

## “GREEN SHEET”

(Form revised 02/09/07)

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**Meeting dates:** August 17<sup>th</sup> Conference Call  
**Agenda item:** Progress report about Public Hearing on Statewide Steelhead DEIS  
**Staff Contact:** Jim Buck (360) 902-2791  
**Presenter/s:** Jim Buck, Statewide Steelhead EIS Manager; and Heather Bartlett, Salmon and Steelhead Division Manager

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### **Background:**

In 2004, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (the Department) initiated a multi-step process to improve the management and status of steelhead in Washington. The first step in this process was to lay the scientific foundation for the subsequent development of improved management plans. Drawing on decades of research and new analyses, a comprehensive review of steelhead stocks and their status in Washington was published in a DRAFT report “*Oncorhynchus mykiss: Assessment of Washington State’s Anadromous Populations and Programs*” (<http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/papers/steelhead/index.htm>). Each chapter in the Science Paper concluded with numerous findings and recommendations to guide future management.

Building on the science foundation, this second step, development of a statewide steelhead management plan has been initiated through the release of a DRAFT Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) that provides a framework of policies, strategies, and actions for application throughout the state in steelhead management. Recognizing that substantial variation exists in the status of stocks, habitat conditions, and that tribal, local, and federal authorities vary across the state the objective for the DRAFT Plan is to provide the Department with the necessary guidance to develop the third and final step; regionally based steelhead resource management plans. For many of these regions, recovery plans have been developed and will compliment the statewide steelhead plan to serve as primary guidance for detailed strategies and actions identified within the regional steelhead resource management plans.

The DEIS was released to the public for 30 days of comment on August 1, 2007. Public meetings are scheduled for Sequim (8/13), Olympia (8/14), Vancouver (8/15), Mill Creek (8/16), Wenatchee (8/20), Moses Lake (8/21) and Richland (8/22). This agenda item is to inform the commission about the public’s comments and reaction to the DEIS for the first 4 public meetings.

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

None – briefing only

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

Public involvement began in July 2006 with the formation of an ad hoc committee from the Steelhead and Cutthroat Policy Advisors (SCPAG). This ad hoc committee expanded to include other interested parties such as representatives of Wild Salmon Conservancy, the Hatchery Scientific Review Group, and Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission. The ad hoc committee met monthly to advise the department as staff developed the DRAFT Statewide Steelhead Management Plan (represents the preferred alternative in the DEIS). Members of the ad hoc committee shaped the components and chapters the DEIS through their recommendations at public meetings and in writing to address natural production, artificial production, habitat, fishery management, adaptive management, enforcement and outreach and education.

The DEIS process initiated broad citizen review and input. Four public meetings will have occurred as well as potentially some initial written comments will have been received by the time of the briefing.

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**Action requested** (identify the specific Commission decisions you are seeking and when):  
Briefing only

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**Draft motion language:**

None

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**Justification for Commission action:**

None

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