

Pacific Salmon Commission: (Adopted – 2/17/06)

Action Plan in Response to CWT Expert Panel Recommendations

A Work Group of 8-10 members is hereby formed to develop an Action Plan defining tasks associated with recommendations of the PSC's CWT Expert Panel Report. The Work Group consists of a subset of the Expert Panel, specifically those four members who are employed by management agencies [John Clark (ADFG), Gary Morishima (Quinault Indian Nation), Brian Riddell (DFO), and Jim Scott (WDFW)], and other agency representatives identified by the Commission. In addition, the Work Group will rely and may call upon the expertise and assistance of other scientists and managers as needed to develop the Action Plan.

The Work Group will initially address the short-term tasks related to recommendations of the Expert Panel. The highest priority will be placed on those tasks that need immediate action. Accordingly, the initial emphasis of the Action Plan will be identifying options to address current deficiencies in the CWT program (recommendations #1-4). Attachment I contains tasks that should be incorporated into the initial response and the work group should expand or modify the list as necessary to adequately address the associated recommendations.

The Work Group is considered an Ad Hoc Work Group of the PSC and activity of this Work Group may be suspended following presentation of its findings at the Commission's Executive Session in October, 2006. It is anticipated that the Work Group would transmit its report to the Commission with their initial response to the first four recommendations by August 1, 2006.

The Commission requests the management agencies to cooperate with the Work Group so as to facilitate timely completion of this important follow-up step to the Expert Panel report.

RECOMMENDATION 1 – *Substantial improvements must be made in the CWT system to insure that the quality and reliability of collected data are consistent with the increasing demands being placed on these data by fishery managers. Areas requiring attention include quality control/quality assurance, and various sampling design issues including expansion of catch and escapement sampling in areas where little or no sampling currently takes place.*

Tasks

- 1) Develop a matrix outlining where quality control/quality assurance issues are occurring within the current CWT system and identify options and associated costs for corrective measures.
- 2) Identify the current tagging levels for indicator stocks utilized by PSC technical committees.
- 3) Identify the current sampling rates occurring for marine fisheries, freshwater fisheries, spawning grounds and hatchery returns. Where the recommended or targeted sampling rates are not being achieved identify options and costs for corrective measures.
- 4) Develop recommendations for sampling design protocols for catch and escapement estimation and sampling.

RECOMMENDATION 2 – *Explicit criteria should be developed for the precision of statistics to be estimated from CWT recovery data. New guidelines for CWT release group sizes and fishery and escapement sampling rates should be based on these explicit criteria.*

Tasks

- 1) Describe the precision currently achievable for estimated parameters derived from the current CWT data, where the status quo is defined as the precision level given that current sample design targets are being met in all areas (e.g., tagging levels, coverage and sampling rates).
- 2) Provide options for modifying current CWT release group sizes and sampling rates for fishery and escapement that provide increments of improved precision over status quo.

RECOMMENDATION 3 – *We recommend that the utility of a decision-theoretic approach, intergrading cost, benefits, and risk into a formal evaluation structure be investigated as a means of prioritizing potential improvements (e.g., measures to improve CWT data – reporting, sample design, and protocol) to the CWT system. The approach should identify the release group sizes and recovery programs required to meet the statistical criteria for CWT recovery data. Sampling programs should include all fisheries, hatcheries, and spawning ground areas where CWT exploitation rate indicator stocks are present.*

Task

- 1) Work with the relevant agencies to identify cost considerations for the actions associated with the first three recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION 4 – *We recommend completion of a comprehensive survey and statistical analysis of all relevant published and unpublished CWT studies that concerns the correspondence between exploitation patterns and rates for hatchery indicator stocks as compared to their natural counterparts. This review should also include new analysis of relevant agency-collected data that have not yet been previously subject to analysis. Recommendations for additional studies should be made if they are judged necessary.*

Tasks

- 1) Summarize the results from all the relevant management agencies' published and unpublished CWT studies that concern the correspondence between exploitation patterns and rates for hatchery indicator stocks as compared to their natural counterparts.
- 2) Review current indicator stock coverage and provide recommendations where additional analysis could be conducted for peer review that would advance understanding of the relationship between hatchery indicator stocks and their natural counterparts.