

Appendix H

Confirmed Methow/Upper Columbia Agreement on Abundant Hatchery Returns

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May 11, 2001

This document reflects the agreement of representatives of the National Marine Fisheries Service, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Yakama Nation and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife at the May 11, 2001 policy meeting on abundant hatchery returns. The agreement will be circulated to these parties and to the Colville Tribes—who were unable to attend the May 11 discussion, but participated in the previous deliberations—for concurrence. The concurrence letter will come from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and should be available for signature early next week. At the May 11 policy discussion, only two amendments were approved. Section 4 of Methow Production Issues was amended to make clear that adult fish would generally not have access to the channel below the Winthrop hatchery. In addition, language was added to the Leavenworth Issues section to provide for potential outplanting of fish in Icicle Creek above the hatchery. See the agreement for the specific language on these two points.

Methow River Production Issues: This Year's Operations

1. All parties commit to the 1.15 million smolt program for this year and agree that it is the production program planned for outyears, subject to further discussion as noted in the longer-term issue list below.
2. For this year, broodstock collection efforts will endeavor to collect a target of 1,000 adult fish using the priorities specified in 3(a)-(d) below. If 1,000 fish are obtained, collection at Winthrop as specified in 3(e) below will not be applicable. It is acknowledged that, given expected water conditions, the number collected could be less than 1,000. All smolt releases from these collections would be marked with an internal tag.
3. The collection of broodstock would be conducted with the following priorities:
 - a. As a first priority, collect adults at Chewuch. Collect as many as practicable, not to exceed 60% of the run. The first 250,000 smolts would be released in the Chewuch River. Remaining smolts would be released in the mainstem Methow as part of the Methow Composite program. Also as first priority, at Twisp, design broodstock protocols in an effort to produce a 225,000-250,000 smolt program in combination with expected production from the existing captive broodstock program.
 - b. Collect adult swim-ins at the Methow Hatchery. Cross the 1997 brood-year return with Chewuch males (utilizing live spawning for wild males) and release progeny as smolts in the mainstem Methow. Except as noted below, smolt releases would not be adipose fin clipped, but would be internally tagged at a 100% rate as noted in 2 above.

- c. WDFW staff will, in consultation with the co-managers, develop protocols that identify the number of adult fish needed to contribute to the attainment of the 1.15 million smolt program given the anticipated adult collections at the Methow, Twisp and Chewuch facilities.
 - d. If needed to attain the 1.15 million smolt release goal, Carson stock fish will be outcrossed with Chewuch males and the resultant progeny reared at Winthrop National Fish Hatchery and released in the mainstem Methow as smolts. These fish would be marked at a 100% rate with a coded wire tag and adipose fin clip. When these marked fish return in the future, if they are not needed for hatchery broodstock, they will be used in a beneficial manner, with first consideration being given to natural spawning in the system.
 - e. The parties believe it will be unnecessary to trap at Winthrop. If collections under (a) and (b) above are insufficient, broodstock collection at Winthrop National Fish Hatchery will occur at a level sufficient to meet the overall production program. If it turns out the collected fish are not needed, they will be outplanted to Lost River and Early Winters Creek.
 - f. Efforts will be made to minimize the collection of excess gametes. Any production excess to that needed for the 1.15 million smolt program would be outplanted to Lost River and Early Winters Creek.
- 4. Uncollected adults will be allowed to spawn naturally. The Winthrop channel will be closed at the mouth of the channel. Some adult fish will be allowed to use the channel, as determined in-season.
 - 5. The 300,000 Carson fish currently being held on-site at Winthrop National Fish Hatchery will be raised to smolts and made available for outplanting in the Okanogan Basin.
 - 6. Parties should be notified immediately before there is divergence from the above protocol.

Longer-term Methow River Issues to be Addressed

The following issues will need to be discussed further prior to next year's program.

- 1. Further discussion of the 1.15 million production goal needs to occur. In a low abundance year, would out-of-basin Carson stock be brought back into the basin?
- 2. What is the most appropriate stock for use in the Okanogan? There are several options currently being considered. If, for example, listed fish are to be used, NMFS would need to determine if the population could be designated as an experimental population. If hatchery fish are to be used, the issue would not arise.

3. When is it appropriate to outplant Methow Composite stock in the Chewuch given the levels of Carson influence in the existing Composite stock?
4. The Twisp production program needs to be discussed. How can the program meet the full production levels? How significant are the impacts of the weir on the natural spawning population?

Entiat Issues

1. Full broodstock collection for the Entiat National Fish Hatchery facility will occur. In addition, 100 adult fish from Entiat will be made available for use in the Okanogan system in Omak Creek, assuming satisfactory water temperatures. Distribution of other fish to the Colville and Spokane Tribes will be maximized. Remaining fish would be used for local food banks and nutrient enhancement. There is agreement to conduct additional genetic analysis in this and subsequent years on the Entiat population. Funding is not yet allocated to this important effort, but National Marine Fisheries Service is exploring the possible use of FY2000 funding for this purpose.

Leavenworth Issues

1. The parties agree on the outplanting of fish in Peshastin Creek. The number of fish to be released is still under discussion. 500 is the currently proposed number.
2. The parties will convene a technical group to evaluate the appropriateness of and develop a proposed plan for outplanting adult fish in Icicle Creek above the hatchery.