

**Willapa Bay Salmon Management Policy – (Briefing/Public Comment/Decision)**

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

	<b>Page</b>
Summary Sheet .....	1 of 25
Draft Policy .....	3 of 25



## “SUMMARY SHEET”

**Meeting dates:** June 13, 2015, Commission Meeting

**Agenda item:** Willapa Bay Salmon Management Policy – (Briefing/Public Comment/Decision)

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

**Background summary:**

The department will brief the Commission on Willapa Bay Salmon Management Policy development, describe the public process, refine the draft policy as requested, and seek adoption of this policy.

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

The department is presenting the Grays Harbor Basin Salmon Management Policy to the Commission for adoption consideration.

**Public involvement process used and what you learned:**

To date the department has held eight (8) meetings to develop and refine the draft Willapa Bay Salmon Management Policy through public and Ad hoc Committee input. Four public meetings have been held and four (4) advisor meetings with an open public comment sessions following. All four (8) of these meetings were focused on sharing information and soliciting management objectives from the public for development and/or refinement of the draft policy. Five (5) Fish and Wildlife Commission meetings have been held with public input.

**Action requested:**

Consider policy adoption.

**Draft motion language:**

I move to adopt the policy with Chinook option X and Chum option X.

I move to adopt the policy with Chinook option X and Chum option X; and the following floor amendments.

**Justification for Commission action:**

This action is justified under RCW 77. 12 .047

**Communications Plan:**

- Oct. 25 – WDFW fishery managers will host an open house from 2-5 p.m.; Raymond High School cafeteria, 1016 Commercial St., Raymond
- Oct. 27 – Willapa Bay Ad hoc Advisory Committee, from 6-8 p.m.; public input from 8-9 p.m.; Raymond High School Library, 1016 Commercial St., Raymond
- Nov. 1 – WDFW fishery managers will host a public workshop from 4-7 p.m.; Raymond High School cafeteria, 1016 Commercial St., Raymond
- Nov. 13 – Willapa Bay Ad hoc Advisory Committee, from 6-8 p.m.; public input from 8-9 p.m.; Raymond High School cafeteria, 1016 Commercial St., Raymond

- Nov. 20 – Willapa Bay Ad hoc Advisory Committee, from 6-8 p.m.; public input from 8-9 p.m.; Raymond High School cafeteria, 1016 Commercial St., Raymond
- Dec. 6 – WDFW fishery managers will host a public workshop from 2-5 p.m.; Raymond High School cafeteria, 1016 Commercial St., Raymond
- Jan. 6 - Willapa Bay Ad hoc Advisory Committee, from 6-8 p.m.; public input from 8-9 p.m.; WDFW's Region 6 Office, 48 Devonshire Rd., Montesano
- Jan. 17 – WDFW fishery managers will host a public workshop from 2-5 p.m.; Raymond Elks Lodge, 326 Third St., Raymond

Upon adoption of the policy, WDFW will send out a press release notifying the public of the decision.

*Form revised 12/5/12*

## FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION POLICY DECISION

---

**POLICY TITLE:** Willapa Bay Salmon Management      **POLICY NUMBER:** C-XXXX-

Cancels or  
Supersedes: NA

Effective Date: XXXXXX, 2015  
Termination Date: December 31, 2023

See Also: Policies C-3608, C-3619

Approved \_\_\_\_\_ [date]  
by: \_\_\_\_\_ Chair  
Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission

---

### **Purpose**

The objective of this policy is to achieve the conservation and restoration of wild salmon in Willapa Bay and avoid ESA designation of any salmon species. Where consistent with this conservation objective, the policy also seeks to maintain or enhance the economic well-being and stability of the commercial and recreational fishing industry in the state, provide the public with outdoor recreational experiences, and a fair distribution of fishing opportunities throughout the Willapa Bay Basin. Enhanced transparency, information sharing, and improved technical rigor of fishery management are needed to restore and maintain public trust and support for management of Willapa Bay salmon fisheries.

### **Definition and Goal**

This policy sets a general management direction and provides guidance for Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (Department) management of all Pacific salmon returning to the Willapa Bay Basin. The Willapa Bay Basin is defined as Willapa Bay and its freshwater tributaries.

### **General Policy Statement**

This policy provides a cohesive set of principles and guidance to promote the conservation of wild salmon and steelhead and improve the Department's management of salmon in the Willapa Bay Basin. The Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission (Commission) recognizes that management decisions must be informed by fishery monitoring (biological and economic), and that innovation and adaptive management will be necessary to achieve the stated purpose of this policy. By improving communication, information sharing, and transparency, the Department shall promote improved public support for management of Willapa Bay salmon fisheries.

State commercial and recreational fisheries will need to increasingly focus on the harvest of abundant hatchery fish. Mark-selective fisheries are a tool that permits the harvest of abundant hatchery fish while reducing impacts on wild stocks needing protection. As a general policy, the Department shall implement mark-selective salmon fisheries, unless the wild populations substantially affected by the fishery are meeting spawner (e.g., escapement goal) and broodstock management objectives. In addition, the Department may consider

avoidance, alternative gears, or other selective fishing concepts along with other management approaches provided they are as or more effective than a mark-selective fishery in achieving spawner and broodstock management objectives.

Fishery and hatchery management measures should be implemented as part of an “all-H” strategy that integrates hatchery, harvest, and habitat systems. Although the policy focuses on fishery management, this policy in no way diminishes the significance of habitat protection and restoration.

### **Guiding Principles**

The Department shall apply the following principles in the management of salmon in the Willapa Bay Basin:

- 1) Prioritize the restoration and conservation of wild salmon through a comprehensive, cohesive, and progressive series of fishery, hatchery, and habitat actions.
- 2) Work with our partners (including Regional Fishery Enhancement Groups, nonprofit organizations, the public and Lead Entities) to protect and restore habitat productivity.
- 3) Implement improved broodstock management (including selective removal of hatchery fish) to reduce the genetic and ecological impacts of hatchery fish and improve the fitness and viability of salmon produced from Willapa Bay rivers (see Hatchery and Fishery Reform Policy C-3619). Achieve Hatchery Scientific Review Group (HSRG) broodstock management standards for Coho and Chum salmon by 2015, and work toward a goal of achieving standards for Chinook salmon by 2020.
- 4) Investigate and promote the development and implementation of alternative selective gear. The development of alternative selective gear may provide an opportunity to target fishery harvests on abundant hatchery fish stocks, reduce the number of hatchery-origin fish in natural spawning areas, limit mortalities on non-target species and stocks, and provide commercial fishing opportunities.
- 5) Work through the Pacific Salmon Commission to promote the conservation of Willapa Bay salmon and, in a manner consistent with the provisions of the Pacific Salmon Treaty, pursue the implementation of fishery management actions necessary to achieve agreed conservation objectives.
- 6) Within the Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) process, support management measures that promote the attainment of Willapa Bay conservation objectives consistent with the Council’s Salmon Fishery Management Plan.
- 7) Monitoring, sampling, and enforcement programs will adequately account for species and population impacts (landed catch and incidental fishing mortality) of all recreational and commercial fisheries and ensure compliance with state regulations. Develop and

implement enhanced enforcement strategies to improve compliance with fishing regulations and ensure orderly fisheries.

- 8) If it becomes apparent that a scheduled fishery will exceed the aggregated pre-season natural-origin Chinook mortality (impact) expectation, the Department shall implement in-season management actions so that mortalities of natural-origin Chinook shall not exceed the aggregated pre-season projection.
- 9) Salmon management will be timely, well documented, transparent, well-communicated, and accountable. The Department shall strive to make ongoing improvements in the transparency of fishery management and for effective public involvement. These shall include: a) clearly describing management objectives in a document available to the public prior to the initiation of the preseason planning process; b) enhancing opportunities for public engagement during the preseason fishery planning process; c) communicating in-season information and management actions to advisors and the public; and d) striving to improve communication with the public regarding co-management issues that are under discussion.
- 10) Seek to improve fishery management and technical tools through improved fishery monitoring, the development of new tools, and rigorous assessment of fishery models and parameters.
- 11) When a mark-selective fishery occurs, the mark-selective fishery shall be implemented, monitored, and enforced in a manner designed to achieve the anticipated conservation benefits.

**Fishery and Species-Specific Guidance**

Subject to the provisions of the Adaptive Management section, the following fishery-and species-specific sections describe the presumptive path for achieving conservation objectives and a fair sharing of harvestable fish.

**Fall Chinook Salmon: Alternative A  
(No Area 2T, 2U Commercial Fishery in August after Transition Period)**

Subject to the adaptive management provisions of this policy, the Department will manage fall Chinook salmon fisheries and hatchery programs consistent with the Guiding Principles and the following additional guidance:

- 1) The Department shall initiate a three-phase rebuilding program to conserve and restore wild Chinook salmon in Willapa Bay. The progressive series of actions is intended to result in achieving broodstock management standards by year 5 and spawner goals by years 16-21. Within the conservation constraints of the rebuilding program, Chinook salmon will be managed to provide for a full recreational fishing season with increased participation and/or catch anticipated in future years.
- 2) Rebuilding Program - Phase 1 (Years 1-4). The objectives of Phase 1 shall be to increase the number of natural-origin spawners and implement hatchery program modifications designed to meet broodstock management standards in the subsequent cycle.
  - a. Limit impact rates on Willapa River natural-origin Chinook salmon to no more than 20% to initiate rebuilding of the number of natural-origin spawners.
  - b. Implement hatchery broodstock management actions to promote re-adaptation to the natural environment and enhance productivity of natural-origin Chinook salmon in the North/Smith, Willapa, and Naselle rivers:
    - North/Smith – Manage as Wild Salmon Management Zone with no hatchery releases of Chinook salmon.
    - Willapa – Implement an integrated program with hatchery broodstock management strategies designed to achieve broodstock management standards consistent with a Primary designation in the subsequent cycle.
    - Naselle – Implement a stepping stone program to promote local adaptation. The highly integrated program of 300,000 will be derived from at least 70% natural-origin broodstock. The Department shall continue to enhance weir operations with a goal of limiting hatchery-origin adults to less than 30% of the natural spawners above the weir.
  - c. Pursue implementation of additional mark-selective commercial fishing gear to enhance conservation and provide harvest opportunities. The Department shall provide to the Commission by January 2017 a status report and by January 2018 an assessment of options to implement additional mark-selective commercial fishing gear in Willapa Bay. The assessment shall identify the likely release



mortality rates for each gear type, the benefits to rebuilding naturally spawning populations, and the benefits and impacts to the commercial fishery.

- 3) Rebuilding Program - Phase 2 (Years 5 - 10). The objectives of Phase 2 shall be to increase the number and productivity of natural-origin spawners through a further reduction in harvest rates and continued implementation of the broodstock management strategies discussed above.
  - a. Limit impact rate on Willapa River natural-origin Chinook salmon to no more than 14% to accelerate the rebuilding program.
  - b. Evaluate hatchery broodstock management actions for consistency with the objectives identified in 2(b), including the proportionate natural influence in the Willapa River and incorporation of natural-origin broodstock into the stepping stone program in the Naselle River.
- 4) Rebuilding Program - Phase 3 (Years 11 – 21). The combination of fishery and harvest management actions is projected to result on average in the achievement of spawner goals for the North & Willapa populations in the years 16-21. Additional fishery and hatchery management actions will be considered during this time period if the progress toward the spawner objectives is inconsistent with expectations.
- 5) Fishery Management Objectives. The fishery management objectives for fall Chinook salmon, in priority order, are to:
  - a. Achieve spawner goals for the primary stocks of natural-origin Chinook and hatchery reform broodstock objectives through the three phase rebuilding program described above.
  - b. Provide for an enhanced recreational fishing season. The impact rate of the recreational fishery is anticipated to be ~3.2% during the initial years of the policy, but may increase in subsequent years to provide for an enhanced recreational season as described below:
    - Manage Chinook salmon for an enhanced recreational fishing season to increase participation and/or catch including consideration of increased daily limits, earlier openings, multiple rods, and other measures.
    - Conservation actions, as necessary, shall be shared equally between marine and freshwater fisheries.
  - c. Provide opportunities for commercial fisheries within the remaining available fishery impacts.

- 6) Fishery Management in Phase 1. To facilitate a transition to the Willapa River as the primary Chinook salmon population, fisheries during the transition period will be managed with the following goal:
  - a. The impact rate on Willapa River natural-origin fall Chinook in Willapa Bay fisheries shall not exceed 20%. Within this impact rate cap, the priority shall be to maintain a full season of recreational fisheries for Chinook salmon in the Willapa Bay Basin.
  - b. No commercial Chinook fisheries shall occur in areas 2T and 2U prior to Labor Day. Commercial fisheries in areas 2T and 2U after Labor Day but before Sept. 16 shall use mark-selective fishing gear (6.5" maximum mesh in 2T and 4.5" maximum mesh tangle net in 2U) and recovery boxes.
  - c. No commercial Chinook fisheries shall occur in areas 2M, 2N, 2P and 2R prior to August 16.
- 7) Fishery Management After Phase 1. Fisheries in the Willapa Bay Basin during the Chinook salmon management period (prior to September 16) will be managed with the intent of:
  - a. Limiting the impact rate on Willapa River natural-origin fall Chinook salmon to no more than 14%.
  - b. No commercial fisheries shall occur within areas 2T and 2U prior to September 16.
  - c. No commercial Chinook fisheries shall occur in areas 2M, 2N, 2P and 2R prior to August 16.
- 8) Hatchery Production. Within budgetary constraints, and at the earliest feasible date, the Department shall seek to implement the following hatchery production of fall Chinook salmon:
  - 3.30 million at Naselle Hatchery
    - i. 300,000 highly integrated
    - ii. 3 million from first generation returns of highly integrated stock
  - 3.30 million at Nemah Hatchery
  - 0.35 million at Forks Creek Hatchery
- 9) Enhanced Hatchery Production. The Department shall work with our partners to secure resources to increase production of fall Chinook salmon at Naselle Hatchery by an additional 2.7 million subyearlings.

**Fall Chinook Salmon: Alternative B  
(Area 2T Commercial Fishery in Early-August)**

Subject to the adaptive management provisions of this policy, the Department will manage fall Chinook salmon fisheries and hatchery programs consistent with the Guiding Principles and the following additional guidance:

- 1) The Department shall initiate a three-phase rebuilding program to conserve and restore wild Chinook salmon in Willapa Bay. The progressive series of actions is intended to result in achieving broodstock management standards by year 5 and spawner goals by years 16-21. Within the conservation constraints of the rebuilding program, Chinook salmon will be managed to provide for a full recreational fishing season with increased participation and/or catch anticipated in future years.
- 2) Rebuilding Program - Phase 1 (Years 1-4). The objectives of Phase 1 shall be to increase the number of natural-origin spawners and implement hatchery program modifications designed to meet broodstock management standards in the subsequent cycle.
  - a. Limit impact rate on Willapa River natural-origin Chinook salmon to no more than 20% to initiate rebuilding of the number of natural-origin spawners.
  - b. Implement hatchery broodstock management actions to promote re-adaptation to the natural environment and enhance productivity of natural-origin Chinook salmon in the North/Smith, Willapa, and Naselle rivers:
    - North/Smith – Manage as Wild Salmon Management Zone with no hatchery releases of Chinook salmon.
    - Willapa – Implement an integrated program with hatchery broodstock management strategies designed to achieve broodstock management standards consistent with a Primary designation in the subsequent cycle.
    - Naselle – Implement a stepping stone program to promote local adaptation. The highly integrated program of 300,000 will be derived from at least 70% natural-origin broodstock. The Department shall continue to enhance weir operations with a goal of limiting hatchery-origin adults to less than 30% of the natural spawners above the weir.
  - c. Pursue implementation of additional mark-selective commercial fishing gear to enhance conservation and provide harvest opportunities. The Department shall provide to the Commission by January 2017 a status report and by January 2018 an assessment of options to implement additional mark-selective commercial fishing gear in Willapa Bay. The assessment shall identify the likely release

mortality rates for each gear type, the benefits to rebuilding naturally spawning populations, and the benefits and impacts to the commercial fishery.

- 3) Rebuilding Program - Phase 2 (Years 5 - 10). The objectives of Phase 2 shall be to increase the number and productivity of natural-origin spawners through a further reduction in harvest rates and continued implementation of the broodstock management strategies discussed above.
  - a. Limit impact rate on Willapa River natural-origin Chinook salmon to no more than 14% to accelerate the rebuilding program.
  - b. Evaluate hatchery broodstock management actions for consistency with the objectives identified in 2(b), including the proportionate natural influence in the Willapa River and incorporation of natural-origin broodstock into the stepping stone program in the Naselle River.
- 4) Rebuilding Program - Phase 3 (Years 11 – 21). The combination of fishery and harvest management actions is projected to result on average in the achievement of spawner goals for the North & Willapa populations in the years 16-21. Additional fishery and hatchery management actions will be considered during this time period if the progress toward the spawner objectives is inconsistent with expectations.
- 5) Fishery Management Objectives. The fishery management objectives for fall Chinook salmon, in priority order, are to:
  - a. Achieve spawner goals for the primary stocks of natural-origin Chinook and hatchery reform broodstock objectives through the three phase rebuilding program described above.
  - b. Provide for an enhanced recreational fishing season. The impact rate of the recreational fishery is anticipated to be ~3.2% during the initial years of the policy, but may increase in subsequent years to provide for an enhanced recreational season as described below:
    - Manage Chinook salmon for an enhanced recreational fishing season to increase participation and/or catch including consideration of increased daily limits, earlier openings, multiple rods, and other measures.
    - Conservation actions, as necessary, shall be shared equally between marine and freshwater fisheries.
  - c. Provide opportunities for commercial fisheries within the remaining available fishery impacts.
- 6) Fishery Management in Phase 1. To facilitate a transition to the Willapa River as the

primary Chinook salmon population, fisheries during the transition period will be managed with the following goal:

- a. The impact rate on Willapa River natural-origin fall Chinook in Willapa Bay fisheries shall not exceed 20%. Within this impact rate cap, the priority shall be to maintain a full season of recreational fisheries for Chinook salmon in the Willapa Bay Basin.
  - b. Commercial fisheries may occur within the remaining allowable impacts, but no commercial fisheries shall occur prior to August 1.
  - c. Commercial fisheries between August 1 and August 15 shall be limited to 72 consecutive hours and may occur in all areas except Area 2U.
  - d. No commercial Chinook fisheries shall occur in area 2T August 16 through Labor Day. Commercial fisheries in area 2T after Labor Day but before Sept. 16 shall use mark-selective fishing gear and recovery boxes. Commercial fisheries in area 2U prior to Sept. 16 shall use mark-selective fishing gear (4.5" maximum mesh tangle net) and recovery boxes.
  - e. No commercial Chinook fisheries shall occur in areas 2M, 2N, 2P and 2R from August 16 until after Labor Day.
- 7) Fishery Management After Phase 1. Fisheries in the Willapa Bay Basin during the Chinook salmon management period (prior to September 16) will be managed with the goal of:
- a. Limiting the fishery impact rate on Willapa River natural-origin fall Chinook salmon to no more than 14%.
  - b. Commercial fisheries may occur within the remaining allowable impacts, but no commercial fisheries shall occur prior to August 1.
  - c. Commercial fisheries between August 1 and August 15 shall be limited to 72 consecutive hours and may occur in all areas except Area 2U.
  - d. No commercial fisheries shall occur in Areas 2T and 2U from August 16 through September 16.
  - e. No commercial Chinook fisheries shall occur in areas 2M, 2N, 2P and 2R from August 16 until after Labor Day.
- 8) Hatchery Production. Within budgetary constraints, and at the earliest feasible date, the Department shall seek to implement the following hatchery production of fall Chinook salmon:

- 3.30 million at Naselle Hatchery
    - i. 300,000 highly integrated
    - ii. 3 million from first generation returns of highly integrated stock
  - 3.30 million at Nemah Hatchery
  - 0.35 million at Forks Creek Hatchery
- 9) Enhanced Hatchery Production. The Department shall work with our partners to secure resources to increase production of fall Chinook salmon at Naselle Hatchery by an additional 2.7 million subyearlings.

DRAFT

## **Fall Chinook Salmon: Alternative C (Naselle Contributing)**

Subject to the adaptive management provisions of this policy, the Department will manage fall Chinook salmon fisheries and hatchery programs consistent with the Guiding Principles and the following additional guidance:

- 1) The Department shall initiate a three-phase rebuilding program to conserve and restore wild Chinook salmon in Willapa Bay. The progressive series of actions is intended to result in achieving broodstock management standards by year 5 and spawner goals by years 16-21. Within the conservation constraints of the rebuilding program, Chinook salmon will be managed to provide for a full recreational fishing season with increased participation and/or catch anticipated in future years.
- 2) Rebuilding Program - Phase 1 (Years 1-4). The objectives of Phase 1 shall be to increase the number of natural-origin spawners and implement hatchery program modifications designed to meet broodstock management standards in the subsequent cycle.
  - a. Limit impact rates on Willapa and Naselle river natural-origin Chinook salmon to no more than 20% to initiate rebuilding of the number of natural-origin spawners.
  - b. Implement hatchery broodstock management actions to promote re-adaptation to the natural environment and enhance productivity of natural-origin Chinook salmon in the North/Smith, Willapa, and Naselle rivers:
    - North/Smith – Manage as Wild Salmon Management Zone with no hatchery releases of Chinook salmon.
    - Willapa – Implement an integrated program with hatchery broodstock management strategies designed to achieve broodstock management standards consistent with a Primary designation in the subsequent cycle.
    - Naselle – Implement hatchery broodstock strategies designed to achieve broodstock management standards consistent with a Contributing designation in the subsequent cycle.
  - c. Pursue implementation of additional mark-selective commercial fishing gear to enhance conservation and provide harvest opportunities. The Department shall provide to the Commission by January 2017 a status report and by January 2018 an assessment of options to implement additional mark-selective commercial fishing gear in Willapa Bay. The assessment shall identify the likely release mortality rates for each gear type, the benefits to rebuilding naturally spawning populations, and the benefits and impacts to the commercial fishery.

- 3) Rebuilding Program - Phase 2 (Years 5 - 10). The objectives of Phase 2 shall be to increase the number and productivity of natural-origin spawners through a further reduction in harvest rates and continued implementation of the broodstock management strategies discussed above.
  - a. Limit impact rates on Willapa and Naselle river natural-origin Chinook salmon to no more than 14% to accelerate the rebuilding program.
  - b. Evaluate hatchery broodstock management actions for consistency with the objectives identified in 2(b), including the proportionate natural influence in the Willapa and Naselle rivers.
- 4) Rebuilding Program - Phase 3 (Years 11 – 21). The combination of fishery and harvest management actions is projected to result on average in the achievement of spawner goals for the North & Willapa populations in the years 16-21. Additional fishery and hatchery management actions will be considered during this time period if the progress toward the spawner objectives is inconsistent with expectations.
- 5) Fishery Management Objectives. The fishery management objectives for fall Chinook salmon, in priority order, are to:
  - a. Achieve spawner goals for the primary stocks of natural-origin Chinook and hatchery reform broodstock objectives through the three phase rebuilding program described above.
  - b. Provide for an enhanced recreational fishing season. The impact rate of the recreational fishery is anticipated to be ~3.2% during the initial years of the policy, but may increase in subsequent years to provide for an enhanced recreational season as described below:
    - Manage Chinook salmon for an enhanced recreational fishing season to increase participation and/or catch including consideration of increased daily limits, earlier openings, multiple rods, and other measures.
    - Conservation actions, as necessary, shall be shared equally between marine and freshwater fisheries.
  - c. Provide opportunities for commercial fisheries within the remaining available fishery impacts.
- 6) Fishery Management in Phase 1. To facilitate a transition to the Willapa River as the primary Chinook salmon population, fisheries during the transition period will be managed with the following goal:



- a. The impact rate on Willapa and Naselle river natural-origin fall Chinook in Willapa Bay fisheries shall not exceed 20%. Within this impact rate cap, the priority shall be to maintain a full season of recreational fisheries for Chinook salmon in the Willapa Bay Basin.
  - b. No commercial Chinook fisheries shall occur in areas 2T and 2U prior to Labor Day. Commercial fisheries in areas 2T and 2U after Labor Day but before Sept. 16 shall use mark-selective fishing gear (6.5" maximum mesh in 2T and 4.5" maximum mesh tangle net in 2U) and recovery boxes.
  - c. No commercial Chinook fisheries shall occur in areas 2M, 2N, 2P and 2R until after Labor Day.
- 7) Fishery Management After Phase 1. Fisheries in the Willapa Bay Basin during the Chinook salmon management period (prior to September 16) will be managed with the goal of:
- a. Limiting the fishery impact rate on Willapa and Naselle river natural-origin fall Chinook salmon to no more than 14%.
  - b. No commercial fisheries shall occur within areas 2T and 2U prior to September 16.
  - c. No commercial Chinook fisheries shall occur in areas 2M, 2N, 2P and 2R until after September 7.
- 8) Hatchery Production. Within budgetary constraints, and at the earliest feasible date, the Department shall seek to implement the following hatchery production of fall Chinook salmon:
- 0.80 million at Naselle Hatchery
  - 3.30 million at Nemah Hatchery
  - 0.35 million at Forks Creek Hatchery

## **Fall Chinook Salmon: Alternative D (No Transition Period)**

Subject to the adaptive management provisions of this policy, the Department will manage fall Chinook salmon fisheries and hatchery programs consistent with the Guiding Principles and the following additional guidance:

- 1) The Department shall initiate a two-phase rebuilding program to conserve and restore wild Chinook salmon in Willapa Bay. The progressive series of actions is intended to result in achieving broodstock management standards by year 5 and spawner goals by years 16-21. Within the conservation constraints of the rebuilding program, Chinook salmon will be managed to provide for a full recreational fishing season with increased participation and/or catch anticipated in future years.
- 2) Rebuilding Program - Phase 1 (Years 1-4). The objectives of Phase 1 shall be to increase the number of natural-origin spawners and implement hatchery program modifications designed to meet broodstock management standards in the subsequent cycle.
  - a. Limit impact rates on Willapa River natural-origin Chinook salmon to no more than 14% to initiate rebuilding of the number of natural-origin spawners.
  - b. Implement hatchery broodstock management actions to promote re-adaptation to the natural environment and enhance productivity of natural-origin Chinook salmon in the North/Smith, Willapa, and Naselle rivers:
    - North/Smith – Manage as Wild Salmon Management Zone with no hatchery releases of Chinook salmon.
    - Willapa – Implement an integrated program with hatchery broodstock management strategies designed to achieve broodstock management standards consistent with a Primary designation in the subsequent cycle.
    - Naselle – Implement a stepping stone program to promote local adaptation. The highly integrated program of 300,000 will be derived from at least 70% natural-origin broodstock. The Department shall continue to enhance weir operations with a goal of limiting hatchery-origin adults to less than 30% of the natural spawners above the weir.
  - c. Pursue implementation of additional mark-selective commercial fishing gear to enhance conservation and provide harvest opportunities. The Department shall provide to the Commission by January 2017 a status report and by January 2018 an assessment of options to implement additional mark-selective commercial fishing gear in Willapa Bay. The assessment shall identify the likely release

mortality rates for each gear type, the benefits to rebuilding naturally spawning populations, and the benefits and impacts to the commercial fishery.

- 3) Rebuilding Program - Phase 2 (Years 5 – 21). The combination of fishery and harvest management actions is projected to result on average in the achievement of spawner goals for the North & Willapa populations in the years 16-21. Additional fishery and hatchery management actions will be considered during this time period if the progress toward the spawner objectives is inconsistent with expectations.
- 4) Fishery Management Objectives. The fishery management objectives for fall Chinook salmon, in priority order, are to:
  - a. Achieve spawner goals for the primary stocks of natural-origin Chinook and hatchery reform broodstock objectives through the three phase rebuilding program described above.
  - b. Provide for an enhanced recreational fishing season. The impact rate of the recreational fishery is anticipated to be ~3.2% during the initial years of the policy, but may increase in subsequent years to provide for an enhanced recreational season as described below:
    - Manage Chinook salmon for an enhanced recreational fishing season to increase participation and/or catch including consideration of increased daily limits, earlier openings, multiple rods, and other measures.
    - Conservation actions, as necessary, shall be shared equally between marine and freshwater fisheries.
  - c. Provide opportunities for commercial fisheries within the remaining available fishery impacts.
- 5) Fishery Management in Phase 1. To facilitate a transition to the Willapa River as the primary Chinook salmon population, fisheries during the transition period will be managed with the following goal:
  - d. The impact rate on Willapa River natural-origin fall Chinook in Willapa Bay fisheries shall not exceed 14%. Within this impact rate cap, the priority shall be to maintain a full season of recreational fisheries for Chinook salmon in the Willapa Bay Basin.
  - e. No commercial Chinook fisheries shall occur in areas 2T and 2U prior to Labor Day. Commercial fisheries in areas 2T and 2U after Labor Day but before Sept. 16 shall use mark-selective fishing gear (6.5" maximum mesh in 2T and 4.5" maximum mesh tangle net in 2U) and recovery boxes.

- f. No commercial Chinook fisheries shall occur in areas 2M, 2N, 2P and 2R prior to August 16.
- 6) Fishery Management After Phase 1. Fisheries in the Willapa Bay Basin during the Chinook salmon management period (prior to September 16) will be managed with the goal of:
- a. Limiting the fishery impact rate on Willapa River natural-origin fall Chinook salmon to no more than 14%.
  - b. No commercial fisheries shall occur within areas 2T and 2U prior to September 16.
  - c. No commercial Chinook fisheries shall occur in areas 2M, 2N, 2P and 2R prior to August 16.
- 7) Hatchery Production. Within budgetary constraints, and at the earliest feasible date, the Department shall seek to implement the following hatchery production of fall Chinook salmon:
- 3.30 million at Naselle Hatchery
    - i. 300,000 highly integrated
    - ii. 3 million from first generation returns of highly integrated stock
  - 3.30 million at Nemah Hatchery
  - 0.35 million at Forks Creek Hatchery
- 8) Enhanced Hatchery Production. The Department shall work with our partners to secure resources to increase production of fall Chinook salmon at Naselle Hatchery by an additional 2.7 million subyearlings.

**Fall Chinook Salmon: Alternative E  
(No Transition, Naselle Contributing)**

Subject to the adaptive management provisions of this policy, the Department will manage fall Chinook salmon fisheries and hatchery programs consistent with the Guiding Principles and the following additional guidance:

- 1) The Department shall initiate a two-phase rebuilding program to conserve and restore wild Chinook salmon in Willapa Bay. The progressive series of actions is intended to result in achieving broodstock management standards by year 5 and spawner goals by years 16-21. Within the conservation constraints of the rebuilding program, Chinook salmon will be managed to provide for a full recreational fishing season with increased participation and/or catch anticipated in future years.
- 2) Rebuilding Program - Phase 1 (Years 1-4). The objectives of Phase 1 shall be to increase the number of natural-origin spawners and implement hatchery program modifications designed to meet broodstock management standards in the subsequent cycle.
  - a. Limit impact rates on Willapa and Naselle river natural-origin Chinook salmon to no more than 14% to initiate rebuilding of the number of natural-origin spawners.
  - b. Implement hatchery broodstock management actions to promote re-adaptation to the natural environment and enhance productivity of natural-origin Chinook salmon in the North/Smith, Willapa, and Naselle rivers:
    - North/Smith – Manage as Wild Salmon Management Zone with no hatchery releases of Chinook salmon.
    - Willapa – Implement an integrated program with hatchery broodstock management strategies designed to achieve broodstock management standards consistent with a Primary designation in the subsequent cycle.
    - Naselle – Implement hatchery broodstock strategies designed to achieve broodstock management standards consistent with a Contributing designation in the subsequent cycle.
  - c. Pursue implementation of additional mark-selective commercial fishing gear to enhance conservation and provide harvest opportunities. The Department shall provide to the Commission by January 2017 a status report and by January 2018 an assessment of options to implement additional mark-selective commercial fishing gear in Willapa Bay. The assessment shall identify the likely release mortality rates for each gear type, the benefits to rebuilding naturally spawning populations, and the benefits and impacts to the commercial fishery.

- 3) Rebuilding Program - Phase 2 (Years 5 – 21). The combination of fishery and harvest management actions is projected to result on average in the achievement of spawner goals for the North & Willapa populations in the years 16-21. Additional fishery and hatchery management actions will be considered during this time period if the progress toward the spawner objectives is inconsistent with expectations.
- 4) Fishery Management Objectives. The fishery management objectives for fall Chinook salmon, in priority order, are to:
  - d. Achieve spawner goals for the primary stocks of natural-origin Chinook and hatchery reform broodstock objectives through the three phase rebuilding program described above.
  - e. Provide for an enhanced recreational fishing season. The impact rate of the recreational fishery is anticipated to be ~3.2% during the initial years of the policy, but may increase in subsequent years to provide for an enhanced recreational season as described below:
    - Manage Chinook salmon for an enhanced recreational fishing season to increase participation and/or catch including consideration of increased daily limits, earlier openings, multiple rods, and other measures.
    - Conservation actions, as necessary, shall be shared equally between marine and freshwater fisheries.
  - f. Provide opportunities for commercial fisheries within the remaining available fishery impacts.
- 5) Fishery Management in Phase 1. To facilitate a transition to the Willapa River as the primary Chinook salmon population, fisheries during the transition period will be managed with the following goal:
  - a. The impact rate on Willapa and Naselle river natural-origin fall Chinook in Willapa Bay fisheries shall not exceed 14%. Within this impact rate cap, the priority shall be to maintain a full season of recreational fisheries for Chinook salmon in the Willapa Bay Basin.
  - b. No commercial Chinook fisheries shall occur in areas 2T and 2U prior to Labor Day. Commercial fisheries in areas 2T and 2U after Labor Day but before Sept. 16 shall use mark-selective fishing gear (6.5" maximum mesh in 2T and 4.5" maximum mesh tangle net in 2U) and recovery boxes.
  - c. No commercial Chinook fisheries shall occur in areas 2M, 2N, 2P and 2R until

after Labor Day.

- 6) Fishery Management After Phase 1. Fisheries in the Willapa Bay Basin during the Chinook salmon management period (prior to September 16) will be managed with the goal of:
  - a. Limiting the fishery impact rate on Willapa and Naselle river natural-origin fall Chinook salmon to no more than 14%.
  - b. No commercial fisheries shall occur within areas 2T and 2U prior to September 16.
  - c. No commercial Chinook fisheries shall occur in areas 2M, 2N, 2P and 2R until after September 7.
- 7) Hatchery Production. Within budgetary constraints, and at the earliest feasible date, the Department shall seek to implement the following hatchery production of fall Chinook salmon:
  - 0.80 million at Naselle Hatchery
  - 3.30 million at Nemah Hatchery
  - 0.35 million at Forks Creek Hatchery

### Coho Salmon

Subject to the adaptive management provisions of this policy, the Department will manage Coho salmon fisheries and hatchery programs consistent with the Guiding Principles and the following objectives:

- 1) Broodstock Management Strategies. Manage Coho salmon with the following designations and broodstock management strategies:

	North/Smith	Willapa	Naselle
Designation	Primary	Primary	Stabilizing
Broodstock Strategy	No Hatchery Program	Integrated	Integrated

Coho salmon returning to all other watersheds will be managed consistent with a Contributing designation.

- 2) Fishery Management Objectives. The fishery management objectives for Coho salmon, in priority order, are to:
  - a. Fisheries will be managed with the goal of achieving the aggregate spawner goal for Willapa Bay natural-origin Coho salmon. When the pre-season forecast of natural-origin adult Coho is less than the aggregate goal, or less than 10% higher than the aggregate goal, fisheries in the Willapa Bay Basin will be scheduled to result in an impact of no more than 10% of the adult return;
  - b. Prioritize commercial fishing opportunities during the Coho fishery management period (September 16 through October 14); and
  - c. Provide recreational fishing opportunities.



**Chum Salmon**

Subject to the adaptive management provisions of this policy, the Department will manage Chum salmon fisheries and hatchery programs consistent with the Guiding Principles and the following objectives:

- 1) Broodstock Management Strategies. Manage Chum salmon with the following designations and broodstock management strategies:

	North/Smith	Palix	Bear
Designation	Primary	Contributing	Primary
Broodstock Strategy	No Hatchery Program	No Hatchery Program	No Hatchery Program

Chum salmon returning to all other watersheds will be managed consistent with a Contributing designation.

- 2) Fishery Management Objectives. The fishery management objectives for Chum salmon, in priority order, are to:
  - a. Achieve the aggregate goal for naturally spawning Chum salmon and meet hatchery reform broodstock objectives (see bullet 3);
  - b. Provide commercial fishing opportunities during the Chum salmon fishery management period (October 15 through October 31); and
  - c. Provide recreational fishing opportunities. Recreational fisheries will be allowed to retain Chum salmon.
- 3) Fisheries will be managed with the goal of achieving the aggregate goal for Willapa Bay naturally spawning Chum salmon.
  - a. Option A: Until the spawner goal is achieved, the maximum fishery impact shall not exceed a 10% impact rate and no commercial fisheries will occur in the period from October 15-31. If the aggregate goal has been achieved, but the pre-season forecast of adult Chum salmon is less than the aggregate goal, or less than 10% higher than the aggregate goal, fisheries in the Willapa Bay Basin will be scheduled to result in an impact of no more than 10% of the adult return.
  - b. Option B: Until the spawner goal is achieved 2 consecutive years, the maximum fishery impact shall not exceed a 10% impact rate and no commercial fisheries will occur in the period from October 15-31. If the number of natural-origin spawners was less than the goal in 3 out of the last 5 years, the Department shall implement the following measures:

- i. The predicted fishery impact for Chum in Willapa Bay Basin will be scheduled to result in an impact of no more than 10% of the adult return.
  - ii. When the Chum pre-season forecast is 90% or less of the escapement goal, the predicted fishery impact for Chum in Willapa Bay Basin will be scheduled to result in an impact of no more than 5% of the adult return.
- 4) The Department shall evaluate opportunities to increase hatchery production of Chum salmon. If Chum salmon hatchery production is enhanced, beginning as early as 2018, fisheries in the Willapa Bay Basin may be implemented with a fishery impact limit of no more than 33% of the natural-origin Chum salmon return.

### **Adaptive Management**

The Commission recognizes that adaptive management will be essential to achieve the purpose of this policy. Department staff may implement actions to manage adaptively to achieve the objectives of this policy and will coordinate with the Commission, as needed, in order to implement corrective actions.

The Commission will also track implementation and results of the fishery management actions and artificial production programs in the transition period, with annual reviews beginning at the end of 2015 and a comprehensive review at the end of the transition period (e.g., 2017). Fisheries pursuant to this Policy will be adaptive and adjustments may be made. Department staff may implement actions necessary to manage adaptively to achieve the objectives of this policy and shall coordinate with the Commission, as needed, in order to implement corrective actions.

Components of the adaptive management will be shared with the public through the agency web site and will include the following elements:

- 1) Conduct Annual Fishery Management Review. The Department shall annually evaluate fishery management tools and parameters, and identify improvements as necessary to accurately predict fishery performance and escapement.
- 2) Improve In-season Management. The Department shall develop, evaluate, and implement fishery management models, procedures, and management measures that are projected to enhance the effectiveness of fishery management relative to management based on preseason predictions.
- 3) Review Spawner Goals. The Department shall review spawner goals to ensure that they reflect the current productivity of salmon within the following timelines:
  - a. Chum: September 1, 2015
  - b. Coho: January 1, 2016
  - c. Chinook: January 1, 2020

- 4) Comprehensive Hatchery Assessment. The Department shall complete a comprehensive review of the hatchery programs in the Willapa Bay region by June 2016. The review shall identify the capital funding necessary to maintain or enhance current hatchery programs, identify changes in release locations or species that would enhance recreational and commercial fishing opportunities, identify improvements or new weirs to increase compliance with broodstock management, and the use of re-use water systems, water temperature manipulation to increase production hatchery capacity.
- 5) Ocean Ranching Opportunities. The Department shall complete by January 2016 a comprehensive review of opportunities and constraints to implement ocean ranching of salmon in Willapa Bay.

**Delegation of Authority**

The Commission delegates the authority to the Director, through the North of Falcon stakeholder consultation process, to set seasons for recreational and commercial fisheries in the Willapa Bay Basin, and to adopt permanent and emergency regulations to implement these fisheries.