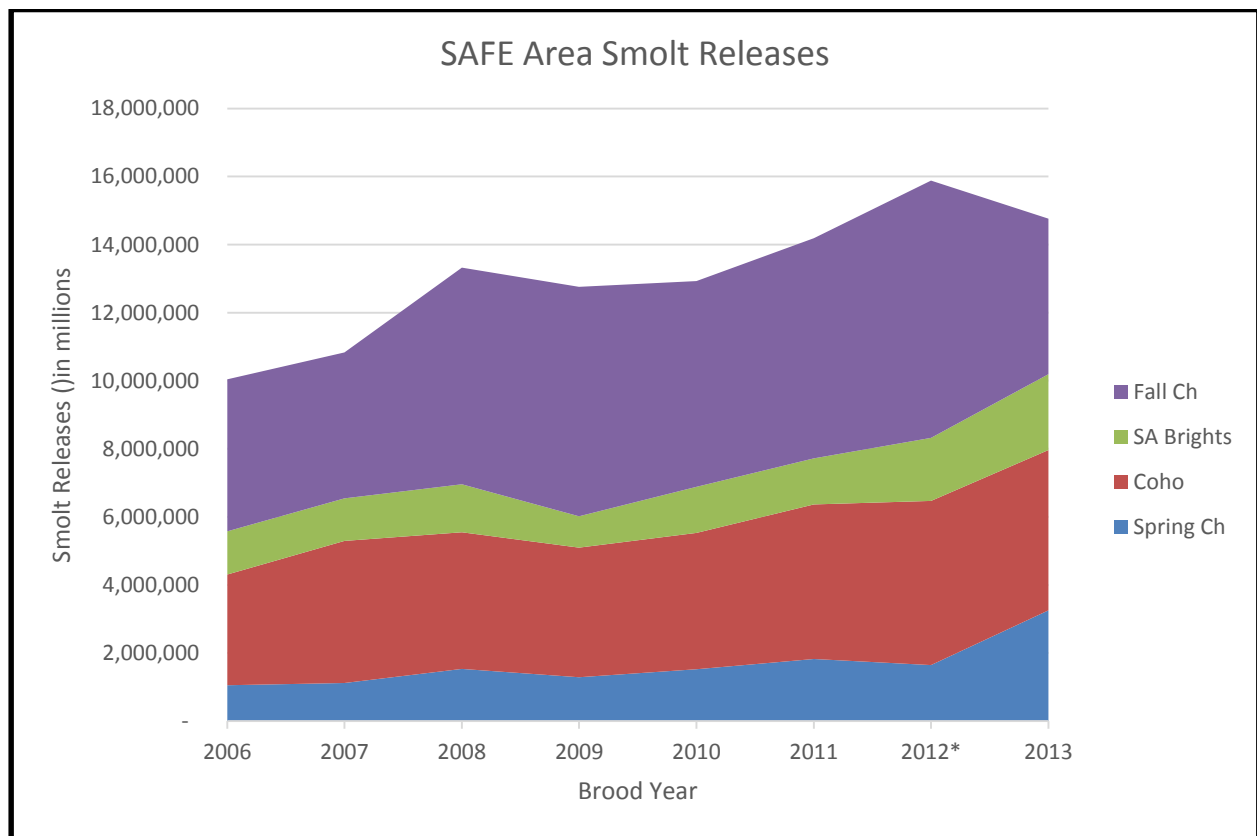


Comparing NSIA Testimony on Select Area Smolt Releases and Angler Trip Graphs to the Real Numbers, and Using All The Data They Were Given

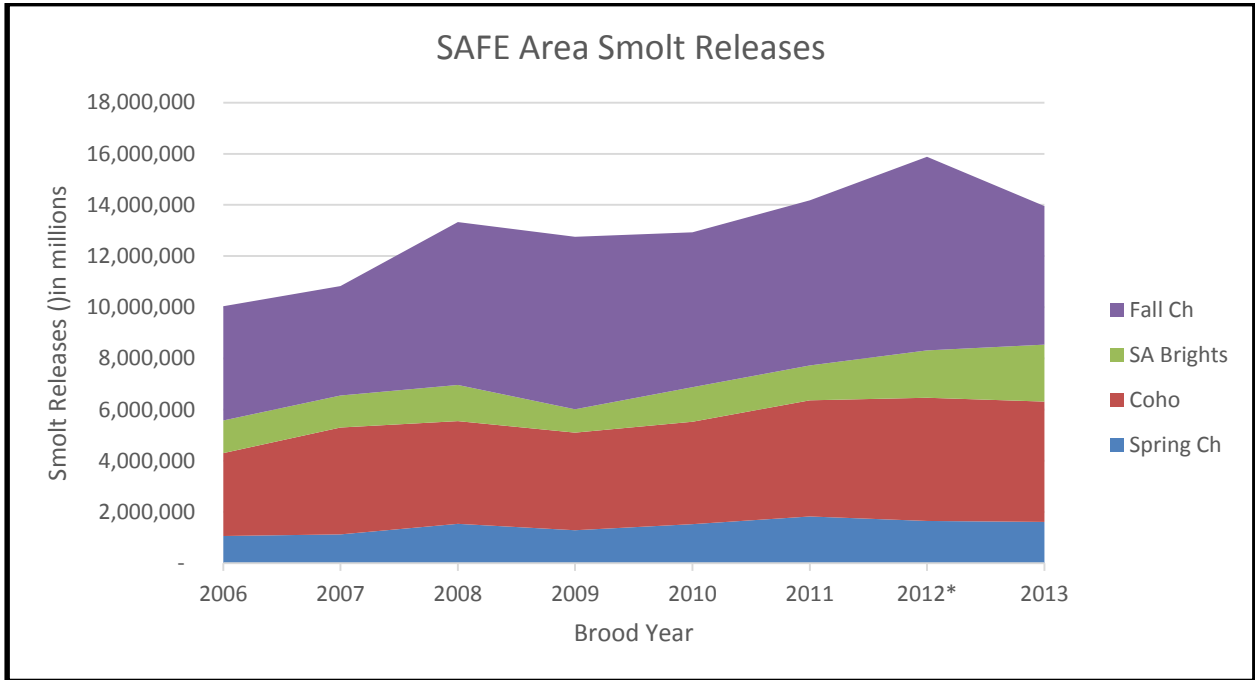
Robert Sudar, Columbia River Commercial Advisor, 3/2016

In December of 2015, the Northwest Sportfishing Industry Association (NSIA) and The Coastal Conservation Association (CCA) gave a presentation to the Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission that suggested that the 2013 Columbia River Management Plan (aka The Kitzhaber Plan) was progressing as promised and that it was providing the intended benefits to the non-Indian recreational and commercial fishing industries on the Columbia River. They showed several graphs which they said confirmed this opinion. I feel their presentation distorted the true facts and did not clearly depict the actual changes in salmon management and user-group participation that have occurred since 2013. They only used part of the data provided by staff, and chose to show the portion they felt most benefited their position. I have expanded their graphs to utilize all of the data, and to give a clearer picture of how the new plan has impacted non-Indian recreational and commercial fisheries on the Columbia River.

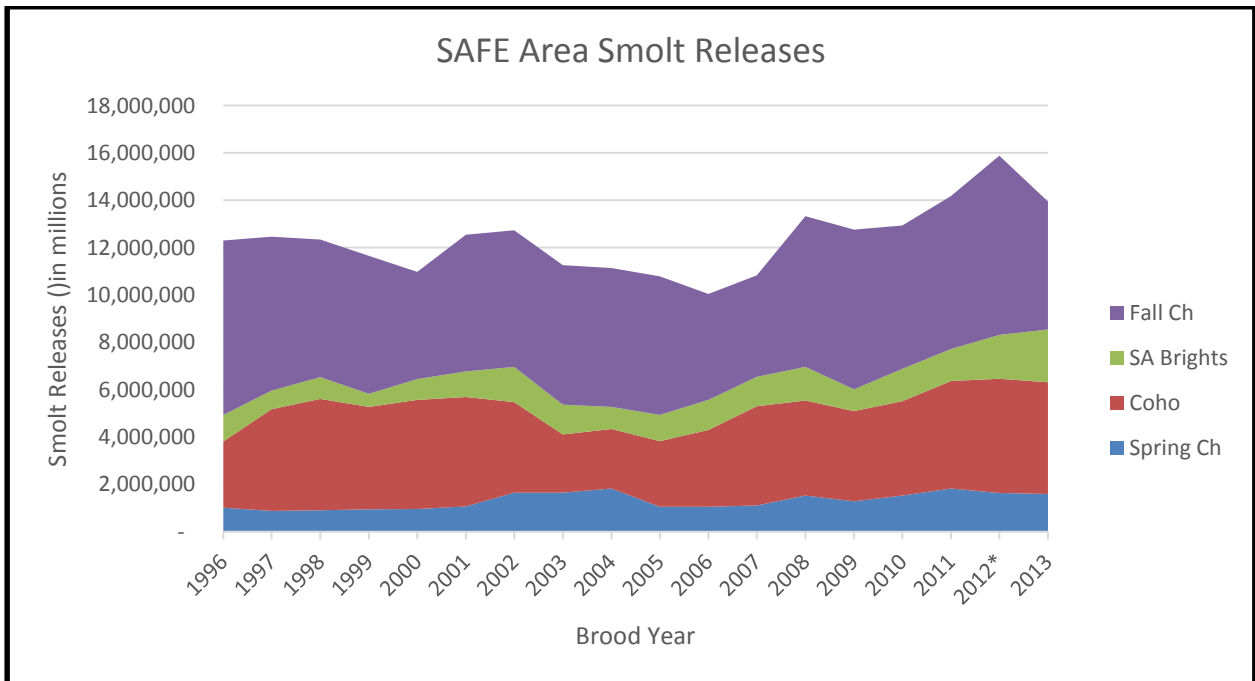
Below is what NSIA and CCA presented to the Commission:



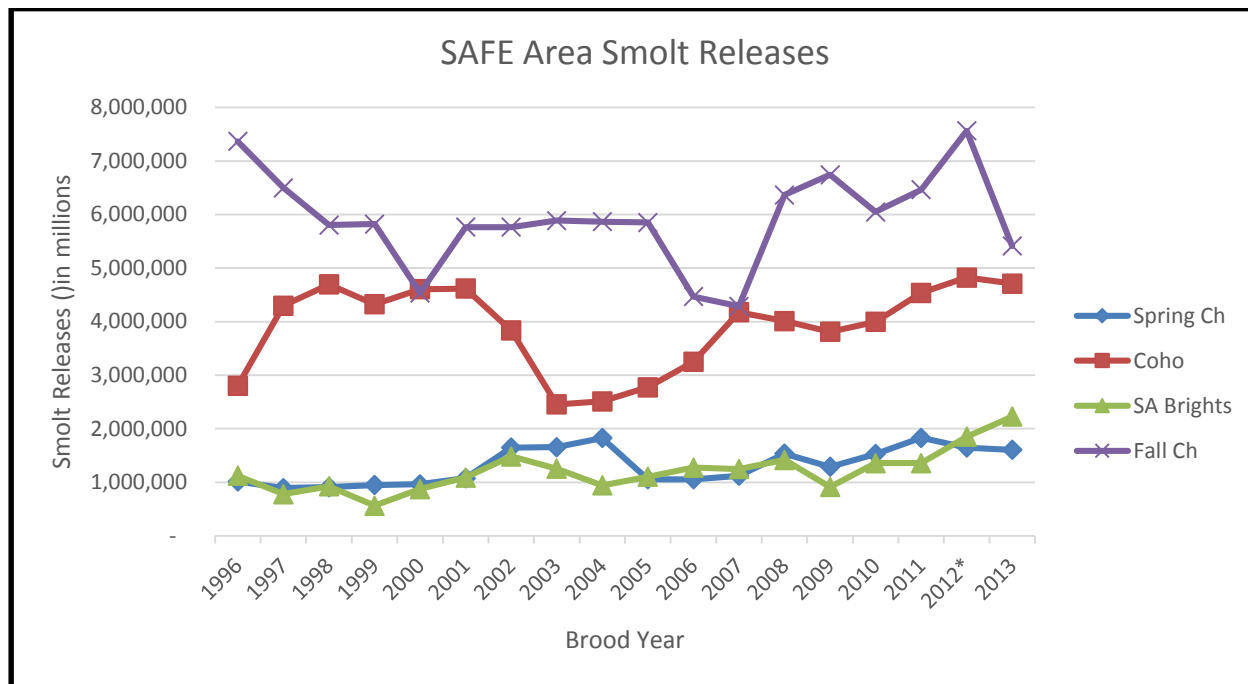
Shown below is what the graph should have looked like with the correct spring and fall release numbers for 2013 (I have no idea where they got their numbers):



And here's what Select Area releases look like if you go back further that 2006 (data that NSIA had, too):

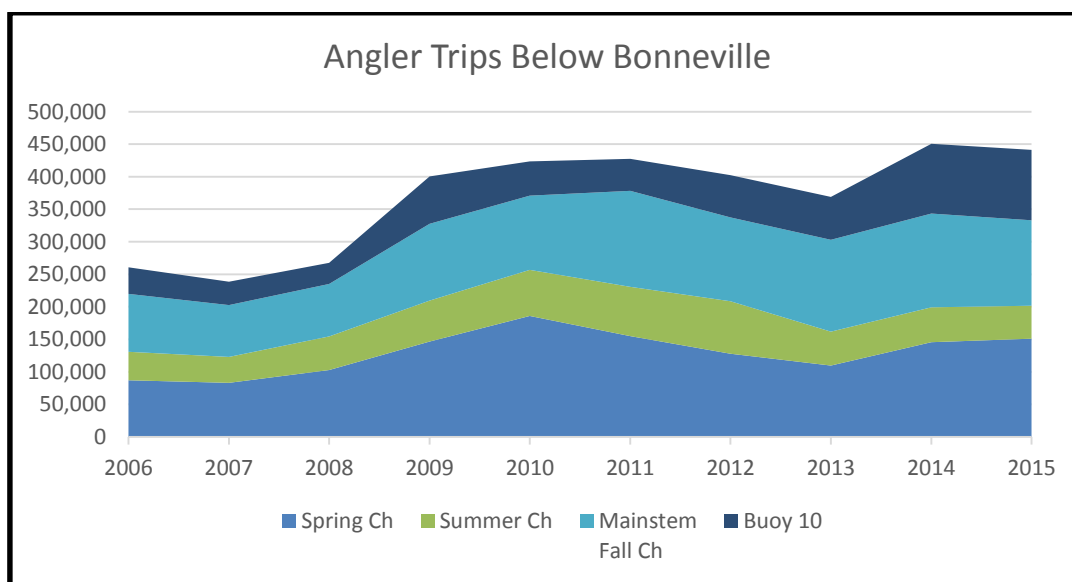


I think the line drawing below, though a little messy, shows the message even more clearly because each group of smolts is shown separately, without being affected by other species:

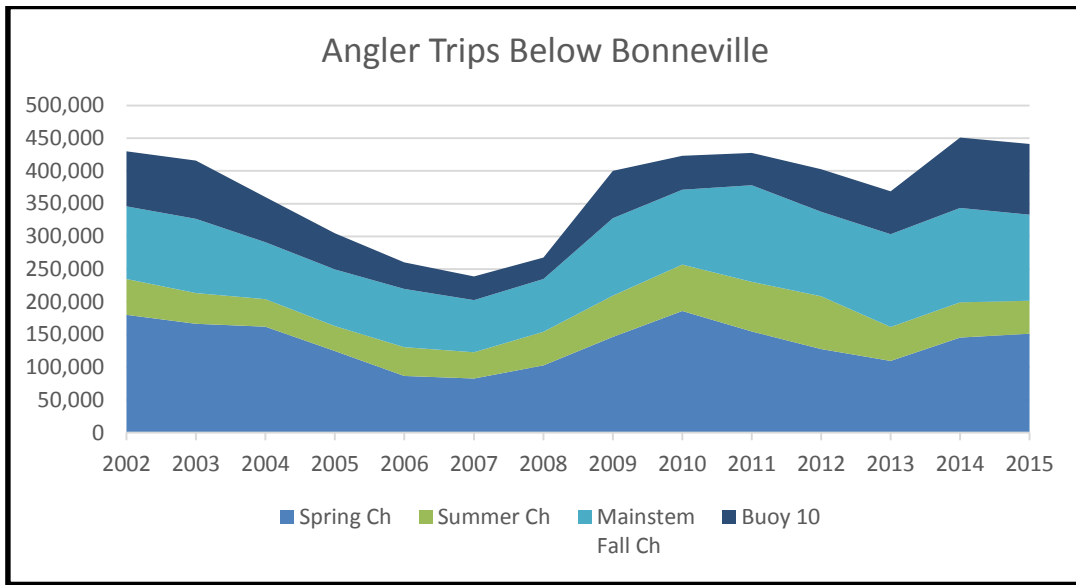


For all stocks except Select Area Brights (SABs, a fall stock), the levels they are releasing now, with expanded Select Area options to plant them, are in most cases lower than what they were releasing 15-20 years ago. The impression that they are boosting our potential earnings by increasing Select Area releases to compensate for lost mainstem opportunity is really just returning to release levels of the past. I'm not sure why those levels dropped so much – I suspect others can perhaps shed some light – but the reality is that they are making it look like we are getting more when in reality we are barely getting what we used to have. And with this year's shortage of SAB brood stock, those numbers could go down in the future, too.

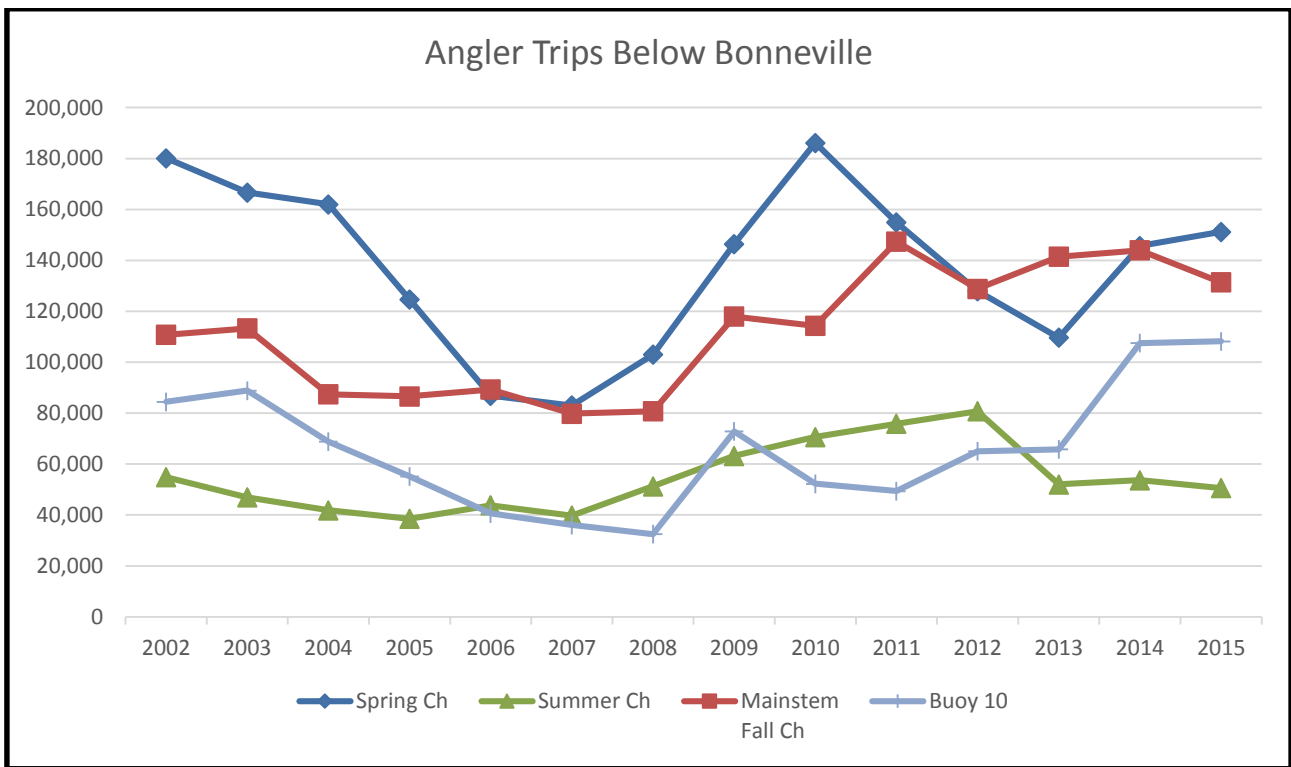
Another graph they showed was this one for angler trips:



However, if you include the data back to 2002, which they were also given, it looks like this:



And here is that same info in a line format :



Fall participation now (the red line) is larger than 2002 but not hugely - it's actually less than pre-Policy 2011 - and consider how much the big returns of the last two years might have influenced that. This summerChinook season, despite a full 45 days with two-thirds of it non-mark selective and a record return, participation was also down considerably. Even spring participation is down since the tribes insisted on catch-balancing after 2010. None of the seasons show consistent improvement, nor does the total. Seeing all of the data paints a different picture than the selected portion that was presented to the Commission in December.