

Resident Native Trout Harvest Management Fish Committee

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Agenda/Presentation Overview

- Review background and process to date
 - Petition
 - Schedule
 - Town Hall #1
- Draft policy framework
 - Geographic areas
 - Conservation concerns
 - Draft rule/decision matrix options
- Questions



Petition Review

- The Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission received a petition requesting “statewide protection of resident forms of wild steelhead”.
 - Specific to resident rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) in locations where they may directly contribute to the anadromous form of *O. mykiss* – a.k.a. steelhead.
 - Specific rules requested in the petition:
 - Statewide year-round Catch-and-Release (all size wild trout) in rivers and streams for all watersheds with wild steelhead
 - Statewide year-round Selective Gear Rules (all size wild trout) in rivers and streams in all watersheds with wild steelhead
 - Closed Waters: Selected sections of rivers designated as Wild Steelhead Gene Banks
 - Closed Waters: Watersheds with wild steelhead runs under escapement



Development and Implementation

	Date	Task				
✓	Nov 2023	Develop scope/timeline				
✓	Dec 2023	Fish Committee: Share scope/timeline				
✓	Jan 2024	Tribal coordination letter				
✓	Jan 2024	Town Hall #1: Outreach to share approved scope/timeline				
		Staff develop initial draft				
→	Jun 2024	Touch base with Fish Committee				
	Jun 2024	Town Hall #2: share initial draft policy				
		Staff evaluate/incorporate public comment				
	Dec 2024	Present close to final draft with Fish Committee				
	Dec 2024	Town Hall #3: Share close to final draft				
	Feb 2025	Tribal coordination/input				
	Mar 2025	SEPA				
	Apr 2025	Share SEPA comments with Fish Committee/Commission				
		Evaluate and summarize for public comment				
	Jun 2025	Share final draft with Fish Committee				
	Aug 2025	Full Committee/Commission briefing/public comment				
	Sep 2025	Commission decision				
	Sep 2025	Communicate final policy decision				



Virtual Town Hall #1

- Feb 12, 2024
- 50 attendees
- Shared:
 - Draft scope
 - Draft Timeline
 - Opportunities for input/comment
- Received initial input/comment



Resident Native Trout Harvest Management Policy

DRAFT POLICY FRAMEWORK

Geographic Areas

Identified 2 main geographic areas:

- Originally had more detailed geographic breakouts (with/without anadromous fisheries); seemed duplicative.
- Simplified version promotes greater understanding and utility
 - Anadromous zone
 - Areas of limited/no connectivity to anadromous zone (lakes, reservoirs)



Conservation Categories

- No known conservation concerns (for resident native trout)
 - Current harvest rules are adequately protective across the range
- Known conservation concerns (for resident native trout)
 - Where empirical evidence shows harvest impacts native trout populations.
- Known conservation concerns (for juvenile salmon/steelhead)
 - Where empirical evidence demonstrates resident native trout fishing is impacting juvenile salmon/steelhead production, rearing or outmigration.
 - Fishing impacts on adult salmon/steelhead not considered due to management through different processes (NOF, US v. OR, ESA, etc.)
- Multiple policy statement options for consideration.
 - Each option represents a range from more liberal/status quo/conservative guidance for management.
 - Areas with limited/no connectivity have fewer options due to fewer risks due to absence of anadromous fish.



Policy Categories (Areas)	No known conservation concerns - resident native trout	Known conservation concerns - resident native trout	Known conservation concerns - impacts to juvenile salmon/steelhead production, rearing, or outmigration
Anadromous Zone	a WDFW may promulgate new special rules for resident native trout that maximize recreational angler harvest. Rules will be biologically based.	a WDFW may manage resident native resident under current statewide general fishing rules.	a If it can be demonstrated that implementing special rules will minimize or eliminate impacts to juvenile salmon and/or steelhead when fishing for resident native trout, WDFW may make changes to size and/or daily limits, seasons, and/or gear restrictions. Rules will be biologically based and/or a term and condition of ESA.
	b WDFW manages resident native trout under current statewide general fishing rules and existing special rules.	b WDFW may promulgate special rules to minimize or eliminate recreational angler harvest of resident native trout. This may include changes to size and/or daily limits, seasons, and/or gear restrictions. Rules will be biologically based.	b WDFW will close resident native trout to recreational fishing to eliminate recreational impacts to threatened, depressed, or ESA listed species.
	c WDFW may promulgate new special rules that restrict harvest of resident native trout. Rules can be biologically or socially based.	c Close recreational fishing for resident native trout. Closures will be biologically based.	c
Policy Categories (Areas)	No known conservation concerns - resident native trout	Known conservation concerns - resident native trout	Known conservation concerns - impacts to juvenile salmon/steelhead production, rearing, or outmigration
No or limited connectivity to anadromous zone	a WDFW may promulgate new special rules for resident native trout that maximize recreational angler harvest. Rules will be biologically based.	a WDFW may manage resident native trout under current statewide general fishing rules.	a N/A
	b WDFW manages resident native trout under current statewide general fishing rules and existing special rules.	b WDFW may promulgate special rules to minimize or eliminate recreational angler harvest of resident native trout. This may include changes to size and/or daily limits, seasons, and/or gear restrictions. Rules will be biologically based.	b N/A
	c WDFW may promulgate new special rules that restrict harvest of resident native trout. Rules can be biologically or socially based.	c	c N/A



Draft Policy Language: Example 1

(Known Conservation Concern – resident native trout, Option B)

- WDFW may promulgate special rules to minimize or eliminate recreational angler harvest of resident native trout. This may include changes to size and/or daily limits, seasons, and/or gear restrictions. Rules will be biologically based.
 - Provides conservation measures as needed
 - Provides many options to maintain diversity of opportunity: gear restrictions, C&R, selective gear, closures, etc.
 - Maintains fishing opportunity



Draft Policy Language: Example 2

(Known Conservation Concern – impacts to juvenile salmon/steelhead, Option A)

- If it can be demonstrated that implementing special rules will minimize or eliminate impacts to juvenile salmon and/or steelhead when fishing for resident native trout, WDFW may make changes to size and/or daily limits, seasons, and/or gear restrictions. Rules will be biologically based and/or a term and condition of ESA.
 - Provides protection for non-target salmonids
 - Maintains fisheries where appropriate.



Draft Policy Language: Example 3

(Known Conservation Concern – resident native trout, Option C)

- Close recreational fishing for resident native trout. Closures will be biologically based.
 - Substantively impacts opportunity
 - Significant measure to achieve targeted conservation objective



Questions?

