

9. Puget Sound Recreational Enhancement Fund - (Briefing)

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Summary

Meeting dates:	January 10, 2014
Agenda item #9:	Puget Sound Recreational Fisheries Enhancement Fund (Briefing)
Presenter(s):	Steve Thiesfeld, Puget Sound Salmon Manager, Fish Program Dave Knutzen, Chair PSRFEF Oversight Committee

Background summary:

The Puget Sound Recreational Salmon and Marine Fish Enhancement Program (PSRSMFP) was created in 1993 through legislation pursued by Senators Oke and Owens. Anglers fishing in Puget Sound desired to improve recreational fishing in the Sound and were willing to contribute an additional \$10 per angler to fund improvements. The original bill focused heavily on rearing year-old Chinook smolts ("delayed release") to enhance the winter blackmouth fishery. The legislature also authorized a citizens Oversight Committee to advise WDFW's director on all aspects of the fisheries enhancement program, such as reviewing projects and providing guidance on funding activities related to the enhancement program.

The original goal of producing 3 million delayed-release Chinook became increasingly difficult to attain during the last decade. Key factors cited in an April 2010 state performance audit of the PSRSMFP include:

- Concerns about the effect of releasing millions of hatchery salmon on wild fish protected under the federal Endangered Species Act.
- Declining survival rates for delayed-salmon, due mostly to environmental conditions in Puget Sound.
- Reduced capacity at state hatcheries to hold and feed fish for a year.

On a separate matter, the Joint Legislative Affairs Review Committee (JLARC) has found that provisions in the program's authorizing statute regarding bottomfish aquaculture does not reflect WDFW's current focus on recovering depleted stocks in Puget Sound.

Legislation was introduced and passed in 2011 to modify the program and shift the focus from production goals to performance based goals. The revised legislation

- Authorizes the WDFW director and the PSRSMFP's Oversight Committee to develop, review and approve outcome-based goals for the program.
- Requires WDFW to evaluate the effectiveness of the Puget Sound fishery enhancement program, considering the number of daily angler fishing trips in Puget Sound and the percentage of the program's hatchery-produced fish that survive to contribute to the recreational fishery.
- Requires WDFW and the PSRFE Oversight Committee report annually to the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission and biennially to the Legislature on the program goals and WDFW's effectiveness in achieving those goals.
- WDFW would continue to support research, development and implementation of hatchery programs for marine bottomfish species.

WDFW and the Oversight Committee completed development of goals and objectives for the Program earlier this year. Those goals and objectives are the focus of this briefing.

Policy issue(s) you are bringing to the Commission for consideration:

None

Public involvement process used and what you learned:

N/A

Action requested:

None. Briefing Only.

Draft motion language:

N/A

Justification for Commission action:

N/A

Communications Plan:

N/A

Form revised 12/5/12

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES FINAL VERSION
(adopted February 22, 2013)

RCW 77.105.160

The Puget Sound Recreational Salmon and Marine Fish Enhancement Program (PSRE) Oversight Committee has the following duties:

- (A) Develop recommendations, with assistance from the coordinator, for outcome-based goals and objectives to assess the effectiveness of the program;
- (B) Meet with the director each year to review these goals and objectives;
- (C) Report annually with the director to the commission on the goals of the program and the effectiveness of the program in meeting those goals;

The purpose of the PSRE is to conserve, enhance, and promote recreational fisheries within Puget Sound and Lake Washington. These goals and objectives were developed jointly by the Oversight Committee and WDFW, and may be modified over time as new information becomes available.

- Program Goal: Improve the recreational fishing opportunities in Puget Sound and Lake Washington and increase the economic benefits from the fishery.
 - Outcome Performance Measure: Increase angler trips in Puget Sound and Lake Washington by 5% per biennium.

i) Strategy: Improve marketing and remove obstacles to build interest and participation in the fishery.

(1)Objective: Increase the percentage of Puget Sound anglers that are aware of Puget Sound fishing opportunities supported by PSRE.
(a) Performance Measure: 10% increase in awareness per biennium.

(2)Objective: Identify and promote fisheries on healthy stocks currently underutilized.
(a) Performance Measure: Identify underutilized fish stocks in Puget Sound by 2015.

(b)Performance Measure: Increase angler trips on identified and abundant underutilized stocks within the constraints of available stock surplus by 2022.

- (3) Objective: Capitalize on WDFW activities to develop marketing tools in a unified approach to encourage participation and educate new and experienced anglers when, where, and how to fish in Puget Sound.
 - (a) Performance Measure: Develop 5 new tools by 2017 to increase awareness of Puget Sound fishing opportunities.
 - ii) Strategy: Increase effectiveness of hatcheries providing salmon to Puget Sound fisheries.
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- (1) Objective: Review salmon production programs and facilities in Puget Sound to better understand their capabilities, limitations, and ways to increase the contribution rate.
 - (a) Performance Measure: Report completed by 2014 that calculates and summarizes survival rates, contribution rates, and cost/fish; in addition, identifies new rearing and release strategies to be evaluated in a future study.
 - (b) Performance Measure: Report completed by 2022 that evaluates new rearing and release strategies identified by the 2014 report to increase contribution rate.
- (2) Objective: Minimize the cost/fish of hatchery salmon caught in Puget Sound marine fisheries
 - (a) Performance Measure: Reduce average production cost/fish caught in Puget Sound marine recreational fisheries by 30% for yearling and sub-yearling Chinook by 2022 after adjustment for cost of living (e.g. CPI, current inflation rate).
- (3) Objective: Evaluate potential to improve fishing opportunities with artificial production of other salmon species, e.g. coho, consistent with Hatchery and Fishery Reform Policy.
 - (a) Performance Measure: Report completed by 2015 that evaluates other species for cost/benefit ratio, timing of fishing opportunities, and ability to attract and retain new or lapsed anglers.
- (4) Objective: Increase the survival of Lake Washington sockeye.
 - (a) Performance Measure: Report that identifies alternative rearing strategies (e.g. timing, size, acclimation, release location, rearing conditions) to increase survival rate by 2015.

iii) Strategy: Develop a long term strategy for improving recreational bottomfish fisheries in Puget Sound.

(1) Objective: Support research to evaluate the risks and uncertainties associated with the release of cultured bottomfish and artificial habitats.

(a) Performance Measure: Report that evaluates studies to date on lingcod culture and provides recommendations by 2015.

(2) Objective: Use outreach and education to decrease mortality on rockfish.

(a) Performance Measure: Improve angler identification of rockfish species by 50% by 2017.

(b) Performance Measure: Increase use of descender tools on rockfish to 50% of the encounters by 2017.

(c) Performance Measure: Decrease angler encounters (e.g. released bycatch and unintentional retention) of rockfish by 10% by 2017.

iv) Strategy: Stabilize and enhance resources invested in improving Puget Sound recreational fisheries.

(1) Objective: License fees and contribution rate of enhancement funds are adjusted regularly to reflect the cost of living (e.g. CPI, current inflation rate).

(a) Performance Measure: Legislation is modified so license fees and the contribution rate adjust each biennium to reflect the cost of living.

(2) Objective: Identify and pursue other funding sources.

(a) Performance Measure: PSRE funding is leveraged by 20% by 2017.

(3) Objective: Increase the number of licensed anglers that fish in Puget Sound and Lake Washington.

(a) Performance Measure: Ten-year rolling average of the number of saltwater and combination licenses purchased by anglers that fish in Puget Sound and Lake Washington trends upwards.

Draft Tasks updated 01/02/2014

Tasks by Category:

- Establish Baselines
 - Surveys
 - Survey Method Options
 - Catch Record Cards to estimate angler trips.
 - Existing Responsive Management surveys.
 - Existing RecFin surveys.
 - Sports Shows.
 - License Vendors during license sales, including online.
 - Existing staff where efficient (e.g. port samplers, enforcement).
 - Baseline Questions
 - Identify what percent of anglers know they contribute to PSRE revenue from license sales.
 - Identify what programs anglers believe are financially supported by PSRE.
 - Identify what characteristics of a fishery are most important to new and lapsed Puget Sound anglers.
 - Identify what percent of anglers can correctly identify the most common rockfish species in Puget Sound.
 - Identify what percent of anglers use rockfish descender devices.
 - Identify angler preference for artificial propagation of other salmon species and stocks that would improve recreational fishing.
- Data Reports
 - Identify current angler effort (angler trips)
 - Identify angler bycatch of rockfish
 - RecFin Estimates.
 - Baseline Data Expansions.
 - Determine if enforcement contacts are available.
 - Identify angling effort for underutilized and abundant stocks
 - RecFin Estimates.
 - Baseline Data Expansions.

- Outreach and Education
 - Products – Club Presentations, Videos, Brochures, and Other Handouts
 - Present information on what the PSRE is and what it does.
 - Fishing basics.
 - Salmon fishing basics.
 - Tips and techniques to fish for abundant and underutilized species.
 - How to identify Puget Sound rockfish.
 - How to use a rockfish descender and hand out devices.
 - How to avoid catching rockfish when fishing for other species.
 - Identify clubs, shows, and websites to share products.
 - Ensure existing products about Puget Sound are available and online (e.g. Wild About Washington).
 - Media
 - Social Media – Develop a list (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.), strategy, and utilize.
 - Develop Mobile Application for Puget Sound recreational fishing (when, where, how, regulations, etc.).
 - Make use of existing, traditional media
 - News releases – at least 2 per year highlighting PSRE accomplishments (e.g. Released 5 million fish this year).
 - Weekender – PSRE reference every month.
 - Website – enhance PSRE page including front page story once per year.
 - Rule Changes – Identify opportunities provided by PSRE (similar to Columbia River Endorsement).
 - Sport Regulation Pamphlet – Utilize space to inform about PSRE.
 - Radio Shows – Monthly PSRE presentation.
 - Fish Washington – Update website information including how to, videos, and promote.
 - Inform public about PSRE hatchery production statistics.
 - Inform public about Outreach and Education products and how they can access them.
 - Remind anglers about upcoming opportunities supported by PSRE program (e.g. major winter blackmouth fishery openings).

- Publish Annual Report to Commission/Biennial Report to Legislature.
 - Sports Shows
 - Identify which shows are appropriate to attend.
 - Identify key themes to communicate each year.
 - Develop materials and presentations to support key themes.
 - Leverage resources with other programs attending shows.
 - Signage
 - Create and install signs at facilities that are funded by PSRE (hatcheries, Chittenden Locks, etc.).
 - License Sales
 - Provide quick links to on-line license sales (website, news releases, etc.).
- Reports
 - Program Goal and Objectives Update
 - Report annually to Commission.
 - Report biennially to Legislature.
- Hatchery Effectiveness
 - Baseline
 - Calculate costs, survival, contribution, and cost/fish for all hatchery programs in Puget Sound.
 - Produce summary tables.
 - Strategies
 - Re-establish Evaluation Committee.
 - Identify analysis tools (e.g. SWOT).
 - Schedule meetings with hatchery/regional staffs.
 - Identify potential new or alternative strategies.
 - Identify other unused hatchery facilities/space.
 - Coordinate with hatchery/regional staffs to prioritize strategies.
 - Complete report detailing new strategies.
 - Coordinate with Oversight Committee and hatchery/regional staffs to fund and implement new strategies.
- Alternative Salmon Species or Stocks
 - Construct calendar of current fishing opportunities and identify windows with low opportunity.
 - Determine cost/benefit and facility feasibility of other salmon species.
 - Prioritize alternative species or stocks with high cost/benefit and that fill open windows.

- Lake Washington Sockeye Survival Report.
 - Compile and synthesize results of previous and current rearing strategies for Lake Washington sockeye
 - Complete literature review of sockeye rearing strategies
 - Coordinate with co-managers to evaluate potential alternative rearing strategies
 - Lingcod Hatchery Production Feasibility Report
 - Compile results of previous lingcod hatchery production.
 - Complete report synthesizing results and providing recommendations about lingcod culture.
 - Underutilized and Abundant Fish Stocks.
 - Complete stock status assessments
 - Likely
 - Chum.
 - Coho.
 - Resident coho.
 - Possible
 - Cutthroat.
 - Flounders.
 - Perches.
 - Develop assessment process for potential other species with groundfish managers.
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- Budget
 - License fees and contribution to PSRE are adjusted regularly to reflect cost of living
 - Form sub-committee.
 - Coordinate with legislative liaison to develop strategy.
 - Identify key legislatures.
 - Identify key stakeholders.
 - Promote and support with economic benefits through hearings, letters, and discussions.
 - Pursue Additional and Alternative Funding
 - Form sub-committee to develop strategy.
 - Identify private companies, non-profits, state/federal grants, and benefactors.
 - Identify other rearing programs to cooperate with (e.g. tribal hatcheries, angling clubs).
 - Pursue benefactors and cooperators, and enter into agreements.