

Summary

Meeting dates: January 11, 2013 Commission Meeting

Agenda item #10: Giant Pacific Octopus -- Briefing

Presenter(s): Craig Burley, Fish Management Division Manager

Background summary: The Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) received three petitions requesting amendments to sportfishing rules to protect octopi from recreational harvest.

These petitions were received after a Giant Pacific Octopus (GPO) was legally harvested from the waters of a popular dive site at Seacrest Park in West Elliot Bay.

At the December 21, 2012 Commission conference call the Commission directed the department to develop a series of management options, process and a schedule to address protection of the Giant Pacific Octopus in waters of the Puget Sound for consideration and further direction.

Staff will present a briefing on the following:

- Biology and status of GPO in Puget Sound
 - Historical harvest of GPO in Puget Sound
 - Current sportfishing regulations and legal harvest of GPO at Seacrest Park
 - Proposed Process and Schedule
 - Management options to consider for regulatory action
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Policy issue(s) you are bringing to the Commission for consideration:

Staff will request Commission guidance on the following:

- Proposed Process and Schedule
 - Policy Options to consider for regulatory action
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Public involvement process used and what you learned:

The Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) has received three petitions requesting amendments to recreational fishing rules to protect octopi from harvest.

The Director Briefed the Commission regarding the incident and the Commission received public testimony at the November Commission Meeting.

Action requested:

Staff will request Commission guidance on the following:

- Proposed Process and Schedule
 - Policy Options to consider for regulatory action
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Draft motion language:

Justification for Commission action:

Communications Plan: Agency web site, news releases, ad hoc advisory group and public workshops.
