

WASHINGTONS WILD FUTURE

Feb 4th, 2016 Listening Forum

Public Comments

WILDLIFE/LANDS

- No state funding to assist Colville Tribe in their pronghorn releases unless non-tribal hunters can hunt them.
- Marine mammal control.
- Eliminate break in early goose season – the break in October.
- Later archery season – During peak rut. It currently favors muzzleloader.
- Add late archery in Williams Creek for elk.
- It is believed that WDFW enables big timber companies to charge access fees due to contracts with enforcement.
- Late goose season (private land only) excludes some hunters. Do better at informing where the public can go.
- Naselle River and Hwy 4 private easement access needs improvement
- Hunting seasons are scheduled poorly/no rut for elk.
- Eliminate goose season split (the early one). Use Sept. season days.
- Get sea lions and cormorants under control.
- Need ability to manage sea lions
- Improve outreach info at WDFW access sites: e.g. flora/fauna, respecting adjacent private property.
- Mandate of WDFW includes wildlife viewing.
- Limit motorized access, but provide boat hunting.
- Concerns about the Columbia Blacktail population.
- Work with private industrial timberlands to provide recreational hunting access.
- Consider R6 2-pt min. for deer, 3-pt. min for deer on walk-in access areas.
- Concerns about liberal elk damage seasons, and total harvest by Master Hunters.
- Concerns about the number of permits provided to Master Hunters.
- Work with the legislature that requires open-space forest tax rate to require public access.
- Provide more disabled hunting motorized access.
- Concerns about access to timberlands, and the state should collect taxes on access permits.
- Hunters should be exempt from the Discover Pass.
- Restore game check stations, help with enforcement.
- Develop quad paths for disabled hunters to maneuver around gates. Work with private timberland owners to promote disabled access.

- Retain requirements for muzzleloaders to be low energy/low velocity, no scopes, action should be open to the elements.
- Late elk archery season on Williams Creek.
- Continue the muzzleloader elk units.
- Continue issuing damage permits for elk on private farmland.
- Late elk archery season on Williams Creek.
- Provide dealers with state duck stamps to provide directly to hunters (don't require SASE).
- Decrease sea lion, Caspian tern, cormorant populations on the lower Columbia River.
- Amend MMPA to allow more management of Seal Lions.
- Implement a 2-pt or 3-pt min. on Columbia Blacktail Deer.
- Allow scopes on muzzleloaders (even 1x).
- Buy access easements for river fishing access.
- Better management of WDFW forest lands.
- Thought (any 20) quality deer in November great idea.
- Let youth doe tags harvest either sex in early season.
- Do away with early goose closure.
- Provide twice as much road access for the disabled hunters
- Develop public access at N Nemah Bridge.
- Invasive species-WDFW should not buy more land without the capability to manage invasive species: ghost shrimp, japonica.
- Spartina: accounting-check crews to make sure the work is getting done.
- Engage youth in hunting and fishing activities to get them outside.
- We need more and easier access to hunt and fish areas in Grays Harbor and Pacific counties.
- In addition to gates, include a pathway access.
- Establish some sort of ADA sticker to allow quad access for disabled hunting.
- Rainier's access fees are too expensive. It creates a private monopoly.
- By not having ADA access to hunting & fishing, it is a quality of life issue. Access beyond "blind and wheelchair" would help other medically disabled persons.
- Develop better recreational fishing access on the North Nemah.
- Have a hunting season for cormorants and terns.

FISHING/SHELLFISH

- Needs assistance getting a fish-friendly tidegate on Redmond Creek— Jeff Davis will have his regional staff make contact and provide assistance.
- Get hatch (egg) boxes back in streams to improve fish production. Can use native stock and increase survival from egg to fry.
- Stop fin clipping
- Stop catch and release fishing. Catch your fish and leave.
- Increase release sites on rivers to spread fishermen out.

- Look into the economic study online regarding commercial and recreational fishing. Contention is that we undervalued commercial by 2.2 billion (by misinterpreting NOAA data)
- Disagreement with Willapa commercial rules and restrictions.
- Hook and release rules in ocean fishery means wastage at a high level. There is a lot of stress on Coho from this practice that this leads to less reproductive success for the fish. Recreational folks should have to take the first two fish they get and avoid “high-grading” their catch to better conserve the resource.
- 1985-1989 FMC book for Willapa Bay and Naselle shows us planting fish at a higher level. Wants that back. “WDFW is starving out Willapa Bay fishing industry”.
- By having fewer smolt than in the past, creatures in the ecosystem are taking a larger proportion and the ecosystem is not supported as it once was, “expecting 3 million smolt, getting 300K”.
- CCA is working to eliminate commercial fishing. They have too much influence on our agency.
- Create a rough calendar of commercial fishing openings, and distribute to restaurants so they better know when, what they may be buying could be illegal.
- Right now sportfishing pressure is at a high level on the coastal rivers due to the shut downs and reduction of hatchery stock on other rivers that flow into Puget Sound. Something needs to happen very soon or the heavy pressure now on the coastal area (Olympic Peninsula) will have a huge impact to wild fish runs as well as hatchery runs.
- We should also consider planting steelhead on rivers that now have hatcheries. Some rivers on the coast had great runs of larger planted steelhead prior to merging the salmon hatchery to also do steelhead. Now instead of 2 to 3 months of good fishing, the hatchery bound fish shoot up in December and it’s over. Wynoochee has a great fishery of planted steelhead and I see no reason why the Humptulips and the Satsop should only have a 30 day run. – Jim Babcock, Olympic Waters Guide Service.
- The Citizens of our state “own” the resources that commercial and recreational fishermen covet. As a commercial salmon troller, I provide access to fish for our residents who, for whatever reasons, do not choose to catch their own. Attempts to prioritize recreational fishing over commercial fishing denies access to fish by our non-fishing citizens. The retail costs for our sustainably-caught fish are, for many, too high now. Rather than push for a greater share of the resource, as by recent and continuing bulls in our legislature, we should be looking to support hatchery reforms and funding to create more fish. – Thank you for keeping our state respected by those in the PFMC process – Steve Wilson, Coastal Trollers Assoc.
- (A) Concern over the issue of sport priority in allocation of resource. Fish are a public resource, but if 1 in 6 citizens in this state buy a license, 5 people have to beg or buy a fish from a commercial provider. The point is that commercial fishing is the primary access to salmon, crab, shrimp and other fish for the majority of the public. Allocation is a function of the F & W Commission, but it is important to let the department know about these concerns as a commercial salmon troller who is a servant to the non fishing public. Please help the commission understand commercial fish is the public’s fish and that commercial fishing serves the majority of the public. (B) I am very grateful to the department for taking a leadership role in habitat protection and restoration. I’ll say up front I wish the Department had the policy

latitude to support removal of the 4 lower Snake River Dams. These dams hurt more salmon while costing taxpayers more money per kilowatt generated than any dam in the basin. Other than Columbia Basin dams, I feel the department has done as much as they could in a difficult political climate to protect and restore habitat. Many thanks for the good job. – Joel Kawahera

- There is a near total lack of communication between the commission, especially the fish committee, and the commercial fishery. Policies are unveiled that affect our future with no input from those impacted until the public hearing becomes a formality to formalize what has already been decided.
- (A) A teaching workshop for the commission on selective harvest with the involvement of those who are expected to carry it out. (B) Region 5 has a commissioner that openly says she doesn't represent those of us on the coast/Lower Columbia. Why would we invest large sums of money in technologies that we have no commitment from the state that will be allowed? -- "agency capture" by the recreational fishery. – Kurt Martin
- WB salmon policy causes 20 years of no commercial fishery. Need to increase hatchery production and allow harvest opportunity.
- WSGB least sport impact, Grays River/Toutle/Coweeman- WSGE decision is bad.
- Fight Skokomish U & A expansion, Satsop/Chehalis.
- Olympic Peninsula- 1 wild steelhead per year.
- Emergency change to this year PST to protect WB Chinook.
- Change hatchery bill process, do it by hatchery.
- I don't agree with Hatchery Reform Policies. Hatcheries goal is to produce fish for the harvest-Alaska model.
- Hoodspout pinks are good. Finch Creek youth salmon opportunity.
- Fight WFC.
- Give advanced notice of halibut closures.
- Puget Sound shrimp opener with halibut opener – schedule different days.
- Move the Willapa Bay line back out to the bar as it was 6 years ago. Move the line west about a mile and a half.
- Maintain Leadbetter Line – salmon troll
- Reduce sport limit to no more than 2 adults in Willapa Bay.
- Commercial clam dig on Leadbetter "Point".
- Eliminate Wild Rule ocean rec. salmon. Keep the first 2 fish caught.
- I am proud of my commercial fishing industry! It's a marriage. Commercial and recreational- make it right!/equality. Don't over prioritize one group.
- Review commercial impacts in Willapa Bay.
- Don't need four adult fish per day for recreational fishery.
- Maintain healthy recreational Chinook freshwater opportunity in Willapa Rivers.
- Why doesn't fish tax go to the WDFW?
- This is not a public meeting where I can say what I want so others here can hear me also. Commercial fishers were left out of the original invitation/message.

- The department needs to create a complete or expanded definition of the term “selectivity”. There are as many as five elements of selectivity that need to be defined/brought in.
- Increase commercial fisheries in Willapa Bay.
- Have at least three commissioners with commercial fishing experience.
- The managers of commercial fisheries are incompetent.
- Two fish limit (hatchery or wild). Don’t catch and release wild-it still does damage to the fish.
- Predator impacts on wild fish will increase with reduced hatchery production.
- No sturgeon sport fishing in the Columbia upstream of Rooster Rock (year round).
- Eliminate catch and release of sturgeon.
- Need real time fish harvest data. Example: phone app.
- Equity in who does test fishing- so small groups get contracts.
- Don’t fish in creeks on top of fish you are trying to recover.
- Where possible use technology like video to collect information (counting fish). It saves money for production.
- Equal access to the fish by recreational and commercial fishers.
- If not for commercial fishing, there wouldn’t be recreational fishing. “it’s a marriage, can’t have one without the other”.
- Maximize harvest of hatchery fish, don’t waste fish. Commercial fishing is designed to prevent waste.
- Reward and prioritize commercial fishermen for utilizing selective gear.
- Create a sustainable gillnet fishery on the Grays Harbor and Willapa Bay for Chinook, Coho and Chum.
- Rescind policy to close the mainstem Columbia for commercial gillnet fisheries.
- Rescind the Willapa policy enacted in 2015.
- Only allow one punch card per salmon angler and penalize or withhold issuing future punchcards.
- Stop sport caught tuna/salmon from entering the retail/commercial market.
- Remove crab pots in Willapa prior to sport fishery.
- Close catch and release sturgeon fishing on Willapa Bay and Columbia River.
- Better management of surplus hatchery fish. Better opportunity for commercial. Surplus fish is an excuse for conservationists (Fish Conservancy) to shut the hatcheries down.
- Willapa plan isn’t working.
- Grays Harbor plan isn’t working.
- The Region 6 salmon manager is an avid sport fisherman. He is biased against commercial.
- Commercial line in 2T back out to the Statute Line of Demarcation.
- Recreational: for the second or third punch card, the first should be turned in on the spot.
- Don’t eliminate commercial fishing on the Columbia River.
- Commercial razor clams should open April 1.
- “Write-off” stocks that can’t be recovered e.g. Green/Duwamish.
- On-board monitoring of recreational fisheries.

- Need hatcheries to support commercial and sport fisheries, otherwise tear them down.
- Shouldn't mass-mark salmon and not have mark-selective fisheries.
- Utilize in-season management to open or close rivers to allow recreational opportunities in times of abundance.
- Limit recreational anglers to one punch card per year.
- Incorporate hatch boxes and egg tubes into salmon recovery.
- Get rid of HSRG, hatchery and fishery reform policy.
- Re-evaluate gillnet release mortality rate.
- Limit ocean fisheries when fish don't show up.
- Change Naselle Chinook to "stabilizing".
- We want a halibut tag instead of a derby.
- Stop the tribes from digging razor clams.
- Lengthen razor clam seasons into the summer.
- Identify hatchery only systems and increase production for additional terminal harvest opportunity.
- Re-open Willapa Bay to commercial sand shrimp harvest.
- Open Willapa Spits earlier to commercial razor clam harvest.
- Adopt a razor clam punch card good for 50 clams over one tide series.
- Raise the razor clam limit to 20 or 30.
- Complete HGMP Plans (coastal, Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor)
- Grays Harbor has been turned into a directed Chinook hook and release fishery.
- Grays Harbor and Willapa Bay salmon policies had no input from the commercial fisheries sector included.
- Develop alternative feeding strategies for hatchery fish-midwater and bottom.
- Have a Listening forum meeting for commercial fishermen exclusively.
- Have a daily limit for recreational albacore fisheries.
- Never do a Chehalis recreational closure/opening like 2016. ALL OR NOTHING.
- Eliminate all NT State commercial fishing in Grays Harbor, including guides.
- Eliminate all sport fishing in Grays Harbor.
- If closing commercial, close recreational fishing during e-regs for conservation.
- Don't delay commercial crab to align with Oregon.
- Don't delay opening Willapa Bay crab.
- Re-examine crab line in Willapa Bay 60C.
- Open commercial razor clams all year. Sampling for openers.
- Public beach access for commercial razor clams.
- Allow gas carts to pack clams and equipment.
- Re-evaluate handling and mortality rates.
- Do away with IFSP!
- Have 30% harvest rate on NOR to allow access to hatchery fish.
- Willapa policy- remove natural origin and go with just natural.

- Need more commercial salmon fishing times/days in Willapa Bay.
- Sports fishermen need livebox for salmon to be required just like commercial.
- Put observers on salmon sportfishing charter boats, any and all recreational boats.
- Support commercial fishermen. They support local communities more than recreational fishers.
- Do not have 84 hour Willapa dp in fishery in Area 2.1.
- Hatcheries are important as they provide a buffer for ESA listed salmon.
- Like Willapa Bay fishing, same as last year.
- Keep commercial out of Willapa Bay until Sept. 15th.
- Keep the camaraderie alive between sport, charter, and commercial fisheries in Westport, we are doing well now-keep it up. Not in favor of “divide and conquer”.
- One hundred percent behind hatchery production of salmon.
- Get funds for hatcheries.
- Give commercial fishers in Willapa Bay more than 6 days like last year and earlier than Sept. 15th.
- If fishing is closed for commercial, then close it for all fishing.
- Commissioners need to look for equal opportunity for sports and commercial fishing. W/O opportunity, neither side can move ahead.
- Everyone share the harvest. Everyone share the hurt.
- Surplus fish need to go in the economy and not sold as junk.
- The Boldt decision was a fair decision between the state and the tribes. We need those kinds of decisions between the sports and commercial fishers.
- We need to do more to work together for the fish and not fight over the last 3 items.
- Get the politics out of the fish and get back to the science. We need more power for the biologists.
- Providing protection of the fish to build the runs back up should be the priority.
- Shut down salmon hatcheries that do not support commercial salmon fisheries. Hatcheries are supposed to have 95 percent take the rest is for reproduction.
- Fully fund all hatcheries in Willapa Bay.
- Change hatchery bidding program. Make it available by individual hatchery.
- Increase recreational opportunity.
- Naselle hatchery should produce more Chinook and should be a stabilizing system with more hatchery outplants (3+ million).
- Increase commercial salmon harvest to reduce wastage.
- Consider local needs for employment tied to commercial fishing.
- Support keeping gillnet fishing open in Willapa Bay and Grays Harbor.
- Provide more incentives to become commercial fishers. Look to Alaska for examples.
- Look to work collaboratively for the long term commercial harvest opportunity as a public benefit (Eat Local Fish!).
- Reduce Alaskan and Canadian fish harvest to increase fish returning to Willapa Bay.
- Lobby federal change in salmon quotas.

- Replant sturgeon to control sand shrimp in Willapa Bay.
- 50+ razor clam punch card for every opening. Increase limit when there is a surplus of razor clams.
- Investigate impacts from timber companies spraying clear cuts.
- Lower Columbian River sturgeon access on tagging.
- There is zero communication between WDFW Commission and commercial fishermen and community.
- Thank you, Director Unsworth, from commercial salmon fishermen.
- Willapa Bay oysters are all non-indigenous to the northwest/hatchery raised. Why not all salmon?
- Columbia River fish belong to everyone, commercial and recreational fishermen. The current catch policies are not advantageous to commercial fishermen and future commercial generations.
- Thank you, WDFW Commission, for the new 2015 Willapa Bay policy-wonderful recreational season in 2015.
- Allow handicap access below hatchery weirs for 7 day season, annually.
- No more than 10 percent of impacts for seine and beach seine fisheries.
- Increase Naselle hatchery production to 3+ million Chinook.
- Non-mark selective zones 4 and 5 seine and beach seine fisheries.
- Fish are getting smaller, but A-run and B-run length restrictions aren't getting smaller. Consider reducing the 78 cm length cutoff between A-run and B-run.

ENFORCEMENT

- Maintain enforcement budget and presence.
- Thanks for the Forks officer/we miss Brian Fairbanks.
- Continue patrols to regulate gillnet rules and regulations.

HABITAT

- Logging practices are out of control. Herbicide application is killing vegetation important to fish. Skidding on steep ground and leaving deep ruts which deliver sediment to streams.
- Include the Conservation District in the Chehalis Habitat Restoration Plan development and implementation. They could use some assistance in capacity to participate.
- Need to bring back bar scalping while using bio-engineering in larger rivers to reduce flooding and enhance fish habitat. Too much gravel is making flow go sub-surface and limiting habitat. Remove during summer low flows.

LICENSING

- Eliminate higher out of state commercial license fees – as regulated by law (Carlson Act).
- Increase commercial license fees.

- OK with increased license costs and fees to maintain current opportunities.
- Increase sport license fees.
- Develop viable buy-out of commercial licenses, Columbia River to Grays Harbor.
- Shouldn't have to renew commercial licenses until seasons are set.
- Keep commercial license fees within WDFW and not put in the general fund.

OTHER

- Desire to see renewed effort on youth and education, and recognize it will require rebuilding and a long term effort. (Jason W. traded business cards and plans to spend some more time speaking with him in the future. Thinks he had insights to share from WDFW's past history on this).
- Need all funds going to the general fund. It makes all customers equal.
- Need to schedule meetings earlier. Up to 8 months as much as possible. E.g. Aug. halibut, NOF.
- Increase commercial license fees.
- Don't let policy decisions be driven by special interest groups.
- Always be honest and straight forward with the public and the commissioners. In the past they have not always been honest and straight forward with proposals when presenting them to the public and or the commissioners (internet, mailings, etc.)
- WA & OR should have a think tank to look at all of this information.
- Cutback WDFW staff.