

Lower Snake River Compensation Plan FY2015 Performance Report
Idaho Department of Fish and Game - Hatchery Administration Program

FY2015 OBJECTIVES:

Objective 1: Provide management direction and oversight to research, hatchery, and management programs associated with the LSRCP hatchery program designed to: 1) provide sport-fishing opportunities for salmon and steelhead and 2) to conserve and enhance naturally produced anadromous fish.

Report: During federal fiscal year 2015, IDFG staff coordinated with federal and state agencies and Indian tribes regarding Columbia basin and in-state anadromous salmon and steelhead fisheries, developed technical and planning information to support instate fishery implementation, developed technical analysis and provided technical and policy coordination for Columbia River fishery management, and developed documents and technical reviews to support ESA-related processes such as recovery planning and biological opinions. Sport fisheries that harvested LSRCP-origin Chinook Salmon occurred in the Clearwater River drainage and the lower Salmon and South Fork Salmon rivers. Sport fisheries that harvested LSRCP-origin steelhead occurred in the Clearwater River drainage, the Salmon River drainage, and the Snake River.

Objective 2: Develop an annual Statement of Work (SOW) and operating budget for the Department Hatchery Administration Program and submit to LSRCP office by June 15.

Report: The Statement of Work and FY2016 budget request were prepared and submitted to LSRCP in June 2015.

Objective 3: Contribute to the development of Clearwater and Salmon River Annual Operating Plans (AOP).

Report: IDFG contributed to the development and editing of the Clearwater and Salmon River AOPs. Department staff served as administrator for web-based editing on both documents, increasing the efficiency of the cooperative multi-author process.

Objective 4: Provide technical and policy analysis for and input into intergovernmental river management forums designed to enhance the survival of spawning, rearing, and migrating salmon and steelhead.

Report: IDFG staff worked with the State of Idaho and federal cooperators to implement the Memorandum of Agreement entered into between the State of Idaho and the FCRPS Action Agencies (Bonneville Power Administration, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Bureau of Reclamation). IDFG staff also collaborated with tribal, state and federal agencies on fish passage and life cycle modeling efforts.

IDFG staff participated in several regional forums to provide technical comments, adaptive management recommendations, and policy support to enhance survival of Idaho spring and

summer juvenile migrants and returning adult salmon and steelhead. Participation in key governmental forums included Fish Passage Advisory Committee (FPAC), Technical Management Team (TMT), and various Corps of Engineer committees (such as System Configuration Team [SCT]). Technical and policy support was provided to the State Implementation Team (IT) member. Substantial coordination occurred with the Region's states, tribes, and federal agencies to develop common strategies for adult and juvenile salmon and steelhead migration survival during this reporting period.

Objective 5: Provide technical and policy analysis and input into federal recovery and/or programmatic procedures including NEPA for Snake Basin hatchery programs, NOAA Fisheries recovery plan development, including ESA permitting associated with Hatchery and Genetic Management Plans (HGMP) and Fishery Management and Evaluation Plans (FMEP).

Report: IDFG staff developed documents and technical reviews to support ESA-related processes such as recovery planning and biological opinions. Eight HGMPs associated with LSRCP Chinook salmon and steelhead hatchery programs have been submitted to NOAA; the Department continues to coordinate with state and federal agencies and Indian tribes regarding edits and modifications to these documents prior to consultation. Prior to this FY2015, IDFG staff completed the coordination and development of FMEPs for salmon and steelhead sport fisheries and submitted those FMEPs to NMFS requesting NMFS approval of the fishery plans and limits on the Endangered Species Act (ESA) Section 9(a)(1) take prohibitions as allowed under NMFS 4(d) Rule Limit 4. The FMEP for spring Chinook Salmon has been approved. The FMEP for steelhead remains in review.

Objective 6: Provide technical and policy analysis for and input into U.S. v Oregon and other pertinent multi-state, federal, and tribal forums designed to resolve fishery management issues or to develop and implement recovery measures, including National Marine Fisheries Service forums, particularly implementation of the Federal Columbia River Power System and Upper Snake River Biological Opinions and related forums, including hatchery and fishery reviews.

Report: The long-term Columbia River Fish Management Plan (CRFMP) that was completed during the FY2008 reporting period continued to be implemented during this contract period; that implementation resulted in continuous coordination and communication with state, tribal and federal parties to U.S. v Oregon for fish production and fishery management. Other tribal coordination occurred to share harvest and run size information and develop options for utilization of hatchery adults excess to hatchery brood stock needs during the contract period. Staff oversight of hatchery programs included brood stock management, distribution of excess fish for ceremonial or subsistence use by tribes or non-profit food banks, outplants of adults for natural production, and communication and reporting. IDFG staff participated in the activities of the U.S. v Oregon Technical and Production advisory committees. Communication was conducted with technical and policy parties of U.S. v Oregon with substantial effort directed at state and tribal fishery management plans and thirteen hatchery and genetic management plans (HGMPs).

Objective 7: Conduct salmon and steelhead sport fisheries and monitoring that maximize angling opportunities within the constraints of natural and listed fish conservation and recovery.

Report: The Anadromous Fish Manager (Manager) and the Anadromous Fish Coordinator (Coordinator) provided management, direction, and oversight to implement selective fisheries in Idaho for hatchery steelhead and fall Chinook Salmon during the fall (August – December), for hatchery steelhead in spring (January – April), and for spring/summer Chinook Salmon (May – August). The Manager also assisted with technical products related to run size forecast and listed/unlisted composition in coordination with the ESA coordinator and other staff. Substantial instate management coordination was conducted to develop and implement monitoring for harvest share and wild fish/ESA impacts, particularly in the spring/summer Chinook Salmon fisheries where managers had to insure that natural spawning was maximized and hatchery brood stock goals met while providing angler access to hatchery fish in expanded and new fishing areas. Fishery implementation also required significant coordination and communication with National Marine Fisheries Service for fishery authorization and in-season modification and reporting.

Objective 8: Coordinate state fishery management activities and policies among state, tribal, and federal management entities of Idaho and the Columbia Basin.

Report: Internal coordination meetings were held periodically and a state-wide anadromous program coordination meeting was held in January of 2015 for communication and strategic planning. The winter meeting included statewide anadromous management task prioritization, facilitated by the Coordinator. Staff of the Department fisheries management, fisheries research, and fish production programs participated in this effort. Staff participated in annual pre-season coordination meetings, in-season weekly teleconferences, and post-season wrap-up and summarization meetings with the Shoshone-Bannock and Nez Perce Tribes, LSRCP, USFWS, ODFW, WDFW, IPC and NOAA fisheries. Staff also participated in the Snake River fall Chinook Salmon coordination group. Other coordination concerning fishery management activities and policies included meetings with the Northwest Sportfish Industry Association, Oregon and Washington fish and wildlife agencies, Columbia River sportfish advisory group (Oregon and Washington), NOAA Fisheries Service and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Objective 9: Educate the public and policy makers regarding the importance of salmon and steelhead resources and sport fishing opportunity.

Report: Public education about aspects of Chinook Salmon and steelhead fisheries was provided via agency website, press releases, and news media.

Objective 10: The Department is establishing improved oversight of hatchery operations through creation of complex manager positions which will supervise three to five facilities grouped by location or type of production. Supervision of hatchery managers has shifted from centralized Bureau staff to more regionalized complex managers, placing supervisors in closer proximity and limiting the number of facilities for which each supervisor is responsible. This restructuring increases the level of supervisors' site-specific knowledge, promotes more regular communication among staff, and allows supervisors to focus on improving the efficiency and consistency of hatchery operations. Complex managers report to the Fish Production Program Manager, Gary Byrne. Three complex managers are associated with LSRCP hatchery

production. The Clearwater Hatchery Complex Manager is 100% dedicated to LSRCP funding on the Clearwater Hatchery budget. The Hatchery Administration budget identifies 4 months funding for the Magic Valley Hatchery Complex Manager and 5.3 months funding for the Salmon River Complex Manager, representing proportional partial funding by LSRCP of the annualized cost of these positions.

Report: The individuals promoted into the complex manager positions established by the Department in FY2013 assumed greater responsibility in FY2015 and are fulfilling the roles described above. Their contributions have been essential to the development of AOPs and reports, field implementation of in-season management decisions, and coordination and streamlining in-complex and statewide of hatchery operations and fish transport. During 2015, the IDFG HQ and Clearwater Hatchery staff prepared for the retirement of the Clearwater Hatchery Complex Manager.

Objective 11: Provide a written Hatchery Administration Program annual report to the LSRCP office by December 31.

Report: This document serves as the FY2015 annual report.