Puget Sound Chinook Resource Management Plan

Washington Department of FISH and WILDLIFE

Introduction

- Puget Sound Chinook Resource Management Plan
  - Co-manager proposal to obtain ESA-coverage for PS Chinook fisheries
  - Must satisfy criteria specified in federal rules (Limit 6 of 4(d) rule)
- Commission delegated authority to Director (November 2, 2018)

Paragraph E.2. Treaty Indian Tribal Agreements

The Director shall have the authority to enter into co-management agreements with recognized treaty or executive order Indian tribes, including any such agreements required under *U.S. v. Washington* (e.g. the Puget Sound Chinook Management Plan), and *U.S. v. Oregon*. The Director shall consult with the Commission on decisions that may have significant implications for the Department. The Director shall annually report to the Commission on issues associated with co-management agreements.

Presentation Objectives

Commission understanding of:

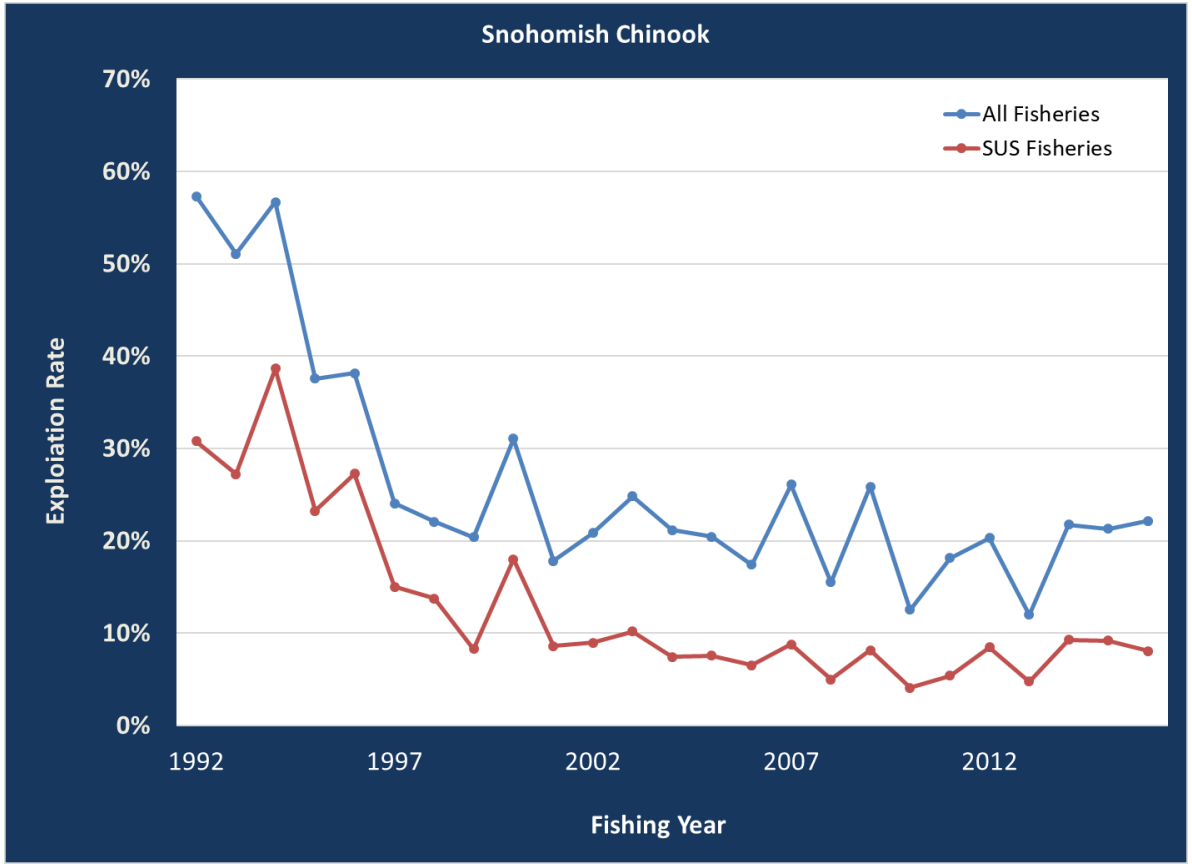
- High risk environment
- Significant conservation challenges
  - Puget Sound Chinook Salmon
  - Southern Resident Killer Whales
- Major elements of Resource Management Plan (RMP)
- National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) public comment, review, and approval process

Review of WDFW communication plan

Operating Environment - Key Actions

Fishery Management

- Co-managers have been leaders in fishery management innovation
- Substantial reductions in fishery exploitation rates



Operating Environment - Key Actions

2019 Pacific Salmon Treaty Update

- Focused on conservation of Salish Sea Chinook
- Nooksack, Stillaguamish greatest concern
- 12.5% reduction in Canadian Salish Sea fisheries relative to 2009-2015

PACIFIC SALMON COMMISSION

Treaty Between the Government of Canada and the Government of the United States of America Concerning Pacific Salmon

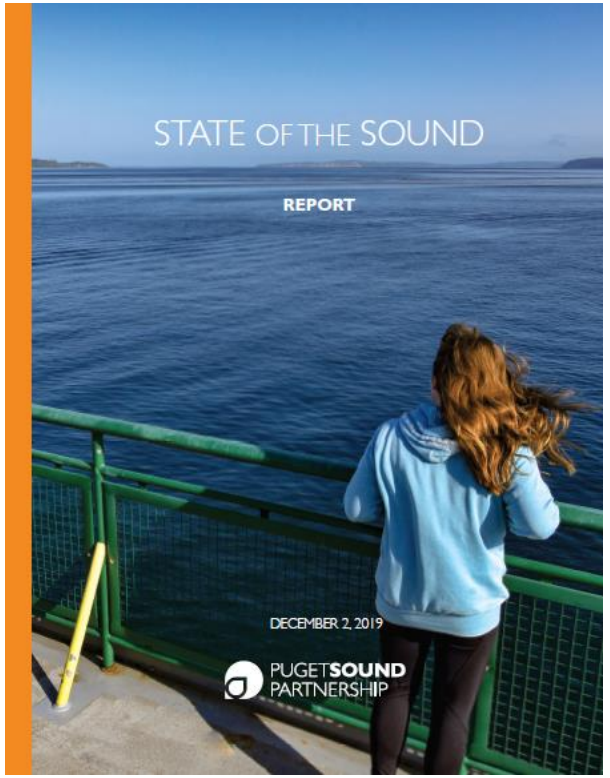
"This step comes at a crucial time as we continue to see declines in chinook salmon populations around Puget Sound."

Governor Jay Inslee

Operating Environment - Key Challenge

State of the Sound Report (Dec. 2019)

- Puget Sound in "grave trouble"
- 87% of indicators not meeting 2020 targets



"…with each passing day, the course to recovery becomes more challenging."

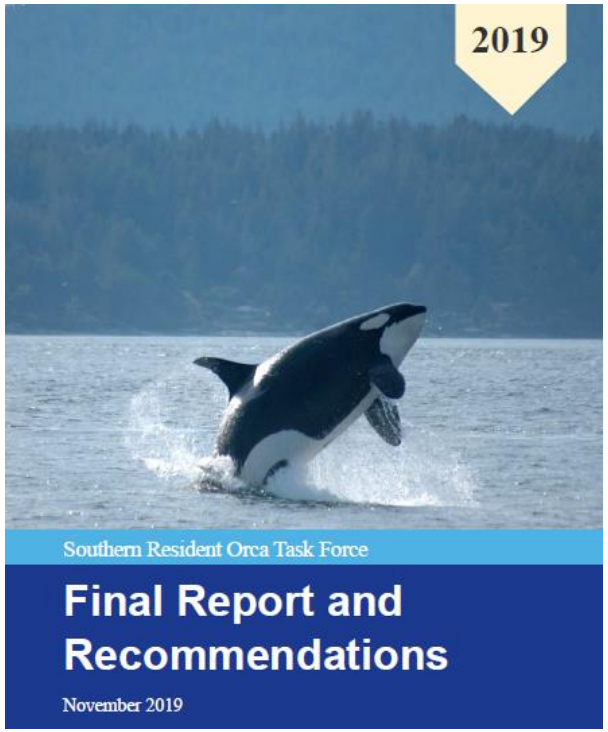
"Now is the time – OUR time – to act."

Puget Sound Partnership Leadership Council

Operating Environment - Key Challenge

Southern Resident Orca Task Force (Nov. 2019)

- Orca abundance lowest level in 40 years
- Chinook salmon make up 80% of the diet

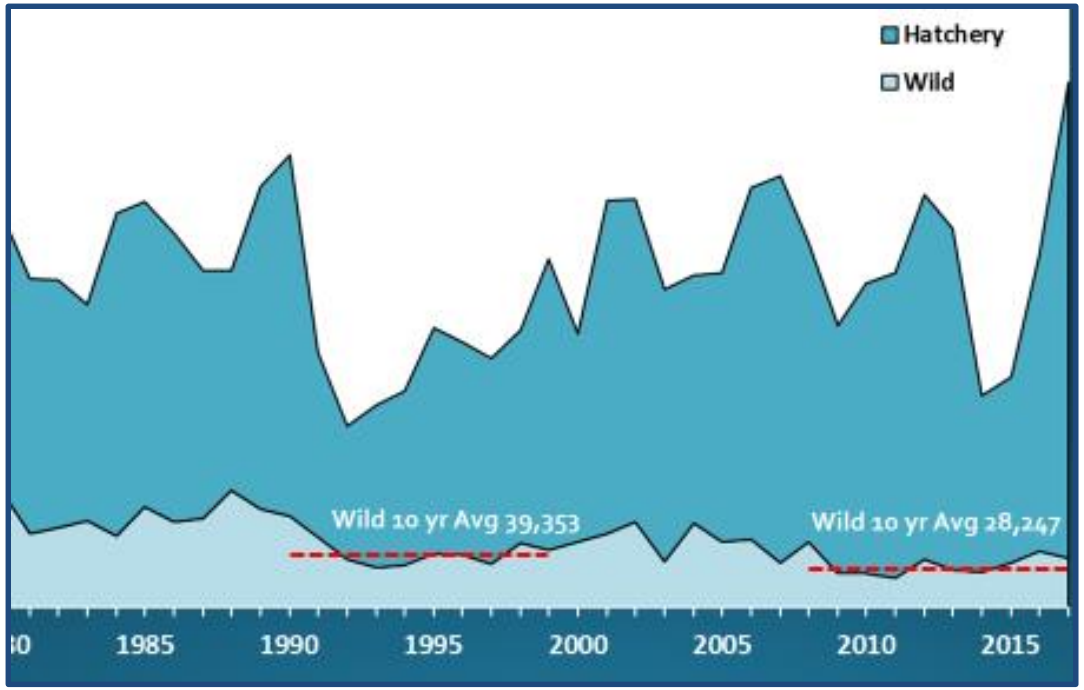


"With only 73 individuals remaining, there is no time to waste — the road to sustained Southern Resident recovery is through swift, bold and impactful solutions."

Co-Chairs Dr. Les Purce and Stephanie Solien

Operating Environment - Key Actions

- PS Chinook Salmon Fisheries – essential to maintain strong conservation measures
- Reducing predation important strategy to test in short-term
- Accelerated habitat restoration and protection needed to reverse long-term trend
- Critical to improve techniques and increase capacity to support land use consistent with salmon recovery



ESA Coverage, NEPA, and Litigation Risk

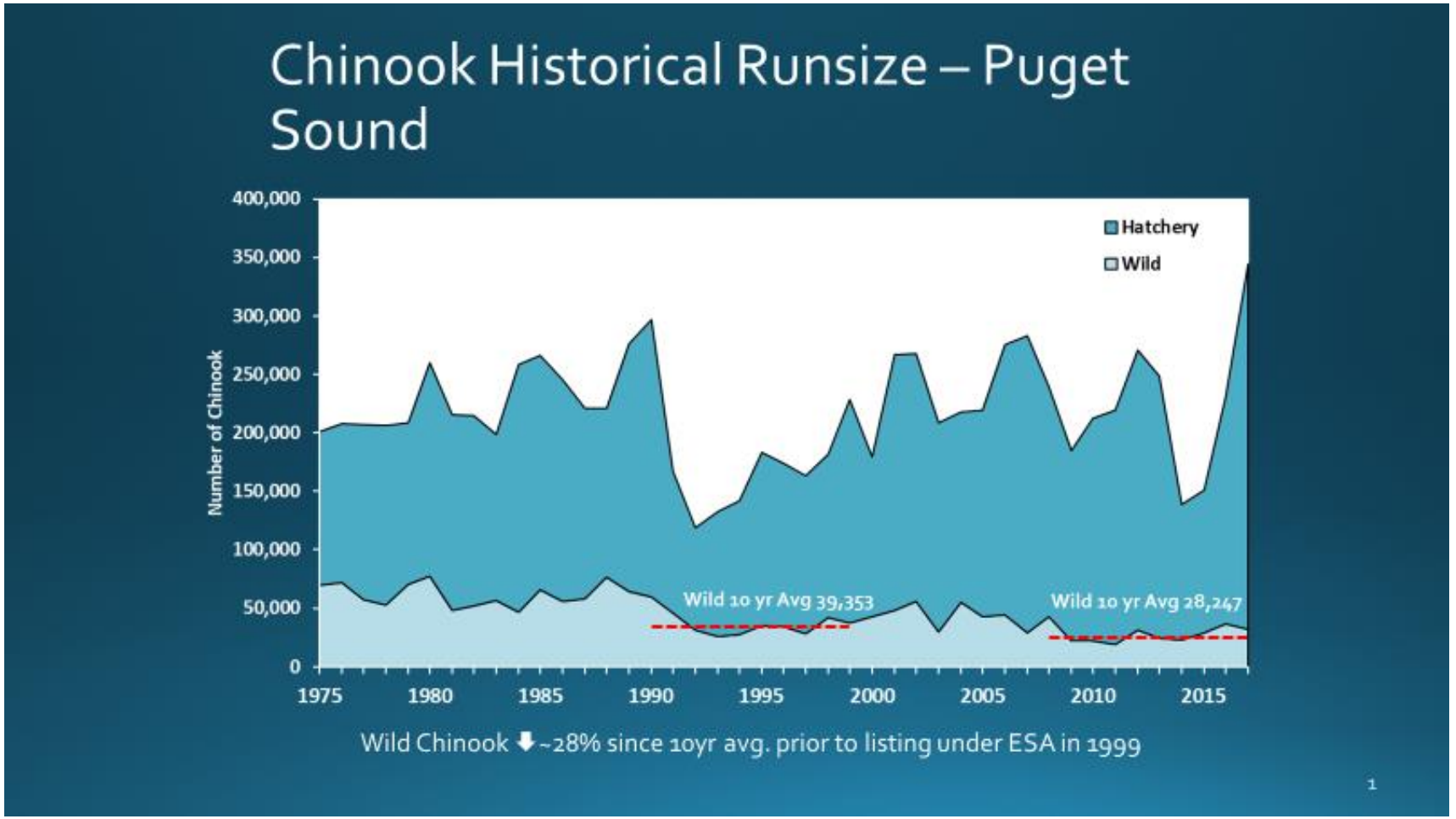
- Annual Section 7 coverage by Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA)
  - Reluctant to continue annual process
  - Unable to approve at regional level beyond 2020
- EIS not updated since 2004

ESA Coverage, NEPA, and Litigation Risk

- 2020: Wild Fish Conservancy
  - 60-day Notice alleges 2019 SEAK (PST) Biological Opinion arbitrary and capricious
- 2019: Center for Biological Diversity and Wild Fish Conservancy
  - Alleged 2009 Biological Opinion for ocean fishery impacts on SRKW outdated
  - Stay on litigation until May 2020 while NMFS prepares Biological Opinion
- 2019: Center for Biological Diversity and Orca Relief Citizen's Alliance
  - Alleged NMFS failed to act on petition for vessel exclusion zone
  - NMFS sent letter denying petition resulting in dismissal of litigation
- 2018: Center for Biological Diversity
  - Alleged NMFS failed to act on petition for SRKW critical habitat designation along west coast
  - 2019 Settlement provides for draft rule by Sept. 2019 and final action by 2020

Chinook Conservation Concerns

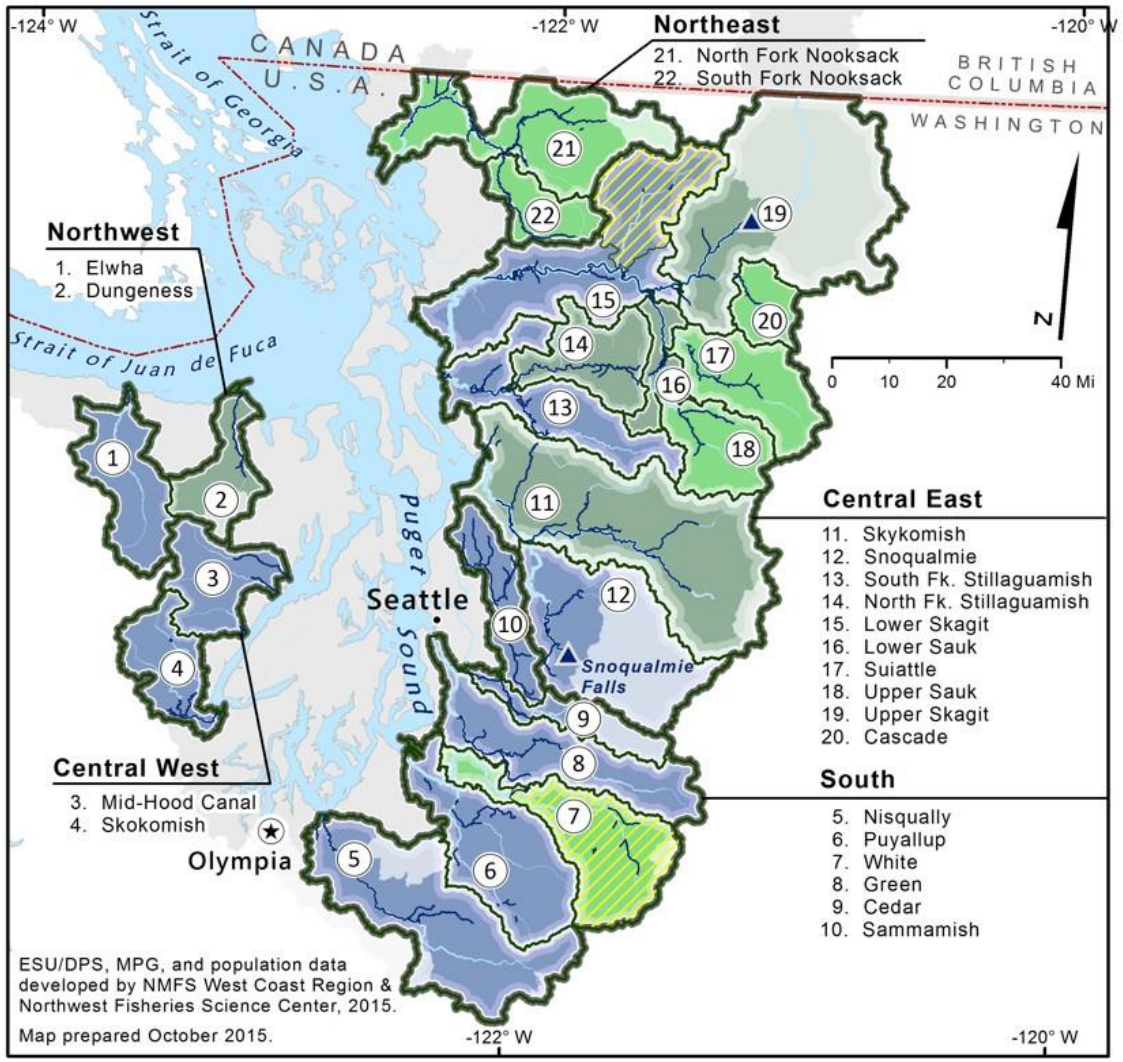
- Puget Sound Chinook Salmon: down 28% relative to 10-years prior to listing



Chinook Conservation – ESA Lens

Chinook Populations

- Identified in recovery plan
- Fundamental unit of diversity
- Small populations can be equally important as large populations



Run Time
- Spring
- Summer
- Fall

Chinook Conservation – ESA Lens

Critical Level Abundance

- Substantial short-term risk of extirpation
- Defined by NMFS to inform ESA reviews
- 4(d) rule: for a population in critical status, harvest must not be allowed to appreciably increase genetic and demographic risks facing the population and must be designed to permit the population's achievement of viable function.

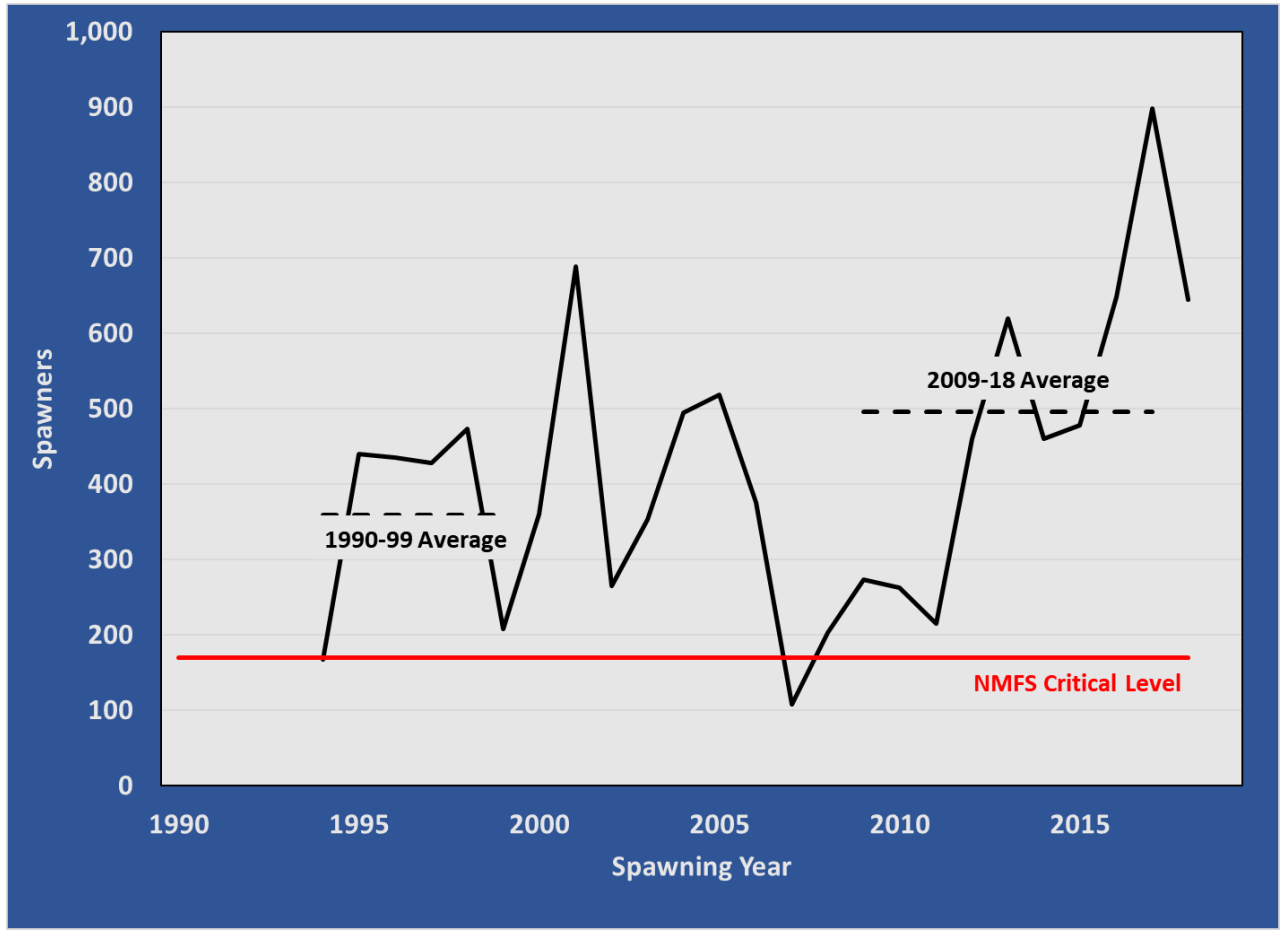
Chinook Conservation – ESA Lens

Exploitation Rate Limits

- 4(d) rule: Maximum exploitation rates must not appreciably reduce the likelihood of survival and recovery of the ESU.
- Rebuilding exploitation rates (RER) are the maximum population-specific exploitation rates that are thought to be consistent with survival and recovery

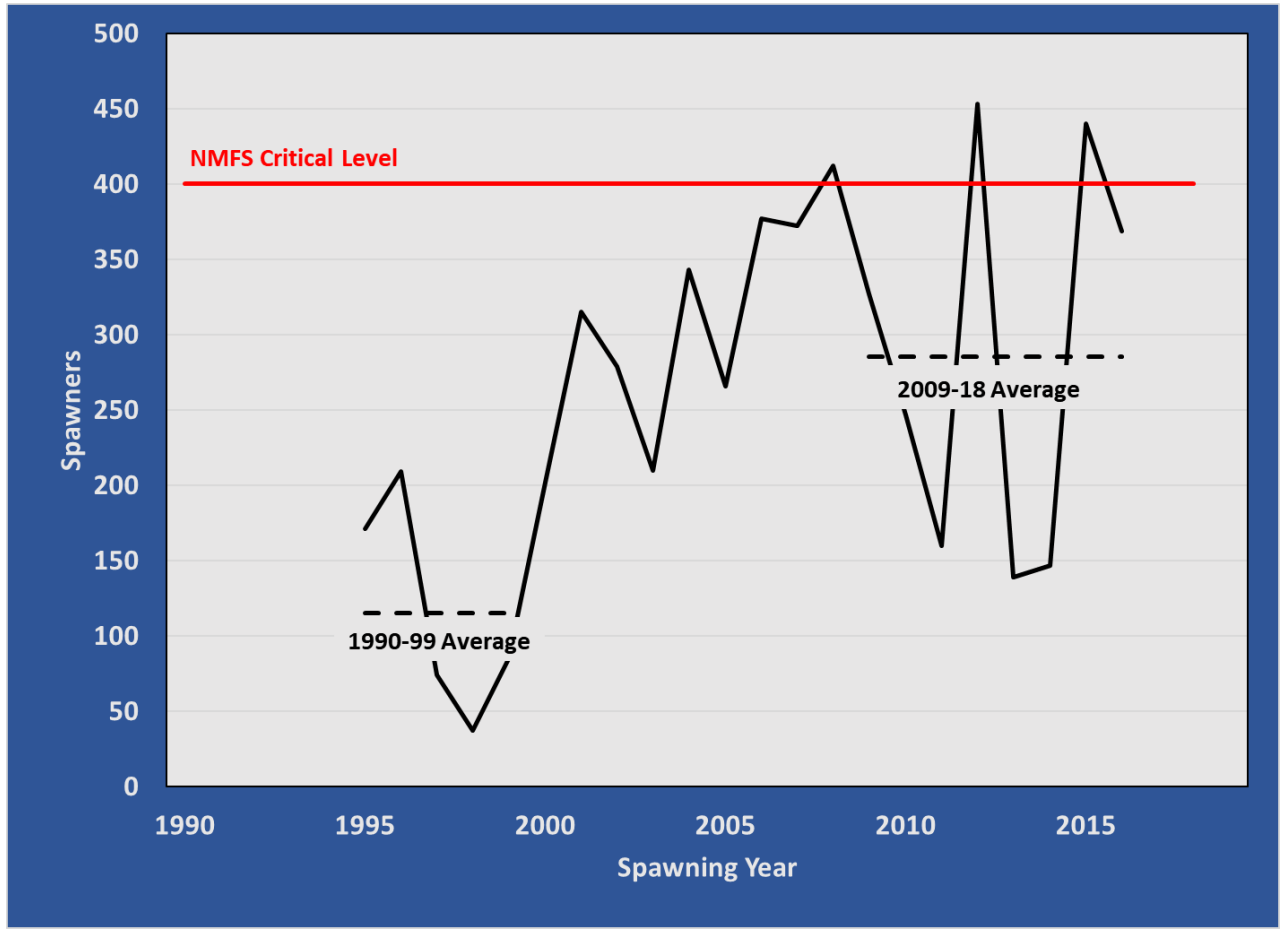
Suiattle (Spring)

- Positive trend since 2007
- Abundance above critical level
- 32% NMFS rebuilding exploitation rate



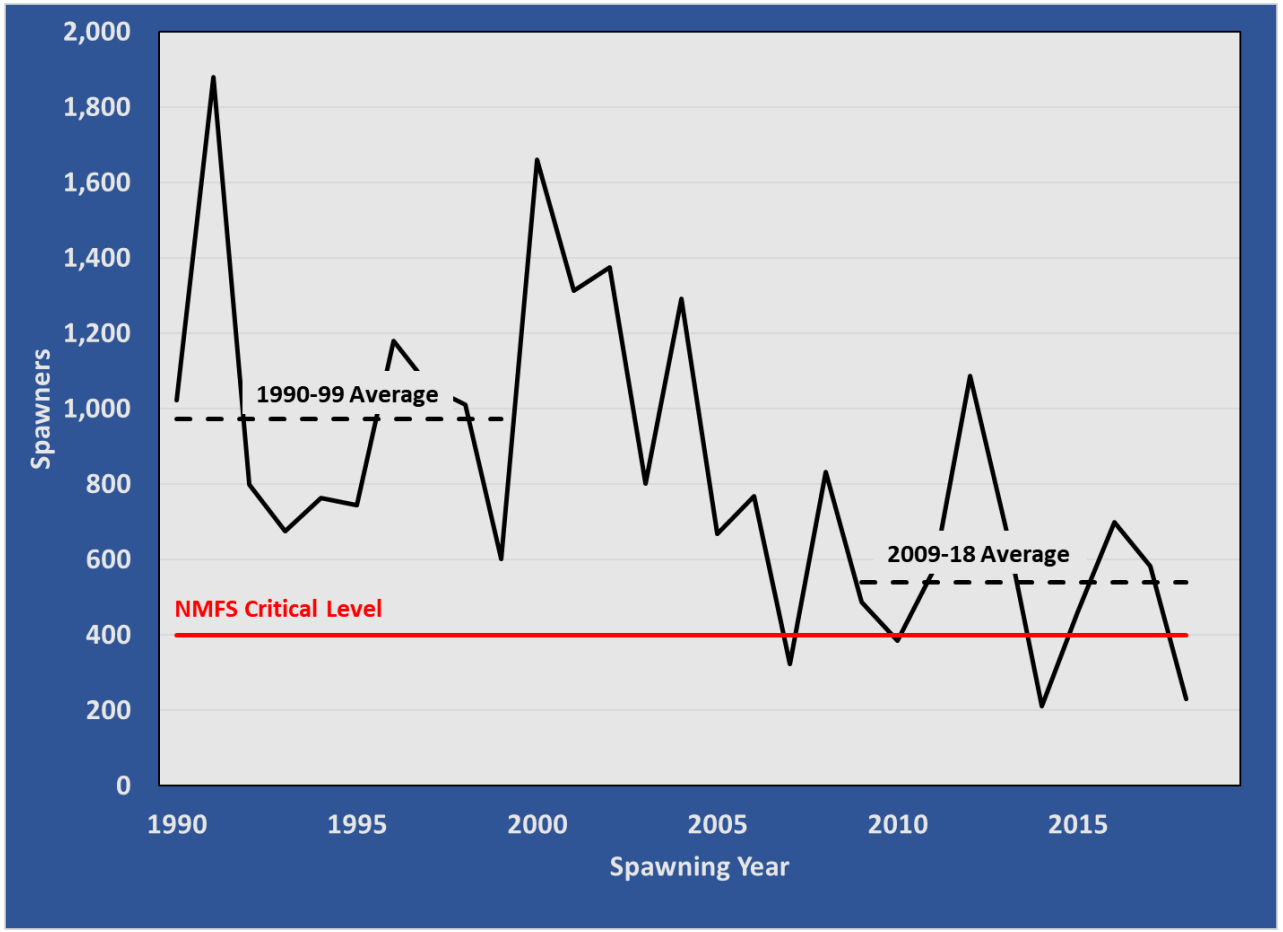
North Fork Nooksack (Spring)

- Positive trend
- Abundance below critical level
- Supported by hatchery conservation program
- 5% NMFS rebuilding exploitation rate



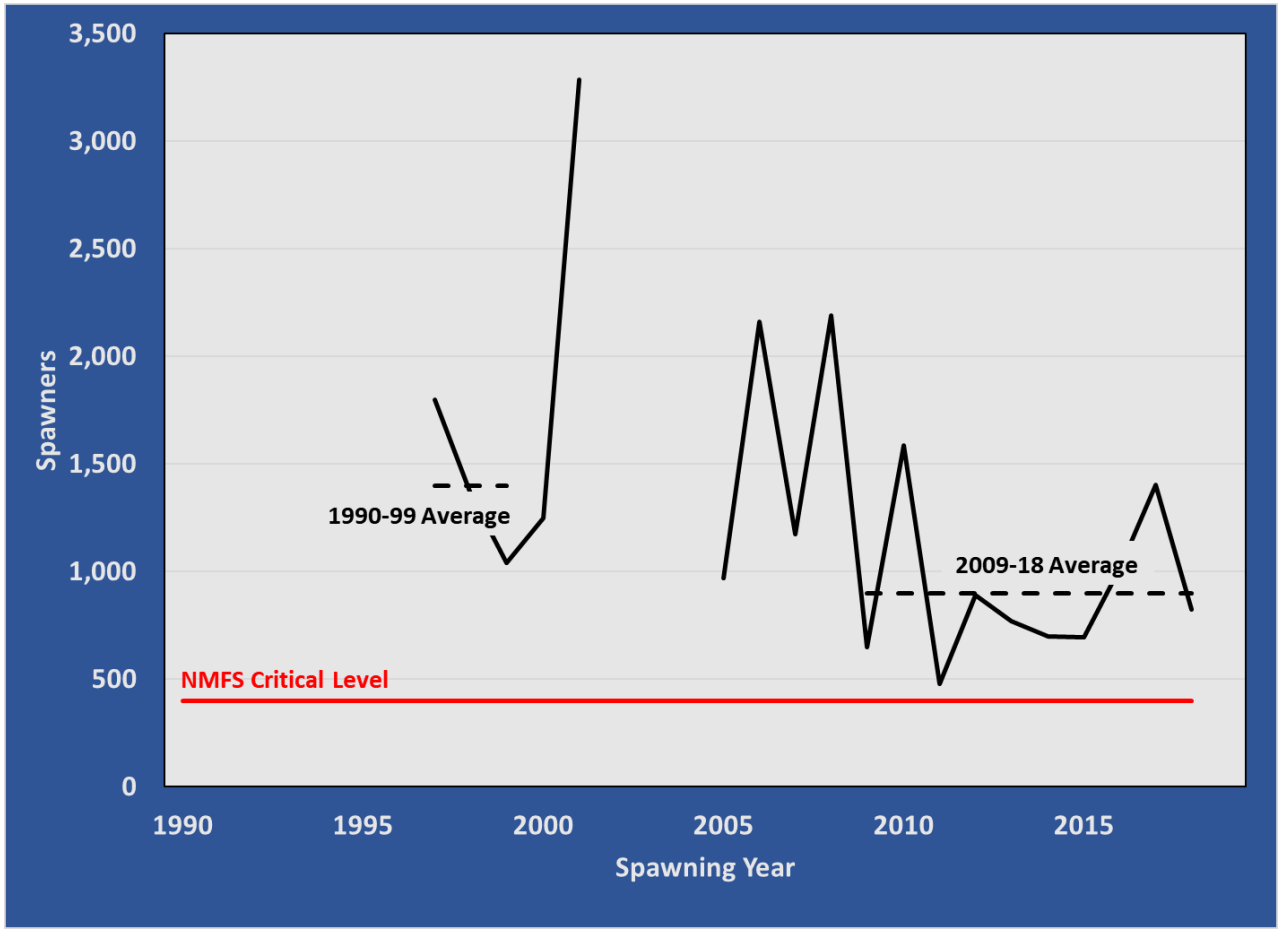
Stillaguamish (Summer & Fall)

- Negative trend
- Abundance approaching critical level
- Supported by hatchery conservation programs
- 22% NMFS rebuilding exploitation rate



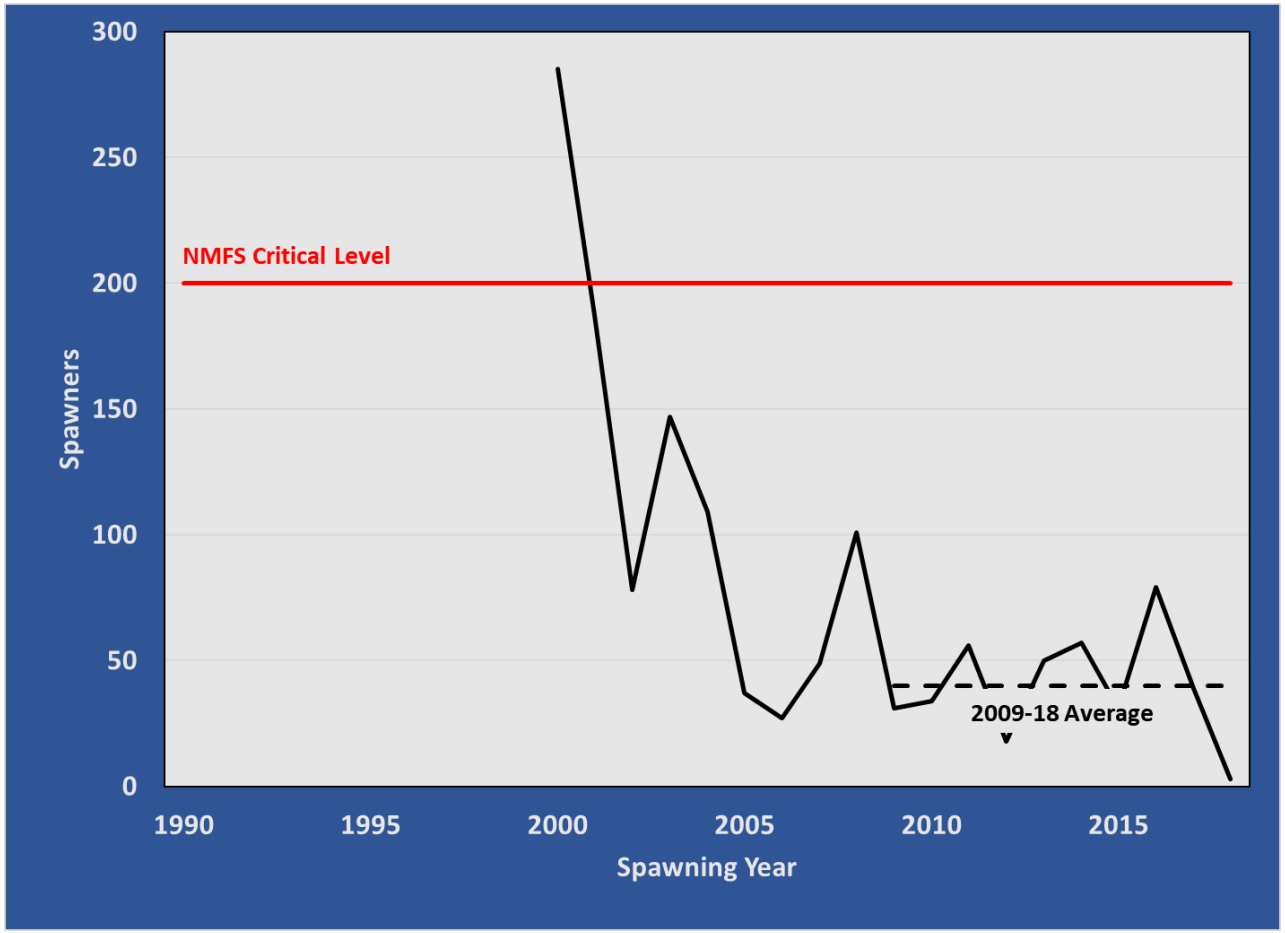
Snoqualmie (Fall)

- Negative trend
- Abundance above critical level
- 20% NMFS rebuilding exploitation rate



Mid-Hood Canal

- Abundance below critical level
- SEAK Delegation (PST) Bi-Op calls for re-initiation of a hatchery conservation program
- 5% NMFS rebuilding exploitation rate



Purpose of RMP

- Multi-year ESA coverage for Puget Sound fisheries
- Stable Chinook salmon conservation objectives
- Sustainable workload
  - WDFW
  - NMFS
- Redirect staff time to restoring Puget Sound Chinook and fisheries

Short History

- 2004 - 2009: Co-manager RMP approved by NMFS
- 2010 - 2013: Co-manager RMP approved by NMFS (submitted to cover 2014)
- 2014 - 2017
  - Annual Section 7 incidental take permit
  - Co-managers work on updating RMP
- December 2017: Co-managers submitted new RMP
- January 2018: NMFS concluded “insufficient”
- 2018 – 2019
  - Annual Section 7 incidental take permit
  - Co-managers & NMFS work collaboratively to develop “sufficient” plan

Major Elements of RMP (2017)

Management Objectives

Management Unit	Upper Exploitaion Rate Ceiling	Upper Management Threshold	Exploitation Rate Ceiling or Moderate Management Exploitation Rate	Low Abundance Threshold	Critical Exploitation Rate Ceiling	Point of Instability
Nooksack R. North/Middle Fork South Fork		 1,000 500		 400 200	10.5% SUS 13.5% SUS	
Skagit Summer/Fall		14,500	48%	6,500		4,800
Upper Skagit summer-run				2,200	15% SUS even-years 17% SUS odd-years	
Sauk summer-run				400		
Lower Skagit fall-run				900		
Skagit Spring		2,000	37.5%	690	10.3% SUS	470
Upper Sauk				130		
Upper Cascade				170		
Suiattle				170		
Stillaguamish		1,500	22% Total / 10%-13% SUS	1,200	8% SUS	900
North Fork						
South Fork and Mainstem						
Snohomish		4,900	19%	3,250	10%/9%/8% SUS	
Skykomish		3,600		2,015		1,745
Snoqualmie		1,300		1,132		700
Lk. Washington & Cedar	12%/13% PT SUS	500	18% SUS	200	12% SUS	
Green	12%/13% PT SUS	3,300/6,000	18% SUS	802	12% SUS	
White R. Spring		1,000	22% SUS	400	15% SUS (5% PT and 10% Terminal)	
Puyallup Fall	12%/13% PT SUS	1,300	30% SUS	468	15% SUS	
Nisqually			47%	3,500/6,300	50% reduction in SUS	
Skokomish		3,650	50%	1,300	12% PT SUS	
Mid-Hood Canal		750	TBD	400	TBD	
Dungeness		925	10% SUS	500	6% SUS	
Elwha		4,300	10% SUS	1,500	6% SUS	1,000
Western Strait of Juan de Fuca & Hoko		1,050	10% SUS	500	6% SUS	

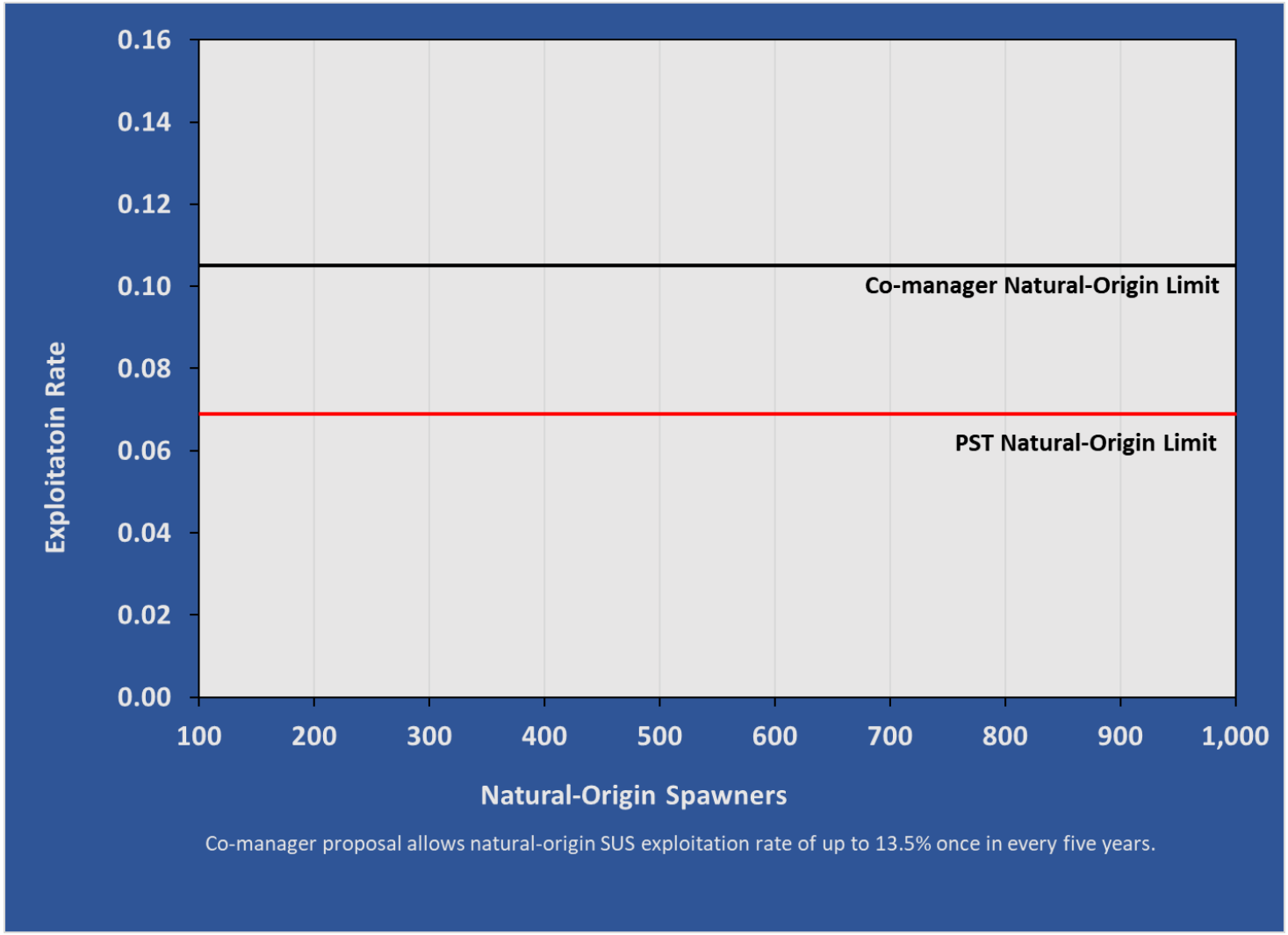
Management Objectives – Nooksack R.

Source	Natural-Origin All Fisheries	Natural-Origin SUS Fisheries
NMFS RER	5%	
Co-Manager Proposal	-	
Pacific Salmon Treaty		6.9% 1/
Co-Manager Proposal		10.5% 2/

1/ Preliminary assessment based on FRAM model runs. Actual limit will be established based upon average 2009-2015 exploitation rate estimated from recoveries of coded-wire tags.

2/ Rate can be up to 13.5% in 1 of 5 years.

Management Objectives – Nooksack R.



Management Objectives – Nooksack R.

Year	Forecast NOR Spawners	Natural-Origin All Fisheries		Natural-Origin SUS	
		RMP Proposed	Actual	RMP Proposed	Actual
2018	201	-	31.6%	10.5% [1/]	10.5%
2019	242	-	33.2%	10.5% [1/]	10.5%

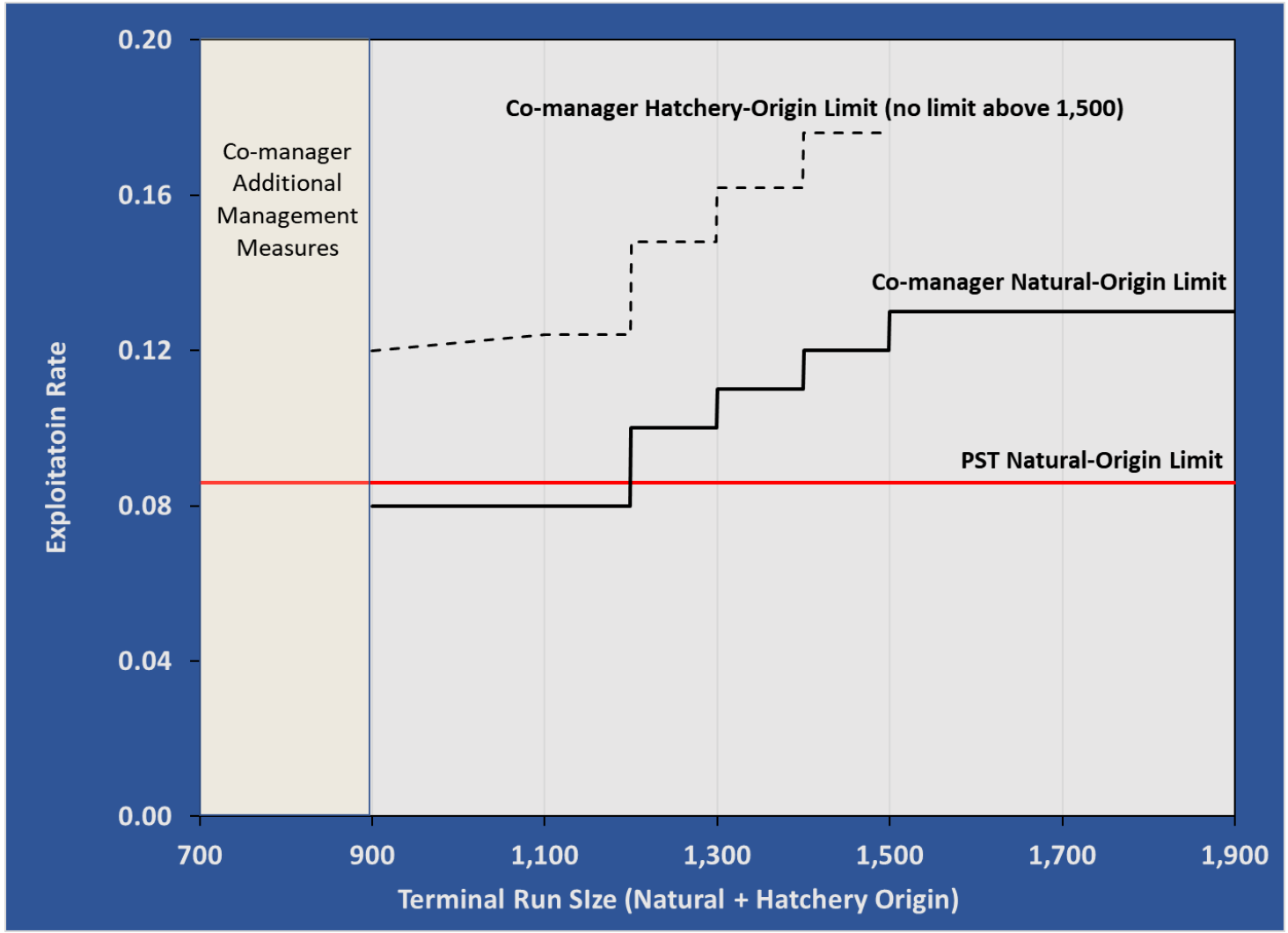
Management Objectives - Stillaguamish

Source	Natural-Origin All Fisheries	Natural-Origin SUS Fisheries	Hatchery-Origin SUS Fisheries
NMFS RER	22%		
Co-Manager Proposal	22%		
Pacific Salmon Treaty		8.6% 1/	
Co-Manager Proposal		8% 2/ to 13%	
Co-Manager Proposal			12% 2/ to No Limit

1/ Preliminary assessment based on FRAM model runs. Actual limit will be established based upon average 2009-2015 exploitation rate estimated from recoveries of coded-wire tags.

2/ Additional management measures will be taken when the terminal run is less than 900 Chinook salmon.

Management Objectives - Stillaguamish



Management Objectives - Stillaguamish

Year	Forecast Terminal Run	Natural-Origin All Fisheries		Natural-Origin SUS		Hatchery-Origin SUS	
		RMP Proposed	Actual	RMP Proposed	Actual	RMP Proposed	Actual
2018	1,551	22.0%	20.8%	13.0%	12.2%	No Limit	16.5%
2019	943	22.0%	18.0%	8.0%	8.0%	12.0%	10.9%

Remaining Tasks

- Resolve Mid-Hood Canal exploitation rate limits
- Finalize Adaptive Management provisions
- Describe fishery actions to address SRKW status

NMFS Schedule

- Three Separate but Concurrent Processes
- Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) (15 months)
  - 45-56 day public comment period on draft EIS
- 4(d) Rule Determination (12 months)
  - 30-day public comment period on Proposed Evaluation and Pending Determination
- Biological Opinion (7 months)

Communication Plan

- Presentation to Fish & Wildlife Commission (today)
- Three public meetings (February)
- Additional meetings with stakeholders and advisors (ongoing)
- Presentation to Salmon Recovery Council (March)
- Web page with sign-up for RMP information

Importance of Submitting RMP

- Secure ESA coverage – increasingly difficult
- Reduce risk of litigation
- Increase certainty of non-treaty fisheries
- Maintain State-Tribal partnership
- Stabilize annual NOF process

Next 10 Years

Last and best chance to reverse the decline for Puget Sound Chinook salmon