



2016 FISH FACTS

A Public Power Council compilation of relevant facts regarding the BPA ratepayer-funded effort to aid salmon and steelhead in the Columbia and Snake Rivers

Status of Columbia and Snake River Salmon Runs

- **Which Runs are Federally Protected?** Thirteen sub-populations, or “runs”, of Columbia and Snake River fish are listed as threatened or endangered under the ESA. Nine runs occur in the mainstem Columbia and Willamette Rivers and four in the Snake River. Four of these ESA-listed populations occur primarily below the Federal Columbia River Power Systemⁱ.
- **2015 Salmon Return Results:** Salmon and steelhead returned in record or near record numbers over the last few years. The fall chinook salmon return to Bonneville Dam (BON) in 2015 was over 1.3 million fish, which is the largest number observed since the dam was built in 1938ⁱⁱ. The 2015 summer chinook return was the largest observed since 1980ⁱⁱⁱ. Over 510,000 sockeye salmon passed in BON in 2015 making it the third highest return observed since 1938^{iv}. The spring chinook return in 2014 ranked as the 4th highest since 1980^v.
- **ESA Delisting Considered for Some Stocks** - In 1990, only 78 wild, ESA-listed Snake River fall chinook returned to the Columbia River Basin^{vi}. In 2014, an estimated 21,639 wild fall chinook returned to the basin.^{vii} The number of fall chinook returning to the Snake River has been strong for the last several years; NOAA-Fisheries is now beginning a process to consider removing the stock from the ESA list.
- **2016 Forecast:** The 2016 forecast for adult returns of most stocks is positive with runs projected to be near the high numbers observed over the last 10 years. The return of spring chinook is estimated to be over 188,000 fish^{viii}. This would be the 10th highest return since 1980. The forecast summer chinook is projected to be the 2nd largest since 1980^{ix}. The fall chinook return is forecast to approximate the recent record returns^x.

Status and Implementation of the Biological Opinion

- **Current Biological Opinion:** NOAA Fisheries issued a supplemental BiOp in 2010, incorporating the Obama Administration’s Adaptive Management Implementation Plan into the 2008 BiOp. The National Wildlife Federation, the State of Oregon and the Nez Perce tribe challenged it in U.S. District Court. On August 2, 2011, the Federal District Court remanded the BiOp on a narrow issue - sufficiency of habitat measures in the tributaries and estuary beyond 2013. Per court order, on January 17, 2014 the National Marine Fisheries Service issued another Supplemental BiOp addressing the court’s findings on habitat measures. Court-ordered spill operations remain in place in annual implementation of the BiOp.

- **Implementation of the 2014 BiOp** is ongoing even as the District Court challenge continues. It includes funding for over 100 tribal projects.

Power Rates and the Cost of Fish & Wildlife Actions

- **Total cost of BPA Fish & Wildlife actions since inception (1978-2015):** over **\$15 billion.**^{xi}
- **Annual BPA Fish & Wildlife costs:** BPA’s fish and wildlife costs vary year to year due to a number of factors including water conditions, program requirements and energy markets.
 - In **2015**, fish and wildlife costs were **\$757 million** (**\$263.3 million** in foregone revenue and power purchases and **\$493.7 million** in program expenses) with an **additional \$104.1 million** in capital investment.^{xii}
 - **Impact on the BPA power rate:** In recent years, fish and wildlife costs have **ranged from twenty-five to thirty percent** of total costs for BPA power.^{xiii}

For the foreseeable future, salmon and steelhead mitigation in the Northwest will continue to be one of the largest wildlife recovery efforts in history. PPC remains committed to cost-effective, science-based approaches to ensure ratepayers funds committed to this important endeavor produce measureable results.

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About the Public Power Council—The Public Power Council, established in 1966, is an association that represents consumer-owned electric utility customers of the Bonneville Power Administration in the Pacific Northwest. PPC’s goal is to preserve and protect the benefits of the Federal Columbia River Power System for consumer-owned utilities. For more information, please visit us at www.ppcpx.org

ⁱ 2010 Status Update for Pacific Northwest Salmon & Steelhead Listed under the Endangered Species Act.

http://www.westcoast.fisheries.noaa.gov/publications/status_reviews/salmon_steelhead/multiple_species/sr-2010-all-species.pdf

ⁱⁱ University of Washington, Columbia River Data Access in Real Time website:

http://www.cbr.washington.edu/dart/wrapper?type=php&fname=adultannual_1454007950_957.php

ⁱⁱⁱ 2016 Joint Staff Report: Stock Status and Fisheries for Spring Chinook, Summer Chinook, Sockeye, Steelhead, and Other Species, and Miscellaneous Regulations. Joint Columbia River Management Staff, ODFW and WDFW; January 20, 2016.

http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/crc/staff_reports.html

^{iv} *Id.*

^v *Id.*

^{vi} 2015 Joint Staff Report: Stock Status and Fisheries for Fall Chinook Salmon, Coho Salmon, Chum Salmon, Summer Steelhead, and White Sturgeon. Joint Columbia River Management Staff, ODFW and WDFW; July 14, 2015. <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/crc/>

^{vii} *Id.*

^{viii} 2016 Joint Staff Report: Stock Status and Fisheries for Spring Chinook, Summer Chinook, Sockeye, Steelhead, and Other Species, and Miscellaneous Regulations. Joint Columbia River Management Staff, ODFW and WDFW; January 20, 2016.

http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/crc/staff_reports.html

^{ix} *id*

^x WDFW 2015 Adult Returns and 2016 Expectations Columbia River Preliminary Draft – December 14, 2015

^{xi} Bonneville Power Administration (information provided to customers).

^{xii} *Id.*

^{xiii} NW Power and Conservation Council’s State of the Columbia River Basin, Fiscal Year 2015; 2015 Annual Report to Congress, February 2016.