

# 2015 Lower Columbia River Sturgeon Management

Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting

Tumwater, Washington

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Fish Program

Cindy Le Fleur, Region 5 Fish Program Manager

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# Purpose

- Follow up Briefing and Public Hearing for Lower Columbia River White Sturgeon
- Review stock status
- Update with new information
- Considerations for 2015
- Per Policy C-3001 Director in discussions with ODFW re: options for fisheries in 2015

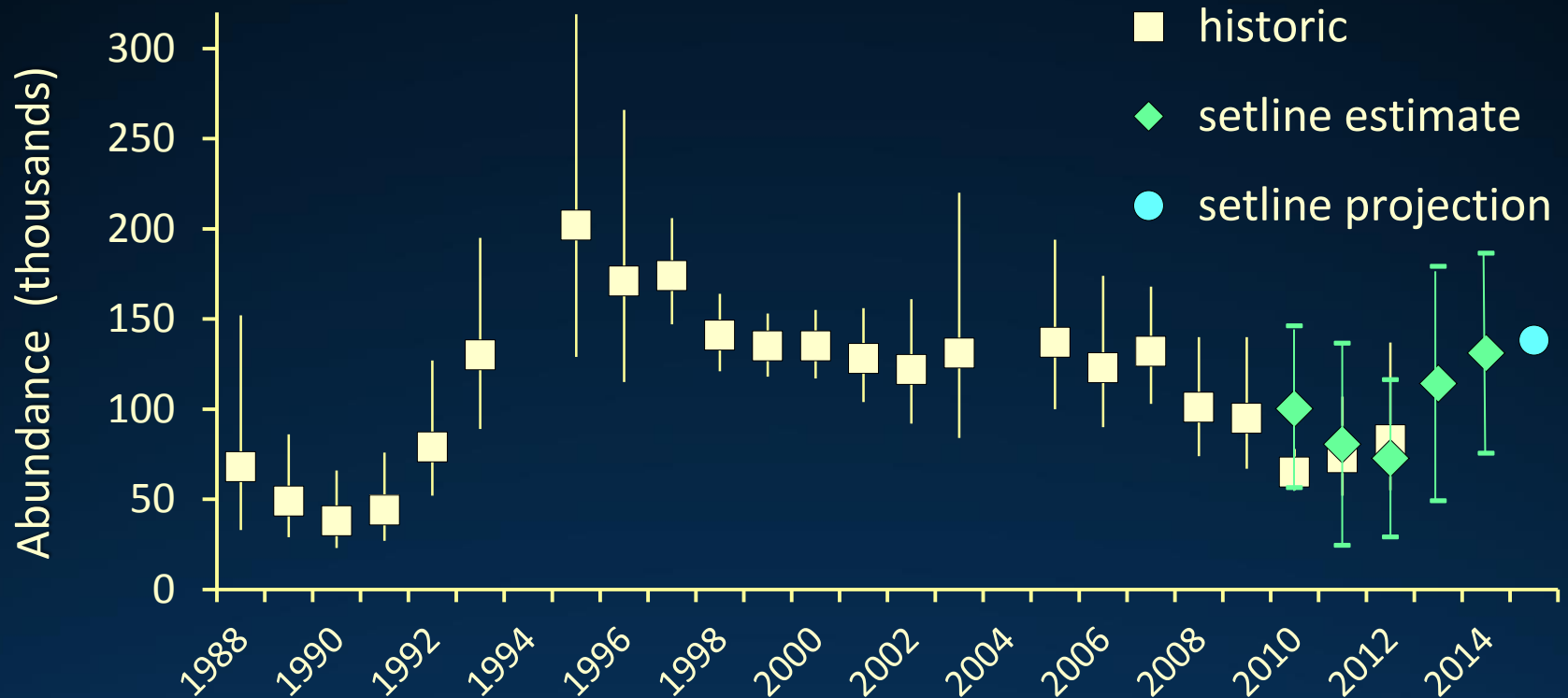
# Population Estimates

## Legal-Size Fish

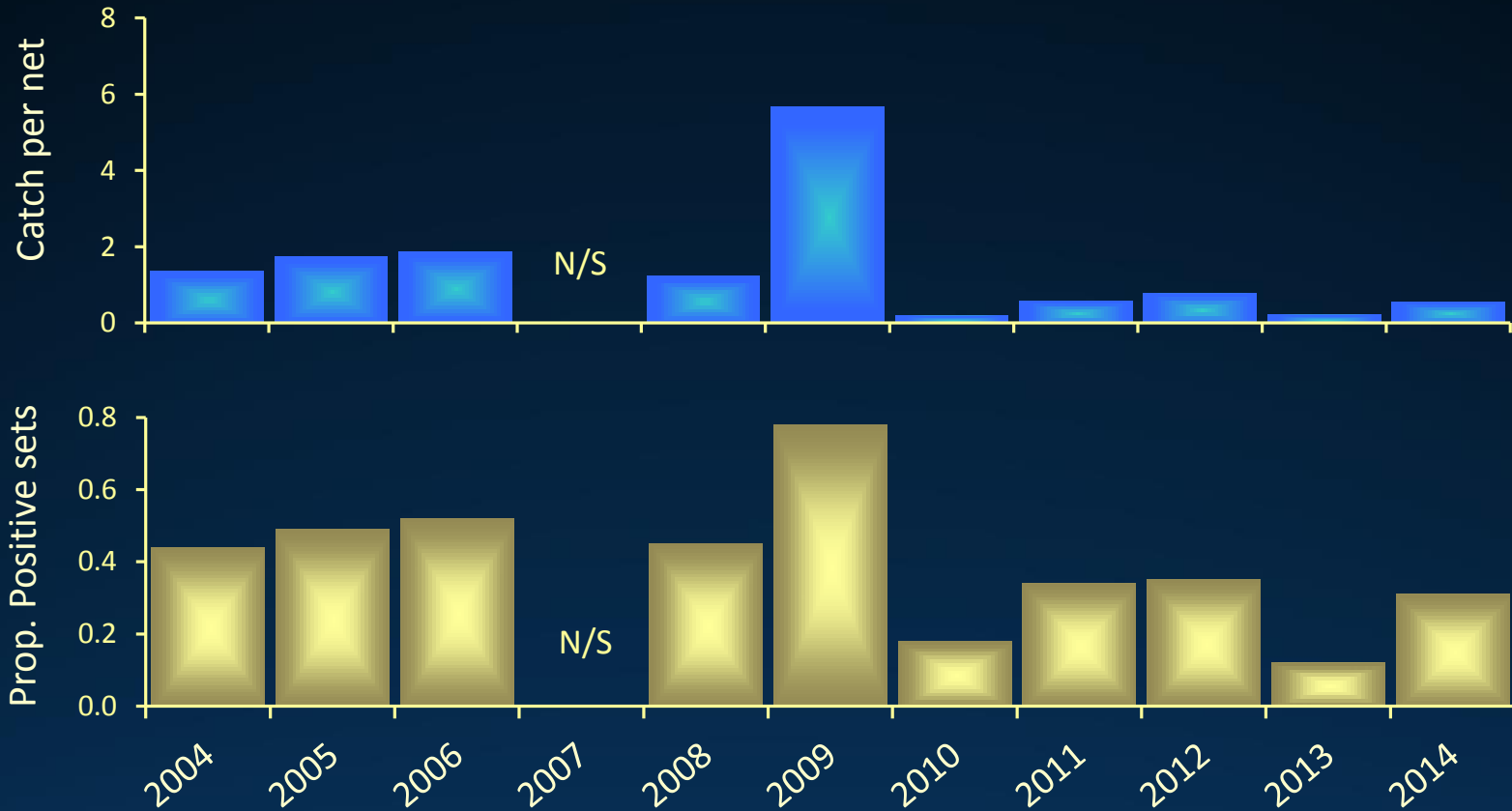
Year	Historic method	Setline method		Harvest guideline
		Estimate	Projected	
2009	95,000	--	--	40,000
2010	65,300	100,200	--	24,000
2011	72,800	80,500	77,000	17,000
2012	83,400	72,700	65,000	10,400
2013	--	114,200	74,300	10,105
2014	--	130,990 <sup>1</sup>	131,700	0
2015	--		138,200 <sup>1</sup>	--

<sup>1</sup> Preliminary.

# Recent Trends in Abundance Legal-Size Fish



# Sub-Yearling Production Index



# Considerations

- No indication that legal-size population would increase significantly in next decade
  - Setline data and model suggests recruitment to legal size will drop off within a few years
  - Sub-yearling production index for recent years is lower than previous years – unknown how significant this is
  - Spawner population will increase in short-term
    - Will take time to see results in legal size abundance

# Considerations (continued)

- Uncertainty in model estimates
  - Most confidence in legal size population estimate
  - Most uncertainty in very small and over-legal size classes
- Difficult to project into future
  - Model is best available

# Thank You



Cindy LeFleur, Fish Program Manager, Region 5  
Brad James, Region 5 Sturgeon Manager





# Policy Guidance for 2014

## Policy C-3001 revised and extended 5 years

- March 1, 2014 through December 31, 2018

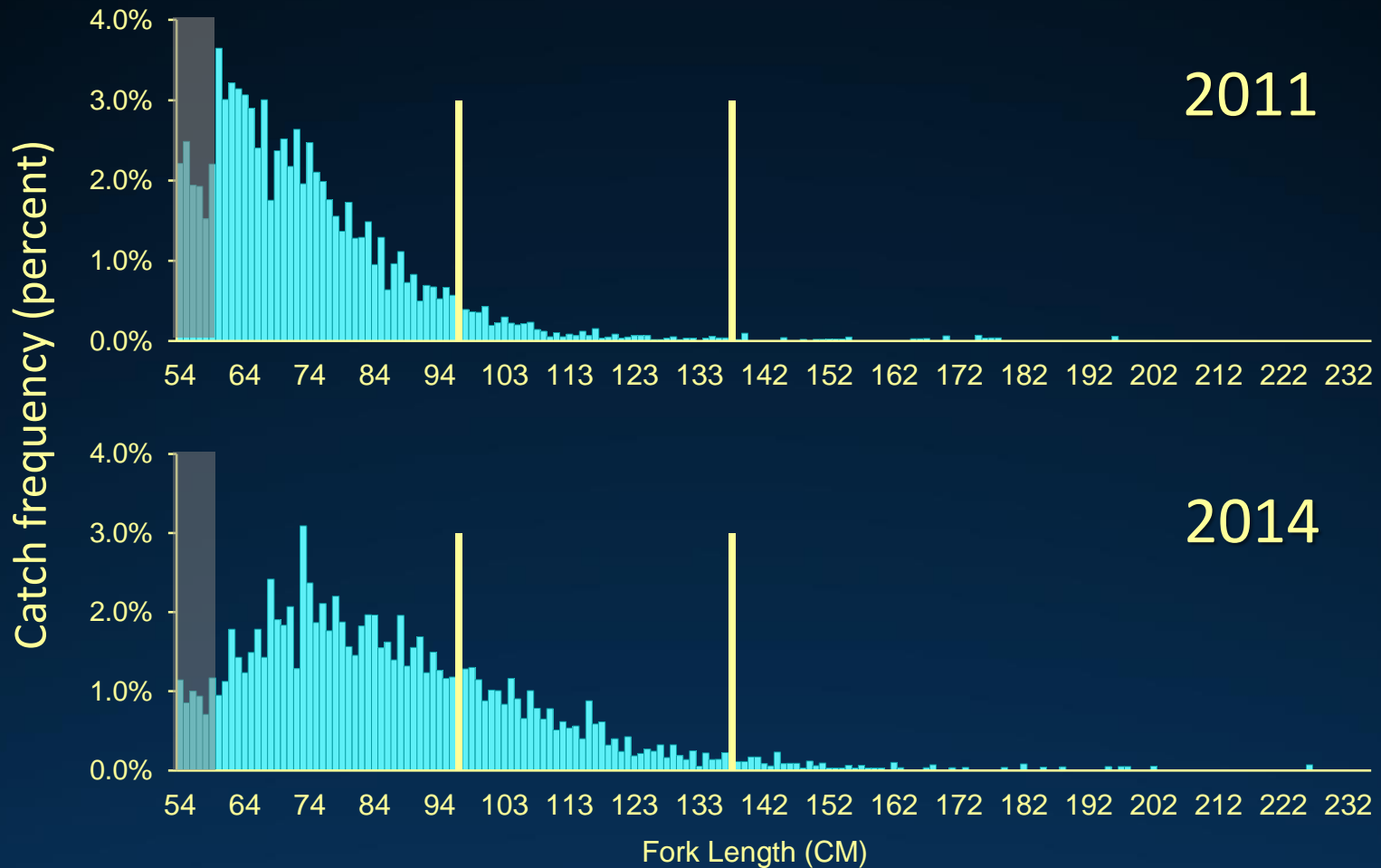
## Retention Prohibition

- Prohibit retention in the Columbia River below Bonneville Dam, the WA coast, Puget Sound, and their tributaries, effective Jan. 1, 2014.

# Population Estimates Spawner-Size Fish

- Abundance of spawner-size fish (fish >165cm) is currently below the Oregon Plan conservation status threshold of 3,900 fish
- It appears that sufficient numbers of sub-adult fish (fish 137cm – 165cm) have already escaped the fishery to allow the spawner-size population to increase above the threshold within a couple years

# Setline Catch-Frequency by Size



# Production and Recruitment

## Sub-yearling Index Survey

- Both indices show peak production in 2009 followed by the four lowest years, just with differing magnitudes
- Unknown how years surveyed compare to historic production

## Setline size frequency

- 2009 year-class may have shown up in 2011 setline catch
- Proportion of smallest juveniles has declined since 2011
- Likely in the middle of a period of decent recruitment to legal-size (2004-2009 sub-yearling production and maybe a bit before), to be followed by a decline in recruitment to legal-size

# Angler Trips Annual Averages

Period	Estuary	Above Wauna & Willamette River	Combined
2002-2011 avg.	46,800	88,200	135,000
2012-2013 avg.	18,100	27,200	45,300
2014	1,700	4,200	5,900

# Harvest Scenarios

## Legal-size Abundance



# Harvest Scenarios

## Spawner-size Abundance

