

Resident Native Trout Harvest Management

Public Comments Summary

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Outline of Presentation

- Review Purpose Statement
- Summary of Public Comment
 - Comment Themes
- Next Steps
- Questions



Purpose Statement Review

Purpose and Background

The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) to ensure the recreational fishing opportunities for resident native trout, specifically, coastal Rainbow Trout *Oncorhynchus mykiss*, Columbia River Redband Rainbow Trout *O. mykiss gairdneri*, coastal Cutthroat Trout *O. clarkii*, and Westslope Cutthroat Trout *O. clarkii lewisi*, consistent with the agency's mandate under [RCW 77.04.012](#). This policy does not specify regulations for any given situation, rather provides policy guidance to staff when developing fishing regulations for resident native trout in a manner that protects and conserves native species and seeks to maximize recreational opportunities. This policy does not address native or non-native char species, nor does it address any of the non-native trout, or hatchery-origin trout.



Public Comment Summary

- Town Hall meeting February 12th - 50 attendees
- Town Hall meeting July 17th - 46 attendees
- Policy Statements posted and comments submitted at:
[Resident Native Trout Harvest Management Policy | Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife](#)
- Comment period: July 17th- August 14th
 - Public Comment portal: 83 comments
 - Written and email: 6
 - Themes: 15 general topics



Comment Themes #1

Language clarifications (11):

- Better description/clarification of anadromous zone and areas of limited connectivity.
- The language is vague.



Comment Themes #2

Geographic Areas Changes (11):

- Areas should be based upon watersheds/populations, not just anadromy.
- Combine anadromous/non-anadromous as it reflects interconnected nature of populations.
- Consider geographic areas based upon altitude.



Comment Themes #3

Changes in conservation concerns (24):

- Change "no known conservation concerns" to "unknown conservation concerns" to better reflect the lack of data on populations and/or to be more conservative.
- Keep the current but add in an additional conservation category: "No measurement or population data" or "unknown conservation concern".
- The initial language is good as is, "unknown" will shut down all fisheries.



Comment Themes #4

Regulation suggestions (30):

- Fly fishing only, catch and release, hoot owl during high temps or low flows, closed areas, but keep them open during salmon/steelhead closures , don't need increased harvest.
- Policy should include restrictive options when lacking population information.
- WDFW should take a precautionary approach to management.
- Rules/needs should be determined by the local biologist that is intimate with the area.



Comment Themes #5

Monitoring suggestions (9):

- Evaluate the impacts of hatchery programs on wild fish.
- Only allow harvest without impacting VSP parameters.
- Increase the monitoring of trout populations.



Next Steps

	Date	Task				
✓	Nov 2023	Develop scope/timeline				
✓	Dec 2023	Fish Committee: Share scope/timeline				
✓	Jan 2024	Tribal coordination letter				
✓	Jan 2024	Town Hall #1: Outreach to share approved scope/timeline				
✓		Staff develop initial draft				
✓	Jun 2024	Touch base with Fish Committee				
✓	Jun 2024	Town Hall #2: share initial draft policy				
→		Staff evaluate/incorporate public comment				
	Dec 2024	Present close to final draft with Fish Committee				
	Dec 2024	Town Hall #3: Share close to final draft				
	Feb 2025	Tribal coordination/input				
	Mar 2025	SEPA				
	Apr 2025	Share SEPA comments with Fish Committee/Commission				
		Evaluate and summarize for public comment				
	Jun 2025	Share final draft with Fish Committee				
	Aug 2025	Full Committee/Commission briefing/public comment				
	Sep 2025	Commission decision				
	Sep 2025	Communicate final policy decision				



Questions and Discussion

