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TEMPORARY ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER

INCLUDING STATEMENT OF NEED & JUSTIFICATION

DFW 108-2026

CHAPTER 635

DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

FILED: 10/30/2026 1:27 PM

ARCHIVES DIVISION SECRETARY OF STATE & LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL

FILING CAPTION: Gear Restrictions on the Chetco and Winchuck Rivers

EFFECTIVE DATE: 11/03/2026 THROUGH 12/31/2026

AGENCY APPROVED DATE: 10/30/2026

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Filed By:
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Rules Coordinator

NEED FOR THE RULE(S):

This rule is needed to protect fall Chinook that have not been able to distribute upstream due to extended low flows. The fall Chinook are holding in the first few holes at the top of tidewater in the lower Chetco and Winchuck Rivers. The precipitation forecast for the South Coast indicates that Chinook salmon will not be able to distribute throughout the mainstem river before the gear restriction is scheduled to be lifted on November 4. If the rule is not extended, fall Chinook will be exposed to increased harvest and snagging. Maintaining the gear restriction will continue to allow anglers the opportunity fish without fully closing the river.

JUSTIFICATION OF TEMPORARY FILING:

There is not adequate time to go through normal rulemaking proceedings to modify this rule because the fishing season is currently underway.

Failure to adopt this rule would result in serious prejudice to the public interest by exposing fall Chinook to a very high likelihood of being snagged and poaching. The public is very much interested in extending the gear restriction.

DOCUMENTS RELIED UPON, AND WHERE THEY ARE AVAILABLE:

A copy of the rules and the other documents relied upon for this rulemaking are available from the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Fish Division, 4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE, Salem, Oregon 97302-1142. Contact Adam Buell at 503-947-6233 or adam.m.buell@odfw.oregon.gov to view by appointment between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., on normal working days, Monday through Friday.

AMEND: 635-016-0520

RULE TITLE: South Coast District

RULE SUMMARY: This rule will extend the current gear restrictions in the Chetco and Winchuck rivers to December 31 to protect fall Chinook.

RULE TEXT:
(1) The current annual Oregon Sport Fishing Regulations provide requirements for the Southwest Zone. However, additional regulations may be adopted in this rule division from time to time and to the extent of any inconsistency, they supersede the current annual Oregon Sport Fishing Regulations.
(2) In Floras Creek and New River from the mouth to bridge at MP 1.5 on Floras Creek Rd., effective August 1 through December 31:
(a) The daily adult wild Chinook salmon bag limit is one fish in aggregate; and
(b) No more than two adult wild Chinook salmon may be retained for the period in aggregate.
(3) In Floras Creek and New River from the BLM boat ramp at Storm Ranch upstream to the confluence of Floras Creek and Floras Lake outlet, effective November 1 through December 31, 2026:
(a) The daily adult wild coho salmon bag limit is one fish in aggregate;
(b) No more than three adult wild coho salmon may be retained for the period in aggregate; and
(c) The daily wild jack coho salmon bag limit is one fish in aggregate.
(4) In the Sixes River from the mouth to Edson Creek, effective July 1 through December 31:
(a) The daily adult wild Chinook salmon bag limit is one fish; and
(b) No more than ten adult wild Chinook salmon may be retained for the period.
(5) In Hunter Creek from the mouth to Mateer, effective October 1 through December 31:
(a) The daily adult wild Chinook salmon bag limit is one fish; and
(b) No more than two adult wild Chinook salmon may be retained for the period.
(6) In the Chetco River from the mouth to Nook Creek, Pistol River from the mouth to Deep Creek, and Winchuck River from the mouth to Wheeler Creek, effective September 1 through December 31:
(a) The daily adult wild Chinook salmon bag limit is one fish; and
(b) No more than five adult wild Chinook salmon may be retained for the period.
(7) Effective September 1 through December 31, 2026:
(a) In the Chetco River from RM 2.2 to Nook Creek, angling is restricted to fly fishing (must include a strike indicator) or bobber fishing (see Bobber Fishing Rule, page 18 of 2026 Oregon Sport Fishing Regulations book); and
(b) In the Winchuck River from the mouth to Wheeler Creek, angling is restricted to fly fishing (must include strike indicator) and bobber fishing (see Bobber Fishing Rule, page 18 of 2026 Oregon Sport Fishing Regulations book).
(8) All other permanent rules for the Southwest Zone, as stated in the current annual Oregon Sport Fishing Regulations, remain in effect.

STATUTORY/OTHER AUTHORITY: ORS 496.138, ORS 496.146

STATUTES/OTHER IMPLEMENTED: ORS 496.162