

Summary Sheet

Meeting dates: November 15, 2019 WDFW Commission Conference Call

Agenda item: Petition: Skykomish River Rule Change

Presenter(s): Edward Eleazer, Region 4 Fish Program Manager

Background summary:

“The Department received a petition to delay opening day for recreational anglers on the Skykomish River from May 25 to June 15 and to enact selective gear rules from July 15 to January 31.”

Steelhead and salmon fisheries in the Snohomish system are co-managed under annual fishing season setting processes. Steelhead seasons are agreed to in the annual *Stock Status and Harvest Management Plan for Winter and Summer-run Steelhead Returning to the Snohomish and Stillaguamish rivers* in order to meet harvest and conservation objectives. Salmon fisheries are developed and agreed to in the annual North of Falcon process; this also includes rule changes such as selective gear rules. Both steelhead and salmon fisheries are permitted by NOAA under the *Endangered Species Act Section 7(a)(2) Biological Opinion and Manganuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Essential Fish Habitat Consultation*.

In 2019, summer steelhead and summer Chinook fisheries opened on the Saturday before Memorial Day. 2019 fisheries impacts on wild steelhead populations met conservation objectives and were estimated to be below the allowable 4.2% impact rate as permitted under the ESA.

Staff recommendation:

Deny the rule changes requested in the petition as written. Although the petition is specific to steelhead, the changes would significantly affect hatchery Chinook and hatchery steelhead fisheries. The rule change(s) are appropriate for consideration for the upcoming North of Falcon public season setting process.

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

Pursuant to RCW 34.05.330 Should the Commission:

- A) Deny the petition in writing, stating the reasons for the denial, specifically addressing the concerns raised by the petitioner, and where appropriate, the alternative means it will address the concerns raised by the petitioner;

Or-

- B) Initial rule making proceedings?
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Fiscal impacts of agency implementation:

None

Public involvement process used and what you learned:

No public process has been conducted of this petition.

Action requested and/or proposed next steps:

Deny the rule changes requested in the petition as written and direct the Department to consider the rules identified during the NOF rule making process.

Draft motion language:

Motion: I move to deny the petition to delay opening day for recreational anglers on the Skykomish River from May 25 to June 15 and to enact selective gear rules from July 15 to January 31. I direct staff to consider these changes during the upcoming 2020 NOF public fishing season setting process.

Is there a "second"?

If so, then motion maker discusses basis for motion; other Commissioners discuss views on motion; amendments, if any, proposed and addressed

Post decision communications plan: