

PINNIPED FPOM UPDATE - APRIL 11, 2013

- To date, slightly fewer average daily Steller sea lions than the past couple of years and fewer California sea lions present than since we started observations (2002). Mostly repeat Steller and mostly new California's ID'd.
- Lowest predation on sturgeon since 2007 and salmonids since 2002.
- Abundance and predation on Chinook beginning to increase this past week
- ODFW reported a record 627 California sea lions in the East Mooring Basin, Astoria, on April 9, about 2X more than ever counted before. Sea lions hauled out on an ODFW research boat in the basin 2 weeks ago and partially sank it! ODFW reported about 55 California sea lions between Beacon Rock and Hamilton Island, in several pods of small adults, but they never made it up to Bonneville.
- States plan on active trapping beginning next week. Assembled a smaller trap for use in the forebay this week and will push up to The Dalles to try and trap the California sea lions up there beginning next week (weather permitting).
- States will put a few Critter-cam's on Stellers the week of April 22, with the help of the National Geographic developer (who wants to test out a remote quick release mechanism) and a Steller sea lion research expert. They can record up to 10 hours video. Hope to help answer questions like: Do they eat fish underwater? Do they take fish right in front of the entrances? Do they feed much at night?
- A Steller made it up into the forebay 2 weeks ago for the first time, but was back down below the dam about a week later.
- Chinook runs just now beginning to pick up to hundreds per day.