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March 29, 2011

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: Chris Drivdahl

SUBJECT: Presentation by chairs of Washington's four Columbia Basin fish recovery boards

Chairs of Washington's four Columbia Basin salmon recovery organizations will provide brief overviews of their boards, their work, and what lies ahead.

Background

Washington's legislature established the state's first local salmon recovery organization – the Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board – in 1998. They did so in response to a request from citizens, local government officials, businesses, and tribal governments concerned about the growing number of federal Endangered Species Act listings that were occurring in the area. The legislature asked this local group to take the lead in salmon recovery by combining local and regional efforts into a collaborative approach that would ensure public participation in salmon recovery. The locals believed if salmon ever were to recover and be removed from restrictions imposed because of the listings, the impetus had to be a grass roots approach with everyone at the table deciding what would be done.

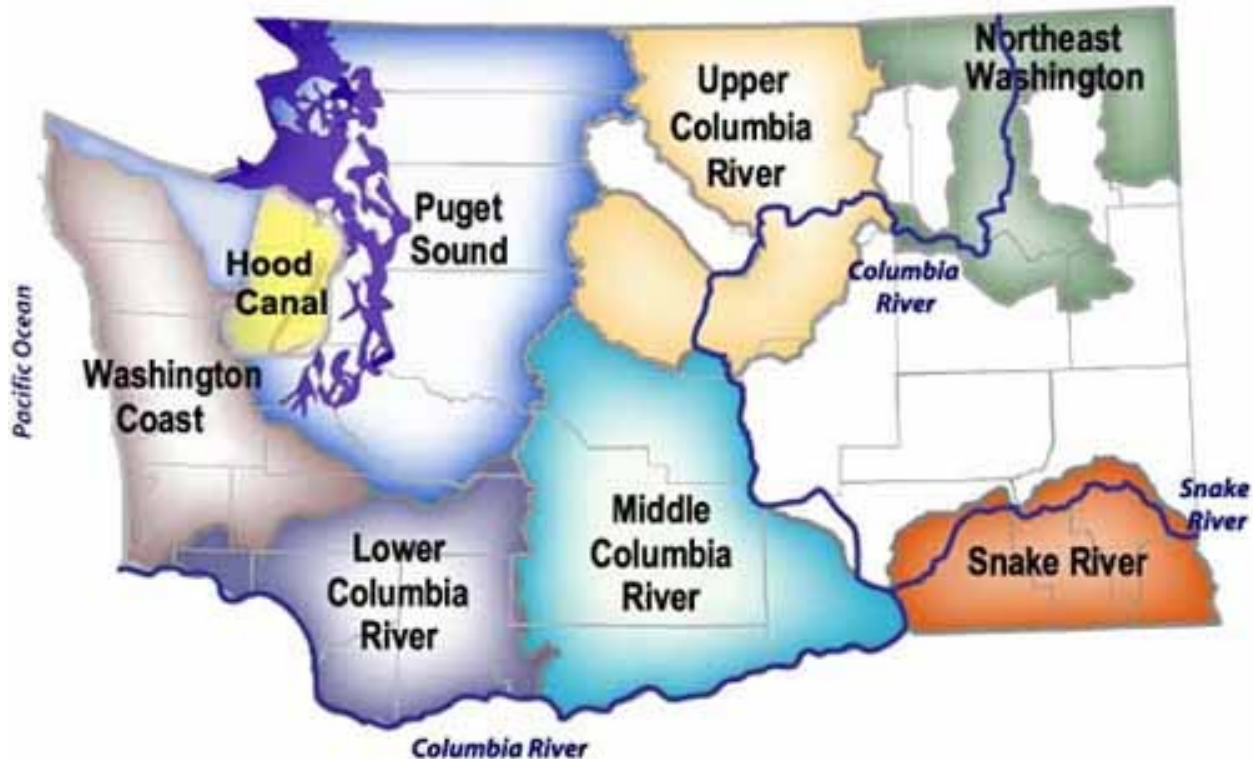
Listings were getting the attention of businesses, farmers, tribal and local governments all across the state, and by 2003 organizations similar to the Lower Columbia were receiving money from the Salmon Recovery Funding Board to support local forums that would develop and coordinate implementation of salmon recovery plans.

By 2005, draft recovery plans were completed for all of the state's salmon recovery areas, and in 2006 NOAA-Fisheries adopted the Lower Columbia's recovery plan as the first in Washington. Today, all regions in the state have recovery plans approved and adopted by the state and federal governments.

These plans serve as the beginning, not the end, of a tremendous amount of work to reclaim salmon populations that are healthy, harvestable, and sustainable. These regional salmon boards

provide a forum for everyone who has an interest in healthy salmon and sustainable watersheds to voice their views about how to achieve success.

Salmon Recovery Regions in Washington



Washington’s statewide salmon recovery strategy relies on eight salmon recovery regions that are based on Evolutionarily Significant Units. In the Columbia Basin, four of these regions – all but the Northeast – operate under the guidance of regional recovery organizations that have developed recovery plans which inventoried and assessed current conditions; examined options for improving these conditions; and agreed on goals and proposed implementation actions by all parties that would achieve these goals. Implementation is well underway, supported by funding from local, state, federal, and tribal partners, including the Bonneville Power Administration and the Northwest Power and Conservation Council. These collaborative processes, bringing together technical experts, stakeholders, policy makers, and local politicians, provide a high likelihood of a lasting approach that ensures all values and interests have a “place at the table” to interact and arrive at consensus.