

Southern Resident Killer Whales

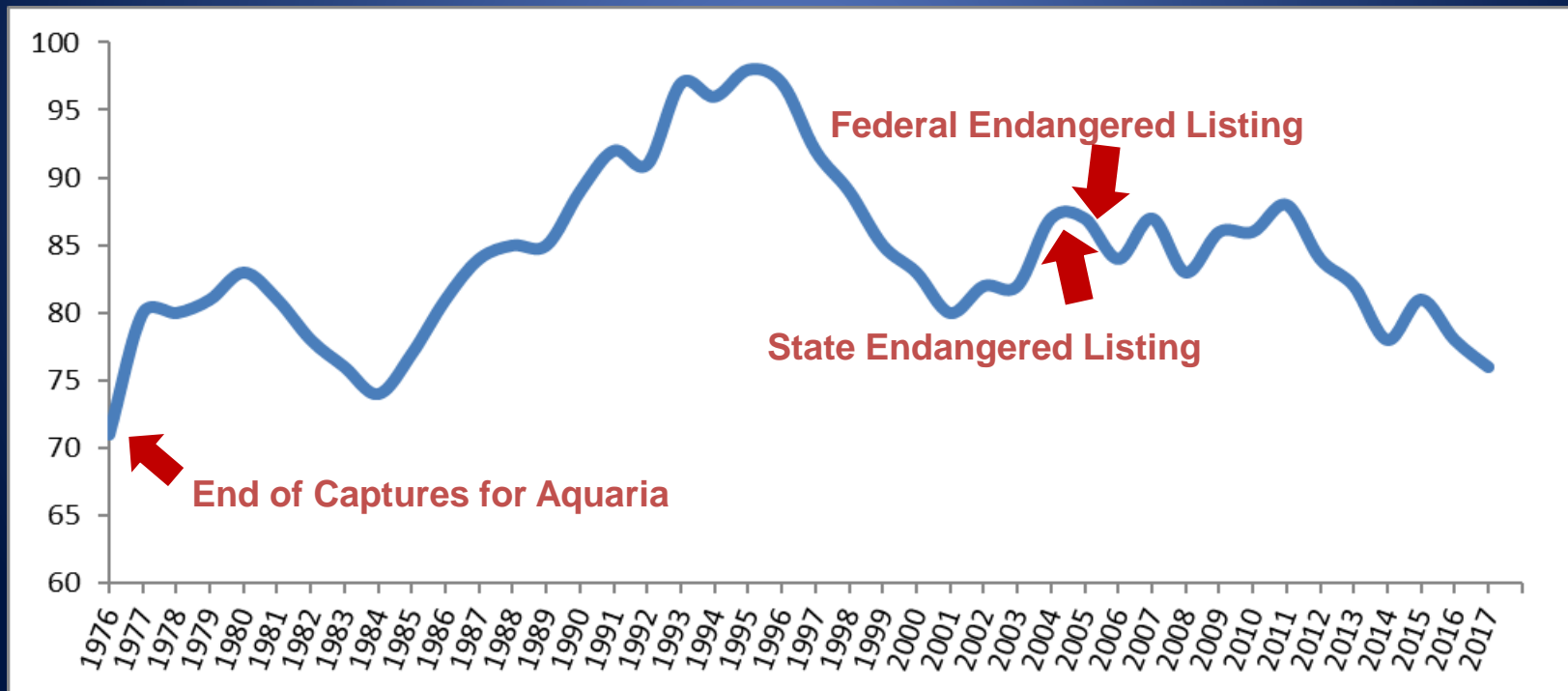


Washington Department of
FISH and WILDLIFE

Penny Becker
Killer Whale Policy Lead
Wildlife Program

A Population in Trouble

- Historic population estimated at around 200 whales in the late 1800's.



A Population in Trouble

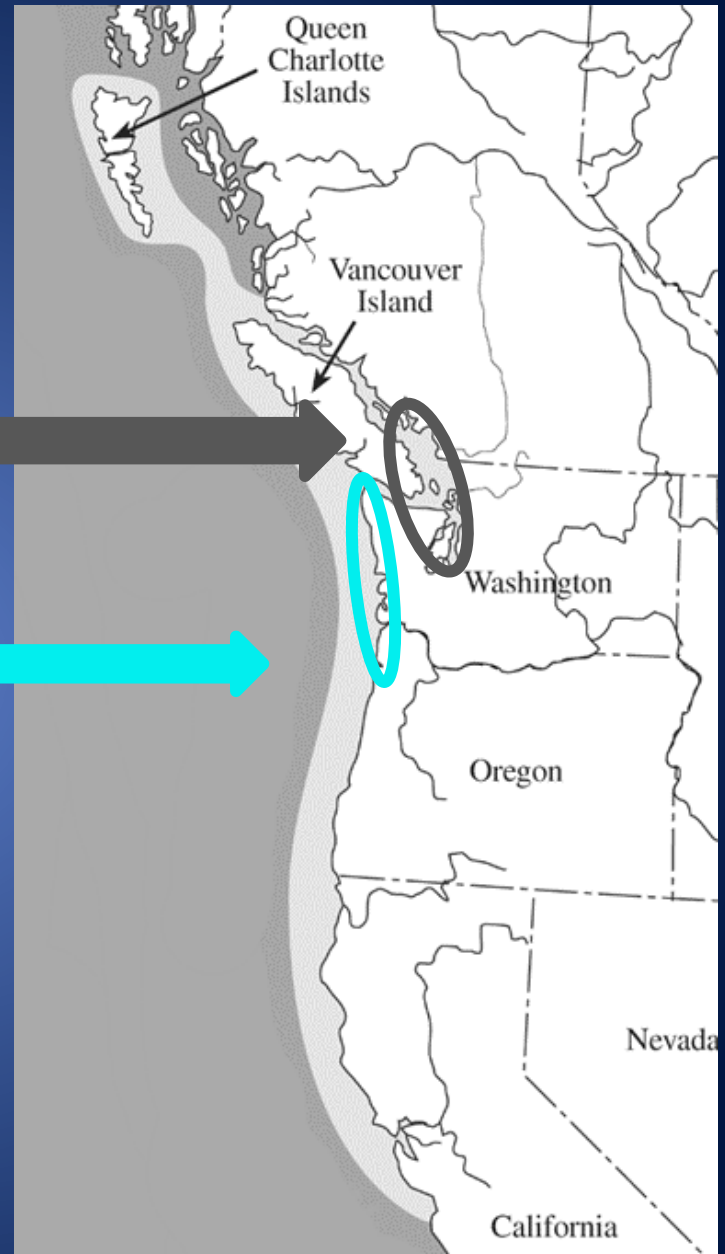


Southern Resident Range

Summer and J Pod Winter



K and L Pod Winter



Southern Residents and Salmon

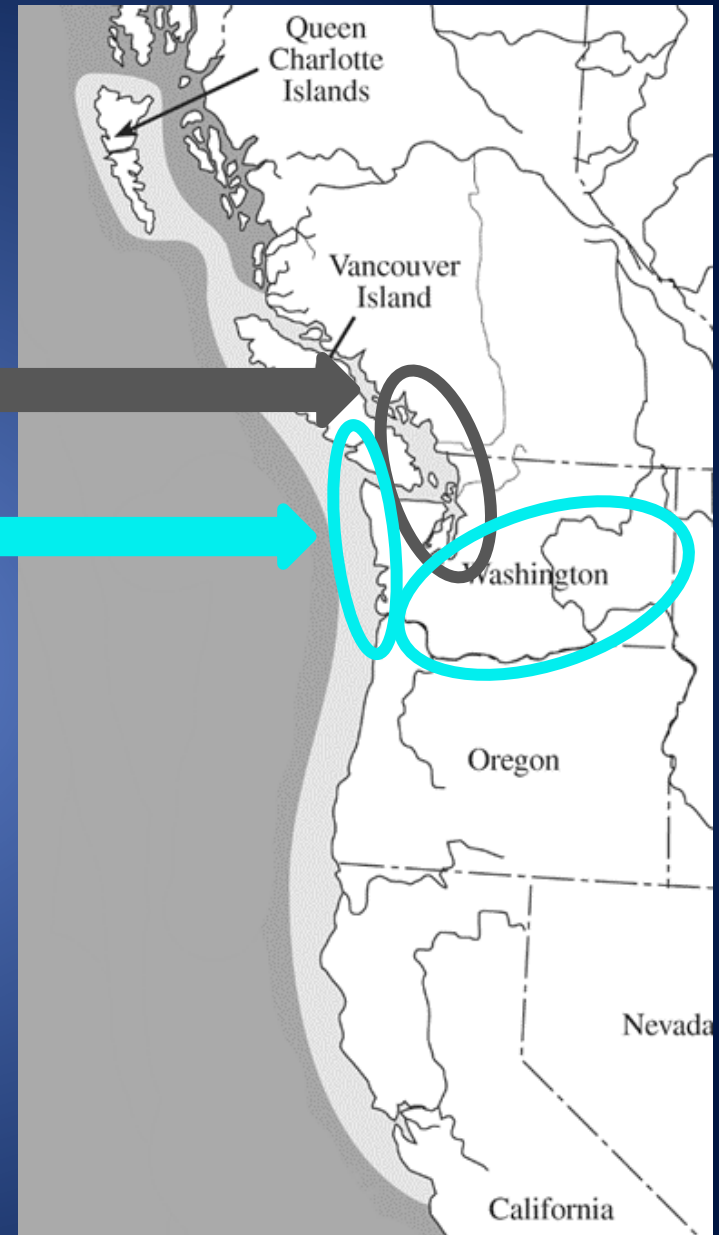
Puget Sound and the San Juan Islands

May-Sept:
65-96% Chinook
0-35% Steelhead
0-29% Coho

Oct-Dec:
39-62% Chum
21-45% Chinook
5-13% Coho
2-5% Steelhead

Outer Coast

Jan-April:
67-80% Chinook
5-16% Steelhead
0-14% Lingcod
2-12% Halibut



Why Do We Love Them?

- Our heritage
- Economics
- We can relate
- Healthy whales, healthy waters



Astrid van Ginneken

Major Threats

- Reduced abundance of salmon
- Vessel interaction and sound: prey accessibility
- Chemical contaminants and potential oil spills



Associated Press photo

Vessels and Noise

Boating/Whale Watching

- Outreach
- Regulations
- Enforcement



Matt VanderHagen, WDFW

Shipping/Large Vessels

- Canada pilot go-slow times and areas
- Vessel innovations-retrofits

Contaminants and Potential Oil Spills

- Reduction in inputs of contaminants from stormwater, wastewater, and other sources.
- Technology and hazing preparations to keep whales away from oil spill areas.



<https://www.randshardscaping.com/blog>



<http://www.bianoti.com/oil-spill-water-pollution.html>

Prey

Hatchery

- Recent decreases
- Prioritizing stocks and hatcheries for increases

Habitat

- Protection
- Restoration



King5

Prey

Hydropower

- Improved infrastructure
- Increased water spill

Predation

- Protect and restore forage fish
- Eliminate strategic artificial haul-outs
- Research/feasibility assessment



San Juan Journal



YouTube

Prey

Harvest

- Harvest has already declined significantly
- Pacific Salmon Treaty
- Canada's proposal for area/time adjustments
- 2018 measures to protect orcas, critical stocks

Governor Inslee's Executive Order



Center for Whale Research

- Supplemental funding
- Agency immediate actions
- Task Force establishment

Supplemental Funding

2018 Operating Budget and 2017-2019 Capital Budget:

- Enforcement
- Increase hatchery production and improve facilities
- Fish screen inventory and maintenance
- Public outreach and education
- Recovery coordination
- Pinniped predation research and data compiling
- Oil spill protection
- Task Force Facilitation

Agency Immediate Actions

- Implementation plan for education, outreach, and enforcement of vessel and chinook salmon fishing regulations.
- Adjust 2018 recreational and commercial fishing regulations as needed to protect key locations and fish runs.
- Develop a report on fish food in state hatcheries to help reduce the Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs) in orca prey.
- Identify highest-priority areas for orca prey to guide fish harvest levels, habitat restoration, hatchery operations, and fish passage policies and programs.
- Demonstrate how grants for chinook recovery projects benefit southern resident recovery.

Task Force

- Convening May 1. First report is due Nov. 2018 and the second report is due Oct. 2019.
- Broad representation through Task Force and Working Groups.
- WDFW and the Puget Sound Partnership lead state agencies. WDFW coordination: Penny Becker.
- WDFW participation: Commissioner Brad Smith, Amy Windrope, Kirt Hughes, Jim West, Captain Alan Myers.

Questions?



Clint Rivers, Eagle Wing Tours