

Guide Logbook Advisory Committee

Meeting #8: November 2, 2:00-4:30 p.m.
Microsoft Teams

Introduction: Raquel Crosier welcomed the group and reviewed agenda.

Participants:

The following participants attended the Zoom call:

Leah Snyder, Raquel Crosier, Steve Joyce, Mark Baltzell, Caleb Hitzfield, Ryan Lothrop, Bob Kratzer, Becky Bennett, Blake Merwin, Cameron Black, Craig Burley, Chris Donley, Doug Saint-Denis, Eric Kraig, Toby Wyatt, Patrick Gaffney, Randy Lato, Jake Shapley, Kit Rosenberger, Greg Kain, Kelly Cunningham, Steven VanderPloeg, Kyle Adicks

CRC and Creel Monitoring

Eric Kraig presented to the group on the history, structure and data analysis process associated with catch record cards. He covered the following;

- WDFW has issued Steelhead CRCs since 1947, Salmon – since 1964. They are required for Salmon, Steelhead, Sturgeon, Halibut, Dungeness Crab and the agency issues > 500,000 annually.
- The agency selects a 25% in-sample subset – based on last two digits in card number and does targeted mailings to anglers within sample cards.
- For crab CRCs- we use them all. There is a \$10 penalty charged for failure to report and reminders are sent by e-mail or by postcard. 70% of reporters use online option to report.
- To process CRCs, first the cards sorted; In-sample or out-sample, catch or no catch. Then, document numbers are scanned, cards are edited for readability by data entry staff and anglers are contacted for missing or obviously incorrect data. Then, all data is entered into the database.
- To generate a harvest estimate, the CRC team expands on returned cards to get total cards. To get the expansion factor we divide the number of cards issued by the in-sample cards returned. Then we apply that to species, area and date range to get an expanded harvest (expanded harvest = reported catch x expansion factor). Finally, we adjust by applying non-reporting bias (estimated harvest = expanded harvest x bias correction factor).
- Non-Reporting Bias - successful anglers may return cards at a different rate than those with no catch. With that in mind, we work to quantify the non-reporting bias w/ field or phone surveys.
- The agency estimates marine salmon and freshwater salmon a bit differently; for marine salmon we use PS baseline creel data and for freshwater salmon we use river system level estimates.

- We review our estimates with the help of our local bios on the basis of biological feasibility, legality (seasons, areas) and suggested creel substitutions. Anglers are contacted to clear up any discrepancies.
- Eric talked through the future of CRC reporting and the agency’s work to develop new tools including; a database for our estimates, an online reporting system for fish and an app for real time reporting (similar to the guide mobile app).

Next Mark Baltzell our Puget Sound Fisheries Manager and Ryan Lothrop our Columbia River Fisheries Manager talked to the group about how we monitor fisheries throughout the state.

- The talked through data required by our ESA permits; creel, effort counts, supplemental surveys, test fishing, trip reports and CRC data, and how the agency uses these various data sets to cross reference and validate our catch estimates.
- Commercial fisheries are also monitored – using catch sampling, fish ticket reporting, on board monitoring, and other reporting systems.
- Since the agency doesn’t have resources to do a census of all anglers, we decide where, when and how much to sample based on what is necessary to get a representative sample and the most cost-effective way to do it. We look for high effort areas for sampling, focusing where we have legal need or catch share concerns. We can get more data with less sampling in more condensed/ high effort fisheries. In lower effort fisheries that are more spread out, we need more time to get a representative sample.
- To generate harvest estimates, we expand the representative sample to account for the catch and effort not sampled. We use effort counts to inform. This is called the expansion factor. Then, we take the representative sample x expansion factor in order to get the harvest estimate.

Annual Retention Limit and other Reg Change Ideas

Chris Donley walked the group through the next agenda item; evaluating the idea of an annual retention limit for chinook.

- He provided background on previous discussions on the topic; from the origin of the idea at guide regulation brainstorm, conversations about it with the Director and request of Kelly Cunningham to have staff evaluate whether it would lengthen seasons or provide a conservation benefit.
- On the question of season length, the group reviewed conversation at the last meeting around challenges in jointly managed fisheries and season-based fisheries.
- The group discussed the challenges associated with achieving any conservation benefits through an annual retention limit. Since ESA permits outline allowable “impacts” based on recovery goals, reducing impacts to create a “buffer” doesn’t get us to recovery faster and could result in higher impacts on wild chinook (due to more hatchery chinook making it to the spawning grounds). An annual retention limit could also result in a situation where we have foregone opportunity or reallocation of “impacts” to either the commercial or tribal fishery.

- Kelly Cunningham talked through the agencies position based on our evaluation; that there wasn't a meaningful season length benefit associated with an annual retention limit, nor was there a conservation benefit. He reiterated the concern in moving forward this idea in the name of conservation and seeing impacts get reallocated to the tribes or commercial fishers under foregone opportunity (US vs WA).
- Kelly Cunningham described the rulemaking process should the group wish to pursue an annual retention limit and encouraged the committee to keep bringing forward ideas like this for us to evaluate together.

Year in Review

Raquel Crosier walked the committee members through progress made during the first year of the committee convening and outlined some of the group's priorities in a work plan for 2021.

- Some of the key items in the work plan included; evaluating logbook data, increasing communication around the North of Falcon season setting process, identifying ways to increase the quality of fisheries and developing a Guide Code of Conduct.
- The group talked through the purpose of a code of conduct, the need for it to be developed by industry for industry NOT by WDFW as the regulatory agency.
- The group reviewed it's intended outcomes from our brainstorm at a previous meeting and Raquel shared via email a draft that incorporated some of those ideas. She asked for the committee to look at that and send feedback and also begin thinking about how to solicit broader input from industry. The group discussed the idea of developing a draft and sending it to regional guide associations and WA State Guide Association for input in order to develop a statewide code of conduct so the industry has a consistent set of values and expectations to lean on.
- The group discussed the need to post this on the WDFW website once complete and send it out to guides with their license renewal packets.
- Then the group reviewed other regulatory ideas discussed at previous committee discussions and asked Raquel to begin drafting what revisions would look like for the group to review at a future meeting. The group also discussed the need to wait for any major regulatory change ideas to be implemented until we have more data and more support from the broader industry.

Logbook Update

Raquel Crosier lead the group through an update on guide logbook data, analysis of the data collected to date and compliance rates.

- Compliance with the new reporting rule has been spotty this first year. The typical ramp up in education around a new rule was interrupted by COVID related fisheries closures and impacts to fishing guides. That said, the data shows that 2,215 reports have come in via the mobile app and 1,158 have been reported using the paper log.
- We have a total of 233 guides reporting with 131 of those using the mobile app and 109 using the paper log (some using both tools). As percentage of total licensed guides that's just over a 41% compliance rate.

- Logbook data (trips and encounters) is being sorted into the following geographic areas as discussed by the group at our last meeting:
 - Columbia River and tributaries - Canada to Pacific Ocean
 - Willapa Bay tributaries
 - Puget Sound tributaries - Hood Canal, Lake WA, Sammamish
 - Grays Harbor Tributaries - Humptulips South
 - North Coast - Elwha to Copalis
 - Eastern Washington Lakes (@ cascade crest)
 - Western Washington Lakes (@ cascade crest)
- The group reviewed both trips and encounters by geographic area and helped identify some mis-identified species.
- The group then discussed future questions we want to ask of the data, things like;
 - How far did the guide travel from county of residence?
 - How far did the client travel from county of residence?
 - How many people accessed fisheries through guides vs. on their own?
 - What were the local economic contributions associated with guided trips?
- The group then got an update from Sgt Rosenberger and Becky Bennett on enforcement. With low compliance they are working on additional training for enforcement officers and emphasis patrols in certain areas where there is a larger volume of guides. They are also considering a letter from the Chief to guides before the new year to report out on compliance and discuss the agency's approach in year two of implementation of the logbook reporting rule.

Wrap-Up

- **Meeting note approval**
- **Scheduling**
 - Reschedule April meeting to later in month