

Fish Committee Report
April 10, 2020

The Fish Committee met yesterday April 9, 2020 by conference call. The agenda and materials were posted on the Commission website prior to the meeting.

All Fish Committee Members were present. Also in attendance were Commissioners Baker, Thorburn, Anderson, and Linville, Commission staff Nikki Kloepper, Attorney General's Office counsel Joe Panesko, and Department staff members Kelly Cunningham, Laurie Peterson, and Kirk Hughes. Approximately 12 members of the public were also on the call.

The Fish Committee discussed materials associated with the topic of providing guidance on the development policy language revisions to Policy C-3619. The Fish Committee reached a unanimous recommendation to the Commission to consider under agenda item 8 at this meeting. This recommendation is shown below and is also posted under agenda item 8.

Policy C-3619 Policy Language Development Guidance

Fish Committee Recommendation

April 9, 2020

The policy language development guidance below refers to the current language of Policy C-3619. It is consistent with the original June 2018 motion as to changes to be considered and contains both items associated with that motion and additional items from the review process to date. The guidance includes direction to develop language for a draft revised Policy C-3619 for review by the Fish Committee at the June Commission meeting, so as to facilitate Commission consideration to approve a public review draft at the July 31-August 1 Commission meeting and the Commission making a final decision on any policy language changes at the October 23-24 Commission meeting.

- A. Change the title to reflect a hatchery policy only; delete fishery reform from title: *Anadromous Salmon and Steelhead Hatchery Policy*
- B. Change the language in the **Purpose** section as follows:
 - The purpose of this Department of Fish and Wildlife policy is to **guide hatchery programs to advance the conservation and recovery of natural origin salmon and steelhead (salmon) by promoting and guiding the continuing to implementation of hatchery reform measures; to perpetuate salmon as mitigation for lost abundance due to permanently blocked or lost habitat; and to provide sustainable economic and stability benefits to recreational, commercial, and tribal fisheries in Washington State.**

- C. Change the **Definition and Intent** section to reflect the additions in the Purpose section and to insert a separate paragraph describing the intent to begin development of a joint policy with Tribal Co-Managers after the adoption of a revised Commission policy.
- D. In the **General Policy Statement**, alter language as follows:
- Insert a paragraph adding mitigation hatcheries as a program designation to the existing categories of conservation hatchery programs and harvest hatchery programs, using a “lost habitat” definition that refers to perpetuation.
 - Delete the two paragraphs dealing with mark-selective fisheries.
 - Add phrasing in the first paragraph about providing for a greater level of salmon abundance to achieve ecological, socio-cultural, legal, and fishery-related purposes.
 - Add clarifying language to the “All-H” paragraph regarding mitigating for permanently lost habitat; to strongly advocating for the protection and restoration of currently damaged habitat that could be restored; and to clarify any confusion over State mark-selective fishing practices.
 - Strengthen the last paragraph of the current language to more directly recognize Treaty Indian fishing right obligations and describe a strong Tribal Co-Management relationship.
 - Add a final paragraph stating that after adoption of this policy by the Commission, the Director is tasked to begin development of a joint policy on hatchery programs with Tribal co-managers that has similar development and joint commitment provisions to the current joint policy on hatchery disease protocols.
- E. In the **Policy Guidelines** section:
1. Start with guideline that describes and achieves policy recognition of the various genetic risks of hatchery programs.
 2. Add a guideline that describes and achieves policy recognition of the ecological risks of hatchery programs.
 3. Do not include guideline points 1, 2, and 3 in the prior policy document, but rather substitute with a guideline calling for the development of a strong Hatchery and Genetic Management Plan (HGMP) for every anadromous salmon hatchery program in the State that includes at least the following.
 - a. Consistency with this policy.
 - b. Addressing policy guidelines 1 and 2 above.
 - c. Providing descriptions and plans for the normal content categories found in contemporary HGMPs in place in 2020, including sections on broodstock collection and mating protocols; juvenile salmon rearing and release specifics; and monitoring, evaluation, and research provisions. (Provide an appendix to the Policy document with a prototype HGMP table of contents as a contemporary example).
 - d. Providing for special initiatives such as the SRKW prey enhancement initiative.
 - e. Provide an implementation schedule recommendation.
- Include in this guideline point language that the HGMP development process is to be done with full consultation and collaboration with Tribal Co-Managers, adjacent States, and the Federal government.

4. Keep prior guideline number 4 to mark all hatchery fish, but strike the phrasing "...that is intended to be used for harvest..." so that this would constitute a guideline to mark all hatchery fish (without specification for one purpose) unless agreed to otherwise in an intergovernmental agreement.
 5. Keep prior guidelines 5 (to secure some operational cost necessities) and 11 (identifying some watersheds to be free of hatchery fish of a particular species), but add in all necessary operational costs for the three purposes identified in prior guideline 5.
 6. Delete prior guidelines 6 (dealing with an implementation schedule from the 21st Century Salmon and Steelhead Framework), 8 (dealing with the promotion of new selective fishing gear), 9 (relocated via consolidation with prior guideline 5), and 10 (dealing with the definition of "full implementation" of selective sport and commercial fishing gear).
 7. Retain prior guideline 7, but change the annual report to the Commission to be a written report rather than a mandatory Commission presentation, unless there is a policy implementation problem identified. Place this provision in a new Adaptive Management section rather than the Policy Guidelines section with additional reporting intent (see below).
 8. Prepare an alternative to current guideline #11 that calls for providing the highest level of protection from negative genetic and ecological hatchery impacts to natural origin populations that have not been significantly genetically modified from the natal state or are now in a healthy condition with little or no same species/run hatchery influence, and a process for identifying such populations.
 9. Add a guideline calling for the expanded use of weirs to separate hatchery and natural origin adult salmon below natural spawning grounds where feasible and agreed to with area-specific Tribal Co-Managers.
- F. Add an **Adaptive Management** section.
- Include and adaptive management section that contains at least the following.
- A section describing the rationale and need for adaptive management, including scientific and management uncertainty, effects of climate change, etc.
 - A periodic review reporting section that describes the annual review provision shown above in #8, includes a qualitative review in 2024 of policy performance over the past 15 years and adds a 10-year more comprehensive review in 2030. The reports should be provided to the Commission with an opportunity for public comment on any adaptive management changes, and to the Tribal Co-Managers for their governmental processes.
 - Proposals for more extensive monitoring, evaluation or research that is appropriate for an HGMP for a particular hatchery program, or for overarching short and long-term assessment purposes.
 - A process for policy adjustments when significant new information or changes in relevant factors occur, including a Co-Manager involvement process.