



IDAHO FISH AND GAME GOLDSHEET

July 2026 Commission Meeting

Agenda Item: Season Modification, Fall Chinook Salmon Fisheries (**Action**)

Presented by: John Cassinelli

Position/Title: Anadromous Fisheries Program Manager

Agenda Item No.: 5. L.
Supervisor Approval: LH

Background:

This agenda item concerns the modification of fall Chinook Salmon fishing seasons targeting adult anadromous Chinook Salmon in the Snake River, Lower Salmon River, Salmon River, Mainstem Clearwater River, Middle Fork Clearwater River, North Fork Clearwater River, and South Fork Clearwater River. Fisheries staff will brief the Commission on the pre-season forecasts for Snake River fall Chinook Salmon returns for 2026 and propose modified daily bag and possession limits based on the pre-season forecast.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy Issues:

Idaho Statute 36-104(b)2 gives the Commission the authority to make a rule or proclamation establishing seasons and methods for the taking of fish. Fishing Rules are provided in IDAPA 13.01.11

Public Involvement Process:

Fall Chinook season structure is set through the Department's three year fishery season and rules cycle. The setting of those seasons and rules (currently adopted through 2027) includes a public scoping process. The modifications proposed for the 2026 season are to stay within compliance of Endangered Species Act (ESA) take allocation of the wild component of the adult returns as outlined through our 2019 NOAA Fisheries-issued Fisheries Management and Evaluation Plan (FMEP). This document also went through a public scoping process.

Justification:

Salmon and steelhead mitigation hatcheries were built to mitigate or compensate for fishing opportunity lost as a result of hydropower development. The proposed season modifications would provide anglers the opportunity to fish for returning adult Chinook Salmon produced at Snake River basin mitigation hatcheries without jeopardizing the natural-origin population.

Staff Recommendation:

The Department recommends the Commission approve the proposed 2026 bag and possession limit modifications for fall Chinook Salmon fisheries in the Snake River, Lower Salmon River, Mainstem Clearwater River, Middle Fork Clearwater River, North Fork Clearwater River, and South Fork Clearwater River.



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Suggested Motion:

I move the Commission adopt the fall Chinook Salmon bag and possession limit modifications as recommended by the Department.