



## Fish and Wildlife Commission Presentation Summary Sheet

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**Meeting date:**

9/27/2024

**Agenda item:**

Grays Harbor Basin Salmon Management Policy C-3621

**Presenter(s):**

Marlene Wagner, South Coast Policy Lead and Mike Scharpf, Grays Harbor Fish Biologist

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**Background summary:**

The Grays Harbor Basin Salmon Management Policy (C-3621) was implemented on February 28, 2014, and expired on December 30, 2023. In June 2024, the process to revise the policy began when Department staff presented a summary and performance review of the expired policy to the Fish Committee of the Fish and Wildlife Commission, along with recommendations for revisions.

Following the June briefing, the Fish Committee directed staff to create a mark-up strike-through document incorporating the recommendations with updated policy language. In August 2024, Department staff shared these draft revisions with both the Fish Committee and the full Commission. The proposed changes are designed to promote flexible and adaptive management, utilize the best available science, and better align with the newly approved Willapa Bay Salmon Management Policy. Additionally, they aim to eliminate redundant and prescriptive language while reorganizing sections for improved clarity and conciseness.

During the August briefing, Department staff received approval from the full Commission to solicit public comments on the draft revised Grays Harbor Basin Salmon Management Policy. A formal comment period was open from August 13, 2024, to September 15, 2024, during which a town hall meeting was held on September 4, 2024, to gather further feedback. Department staff will present a summary of the public comment received during this presentation and review the policy development timeline moving forward.

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**Policy issue(s) and expected outcome:**

The Commission provides guidance through a revised Grays Harbor Basin Salmon Management Policy for the Department to pursue and implement management strategies that support adaptive management. This guidance is crucial for addressing dynamic and evolving challenges in salmon conservation and fisheries management. By adopting adaptive management practices, the Department can adjust strategies based on new information and changing conditions, ensuring more effective and responsive management of the salmon resource.

This approach aligns with the overarching mandate to preserve, perpetuate, and protect the salmon resource. It also ensures that commercial and recreational salmon fishing opportunities remain sustainable over the long term. Through these strategies, the Commission aims to balance ecological preservation with economic and recreational interests, fostering a resilient and well-managed salmon population.

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**Fiscal impacts of agency implementation:**

N/A

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**Public involvement process used and what you learned:**

A public comment period was open from August 13, 2024, to September 15, 2024, allowing interested parties to provide feedback on proposed policy revisions through a WDFW website portal. Additionally, a regional public meeting was held on September 4, 2024, to give the public an opportunity to hear staff present the policy revisions and to ask questions.

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**Action requested and/or proposed next steps:**

Staff anticipate receiving feedback from the Commission on the current direction and anticipate approval to proceed with adding a new addition to the Guidance section, in addition to returning in October for a final decision.

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**Draft motion language:**

N/A

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**Post decision communications plan:**

The revised policy will be posted to the Commission’s policy page on the WDFW website when revisions have been approved by the Commission.

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