

**Policy and Regulatory Concurrency Accord  
for  
Oregon and Washington Jointly Managed Columbia River Non-Tribal Fisheries**

Note: This initial Writing Work Group draft document is intended to focus on just the **conservation** related matters portion of an overall Agreement, reflective of the context of discussions at the past 2021 Joint-State Columbia River Salmon Fishery Policy Review Committee meetings through May 26, 2021; this draft is intended for review and discussion at the July 28, 2021 Committee meeting. Fishery specific provisions are not included at this time.

**Purpose**

*As the final document is developed, insert some sort of opening chapeau that mentions both Commissions and the purposes/intent of this policy document.*

**Concurrent Guiding Principles**

1. Promote the recovery of Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species and the conservation of all wild stocks of salmon, steelhead, sturgeon, and other native species in the Columbia River.
2. Continue leadership on fish recovery and restoration actions, including improved fish survival through the federal Columbia River hydropower system, improved habitat conditions in Columbia River tributaries, mainstem, and estuary areas, including reduced predation by fish, birds, and marine mammals; managing hatchery production compatibly with wild fish goals; and harvest fishery management that meets conservation and recovery responsibilities.
3. Support the short and long term qualitative and quantitative goals of the Columbia Basin Partnership Task Force, including the 25 year “Healthy and Harvestable” objective. Continue to work with NOAA, Tribal sovereigns, State agencies, and the public as specific management actions are developed to implement those goals.
4. Continue to meet the terms of U.S. v. Oregon management agreements with Columbia River Treaty Tribes.

*As the final document is developed, it is intended that there will be Policy Guidelines related to fishery management specifics.*

**Implementing Provisions**

The intent of this Policy Accord is to provide direction, positions, strategies, goals, and actions to the Departments to achieve its stated purposes and guiding principles. Thus, the Departments are directed to implement the following provisions.

## 1. Conservation and Recovery of ESA-listed and non-ESA Stocks

It is important that this Policy Accord is built on the primary foundation of putting conservation and recovery as the first priority. The Departments will use the following policy positions and directives toward implementing meaningful measures achieving this over-arching goal.

- a. Promote the recovery of ESA-listed populations of salmon and steelhead in the Columbia River by ensuring that fisheries and hatcheries are operated in a manner consistent with the provisions of the ESA.
- b. Promote the conservation of non-ESA listed wild stocks by managing fisheries to achieve spawning escapement and fishery conservation goals.
- c. Manage towards the general goal to increase natural production of salmon, steelhead and other native fish in the Columbia River basin for the purpose of perpetuating a magnitude of abundance more consistent with historic abundance. As part of this, identify short- and long-term hatchery and natural-origin abundance goals for individual populations and population aggregates where possible that accomplish full utilization of existing natural habitat and full mitigation for lost and impaired habitat.
- d. In the short-term, support increases in hatchery production where full mitigation of losses from human-caused uses has yet to occur, to accommodate initiatives to provide additional prey to endangered Southern Resident Orca as well as, when possible, within constraints necessary to support natural origin salmon, steelhead and other native species, enhanced fishery benefits. Enhanced hatchery production of salmon and steelhead shall be done in areas and with strategies that avoid or strongly minimize negative genetic and ecological effects on wild salmonid populations.
- e. Support ladders or other means of passage, and/or reintroduction and restoration of salmon and steelhead in habitat currently blocked by dams without fish ladders.
- f. Integrate the most current understanding of the effects of climate change into all decisions, planning, and implementation efforts associated with this Policy Accord.
- g. Convene a policy level joint-State body to review available information, including primarily the 2020 EPA report titled "Columbia River Cold Water Refuges Plan", regarding cold water refuge area migrating salmonids, and the impacts of fisheries in these areas. Develop a report with recommendations on possible additional thermal angling sanctuaries. The report is to be submitted to the Washington and Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commissions for their consideration for possible concurrent regulations.

## 2. All H Context

The measures in this Policy Accord should be implemented as part of an “all-H” strategy that integrates hydro-system, habitat, hatchery, harvest and actions designed to improve the abundance and fishery management of Columbia River salmon and steelhead. Although this Policy Accord focuses primarily on fishery management and hatchery production, it in no way is meant to diminish the significance of habitat and hydro-system protection and restoration. Rather, this Policy Accord explicitly supports additional minimization of hydro-system related fish mortality and further protection and restoration of salmon steelhead and other native fish habitat throughout the Columbia River basin. The Departments will use the following policy positions and directives toward ensuring that efforts in all H areas are implemented in a cohesive manner towards achieving the purposes of the Policy Accord.

- a. Advocate for increased downstream and upstream survival of salmon steelhead and other native fish through the Columbia River hydro-power system
- b. Advocate for salmon and steelhead habitat protection and restoration, including reducing predation on sensitive stocks by marine mammals, birds, and fish in areas and situations of particular vulnerability.
- c. *(Examining hatchery production and impacts in the overall conservation context will be considered as the Policy Accord is further developed.)*
- d. *(Examining harvest in fisheries in the overall conservation context will be considered as the Policy Accord is further developed.)*

### 3. Actions to Achieve Short- and Long-Term Goals

In the spirit of the October 2020 Governor’s Agreement between the States of Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana<sup>1</sup> pledging collaboration in rebuilding Columbia River salmon and steelhead and to advance the goals recommended by the Columbia River Basin Task Force, the Departments shall develop and implement actions consistent with these recommended goals and the policy directives of this Policy Accord.

### 4. Co-Management with Columbia River Tribes

- a. Non-Tribal fisheries shall continue to be managed to meet the terms of U.S. v. Oregon management agreements with Columbia River Treaty Tribes.
- b. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife shall continue to meet Colville tribal subsistence and ceremonial needs consistent with agreements with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, as well as providing the Wanapum Band of Sokulk Indians a fishing opportunity consistent with Washington RCW 77.12.453.

### 5. *Other Implementing Provisions related to Concurrent Guiding Principles for Columbia River fishery management - yet to be developed.*

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<https://www.nwcouncil.org/sites/default/files/Four%20govs%20agreement%20Columbia%20River%20salmon%20Oct%202020.pdf>

## **Adaptive Management**

The Commissions recognizes that the provisions of this Policy Accord describe a presumptive basis to achieve its stated purposes, and that considerable uncertainty exists in how and when progress in implementing the guiding principles and actions will be regarded as achieving the purposes of this Policy Accord. In addition to management performance uncertainty, there are many unpredictable events that could have a substantial effect on the presumptive path forward, including large fluctuations in short-term run sizes, climate change and changes in short-term environmental patterns, possible environmental disasters, and population restoration results occurring sooner or later than expected. Therefore, the Commissions acknowledge that adaptive management approach implemented within policy, rule or statute constraints 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 Accord.