

Meeting Date: March 23 or 24, 2009

Agenda Item No. 14

Agenda Item: Rules, Clearwater River, Snake River, Lower Salmon River and Little Salmon River Chinook Salmon Fisheries

Bureau Chief Approval: _____

Prepared by: Peter Hassemer, Anadromous Fish Manager

Background:

This agenda item concerns the setting of fishing seasons targeting spring Chinook salmon on the Snake River, Lower Salmon River, Little Salmon River, Mainstem Clearwater River, North Fork Clearwater River, South Fork Clearwater River and Lochsa River. Chinook salmon fisheries were conducted on these waters in 1997 and 2000 through 2008. For all proposed fishing areas, staff is forecasting that a sufficient number of hatchery salmon will return to allow sport fisheries that target the non-tribal harvestable share when hatchery production and brood stock targets are considered.

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:

The public involvement process was on-going at the time this gold sheet was prepared. Findings from the public involvement process will be reported to the Commission during their meeting.

Staff Recommendation:

Approve the proposed 2009 fishing rules for Chinook salmon seasons on the Snake River, Lower Salmon River, Little Salmon River, Mainstem Clearwater River, North Fork Clearwater River, South Fork Clearwater River and Lochsa River.

NOTE: At the time of preparation of this gold sheet, Regional and Bureau fisheries staff were in the process of updating salmon return forecasts and scoping fishery options. The specific fishery proposals that were not completed are not included here but will be delivered to the Commission during the week prior to the March Commission meeting.

Justification:

Title 36 of Idaho State Code gives the Commission the authority to set rules to preserve, protect, or manage fish and wildlife in Idaho. The proposed fisheries are to address biological issues, mitigation hatchery programs, and angler desires.