



Fish and Wildlife Commission Presentation Summary Sheet

Meeting date:

8/9/2024

Agenda item:

Grays Harbor Basin Salmon Management Policy C-3621

Presenter(s):

Marlene Wagner, South Coast Policy Lead and Mike Scharpf, Grays Harbor Fish Biologist

Background summary:

The Grays Harbor Basin Salmon Management Policy (C-3621) was put into effect on February 28, 2014, and expired on December 30, 2023. In June 2024, Department staff briefed the Fish Committee of the Fish and Wildlife Commission with a summary and performance review of the expired policy, offering staff recommendations for revisions. The proposed changes aim to enable flexible and adaptive management, use the best available science, and align more closely with the newly approved Willapa Bay Salmon Management Policy. They also seek to eliminate redundant and/or prescriptive language and reorganize sections for clearer and more concise flow.

At the June briefing, the Fish Committee directed staff to develop a mark-up strike-through document reflecting these recommendations with revised policy language. Department staff will present these draft policy revisions to the Commission during this presentation and review the policy development timeline moving forward.

Policy issue(s) and expected outcome:

The Commission provides guidance through a revised Grays Harbor Basin Salmon Management Policy for the Department to pursue and implement management strategies that support adaptive management. This guidance is crucial for addressing dynamic and evolving challenges in salmon conservation and fisheries management. By adopting adaptive management practices, the Department can adjust strategies based on new information and changing conditions, ensuring more effective and responsive management of the salmon resource.

This approach aligns with the overarching mandate to preserve, perpetuate, and protect the salmon resource. It also ensures that commercial and recreational salmon fishing opportunities remain sustainable over the long term. Through these strategies, the Commission aims to balance ecological preservation with economic and recreational interests, fostering a resilient and well-managed salmon population.

Fiscal impacts of agency implementation:

N/A

Public involvement process used and what you learned:

A public comment period will open on August 12, 2024, allowing interested parties to provide feedback on proposed policy revisions through a WDFW website portal. Additionally, a regional public meeting will be scheduled during this period to give the public an opportunity to hear staff present the policy revisions and to ask questions. In September, Department staff will return to provide the Fish and Wildlife Commission with a briefing on public comments received.

Action requested and/or proposed next steps:

Staff anticipate receiving feedback from the Commission on the current direction and anticipate approval to proceed with circulating the draft revised Grays Harbor Basin Salmon Management Policy language for public comment.

Draft motion language:

N/A

Post decision communications plan:

The revised policy will be posted to the Commission’s policy page on the WDFW website when revisions have been approved by the Commission.
