

# Joint-State Columbia River Fishery Policy Review Committee

February 26, 2019

9am to 5pm

Location: ODFW Headquarters Office, Salem OR

Meeting Summary Notes and Decisions

## **ATTENDANCE:**

Holly Akenson – ODFW Commissioner

Bruce Buckmaster – ODFW Commissioner

Bob Webber (phone) – ODFW Commissioner

Curt Melcher – ODFW Director

Ed Bowles – ODFW Staff

Tucker Jones – ODFW Staff

Chris Kern – ODFW Staff

April Mack – ODFW Staff

John North – ODFW Staff

Michelle Tate – ODFW Staff

David Graybill – WDFW Commissioner

Bob Kehoe – WDFW Commissioner

Don Mclsaac – WDFW Commissioner

Myrtice Dobler – WDFW Staff

Cindy LeFleur – WDFW Staff

Ryan Lothrop – WDFW Staff

Ron Warren – WDFW Staff

Bill Tweit – WDFW Staff

## **Opening Remarks and Adoption of the Agenda**

The meeting start was delayed due to technical difficulties securing Commissioner Weber's participation by phone.

The draft agenda was adopted as the working agenda for the meeting without change. Staff reviewed the list of materials. These items were requested at previous meetings.

## **2019 Policies and Regulations**

Commissioners and staff reviewed Narrative Descriptions of each options, no changes were proposed.

Staff provided a briefing on modeling assumptions and results.

Staff reviewed how each of the options performed under three primary evaluation criteria for 2019. It was noted that there were no significant differences between conservation and orderly fishery criteria in any of the options. Regarding the economics evaluation, recreational angler trips in every option slightly exceed the base, but the commercial fishery ex-vessel economic value in every option did not achieve the level of the base, with Option 2 showing the lowest commercial economic value and Option 1 being the closest to the base.

Staff presented and reviewed documents provided on mark rates. Based on cursory information from Washington field staff, enforcement and customer service it seems most anglers primarily use barbless hooks to comply with the law and were overwhelmingly not in favor of it.

Staff presented information and answered questions on the effectiveness of the Youngs Bay Control Zone. A discussion on options to try to improve Select Area Bright Chinook salmon

(SAB) reaching Youngs Bay and other Select Areas followed, and additional information was requested.

### **Developing a Consolidated Recommendation**

Prior to making any proposals or motions, Commissioners shared their perspectives, reactions, and leanings.

The following motion was made by Commissioner Kehoe and seconded by Commissioner Mclsaac.

*Towards concurrent policies and regulations for 2019, I move to adopt Option 1, Transition Period, to also include a change in sports fisheries from mandatory barbless to voluntary barbless hooks effective as soon as practical but by June 1, 2019 at the latest.*

*The motion also calls for good faith progress towards recommending a comprehensive Columbia River salmon fishery policy for 2020 and beyond, to be completed as soon as possible. The policies embodied in this motion are intended to be in place until such comprehensive policy is adopted.*

- The final vote on the motion, as successfully amended (see below) and clarified, passed
  - Aye- Commissioners Kehoe, Akenson, and Buckmaster
  - Nay- Commissioners Graybill, Weber
  - Commissioner Mclsaac announced the motion would pass without the Chair voting and did not vote

### **Staff Clarification on Summer Chinook seasons:**

Replace “above a spawning escapement goal of 20,000 at Priest Rapids dam” with “under the US v OR Management Agreement,” and replace “See page 7 in the” to “based on current” in footnote iii.

### **Amendments:**

The amendment is to change Fall Chinook sharing language from “ $\leq 70\%/\geq 30\%$ ” to “ $\leq 65\%/\geq 35\%$ ,” and to replace the word “freeze” with “modify” in the first sentence of the option 1 written description. Amendment moved by Commissioner Akenson

- Seconded- Commissioner Kehoe
- Amendment failed
  - Aye- Commissioners Buckmaster and Akenson
  - Nay- Commissioners Weber, Graybill and Kehoe
  - Commissioner Mclsaac announced motion will fail regardless of Chair’s vote and did not vote

The main motion is amended such that the 80%/20% sport/commercial allocation, with no buffer applied to the commercial share and no mainstem commercial fishing, is to be used in

2019 unless the Upriver [spring Chinook] run size update is more than 129% of the preseason forecast. Amendment moved by Commissioner Mclsaac.

- Seconded- Commissioner Kehoe
- Amendment withdrawn

The main motion is amended such that the 80%/20% sport/commercial allocation, with no buffer applied to the commercial share and no mainstem commercial fishing, is to be used in 2019 unless the Upriver run size update is more than 129% of the Upriver spring Chinook pre-season forecast of 99,300. Amendment moved by Commissioner Mclsaac.

- Seconded- Commissioner Kehoe
- Amendment failed
  - Aye – Commissioners Weber, Kehoe
  - Nay- Commissioners Graybill, Akenson, and Buckmaster
  - Commissioner Mclsaac announced motion will fail regardless of Chair’s vote and did not vote

To be used only in 2019, the main motion is amended such that the 80%/20% sport/commercial allocation, with no buffer applied to the commercial share and no mainstem commercial fishing, is to be used unless the Upriver run size update is more than 129% of the Upriver spring Chinook pre-season forecast of 99,300. Amendment moved by Commissioner Buckmaster.

- Seconded- Commissioner Kehoe
- Amendment passed
  - Aye- Commissioners Weber, Kehoe, Buckmaster
  - Nay- Commissioners Graybill and Akenson
  - Commissioner Mclsaac announced motion would pass without a Chair’s vote and did not vote

#### Transmission to Full Commissions

The committee discussed how to carry the motion to their respective full Commissions. The motion and amendment was provided to committee members in writing (see attached Transmission Document).

Final chinook salmon allocations, as moved and amended:

- Spring 80%/20% in 2019 (unless run update is >129% of preseason forecast) then 70%/30%
- Summer 70%/30%
- Fall  $\leq 70\%$ / $\geq 30\%$  of the most constraining stock

### **Future Process and Schedule**

Next meeting is March 14<sup>th</sup> and will be hosted by Washington at the Ridgefield office.

Additional meeting dates were discussed and identified:

- March 26<sup>th</sup> – webinar, IT host TBD
- April 17<sup>th</sup> – St. Helens Oregon

### **Policies and Regulations in 2020 and Beyond**

Commissioners briefly walked through a draft document of range of alternatives for 2020 and beyond regarding the sharing of the sport fishery impacts between lower river and upper river sport fisheries. They plan to revisit this topic in April.

### **Conclusionary Matters**

Staff Assignments:

- Provide more analysis on Youngs Bay- look at if there could be any further explanations for the trend line on the SAB harvest share, and identify what other options are there to increase escapement of SABs to Youngs Bay
- Review of the Range of Alternatives display and be prepared for further discussion at the next PRC meeting.

**Joint-State Columbia River Fishery Policy Review Committee**  
Recommendation Transmission

The Joint-State Columbia River Fishery Policy Review Committee (PRC) met on February 26, 2019 at the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife office in Salem, Oregon. This was the third meeting held for the purpose of striving to develop a recommendation for concurrent policies and regulations for Columbia River salmon fishery management. The initial goal has been to develop a recommendation for 2019 fisheries by mid-March, for use in the 2019 North of Falcon Process; an additional goal has been to develop a more comprehensive recommendation for a long-term policy for 2020 and beyond. Any recommendations of the PRC are to be transmitted to the full Commissions of the Washington and Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commissions for their consideration for adoption and implementation.

The following motion and amendment passed.

Motion

*Towards concurrent policies and regulations for 2019, I move to adopt Option 1, Transition Period, to also include a change in sports fisheries from mandatory barbless to voluntary barbless hooks effective as soon as practical but by June 1, 2019 at the latest.*

*The motion also calls for good faith progress towards recommending a comprehensive Columbia River salmon fishery policy for 2020 and beyond, to be completed as soon as possible. The policies embodied in this motion are intended to be in place until such comprehensive policy is adopted.*

Amendment (referring to spring Chinook seasons)

*To be used only in 2019, the main motion is amended such that the 80%/20% sport/commercial allocation, with no buffer applied to the commercial share and no mainstem commercial fishing, is to be used unless the Upriver run size update is more than 129% of the Upriver spring Chinook pre-season forecast of 99,300.*

The vote on the amended motion was:

- Aye - Commissioner Kehoe (WDFW), Commissioner Akenson (ODFW), Commissioner Buckmaster (ODFW)
- Nay - Commissioner Graybill (WDFW), Commissioner Webber (ODFW)
- Commissioner Mclsaac (WDFW) announced the motion would pass without the Chair voting and did not vote

Following is the narrative description of the recommended policy language that was viewed at the PRC meeting, as modified by the motion that passed, including the amendment and a technical clarification on the summer Chinook harvestable surplus description as presented by staff at the meeting.

Analytical information on the three evaluation criteria (achieving conservation goals, conducting orderly fisheries, and the economic metrics of angler trips and ex-vessel commercial value), along with rationale for or against the motion that passed, will be provided by agency staff and PRC Members at the next full Commission meetings of the Washington and Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commissions.

**Narrative Description of Option 1**  
As Modified by Motion Passed by the  
**Joint-State Columbia River Fishery Policy Review Committee**  
February 26, 2019

**Option 1: Transition Period Policies**

The intent of this option is to essentially freeze the fishery management policies in effect in 2016, which was the last year of a 2013 – 2016 period in which the mainstem Columbia River commercial fishery would transition from a gillnet gear or alternative gear fishery to an alternative gear-only fishery. The fishery management policies for sport/commercial allocations, allowable commercial fishing gear in the mainstem Columbia River by season, and other fishery management measures for this option are as follows:

- Spring Chinook Seasons: 70%/30% sharing of allowable non-Treaty Upriver Run ESA impacts; both fisheries to be constrained by the pre-run size update buffer mechanism; tangle nets allowed pre-update and post-update, with gillnet gear allowable in the post update period; of the 70% of Upriver Run ESA impacts allocated to the sport fishery, 25% (17.5% of the total allocation) is allocated to sport fisheries above Bonneville Dam. Within that 25% upriver allocation, 40% is allocated to OR/WA fisheries from Bonneville Dam up to the state line and 60% is allocated to the WA fishery in the Snake River and Upper Columbia River areas. The remaining amount of the 70% (52.5% of the total allocation) is allocated to sport fisheries below Bonneville Dam.
  - For 2019 only, an allocation of allowable non-Treaty impacts of 80%/20% sport/commercial allocation is to be used, with no buffer applied to the commercial share and no mainstem commercial fishing, unless the Upriver run size update is more than 129% of the Upriver spring Chinook pre-season forecast of 99,300.
- Summer Chinook Seasons: The amount of the non-Treaty harvestable surplus under the US v OR Management Agreement shall be allocated between fisheries above and below Priest Rapids Dam based on a sliding scale<sup>i</sup>; the harvestable amount for the areas below Priest Rapids Dam are to be shared 70% /30% between sport and commercial fisheries; 5% of the commercial share (1.5% of the total allocation below Priest Rapids Dam) is to be set aside for incidental take in SAFE area fisheries; allowable commercial fishing gear includes gillnets and alternative gear.
- Sockeye Seasons: 70%/30% sharing of allowable non-Treaty Snake River ESA impacts; the 30% commercial share is to be used for incidental impacts in commercial fisheries directed at summer Chinook salmon.
- Fall Chinook Seasons:  $\leq 70\%$ / $\geq 30\%$  sharing of allowable LRH ESA impacts and allowable non-Treaty Snake River ESA impacts (whichever is more constraining in a given year); the commercial share of such ESA impacts is to cover mainstem Columbia River and SAFE area fisheries; allowable commercial fishing gear in the mainstem Columbia River includes gillnet, tangle net, and seine gear.
- Coho Seasons: While there is no explicit numerical sharing of Lower Columbia River Natural ESA impacts, the allocation was prioritized as follows: commercial fisheries are to be assigned sufficient impacts to implement SAFE coho and fall Chinook fisheries and mainstem fall Chinook fisheries; and the balance to in-river mainstem recreational fisheries. If these fisheries are

expected to be unable to use all of the impacts, the remainder will be assigned to mainstem commercial coho fisheries. Allowable commercial fishing gear is to include gill net, tangle net, beach seine, and purse seine fishing gear.

- The use of barbless hooks in Columbia River salmonid sport fisheries shall be voluntary and not mandatory as soon as practical but by June 1, 2019 at the latest.

This option also calls for specific hatchery releases in SAFE areas as follows, which represent a net increase from the 2016 actual program, to the level specified in current Oregon policy.

- Spring Chinook: 3.7 M smolts (1.5 M greater than the 2018 actual release; increased to enhance commercial economics and offset Mitchell Act-related coho reductions since 2016).
- Fall Chinook: 1.0 M smolts (decreased from 2.2 M smolt due to Mitchell Act related reductions and brood limitations).
- Coho: 5.255 M smolts (somewhat reduced due to Mitchell Act related reductions).

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<sup>i</sup> Based on current Washington Policy Document C-3620 *Columbia River Basin Salmon Management*.