Idaho Fish and Game Commission
Special Meeting – June 13, 2023
Idaho Department of Fish and Game
Boise, Idaho

A meeting of the Idaho Fish and Game Commission was held by telephone conference, attended by Commissioners Dave Bobbit, Don Ebert, Tim Murphy, Greg Cameron, Jordan Cheirrett, Derick Attebury, and Ron Davies.

IDFG staff present: (in-person) Deputy Directors Jon Rachael and Amber Worthington; Chris Sullivan, Connor Liess, Roger Phillips, and Valerie Taro; and (via phone) John Cassinelli, Lance Hebdon, Carson Watkins, JJ Teare, Veronica Gutierrez, Josh Royse, Craig White, Dan Garren, Matt Pieron, and Ryan Hilton.

Members of the public in attendance: (Clearwater Region) Kyle Maki with Idaho Wildlife Federation.

Chairman Ebert called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m. MDT.

SEASON SETTING AND RULES

Season Setting: Spring/Summer Chinook Salmon Fisheries

Chris Sullivan, Anadromous Fisheries Coordinator, provided an update on spring Chinook seasons. Fisheries are ongoing in the Clearwater, Snake and Salmon rivers and anglers caught significant numbers of Chinook last week in all fisheries. The director signed a closure order on the Lower Salmon and Little Salmon Rivers June 12th, with the harvest share of approximately 1,850 adults expected to be reached by the closure date of June 14th.

The staff proposals for summer Chinook Salmon seasons are for the Lochsa River, South Fork Salmon River, and Upper Salmon River fisheries (Appendix 56, Exhibit 36). The seasons would open on Thursday, June 22nd and fishing would be allowed seven days per week.

The Lochsa fishery would run from the Lowell Bridge (which is just upstream of the confluence of the Lochsa and the Selway Rivers) up to the twin bridges just upstream of the confluence of Crooked Fork and Colt Killed Creeks. This fishery would allow the retention of both adipose-clipped and adipose-intact fish as hatchery fish returning to the upper Lochsa consist of a mix of clipped and non-clipped fish.

The South Fork Salmon River fishery would run from the Jakie Creek Bridge up to a posted boundary 100 yards downstream of the South Fork Salmon River trap. The Department has coordinated with the Nez Perce Tribe on a framework that supports the Tribe's ability to meet its treaty harvest share while distributing opportunity as we attain our state harvest shares. In developing staff recommendations, the Department held a series of public meetings around the state and solicited online comments related to sport anglers' preferences on potential season changes. The proposal for the South Fork Salmon fishery is structured to provide good access to fish for both tribal and non-tribal fisheries.

Finally, the upper Salmon River fishery would run from upstream of the East Fork Salmon River confluence up to a posted boundary about 100 yards below the Sawtooth Fish Hatchery weir. The lower boundary for the fishery was chosen for two reasons, 1) to protect hatchery returns to Pahsimeroi Hatchery where run projections are below brood needs, and 2) to reduce interceptions of ESA-listed wild Chinook Salmon.

23-47 Commissioner Davies moved and Commissioner Cameron seconded a motion to approve the proposed 2023 fishing seasons for summer Chinook Salmon in proposed areas as presented by staff. The Motion Carried.

Adjournment

Don Ebert
Chairman

Jim Fredericks
Secretary