

**Hatchery and Fishery Reform Policy (C-3619)**  
**(Briefing)**

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## Summary Sheet

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**Meeting dates:** February 8, 2019

**Agenda item:** Hatchery and Fishery Reform Policy (C-3619) Review Update

**Presenter(s):** Erik Neatherlin, Science Division Manager, Eric Kinne, Hatchery Division Manager

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**Background summary:**

Staff will provide a status update on the Hatchery and Fishery Reform Policy (C-3619) review process.

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**Staff recommendation:**

NA

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

NA

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**Fiscal impacts of agency implementation:**

NA

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

NA

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

Briefing only, no action.

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**Draft motion language:**

Motion: I move to \_\_\_\_\_ (adopt/amend/deny) \_\_\_\_\_ (rule(s)/petition) as presented by staff (if appropriate)

Is there a "second"?

If so, then motion maker discusses basis for motion; other Commissioners discuss views on motion; amendments, if any, proposed and addressed

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**Post decision communications plan:**

NA

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*Form revised 2-15-18*

# FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION

## POLICY DECISION

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**POLICY TITLE: Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Hatchery and Fishery Reform**

**POLICY NUMBER: C-3619**

Effective Date: November 6, 2009

Supersedes: N/A

See Also:

Approved by: Miranda Wecker, Chair  
Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission

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### **Purpose**

The purpose of this Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife policy is to advance the conservation and recovery of wild salmon and steelhead by promoting and guiding the implementation of hatchery reform.

### **Definition and Intent**

Hatchery reform is the scientific and systematic redesign of hatchery programs to help recover wild salmon and steelhead and support sustainable fisheries. The intent of hatchery reform is to improve hatchery effectiveness, ensure compatibility between hatchery production and salmon recovery plans and rebuilding programs, and support sustainable fisheries.

### **General Policy Statement**

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) shall promote the conservation and recovery of wild salmon and steelhead and provide fishery-related benefits by establishing clear goals for each state hatchery, conducting scientifically defensible-operations, and using informed decision making to improve management. Furthermore, it is recognized that many state operated hatcheries are subject to provisions under U.S. v. Washington and U.S. v. Oregon and that hatchery reform actions must be done in close coordination with tribal co-managers.

Artificial production programs will be designated as one of the following:

- Conservation Programs. Artificial production programs implemented with a conservation objective shall have a net aggregate benefit for the diversity, spatial structure, productivity, and abundance of the target wild population.
- Harvest Programs. Artificial production programs implemented to enhance harvest opportunities shall provide fishery benefits while allowing watershed-specific goals for the diversity, spatial structure, productivity, and abundance of wild populations to be met.

State commercial and recreational fisheries will need to increasingly focus on the

harvest of abundant hatchery fish. As a general policy, the Department shall implement mark-selective salmon and steelhead fisheries, unless the wild populations substantially affected by the fishery are meeting spawner and broodstock management objectives.

In addition, the Department may consider other management approaches provided they are as or more effective than a mark selective fishery in achieving spawner and broodstock management objectives.

Hatchery reform should be implemented as part of an “all-H” strategy that integrates hatchery, harvest, and habitat actions. Although this policy focuses on hatchery and harvest reform, in no way does it diminish the significance of habitat protection and restoration.

In implementing the policy guidelines the Department shall work with the tribes in a manner that is consistent with U.S. v. Washington and U.S. v. Oregon and other applicable state laws and agreements or federal laws and agreements.

### **Policy Guidelines**

1. Use the principles, standards, and recommendations of the Hatchery Scientific Review Group (HSRG) to guide the management of hatcheries operated by the Department. In particular, promote the achievement of hatchery goals through adaptive management based on a structured monitoring, evaluation, and research program.
2. The Department will prioritize and implement improved broodstock management (including selective removal of hatchery fish) to reduce the genetic and ecological impacts of hatchery fish and improve the fitness and viability of natural production working toward a goal of achieving the HSRG broodstock standards for 100% of the hatchery programs by 2015.
3. Develop watershed-specific action plans that systematically implement hatchery reform as part of a comprehensive, integrated (All-H) strategy for meeting conservation and harvest goals at the watershed and Evolutionarily Significant Unit (ESU)/Distinct Population Segment (DPS) levels. Action Plans will include development of stock (watershed) specific population designations and application of HSRG broodstock management standards. In addition, plans will include a time-line for implementation, strategies for funding, estimated costs including updates to cost figures each biennium.
4. Externally mark all Chinook, coho and steelhead artificial production that is intended to be used for harvest except as modified by state-tribal agreements or for conservation or research needs.
5. Secure necessary funding to ensure that Department-operated hatchery facilities comply with environmental regulations for passage facilities, water intake screening, and pollutant control systems.

6. Implement hatchery reform actions on a schedule that meets or exceeds the benchmarks identified in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Salmon and Steelhead Framework.
7. Provide an annual report to the Fish and Wildlife Commission on progress of implementation.
8. Develop, promote and implement alternative fishing gear to maximize catch of hatchery-origin fish with minimal mortality to native salmon and steelhead.
9. Seek funding from all potential sources to implement hatchery reform and selective fisheries.
10. Define “full implementation” of state-managed mark selective recreational and commercial fisheries and develop an implementation schedule.
11. Work with tribal co-managers to establish network of Wild Salmonid Management Zones (WSMZ)<sup>1</sup> across the state where wild stocks are largely protected from the effects of same species hatchery programs. The Department will have a goal of establishing at least one WSMZ for each species in each major population group (bio-geographical region, strata) in each ESU/DPS. Each stock selected for inclusion in the WSMZ must be sufficiently abundant and productive to be self-sustaining in the future. Fisheries can be conducted in WSMZ if wild stock management objectives are met as well as any necessary federal ESA determinations are received.

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<sup>1</sup> Wild Salmonid Management Zone is equal in meaning and application to the term of ‘Wild Stock Gene Bank’ as used and defined in the Statewide Steelhead Management Plan.

## **Commission Guidance on Policy 3619 (Policy) Implementation Effective June 15, 2018**

**Based on the foregoing information on the record under this agenda item, the Director is tasked to initiate a review of all sections and aspects of the Policy with an expectation that the results of the review be presented to the Commission, with a target of 6 months to a year. The review should include examining performance results since the Policy was adopted, updating appropriate policy language and scientific elements, changing language tone about the positive value of hatchery programs, and providing alternatives for possible Policy revisions including at least**

- adding a categorical designation for mitigation hatcheries,**
- accommodation of Southern Resident Killer Whale prey initiatives, and**
- different levels of hatchery-wild interactions that take into account the evolving science on risks to the salmon genetic resources of the State.**

**While the review is underway and until the Commission adopts any revisions or refinements to the Policy, the Policy shall remain in effect except that Policy Guidelines 1, 2, and 3 shall be suspended for salmon species other than steelhead. Any language in the Policy that could be viewed as being inconsistent with the described suspension of these paragraphs shall be interpreted as being similarly suspended from Policy implementation. The purpose of suspending Policy Guidelines 1, 2, and 3 for salmon species other than steelhead is to allow for full consideration of the maintenance or enhancement of hatchery programs for chinook, coho, and chum salmon that would otherwise be inconsistent with these three guidelines, while still providing adequate protection of genuine native genetic resources.**

Commissioner McIsaac's Talking Points on Policy C-3619 Guidance in the Near Term  
June 15, 2018

Thus, I offer the following two paragraph motion for guidance on policy implementation in the near term intended to represent a bit of a **change in attitude** at the Commission level on the point of hatchery production benefits within a state-wide hatchery policy. If I get a second, I would like to explain some of the language choices.

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*Explanatory TPs in red font.*

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**expectation that the results of the review be presented to the Commission, with a target of 6 months to a year.**

- *The intent is for a thorough review. The appropriate time should be dictated by staff workload factors and the priority of other things on Commission meeting agendas. The review should completely take into consideration the points made in the Tribal letter.*

**The review should include examining performance results since the Policy was adopted,**

- *This would include such things as evaluating the evolving science on the relative reproductive success of hatchery salmon spawning naturally with wild spawners, where the Policy has caused hatchery reductions not mandated by ESA compliance, where the Policy has resulted in successful population recovery, and where and where not funding has successfully been obtained for adequate hatchery facilities operation and maintenance necessities.*

**updating appropriate policy language and scientific elements,**

- *This would include such things as updating or removing the obsolete or outdated references to 21<sup>st</sup> Century Framework Planning benchmarks and the alternative gear implementation elements, and any of the appropriate scientific descriptors/parameters in Guidelines 1, 2 and 3.*

**changing language tone about the positive value of hatchery programs, and providing alternatives for possible Policy revisions including at least**

- **adding a categorical designation for mitigation hatcheries,**
- **accommodation of Southern Resident Killer Whale prey initiatives, and**
- **different levels of hatchery-wild interactions that take into account the evolving science on risks to the salmon genetic resources of the State.**
  - *The idea here is for the staff to provide alternatives and analysis for policy decision-making by the Commission. It is probably wise to plan on a two Commission meeting process to get to finality on new Policy language.*

**While the review is underway and until the Commission adopts any revisions or refinements to the Policy, the Policy shall remain in effect except that Policy Guidelines 1, 2, and 3 shall be suspended for salmon species other than steelhead. Any language in the Policy that could be viewed as being inconsistent with the described suspension of these paragraphs shall be interpreted as being similarly suspended from Policy implementation. The purpose of suspending Policy Guidelines 1, 2, and 3 for salmon species other than steelhead is to allow for full consideration of the maintenance or enhancement of hatchery programs for chinook, coho, and chum salmon that would otherwise be inconsistent with these three guidelines,**

- *The phrasing "...allow for full consideration of the maintenance or enhancement of hatchery programs..." is meant to allow for*



1. *Southern Resident Killer Whale enhancement ideas to go forward even if they infringe somewhat on the pHOS standards that have up until this time been used for chinook salmon; it is not meant to allow for the release of inconsistent genetic strains of hatchery fish into areas of genuine wild genetic strains.*
2. *Willapa Bay, Columbia River, and Puget Sound hatchery programs to be maintained during the interim period, or enhanced if the Commission chooses to make such a policy decision.*

**while still providing adequate protection of genuine native genetic resources.**

- *How do you provide adequate protection while these paragraphs are suspended? We certainly should not go back to the “Johnny Appleseed” days of no constraints on hatchery operations; we want contemporary “best practices”, absent strict compliance with pHOS standards, for Washington State hatcheries. In this interim period, we expect staff to apply the best available evolving science, to comply with ESA mandates and negotiate with the NMFS on ESA compliance nuances (such as SRKW prey initiative accommodation), and to abide by the provisions of the Hatchery Genetic Management Plans that do not involve suspended policy direction. If there is a significant question about a substantial elevation in how much risk to take on a level of protection from hatchery-wild spawning interactions, such a risk-taking question is a policy decision that should be brought back to the Commission.*

***In summary, this motion is intended to represent a change in attitude about our salmon hatchery policy via a thorough review-and-change process.***

*Thank you Mr. Chairman; I would be glad to try to answer any questions on the motion.*

# Mitigation Hatchery: Rapid River Hatchery

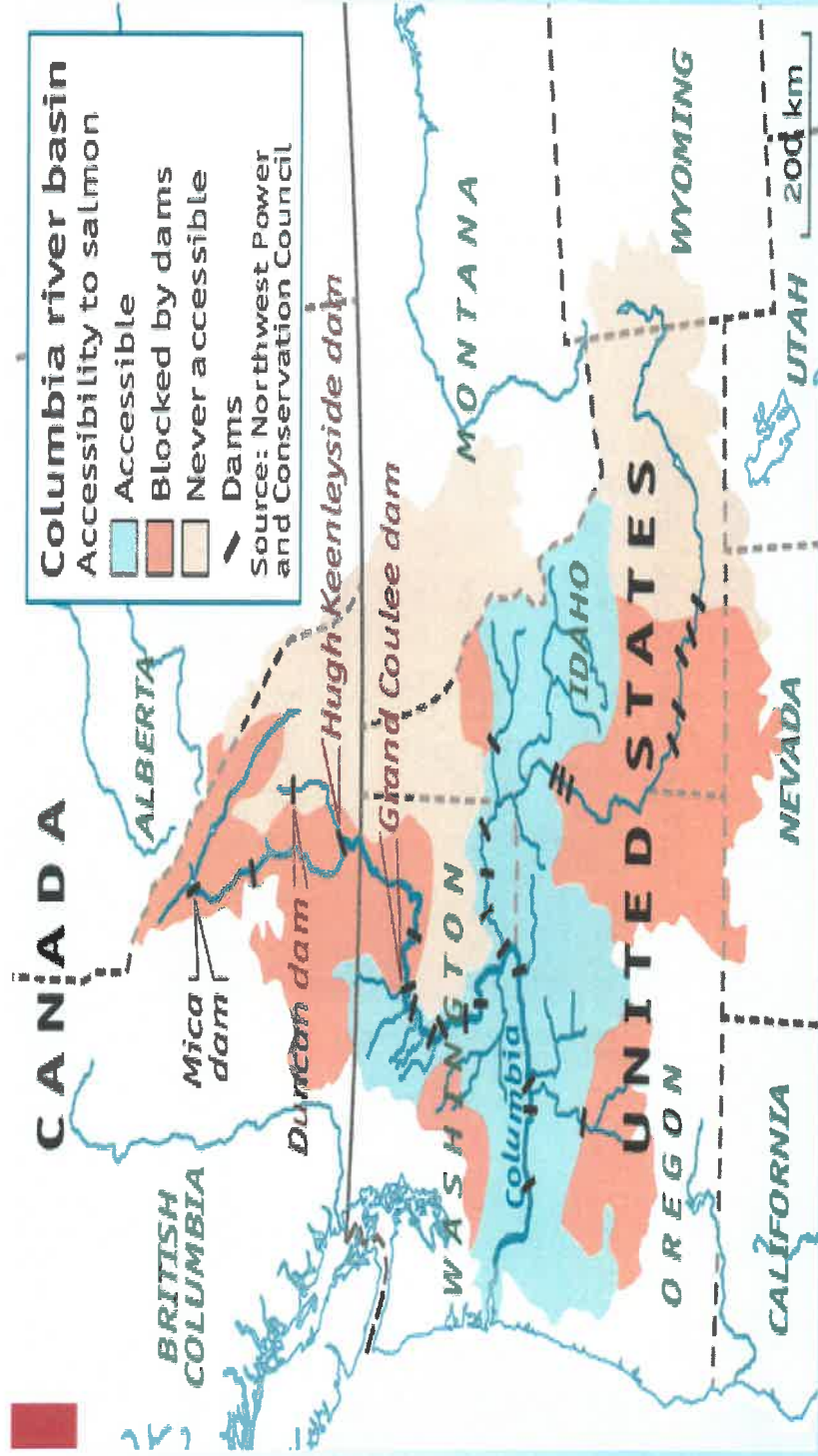
(Hells Canyon Dam, Oxbow Dam, Brownlee Dam; all with no fish ladders)



# Merwin Dam (1932): No Fish Ladders

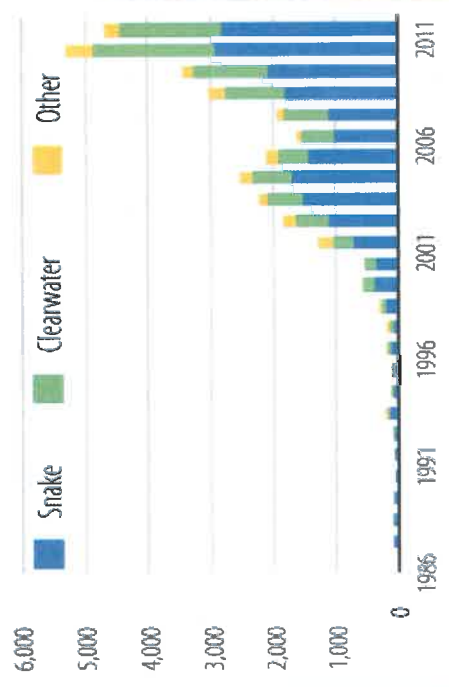


# Loss of Salmon Habitat due to Dam Blockage in the Columbia River Basin is Significant



## Conservation Hatcheries

Fall Chinook Redds



## Mitigation Hatcheries



## Harvest Hatcheries

