

Smelt Update

Wednesday – March 18, 2009

Conditions:

No reported effort by commercial or recreational fishers this past week. No reports of bird or marine mammal activity in the tributaries or in the mainstem consistent with a smelt run.

The Cowlitz River discharge rose last Saturday, with the gauge reading 9,370 cfs this afternoon (has been bouncing around the median daily discharge of 9,900 cfs for the past four days). The water became more turbid on Saturday but quickly cleared up, with the turbidity currently very low—26 fnu. Water temperatures are similar to last week: 42.8°F (6.0°C) in the Cowlitz River and 43.4°F (6.3°C) in the Columbia River.

The sport fishing prospects for the last two Saturday fishing periods of 2009 (March 21st and 28th) are very poor.

Catches:

Columbia River:

Sport: There were no reports of sport dipping this past week.

Commercial: No reported landings for Monday, March 16th. Season total 5,551-lbs.

Cowlitz River:

Sport: There were no reports of sport dipping this past weekend. Cumulative catch for this season is estimated to equal or exceed the commercial landings.

Commercial: No landings this week. Cumulative catch since January 3rd is 12,093-lbs.

Treaty Tribe: No C&S effort this past two weeks. Cumulative Ceremonial and Subsistence take is 3,500-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/>