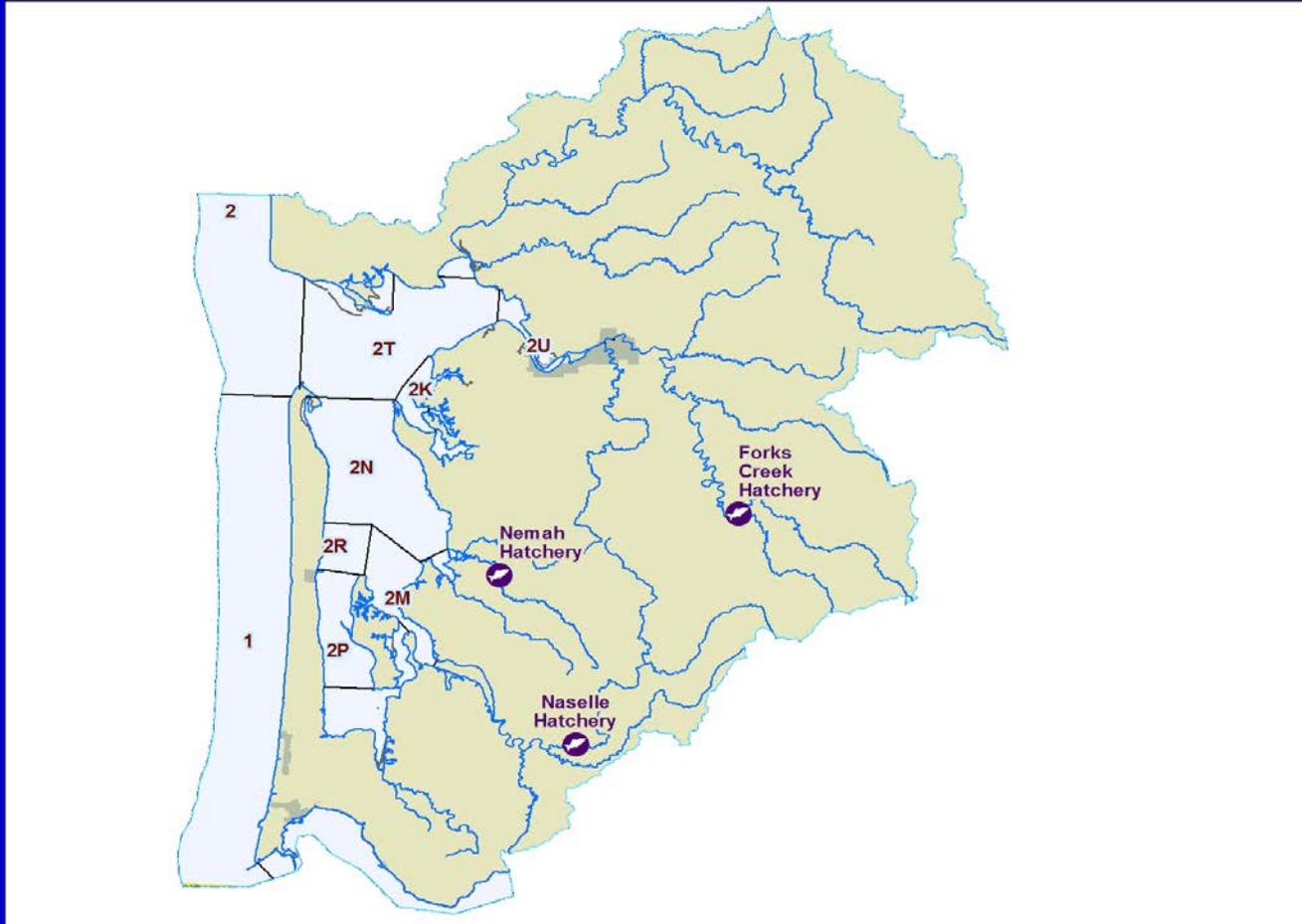




Willapa Bay Salmon Management Policy



**Steve Thiesfeld; Region 6 Fish Program Manager
Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission Meeting
April 9, 2015**

Purpose

- **Brief Commission on Draft Willapa Bay Salmon Management Policy Process**
- **Report on feedback from public**
- **Seek Commission Input on Policy Enhancements**

Presentation Outline

- **Policy Development Schedule**
- **Key Policy Issues**
- **What were the major points of public comments?**
- **How could the draft policy be improved?**

Policy Development Schedule

- **Nov - FWC reviewed initial Policy sideboards**
- **Dec - FWC briefed on Policy development**
- **Jan - FWC considers draft Policy**
 - **Receives public comment**
 - **FWC provides additional direction on Policy**
 - **Draft policy released for 3-week public comment period**
- **Feb - FWC considers revised draft Policy**
 - **Receives public comment on draft Policy**
 - **Provides additional direction**
 - **Revised draft policy released for 3-week public comment period**
 - **Need for 2015 interim guidance identified**

Policy Development Schedule

- **Apr - FWC considers revised draft Policy**
 - Receives public comment on revised draft Policy
 - Provides additional direction
- **June - FWC considers adoption of Policy**

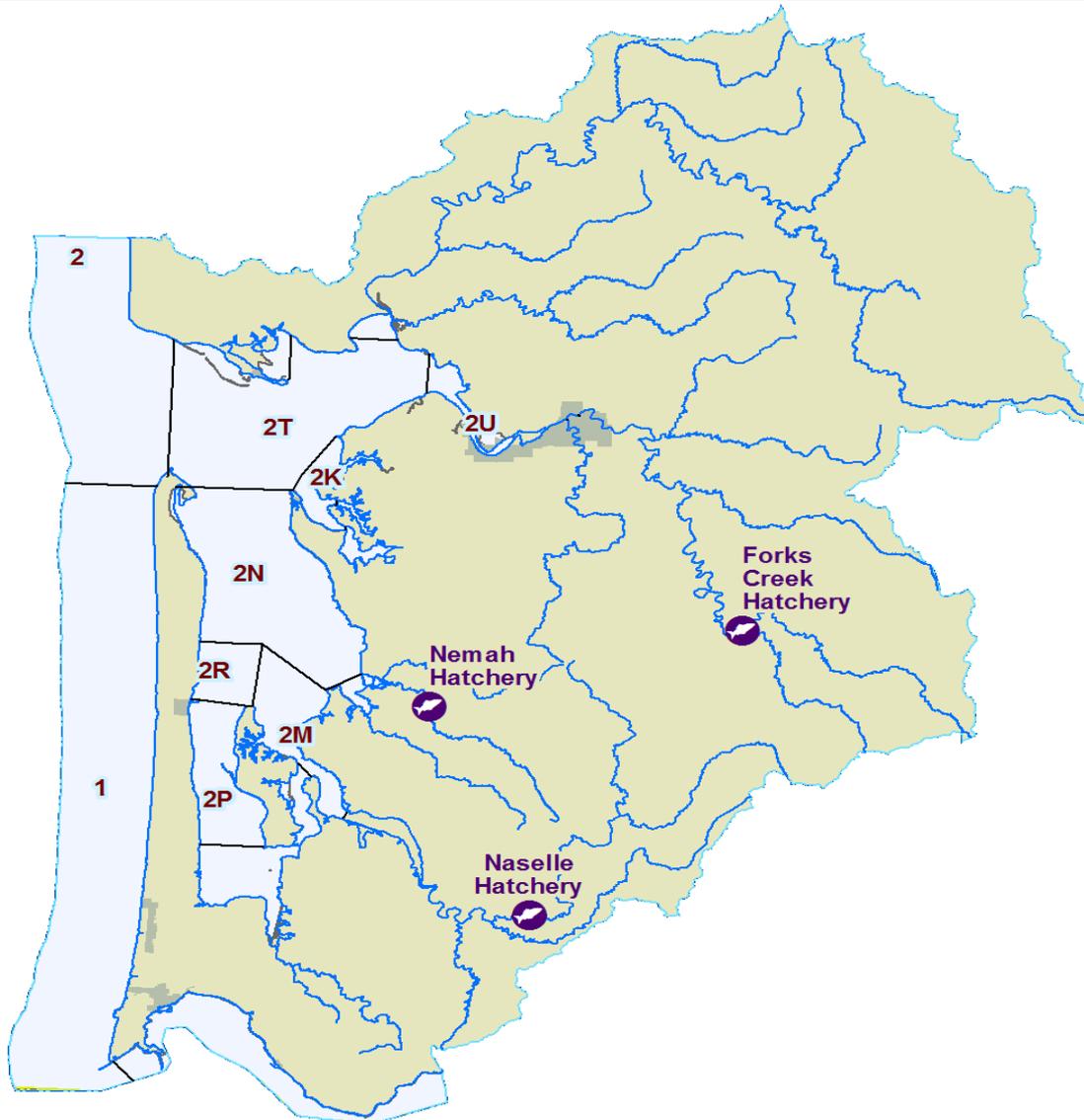
Public Process

- Oct. 25th Open house
- Oct. 27th Ad-hoc committee/public meeting
- Nov. 1st Public workshop
- Nov. 13th Ad-hoc committee/public meeting
- Nov. 20th Ad-hoc committee/public meeting
- Dec. 6th Public workshop
- Dec. 30th, Public workshop – AHA modeling
- Jan. 6th, Ad-Hoc committee/public meeting
- Jan. 17th, Public workshop

Mandate and Existing Guidance

- **RCW 77.04.12**
 - Preserve, protect, perpetuate, and manage
 - Maintain the economic well-being and stability of the fishing industry
- **2015-17 Budget Policy**
 - Compare economic benefits in policy and budget decisions
 - Promote selective fisheries
 - Equitable sharing of the costs of management

Willapa Bay Basin



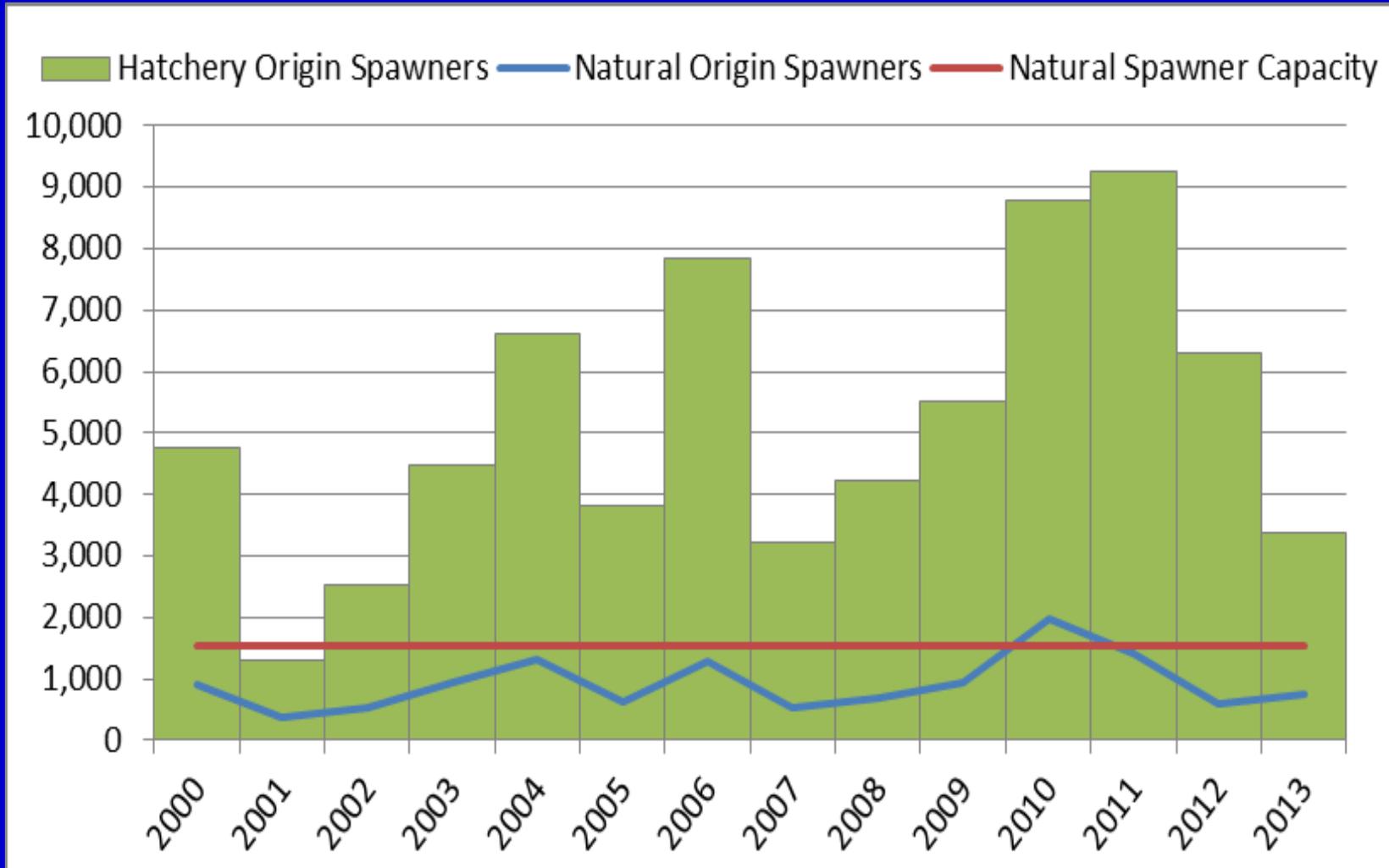
Why is a Willapa Bay Salmon Management Policy Needed?

- Enhance Conservation Focus
- Restore and Maintain Public Trust
- Clarify Sharing of Impacts

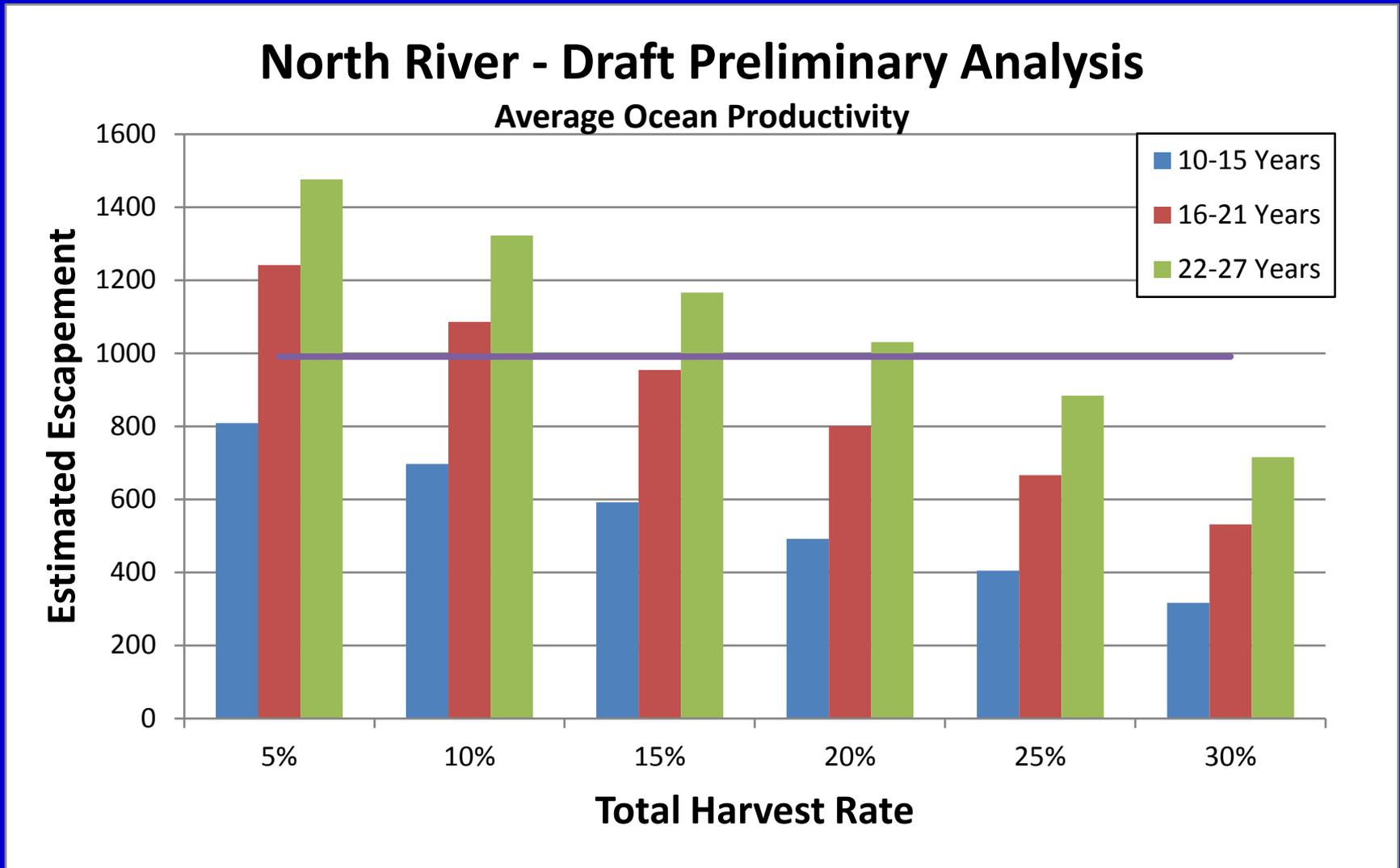
Key Issues

- Conservation - Hatchery Reform
- Fishery Challenges
- Transparency
- Monitoring and Enforcement
- In-Season Management

Conservation - Hatchery Reform Naselle River Fall Chinook



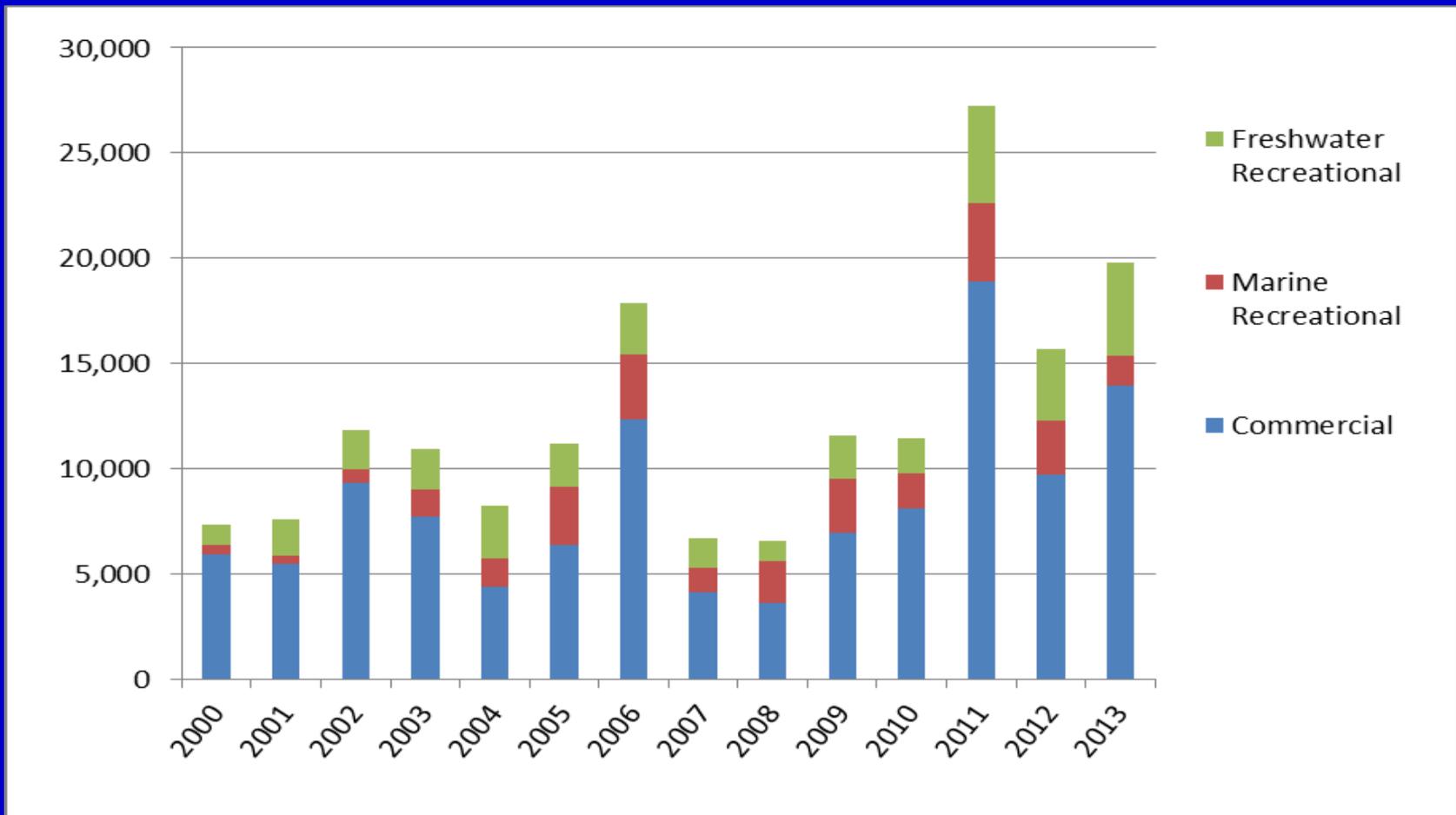
Conservation – Hatchery Reform



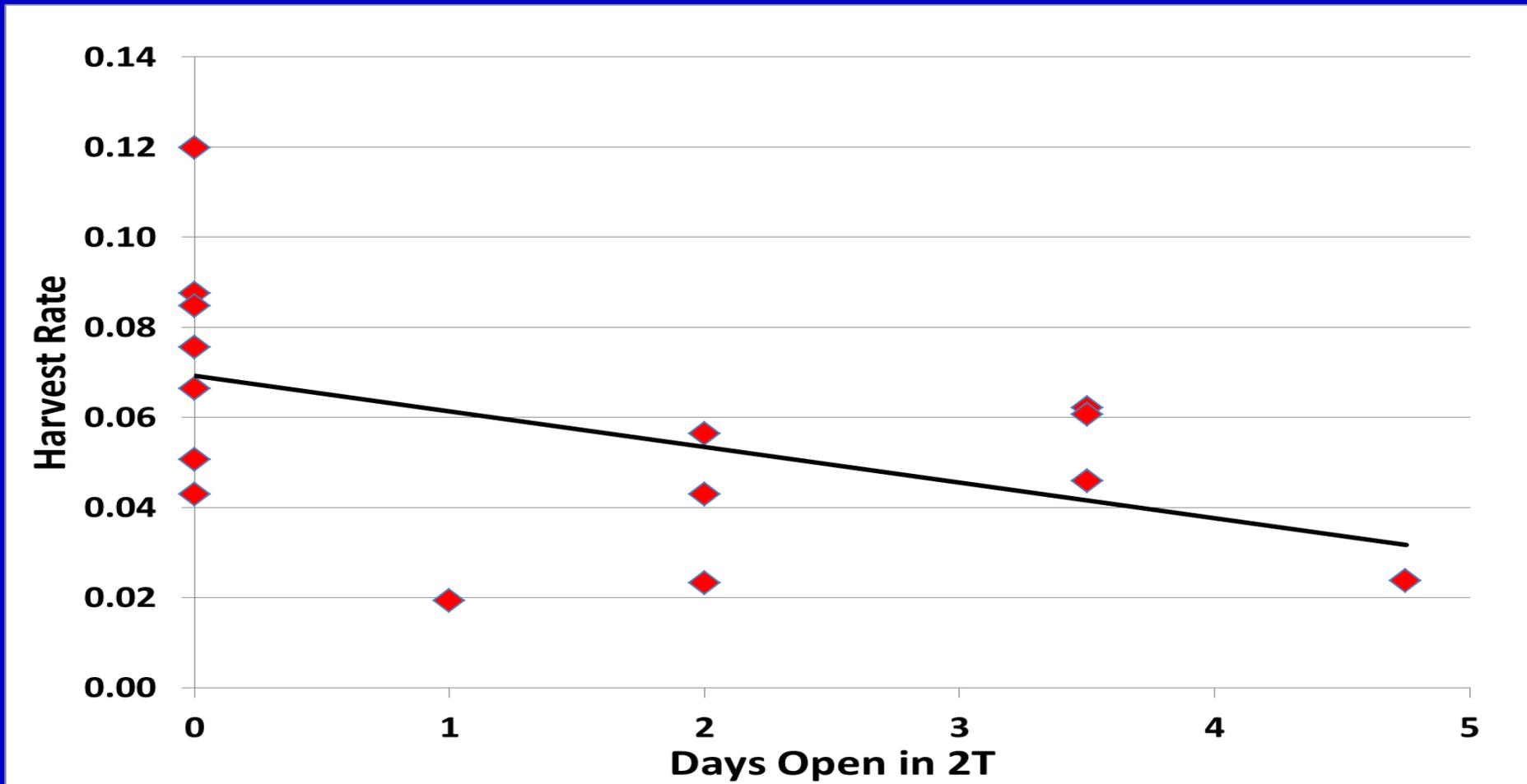
Initial Commission Guidance Conservation - Hatchery Reform

- **Implement Hatchery and Fishery Reform Policy**
- **Think long term, recognize there may be short term disruptions, pain, and friction.**
- **Evaluate switching Primary Chinook population from Naselle to Willapa**

Fishery Challenges Fall Chinook Catches



Analysis 1 - Interaction of Commercial and Recreational Fisheries



More commercial fishing – lower recreational harvest rate

Analysis 2 - Interaction of Commercial and Recreational Fisheries

- 2006 – 2009

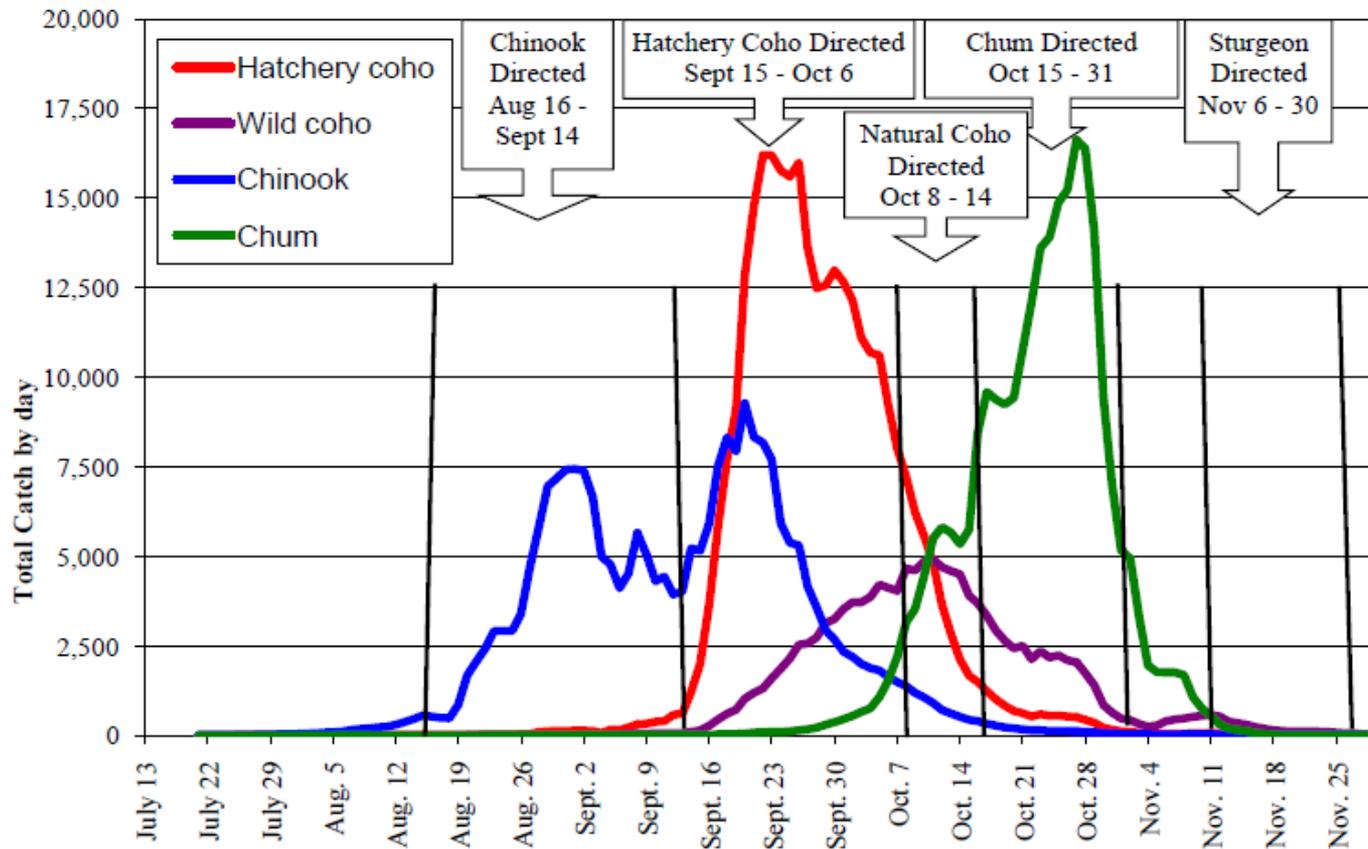
- 0 days fished in catch area 2T
- .069 harvest rate

- 2010 – 2013

- 3 days fished in catch area 2T
- .051 harvest rate

- 35% increase in marine recreational harvest rate with no commercial fishery prior to Sept 8.

Year	Number of scheduled Commercial Fishing Days prior to 9/8	Recreational Marine Harvest Rate
2006	0	0.066
2007	0	0.051
2008	0	0.085
2009	0	0.076
2010	2	0.043
2011	3.5	0.062
2012	3.5	0.061
2013	3.5	0.038
2006-2009	0	0.069
2010-2013	3.125	0.051



Early August commercial fishery

- Timing determines number of Chinook available
- Abundance increases rapidly in mid-August

Interaction of Commercial and Recreational Fisheries

Importance of Early August commercial fishery

- High value product
- High economic return per day fishing
- Provides stable fishery; coho abundance and fishery more variable

Initial Commission Guidance Fishery Challenges

- **Species Priority - Evaluate prioritizing:**
 - Chinook for recreational anglers
 - Coho and Chum for commercial fishers
- **Area Priority - Evaluate prioritizing:**
 - North bay (2T) for recreational anglers
 - South bay for commercial fishers

Initial Commission Guidance

- **Similar language as Grays Harbor Policy for transparency, communication, monitoring, enforcement, and in-season management.**

Revised (2nd) Draft of Policy

DRAFT March 3, 2015

¶

→ FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION ¶ → POLICY DECISION ¶

¶

POLICY TITLE: → Willapa Bay Salmon Management → **POLICY NUMBER:** → C-XXXX ¶

→ ¶

Cancels or → Effective Date: → XXXXXX, 2015 ¶

Supersedes: → NA → Termination Date: → December 31, 2023 ¶

¶

See Also: → Policies C-3608, C-3619 → Approved: _____ [date] ¶
by: _____ Chair ¶
Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission ¶

¶

¶

Purpose ¶

The objective of this policy is to achieve the conservation and restoration of wild salmon in Willapa Bay and avoid ESA designation of any salmon species. Where consistent with this conservation objective, the policy also seeks to maintain or enhance the economic well-being and stability of the **commercial and recreational** fishing industry in the state, provide the public with outdoor recreational experiences, and a fair distribution of fishing opportunities throughout the Willapa Bay Basin. Enhanced transparency, information sharing, and improved technical rigor of fishery management are needed to restore and maintain public trust and support for management of Willapa Bay salmon fisheries. ¶

¶

Definition and Intent ¶

This policy sets a general management direction and provides guidance for Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) management of all Pacific salmon returning to

Chinook Management

- **Three Alternatives**

 - Alternative A

 - Alternative B, Enhanced Commercial Fishery

 - Alternative C, Stronger Naselle Conservation Measures

- **All Alternatives**

 - Willapa Primary Population

 - 4 Brood Cycle Rebuilding Period

 - Transitional fisheries from 2015 to 2017

Chinook Alternatives

	Alternative A	Alternative B	Alternative C
Harvest Rate			
Willapa	20%/14%	20%/14%	20%/14%
Naselle	Unrestricted	Unrestricted	20%/14%
Broodstock Management (meet goals in 5 years)			
Willapa	Int Primary	Int Primary	Int Primary
Naselle	Stepping Stone	Stepping Stone	Contributing
Escapement (Meet goal in 16-21 years)			
Willapa	Yes	Yes	Yes
Naselle	No	No	Yes

Coho Management

- Continue to achieve the aggregate spawner goal
- Hatchery programs and fisheries managed to achieve broodstock standards
- Prioritizes commercial opportunity beginning Sept. 16 through Oct. 14

Chum Management

- Achieve the aggregate spawner goal
- No Chum directed fishing and 10% impact limit until the spawner goal is achieved
 - 1 year
 - 2 consecutive years, “penalty box”
- Prioritizes commercial opportunity beginning Oct. 15 through Oct. 31
- Evaluate hatchery Chum enhancement

Revised Draft Policy

- Released revised draft policy for public review on March 5th
- Comment period through March 26th

What were the major points of public comment?

- 14 written comments
 - Some represented groups (up to 19)
- 2 in-person meetings with constituents (1 recreational/conservation, 1 commercial)
- 0 on-line comments
- Summarized into 7 categories

Categories of Public Comment

- 17 – Conservation - Options
- 8 – Commercial Fisheries
- 8 – Recreational Fisheries
- 5 – Hatcheries and Broodstock Management
- 2 – In-season Management
- 2 – Clarity
- 5 – Miscellaneous

Comments

Chinook Harvest Rates

- Limit harvest rate to 14% in Phase 1 so rebuilding will not be delayed
- Implement 14% harvest rate only if “wild” Chinook are present
- Manage for hatchery production – not wild fish

Comments

Recreational Fishery

- Negatively affected with Willapa as Primary population and reduced hatchery production at Forks Creek Hatchery
- Harvest priority is not provided despite greater economic benefit per fish caught
- Policy conflates less restrictive rules with meaningful angling opportunity

Comments

Commercial Fishery

- Necessary to remove hatchery fish
- Allow in all areas and times within allowable harvest limits
- Need August & early September fisheries
- Need new selective gear

Comments

In-season Management

- Need to improve
- Need to ensure pre-season mortality projections are not exceeded
- Use language from draft 2015 Interim Guidance
- Monitoring must adequately account for impacts
- Don't mandate

How could the draft policy be improved?

- Incorporate in-season management language from draft 2015 Interim Guidance
- Refine language to ensure consistency with “Policy” format

Process and Next Steps

- **Apr - FWC considers revised draft Policy**
 - Receives public comment on revised draft Policy
 - Provides additional direction

- **June - FWC considers adoption of Policy**

Willapa Bay Salmon Management Policy



Questions?

Special Thanks:

**Jim Scott, Chad Herring, Ron Warren,
Mike Scharpf, Barb McClellan, Curt Holt,
Rob Allan, Randy Aho**

