



**Oregon Administrative Rules
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife**

DIVISION 500

Conservation Plan for Fall Chinook Salmon in the Rogue Species Management Unit

635-500-6650

Implementing the Conservation Plan for Fall Chinook Salmon in the Rogue Species Management Unit

(1) Policy. The Conservation Plan for Fall Chinook Salmon in the Rogue Species Management Unit of 2012 (Rogue Fall Chinook Conservation Plan, available at Department offices) implements the Commission's strategy for the management of these populations of naturally produced native fish by the Department, in cooperation with other state, federal and local partners. The Rogue Fall Chinook Conservation Plan is based on the general premise that habitat management and fishery management are critical to ensure the conservation and enhancement of these populations of native fish. The Commission believes that habitat management is most likely to be successful by working cooperatively with other federal, state, and local management agencies, and by encouraging the maintenance, restoration, and enhancement of aquatic and riparian habitat as outlined by the Oregon Plan for Salmon and Watersheds. This rule describes a strategy for the use of Department statutory authorities to implement the requirements of the Native Fish Conservation Policy (OAR 635-007-0502 thru 635-007-0505). The Rogue Fall Chinook Conservation Plan is not intended to be a rigid recipe, but does prescribe generalized management strategies the Department will pursue; and how the efficacy of those strategies and allied management actions will be evaluated.

(2) Species Management Unit and Population Description. The Species Management Unit (SMU) for Rogue fall Chinook salmon includes that area of coastal Oregon south of Elk River (near Port Orford). Based on differences in genetic attributes and genetic-based life history attributes, fall Chinook salmon (CHF) populations were assigned to one of two strata: the Rogue Stratum or the Coastal Stratum. There are five independent CHF populations in the Rogue Stratum (Upper Rogue, Middle Rogue, Lower Rogue, Applegate, and Illinois) and four independent CHF populations in the Coastal Stratum (Chetco, Winchuck, Pistol, and Hunter).

(3) Desired Status. The desired status goal is to manage Rogue fall Chinook salmon and their habitat so that:

(a) The population is sustained for a minimum of 100 years;

(b) The productive capacity of the habitat is maintained in order to provide ecological, economic, and cultural benefits; and

(c) The opportunities for sport and commercial fishers are consistent with population status.

(d) The five measurable criteria that describe the desired status goal for fall Chinook salmon populations in the Rogue Stratum are:

(A) Adult abundance;

(B) Adult migration timing;

(C) Adult age composition;



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39 (D) Adult composition (% hatchery); and

40 (E) Population persistence.

41 (e) The above measurable criteria are defined in Table 36 of the Desired Biological Status section of
42 the Rogue Fall Chinook Conservation Plan, and are adopted by reference into this rule. The desired
43 status goal for the Rogue Stratum shall be judged to be achieved when all of the populations achieve all
44 of the measurable criteria. Other criteria related to productivity (standardized rate of population growth)
45 and survival rate to each critical life history stage may be developed in the future if new information
46 becomes available. Implementation of any new criteria, or the deletion of any current criteria, will
47 necessitate modification of this rule.

48 (f) The five measurable criteria that describe the desired status goal for fall Chinook salmon
49 populations in the Coastal Stratum are:

50 (A) Spawner abundance;

51 (B) Spawner age composition (Chetco only);

52 (C) Spawner composition (% hatchery);

53 (D) Juvenile abundance (Winchuck only); and

54 (E) Population persistence.

55 (g) The above measurable criteria are defined in Table 37 of the Desired Biological Status section of
56 the Rogue Fall Chinook Conservation Plan, and are adopted by reference into this rule. The desired
57 status goal for the Coastal Stratum shall be judged to be achieved when all of the populations achieve all
58 of the measurable criteria. Other criteria related to productivity (standardized rate of population growth)
59 and survival rate to each critical life history stage may be developed in the future if new information
60 becomes available. Implementation of any new criteria, or the deletion of any current criteria, will
61 necessitate modification of this rule.

62 (h) The desired status goal for the entire SMU shall be judged to be achieved when the two strata both
63 achieve desired status.

64 (4) Current Status. The current status of the Rogue Fall Chinook SMU and constituent independent
65 populations, at the time of adoption of this rule, is described in Tables 43 and 44 of the Current Status
66 section of the Rogue Fall Chinook Conservation Plan. Criteria used to characterize current status are
67 structured so as to allow for the direct comparison of current and desired status of the SMU. The
68 Department shall annually update the current status of the SMU. Annual updates will serve as a
69 measurement of progress toward desired status, and thus will not require rule modification of current
70 status.

71 (5) Primary Limiting Factors.

72 (a) Numerous factors could, in the future, contribute to the gap between current and desired status for
73 fall Chinook populations in the Rogue Stratum of the SMU.

74 (b) At the time of adoption of this Conservation Plan, manageable primary limiting factors are:

75 (A) Water temperature of the Rogue River in summer during adult migration;



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- 76 (B) Water temperature of the Rogue River in summer during juvenile rearing;
77 (C) The intensity of peak flows during egg and sac-fry incubation in the gravel;
78 (D) Brood harvest rates that sometimes exceed maximum sustained yield; and
79 (E) Periodic low spawning escapements that follow poor ocean survival conditions.
80 (c) Numerous factors contribute to gaps between current and desired status for fall Chinook
81 populations in the Coastal Stratum of the SMU.
82 (d) At the time of adoption of this Conservation Plan, manageable primary limiting factors are:
83 (A) Volume of juvenile rearing habitat in streams and estuaries;
84 (B) Water temperature in streams and in the estuaries during summer;
85 (C) Habitat quality in the estuaries during summer;
86 (D) Brood harvest rates that sometimes exceed maximum sustained yield; and
87 (E) Periodic low spawning escapements that follow poor ocean survival conditions.
88 (6) Management Strategies. Department staff shall attempt to implement the following management
89 strategies as mechanisms designed to maintain desired status. These strategies are directed at primary
90 and secondary factors that currently limit attainment of desired status, or are judged to be potential risks
91 to attainment of desired status in future years:
92 (a) Rogue Stratum Short-term Strategies (1 to 5 years):
93 (A) Manage recreational and commercial fisheries to sustain productivity for all populations of
94 naturally produced fall Chinook salmon, and to provide harvest opportunities for recreational and
95 commercial fishers.
96 *Note: above strategy does not differ between Alternative 4 and Alternative 5.*
97 (B) Manage fall Chinook salmon of hatchery origin to minimize the risk of genetic changes among
98 naturally produced fish.
99 *Note: above strategy does not differ between Alternative 4 and Alternative 5*
100 (b) Rogue Stratum Long-term Strategies (1 to 25 years):
101 (A) Support habitat restoration, maintenance, and enhancement programs to ensure that aquatic
102 and terrestrial habitat is managed to maintain productive populations of naturally produced fall Chinook
103 salmon.
104 *Note: above strategy does not differ between Alternative 4 and Alternative 5.*
105 (B) Develop and support programs designed to decrease introductions of non-native species into
106 areas inhabited by naturally produced fall Chinook salmon.
107 *Note: above strategy does not differ between Alternative 4 and Alternative 5.*
108 (C) Decrease rates of predation by introduced species on naturally produced fall Chinook salmon.
109 *Note: above strategy is specific to Alternative 4 and is designed to only address predation impacts by*
110 *introduced, non-native species.*
111 (D) Decrease rates of predation on naturally produced fall Chinook salmon.



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112 *Note: above strategy is specific to Alternative 5 and is designed to address predation impacts by*
113 *introduced and native species*

114 **(c) Coastal Stratum Short-term Strategies (1 to 5 years):**

115 **(A) Manage recreational and commercial fisheries to sustain productivity for all populations of**
116 **naturally produced fall Chinook salmon, and to provide harvest opportunities for recreational and**
117 **commercial fishers.**

118 *Note: above strategy does not differ between Alternative 5 and Alternative 6.*

119 **(B) Manage fall Chinook salmon of hatchery origin to minimize the risk of genetic changes among**
120 **naturally produced fish.**

121 *Note: above strategy does not differ between Alternative 5 and Alternative 6.*

122 **(d) Coastal Stratum Long-term Strategies (1 to 25 years):**

123 **(A) Support habitat restoration, maintenance, and enhancement programs to ensure that aquatic**
124 **and terrestrial habitat is managed to maintain productive populations of naturally produced fall Chinook**
125 **salmon.**

126 *Note: above strategy does not differ between Alternative 5 and Alternative 6.*

127 **(B) Develop and support programs designed to decrease introductions of non-native species into**
128 **areas inhabited by naturally produced fall Chinook salmon.**

129 *Note: above strategy does not differ between Alternative 5 and Alternative 6.*

130 **(C) Ensure complete access of fall Chinook salmon to stream habitat capable of producing full**
131 **sized smolts.**

132 *Note: this strategy is specific to Alternative 6 and is designed to address production limitations that*
133 *result from natural partial migration barriers.*

134 **(7) Deterioration in Status.**

135 **(a) Additional conservation actions, or plan modification, will be employed by the Department if**
136 **monitoring, or pre-season forecasting, indicate that fall Chinook population status has, or will, dropped**
137 **below criteria levels defined in Tables 48 and 49 of the Criteria Indicating Deterioration in Status section**
138 **of the Rogue Fall Chinook Conservation Plan; and are adopted by reference into this rule.**

139 **(b) Additional conservation actions to be taken will be dependent on Department assessments that**
140 **predict:**

141 **(A) Which criteria will be reached: and**

142 **(B) The degree of criteria deterioration.**

143 **(c) Implementation of any new criteria, or the deletion of any current criteria, will necessitate**
144 **modification of this rule.**

145 **(8) Adaptive Management. The Department shall employ adaptive management principles within its**
146 **statutory authority in support of achieving the desired status goal for the Rogue Fall Chinook SMU and**
147 **constituent fall Chinook populations. The adaptive management approach employed by the Department**



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148 will include five elements: research; monitoring; evaluation; reporting; and modification of corrective
149 strategies.

150 (a) Research. The Department shall identify and support research that, as funding and staffing allows,
151 addresses uncertainties related to management strategies and actions needed to achieve desired status.
152 Research needs, at the time of plan adoption, are identified in the Rogue Fall Chinook Conservation Plan
153 (but which are not intended to be the exclusive research projects to be pursued). Future research needs
154 may be identified, or research needs described at the time of plan adoption may be modified, as a result of
155 periodic assessments of the Rogue Fall Chinook Conservation Plan.

156 (b) Monitoring. The Department shall identify, implement, and support monitoring, as funding and
157 staffing allow, needed to assess fall Chinook population and SMU status relevant to desired status
158 criteria, current status criteria, and criteria indicating significant deterioration in status. Future
159 monitoring needs may be identified during periodic assessments of the Rogue Fall Chinook Conservation
160 Plan.

161 (c) Evaluation. The Department shall identify and support evaluation that is needed, as funding and
162 staffing allows, to determine the effectiveness of management strategies and actions in achieving
163 intended outcomes. Future evaluation needs may be identified, or evaluation needs described at the time
164 of plan adoption may be modified, as a result of periodic assessments of the Rogue Fall Chinook
165 Conservation Plan.

166 (d) Reporting. The Department will develop, and will make available to the public:

167 (A) Annual reports of fall Chinook population and SMU status. Annual reports will present:

168 (i) Current fall Chinook population and SMU status as assessed by monitoring;

169 (ii) A summary of results from research or evaluation activities; and

170 (iii) Department rationale associated with any adaptive changes made to management actions.

171 (B) Summary reports of fall Chinook population and SMU status every five years. Summary
172 reports will outline progress made towards attainment of desired status; and

173 (C) Comprehensive assessments of the Conservation Plan efficacy. Comprehensive assessments
174 of plan efficacy will be completed for intervals that do not exceed 15 years, beginning with the year 2027.

175 (9) Process to Modify Strategies.

176 (a) In the event Department assessments indicate that criteria indicative of status deterioration will
177 likely be realized, the Department will craft management options to address the need to temporarily
178 modify the Rogue Fall Chinook Conservation Plan. These options will be presented in the annual report,
179 and the Department will solicit public input prior to selection of a course of action.

180 (b) In the event that a status review indicates that management strategies should be modified to
181 ensure attainment of desired status, or in the event of critical changes in local, state, or federal laws, the
182 Department will develop revised options for management strategies to address the need to modify the
183 Rogue Fall Chinook Conservation Plan. These options will be presented in a special report, and the
184 Department will solicit public input prior to selection of a course of action.



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185 (c) Specific management actions for management strategies adopted into rule may be modified by the
186 Department under the principle of adaptive management.

187 (d) Actions may be revised to improve performance, or actions may be terminated and be replaced by
188 other actions that are determined to be more effective.

189 (e) Rationale associated with any changes in management actions will be detailed in annual status
190 reports developed by the Department, and where applicable, will be linked to findings from monitoring,
191 evaluation, and research efforts.

192 (10) Impact on Other Native Fish Species. Management strategies identified in the Rogue Fall Chinook
193 Conservation Plan are likely to be collectively neutral or somewhat beneficial to other native fish species
194 present in the SMU. New or modified management actions shall consider projected impacts to other
195 native species of fish and if needed, will be modified to ensure compliance with:

196 (a) Department policy; and

197 (b) State, federal, and local laws.

198 Stat. Auth.: ORS 496.138, 496.146 & 506.119

199 Stats. Implemented: ORS 506.109 & 506.129