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U.S. Department of Commerce | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration | NOAA Fisheries



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# Public Workshop

Puget Sound Early Winter Steelhead Hatcheries EIS

July 2015



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# Background

- Early winter steelhead (EWS) hatchery programs were received from co-managers for NMFS review and approval
- Evaluations of Nooksack, Dungeness, and Stillaguamish EWS programs were released in March 2015:
  - NEPA Environmental Assessment
  - ESA Proposed Evaluation and Pending Determination – no jeopardy
  - Public review and comments (mostly oriented at NEPA)
- NMFS decided an EIS was warranted
- Scope expanded from 3 to 5 hatchery programs, in consultation with the co-managers
- One EWS hatchery program was withdrawn by the co-managers (Soos Ck)

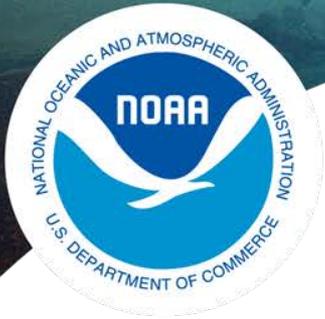


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# Workshop Purposes

- Discuss Puget Sound early winter steelhead hatchery programs to be included in the EIS
- Provide information that will help the public provide comments on what the EIS should consider
  - Potential issues and concerns
  - Potential environmental impacts
  - Potential alternatives for analysis

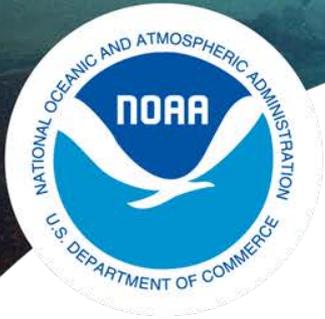


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# Puget Sound Early Winter Steelhead Programs in the EIS

- 5 hatchery programs
  - Dungeness, Nooksack, Stillaguamish, Snohomish/Skykomish, and Snoqualmie watersheds
- 8 hatchery and rearing pond facilities
- Annual production of 620,000 steelhead smolts



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# Puget Sound Early Winter Steelhead Programs in the EIS

- 100 percent of EWS programs are operated to provide fish for harvest (isolated program type)



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# Puget Sound Early Winter Steelhead Programs in the EIS

Program	Watershed	Program Type	Operator	Release Number
Dungeness River Hatchery	Dungeness River	Isolated	WDFW	10,000
Kendall Creek Hatchery	NF Nooksack River	Isolated	WDFW	150,000
Whitehorse Ponds	NF Stillaguamish River	Isolated	WDFW	130,000
Snohomish/Skykomish	Skykomish River	Isolated	WDFW	256,000
Tokol Creek Hatchery	Snoqualmie River	Isolated	WDFW	74,000
Total				620,000

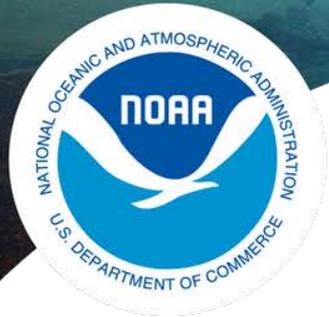


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# Why NEPA?

- National Environmental Policy Act
  - Requires federal agencies to evaluate potential impacts of major actions they propose, and to inform and involve the public in the decision-making process
  - Requires analysis of potential effects, both positive and negative, that the Proposed Action and alternatives may have on the environment and local community



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# Endangered Species Act

- Listed steelhead and salmon in Puget Sound
  - Steelhead (2007)
  - Chinook (1999)
  - Hood Canal summer chum (1999)
  - Bull trout (1998)



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# Role of NEPA and the EIS

- The EIS will not make determinations of whether any hatchery programs meet the requirements of the ESA
- EIS is a disclosure document

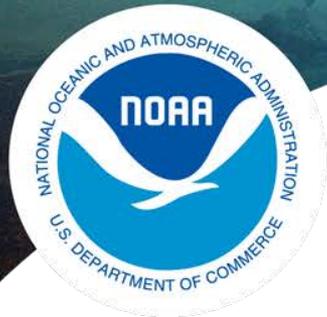


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# The Federal Action Is

- NMFS' approval of hatchery plans under the ESA



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## The EIS Will Not . . .

- Determine whether any particular hatchery program is compliant with the ESA
  - Those decisions come under provisions of the ESA
- Specify or make determinations on how individual programs should be operated



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# Purpose of the EIS

- Respond to the request of the co-managers for their hatchery programs to be exempted from take prohibitions under the ESA
- Disclose the potential effects of the Proposed Action and alternatives on the human environment



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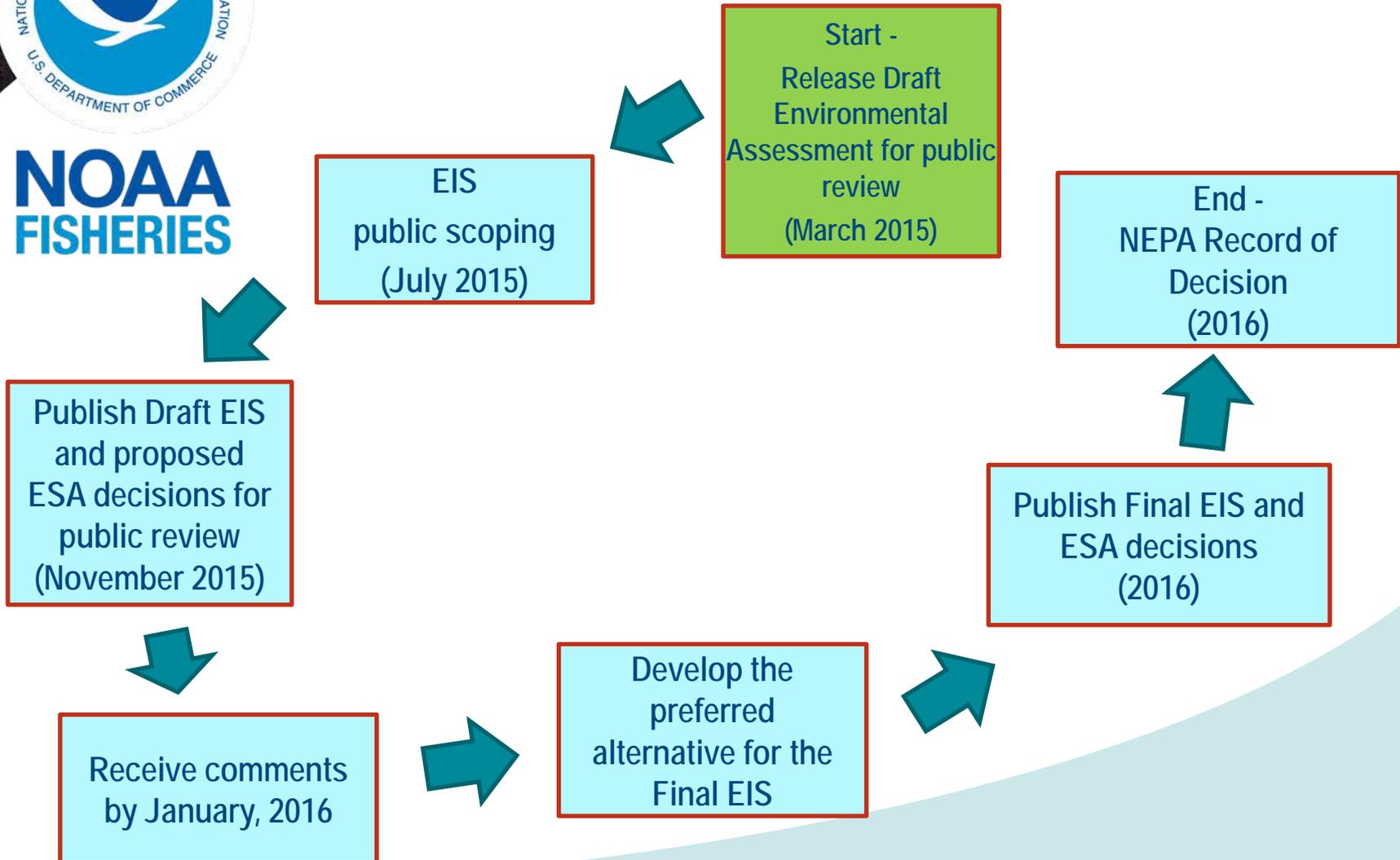
# Steelhead NEPA Work to Date

- March 26, 2015 – Notice of Availability Draft EA for three steelhead hatchery programs
  - Close of comments April 27, 2015
- July 14, 2015 – Notice of Intent to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for five steelhead hatchery programs
  - Close of comments August 13, 2015

# NEPA and ESA Processes



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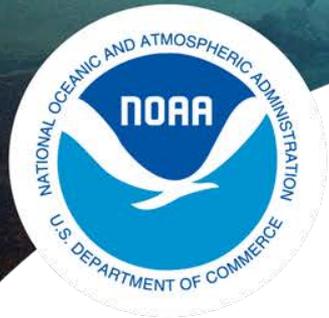
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# Proposed Focus of EIS Analysis

Analysis of Puget Sound early winter steelhead hatchery programs on the natural and human environment

- Fish (ESA-listed and non-listed)
- People (socioeconomics, environmental justice)
- Water Quantity
- Cumulative Impacts



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# Potential Alternatives

- Alternatives would center around differences in levels and types of hatchery production, including no action
- NMFS is not advocating any particular alternative – they were developed for the Draft Environmental Assessment



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# Alternative 1

(No Action)

- No production from isolated hatchery steelhead programs



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# Alternative 2

(Proposed Action)

- Production from isolated programs as proposed in the co-managers' five HGMPs
- Hatchery production – 620,000 total



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## Alternative 3 (Reduced Production)

- Production of hatchery steelhead reduced 50% to 315,000



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# Alternative 4

## (Transition to Native Broodstock)

- Change early winter steelhead (isolated) programs to native late winter steelhead programs (listed, integrated programs)
- Target hatchery production level would remain 620,000, consistent with availability of natural-origin broodstock
- Fishing would occur when natural returns are large enough



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# NEPA and ESA Schedule

- July 14 through August 13, 2015 – 30-day NEPA public scoping period
- November 2015 – Publish DEIS, proposed ESA decision, and start of public review
- December 2015 – 45-day public review period ends
- Spring 2016 - Publish Final EIS, NEPA Record of Decision, and final ESA decision



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# Public Scoping Workshops

- July 20, 2015 in Mt Vernon
- July 21, 2015 in Lynnwood



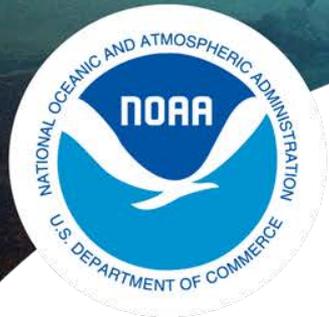
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# For More Information

[www.westcoast.fisheries.noaa.gov/  
hatcheries/salmon\\_and\\_steelhead\\_hatcheries.html](http://www.westcoast.fisheries.noaa.gov/hatcheries/salmon_and_steelhead_hatcheries.html)

Submit scoping comments by email to:  
[EWSHatcheriesEIS.wcr@noaa.gov](mailto:EWSHatcheriesEIS.wcr@noaa.gov)



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# Coming Attractions

## Puget Sound ESA and NEPA work

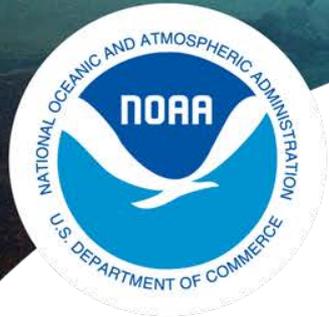
- Public review is completed; finalization is underway
  - Dungeness (3 salmon programs)
- Public review to be initiated
  - Snohomish (6 salmon programs)
  - Hood Canal (1 late winter steelhead and 9 salmon programs)

# Questions and discussion



- Issues and concerns?
- Environmental impacts and alternatives to consider?





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# Potential Alternatives

Watershed	Hatchery Facilities	Alt 1 No Action	Alt 2 Proposed Action	Alt 3 50% Reduction	Alt 4 Transition to Native Broodstock
Dungeness River	Dungeness River Hatchery Hurd Creek Hatchery	0	10,000	5,000	
NF Nooksack River	Kendall Creek Hatchery McKinnon Pond	0	150,000	75,000	
NF Stillaguamish River	Whitehorse Ponds	0	130,000	65,000	
Skykomish River	Wallace Hatchery Reiter Ponds	0	256,000	128,000	
Snoqualmie River	Tokol Creek Hatchery	0	74,000	37,000	