

1. Why was the Friends of the Cowlitz fish production cut off?

The Friends of the Cowlitz continue to raise, acclimate and release approximately 55,000 spring Chinook annually from the Toledo Sand & Gravel net pens. The summer run steelhead net pen program was suspended due to concerns regarding straying of hatchery fish resulting in interactions with wild late winter steelhead. If this net pen program were to continue at historical levels (100,000 fish) it would result in a near complete reduction in the summer steelhead production from Cowlitz Trout Hatchery based on current information.

2. Late-winter steelhead smolt program will not work. Jack Tipping is working on a program on Kalama River. Get behind this program and implement on Cowlitz in 2014.

Jack Tipping's proposal to delay the late winter steelhead smolt program resulting in a longer rearing period was considered on the Cowlitz. Due to the overlap in rearing with the summer run steelhead and cutthroat trout and the increase in the summer run steelhead and late winter steelhead program numbers, it was determined that there were not enough ponds and pathogen-free water available to do all programs simultaneously. Note that the Kalama test is experimental and has not been proven to be successful.

3. Should know by now what size spring Chinook need to be for best returns. Don't gamble with our fish by experimenting with sizes.

There was a desire to maximize the numbers of smolts released and spring Chinook was one of the few species we could increase numbers because there are no native spring Chinook in the lower Cowlitz to limit program size. By reducing size at release we were able to increase the total number of smolts released and still stay within the 650,000 pound cap. There was also a desire to mimic the size of wild fish at release. Releasing fish at 16 per pound can help facilitate the total numbers released because some of the fish need to be released in the fall and the 16 fish per pound size fits that release timeframe.

4. Recycle salmon & steelhead.

WDFW has received funding for the second year (2013) of a steelhead recycling study in the Cowlitz River. The results of the first year are complete and WDFW will review the results of the two years of study to consider what additional actions might occur. Salmon recycling would have to meet the requirements of the WDFW Hatchery and Fishery Reform policy, which includes managing for hatchery/wild interactions on the spawning grounds.

5. What is happening with surplus adults at the Cowlitz Salmon Hatchery?

All spring Chinook and up to 8,600 fall Chinook above hatchery need will be transported upstream with the exception of some retained for coded wire tag recovery. Additional fall Chinook will be donated to food banks or used for nutrient enhancement in the upper watershed. Up to 25,000 coho from the integrated program will be transported upstream above Cowlitz Falls. The average return for the past three years has been approximately 9,000 adults. Up to 6,000 adults above hatchery need from the non-integrated coho program will be transported to the Tilton River. Any additional fish will be either donated to food banks (if food grade quality) or used for nutrient enhancement in the upper watershed (non food grade quality). Summer run steelhead above hatchery need will be donated to food banks with the exception of 500 adults in 2013 that will be recycled downstream as part of a study. Late winter steelhead above hatchery needs will be donated to food banks. Cutthroat trout above hatchery need will be recycled downstream.

6. What is happening with the integration program at the hatchery?

Currently, approximately half of the coho program and all three of the late winter steelhead programs are employing an integration strategy. In addition the plan going forward is to integrate at least a portion of the fall Chinook program this fall. The Cowlitz Fisheries and Hatchery Management Plan (FHMP) calls for integrating spring Chinook in the future.

7. What has been done with native trout in the Tilton River?

WDFW stopped releasing stocked trout this year in the Tilton River following the guidelines established in the *WDFW Statewide Steelhead Management Plan*. The concern is over negative interactions between hatchery origin stocked trout and naturally produced steelhead. Last year, when adipose fin-clipped hatchery trout were still being stocked, the rules were an 8-inch minimum size, a daily limit of 5 trout and release of all trout except those with a clipped adipose fin. This prohibited retention of wild trout. Now, with stocking of hatchery trout ended, the rules have returned to statewide rules which allow a daily limit of 2 (wild) trout, 8-inch minimum size.

8. The 650,000 pound limit only applies to the Cowlitz hatcheries; can use net pens in Mayfield Lake to increase production. Needs funding and support.

There is currently a funding request in the legislature for additional production from net pens for fall Chinook. WDFW, Tacoma Power and the Cowlitz Fisheries Technical Committee (FTC) are considering other options to increase fall Chinook production in lieu of net pens.

9. Water flows fluctuating wildly below Mayfield Dam. Worst flow fluctuations ever are happening this year.

The decision to change Mayfield discharge is made by carefully balancing a number of factors, including: downstream flow and ramping requirements, elevation restrictions on Mayfield reservoir, coordinated dispatch of Tacoma’s other power resources, and local and regional power needs. These factors have been in effect for years. One recent change that impacts local and regional power needs is the development and integration of a large number of wind generators. In the last 5 years over 7,000 MW of wind generation has been built in the Pacific Northwest. Wind generation is very volatile and uncertain. When output from the wind generators increases or decreases, the regional demand of power from other resources changes in response.

10. Need advance notice of expected flows in order to know when to go to Cowlitz to fish.

Tacoma Power describes our Mayfield discharge plan for the week every Monday on the Fish Line and in the Cowlitz Fish Report. Unfortunately, because of the factors listed above our plans can change with little to no advance notice.

11. Too much attraction water to the Cowlitz Salmon Hatchery so fish won’t bite.

The attraction water pump in the adult fish ladder has been off since the fall of 2011 at the Cowlitz Salmon Hatchery. There is no additional attraction water being discharged at that hatchery. The operation of the adult fish ladder and the river water attraction gate at the mouth of the fish ladder has not changed substantially since the facility was built with the exception of some minor modifications directed by NMFS at the ladder entrance a few years back.

12. Want measured assurance there are fish to catch in the Cowlitz River. Current program not working to get fish back: Need more yields. What are the current harvest numbers? Table should be continuously published. Cowlitz fisheries continuously heading down. We’re fishing on bread crumbs. Tacoma needs to show good faith by paying for actions to improve fisheries. Planted fewer fish in 2002-2004 but there are fewer catches now. Why aren’t the fish coming back? How does today’s harvest compare with previous years? Show the numbers. We’re deserving of fish and promised fish yet we don’t have the quality of fishery we had.

	Average Smolt Releases in the Cowlitz River				
	Winter Steelhead	Summer Steelhead	Spring Chinook	Fall Chinook	Coho
1990s Average	1,050,463	449,885	1,773,001	6,262,501	4,120,733
2000s Average	707,319	508,793	969,221	5,083,886	3,102,749

Harvest of Adult Salmonids in the Cowlitz River					
	Winter Steelhead	Summer Steelhead	Spring Chinook	Fall Chinook	Coho
2001	18,146	8,900	54	1,877	37,846
2002	6,616	23,193	1,466	2,844	10,711
2003	4,784	17,444	2,947	3,675	5,232
2004	4,701	30,921	2,127	2,666	4,384
2005	3,612	6,918	1,166	1,936	3,811
2006	3,744	19,669	862	2,226	5,867
2007	5,866	6,537	746	1,655	10,231
2008	4,610	11,878	607	1,202	13,907
2009	10,456	7,284	1,823	3,946	16,224
2010	8,569	8,908	2,116	4,706	10,453
2011	13,345	8,247	2,532	5,266	8,680

13. How are commercial fisheries affecting the Cowlitz? What are the numbers?

Spring Chinook commercial fisheries have a small impact on fish returning to the Cowlitz River. Fewer than 200 Cowlitz spring Chinook were estimated to be caught in main stem Columbia River commercial fisheries from 2000-2010. We do not have estimates of Cowlitz stock fall Chinook harvested in main stem commercial fall season fisheries, but in recent years, both commercial and sport fisheries have been concentrated upstream of the Lewis River to provide additional protection to fall Chinook returning to tributaries in the lower river Columbia River, including the Cowlitz River. We do not have stock-specific estimates of Cowlitz coho harvested in main stem Columbia River commercial fisheries but it is likely more significant than Chinook, as the commercial fishery is focused in mid-October when the proportion of late hatchery coho is greatest.

14. Need commercial gill net season times published in newspapers.

WDFW posts the commercial fishing seasons at the following website: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/crc/>. They are also recorded on the agency phone hotline message at 360-902-2500 the day the season is set. WDFW does not have any authority to require newspapers to publish these seasons.

15. How long will we be forced to use barbless hooks?

The emergency regulation implementing the requirement to use barbless hooks on the Columbia River from the Oregon/Washington border downstream was an outcome of the Commission's Policy C3620 pursuant to the conservation and fisheries management on the Columbia River system. The fish and wildlife commissions of Washington and Oregon worked for many months to review the

many aspects of Columbia River salmon and sturgeon fishery management and to maintain concurrent regulations between Oregon and Washington in the water of the Columbia River bordering the two states. During the North of Falcon pre-season planning process, WDFW added tributaries to the main stem Columbia regulation requiring barbless hooks.

Under the terms of the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission's Columbia River policy there will be an annual review of policy implementation. The Commission's annual review should take place sometime this winter.

16. Delist the fish.

The ESA listing of salmon and steelhead in the Columbia River basin is under the purview of the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). The Cowlitz Fisheries and Hatchery Management Plan is targeted at recovery of natural-origin stocks. If successful de-listing may be possible at some future time. In addition, WDFW is working in a variety of areas to further listed fish recovery.

17. What will be done with Cowlitz Restoration & Recovery Plan? How about using Cowlitz Restoration & Recovery account to fund net pens.

The Cowlitz Fisheries Technical Committee (FTC) developed the Cowlitz Restoration & Recovery (CRR) Plan. The FTC recommended that the fund be expended for habitat measures in the upper Cowlitz River basin for the recovery of listed anadromous fish, and not for additional fish production. Tacoma Power will submit the plan to FERC in 2013 for their approval. It is anticipated that the fund will be available for land and conservation easement acquisitions, and habitat enhancement projects beginning in 2014.

18. Decisions were made in 2000 but things have changed since then. Settlement Agreement numbers not valid today and need to be changed.

The 650,000 pound production cap for fish produced in the Cowlitz hatcheries was based upon previous Cowlitz hatchery operation experiences, the physical limitations of the re-built hatchery facilities, and the Cowlitz River ecosystem as considered in the Hatchery Scientific Review Group's criteria for hatchery production. This cap continues to be valid given the HSRG criteria.

19. How are these questions going to be answered?

Tacoma Power will make the answers of these questions available on their publically-accessible web site - [Cowlitz Fisheries Technical Committee](#). The answers will also be posted on the cowlitzfish.net web site. Any individual requesting a copy of these answers can receive them via email or regular mail. In addition, a public meeting will be scheduled later in 2013 to address some of the specific issues and questions.

20. What is happening to increase downstream collection at Cowlitz Falls Dam?

In an effort to improve downstream fish collection at the Cowlitz Falls Dam, Tacoma Power has designed a shore-based collector (the Cowlitz Falls North Shore Collector). This collector will be located immediately downstream of dam and the entrance will be routed through the dam. The collector will create attraction flows of 500 cubic feet per second and will be designed with the flexibility to pump that attraction water back to the reservoir or allow it to be gravity fed to the tailrace. The construction is expected to complete by the end of 2016. Tacoma Power has also installed a weir box at the upstream face of the dam - in front of Spillway #3 and behind the debris barrier. The weir box creates a surface oriented attraction flow further upstream than the existing fish flumes and once fish are captured in the weir box they are directed to the existing fish flumes. Also, a seasonal collector is currently in design to collect downstream migrants in upper Riffe Lake between Cowlitz Falls Dam and Taidnapam Park. This collector will be used to capture juveniles not collected at Cowlitz Falls Dam during the July – August time frame. A prototype of this system is currently planned for testing in the summer of 2014.

21. What happened with releases via Blue Creek?

Tacoma Power constructed a new outlet into the Cowlitz River downstream of the Blue Creek boat launch as part of the Cowlitz Hatchery Complex remodel. The existing outfall into Blue Creek was maintained in an operational status. By routing the hatchery discharge directly into the Cowlitz River, this reduced the attraction of fish to Blue Creek and promoted their tendency to stray upstream to the Cowlitz Salmon Hatchery ladder and trap. This process was partially done to eliminate adult returns to the Cowlitz Trout Hatchery where they are not needed since all steelhead and cutthroat trout broodstock are collected at the Cowlitz Salmon Hatchery separation facility. Another reason for the new hatchery outfall was to accommodate requests of the angling public and WDFW to spread out the fishery in the Cowlitz River so more of the fishery is upstream of the mouth of Blue Creek.

WDFW now operates the outfall distribution of the Cowlitz Trout Hatchery water as follows: 100% of the hatchery drain water is discharged into Blue Creek beginning February 15th until August 10th. From August 11th to February 14th, hatchery drain water is discharged 50% to Blue Creek and 50% to the Cowlitz River outfall.

22. Why implement the Cowlitz Fisheries and Hatchery Management Plan (FHMP) update when it is not yet approved by FERC?

The FHMP was developed through a comprehensive process in cooperation with a variety of agencies, including state and federal, and the public. WDFW was a signatory to the Settlement Agreement, which incorporated the guidelines of the

FHMP. Both Tacoma Power and WDFW are committed to implementing the provisions of the FHMP Update and implementing the HSRG criteria for hatchery reform on the Cowlitz River. Due to the high level of preparation involved in the FHMP Update, the agreement of all members of the FTC on the content of the plan, and the very low-likelihood that FERC will make substantial changes to the plan the primary implementing parties, Tacoma Power and WDFW, are supportive of moving forward with the implementation of the FHMP to guide fish production and fishery management in the Cowlitz River.

23. Why isn't the state (WDFW) taking care of people? Why does Tacoma Power even have a say in fisheries management?

WDFW has the responsibility to manage sport fisheries on the Cowlitz River. Those fisheries must be consistent with WDFW's policies and agreements. WDFW was a signatory to the Settlement Agreement, which incorporated the guidelines of the FHMP, and includes guidelines for hatchery/wild fish interactions. Fisheries now have to meet more stringent guidelines to be consistent with those guidelines. WDFW is working within the limitations of these policies and agreements to provide as much sport fishing opportunity as possible. The FHMP is not intended in any way to alter the legal and policy mandates and responsibilities of WDFW on the Cowlitz River. The FHMP is intended to provide a structure within which WDFW's responsibilities can be carried out in a manner that is consistent with the Settlement Agreement.