

Columbia River Policy Review - Joint WA/OR Committee Update

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Policy Review Committee Background

- ▶ WDFW Staff prepared a comprehensive report on the Columbia River Policy which was finalized November 15, 2018.
 - ▶ The Commission was provided regular briefings over about 11 months
- ▶ The Washington and Oregon Fish and Wildlife commissions met in a joint meeting on November 1, 2018 to review the past 5 years of the policies and to discuss next steps.
- ▶ The commissions agreed to create the Joint State Columbia River Fishery Policy Review Committee (PRC) consisting of 3 Washington and 3 Oregon commissioners.
- ▶ The PRC was tasked with developing recommendations to the full Commissions in each state.
 - ▶ One of the key goals was to achieve concurrent regulations in the Columbia River.

Schedule and Process

- ▶ The PRC met on January 17, February 6, and February 26.
- ▶ The PRC is using the following criteria to guide PRC decision-making on 2019 concurrency
 - ▶ Meet conservation goals for salmon and steelhead
 - ▶ Promote orderly fisheries (concurrent rules)
 - ▶ Maintain or enhance the economic well-being and stability of both the sport and commercial fishing industries
 - ▶ As referenced in original WA Policy language, use ex-vessel values and angler trips, in comparison to the period prior to 2013
- ▶ These criteria were the basis for the development of the original Policy in 2013.

Summary of February 26 PRC Meeting

- ▶ The Joint WA/OR staff provided 3 basic modeling options as requested by the PRC.
- ▶ The 3 options were:
 - ▶ 1. Transition period - 2016
 - ▶ 2. 2018 Washington policy
 - ▶ 3. No loss of economic benefit (two versions were provided)
- ▶ The PRC reviewed and discussed these models at the Feb 6 and Feb 26 meetings.
- ▶ The PRC agreed on a recommendation to bring to the full commissions in both states.

Model Assumptions

Table 1. Summary of assumptions incorporated into modelling of policy options for the 2019 Policy Review Committee.

Policy Option	Allocation Sharing (%)			Mainstem Commercial Gears							
	Sport/Commercial			Spring		Summer		Fall			
	Spring	Summer	Fall (LRH tule/URB)	Pre-Update Tangle Net	Post-Update Tangle Net/Gillnet	Gillnet	Alt Gear	Zone 4-5 Gillnet	Seine MSF	Coho 6" Gillnet	Coho Tangle Net MSF
1. Transition Period Policy (2016) with current OR Policy releases	70/30	70/30	≤70/≥30	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
2. 2018 Washington Policy	80/20	80/20	≤75/≥25	N	N	N	Y	Y	Y	N	Y
3a. No Loss of Economic Benefit Potential #1	75/25	80/5	≤65/≥35	N	Y	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y
3b. No Loss of Economic Benefit Potential #2	80/20	80/20	≤65/≥35	N	N	Y	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
Pre-Policy (2010-2012 base)	60/40	50/50	59/41	Y	Y	Y	--	Y	--	Y	--

Model Option Summary

		Modelling Estimates for 2019				
		Pre-Policy Base	1. Transition Period Policy (2016) with current OR Policy releases	2. 2018 Washington Policy	3a. No Loss of Economic Benefit Potential #1	3b. No Loss of Economic Benefit Potential #2
Economic Metrics	Sport Angler Trips	339,846	349,780	354,378	350,775	350,775
	Commercial Ex-Vessel Value	\$4,948,463	\$4,229,789	\$3,362,124	\$4,158,775	\$4,169,435
Commercial Ex-Vessel Detail	Mainstem Total	\$3,210,479	\$2,225,915	\$1,358,250	\$2,154,900	\$2,165,561
Commercial Ex-Vessel Detail	SAFE Total	\$1,737,984	\$2,003,874	\$2,003,874	\$2,003,874	\$2,003,874

- All options show increase in angler trips compared to base
- All options show decrease in commercial ex-vessel values compared to base

PRC Recommendation

- ▶ Option 1 - Transition Period with amendment for spring Chinook
 - ▶ Transition Period refers to all the allocations and gear types allowed in 2016.
 - ▶ Last year moving from gillnets to alternative gear.
 - ▶ Change from mandatory barbless hooks to voluntary barbless hooks effective as soon as practical but by June 1, 2019 at the latest.
 - ▶ Good faith progress towards recommending a comprehensive Columbia River salmon fishery policy for 2020 and beyond, to be completed as soon as possible. The policies embodied in this motion are intended to be in place until such comprehensive policy is adopted.
 - ▶ To be used only in 2019, the motion is amended such that the 80%/20% sport/commercial allocation, with no buffer applied to the commercial share and no mainstem commercial fishing, is to be used unless the Upriver run size update is more than 129% of the Upriver spring Chinook pre-season forecast of 99,300.

Summary of Recommendation

- ▶ Spring Chinook - same as in 2018 unless the run size is greater than 129% of the predicted return
- ▶ Summer Chinook - allocation change - likely not to affect 2019 fisheries
- ▶ Fall Chinook - same as actual allocation in 2018
- ▶ Coho - allows use of tangle nets, gill nets, seines

Policy Option	Allocation Sharing (%)		
	Sport/Commercial		
	Spring	Summer	Fall (LRH tule/URB)
Transition Period Policy (2016) with current OR Policy releases	70/30	70/30	≤70/≥30

Commissioner Rationale in favor of proposal

- ▶ Comprehensive Evaluation of Washington Policy showed Policy did not work as expected.
- ▶ Goal to have concurrent policies for 2019 (and beyond).
- ▶ Current WA Policy includes an adaptive management provision - make changes when the assumptions are not met.
- ▶ There is no substantial difference between the options regarding conservation benefits.
- ▶ No significant change in angler trips between options, and remains above pre-policy baseline.
- ▶ Scientific basis was not presented during consideration of implementing barbless hooks, and remains unpopular in the sport fishing community.
- ▶ Option 1 goes the furthest towards increasing commercial ex-vessel values.

Commissioner Rationale in favor of Proposal (Continued)

- ▶ None of the models show the commercial fishery economics will be maintained or enhanced for the commercial fishery (as expected from the policies).
 - ▶ Models show that commercial fishery would be enhanced in out-years (2024) with additional production in SAFE.
- ▶ Original policy goals were good but did not sufficiently employ the adaptive management provisions that were included in the policies.
- ▶ Washington's statutory requirements are similar to the goals of the Policy.
 - ▶ Preserve, protect, perpetuate
 - ▶ Seek to maintain the economic well-being and stability of the fishing industry
 - ▶ Seek to promote orderly fisheries

Commissioner Rationale in opposition of proposal

- ▶ Should not increase allocation for commercial fishery in 2019 due to forecasts.

Possible Next Steps

- ▶ If approved, await Oregon Commission decision (March 15).
- ▶ If not approved (or delayed), PRC requests feedback for the next meeting (March 14).
- ▶ The preseason fishery planning process begins March 7 when the Pacific Fishery Management Council (PFMC) meets in Vancouver, WA.
 - ▶ Ocean and in-river fisheries are being developed and modeled.
 - ▶ Combined ocean and Columbia River fisheries must meet ESA goals.
- ▶ March 18 is first Columbia River North of Falcon meeting to develop in-river fisheries with stakeholders.

Questions

