

## Summary Sheet

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**Meeting dates:** June 25, 2020

**Agenda item:** Willapa Bay Salmon Management Background and Revisions

**Presenter(s):** Ron Warren, Director of Fish Policy

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### **Background summary:**

In the fall of 2014, the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC), supported by Department staff, initiated a process to develop a salmon management policy for Willapa Bay. The intent of the policy is to provide Department staff with general guidance and management objectives for salmon management in Willapa Bay.

In June 2015, the policy was adopted by the FWC as the Willapa Bay Salmon Management Policy – C-3622. The objectives of the policy “is to achieve the conservation and restoration of wild salmon in Willapa Bay and avoid ESA designation of any salmon species. Where consistent with this conservation objective, the policy also seeks to maintain or enhance the economic well-being and stability of the commercial and recreational fishing industry in the state, provide the public with outdoor recreational experiences, and an appropriate distribution of fishing opportunities throughout the Willapa Bay Basin. Enhanced transparency, information sharing, and improved technical rigor of fishery management are needed to restore and maintain public trust and support for management of Willapa Bay salmon fisheries.” The policy recognizes uncertainty in implementation, so depends on continued economic and biological analysis, and relies on an adaptive management approach.

The Commission requested a comprehensive and thorough review of the implementation and performance of the policy in Phase-one. In December 2020, the Comprehensive Evaluation of the Willapa Bay Salmon Management Policy C-3622, 2015-2018, was accepted as final by the Commission and key aspects for policy revision were discussed. This meeting will provide Commissioners with Willapa Bay hatchery and fishery backgrounds. It will also provide proposed options for moving forward with revisions for Policy C-3622 that include fisheries sector prioritization and hatchery production.

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### **Staff recommendation:**

Review of staff recommendations for fisheries sector priority and hatchery production.

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### **Policy issue(s) and expected outcome:**

The Commission will need to review the proposed options and determine what steps to take moving forward.

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### **Fiscal impacts of agency implementation:**

Not applicable.

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### **Public involvement process used and what you learned:**

Public involvement in the review was included throughout the Policy review process. To date department staff have sought public input through twelve public or advisory group meetings as well as through the Willapa Bay Policy Review webpage. The meetings began in January of 2018 and concluded with a public meeting held via webinar on August 18, 2020. Notes from all the meetings are attached as Appendix 6 in the review document and are also available online

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on the Willapa Bay Salmon Advisory Group webpage. After the September Commission meeting a press release was sent out requesting public input on whether the policy should be modified and asking for suggestions of areas in the policy to modify. The public comment received through the webpage listed above is included as Appendix 7 in the review document.

The public will continue to be involved through comment at this meeting and at Fish Committee meetings later in the summer.

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**Action requested and/or proposed next steps:**

Department staff will seek Commission recommendations on the Willapa Bay Salmon Management Policy revisions. The next steps will be determined by the Commission upon reviewing the possible revision trajectories.

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**Draft motion language:**

Not applicable.

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**Post decision communications plan:**

If the Commission requests analysis or development of potential new revisions, those requests should be communicated to stakeholders via the webpage developed for the Willapa Bay Salmon Management Policy Review on the Agency website as well as through a post meeting press release.