



Fall fishery update

Record salmon numbers allow tribal fishery openings into the middle of October

By Stuart Ellis

The fall chinook and steelhead runs have been good this fall. The bright chinook run has been above average with nearly 350,000 bright stock fish expected to pass Bonneville Dam this fall. The tule chinook run was very high with 118,000 tules passing Bonneville Dam. Steelhead have been doing well, too, with a total Group A and Group B steelhead run expected to be 385,000 fish. The current



The last time a tribal fishery was open in mid-October was in 1990.

B steelhead run projection is 71,000. With these runs, the tribes have a 25% allowed harvest rate on upriver bright fish and a 20% harvest rate on B steelhead under the *U.S. v. Oregon* Management

Agreement. The B steelhead harvest limit is higher under the current management agreement compared to older agreements. Unfortunately steelhead impacts continue to complicate fall season fishing. In 2009, fall fisheries were able to reach the allowed chinook harvest rate before reaching the steelhead harvest limit. However, this year a more typical pattern resulted where the fall fishery neared the steelhead limit before reaching the chinook harvest limit. Even with this, the fall fisheries have had five commercial gillnet openings. Platform and hook-and-line sales have been allowed continuously since August 1. The fall fisheries have harvested over 115,000 adult fall chinook and over 25,000 steelhead. These total catches compare well to past years with similar run sizes. Prices have generally been good compared to recent years as well. This year has also resulted in a record fall chinook return to Lower Granite Dam. We do not know how many of these are wild fish yet, but this is a positive sign for the future. Since wild Snake River fall chinook are one of the management limits to fall season tribal fishing, as we make progress through our supplementation efforts to rebuild the wild run, it will help ease fall season fishery limits. The tribes continue to press for increased steelhead supplementation in an effort to help restore wild steelhead populations that also limit fall fisheries.

Tribes lead the way toward regional salmon restoration

critfc executive director's message



Paul Lumley

In 1855 when the Columbia River tribes accepted the treaty promise of the United States to protect tribal fishing rights in return for land, a deal was made between nations. Less than a century later, federal policy threatened the very existence of the salmon those treaty rights referenced. In 1948, federal and state fishery agencies decided to use hydropower development mitigation funds to construct hatcheries below most of the dams and below most tribal fishing areas. This policy proved to be disastrous for upriver wild runs that were caught in great numbers when lower river

non-Indian fishers harvested lower river hatchery fish and it left Indian fishers waiting on the banks

Now the tribes are attempting to reverse federal policies that violated the treaties by taking matters into their own hands to restore and reintroduce salmon populations throughout the usual and accustomed fishing locations in the Columbia Basin.

In 1982, CRITFC presented a plan to reverse this policy by using the hatchery facilities as nurseries for fish destined to spawn in tributaries throughout tribal ceded areas. The tribal governments and fish and wildlife committees implemented the plan and this year's seasons are an indication that many of the efforts are successful.

These efforts to restore fish production in natural ecosystems benefit tribal harvest, but the benefits go beyond what tribal people feed to their families each day. The return of salmon to streams once barren is bringing back life that is nourished by what the salmon bring back from the ocean. Also, the tribes are working with their neighbors to find better ways for respecting and protecting these gifts from the Creator by restoring streams and wetlands, providing nurseries for juvenile wild fish, and by listening to what the salmon tell us about where we live.

Tribal peoples have lived side-by-side with the salmon for thousands of years. We know them. We honor them. The past few years' record salmon returns shows the results of the tribes speaking on behalf of and acting for the benefit of the salmon.



The teepees pitched at the Nez Perce Tribal Hatchery dedication back in 2003 were only the first sign that this wasn't an ordinary salmon facility. There isn't a straight concrete rearing pond in sight; instead, you find ponds that mimic the swift Idaho rivers and streams that flow throughout the Nez Perce reservation. The ponds are just one part of this state-of-the-art facility that embodies the once-radical idea that hatcheries can be used to restore naturally reproducing salmon in the wild. While this idea seems more like common sense than a radical innovation, it took the Nez Perce Tribe more than 25 years to convince federal agencies that it was feasible and worth funding. Now, seven years later, the hatchery has played a role in the Snake and Clearwater rivers salmon runs dramatic increase to numbers not seen since the construction of Lower Granite Dam in 1972.

J. Paul G.

Departments of CRITFC:

Watershed Department

By Aja DeCoteau and Laura Gephart

The CRITFC Watershed Department provides technical assistance and support in planning, funding, implementing, tracking, and publicizing tribal watershed protection, water quality, and fish

habitat restoration activities called for in *Wy-Kan-Ush-Mi Wa-Kish-Wit*, the Tribal Salmon Restoration Plan. The department also participates in regional and national forums coordinating strategies, responding to emerging issues, and educating others on tribal priorities.

Activities:

Update Wy-Kan-Ush-Mi Wa-Kish-Wit

We are currently updating the 15-year-old *Wy-Kan-Ush-Mi Wa-Kish-Wit*. This update will highlight the accomplishments and goals of the tribes since the plan was released in 1995. The update will review the status and trends that document how far we have come, where we plan to go, and how we plan to get there in 5 to 10 years when this 25-year plan ends. It will also include issues that were not addressed in the original plan, such as climate change, water quality, and lamprey restoration. Feedback and input from the tribes are currently being solicited on the draft plan. We plan to submit a final draft to the Commission in December with a release date in January 2011.

Columbia River Toxics Reduction

We regularly participate in the Columbia River Toxics Reduction Working Group and Steering Committee. We attended the September press conference on the release of the Columbia River Toxics Reduction Action Plan held on the Umatilla Reservation. We submitted comments on the Columbia River Restoration Act of 2010 and EPA's National Strategic Plan for FY2011-2015, in which

the Columbia River Basin was not listed as a priority. The Watershed Department will be hiring a Water Quality Coordinator to provide technical assistance and support for tribal water quality efforts.

Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund

We coordinate and implement the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund for the member tribes. Since 2000, over \$20 million has been used to implement 241 salmon recovery projects; \$17 million of this budget went directly to tribal fisheries programs. Of those projects, 175 projects (73%) are completed and 66 projects are ongoing. The majority of the projects are on-the-ground projects involving collaboration with federal, state and private landowners. Outreach materials such as brochures, reports, and the website are constantly being created or updated to demonstrate tribal successes and the need for additional funding. These publications are distributed to the tribes, media, congressional leaders, governmental entities, salmon recovery partners, and private foundations.

Climate Change Adaptation

The Watershed Department supports the tribes' efforts to address climate change and its effects on tribal fisheries and water resources and other natural and cultural resources. There is an important need for CRITFC's member tribes to prepare for, mitigate, and adapt natural resource programs and policies to the effects of climate change.

Hatchery Public Hearings

By Sara Thompson

CRITFC and tribal staffs are busy addressing the inadequacies and flaws in NOAA's DEIS for hatchery production in the Columbia Basin and its potential impacts to tribal programs and the tribal fishery. So far, staff members were on hand at all three of the public hearings that have occurred. The hearings were held in Vancouver, Wash. on 9/20, Kennewick on 9/24 and Astoria on 9/30. Tribal testimony focused on the lack of consultation with the tribes while developing the DEIS, the unacceptable impacts of the alternatives outlined in the DEIS, and how the tribes have led the way in hatchery reform. The tribes are leaders in fisheries management, incorporating hatcheries as an indispensable tool in rebuilding and restoring declining and extirpated salmon runs in the Columbia Basin.



The Watershed Department (l to r): Jo Marie Tessman, grants specialist, Aja DeCoteau, (YAKAMA), department manager, and Laura Gephart, watershed programs coordinator.

Fishers Memorial

By John Platt

Since time immemorial, tribal people have mourned the loss of their loved ones who were taken by the river while fishing, often waiting for the river to return their bodies. Although the idea of a fishers memorial has been discussed for many years by tribal leaders, the loss of fishers during the last few years has brought the matter back to the Commission table.

At its September meeting, the Commission approved beginning active planning for this intertribal memorial. At previous meetings, commissioners stated that they wanted to encourage tribal artists to come up with ideas for a memorial design. In the upcoming months, the Commission will develop a theme for the memorial and seek comment and ideas from tribal artists on how to implement it. Once the general theme is determined, calls for artist's concepts will be published in all the tribal newspapers. The current stage is only the beginning of a long process, but hopefully in the next few years, there will be a meaningful memorial erected that honors all the fishers who have perished in the Columbia River.

Seufert Park Area clean up

The US Army Corps of Engineers has identified the titled property below for potential removal. If these items are not claimed or moved, they will eventually be disposed of by the Corps of Engineers as abandoned property. If you are the owner of any of the properties or know who is, please call The Dalles Lock and Dam Natural Resources Office at (541) 506.7816.

DESCRIPTION	LICENSE
white/tan Overland motorhome	OR H916024
gray Dodge Grand Caravan	OR ZUQ 226
tan/white trailer (parked next to van listed above)	
white Journeyman camper trailer	CA KC3554
white/brown Mel-Mar truck camper	OR K804511
green Gamakatsu boat	WN2430N
white/yellow boat	WN1715KK



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