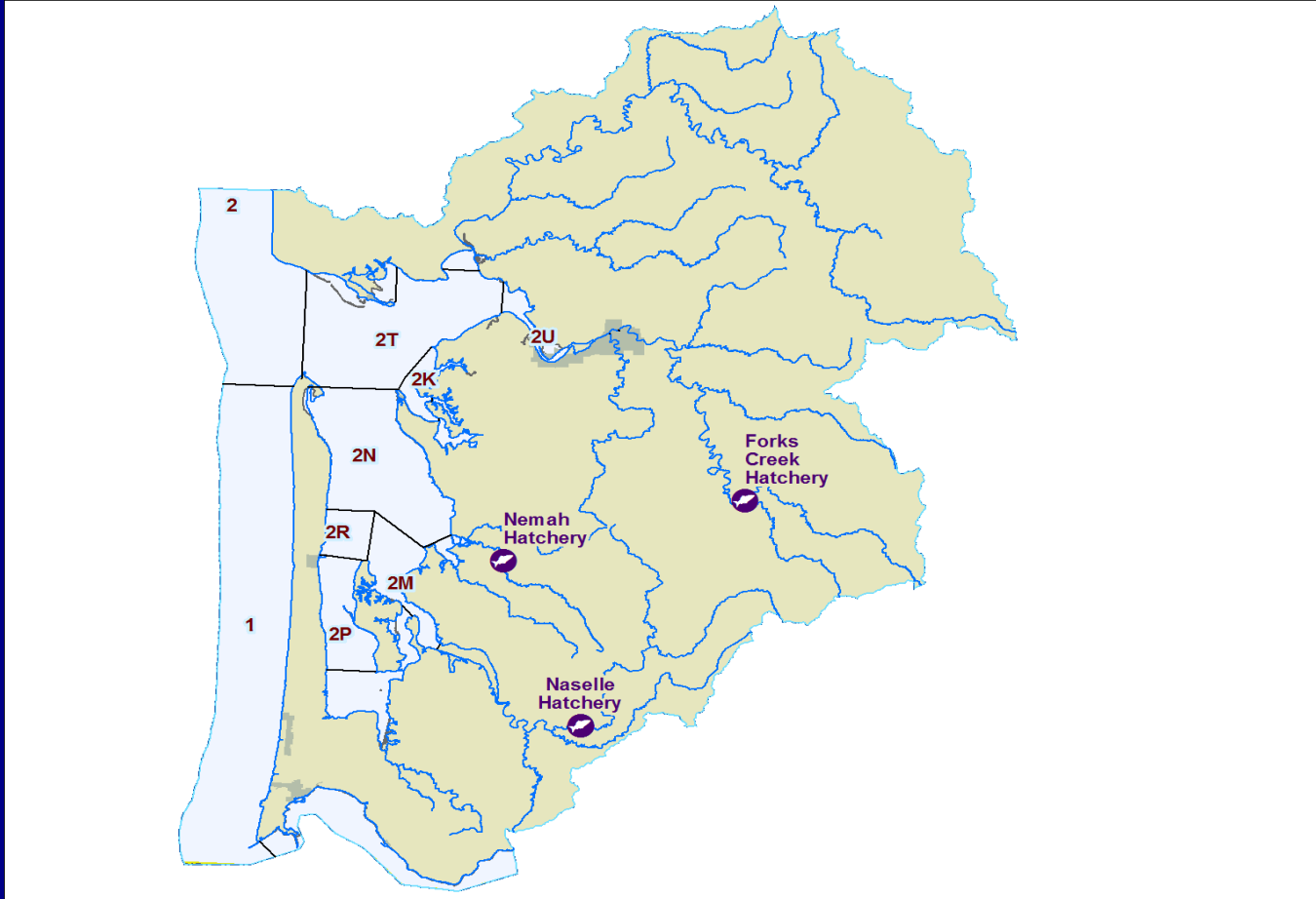


Willapa Bay Salmon Management Policy 2015 Season Review



Chad Herring – Fish Program
Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting
February 27, 2016

Purpose

- Brief Commission on implementation of the Willapa Bay Salmon Management Policy
- Report on public feedback

Presentation Outline

- Review of Key Policy Elements
- Review of 2015 Planning
- Report on 2015 Actual Performance
- Report on 2015 Recreational Monitoring
- Feedback from the Public
- 2016 Implementation

Key Policy Elements

- Enhance Conservation Focus
- Reduce Gear Conflict

Enhance Conservation Focus

- **Implement Phase I: Chinook Rebuilding**
 - 20% harvest rate limit on Naselle and Willapa River stocks
- **Pursue Alternative Commercial Gears**
 - Additional mark selective fishery opportunities
 - 1% of commercial impacts
- **Hatchery Production**
 - 350K at Forks Creek Hatchery for 2015 brood year

Reduce Gear Conflict

Chinook Fishery Management

- No commercial fisheries in areas 2T and 2U prior to September 16.
- No commercial fisheries in areas 2M, 2N, 2P and 2R until after Labor Day.

Review of 2015 Planning

- Constraining stocks
 - Chinook and Chum
- Crafted fisheries to comply with key policy elements
- Crafting alternative gear use on Naselle River
Chinook was difficult

2015 Actual Performance

- **Recreational Fishery**
 - CRC estimates for 2015 season not available
 - Extremely productive very early in the season
 - Difficult to assess impacts
 - Need for additional monitoring
- **Commercial Fishery**
 - Chinook catch rate higher than expected
 - Could be due to forecasting, build-up issues and drought
- **Total Collapse of Coho Fishery**
 - Commercial fishery – Scheduled 27 days in Sept. & Oct. plus 20 days in Nov. but only fished 10 days in Sept.- Oct. and no time in Nov.
 - Recreational fishery limited to areas below hatcheries and mark selective

2015 Actual Performance

- **Chum**

- Arrived earlier than normal
- Couldn't find a way to access without impacting Coho in order to provide commercial opportunity

- **Chinook Pre-Spawn Mortality**

- Drought related
- Highest on Naselle River, also observed in Nemah and Willapa Rivers

2015 Actual Performance

Willapa Bay Fall Chinook - Naturals

Metric	Objective	Pre-Season	Actual*
Runsize		3,835	4,160
Spawners	4,353	3,100	2,043
Harvest Rate for Willapa/Naselle	20%/20%	20%/18.8%	15.7%/19.3%
Alternative Gear Willapa/Naselle	1%/1%	6.5%/1.1%	2.5%/0.4%

* Preliminary data subject to change

2015 Actual Performance

Willapa Bay Fall Chinook - Hatchery

Metric	Pre-Season	Actual*
Runsize	30,983	40,672
Escapement	18,394	28,845
Total Harvest Rate	40.6%	29.1%

* Preliminary data subject to change

2015 Actual Performance

Willapa Bay Coho - Naturals

Metric	Objective	Pre-Season	Actual*
Runsize		38,505	18,112
Spawners	13,090	26,795	13,689

Willapa Bay Coho - Hatchery

Metric	Pre-Season	Actual*
Runsize	41,116	22,722
Escapement	24,262	17,813

* Preliminary data subject to change

2015 Actual Performance

Willapa Bay Fall Chum

Metric	Objective	Pre-Season	Actual*
Runsize		39,994	48,756
Spawners	35,400	35,986	45,044
Harvest Rate	10%	10%	6.8%

* Preliminary data subject to change

2015 Actual Performance

Commercial Catch

Species	Pre-Season	Actual*
Chinook	5,143	4,858
Coho	23,314	1,929
Chum	3,243	2,833

* Preliminary data subject to change

2015 Actual Performance

Natural Origin Spawner Escapements

Species	Basin	Goal	Actual ²	% of Goal
Chinook	North	991	173	17%
	Willapa	1,181	1,064	90%
	Palix	104	77	74%
	Nemah	224	35	16%
	Naselle	1,547	483¹	31%
	Bear	306	211	69%
Coho*	--	13,090	13,689	105%
Chum	--	35,400	45,044	127%

* Escapement estimated using in-season update model

¹ Does not include 532 pre-spawn mortalities and 522 mortalities at the Naselle Hatchery

² Preliminary data subject to change

2015 Actual Performance

Chinook Pre-Spawn Mortality - Females

	Natural	Hatchery
Naselle	532	1,865
Nemah	4	345
Willapa	18	96

* Preliminary data subject to change

2015 Actual Performance

Willapa Bay Hatchery Surpluses - Hatchery

Species	Forks Creek	Nemah	Naselle	Total
Chinook	12,012	72	3,494	15,578
Coho	2,454	0	6,284	8,738
Chum	4	0	0	4

Preliminary data subject to change

2015 Recreational Monitoring

- **Creel Sampling – Marine Area 2.1 Tokeland**
 - From Aug. 8 – Sept. 20
 - 16 days sampled
 - 285 boats
 - 708 anglers
- **Voluntary Trip Reports**
 - From July 23 – Sept. 18
 - 275 VTR forms handed out
 - 72 VTR forms returned
 - 136 anglers

2015 Recreational Monitoring

		Creel	VTR
Chinook	Kept - Ad Clipped	306	87
	Kept - Unmarked	0	2
	Released - Ad Clipped	4	1
	Released - Unmarked	116	33
Coho	Kept - Ad Clipped	74	80
	Kept - Unmarked	61	43
	Released - Ad Clipped	3	0
	Released - Unmarked	2	1
Chum		0	0

Public Feedback

- Commercial fishery
 - Was not a viable fishery
 - Throw out the “Willapa Plan”
 - Harvest rate on unmarked Chinook should be capped at 30%
 - Did not like depending on Coho fishery for harvest especially when the Coho fishery collapsed
 - Did not like less access to Chinook
 - Should have been allowed to access Chinook that died in the rivers
 - Increase Chinook production at all Willapa Bay hatcheries

Public Feedback

- Recreational Fishery
 - Mostly positive for Chinook fishery except limits were too liberal
 - Emergency regulations for Coho were too restrictive
 - Department prioritized recreational fishery over conservation
 - Better monitoring of recreational fishery is necessary

2016 Policy Implementation

- Constraining stocks
 - Willapa River Fall Chinook – 20%
 - Naselle River Fall Chinook – 20%
 - Willapa Bay Chum – 10%
- Implement change of the natural origin Coho escapement goal to 13,600 from 13,090
- Continue to explore alternative gear
- Review the Chum natural spawning escapement goal
- New tools for in-season updates seemed to work in 2015 for Coho and Chum
 - Will continue to refine those
- Address hatchery operations for natural origin Chinook
- Ocean Ranching Report

Questions?