

Hatchery and Fishery Reform Policy (C-3619)
(Briefing/Public Comment/Possible Guidance)

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Summary Sheet

Meeting dates: August 3, 2019

Agenda item: Hatchery and Fishery Reform Policy (C-3619) Review Update

Presenter(s): **Ron Warren**, Director of Fish Policy, **Eric Kinne**, Hatchery Division Manager, **Andrew Murdoch**, Eastern Washington Science Manager, **Joe Anderson**, Research Scientist 2

Background summary:

Staff will provide a status update on the Hatchery and Fishery Reform Policy (C-3619) review process. The following is the motion language the team is working from:

“Based on the foregoing information on the record under this agenda item, the Director is tasked to initiate a review of all sections and aspects of the Policy with an expectation that the results of the review be presented to the Commission, with a target of 6 months to a year. The review should include examining performance results since the policy was adopted, updating appropriate policy language and scientific elements, changing language tone about the positive value of hatchery programs, and providing alternatives for policy revisions including at least:

- Adding a categorical designation for mitigation hatcheries
- Accommodations of Southern Resident Killer Whale prey initiatives, and
- Different levels of hatchery-wild interactions that take into account the evolving science on risks to the salmon genetic resources of the State.

While the review is underway and until the Commission adopts any revisions or refinements to the Policy, the Policy shall remain in effect except that policy guidelines 1, 2, and 3 shall be suspended for salmon species other than steelhead. Any language in the Policy that could be viewed as being inconsistent with the described suspension of these paragraphs shall be interpreted as being similarly suspended from Policy implementation. The purpose of suspending Policy Guidelines 1, 2, and 3 for salmon species other than steelhead is to allow for full consideration of the maintenance or enhancement of hatchery programs for chinook, coho, and chum salmon that would otherwise be inconsistent with these three guidelines, while still providing adequate protection of genuine native genetic resources.”

Staff recommendation:

NA

Policy issue(s) and expected outcome:

NA

Fiscal impacts of agency implementation:

NA

Public involvement process used and what you learned:

3/15/19 – 3/31/19 – Stakeholder Interviews – conducted by Triangle Associates – thoughts and opinions were collected and summarized by Triangle in a document available on the H&FRP Review webpage.

4/11/2019 – Open Public Meeting – facilitated by Triangle Associates – this was video recorded and a written summary was provided by Triangle. Both items are available on the H&FRP Review webpage

5/23/2019 – WSAS Science Workshop – a day long workshop for WDFW writers, WSAS' Committee members, supplemental reviewers, and observers.

H&FRP Review Webpage Link:

<https://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/management/hatcheries/hatchery-reform-policy-review>

Action requested and/or proposed next steps:

Draft motion language:

Motion: I move to _____ (adopt/amend/deny) _____ (rule(s)/petition) as presented by staff (if appropriate)

Is there a "second"?

If so, then motion maker discusses basis for motion; other Commissioners discuss views on motion; amendments, if any, proposed and addressed

Post decision communications plan:

NA

Form revised 2-15-18

FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION

POLICY DECISION

**POLICY TITLE: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Hatchery and Fishery Reform**

POLICY NUMBER: C-3619

Effective Date: November 6, 2009

Supersedes: N/A

See Also:

Approved by: Miranda Wecker, Chair
Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission

Purpose

The purpose of this Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife policy is to advance the conservation and recovery of wild salmon and steelhead by promoting and guiding the implementation of hatchery reform.

Definition and Intent

Hatchery reform is the scientific and systematic redesign of hatchery programs to help recover wild salmon and steelhead and support sustainable fisheries. The intent of hatchery reform is to improve hatchery effectiveness, ensure compatibility between hatchery production and salmon recovery plans and rebuilding programs, and support sustainable fisheries.

General Policy Statement

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) shall promote the conservation and recovery of wild salmon and steelhead and provide fishery-related benefits by establishing clear goals for each state hatchery, conducting scientifically defensible-operations, and using informed decision making to improve management. Furthermore, it is recognized that many state operated hatcheries are subject to provisions under U.S. v. Washington and U.S. v. Oregon and that hatchery reform actions must be done in close coordination with tribal co-managers.

Artificial production programs will be designated as one of the following:

- Conservation Programs. Artificial production programs implemented with a conservation objective shall have a net aggregate benefit for the diversity, spatial structure, productivity, and abundance of the target wild population.
- Harvest Programs. Artificial production programs implemented to enhance harvest opportunities shall provide fishery benefits while allowing watershed-specific goals for the diversity, spatial structure, productivity, and abundance of wild populations to be met.

State commercial and recreational fisheries will need to increasingly focus on the

harvest of abundant hatchery fish. As a general policy, the Department shall implement mark-selective salmon and steelhead fisheries, unless the wild populations substantially affected by the fishery are meeting spawner and broodstock management objectives.

In addition, the Department may consider other management approaches provided they are as or more effective than a mark selective fishery in achieving spawner and broodstock management objectives.

Hatchery reform should be implemented as part of an “all-H” strategy that integrates hatchery, harvest, and habitat actions. Although this policy focuses on hatchery and harvest reform, in no way does it diminish the significance of habitat protection and restoration.

In implementing the policy guidelines the Department shall work with the tribes in a manner that is consistent with U.S. v. Washington and U.S. v. Oregon and other applicable state laws and agreements or federal laws and agreements.

Policy Guidelines

1. Use the principles, standards, and recommendations of the Hatchery Scientific Review Group (HSRG) to guide the management of hatcheries operated by the Department. In particular, promote the achievement of hatchery goals through adaptive management based on a structured monitoring, evaluation, and research program.
2. The Department will prioritize and implement improved broodstock management (including selective removal of hatchery fish) to reduce the genetic and ecological impacts of hatchery fish and improve the fitness and viability of natural production working toward a goal of achieving the HSRG broodstock standards for 100% of the hatchery programs by 2015.
3. Develop watershed-specific action plans that systematically implement hatchery reform as part of a comprehensive, integrated (All-H) strategy for meeting conservation and harvest goals at the watershed and Evolutionarily Significant Unit (ESU)/Distinct Population Segment (DPS) levels. Action Plans will include development of stock (watershed) specific population designations and application of HSRG broodstock management standards. In addition, plans will include a time-line for implementation, strategies for funding, estimated costs including updates to cost figures each biennium.
4. Externally mark all Chinook, coho and steelhead artificial production that is intended to be used for harvest except as modified by state-tribal agreements or for conservation or research needs.
5. Secure necessary funding to ensure that Department-operated hatchery facilities comply with environmental regulations for passage facilities, water intake screening, and pollutant control systems.

6. Implement hatchery reform actions on a schedule that meets or exceeds the benchmarks identified in the 21st Century Salmon and Steelhead Framework.
7. Provide an annual report to the Fish and Wildlife Commission on progress of implementation.
8. Develop, promote and implement alternative fishing gear to maximize catch of hatchery-origin fish with minimal mortality to native salmon and steelhead.
9. Seek funding from all potential sources to implement hatchery reform and selective fisheries.
10. Define “full implementation” of state-managed mark selective recreational and commercial fisheries and develop an implementation schedule.
11. Work with tribal co-managers to establish network of Wild Salmonid Management Zones (WSMZ)¹ across the state where wild stocks are largely protected from the effects of same species hatchery programs. The Department will have a goal of establishing at least one WSMZ for each species in each major population group (bio-geographical region, strata) in each ESU/DPS. Each stock selected for inclusion in the WSMZ must be sufficiently abundant and productive to be self-sustaining in the future. Fisheries can be conducted in WSMZ if wild stock management objectives are met as well as any necessary federal ESA determinations are received.

¹ Wild Salmonid Management Zone is equal in meaning and application to the term of ‘Wild Stock Gene Bank’ as used and defined in the Statewide Steelhead Management Plan.