

## Summary

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**Meeting dates:** April 8-9, 2016

**Agenda item:** Management Objectives for Salmon and Steelhead

**Presenter(s):** Jim Scott, Special Assistant, Director's Office

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**Background summary:**

In September 2015 the Fish and Wildlife Commission requested an overview of how conservation objectives are set for salmon and steelhead and an assessment of the priorities for re-evaluation of the objectives.

A spawner objective represents a social policy decision to allocate a renewable fisheries resource between present and future use. An objective can reflect a policy decision related to short-term population perpetuation, long-term population viability, maximum sustainable yield (AKA harvest), maximum economic efficiency, or other wise-use decisions.

The Magnuson-Stevens Act and *U.S. v Washington* court orders provide high-level direction on management objectives. The Magnuson-Stevens Act establishes maximum sustainable yield (MSY) as the basis for fishery management and requires that the fishing mortality rate does not jeopardize the capacity of a stock to produce MSY. Similarly, the Puget Sound Salmon Management Plan requires that the escapement goal shall be the maximum sustained harvest level for stocks managed for natural production.

Spatial distribution, diversity, and productivity are now often also included as additional management objectives. The inclusion of these factors recognizes that they, in addition to the numbers of spawners, can play an important role in sustaining populations. The Statewide Steelhead Management Plan, for example, states "An escapement objective greater than the number of spawners associated with the Maximum Sustained Harvest (MSH) may be necessary to sustain populations over the long term, achieve diversity and spatial structure objectives, address uncertainties in management, or to test assumptions about stock productivity and habitat."

Department staff will brief the Commission on the types of management objectives and strategies used in Washington, the implications of alternative choices, estimation challenges, and re-evaluation priorities.

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**Policy issue(s) you are bringing to the Commission for consideration:**

N/A

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

N/A

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**Action requested:**

N/A

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**Draft motion language:**

N/A

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**Justification for Commission action:**

N/A

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**Communications Plan:**

N/A

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