

DIPNETTER

NEWSLETTER

Fall fishery update

The latest numbers from the Zone 6 fall tribal fishery.

Page 2

New CRITFC chairman

Nez Perce tribal commissioner McCoy Oatman chosen to head the Commission.

Page 3

River tragedy claims two fishers' lives

On September 14, five Warm Springs tribal fishers were fishing on the Columbia River approximately 2 miles east of the Three Mile Islands. The fishers had just completed placing a net when a large wave hit the side of the boat followed by a second wave, which capsized the boat. Three of the five fishers were able to swim to shore: Gary Katchia, age 27; Thomas Charley, 28 and Bruce Jim Sr., 63.

Three days later, on September 17, searchers from the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fisheries Enforcement recovered the bodies of the two missing fishers: Pete Goodlance, 22 and Thane Colwash, 46.

The search and recovery effort was a multi-agency effort involving the Morrow County Sheriff, Sherman County Sheriff, Benton County Sheriff, Umatilla County Sheriff, Gilliam County Sheriff, Boardman Ambulance and Fire Department, Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fisheries Enforcement, Yakama Nation, Warm Springs Fire and Safety, Warm Springs Police Department, Warm Springs Natural Resources, U.S. Coast Guard, Bonneville Power Administration, Oregon State Police, and multiple dive teams.

Jerry Ekker, CRITFE acting chief of enforcement would like to extend his deepest appreciation and thanks to Undersheriff Steve Myron, Morrow County Sheriff Department who was the incident commander at the scene, Fire Chief Dan Martinez, Warm Springs Fire Department working logistics, and Officers Bob McCrum, Phillip Watlamet, Christine Tegner, Casey Weeks, and Sgt. Ted Lame Bull, conducting CRITFE boat patrols. These departments and their staffs were first responders to initiate the search, set up the incident command site, and gather equipment and supplies for the crews and the fisher's families. Thanks to CRITFE dispatchers Cathy Lame Bull and Misty Martin for the fantastic job they did handling the initial request for assistance and the multitude of calls for assistance and information during the first two days of this incident. Also thanks to all of the personnel from the other agencies listed above for their quick response to assist in this tragic accident.



The Dipnetter is a publication of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission, the fishery management agency overseen by the Yakama, Umatilla, Warm Springs, and Nez Perce tribes.

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Executive Director's Message

THE IMPORTANCE OF TRIBAL ENFORCEMENT

Some might say that the tribes don't need the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fisheries Enforcement, or any enforcement, on the Columbia River. However, CRITFE's presence on the Columbia is necessary for the tribal fisheries, tribal fishers, and tribal sovereignty. After all, the very core of tribal sovereignty is the right of tribes to create — and enforce — their own laws.

Over the years, the tribes have been able to achieve the dream of the four tribes having a coordinated enforcement program on the Columbia River. The foundation for CRITFE was first created shortly after the formation of CRITFC in response to the 1974 Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals affirmation of the tribes' right to regulate tribal members' exercise of their treaty fishing access rights. The 1988 Columbia River Fish Management Plan promoted tribal/state co-management, facilitated enforcement efforts, and reduced the state enforcement presence in Zone 6. Tribal and CRITFE programs became the key elements of mainstem Columbia River law enforcement.

But CRITFE does more than enforce fishing regulations. CRITFE officers provide assistance to tribal fishers during times of need, protect archeological sites, and protect tribal fishing sites from encroachment from non-Indians such as wind surfers and non-tribal fishers.

While you might think eliminating CRITFE's presence on the Columbia River is a good thing, removing CRITFE would be bad. A stronger CRITFE presence can help protect tribal fishers from state enforcement actions.

The bottom line is, if we don't enforce our fishery, someone else will. For many years, fisheries enforcement was so successful that state enforcement was not necessary. I have heard, however, from some of you that there is a renewed presence of Oregon and Washington fisheries enforcement that is interfering with the tribal treaty reserved fishing activities. I take these issues very seriously and am working to resolve them.

Fall Fishery Update

The tribal fall season commercial fisheries are still under way. The sales of platform and hook-and-line fisheries continued from the summer season. Early fall platform fisheries caught over 800 Chinook and over 4,000 steelhead.

The first of five commercial fishing openings began on August 24. Longer openings were scheduled this year with 20.5 days of fishing occurring during the first five weeks.

Effort in the commercial gillnet fishery has been high with over 700 nets being set in the weeks of September 8 and 14. Catches have been good with a preliminary catch estimate of nearly 65,000 adult Chinook caught in the first four weeks of gillnet fishing. The tribes also harvested approximately 21,000 steelhead and 9,200 coho in the first four weeks.

The Chinook return is less than forecast, but still near average. The summer steelhead return is at near-record levels and the coho return is expected to be very good. The fall Chinook jack return continues the remarkable trend in high jack numbers seen this year.

The fall fishery is well within the harvest limits agreed to under the *U.S. v. Oregon* Management Agreement. Tribal fishery managers will continue to evaluate run sizes and catches and the tribes are expected to continue to allow commercial fishing opportunity as long as the fishery remains within its harvest limits.



DIPNETTER

New CRITFC chairman named

McCoy Oatman, member of the Nez Perce Tribe's Executive Committee and CRITFC commissioner, becomes chair of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission. Oatman was appointed to the position by the NPTEC to replace Rebecca Miles and will serve as chair for the next nine months.

"I'm honored to take over the responsibilities as chairman from Ms. Miles," said Oatman. "I'm dedicated to CRITFC, tribal members, and our communities. I'm dedicated to understanding what matters most to our tribal membership and advancing our shared goals and objectives on salmon issues in the Columbia Basin."

Oatman has served as a NPTEC member and CRITFC commissioner for the past one and a half years and comes from a long-line of tribal leaders. A tribal fisher, Oatman is a second generation NPTEC member. Oatman has a long history of service to his tribal community. Prior to NPTEC, Oatman helped tribal youth at the Lapwai Valley Boys and Girls Club and served as the tribe's Community Center Coordinator.

"Mr. Oatman is a vibrant leader who is dedicated to his tribe," said Paul Lumley, executive director of the Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fish Commission. "In addition to being a tribal fisherman, he is also well versed on the issues facing salmon and how they impact the tribes and tribal members."

Miles stepped down from her position on the Nez Perce Tribal Executive Committee on August 14 to assume the position of the Nez Perce Tribe's Executive Director. Miles will be responsible for the day-to-day management of the governmental operations of the Nez Perce Tribe and implementing the policy directives of the NPTEC in her new position.

Protecting our heritage

The tribal fisheries enforcement archaeological project

The US Army Corps of Engineers has provided funding to CRITFC Enforcement to protect cultural and archaeological resources located throughout the Columbia River Gorge.

Although all CRITFE officers have received archaeological training to recognize signs of illegal activity, conduct an investigation, and write reports, there are three officers dedicated to the archaeological project. Sgt. Ted Lame Bull, Jr. (GROS VENTRE/YAKAMA) oversees the project, Officers Russell Spino (WARM SPRINGS) and Christine Tegner (TLINGIT/HAIDA) conduct investigations, follow up information from other officers, assist tribal archeologists at sites, and provide training in archaeological laws and investigations to local law enforcement agencies in Oregon and Washington.

The Corps of Engineers, the Wanapa Koot Koot advisory group, and Officer Spino have recently updated an arrowhead-shaped brochure for public distribution. To quote part of the brochure, "All people have left evidence of their lives on and around these rivers. These remnants are the legacy of our country and the heritage of all people, and cannot be restored once they are damaged or removed. There are people on the river, destroying and removing our cultural and archaeological resources. An archaeological resource is any material remains of past human life, activities and occupation. There are federal, state, and tribal laws protecting these resources."

Tribal fishers can help protect these cultural resources, too. If you see any suspicious activities, call 1 (800) 487-3474 to report it. Providing basic information such as where the activity is occurring, descriptions of persons involved, description of any vehicles or boats and license plate numbers helps with an investigation of the incident. However, for your own protection, do not approach the persons or get involved; only report what you can see or witness from a safe distance.



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New CRITFE officer

Tribal members on the Columbia River may have noticed a new face on the Columbia River Enforcement Team: Officer Casey Weeks. Officer Weeks moved to Hood River two years ago and owned his own remodeling company prior to working with CRITFE. Before coming to Oregon, Officer Weeks worked for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for three years as a law enforcement officer.

Officer Weeks has a Bachelor of Science degree in Resource Management from Oregon State University. Officer Weeks enjoys outdoor activities including hunting, fishing, rock climbing, and mountain biking.



New CRITFE officer Casey Weeks. "I am honored to work for the Commission serving the tribes and protecting their treaty rights and the fishery resources."

TRIBAL RESTORATION PROJECTS:

Deschutes River Fall Chinook Salmon Coded Wire Tagging Project

For the past seven years, the Warm Springs Tribes have been conducting a coded wire tag study on Deschutes River summer and fall Chinook. The goal of the project is to provide ocean distribution and Columbia River exploitation rates for



The Deschutes River

Deschutes River summer/fall Chinook. This project supports implementation of the coast-wide abundance-based management approach adopted under the Pacific Salmon Treaty. By combining this data with information on adult escapement, managers will be able to estimate total harvest, distribution, marine survival, and ocean and in-river exploitation rates for Deschutes River summer/fall Chinook salmon. Project results will improve management of this stock. Project objectives are consistent with the Tribal Integrated Resource Management Plans. Results will also be used to construct a production database to evaluating optimum spawning escapement levels.

(Each month we will feature a tribal salmon restoration project being done by one of the CRITFC member tribes.)

Salmon Marketing workshop



The CRITFC Salmon Marketing program recently held an outboard engine repair workshop in Celilo. Outboard engine instructor Larry Blais taught the workshop, which was funded by the Washington Sea Grant.

The workshop attracted around 20 fishers and covered a variety of topics from basic engine maintenance to troubleshooting engine problems. Attendee James Kiona remarked, "There were lots of questions from fishers about the basic questions of keeping your engine running and he answered all of them from batteries, fuel quality and mixture, and other basics."

"Fishers have told me how hard it is to find someone to work on their engines and to give tips on keeping their engine running," explained Salmon Marketing specialist Les Brown. "For both safety and economic reasons, this workshop was a workshop waiting to happen."

DIPNETTER

Styrofoam Floats

Tribes urge fishers to phase out the use of Styrofoam block fishing floats by end of fall fishing season

At the May commission meeting, tribal representatives secured a pledge from the Oregon State Police that they will not seek enforcement actions on tribal fishers using unencapsulated Styrofoam floats until the fall fishing season is over. The tribes urge fishers to complete their phase-out of Styrofoam block fishing floats by the end of the fall fishing season.

Alternatives such as Styrofoam that has been sealed inside heavy vinyl, closed-cell foam floats, or other non-Styrofoam floats are available at prices starting at about \$8. Your commercial fishing supply dealer possibly keeps these in stock or can order them for you.

Self-inflating Lifejacket Program

With the 2009 fishing season upon us, take this opportunity to upgrade to self-inflating lifejackets for you and your crew. There are several models to choose from. Act now, as the \$50 discount program will end when the grant money runs out. See the voucher below for more details.

INFLATABLE LIFE VEST

You may be eligible for a discount towards the purchase of an inflatable life vest in the amount of



\$50[†]



This is a unique opportunity for fishers meeting eligibility requirements[‡] from the following tribes: Yakama, Umatilla, Warm Springs, and Nez Perce. Hurry! Supplies are limited.



[†]This is not a gift certificate and has no monetary value nor is it a monetary equivalent.

[‡]A list of the specific eligibility requirements governing this offer is available from The Dalles Marine Supply.

Contact

**The Dalles
Marine Supply**

(541) 296-4111

to see if you are eligible

Your representatives at CRITFC

The commissioners of CRITFC are made up of elected or tribal council-appointed individuals. Contact your representative on the commission with concerns, suggestions, and comments regarding salmon and the salmon fishery.

Yakama commissioners • (509) 865-5121

Fidelia Andy (*CRITFC secretary*), LaRena B. Sohappy, Terry Goudy-Rambler, Athena Sanchez

Umatilla commissioners • (541) 276-3165

Rapehal Bill, N. Kathryn Brigham (*CRITFC treasurer*), Ken Hall, Jay Minthorn, Althea Huesties-Wolf

Warm Springs commissioners • (541) 553-3257

Leslie Bill, Bruce Jim (*CRITFC vice chairman*), Olney Patt, Jr., Ryan Smith, Sacredheart Suppah

Nez Perce commissioners • (208) 843-2253

Brooklyn Baptiste, Julia Davis-Wheeler, Tonia Garcia, Larry Greene, Joanna Marek, Joel Moffett, McCoy Oatman (*CRITFC chairman*), Elmer Crow, Herbert Jackson, Quintin Jackson-Ellenwood, Wilfred Scott, T. A. Wheeler, Erik Holt

