

## Summary

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**Meeting dates:** March 14, 2014

**Agenda item:** Naselle River Petition to Open Below the Hatchery (Briefing)

**Presenter(s):** Steve Thiesfeld, Region 6 Fish Program Manager, Fish Program

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### **Background summary:**

Orderly fisheries downstream of the Naselle River hatchery have been problematic due to large returns to the Naselle Hatchery. The river can be extremely low and clear during early fall, and this also contributes to the problem. Various regulations have been utilized in an attempt to address the “disorderly” fishery in this area. In 1988, the 1.4 mile area between Highway 4 and the hatchery was closed to salmon fishing from July 1<sup>st</sup> through October 15<sup>th</sup>. The area reopens to salmon fishing on October 16<sup>th</sup>, a time when flow typically increased and the fish are less vulnerable.

The Fish and Wildlife Commission delegates the authority to the Director to make salmon harvest agreements with Northwest treaty tribes and other governmental agencies, and adopt permanent and emergency regulations resulting from the agreements made during the annual North of Falcon process.

A local citizen has written a petition asking WDFW to re-open this area. The petition was signed by 40 citizens, some of which are landowners along the river in the area that is currently closed. The current petition indicates that proponents have organized supporters and are suggesting the Agency re-consider the proposal. Forecasts this year suggest that about 4,000 hatchery Chinook and 33,000 hatchery coho are expected to return to the Naselle River. However, natural origin Chinook escapements are low and conservation measures are needed to protect them. While the proposal would increase access to surplus hatchery salmon, it could increase mortality of natural origin Chinook and would require additional enforcement resources.

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### **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 by which it will address the concerns raised by the petitioner; or
  - b) Initiate rule-making proceedings?
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### **Public involvement process used and what you learned:**

The Fish and Wildlife Commission has received a petition requesting amendments to recreational fishing rules for the Naselle River to open the area from the Highway 4 bridge upstream to the concrete diversion structure at Naselle Hatchery August 1.

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### **Action requested:**

Deny the petition for immediate rule-making action because the Department proposes to

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address this request during the 2014 North of Falcon process.

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**Draft motion language:**

I move to Deny the petition to initiate immediate rule-making opening the section of the Naselle River from the Hwy. 4 bridge upstream to the concrete diversion structure at Naselle Hatchery August 1 and direct Department staff to address this rule during the 2014 North of Falcon regulation process.

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**Justification for Commission action:**

This action is needed to address the request as described in the LaPierre petition received by the Fish and Wildlife Commission.

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**Communications Plan:**

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## **INSTRUCTIONS TO AUTHORS -- HOW TO PREPARE A SUMMARY SHEET:**

This form is for staff-to-Commission communications and should be suitable for public distribution. You will succeed with this summary if you focus the attention on the actual Commission action you are requesting. Additional information that supports the summary should be included.

The summary should represent your professional advice to the Commission to make a reasoned, considered decision. Give your professional judgment about the policy questions imbedded in your issue, and include the risks or downside of your recommendation. Specify your recommendation for a Commission decision, and include the consequences of no action.

**Background:** This is your chance to capture the essence of the issue you have been working on. If the item responds to a Commission request, make sure to include that here. In this section, frame the issue so a person can see it as a “snapshot” with all the history that got us to this point, current concerns, and, if applicable, probable future development of the issue. This is also a great place to give the Commission any “sound bites” it might need when communicating your issues to the public, other policy makers, and the media.

**Policy issue(s):** Any decision is a “policy”, and any policy is a statement of values. Articulate what “policy” you are bringing to the Commission. Present policy issues to the Commission for action, and clearly define the policy versus operational issues before the Commission. Then briefly describe the implementation procedures the Department plans to take once the Commission makes the policy decision.

**Public Involvement/Input Summary:** Tell the Commission what public participation process(es) you used, including mailings and public forums. Be sure to summarize what the public said, both pro and con. If the public is split, say so. If you changed your recommendation because of public input, identify that as well. The Commission holds a high value on public participation.

**Action requested:** This is the punch line for the summary sheet. Do not repeat the discussions described above; be concise and present action steps in logical order. **Examples:** “Adoption of the rule amendments as proposed.” OR “This is the rule briefing and public hearing opportunity. The Commission will consider final adoption of the rule proposals at its \_\_\_\_\_ meeting in \_\_\_\_\_.” If Commission action is needed at a future Commission meeting, include that information here, and briefly describe the action you will be seeking at that future time. If no Commission action is needed (now or in the known future), indicate “N/A.”

**Draft motion language:** “I move to...” Use the exact language the Commission needs to adopt the rule proposals or Policy Documents. Think through how to convert your requested action into an actual motion. Be precise and include specific WAC numbers. Example, “I move to adopt WAC XXX-XX-XXX as proposed.” If no Commission action is requested at this meeting, indicate “N/A.”

**Justification for Commission action:** Required for the official record. Articulating a justification also helps the Commission streamline its process and explain to the public why a decision is being made. This is another good place to describe the most important “sound bite” of your issue.

**Communications Plan:** The content should pick up where “Public Involvement Process” left off. Provide answers to the questions: What's next? How will the Department get the word out to constituents/stakeholders if the rule change or policy is implemented? How will you educate the public on this issue following a decision?

Contact the Commission Office at (360) 902-2267 with questions.