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February 22, 2012

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chair Dukes and Council Members

FROM: Tony Grover

SUBJECT: Overview of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to Inform Columbia River Hatchery Operations and the Funding of Mitchell Act Hatchery Programs

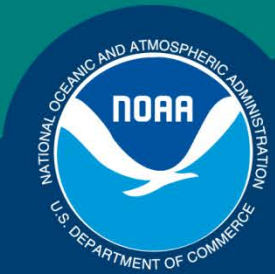
In August 2010, NMFS released a draft EIS on funding and operation of hatchery programs in the Columbia River basin. NMFS will use the EIS to develop a policy direction that will 1) guide NMFS distribution of Mitchell Act hatchery funds and 2) inform NMFS' future review of individual hatchery programs under the Endangered Species Act.

Allyson Purcell, NMFS, will update the Committee on the EIS process. NMFS's presentation to the Council on March 7, 2012, will include a high level overview of the following:

- Purpose of the EIS.
- Alternatives evaluated in the draft EIS.
- Public response to the EIS.
- Next steps.

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Science, Service, Stewardship



Columbia River Hatchery EIS

**UPDATE
MARCH 2012**

**NOAA
FISHERIES
SERVICE**

NOAA



Purpose

Develop a NOAA Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) Policy Direction that will:



- 1) Guide NOAA Fisheries' distribution of Mitchell Act hatchery funds.

Hatcheries and Facilities in the Columbia and Snake River Basins

Prepared by Parametrix, Inc. January 19, 2010 (DEIS_Figure_1-3_20100119.mxd).

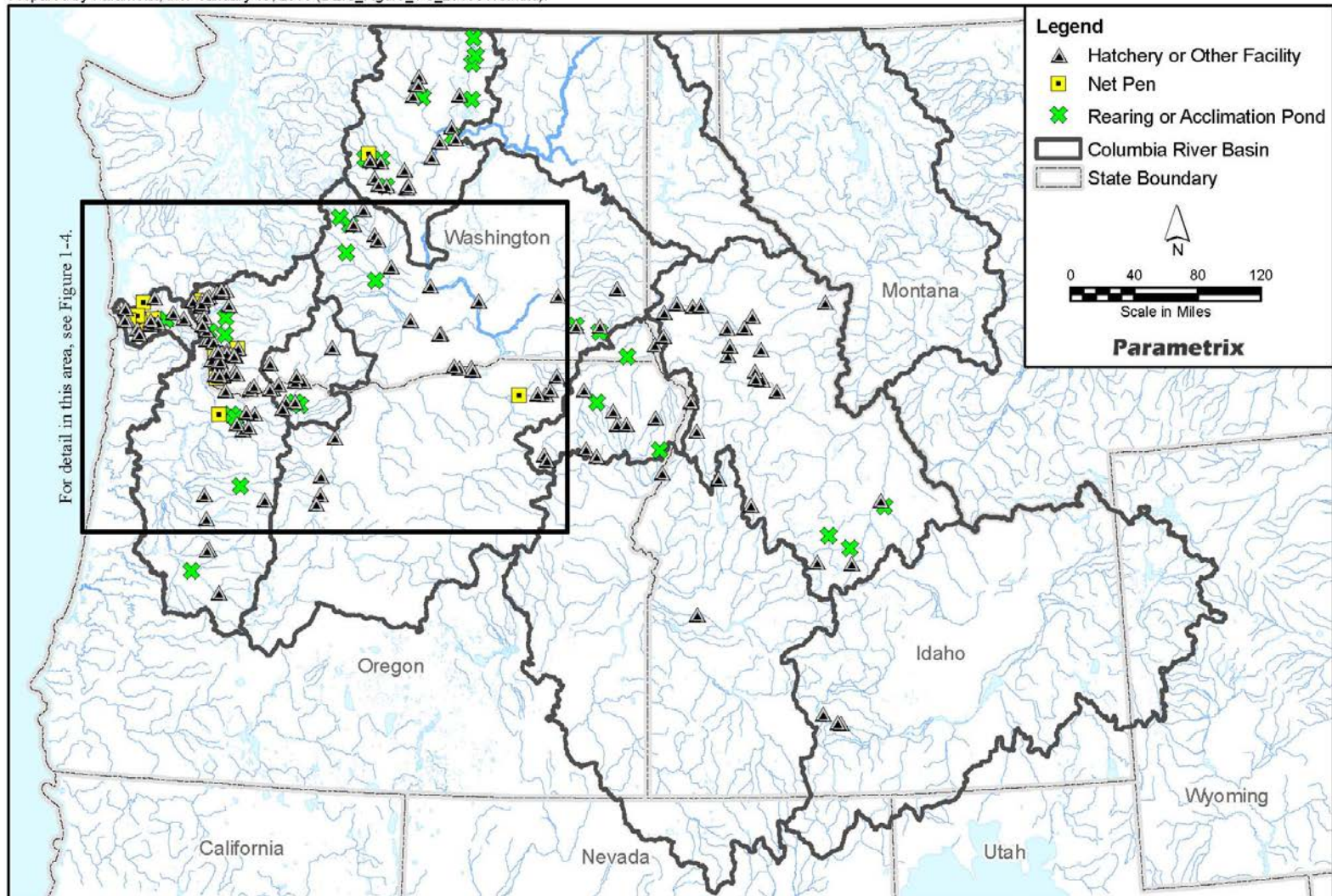


Figure 1-3. Hatcheries and facilities in the Columbia and Snake River basins.



Purpose

Develop a NOAA Fisheries Policy Direction that will:



- 1) Guide NOAA Fisheries' distribution of Mitchell Act hatchery funds.
- 2) Inform NOAA Fisheries' future review of individual hatchery programs under the Endangered Species Act.



Identifying Alternatives

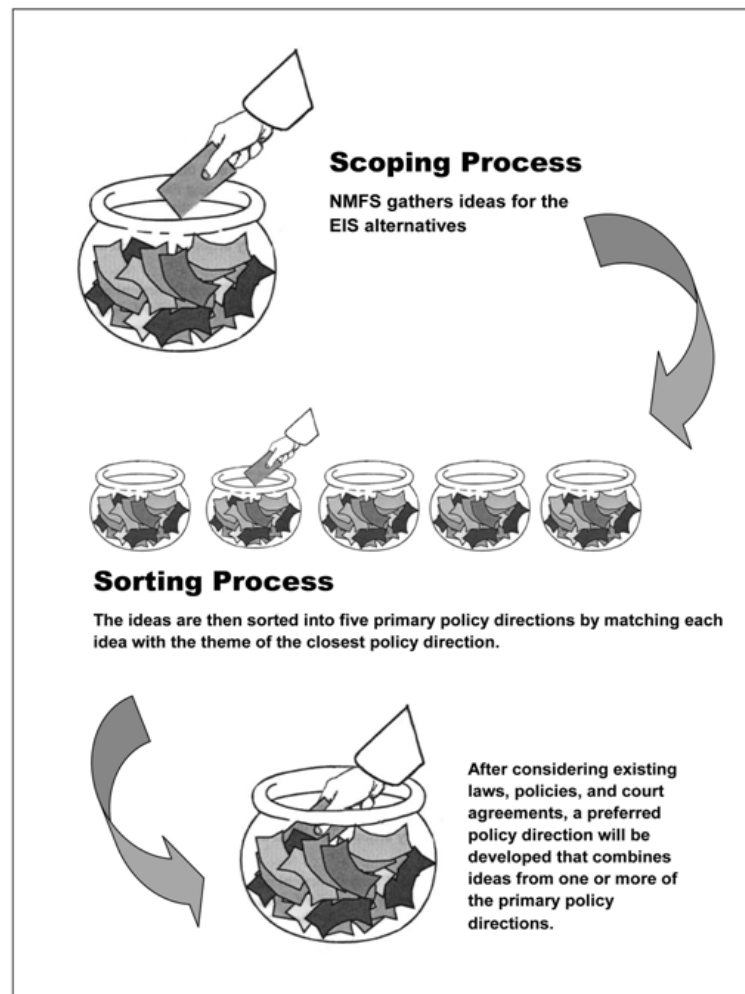


Figure 2-3. Sorting public comments to identify alternative policy directions.



Structure of Draft EIS

- 5 alternatives including status quo.
- Each alternative centers around a general policy direction.





Structure of Draft EIS

- NOAA Fisheries developed one example implementation scenario for each alternative for the purpose of analysis. Innumerable other scenarios exist.
- No preferred alternative (or implementation scenario) in draft EIS.





Identifying Preferred Alternative

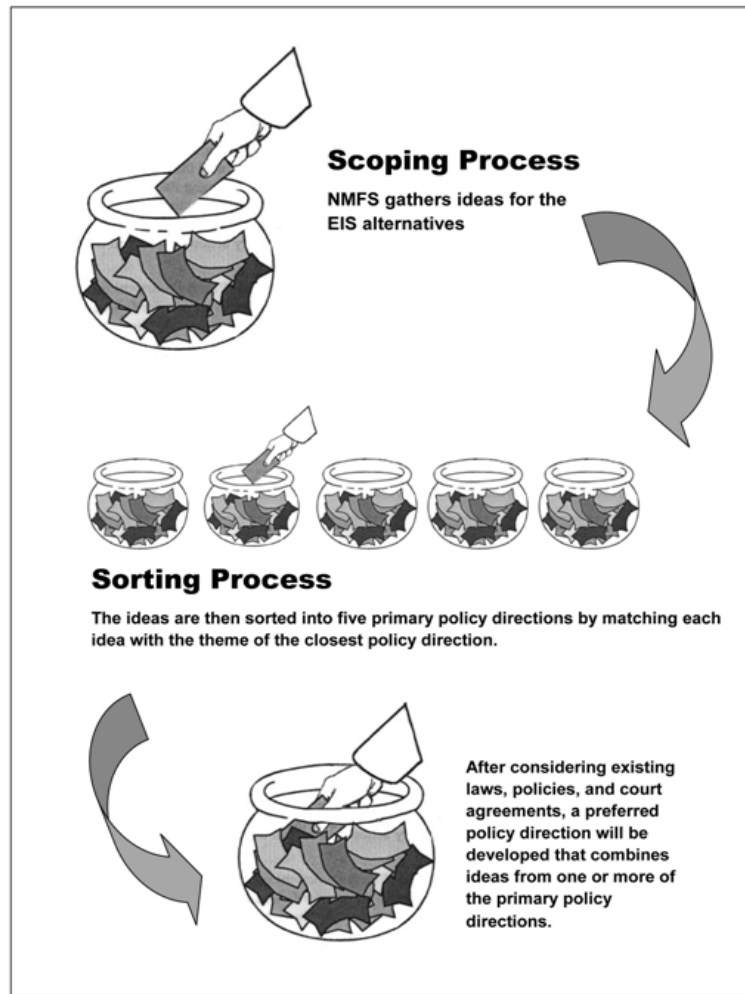
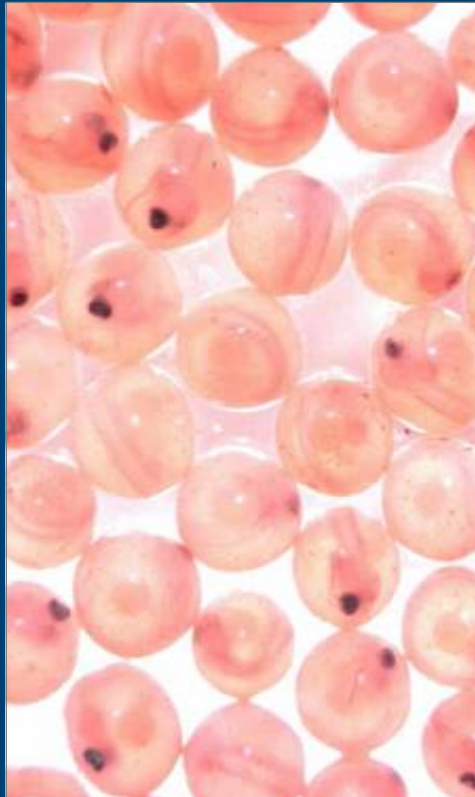


Figure 2-3. Sorting public comments to identify alternative policy directions.



Public Comment Period



- NOAA Fisheries released a draft EIS on August 6, 2010.
- It was available for a 120-day public comment period.
- A total of 418 letters were received.



Public Response

- Thought EIS scope was too narrow or broad.
- Thought the EIS was awkward.
- Did not think the example implementation scenarios were realistic.





Public Response

- No agreement within the region on the best way to operate hatcheries.
- Decisions on hatchery management need to be made subbasin by subbasin. There must be flexibility.
- The Mitchell Act must continue to produce hatchery fish for mitigation and to support the Federal government's Tribal trust responsibility.



Next Steps



- Update EIS in response to public comment.
- Identify a Preferred Alternative.
- Publish a supplemental draft or final EIS by the end of this year.