

Meeting Date: 26 July, 2018

Agenda Item No. 5E

Agenda Item: Season Setting -- Fall Chinook Salmon
Fishery

Bureau Chief Approval: 

Prepared by: Lance Hebdon, Anadromous Fish Manager

Background:

This agenda item concerns the setting of a fishing season for fall Chinook Salmon on portions of the Clearwater and Salmon rivers in September and October and the Snake River in September, October and November of 2018. Sport fisheries for fall Chinook Salmon have been conducted each year since 2008. Also, beginning in 2013 and continuing since then, a short section of the Snake River immediately downstream of Hells Canyon Dam has remained open to fall Chinook Salmon fishing into November. Fall Chinook Salmon broodstock needed for Snake River hatchery programs are collected at or downstream of Lower Granite Dam so there are no broodstock management concerns associated with sport fisheries. Natural origin fall Chinook Salmon that return to the proposed fishing area are listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act and encounter rates on these listed fish are described in the Fisheries Management and Evaluation Plan for Steelhead and Fall Salmon Fisheries submitted by the Department to NOAA Fisheries on December 30, 2010.

Statutory Authority and/or Policy issues:

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

Public Involvement Process:

This is the eleventh year of proposing the fall Chinook Salmon fishery. To date there has been no public process specific to this fishery. There is little opportunity to extend the dates of this fishery. Some comments regarding this fishery have been received during the public comment process for spring/summer season salmon fisheries and as informal comments received via email from anglers.

Staff Recommendation:

Approve the proposed 2018 Fall Chinook Salmon fishing season.

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 would provide anglers the opportunity to fish for returning hatchery fall Chinook Salmon.