

ODFW fishing seasons set

Fishery managers from Oregon and Washington set spring chinook salmon and sturgeon fishing seasons for the Columbia and Willamette rivers during a joint state hearing on February 8.

The Columbia River spring chinook seasons are based on a forecast of 198,400 returning upriver spring chinook. Under fishery agreements with Columbia River treaty tribes, the two states adopted a 30 percent early-season run size buffer, leaving a combined harvest guideline of 7,750 fish in the sport fishery downstream of Bonneville Dam.

The sturgeon seasons adopted at the joint state hearing are based on a reduced total guideline of 17,000 harvestable fish for 2011, which represents a reduction of nearly 30 percent from the 2010 guideline and a 40 percent reduction from 2009. Retention sturgeon fishing is currently open in the Columbia River but was closed on the Willamette in an emergency action adopted earlier this year.

During the February 8 meeting, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife announced that it will reopen retention sturgeon fishing on the Willamette three days a week beginning today, February 17, and continuing until a harvest guideline of 2,550 fish is achieved.

"There has been a great deal of interest on Willamette sturgeon," said Williams, who announced the Oregon action after the joint state hearing. "We saw a great deal of effort last fall on the Willamette that amounted to over 500 fish caught in three days. We expect the fishery to be good when it reopens on the 17th."

About 60 people including sport and commercial fishers showed up to listen and present testimony at the hearing, conducted at the Museum of the Oregon Territory in Oregon City.

A summary of recreational fishing seasons adopted is available on the ODFW website at http://www.dfw.state.or.us/resources/fishing/reg_changes/columbia.asp.

Power of the People

By W. Marc Farmer, General Manager,
West Oregon Electric Cooperative



The True Value of Electricity

It is easy in life to lose perspective on things until we receive a reminder of reality. Such is often the case when it comes to electricity. It is a daily necessity that we easily take for granted, and we tend to forget what it provides for our lives and the many uses we come to rely on, until the power goes off. Then reality reminds us of the many things we cannot use or do without electricity. My staff and I put together a list of typical household electric uses in an average day, and we came up with 45 different items. The list included lighting, heating and cooling, water for drinking and washing or bathroom use needs a pump, refrigeration and freezers, washing clothes and dishes, communication items such as phones, computers, and cell phone chargers, entertainment from television, radio, and stereos, cooking with stoves, toaster and microwaves, vacuum cleaner, clocks, hair dryers and curling irons, power tools, and much more.

A utility company wanting to demonstrate the value of electricity has been of-

fering a challenge to a couple of individuals or families to go for 60 days without using electricity and write about their experience. They received a check for the amount they would have normally spent if they could successfully go the entire 60 days. What looked like a simple challenge on the outside became a song of a different story when the reality set in of how much of their daily lives were dependent upon the use of electricity. For one couple who decided to purchase a generator, it was a lesson in the expense of replacing their power source and the time and money spent to operate it was more than they received for going without.

The time we most often forget is when the power bill arrives and it is time to pay for all of the things we used over the past month. Think about that. How many products or services do you get to use and then pay after you have used it? At the end of the month, we pay for only that amount we have actually used to provide warmth, light, a means to cook food, keep our homes and ourselves clean, be entertained and more. What is the real value of the electricity we have used and for which we are now being asked to pay? I think a simple way of recognizing the true value can best be shown this way. Take the average power bill on our system of \$135. Divide that by a monthly average of 30 days. Dividing \$135 by 30 days shows us that it only costs an average of \$4.50 per day for

all of the many things we use in our homes. That is a small price to pay for all that we receive from the use of electricity during a 24-hour period.

To put the daily price of \$4.50 for electricity into even more perspective, I went to the store and looked at some things we might spend the same amount or close to that amount to purchase. As you consider these items, think about the total benefits we receive from each and I think you will be surprised about the true value of electricity. For approximately the same amount, I observed people purchasing a frozen pizza, half gallon of orange juice or bottle of other juices, a carton of ice cream, a six pack of beer, a box of cereal, package of cookies, a pack of cigarettes, a magazine, family size frozen dinner, a bag of chips and a soft drink. I then thought about the fact that if I drove my car I could only make it as far as North Plains for \$4.50. It would cost someone that much or more for a fast food combo meal or a latte or espresso. They are all things that some people purchase every day and only fill one momentary want or need, not a full day and night of needs. It might be an eye opening experience to write your own list of all the items you use that require electricity and see for yourself all that you receive for only \$4.50 per day. It definitely puts things into perspective and helps to better understand the true value of electricity in each of our lives.

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The Conversation Project provides Oregon nonprofits with free, humanities-based public programs about important issues and ideas. In a culture too often characterized by sound bites and divisive rhetoric, the Conversation Project instead infuses public dialogue with reflection and critical thinking. By bringing together citizens and humanities leaders, the Conversation Project encourages us all to become more informed and engaged in our communities.

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Leaders can expect to offer 4-8 programs annually and must be willing to travel throughout Oregon year-round. Programs in the upcoming catalog will be available to nonprofits from November 1, 2011, through October 31, 2013. Selected presenters are required to attend a training and orientation program in Portland on July 15-16, 2011. Conversation project leaders receive an honorarium, mileage reimbursement and meal stipend. Hosts

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