

Thursday – February 05, 2009

Conditions:

Commercial landings have dropped again in this past week. Recreational fishing last weekend was non-existent. No seals or sea lions were spotted near the County Line Park or in the Cowlitz on Wednesday, February 4th. No significant congregations of birds were reported. Also on Wednesday, WDFW staff test dipped on the Cowlitz River at Carnival Market and Lexington. No smelt were caught. No smelt were detected in the Lewis River, based on test dips by WDFW staff last Friday. Note, commercial and sport fishing is not allowed in the Columbia River tributaries, except the Cowlitz River, so WDFW test dipping outside of the Cowlitz River and mainstem Columbia River does not mean that those waters have been open to fishing.

The flow at Castle Rock is at 9,520 cfs and slightly dropping (has been below the median daily discharge for the past several days). The river continues to clear (turbidity now 38 FNU). Last week, water temperatures rose slightly above 40°F (desirable for smelt). It has improved slightly this week: 42°F (5.6°C) in the Cowlitz River and 40.5°F (4.7°C) in the Columbia River as of noon Wednesday.

Overall the sport fishing prospects for this coming weekend look poor.

Catches:

Columbia River:

Sport: There were no reports of smelt being dipped by sport fishers this season.

Commercial: No mainstem Columbia River landings were reported for this past week. Season total remains 4,021-lbs.

Cowlitz River:

Sport: There has been no activity except a few smelt dipped by a handful of fishers on the January 17th.

Commercial: Cumulative catch since January 3rd is 0-lbs.

Sport Seasons/Regulations:

Tributaries - Sport dipping is only allowed on the Cowlitz River, from 6 AM to 10 PM Saturdays through March 31st. The daily limit is 10 lbs per person per day. This is equivalent to ¼ of a 5-gallon bucket.

Mainstem Columbia River daily limit is 25 lbs per person per day and the fishery is open 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.

Commercial Seasons:

Columbia River: 7-hour fishing periods on Mondays and Thursdays.

Cowlitz River: 6-hour fishing periods on Sunday and Wednesday nights.

Fishing Rule updates are also available by calling (360) 696-6211, then press *1010

Here are some web sites that provide daily river data:

Cowlitz River water flow and levels: USGS Web site:

http://waterdata.usgs.gov/wa/nwis/uv/?site_no=14243000&PARAMeter_cd=00060.00065

Columbia River estuary water temperature: CORIE Web site:

<http://www.ccalmr.ogi.edu/CORIE/network/woody/>