2008-2009 Upper Columbia River Steelhead Fishery Summary

Prepared for NOAA Fisheries
Portland, Oregon

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Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
600 Capitol Way North
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ABSTRACT

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) implemented a selective recreational steelhead fishery in the upper Columbia River (UCR) during fall 2008 and winter 2009. The fishery was conducted as a conservation measure to reduce the proportion of hatchery origin steelhead on the spawning grounds.

Fishery areas included the main stem Columbia from Rocky Reach Dam to Chief Joseph Dam, and the Methow, Okanogan, and Similkameen Rivers. Harvest regulations were enacted and provided for retention of only adipose fin-clipped hatchery steelhead. Creel census activities were conducted to monitor the fishery and to estimate the fishery impacts to upper Columbia River steelhead as required by NOAA Fisheries Permit 1395. Enforcement monitoring occurred throughout the duration of the fishery from October 4, 2008 through March 31, 2009.

The steelhead run above Priest Rapids Dam was estimated to be 17,379 steelhead with a natural origin steelhead component of 3,232 fish. Natural origin fish escapement to the Methow and Okanogan/Similkameen Rivers was estimated at 767 and 177, respectively.

An estimated 10,818 anglers fished a total of 45,052 hours and caught 3,614 steelhead, of which 2,308 were ad-absent fish of hatchery origin, 791 were ad-present hatchery origin, and 515 were natural origin steelhead.

Fishery impacts to natural origin steelhead from catch and release mortality included 15 Methow River steelhead and seven Okanogan/Similkameen River steelhead. All natural origin steelhead impacts remained within Tier 1 guidelines set by NOAA Fisheries Permit 1395.

Enforcement monitoring during the fishery contacted 381 anglers with 59 violations reported, 18 of which were gear violations. One natural origin steelhead was illegally taken by an angler within the Methow River and turned over to NOAA Fisheries enforcement.

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INTRODUCTION

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) implemented a selective recreational steelhead fishery in the upper Columbia River (UCR) during fall 2008 and winter 2009. The fishery was implemented as a conservation measure to reduce the proportion of hatchery origin steelhead on the spawning grounds. Reducing the proportion of hatchery origin adults on the spawning grounds in years of over escapement is consistent with fishery actions described in NOAA Fisheries ESA Section 10 Permit 1395.

Based on projected steelhead run estimates and origins from Priest Rapids Dam steelhead stock assessment sampling, the recreational fishery satisfied the "Tier 1" category as defined in ESA Section 10 Permit 1395. Harvest regulations required single, barbless hooks and provided for retention of only adipose fin-clipped hatchery steelhead. The regulations also required that all steelhead not externally marked must be released unharmed, and included WDFW's freshwater handling rules prohibiting the removal of steelhead from the water that are to be released. Creel census activities were conducted to monitor the fishery and to estimate the fishery impacts to upper Columbia River steelhead. Enforcement monitoring occurred throughout the duration of the fisheries.

FISHERY AREAS AND SEASONS

- Main stem Columbia from Rocky Reach Dam to Wells Dam from November 6, 2008 through March 31, 2009

- Main stem Columbia River from Wells Dam to 400 feet below Chief Joseph Dam from October 4, 2008 through March 31, 2009

- Methow River from the Hwy. 97 Bridge in Pateros upstream to the second power line crossing, and from the first Hwy. 153 Bridge north of Pateros to the confluence with the Chewuch River in Winthrop from October 4, 2008 through March 31, 2009

- Okanogan River from the mouth upstream to Hwy 97 Bridge in Oroville from October 4, 2008 through March 31, 2009

- Similkameen River from the mouth to 400 feet below Enloe Dam from November 15, 2008 through March 31, 2009

METHODS

Run-Cycle Population Estimates

The 2008 - 2009 upper Columbia River steelhead run-cycle abundance and distribution to the various sub-basins upstream of Priest Rapids Dam (PRD) was estimated using the combined information from steelhead stock assessment data collected at PRD, steelhead

count by origin, pit tag return data collected at Rock Island, Rocky Reach, Wells and Tumwater dams, and 1999/2001steelhead radio telemetry data. Additionally, stock assessment data from Wells Dam was used to verify the PRD projected 2008-2009 run-cycle adult steelhead abundance and origin composition in areas above Wells Dam.

Creel Monitoring

Creel surveys were conducted to monitor the fishery and to estimate the fishery impacts to upper Columbia River steelhead. The survey used a two-stage non-uniform probability method of sampling similar to those used by (Malvestuto 1978), but as described in *Creel Information from Sport Fisheries in WDFW Methods Manual* (Hahn et. al.1993). Based on information collected, the total sport-catch, incidental catch and release, and harvest of all origins of steelhead was estimated.

Fishery Impacts to Natural Origin Steelhead

Impacts were monitored monthly to assure that the 2% take for the Methow and the 5% take for the Okanogan/Similkameen natural-origin fish set in the "Tier 1" category within Permit #1395 were not exceeded. Impacts due to the fishery were determined by estimating the number of natural origin fish caught during the fishery times a 5% hook and release mortality. The main stem Columbia (Rocky Reach Dam to Wells Dam, and Wells Dam to Chief Joseph Dam and each individual tributary (Methow, Okanogan, and Similkameen) were analyzed separately and apportioned to the appropriate tributary areas.

RESULTS

Run-Cycle Population Estimates

A "Tier 1" conservation fishery may be implemented within the main stem Columbia in order to reduce the proportion of hatchery fish on the spawning grounds under NOAA Fisheries Section 10 Permit 1395, when the estimated total run of steelhead over Priest Rapids is 9,550 fish and the natural origin component is at least 1,300 fish. Based on Priest Rapids Dam stock assessment data as of September 25, 2008, the run cycle adult escapement above Priest Rapids Dam was projected at 17,379 steelhead, including 3,232 natural origin fish (Table 1). Tier 1 conservation fisheries in selected tributaries may also be opened when minimum natural origin run size criteria are met (600 fish for the Wenatchee, 500 fish for the Methow, and 120 fish for the Okanogan Basin). Estimates of natural origin fish escapement above Wells Dam were 767 and 177 for the Methow and Okanogan Basins, respectively (Table1).

Returns of natural origin steelhead were sufficient to meet the requirements of ESA Permit 1395. Excessive returns of hatchery origin fish created a need to reduce the proportion of hatchery fish on the spawning grounds. Accordingly, a selective fishery targeting hatchery origin steelhead in excess of spawning escapement needs was

implemented in the main stem Columbia from Rocky Reach Dam to Chief Joseph Dam, and the Methow, Okanogan, and Similkameen Rivers.

The September 25 projected run of adult steelhead into the Wenatchee River was also sufficient to both meet spawning escapement goals and the Permit 1395 requirements for returns of natural origin fish. However, neither trapping results at Tumwater Dam nor pit tag data supported this projection. The estimated natural origin fish escapement for the Wenatchee River basin was projected at 2,808 steelhead, including 1,346 natural origin fish based on PRD stock assessment data, well over the requisite number of fish necessary to open a fishery (Table 1). However, stray rates for these fish are known to be very high, and within basin stock assessment data from Dryden and Tumwater Dams did not support the PRD stock assessment data. The fishery on the main stem Columbia River between Rocky Reach and Wells Dams was delayed until November 6, 2008 to allow greater numbers of natural origin steelhead destined for the Methow and Okanogan basins to pass Wells Dam and to allow higher numbers of steelhead to enter the Entiat basin, reducing potential impacts to these stocks. The fishery within the Rocky Reach to Wells section would be primarily on Wenatchee Basin strays. The decision not open a fishery on the Wenatchee River was made in early October. By December of 2008, returns at Tumwater and the mainstream Columbia River dams proved the decision not to open a selective fishery was correct.

Table 1. Run estimate and projected sub-basin escapement based on Priest Rapids Dam sampling for 2008 upper Columbia River steelhead September 25, 2008

River System	Estimate at Priest Rapids		Projected escapement 1/	
	Total run	Natural origin 2/	Total run	Natural origin
Wenatchee	6,398	1,621	2,808	1,346
Entiat	226	226	198	198
Methow	7,389	970	6,796	767
Okanogan and Similkameen	3,177	226	3,317	177
Columbia below Rock Island Dam	189	189	N/A	N/A
Total	17,379	3,232	13,119	2,488

1/ Minus removals for hatchery broodstock and dam survival upstream
2/ Based on natural origin proportion from radio telemetry data

In addition to the initial projections based on PRD stock assessment data, in-season verification for the tributaries above Wells Dam was based on Wells Dam stock assessment data. As of November 15, 2008, the run cycle adult escapement above Wells Dam totaled 9,886, including 1,028 natural-origin fish (Table 2). Using a 79 % and 21% natural origin apportioning of natural origin steelhead to the Methow and Okanogan River Basins, respectively (1999 and 2001 radio telemetry data), and an assumed 95% over-winter survival, the projected natural origin return to the Methow and Okanogan/Similkameen Rivers were 771 and 205 steelhead, respectively.

Table 2. Projected 2008 upper Columbia River natural origin steelhead escapement above Wells Dam through November 15, 2008

River system	Estimate at Wells Dam		Projected escapement 1/
	Total run	Natural origin	Natural origin
Methow	6,643	872	771
Okanogan and Similkameen	3,243	232	205
Total	9,886	1,104	976

1/ Minus Wells hatchery broodstock collection and 95% over winter survival

Creel Monitoring

Mainstem Columbia River (Rocky Reach to Wells)

An estimated 3,519 anglers fished 14,433 hours and caught a total of 734 steelhead (478 ad-absent, 156 ad-present hatchery, and 100 natural-origin) (Table 3). All adipose present steelhead were released.

Table 3. Summary of the 2008-2009 UCR steelhead fishery in the Columbia River main stem between Rocky Reach Dam and Wells Dam

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
CPUE	0.08	0.04	0.03	0.03	0.03	0.05
Effort Hours	5,759	2,864	2,299	2,299	1,212	14,433
Anglers	1,397	697	620	590	215	3,519
Ad-absent steelhead retained	282	94	33	43	17	469
Ad-absent steelhead released	3	0	0	1	5	9
Total Ad-absent steelhead caught	285	94	33	44	22	478
Ad-present hatchery steelhead released	98	14	18	19	7	156
Natural-origin steelhead released 1/	63	9	12	13	3	100
Total Ad-present steelhead released	161	23	30	32	10	256
Total steelhead caught	446	117	63	76	32	734
Natural -origin steelhead mortality	3	0	1	1	0	5
Ad-present hatchery steelhead mortality	5	1	1	1	0	8
Ad-absent hatchery steelhead mortality	282	94	33	43	18	470
Total steelhead mortality	290	95	35	45	18	483

1/ Based on 39% natural-origin within the adipose-present population

Main stem Columbia River (Wells Dam- Chief Joseph Dam)

An estimated 2,217 anglers fished 9,504 hours and caught a total of 694 steelhead (448 ad-absent, 145 ad-present hatchery, and 101 natural-origin) (Table 4). All adipose present steelhead were released.

Table 4. Summary of the 2008-2009 UCR steelhead fishery in the Columbia River main stem between Wells Dam and Chief Joseph Dam

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
CPUE	0.06	0.11	0.06	0.14	0.04	0.09	0.07
Effort Hours	5,214	1,772	771	688	633	426	9,504
Anglers	1,104	452	197	194	200	70	2,217
Ad-absent steelhead retained	168	120	39	67	23	19	436
Ad-absent steelhead released	0	12	0	0	0	0	12
Total ad-absent steelhead caught	168	132	39	67	23	19	448
Total ad-present steelhead released	135	59	6	27	0	19	246
Ad-present hatchery steelhead released	82	33	3	15	0	11	145
Natural-origin steelhead released 1/	53	25	2	12	0	8	101
Total steelhead caught	303	191	45	94	23	38	694
Natural-origin steelhead mortality	3	1	0	1	0	0	5
Ad-present hatchery steelhead mortality	4	2	0	1	0	0	7
Ad-absent hatchery steelhead mortality	168	121	39	67	23	19	436
Total steelhead mortality	175	123	39	68	23	19	448

1/ Based on 39% natural-origin within the adipose-present population

Methow River

An estimated 3,779 anglers fished 16,902 hours and caught a total of 1,309 steelhead (781 ad-absent, 322 ad-present hatchery, and 206 natural origin) (Table 5). All adipose present steelhead were released.

Table 5. Summary of the 2008-2009 UCR steelhead fishery in the Methow River

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
CPUE	0.07	0.05	0.05	0.00	0.09	0.13	0.08
Effort Hours	7,203	3,596	741	132	1,593	3,637	16,902
Anglers	1,410	748	247	38	416	920	3,779
Ad-absent steelhead retained	152	136	8	0	87	228	611
Ad-absent steelhead released	89	18	5	0	12	47	171
Total ad-absent steelhead caught	241	154	12	0	99	275	781
Total ad-present steelhead released	241	29	23	0	52	183	528
Ad-present hatchery steelhead released	147	18	14	0	32	111	322
Natural-origin steelhead released 1/	94	11	9	0	20	72	206
Total steelhead caught	482	183	35	0	151	458	1,309
Natural-origin steelhead mortality 2/	5	1	0	0	1	4	11
Ad-present hatchery steelhead mortality	7	1	1	0	2	6	16
Ad-absent hatchery steelhead mortality	156	137	8	0	88	230	619
Total steelhead mortality	169	138	9	0	90	240	646

1/ Based on 39% natural-origin within the adipose-present population
2/ Includes one illegally retained natural origin steelhead in the Methow River fishery

Okanogan River

An estimated 990 anglers fished 3,276 hours and caught a total of 761 steelhead (547 ad-absent, 131 ad-present hatchery, and 83 natural origin) (Table 6). All adipose present steelhead were released.

Table 6. Summary of the 2008-2009 UCR steelhead fishery in the Okanogan River

	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
CPUE	0.10	0.14	0.24	0.00	0.00	0.36	0.23
Effort Hours	1,292	270	105	0	0	1,609	3,276
Anglers	374	90	35	0	0	491	990
Ad-absent steelhead retained	47	20	7	0	0	320	394
Ad-absent steelhead released	45	6	9	0	0	93	153
Total ad-absent steelhead caught	92	26	16	0	0	413	547
Total ad-present steelhead released	34	11	9	0	0	159	213
Ad-present hatchery steelhead released	21	7	6	0	0	97	131
Natural-origin steelhead released 1/	13	4	4	0	0	62	83
Total steelhead caught	126	37	26	0	0	572	761
Natural-origin steelhead mortality	1	0	0	0	0	3	4
Ad-present hatchery steelhead mortality	1	0	0	0	0	5	7
Ad-absent hatchery steelhead mortality	49	20	8	0	0	325	402
Total steelhead mortality	51	21	8	0	0	333	412

1/ Based on 39% natural-origin within the adipose-present population

Similkameen River

An estimated 313 anglers fished 937 hours and caught a total of 116 steelhead (54 ad-absent, 37 ad-present hatchery, and 25 natural origin) (Table 7). All adipose present steelhead were released.

Table 7. Summary of the 2008-2009 UCR steelhead fishery in the Similkameen River

	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
CPUE	0.02	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.21	0.12
Effort Hours	236	156	0	0	545	937
Anglers	79	52	0	0	182	313
Ad-absent steelhead retained	0	0	0	0	34	34
Ad-absent steelhead released	0	0	0	0	20	20
Total ad-absent steelhead caught	0	0	0	0	54	54
Total ad-present steelhead released	4	0	0	0	58	62
Ad-present hatchery steelhead released	2	0	0	0	35	37
Natural-origin steelhead released 1/	2	0	0	0	23	25
Total steelhead caught	4	0	0	0	112	116
Natural-origin steelhead mortality	0	0	0	0	1	1
Ad-present hatchery steelhead mortality	0	0	0	0	2	2
Ad-absent hatchery steelhead mortality	0	0	0	0	35	35
Total steelhead mortality	0	0	0	0	38	38

1/ Based on 39% natural-origin within the adipose-present population

Fishery Impacts to Natural Origin Steelhead

Mainstem Columbia River (Rocky Reach Dam to Wells Dam)

Natural origin steelhead located within the Rocky Reach pool was estimated using pit tag data and run estimates from Priest Rapids Dam sampling (Table 1). Based on this analysis, an estimated 341 natural origin steelhead of unknown proportions of Wenatchee, Entiat and above Wells origin fish were located between Rocky Reach Dam and Wells Dam. Anglers in this section of the Columbia River caught and released 100 natural origin steelhead, representing an encounter rate of 29.3%. Using a 5% hook and release mortality, the impacts were five natural origin steelhead, representing 1.5% of the estimated natural origin steelhead between Rocky Reach Dam and Wells Dam, and is consistent with the Tier 1 fishery criteria of limiting natural-origin steelhead mortality to no greater than 2%, the lesser take limit for any of the affected tributaries. While steelhead in this stretch of the mainstem Columbia River likely include representation from all four major tributaries above Rock Island Dam, it was impossible to ascertain the proportion of fish relegated to any given tributary and thus correctly apportion the take among tributaries.

Methow River, including Columbia River (Wells-Chief Joseph)

Fishery impacts to the UCR steelhead population may have occurred as a result of steelhead fisheries in the Methow River and in the main stem Columbia River between Wells Dam and Chief Joseph Dam. One hundred percent of the natural origin Methow River steelhead and 79% of the natural-origin main stem Columbia River steelhead caught and released during the fishery were used to determine natural-origin steelhead encounter rates. Collectively, the two fishery areas encountered 286 (206 Methow and 80 main stem Columbia) of the estimated 767 natural-origin Methow River steelhead (Tables 4 and 5), representing an encounter rate of 37.3%. Assuming 5% post release mortality, the Methow River natural-origin steelhead impacts were 15 fish, which represent a 2.0% mortality of the estimated natural-origin steelhead returning to the Methow River and is consistent with the Tier 1 fishery criteria of limiting natural-origin steelhead mortality to no greater than 2%.

Okanogan/Similkameen Rivers, including Columbia River (Wells-Chief Joseph)

Fishery impacts to the UCR steelhead population may have occurred as a result of steelhead fisheries in the Okanogan and Similkameen Rivers, including the main stem Columbia River between Wells Dam and Chief Joseph Dam. One hundred percent of the natural origin Okanogan and Similkameen River steelhead and 21% of the natural-origin main stem Columbia River steelhead caught and released during the fishery were used to determine natural-origin steelhead encounter rates. Collectively, the three fishery areas encountered 129 (83 Okanogan, 25 Similkameen, and 21 main stem Columbia) of the estimated 177 natural-origin Okanogan and Similkameen River steelhead (Tables 4, 6, and 7), representing an encounter rate of 72.9%. Assuming 5% post release mortality, the Okanogan/Similkameen River natural-origin steelhead impacts were 7 fish, which

represent a 4.0% mortality of the estimated natural-origin steelhead returning to the Okanogan and Similkameen Rivers and is consistent with the Tier 1 fishery criteria of limiting natural-origin steelhead mortality to no greater than 5%.

FISHERY ENFORCEMENT

Enforcement of regulations protecting ESA-listed UCR steelhead occurred throughout the steelhead fishery areas. Enforcement activities reported 469 enforcement hours, 381 angler contacts, and 59 reported violations (Table 8).

Of the 59 violations reported, only 18 were classified as gear related, which potentially would have a direct effect on catch and release mortality. This type of violation occurred among less than five percent of the anglers contacted. Illegal retention was less than 0.3% of the violations among anglers. Only one violation for illegally retained natural origin steelhead occurred, specifically in the Methow River during the month of March. Enforcement staff contacted NMFS enforcement regarding the illegally retained steelhead, provided all available data, and transferred the steelhead to NMFS enforcement personnel.

Table 8. Summary of WDFW enforcement for the 2008-2009 UCR steelhead fishery

Month	Enforcement effort		Violation type					
	Hours	Contacts	License	Gear	Closed season	Exceed limit	Illegal retention	Misc 1/
October	90	106	15	6	5	0	0	1
November	101	87	3	3	0	0	0	1
December	50	23	3	3	0	0	0	1
Jan-Feb	68	30	2	1	0	1	0	2
March	160	135	4	5	2	0	1	0
Total	469	381	27	18	7	1	1	5

1/ Includes giving out false information, fish handling techniques, and multiple rod use

REFERENCES

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APPENDIX A1

Fishing Rule Change

WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, Washington 98501-1091
Internet Address: http://wdfw.wa.gov

October 3, 2008

Steelhead fishing to open on Methow, Similkameen, Okanogan and upper Columbia Rivers with concurrent chinook gear rule change on upper Columbia River

Actions:

(1) The Methow, Okanogan, and Upper Columbia Rivers will open to fishing for adipose fin-clipped hatchery-origin steelhead on October 4, 2008 and continue until further notice
(2) The Similkameen River will open to fishing for adipose fin-clipped hatchery-origin steelhead on November 15, 2008 and continue until further notice
(3) Release any steelhead with anchor (floy) tag attached.

Locations:

(1) The Columbia River from Wells Dam upstream to 400 feet below Chief Joseph Dam. Two (2) fish daily limit, adipose-fin clipped hatchery-origin steelhead only, 20-inch minimum size. Selective gear rules and night closure apply. Bait and motorized vessels are allowed. **Current salmon and all other gamefish gear rules do not apply during steelhead season.**

(2) Methow River from the Hwy. 97 Bridge in Pateros upstream to the second powerline crossing, and from the first Hwy. 153 Bridge north of Pateros to the confluence with the Chewuch River in Winthrop, WA. The second powerline crossing upstream to the first Highway 153 Bridge is closed to fishing. Two (2) fish daily limit, adipose-fin clipped hatchery-origin steelhead only, 20-inch minimum size. Selective gear rules and night closure apply. Motorized vessels are allowed. **Whitefish gear rules do not apply during steelhead season.**

(3) Okanogan River from mouth upstream, **EXCEPT** a section of the river from the Lake Osoyoos Control Dam (Zosel Dam) downstream to first Highway 97 Bridge will remain closed. Two (2) fish daily limit, adipose-fin clipped hatchery-origin steelhead only, 20-inch minimum size. Selective gear rules and night closure apply. Motorized vessels are allowed.

(4) **Similkameen River** from its mouth to 400 feet below Enloe Dam. Two (2) fish daily limit, adipose-fin clipped hatchery-origin steelhead only, 20-inch minimum size. Selective gear rules and night closure apply. **Whitefish gear rules do not apply during steelhead season.**

Important Angler Notes:

- Anglers are strongly encouraged to retain the first two adipose fin-clipped hatchery-origin steelhead caught. It is unlawful for anglers to continue to fish once the daily limit of steelhead has been retained.

- For all waters, any steelhead caught with an intact adipose fin must be released immediately and may not be totally removed from the water before release.

Reason for action: The fishery will reduce the number of excess hatchery-origin steelhead and increase the proportion of natural-origin steelhead on the spawning grounds and is expected to improve genetic integrity and stock recruitment of upper Columbia River steelhead through perpetuation of steelhead stocks with the greatest natural-origin lineage.

Information contacts: Jeff Korth, Region 2 Fish Program Manager, (509) 754-4624, Bob Jateff, District 6 Fish Biologist, (509) 997-0316, Art Viola, District 7 Fish Biologist, (509) 665-3337.

Fishers must have a current Washington fishing license. Check the WDFW "Fishing in Washington" rules pamphlet for details on fishing seasons and regulations. Fishing regulations are subject to change. Check the WDFW Fishing hotline for the latest rule information at (360) 902-2500, press 2 for recreational rules. For the Shellfish Rule Change hotline call (360) 796-3215 or toll free 1-866-880-5431.

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APPENDIX A2

Fishing Rule Change

WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, Washington 98501-1091
Internet Address: http://wdfw.wa.gov

November 3, 2008

Steelhead fishing to open November 6, 2008 on
The Columbia River from Rocky Reach Dam up-river to Wells Dam

Actions:
The Columbia River from Rock Reach Dam up-river to Wells Dam will open to fishing for adipose-fin clipped hatchery-origin steelhead. Two (2) fish daily limit, 20-inch minimum size, selective gear rules, except bait and motorized vessels allowed, Night closure in effect. ***All other game fish gear rules do not apply during steelhead season.***

Effective dates: One hour before sunrise on November 6, 2008 until further notice

Species affected: steelhead

Location:

The Columbia River from Rocky Reach Dam up-river to 400 feet below Wells Dam

Important Angler Notes:

• *Anglers are strongly encouraged to retain the first two adipose fin-clipped hatchery-origin steelhead caught. It is unlawful for anglers to continue to fish once the daily limit of steelhead has been retained.*

• For all waters, any steelhead caught with an intact adipose fin must be released immediately and may not be totally removed from the water before release.

Reason for action: The fishery will reduce the proportion of hatchery-origin steelhead on the spawning grounds, minimizing impact to wild steelhead and thus increase natural production.

Information contacts: Art Viola, District 7 Fish Biologist, (509) 665-3337, Bob Jateff, District 6 Fish Biologist, (509) 997-0316, Jeff Korth Region 2 Fish Program Manager, (509) 754-4624.

Fishers must have a current Washington fishing license and Catch Record Card. Check the WDFW "Fishing in Washington" rules pamphlet for details on fishing seasons and regulations. Fishing regulations are subject to change. Check the WDFW Fishing hotline for the latest rule information at (360) 902-2500, press 2 for recreational rules. For the Shellfish Rule Change hotline call (360) 796-3215 or toll free 1-866-880-5431.

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