) **Allowable Sales:** Salmon (except chum), and shad; all coho must be adipose fin-clipped.

(d) **Regulations:** Regulations typically in place for mark-selective commercial fisheries are in effect, including but not limited to: net length, use of recovery boxes, limited soak times, red corks, tangle-net certification, etc.

(e) **Soak times,** defined as the time elapsed from when the first of the net web is deployed into the water until the web is fully retrieved from the water, must not exceed 30 minutes.

(f) **Recovery Box:** Each boat will be required to have on board two operable recovery boxes or one box with two chambers that meet the flow and size requirements standard for the winter/spring season. Each box and chamber and associated pump shall be operating during any time that the net is being retrieved or picked. All non-legal fish must be released immediately unharmed to the river or placed into an operating recovery box. All non-legal salmon and all steelhead that are bleeding, lethargic or appear lifeless must be placed in the recovery box prior to being released. All fish placed in recovery boxes must be released to the river prior to landing or docking.

(g) **Measuring mesh size:** Mesh size is determined by placing three consecutive meshes under hand tension and the measurement is taken from the inside of one knot to the inside of the opposite knot of the center mesh. Hand tension means sufficient linear tension to draw opposing knots of meshes into contact.

(h) **Live Capture workshop:** Only licensed Columbia River commercial fishers that have completed the required state-sponsored workshop concerning live capture commercial fishing techniques may participate in this fishery. At least one fisher on each boat must have live capture certification.

(i) **Multiple net rule:** Nets not specifically authorized for use in this fishery may be onboard the vessel if properly stored. A properly stored net is defined as a net on a drum that is fully covered by a tarp (canvas or plastic) and bound with a minimum of ten revolutions of rope with a diameter of 3/8 (0.375) inches or greater.

(j) **Lighted Buoys:** Nets that are fished at any time between official sunset and official sunrise must have lighted buoys on both ends of the net unless the net is attached to the boat. If the net is attached to the boat, then one lighted buoy on the opposite end of the net from the boat is required.

(k) **24-hour** quick reporting required is for Washington wholesale dealers, per WAC 220-352-315. Oregon buyers are required to electronically submit fish receiving tickets pursuant to OAR 635-006-0210. Electronic fish tickets must be submitted within 24 hours of closure of the fishing period, or within 24 hours of landing for fishing periods lasting longer than 24 hours.

(4) Tongue Point/South Channel Select Area:

Open Dates	Open Days	Open Time	Open Duration
Immediately - October 31	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday (night)	4:00 pm - 10:00 am	18 hrs

(a) **Area:**

(i) The Tongue Point Select Area is defined as waters of the Columbia River bounded by a line from a regulatory marker on the eastern shore of Tongue Point (midway between the red USCG light "2" at the tip of Tongue Point and the northern-most pier (#8) at the Tongue Point Job Corps facility) to the flashing green USCG light "3" on the rock jetty at the northwest tip of Mott Island, a line from a regulatory marker at the southeast end of Mott Island northeasterly to a regulatory marker on the northwest shore of Lois Island, and a line from a regulatory marker located on the Oregon shore approximately 300 yards northwest of the railroad bridge crossing the John Day River projecting easterly to a regulatory marker on the southwest shore of Lois Island:

(A) If the marker on the eastern shore of Tongue Point is not in place, the downstream boundary is defined by a line projecting from a point (46°12'31.1"N latitude 123°45'34.0"W longitude) on the eastern shore of Tongue Point to the flashing green USCG light "3" on the rock jetty at the northwest tip of Mott Island.

(B) If the marker on the Oregon shore is not in place, the upstream boundary is defined by a line projecting from a point (46°10'57.7"N latitude 123°44'35.3"W longitude) on the Oregon shore approximately 300 yards northwest of the railroad bridge crossing the John Day River projecting easterly to a regulatory marker on Lois Island.

(ii) The South Channel Area is defined as waters of the Columbia River bounded by a line from a regulatory marker on the Oregon shore at John Day Point projecting northeasterly to a regulatory marker on the southwest shore of Lois Island, and a line from a regulatory marker on Settler Point projecting northwesterly to the flashing red USCG

light "10" then projecting westerly to the eastern tip of Burnside Island.

(b) **Gear:** Gillnets with a 6-inch maximum mesh size restriction. Maximum net length of 250 fathoms. In the Tongue Point Select Area, the lead line weight may not exceed two pounds per any one fathom; however, unstored gillnets legal for use in South Channel may be on-board.

In the South Channel Select Area, there is no lead line weight limit and attachment of additional weight and anchors directly to the lead line is permitted. Nets not specifically authorized for use may be onboard a vessel if properly stored. A properly stored net is defined as a net on a drum that is fully covered by a tarp (canvas or plastic) and bound with a minimum of ten revolutions of rope with a diameter of 3/8 (0.375) inches or greater. Nets fished any time between official sunset and official sunrise must have lighted buoys on both ends of the net. If the net is attached to the boat, then one lighted buoy on the end of the net opposite the boat is required.

(c) **Allowable Sales:** Salmon (except Chum) and shad.

(5) Blind Slough/Knappa Slough Select Area:

Open Dates	Open Days	Open Time	Open Duration
Immediately - October 31	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday (night)	6:00 pm - 10:00 am	16 hrs

(a) **Area:** The Blind Slough Select Area is defined as waters of Blind Slough and Gnat Creek from a north-south line represented by regulatory markers at the mouth of Blind Slough upstream to a regulatory marker in Gnat Creek located approximately 0.5 miles southeasterly (upstream) of the Barendse Road Bridge. The Knappa Slough Select Area is defined as waters of Knappa Slough, Calendar Slough, and Big Creek Slough bounded to the north (upstream) by a line projecting from a regulatory marker on the eastern shore of Karlson Island to the northernmost regulatory marker at the mouth of Blind Slough and bounded to the west (downstream) by a line projecting southerly from a regulatory marker on the southwestern tip of Karlson Island through regulatory markers on the western tips of Minaker Island to a marker on the Oregon shore. The waters of Knappa Slough within a 100-foot radius of the railroad bridge crossing Big Creek are closed.

(b) **Gear:** Gillnets with a 6-inch maximum mesh size restriction. Maximum net length is 100 fathoms. There is no lead line weight limit and attachment of additional weight and anchors directly to the lead line is permitted.

Nets not specifically authorized for use may be onboard a vessel if properly stored. A properly stored net is defined as a net on a drum that is fully covered by a tarp (canvas or plastic) and bound with a minimum of ten revolutions of rope with a diameter of 3/8 (0.375) inches or greater. Nets fished any time between official sunset and official sunrise must have lighted buoys on both ends of the net. If the net is attached to the boat, then one lighted buoy on the end of the net opposite the boat is required.

(c) **Allowable Sales:** Salmon (except Chum) and shad.

(6) Deep River Select Area:

Open Dates	Open Days	Open Time	Open Duration
Immediately - October 11	Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday (night)	6:00 pm - 9:00 am	15 hrs

Open Dates	Open Days	Open Time	Open Duration
October 14 - October 31	Monday, Wednesday (night)	6:00 pm - 9:00 am	15 hrs
November 4 - November 28	Monday, Wednesday (night)	5:00 pm - 8:00 am	15 hrs

(a) **Area:** The Deep River fishing area includes all waters from West Deep River Road Bridge at the town of Deep River downstream to the mouth defined by a line from USCG navigation marker #16 southwest to a marker on the Washington shore.

(b) **Gear:** Gillnets with a maximum mesh size restriction of 6-inches. Maximum net length is 100 fathoms. No weight restriction on leadline. Use of additional weights or anchors attached directly to the leadline is allowed. No nets can be tied off to stationary structures. Nets may not fully cross the navigation channel. It is unlawful to operate in any river, stream or channel any gillnet gear longer than three-fourths the width of the river, stream, or channel. "River, stream, or channel width" is defined as bank-to-bank, where the water meets the banks, regardless of the time of tide or the water level. This emergency provision shall supersede the permanent regulation and all other regulations that conflict with it. Nets not specifically authorized for use may be onboard the vessel if properly stored. A properly stored net is defined as a net on a drum that is fully covered by a tarp (canvas or plastic) and bound with a minimum of ten revolutions of rope with a diameter of 3/8 (0.375) inches or greater. Nets fished any time between official sunset and official sunrise must have lighted buoys on both ends of the net. If the net is attached to the boat, then one lighted buoy on the end of the net opposite the boat is required.

(c) **Allowable Sales:** Salmon (except Chum) and shad.

(7) **24-hour quick reporting** is in effect for Washington buyers WAC 220-352-315. Permanent transportation rules in effect. Oregon buyers are required to submit fish receiving tickets electronically pursuant to OAR 635-006-0210.

(8) **Multi-Net Rule:** Nets not specifically authorized for use in these areas may be onboard a vessel if properly stored. A properly stored net is defined as a net on a drum that is fully covered by a tarp (canvas or plastic) and bound with a minimum of ten revolutions of rope with a diameter of 3/8 (0.375) inches or greater (WAC 220-358-030(2)).

(9) **Lighted Buoys:** Nets that are fished at any time between official sunset and official sunrise must have lighted buoys on both ends of the net unless the net is attached to the boat. If the net is attached to the boat, then one lighted buoy on the opposite end of the net from the boat is required.

Reviser's note: The typographical error in the above section occurred in the copy filed by the agency and appears in the Register pursuant to the requirements of RCW 34.08.040.

Reviser's note: The unnecessary underscoring in the above section occurred in the copy filed by the agency and appears in the Register pursuant to the requirements of RCW 34.08.040.

REPEALER

The following section of the Washington Administrative Code is repealed, effective immediately:

WAC 220-358-03000H Columbia River seasons below
Bonneville. (24-184)