

Joint-State Columbia River Salmon Fishery Policy Review Committee (PRC)



October 1, 2019 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.
Oregon Fish and Wildlife Commission Room
4034 Fairview Industrial Drive SE, Salem, Oregon
Meeting Notes



Attendance

Michael Finley- ODFW Commissioner
Holly Akenson- Previous ODFW
Commissioner
Curt Melcher- ODFW Director
John North- ODFW Staff
Chris Kern- ODFW Staff
Anika Marriott- OR AG Office

Don McIsaac- WDFW Commissioner
David Graybill- WDFW Commissioner
Bob Kehoe- WDFW Commissioner
Ron Warren- WDFW Director of Fish Policy
Ryan Lothrop- WDFW Staff
Cindy LeFleur- WDFW Staff

ODFW Support Staff

Michelle Tate- ODFW Staff
April Mack - ODFW Staff

WDFW Support Staff

Myrtice Dobler- WDFW Staff

Opening Remarks and Adoption of Agenda

Commission and staff introductions. Opening remarks from previous ODFW Commissioner Akenson, WDFW Commissioner Graybill, and Chair McIsaac.

The Committee adopted the agenda without changes, while recognizing the volume of work being attempted today may require flexibility.

Public Comment

Public testimony was set to four minutes each. Testimony was received from public.

Staff and the Committee shared details about the written testimony process. The links are active on both the WDFW and ODFW Committee websites. When submitting written testimony people will be asked for their name, address, state, and comment. The system will allow one document to be attached.

There was discussion on distribution of written testimony.

- Distribution of testimony
 - WA: 3 PRC Commission representatives, Nikki Kloepfer and WA staff
 - OR: Michelle Tate will distribute to Commissioners and staff
- Length of comment period
 - For the next meeting, written public testimony will be accepted through Thursday November 14. After that, the portal will be suspended
 - The Committee will determine when/ if the portals will open again
- Notification that portals are open
 - Notification on PRC websites
 - Emails to known stakeholders/ interested parties

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Policies and Regulations in 2020 and Beyond

Review and Refinement of the Range of Alternatives (RoA) for Analysis

Summer Chinook

Recreational/Commercial Allocation (Issue 1) - Staff reviewed and answered questions on materials. PRC decision:

- All of the allocation options listed in the Range of Alternatives will remain as options to carry forward to November.
- Alternative 2 (Abundance Based Matrix) – The Committee recognized this method would add a layer of complexity to fishery management, but identified an abundance based matrix as an alternative of interest. In comparison to the 70/30 sharing in the current PRC recommendation, the matrix would provide a greater sport fishery share during years of lower abundance and a greater commercial fishery share during years of higher abundance.

Allocation of Unused Commercial Impacts (Issue 2) - Analysis is not complete, materials will be available for the November meeting. PRC decisions:

- Alternative 1 (unused commercial impacts allocated 100% to spawning escapement) – The PRC deactivated this alternative from further analysis. As a management tool it would constrain fisheries beyond current management guidelines and it's challenging to guarantee that 100% of the unused impacts would reach the escapement areas.
- Alternative 2 (unused commercial impacts to be allocated to either upriver fisheries or increased spawning escapement) – The Committee retained this alternative for discussion in November. This alternative gives fishery managers the flexibility of an additional management tool and the leeway to determine specific needs for an area.

Allowable Mainstem Commercial Gear (Issue 3) - Staff reviewed and answered questions on materials. PRC decision:

- The alternative of OR Status quo (use of alternative gear only) was deactivated from further analysis. At this time, it isn't viewed as a viable option for a commercial fishery due to lack of alternative gear options, superior to gill net gear, which work during the summer Chinook time frame.

Fall Chinook

Recreational/Commercial Allocation (Issue 1) - Staff reviewed and answered questions on materials. PRC decisions:

- Alternative 1 (80/20) – This alternative was deactivated from further analysis. It was not viewed as able to maintain economic viability when compared with other fall fisheries, in the context of the legal mandate for Oregon and policy for Washington.
- Alternative 2 (65/35) – This alternative remains as an option depending on analysis and final decisions for other species and items.

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Allowable Mainstem Commercial Gear (Issue 2) - Staff reviewed and answered questions on materials. PRC decision:

- Alternative 1 (alternative gear only) – This alternative was deactivated due to the current lack of alternative gear options that provide a clear path for economic viability and low bycatch impacts.

Clarification on definition for Alternative Gear, as used by the PRC.

Alternative gear is defined as: *Including but not limited to: purse seine, beach seine, tangle net, pound net, or other gears as authorized by the Commissions.*

- A footnote including this definition will be added to the Range of Alternatives document for future meetings.

Coho

Allowable Mainstem Commercial Gear (Issue 2)

Staff reviewed and answered questions on materials. PRC decisions:

- Alternative 1 (non-tangle net alternative gear only) – This alternative was deactivated. The Committee did not view this option as feasible based on comparison of economic viability with other gear types.
- OR Status Quo Alternative (Tangle Net Gear Only) – This alternative was deactivated. The Committee wants to provide flexibility to fishery managers to utilize the best commercial gear options for fishery management. Limiting to one gear type, would not do this.

Spring Chinook

Recreational/Commercial Allocation (Issue 1)

Staff reviewed and answered questions on materials. PRC decisions:

- Alternative 2 (Abundance based matrix) – Committee identified this as an option to carry forward to November. They requested the analysis from staff include: allocations of 80/20 at lower abundance, 70/30 at medium abundance, and a greater commercial share at high abundance.
- All other allocation options remain active.

Allowable Mainstem Commercial Gear (Issue 2)

Staff reviewed and answered questions on materials. PRC decision:

- OR Status Quo Alternative (Tangle Nets Only during the Post-Update Time Frame) – The Committee deactivated this alternative. This alternative doesn't give flexibility for managers to choose the best commercial gear option available at the time.

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Allocation of Upriver Spring Chinook within Recreational Fisheries (Issue 3)

Staff reviewed and answered questions on materials. PRC decision:

- All alternatives will carry forward to November for additional discussion.

Allocation of Unused Recreational Impacts

This topic was raised in discussion. The Committee recognized this is an issue.

- It was added to the Range of Alternatives under policy issue 5 (from just ‘commercial’ to ‘recreational and commercial’ impacts).

Allocation of Unused Commercial Impacts (Issue 5)

Materials were not complete for this item, they will be provided for the November meeting.

Policy Document Language

Draft Potential Language for the General Provisions Section

The PRC discussed and moved forward the draft language on the following four topics:

- Limitation on Sport Fishery Guide/Charter Licenses
- Commercial License Buyback Programs
- Hatchery Production Goals
- Increased Alternative Gear Development and Implementation
 - In this section there was a question on wording of providing “other incentives for participants”; this is direct language from current WA/OR Policy/Rules. Staff will look into original meaning/intention

The PRC tasked the writing workgroup to develop draft language on the following, for consideration in November for possible inclusion in the General Provisions Section.

- Thermal Angling Sanctuaries.
- Fishery Monitoring.
- Exploration/Development of New SAFE Areas.
- Inclusion of SAFE Areas Production Goals.

It was noted that the success of this policy is closely tied to the continued success of the SAFE areas and that the PRC will need to review the economic contributions of Select Area policy changes.

The PRC thought it would be useful to include a Fact Sheet as an attachment to the draft policy document. This was in response to concerns about public perception of various elements that could be misinterpreted as to purpose and effect. The Fact Sheet will serve as an aid in deliberations at the November PRC meeting, and in the event a recommendation is reached, at the Commission meetings in December.

The writing work group will create a final draft of the General Provisions document and an initial draft of a Fact Sheet to present and discuss at the November meeting.

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Future Consideration of Voluntary Barbless Hooks

Due to the new members on the PRC and both State's Commissions, the Committee requested staff capture in writing the basis of the PRC February recommendation, and other relevant information, for discussion in November and distribution to respective commissions. The summary will include:

- Brief summary of scientific studies on fish mortality effects
- TAC review
- Origin of mandatory barbless requirement in current policy
- Relevance of retention fisheries as opposed to 100% catch and release fisheries
- Barbless hook regulation status elsewhere in OR/WA
- Potential handle of wild B-run steelhead

Future Process and Schedule

Review of Draft Process and Schedule Document

The next PRC meeting is scheduled for November 18, 2019 in Ridgefield WA. It will be a full day meeting with a start time of 8 a.m.

Conclusionary Matters

Review of Staff Assignments

- Summer Chinook: staff requested to develop an abundance based matrix
- Spring Chinook: staff requested to develop an abundance based matrix
- Barbless hook information summary
- Writing group (select commissioners and staff) to develop draft of proposal document
- Non-linear angler trips: explore some nonlinear assumptions for summer Chinook that could estimate angler trips across different allocation alternatives
- Summary of package/big picture analysis, similar to the "long sheets" utilized at PRC meetings earlier in the year, including overall economics across fishing seasons, including SAFE.