

Meeting Report to the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission

Tribal and State Co-Managers Meeting on the Policy C-3619 Review Process
July 28, 2020

A webinar meeting was convened on July 28, 2020 to discuss draft language for possible revisions to Policy C-3619 with Tribal Co-Managers, in accordance with the schedule and process presented at the April 2020 Commission meeting. There were 63 participants on the webinar, including Commission Chair Carpenter, Commissioners Graybill, Mclsaac, and Anderson; Director Susewind and Fish Policy Director Ron Warren; Tribal policy representatives from Puget Sound, Coastal, and Columbia River Tribes; and Agency and Tribal technical and policy support staff.

The group reviewed the remaining process and schedule leading to a final Commission decision at the October Commission meeting as well as the July 15 draft of revised policy language for Policy C-3619. The purpose of the meeting was to hear the policy level perspectives of Tribal Co-Managers on the draft language at this stage in the process, for consideration by the full Commission at this Commission meeting.

Tribal Co-Managers indicated their appreciation of the policy level consultation meeting occurring in advance of the Commission meeting as had been planned and in general stated that the draft language represented a significant advancement over the content of the policy language adopted in 2009. They expressed policy perspectives related to Southern Resident Killer Whale prey enhancement; the commitment to developing a joint policy with Tribal Co-Managers after the Commission Policy process concludes; the habitat needs of hatchery produced fish and the need to continue to focus on restorable salmon and steelhead habitat; mitigation hatchery concepts; the Co-Manager working relationship; the hatchery role in re-introduction efforts above impassable dams; how a joint policy with Tribal Co-Managers would function state-wide; and the need for another Co-Manager policy level consultation prior to final action being taken by the Commission in October. Some specific language changes were recommended by the Colville Tribe.

Details of these policy level perspectives were discussed by the Fish Committee on Thursday, July 30.