The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife developed the Wallace Summer Chinook Hatchery and Genetic Management Plan (HGMP), placed a draft version on our web page on November 7, 2012, announced its availability, and solicited public comment through December 7, 2012.

A total of two individuals or organizations subsequently provided comments to WDFW during the public comment period. The comments ranged from short paragraphs to extensive reviews, and were received from Mr. Andy Appleby and Dr. Peter Paquet representing the Hatchery Scientific Review Group –Washington and from one member of the general public via email. Their comments are posted under separate cover, and our responses are appended below.

Response to Comments by the Hatchery Scientific Review Group – submitted to WDFW December 7, 2012:

Comment:
Water intake screens are in compliance with the federal and state criteria established in 1995 and 1996 but the screens are not in compliance with federal criteria mandated in 2011. We could find no statements about what is being done to correct this.

WDFW Response:
WDFW would like to take the opportunity to thank the HSRG for their review and comments on the Wallace River Chinook HGMP. The integrated hatchery Chinook program developed jointly by the Tulalip Tribe and WDFW is the result of collaboration and hard work that will ultimately advance the conservation and recovery of wild Chinook salmon in the Snohomish system. The implementation of a two-stepped integration approach, utilizing natural origin broodstock, and pHOS control measures, allows for a well-integrated program to be operated achieving the dual purposes of improving conservation of wild populations and maintaining harvest opportunities.

Regarding the HSRG's comments on the intake structure, the Wallace River Hatchery is currently scheduled for a facility remodel that will address any deficiencies in the intake structure. WFDW has identified Wallace River has a high priority in the capital budget request to the Legislature. It is currently ranked in the top five (5) projects with design and permitting expected in biennium 2015 and construction in biennium 2017. This construction request will not only bring Wallace River into compliance for both adult and juvenile passage and screening requirements but also address adult holding, juvenile rearing ponds and pollution abatement, all items identified by the HSRG.

Response to Public Comments on the draft WDFW Wallace Summer Chinook HGMP received by email:

Comment:
Will genetically altering the fish cause them to be sterile as with the Triploid trout? I feel it's wrong to genetically alter anything, leave what God created alone.

WDFW Response:
In the Wallace River Hatchery Chinook Salmon program, the salmon raised in the hatchery are not genetically modified (as plants can be in modern agriculture). In general, hatcheries are utilized to produce fish in areas where natural production potential has been altered due to

habitat loss or to provide for harvestable fish in various fisheries. Rivers have been dammed, forests clear-cut, dikes and levees are utilized to control flooding, estuaries have been filled in, and urban development has created degraded riparian habitat. All of these factors have caused losses in natural salmon productivity. This was recognized at the turn of the century, and hatcheries began producing fish to perpetuate the species in their altered environment, as well as to continue to provide for harvest.

Our current HGMP provides a strategy to perpetuate salmon while utilizing the natural selection processes of the river to ensure our hatchery genetics are compatible with the wild population. Fish from the wild are brought in to the hatchery and spawned with hatchery origin fish to provide the genetic traits that are closely aligned with those in the wild allowing genetic variability to flourish and reduce risks to the wild population.