

The Dipnetter

News of the River from the
Columbia River Inter-Tribal
Fish Commission



January 2013

CRITFC ENFORCEMENT MOBILE COMMAND CENTER

SERGEANT MITCH HICKS, CRITFC ENFORCEMENT

In 2012 the Bureau of Indian Affairs awarded CRITFC a grant of \$100,000 for the purchase of a mobile incident command vehicle.

In 2008, CRITFC authorized the Enforcement Department to design and research purchase costs of an emergency incident command vehicle. Every year CRITFC responds to treaty fishing related emergencies on the Columbia River. Sadly, some of these tragedies involve loss of life.

During past emergencies, the Enforcement Department has struggled with on-scene interagency communications, privacy for investigators and family members, and interaction with media. Many of these emergencies extend over many days and involve coordinating personnel from a variety of agencies, search-and-rescue organizations, and volunteers, all while requiring 24-hour scene security staffing.

A mobile incident command vehicle is a common equipment resource for law enforcement and emergency responders. The vehicle provides a mobile office and communications facility for on-scene response operations.

In addition to the river emergency uses, the vehicle could provide assistance to CRITFC tribes during on-reservation emergencies, assistance on other emergency responses or special events in the area.

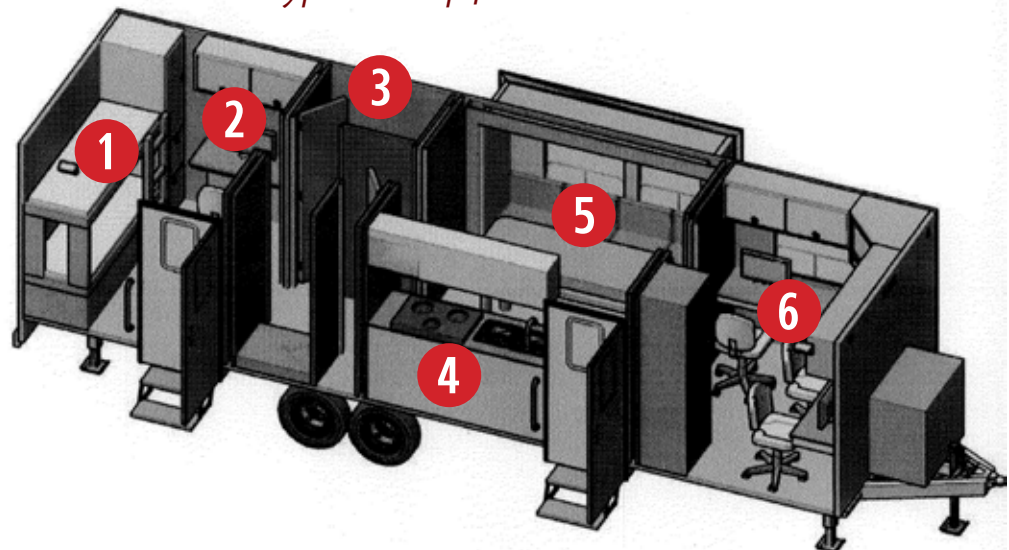
Enforcement Sergeant Mitch Hicks and Captain Jerry Ekker have concluded the primary design elements and features. In the next few weeks CRITFC will be seeking bids for the specifications of the vehicle. The Enforcement Department hopes to receive the vehicle in time for the summer/fall fishing season.

The Enforcement Department appreciates the support of the tribes, the CRITFC commissioners, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs, Portland Area Office in its pursuit to provide the most professional emergency services possible. 🐟



- 1 Sleeping berths for officers
- 2 Private office space
- 3 Lavatory
- 4 Galley kitchen
- 5 Sitting and interview area
- 6 Multiple station office area

Typical setup for a mobile command center



Fishing Site Clean-up Closures

MICHAEL BRONCHEAU, CRITFC FISHING SITE MAINT. MANAGER

Work is complete on three of the six sites scheduled for clean-up this season. The timeline for completing the remaining sites is as follows:

- **Maryhill.** Restroom, showers, and dry shed reopened in December. The remainder of the site will re-open on January 11. The extended time is required because no one has removed their titled property and additional time will be needed to clean the camp sites.
- **White Salmon.** Closure and clean-up will begin on **January 22** and re-open on February 8. Later start and end date is required to complete Maryhill clean-up and FSMC crew will have formal irrigation training in January.

Maryhill Treaty Fishing Access Site before (top) and after (bottom).



- **Lyle.** Closure and clean-up will begin on **February 11** and re-open on March 1.

During each closure, the maintenance crew will remove trash, abandoned property, and temporary structures; repair facilities, plumbing, and electrical systems; maintain the landscaping; and other repairs as necessary. **Any personal and titled property left on a site during its designated clean-up period will be disposed of.**

If you use any of these sites, please remove your personal and titled property to help speed the work and prevent any unexpected losses.

While a site is closed for the maintenance, all other access sites, including the five in-lieu sites, will remain open for use and will be maintained on a normal weekly schedule. 🐟

Winter Season Fisheries

STUART ELLIS, CRITFC FISH MGMT. BIOLOGIST

The two upcoming winter season fisheries are the January sturgeon setline fishery and the winter gillnet fishery. The January sturgeon setline fishery runs from noon January 1 through noon January 31. The regulations that the tribes have set include: setline gear only, no more than 100 hooks per line, 9/0 hooks or larger, circle hooks are recommended, standard dam sanctuaries apply. The length limit for The Dalles and John Day pools is 43-54 inches in fork length and in the Bonneville Pool is 38-54 inches in fork length. Sturgeon must be delivered in the round.

The winter gillnet fishery begins on February 1. Most of the harvest is sturgeon and some steelhead. We will send out the regulations for this fishery as the time gets closer. 🐟

Spring and Summer Forecast

STUART ELLIS, CRITFC FISH MGMT. BIOLOGIST

Forecasted returns for 2013 are less than 2012 returns. The *U.S. v. Oregon* Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is tasked with making pre-season forecasts for use in mainstem fishery management. Each of the four tribes has biologists who are TAC

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members. State and federal fishery agencies are also members. The 2013 pre-season forecasts for upriver spring and Snake River spring/summer chinook, and upper Columbia Summer chinook have been completed. Upriver spring chinook represent an aggregate of populations, and includes all spring chinook destined for areas upstream of Bonneville Dam and Snake River summer chinook. Upper Columbia summer chinook are destined for areas upstream of Priest Rapids Dam. Forecasts are expected returns of fish at the mouth of the Columbia River. The 2013 forecasts are in the box below.

It is important to remember that the forecasts are not what is really important. What is important is how many fish actually come back. Both Indian and non-Indian mainstem fisheries are managed on the actual river mouth returns, not the forecasts. The forecasts merely serve as a tool to help plan early season fisheries before we know how many fish are actually returning.

The *U.S. v. Oregon* Management Agreement, which all four tribes have signed, contains harvest rate schedules for spring and summer chinook. For spring chinook, the Management Agreement says that for runs of 109,000 to 140,000, the tribal fishery will be at an 8.3% harvest rate. For runs between 141,000 and 216,000 the harvest rate is 9.1%. If the run comes back higher, the tribes get to catch more fish.

For non-Indian mainstem fisheries, the states are limited by a “catch balance” agreement that says the total catch plus release mortality for non-Indian mainstem fisheries cannot be greater than the allowed harvest in tribal fisheries. They also have wild harvest rate limits, but the catch balance agreement normally limits them first.

Also, Oregon and Washington have to manage their early mainstem fisheries for a buffered run size that is 30% less than the forecast until TAC updates the run in-season. This means that until we update the run size (in early May), the states will have to manage for a run size no larger than 98,980. Their total fishery impacts (catch plus release mortality) in the early season can be no greater than 7.4% or 7,325 fish. After TAC updates the run size, they have to manage their fisheries for the same river mouth run size that the tribes manage for.

TAC will start updating the spring chinook run size probably in early May. At that time, everyone should expect some adjustments in both Indian and non-Indian fisheries as everybody works to keep the fisheries within the allowed limits based on actual run size.

Many people ask about how accurate the pre-season forecasts are. The answer is that sometimes they are pretty good and sometimes they are way off. For spring chinook, our accuracy has not been all that great lately when we predicted large run sizes, but it is a bit better when we predict lower run sizes. We look at a lot of different methods to do the forecasts and update the methods as we get new information.

The tribes won't be making decisions regarding spring and summer fisheries for a while yet. When the decisions get made, we will distribute the information. CRITFC sends out both email and text announcements to fishers regarding fisheries regulations that the tribes set. CRITFC has also re-designed its web page with a special section with information for fishers. We are trying to rely less on mailing information direct to fishers since the timing of regulation changes can make mail notifications impractical. If you don't already get fishery announcements by email or text, please contact us at CRITFC. 🐟

		2012		2013
		Forecast	Return	Forecast
Spring Chinook	Upriver Total	314,200	203,100	141,400
	Upper Columbia (total)	32,600	24,400	14,300
	Upper Columbia wild	2,800	4,800	1,600
	Snake River Spring/Summer (total)	168,000	109,700	58,200
	Snake River wild	39,000	33,400	18,900
Summer Chinook	Upper Columbia Total	91,200	58,300	73,500
Sockeye	Total	462,000	520,959	180,500
	Wenatchee	28,800		44,600
	Okanogan	431,300		134,500
	Snake River	1,900	512	1,250
	Deschutes/Yakima			150



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Yakama • Warm Springs
Umatilla • Nez Perce



Inter-Tribal Cooperation

With the election over, the tribes have begun the process of planning how to work with the federal government on a variety of fishing rights and natural resource protection issues. The federal government plays a critical role in providing the resources and funding that the tribes rely on to ensure that their conservation and restoration efforts happen. CRITFC has been busy coordinating tribal delegations to Washington DC to help representatives from the four member tribes speak directly with federal lawmakers on such important topics as treaty rights protection funding, the Pacific Salmon Treaty, and tribal self-determination.

To help further these goals, CRITFC has been working with several other inter-tribal fish commissions to formulate a unified message to present to the Obama Administration and Congress. We are working with the Northwest

CRITFC Executive Director's Message

Indian Fisheries Commission—representing 20 tribes in the Puget Sound area, as well as the Chippewa Ottawa Resource Authority, 1854 Treaty Authority, and Great Lakes Indian Fish & Wildlife Commission—together representing 18 tribes in the Great Lakes area of Minnesota, Wisconsin, and Michigan.

By uniting our voices and concerns—and showing that the issues that face tribes in protecting their treaty rights and treaty-reserved resources—we hope to show the Obama Administration and Congress the importance of this work and ask for its help in ensuring tribes throughout the US can continue to exercise their sovereignty and enjoy the support and funding that are required to make these efforts a reality.



Paul Lumley
YAKAMA



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