

2019 GRAYS HARBOR ADVISORY MEETING
MARCH 05, 2019
REGION 6 OFFICE, MONTESANO 6-8 pm

WDFW Staff: Chad Herring, Mike Scharpf, Kim Figlar-Barnes

Advisors: Norman Reinhardt, Matt Nixon, Dave Hamilton, Mara Zimmerman, Cary Hofmann, Francis Estalilla (Not present: Allan and Jack Hollingsworth, Andy Mitby & Bob Lake)

Public: 8

General Discussion:

Chad:

- Overview of Advisor's roles and responsibilities
- Meeting ground rules and introductions

Mike:

- 2018 Grays Harbor Season Review
- 2019 Forecast discussion
 - Fall Chinook counter proposal of forecast by QUIN (Quinault Indian Nation) came in today late afternoon before meeting. For the Chehalis the proposed forecast was around 13,000. Humptulips may go down a bit as well. Reason for forecast re-evaluation is due to discrepancies in data evaluation. MS will meet with counterpart at PFMC this week to come to a final agreement.

Model Options & Proposed Fisheries:

2019 GH Planning Model Set with 2018 Fishery Season Schedule using 2019 Forecast Information

- Model includes updated run sizes, escapements and 2017 catch data
- Chehalis Chinook impacts at 2.99%, can fish to 5%
- Humptulips no sharing available, Coho forecast is below goal
- Non-Treaty commercial season is from 2018
- This model includes the 2018 QUIN fishing schedule
 - QUIN could increase fishery from last year based on forecast
- Model suggests room to increase fisheries from last year
 - Opportunities to fish for Coho
 - Cautionary note Coho numbers will need to be shared with QUIN
 - Model will need to be adjusted once QUIN set a schedule
 - Policy recommends sport sharing between marine and freshwater
 - 29.5% for marine proportion, policy recommends <27%
- Humptulips
 - Chinook achieving goal room for fishery
 - Coho not achieving goal, allowed fishing impact up to 5%, model impact at 3.97%

GH Planning Model A Historical Sport 2018 Commercial

- Non-Treaty commercial season is from 2018
- This model includes the 2018 QUIN fishing schedule
- North Bay 2C left fishery the same
- Marine 2-2 fishery Johns River east
 - Sept 16 to Nov 30
 - 2 fish bag limit, release Chinook
- Chehalis River to South Elma Sept 16 to Dec 31
 - 2 fish bag limit, release Chinook
- Upstream Chehalis Oct 1 to Dec 31
 - 2 fish bag limit, release Chinook
- Skookumchuck & Newaukum Oct 16 to Dec 31
 - 2 fish bag limit, release Chinook
- Jack fishery same as last year
- No January fishery
 - Late Coho past 2 yrs. not returning strong enough for late fishery
- Non-treaty commercial
 - Adjustments not made in this current model, but they will be made
 - Can maximize commercial season to 0.8% and will keep Chehalis under 5% impact for Chinook
- Overall still have a long way to go before fishing seasons are finalized

Advisor Recommendations:

Marine Area 2-2 East Harbor

- Would like two weeks back that were lost last year
- 3 fish bag for part of the season if not the whole season
 - If too much of a hit on wild Coho the 3 fish bag not more than 2 wild Coho
 - Release mortalities on Chinook a concern
- Are the first 2 weeks of Sept. too expensive on Chehalis Chinook?
 - Mike – yes
- Can open whole bay?
 - Chad – not possible the 5% Chehalis Chinook impact would occur too quickly

Entire Fishery

- Make bag limit equitable between marine water and freshwater areas.
- Concerned about 2 fish bag limit in November to December
 - Maybe reduce to hatchery retention only to protect late wild Coho
 - Mike – maybe go to a 1 fish limit in Dec not mark selective
- Prefer a cautious approach over excessive - do not know what ocean conditions will support
- Is in-season management a possibility?
 - Chad – budget not available for in-season monitoring in marine or river fisheries
It is necessary to manage adaptively in GH
- Reduce bag to keep the season going longer -2 fish bag better option than 3 fish bag
- Mike - 1 fish limit with a bonus hatchery Coho

- For example if catch wild Coho done, if catch hatchery fish can keep fishing until next fish is caught
 - Need to clarify with enforcement as a viable option
 - Need to try and model this as an option
- Chad – dates/bag limits being discussed are starting point for fishery proposals
- With Puget Sound forecast being poor could cause an influx of Puget Sound folks fishing in Grays Harbor
 - Be cautious in case the forecast does not pan out
 - 2 fish vs. 3 fish bag limit
 - Without active monitoring will not know the impacts until it is too late

Humptulips Recreational Fishery 2C (North Bay)

- When does North Bay open?
 - Aug 1 to Sept 15
- Conservation concerns with 2 fish bag on Chinook
 - Max number of boats for orderly fishery 45 – 50
 - A Charter boat operator is advertising on Facebook to book dates for 2 fish bag on Chinook in 2C for 2019 Aug 1 to Sep 15
 - Have potential to hammer the wild Chinook
 - Consider 1 fish bag or 1 and 1
 - Chad – growing fishery over last 2 years and buffered growth in model for more robust fishery
 - Mike – heed concerns and not satisfied with buffer in model
 - Need to take reduced Chinook at Buoy 10 and poor Willapa Chinook numbers into account
 - Pressure of those fisheries may move to 2C
 - 1 fish bag for conservation purposes
 - Chad – reduced Puget Sound fisheries could cause additional pressure on 2C
 - One fish bag - expand the length of the season

Public Comments:

Forecast Issues:

- Stay with 2 fish bag limit in marine area to keep season open longer
 - Keep late December fishery
- December 1 wild and 1 hatchery retention
- East Bay start on Sept 1
 - Would take too many Chehalis Chinook impacts ending season sooner

End of Meeting Comments:

- Factors could affect number of anglers in 2C fishery
 - Ocean shores launch limited by tides
 - Westport weather difficult to head to north bay
- North Bay fishery 2C
 - Limited area for boats to fish in the channel
 - If marine anglers takes too many Chinook will effect river anglers

- 1 fish bag to reduce charter and sport impacts
- Wynoochee River situation
 - When will hatchery fish be put in the Wynoochee River?
- Keep season open as long as possible
 - Take less of a bag limit to keep the season open sooner and longer
- Marine 2-2 east bay
 - Support 3 fish limit
 - Chinook impacts are a problem
 - Close Johns River area to allow east bay to continue fishing
 - Chad – 3 fish bag could increase effort outside Grays Harbor
- Future planning try to get Chinook fishery on Wynoochee and Satsop
- South sound opportunity of Coho early in the season could reduce Puget Sound impacts in Grays Harbor
 - Folks may show up for North Bay 2C Chinook opportunities due to problems with Puget Sound, Buoy 10 and Willapa Chinook