

Columbia River Fisheries Project

PHILOSOPHIES AND PROGRAMS OF FEDERAL
AGENCIES FOR PRODUCTION OF WILD AND HATCHERY STOCKS

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PHILOSOPHIES

The authority for management of fisheries and regulation of catch within the boundaries of Idaho, Oregon, and Washington is invested in the states. Hatchery production of salmon and steelhead is dependent upon state approval. The Federal government has no general fishery regulatory authority within the states, excepting situations which are provided for by treaties with Indian tribes or foreign nations, upon Federal reservations which are not considered to be part of a state, or by special agreement or act. These exceptions appear to have relatively little effect on the fisheries management of the Columbia River. Problems with Indian fisheries stem from treaty interpretations and not from any particular Federal managerial authority in fisheries.

The Federal agencies have considerable authority in fields related to fisheries research and environmental protection. Research into almost any conceivable aspect of fisheries production or management is provided for by Federal legislation, although funds are not necessarily provided. Research may be undertaken by Federal scientists or contracted to appropriate entities for accomplishment.

Federal research laboratories program research needed for compliance with international treaties where salmon and steelhead are of concern. Also, data sources are coordinated and supplied to U. S. negotiators. In conjunction with the U.S. Coast Guard, Federal fishery agencies enforce treaty regulations.

The fisheries managerial role of the Federal government will be increased for marine fisheries beyond 3 miles from shore. The Fishery Conservation and Management Act which became law on April 1976 provides for regulation of fishing and management of stocks of fish at sea within 200 miles of the United States. An additional purpose of the Congress was that anadromous species originating in the United States be managed exclusively by the United States in areas beyond the 200 mile conservation zone. Procedures to accomplish the intent of the act were established.

Environmental protection and improvement is accomplished under laws requiring that Federal agencies which license or construct projects that will affect the well being of fish must consult with Federal fishery agencies in regard to fishery protection at contemplated projects. Environmental Impact Statement requirements also provide recognition of fishery damages inherent in proposed actions. Authorities held by the Environmental Protection Agency and Federal laws have been responsible for much of the progress in maintaining water quality.

Where damage to fisheries is expected to result from projects constructed or licensed by an agency of the Federal Government, measures to reduce damage to fisheries or replace lost resources are usually made part of the project. Fisheways and screens are commonly provided to allow migration up and down stream. Hatchery facilities of one sort or another are often provided to replace lost stocks. Federal involvement in hatchery operations in the Columbia and Snake Rivers has been justified mainly for

replacement of fish lost due to water-use projects. Thus, most Federally supported fish culture on the Columbia River and tributary streams is for the purpose of replacement. Salmon and steelhead hatcheries on Indian reservations are a possible exception.

Determination of the kinds and numbers of fish to be reared with money provided by the Federal Government is viewed as a joint responsibility between State and Federal agencies. The states have a dominant interest in fisheries management, while the Federal side must require that appropriations are effectively used and are spent for the purposes specified by the Congress or Administration.

PROGRAMS FOR PRODUCTION OF WILD AND HATCHERY STOCKS

Wild stock enhancement has been undertaken by Federal agencies in two ways. The first of these was by improvement of access to spawning grounds and protection at diversions. Funds have been provided to remove log jams from tributary streams, provide fishways over natural obstacles, and to screen irrigation diversions. In combination with state efforts, tributary stream improvement has been mainly completed as far as obstacles and diversions are concerned. There remain a number of dams of various sizes that adversely affect fish migrations and water flows. We believe that Federal agencies and laws can be helpful in correcting these. The U. S. Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management are making progress toward protection of streams from logging or other land-use damage.

Federal agencies are also active in environmental protection and, in some instances, restoration of stream habitat for fish. Pollution loads of

various kinds have been reduced or prevented. There is substantial involvement by Federal fishery personnel in review of permits and licenses granted by Federal agencies, and in review of plans and operations of Federal agencies that may affect fisheries. These reviews provide bases for comments to licensing and operating agencies that result in protection or improvement of fishery resources. Designs of water-use projects have been modified to protect fish. Licenses and permits for water-use projects have been reviewed, modified, and at times denied for purposes of fish protection.

The major part of the salmon and steelhead smolts released from hatcheries in the Columbia Basin are produced with funds furnished by Federal agencies. About 74% of the operating monies came from these sources in FY 1974.

A significant proportion of the remainder was supported by entities that operate dams as a condition of the license that they hold from the Federal Power Commission. Thus, the anadromous hatchery operations are heavily dependent upon Federal regulations and appropriations. Please refer to the report on artificial propagation for further detail.

In terms of operations, that is, who actually manages the stations, the reverse is true. Federal personnel operated only 9 of the 57 stations that released salmon or steelhead trout.

Federal fishery agencies have contributed substantially to the improvement of hatchery management practices. The work has been accomplished directly or through contract with other agencies. Progress has been achieved in diets, disease control, economics and genetics. Cooperative research schemes have provided a vastly improved understanding of the contribution to various fisheries by hatcheries on the Columbia River.