

Public comments on proposed endangered listing for pinto abalone



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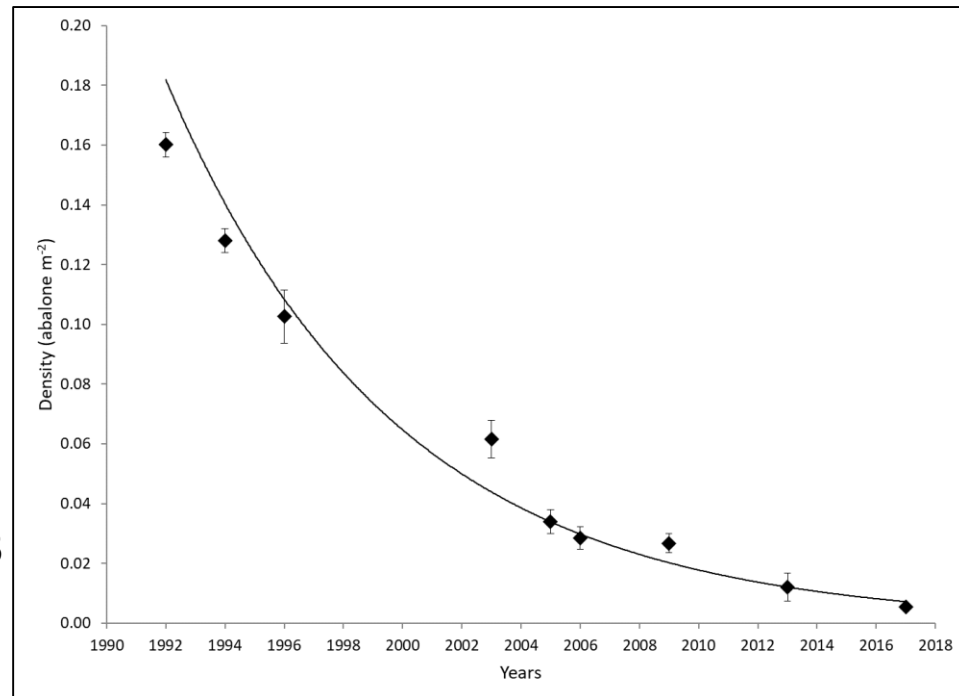
Presentation outline

1. Background: Potential state listing of pinto abalone
2. WDFW outreach & public comment
3. Peer review
4. Timeline of next steps
5. Question & public comment



Pinto abalone status

- Iconic, native marine mollusc valued as food and for beautiful shells
 - Washington declines lead to recreational fishery closure in 1994
 - Endangered Species in Canada, NOAA Species of Concern
 - Continued decline estimated at 97%, 1992 – 2017
 - Lack of reproduction due to low adult densities the most likely cause of decline
 - State-funded hatchery program has placed 16,000 juveniles since 2009
 - Program successfully produced adult spawning aggregations, but limited in scope
- **State status review started Oct. 2018**
- **FWC presentation December 2018**



Public Comment

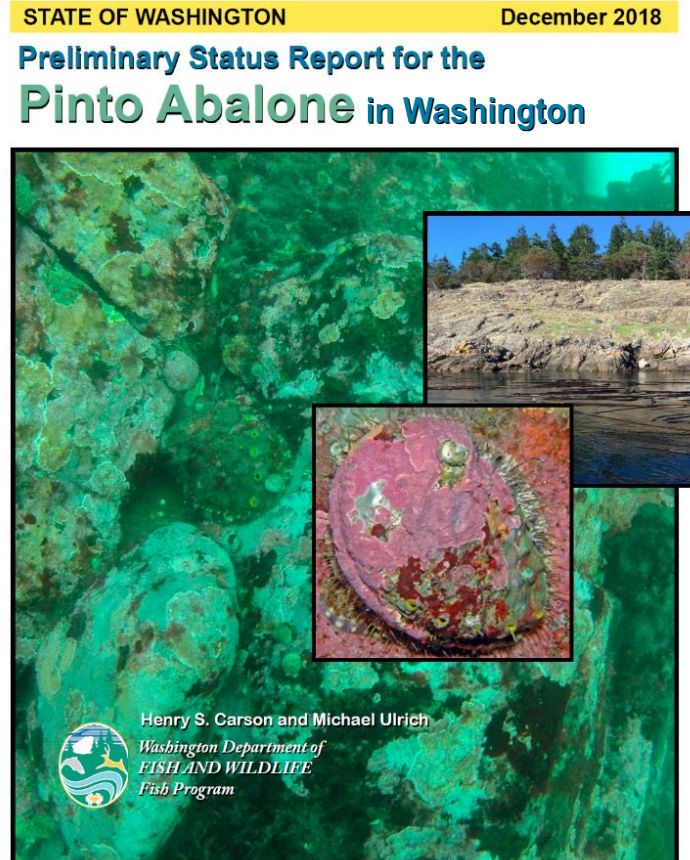
- Public comment period on the proposed listing opened in October 2018 and extends through today's hearing.
- The preliminary status review was released in December 2018 and presented at December commission meeting.
- Staff have reached out to treaty tribes, recreational dive community, dive shops, conservation groups, commercial dive fisheries, academia, boating organizations, ports, aquaria and science centers for comment.
- Staff have given 8 presentations around the Sound (Olympia, Tacoma, Port Townsend, Whidbey, Anacortes, Friday Harbor, Bellingham and remotely to the Northwest Straits Commission).
- We've received 28 written comments in support of listing including official letters from Friends of the San Juans, Friday Harbor Laboratories, Northwest Straits Commission, SeaDoc Society, Skagit County MRC, San Juan County Commissioners, and Island County Commissioners.



Peer Review

Staff solicited official peer review of the Preliminary Status Report and Listing Recommendation from three abalone scientists:

- Melissa Neuman, NOAA – lead of federal listing review and efforts to recover abalone species in California
 - Mike Donnellan, Abalone scientist from Alaska Department of Fish and Game
 - Caroline Wells, Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Species at Risk Recovery Planner
- Reviewer comments will be incorporated in final recommendation for FWC



Timeline going forward

- Staff will modify the Preliminary Status Report and recommendation using the input received from peer review and public comment.
- Final report and recommendation anticipated by mid-April, provided to FWC and released for additional public comment (30 days minimum)
- Staff will bring recommendation to FWC during May 31 call



Questions?



Public comment?

