

HABITAT COMMITTEE REPORT ON CURRENT HABITAT ISSUES

National Standards for Levees

The Habitat Committee (HC) recently became aware of an effort by the Corps of Engineers to modify their national standards for vegetation management on levees. These modifications have the potential to denude large stream reaches of riparian habitat, impacting salmon essential fish habitat (EFH) from the Central Valley of California to the Canadian border. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration has developed a Biological Opinion stating the impacts to salmon in the Puget Sound from vegetation management mandated by the Corps of Engineers. The Corps' nationwide permits are also undergoing review, and there may be specific concerns in these permits regarding EFH.

The HC recommends investigating these situations and preparing a letter to the Corps of Engineers, by June, detailing EFH impacts.

PFMC
3/5/11