WDFW Region 6 - District 17N Grays Harbor
2023 Public Fishery Suggestion Summary
as of 3/22/23

2/16
Gillnetting in the state of Washington and Oregon should be eliminated as soon as possible to save our native/wild, salmon, steelhead, sea run cutthroat trout, white and green sturgeon. And gillnetting for smelt should be eliminated due to the amount of native salmon and steelhead Smoltz and baby sturgeon caught in the nets.

2/19
This comment is about orca food/salmon. We are over Harvesting salmon off the Washington coast. Between the salmon commercial fisherman and the sport salmon fisherman we are not leaving enough salmon for the orcas. I thought hatchery fish were supposed to be for the orcas, and it has just been an excuse for the guides, and the charter fleet for the states to raise more fish in the salmon hatchery‘s. You are overharvesting Salmon in the ocean and leaving the orcas to starve and other species.

3/1 Forecast Meeting
Salmon season extended into December in Chehalis

Jacks open first of Sept in Chehalis instead of August 1st
Barbless hooks in Chehalis and Humptulips (could not fully hear this comment during the meeting and the comment is not clear on the recording)

Need more accessibility for handicapped fishers and allow disabled anglers to fish from boat when rules state no fishing from a floating device

Anti-bobber fishing restriction Sept 16 thru Oct 31 in mainstem Chehalis River

Jack limit should be increased or removed for GH

The issue regarding the bobber has to do with the fish staging and water temperature (cooler water). Possibly use the South Elma Bridge to Fuller Bridge as a boundary for the regulation change.

Open the Wishkah River Sept 1 but no later than Sept 16

Open Van Winkle Creek to 1 fish (Chinook adult)

Make adjustment to the CRC card for jack harvest and how those are accounted for

3/10
Would it not make sense to make it as simple as possible and better mortality for the fish if the rules were as simple as the first one/two fish you catch (clipped or unclipped)

you must keep. No more catch and release as the chances of that fish surviving at very slim. It is all about conservation, what is best for the species.

The other thing would be you cannot purchase multiple punch cards to catch 50+ salmon for the year. If you average the weight to ten pounds per fish @ 50 fish that is 500 pounds of fish for the year. Way more than one person would eat in a year. Again, conservation is the key.

None of this is unreasonable. Just like bass fishermen the salmon/steelhead fishermen need to learn just because you can doesn't mean you should.

3/14
We need to insure that our larger , more healthy, brood stock return to the spawning areas. We need to stop the targeting of larger fish. We must use smaller gauge kill nets (5-7") and tangle nets of 5" immediately.

3/17
I would like to propose a conservation salmon management plan. One I hope could increase the possibility for better fishing opportunities.

1. If the predicted return for a salmon species is less than 20% over the escapement goal than there would be no fishery for that species. Because you cannot predict the run that good and your control over the fishery is not that good. This fishery could be opened later if the ocean fishery indicated the run was going to be bigger than predicted.
2. If the predicted return for a salmon species is greater than 20% over the escapement goal than the fishery should be for 50% of the number over the escapement goal. This may give us the possibly of a little bigger returns in the future.

Could you please explain to me if you are not trying you increase escapement why are you requiring the spending of billions of dollars to remove fish passage barriers and requiring stream buffers if there is going to be no salmon to use them.

3/22 NOF Zoom Meeting
Endorse Model B (mentioned three times during comment period)

Alternate proposal for selective gear rule on Wynoochee River: Selective gear rule in August from Black Creek downstream. Keep rest of the river with current regulations Aug. 16-Nov. 30, no date above White Bridge after Sept. 16th.

Selective gear rule below White Bridge on Wynoochee. Satsop Chinook are near Schafer Park area, don't need to shut lower river. Chehalis River jack fishery by Fuller Hill area where the Chinook hold by mouth Satsop (open Oct 15th or earlier if it rains)

Chehalis Dec. coho fishery upper river need to fish from boat, late coho hold from Oakville to Centralia, no public access to fish from bank. If have steelhead issues in Dec. recommend fishing from a boat from Oakville up to Centralia. Go no bait single point barbless if necessary.

Chehalis Dec. coho fishery, allow boat fishing down to Porter. Most of the upper river is private property and difficult to fish from bank, also issue with Chehalis Tribe. If have steelhead issues again and coho shut down in Dec. Is there any way to increase coho limit (up to 3) in Nov?

December not many STHD around, shut down salmon for steelhead is silly.
Upper Chehalis basin late timed for end of Dec., the local community chose this fish to get better quality fish compared to early timed fish. If can't fish from boat in Dec., upriver locals cannot get to the fish.

Steelhead issue with December like idea of giving 3rd coho in November. If there is a third fish, bonus coho should be a hatchery fish.

Agree 3rd fish should be a hatchery fish

Fished Chehalis since 1968, days of bank walking are behind me, can't walk anymore. I can only fish out of my boat. Can't get around by foot anymore. I fish salmon in December, last year you took away means from fishing from boat and that took a year away from my life.

When you make decisions about not fishing from a boat, remember folks that are limited (handicapped) and cannot fish from the bank. Need to have concern for those that have the least ability and means to fish.

3/22
Ban use of nets in commercial fishing

3/23
Would you see if a 3 fish bag works on the Chehalis. It looks to me like there enough Chinook morts and hatchery coho available. It could be only one or two wilds in the bag. About ten years ago there was a three fish bag with a wild coho limit. I only achieved it once but it was a memorable day.