



Fish and Wildlife Commission Presentation Summary Sheet

Meeting date:

10/25/2024

Agenda item:

Grays Harbor Basin Salmon Management Policy C-3621

Presenter(s):

Kelly Cunningham, Fish Program Director
Marlene Wagner, South Coast Fish Policy Lead
Mike Scharpf, Grays Harbor Fish Biologist

Background summary:

The Grays Harbor Basin Salmon Management Policy (C-3621) was implemented on February 28, 2014, and expired on December 30, 2023. In June 2024, the process to revise the policy began when Department staff presented a summary and performance review of the expired policy to the Fish Committee of the Fish and Wildlife Commission, along with recommendations for revisions.

Following the June briefing, the Fish Committee directed staff to create a mark-up strike-through document incorporating the recommendations with updated policy language. In August 2024, Department staff shared these draft revisions with both the Fish Committee and the full Commission. The proposed changes were designed to promote flexible and adaptive management, utilize the best available science, and better align with the newly approved Willapa Bay Salmon Management Policy. Additionally, they aimed to eliminate redundant and prescriptive language while reorganizing sections for improved clarity and conciseness.

During the August briefing, Department staff received approval from the full Commission to solicit public comments on the draft revised Grays Harbor Basin Salmon Management Policy. A formal comment period was open from August 13, 2024, to September 15, 2024, during which a town hall meeting was held on September 4, 2024, to gather further feedback.

At the September Fish and Wildlife Commission meeting in Spokane, WA, Department staff briefed both the Fish Committee and the full Commission on public comment received. There was also live public comment taken at that time specifically on the Grays Harbor Basin Salmon Management Policy agenda item on September 27, 2024. Staff provided a response to public comments and posted them on the Commission's webpage on October 7, 2024.

This meeting is reserved for the full Fish and Wildlife Commission to vote on a motion to approve the final draft Grays Harbor Basin Salmon Management Policy (C-3621) language.

Policy issue(s) and expected outcome:

The Commission will vote on a motion to approve the final draft Grays Harbor Basin Salmon Management Policy.

Fiscal impacts of agency implementation:

Not applicable

Public involvement process used and what you learned:

A public comment period was open on August 13, 2024, through September 15, 2024, for a total of 34 days. This allowed interested parties to provide feedback on proposed policy revisions through a WDFW website portal. Additionally, a regional town hall was held on September 4, 2024, where Department staff presented the policy revisions followed by a question and answer period. The Commission also heard live public comment specifically on the policy revisions at their meeting on September 27, 2024.

Action requested and/or proposed next steps:

Department staff will seek Commission approval for the final draft revised Grays Harbor Basin Salmon Management Policy.

Draft motion language:

I move to adopt the Grays Harbor Basin Salmon Management Policy (C-3621) as provided by staff in the meeting materials for agenda item #6.

Post decision communications plan:

Should the Commission approve the policy, the Department will communicate to stakeholders via the agency webpage and through a post-meeting press release.
