

North of Falcon Policy

Commission Briefing

January 26, 2024 Meeting

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**2019-2023 North of Falcon Policy
C-3608
Expired December 31, 2023**

Purpose

- Review policy review process
- Summarize public comment received since December meeting
- Commission consider adoption of revised policy for 2024-2028



Policy Review Process

- October 2023 Commission briefing:
 - Briefed Commission and sought guidance on modifications
 - Received initial public comment
- December 2023
 - Briefing on public comment received, provide potential revisions to draft policy in a revised draft
 - Additional public comment
 - Additional Commission guidance for revised draft
 - Revised draft posted online for public comment after meeting
 - Public comment accepted through January 15
- January 2024
 - Public comment compiled
 - Briefing on additional public comment received
 - Commission considers adoption of revised policy



Public Comment since December

- ~50 public comments received
- Comments were compiled into single document posted with meeting materials for this agenda item
- Comments spanned a wide range of topics



Public Comment since December

- Most frequent topics were specific season desires for fisheries
 - Specific opening and closing dates for specific areas
 - Open winter fisheries for blackmouth in areas currently closed
 - Schedule concurrent openings across Puget Sound
 - More non-selective fishing opportunity
 - Less non-selective fishing opportunity
 - These are the trade-offs and decisions we engage in annually during the North of Falcon process



Public Comment since December

- Avoid/reduce frequency of emergency closures
- Offer better marine fishing opportunity
- Prioritize extreme terminal and freshwater fishing opportunity
- Define meaningful recreational opportunity to prioritize maximizing harvest over length of opportunity



Public Comment since December

- Comments on allocation of ocean harvest between ocean areas, and allocation of ocean vs inside fishing opportunity
- Increase hatchery production
- Create new 'Bubble' fisheries
- Support for addition of section on reporting



Public Comment since December

- Other concerns:
 - Commercial fisheries are allowed to occur
 - Transparency of meetings with tribal governments
 - Status of ESA-listed stocks is not improving
 - Climate change is not directly addressed in the policy
 - That any non-tribal fishing is allowed
 - That the policy does not give enough consideration to marine mammals, birds, beavers or other non-human fishers



Public Comment since December

- Some specific comments on policy language in several of the letters received (attachments in the public comment document)
- Include gamefish in language when considering managing for recovery, offering opportunity on healthy stocks, and providing diverse opportunities within available stock impacts
- Include a direct reference to the Puget Sound Salmon Management Plan in the list of guiding documents



Public Comment since December

- Specific language suggestions on in-season management, limits on fishery catch & encounters, and communications on those topics
- Language addition to Pacific Ocean section on prioritizing selective fisheries to harvest hatchery salmon and help meet conservation objectives for ESA-listed and weak stocks
- Language on Puget Sound management and prioritization of chum and pink opportunity
 - Re-insert language on minimizing gear conflicts
 - Delete language on expected relative catch proportions



Modifications in draft policy

- Redline version provided with summary sheet includes all modifications made to the expired policy as presented in December
- Re-inserted phrase “while minimizing gear and other fishery conflicts” into the guidance for providing fishing opportunity for Puget Sound-origin pink and chum salmon



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Questions?

