

Fish and Wildlife Commission Policy C-3619 Hatchery and Fishery Reform

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Overview

Anadromous Salmon and Steelhead Hatchery Public Review Policy Draft

- Review Key Portions of the draft Policy Language
 - Purpose
 - General Policy Provisions
 - Policy Guidelines
 - Adaptive Management
- Schedule



Purpose

The purpose of the Anadromous Salmon and Steelhead Hatchery Policy (Policy) is to guide hatcheries and their individual rearing programs to advance the conservation and recovery of wild salmon and steelhead by continuing to implement hatchery reform measures; to perpetuate salmon and steelhead in accordance with existing mitigation programs and agreements for permanently lost habitat; and to provide sustainable economic and stability benefits to recreational, commercial and tribal fisheries in Washington State as appropriate. For the purposes of this Policy, a hatchery program is the rearing and release of a single species or race of anadromous salmon or steelhead in a hatchery or hatchery complex.



Authority Definition and Intent

This Policy is applicable to hatcheries operated by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) for programs that include anadromous salmon and steelhead. The intent of this Policy is to provide direction, goals, objectives, and actions to improve hatchery effectiveness and ensure compatibility between hatchery salmon and steelhead production and wild salmon and steelhead conservation in a manner that optimally achieves the stated purposes of this Policy.



General Provisions

The highest priority policy commitment shall be the conservation of natural resources, including the conservation and recovery of depressed coincident wild salmon and steelhead populations, the maintenance of wild populations currently in a healthy condition, the conservation of genetic resources found in hatchery populations, and providing critical ecological benefits such as prey to endangered Southern Resident Killer Whales and marine nutrient re-cycling.



General Provisions Continued

The Department shall maintain a strong Co-Manager working relationship with affected Tribes that ensures open communication, full consideration of scientific and policy perspectives, and a cooperative approach to decision-making on salmon and steelhead hatchery program matters that directly affect Treaty-reserved fishing rights.

Upon adoption of this Policy by the Commission, the Director is tasked to begin development of a joint policy agreement on salmon and steelhead hatchery programs with Tribal Co-Managers that has similar development and joint commitment provisions to those in the current joint policy on hatchery disease protocols.



Policy Guideline #1

1. It is recognized that there can be significant genetic risks to wild salmon and steelhead populations that accompany the operation of a salmon or steelhead hatchery program.... Genetic risks shall be minimized in accordance with the provisions of Hatchery Genetic Management Plans as shown in Policy Guideline 3.



Policy Guideline #2

2. It is recognized that there can be significant ecological risks to wild salmon and steelhead populations that accompany the operation of a salmon or steelhead hatchery program.... Ecological risks shall be minimized in accordance with the provisions of Hatchery Genetic Management Plans as shown in Policy Guideline 3.



Policy Guideline #3

3. It is recognized there can be many benefits from well-managed hatchery programs that propagate salmon or steelhead.... Hatchery Genetic Management Plan provisions should reflect a balance between the need to minimize genetic and ecological risks to coincident wild populations and providing for the ecological and societal benefits of hatchery propagated salmon and steelhead.



Policy Guideline #4

4. A Hatchery Genetic Management Plan shall be developed for every anadromous salmon and steelhead hatchery program operated under the authority of this Policy, and each hatchery program shall operate in accordance with the provisions of its Hatchery Genetic Management Plan. ...Hatchery Genetic Management Plan shall describe operations consistent with the provisions of this Policy to balance the need to minimize genetic and ecological risks to coincident wild populations while providing for the ecological and societal benefits of hatchery propagated salmon and steelhead.



Policy Guideline #5

5. All chinook, coho and steelhead propagated in hatcheries shall be externally marked, except:
- as modified by state-tribal agreements;
 - for conservation or other management purposes; or
 - to fulfill other research needs.



Policy Guideline #6

6. The Department shall strive to secure necessary funding to ensure that Department-operated hatchery facilities:
 - comply with environmental regulations for hatchery operations, including passage facilities, water intake screening, and pollutant control systems; and
 - achieve the administrative necessities of this Policy, including those described in the Policy Guidelines and Adaptive Management sections.



Policy Guideline #7

7. In considering questions of balance between the risks of possible deleterious impacts to wild salmon and steelhead populations from hatchery programs conducted in accordance with this Policy, the highest level of protection from possible negative effects of hatchery programs to wild populations shall be provided to those wild populations that have not had substantial genetic modification from past hatchery practices or are now in a healthy condition with little or no same species/run hatchery influence.



Policy Guideline #8

8. The Department shall plan for and implement an expanded use of methods to separate hatchery and natural origin salmon and steelhead below natural spawning grounds where scientifically justified, logistically feasible, and agreed to with area-specific Tribal Co-Managers.



Adaptive Management

The Commission acknowledges that adaptive management procedures will be essential to achieve the purpose of this Policy and are expected to occur after proper evaluation and as appropriate to achieve the purposes of this Policy.

- Annual written reports updating progress
- If not being achieved – efforts to determine why and to identify actions necessary to correct course
- Expectations to implement actions to manage adaptively to achieve the purposes of this policy
- If significant new information or changes in relevant key factors – Commission notification with a process to consider changes coordinated with co-managers and including a transparent public input



Adaptive Management - Continued

Within one year of adoption of this Policy, the Department shall provide written proposals for overarching regional or state-wide short or long-term assessment purposes monitoring, or for evaluation or research that is more extensive than described in an individual Hatchery Genetic Management Plan. The Department shall seek funding for these proposals as a high priority matter consistent with the purpose of short- and long-term adaptive management needs.



Adaptive Management - Continued

The Department shall provide a written qualitative review in 2024 of policy performance over the previous 15 years and a comprehensive written review in 2030.



Appendices

Appendix 1. Prototype Example of a Table of Contents to a Hatchery Genetic Management Plan for a Washington State Hatchery Program. (Draft TBC by July 30, 2020).

Appendix 2. Status and Schedule for Completion of Hatchery Genetic Management Plans for Washington State Hatcheries Applicable to revised Policy. (Draft TBC by July 30, 2020).



Schedule – Next Steps

- August 1, 2020 – Consider approval of draft policy language
- September 10–12, 2020 – Review public comment; Finalize language and announce final public comment period
- October 23-24, 2020 – Consider Final Adoption





Questions?