

**Cowlitz Fish Technical Committee
Decision Document**

Project Name	Coded Wire Tag Strategy – Cowlitz Basin
Date Proposal Submitted	4/20/2015
Date of Requested Decision	5/5/2015
Completed By	Matt Bleich

FTC Decision and Justification

The FTC agreed the 2015 strategy is consistent with the 2014 marking strategy and should be repeated. This decision document completes the annual review process.

Proposed Decision or Consideration

All coho, steelhead and cutthroat captured at Cowlitz Falls Dam will be marked with coded wire tags. Steelhead and cutthroat will be marked with coded wire tags bearing the WDFW agency code (063) during 2015.

Background

In 2010, the coded wire tag marking of steelhead smolts was moved from the Mayfield Facility to the Cowlitz Falls Fish Facility (CFFF). This was associated with the initiation of the productivity test. This mark is used for determining the appropriate location to transport adult steelhead returning to the Cowlitz Salmon Hatchery separator facility. The most recent Fisheries and Hatchery Management Plan Update (FHMP), submitted to FERC in November 2011, proposes moving the CWT marking of the remaining species from the Tilton River populations to the upper Cowlitz River basin populations.

In 2012 and 2013, all steelhead, coho and cutthroat captured at the Cowlitz Falls Dam were marked with coded wire tags bearing the WDFW agency code (063). During the March 6, 2014 FTC meeting Tacoma Power presented the outcome of discussions with WDFW database managers for coded wire tag data. WDFW recommended that steelhead and cutthroat be marked with WDFW agency code (063), and coho will be marked with individual coded wire tags in 2014, and will continue in 2015. The marking plan will be revisited annually while Cowlitz Facilities are being design and constructed.

Coordination Need

The FTC will revisit the decision annually to Coded Wire Tag fish at Cowlitz Falls Fish Facility, using agency only marks for steelhead and cutthroat, and individual coded wire

tag marks for coho.

Summary of Potential Impacts

There is potential to gain additional, out of basin, information for the coho fishery from CWT fish originating from the Cowlitz. This will be limited to out of basin harvest records for Cowlitz origin fish.

If future study designs were developed to differentiate in-basin groups it would result in additional processing of fish at the adult sorting facility. At this point the questions that would be answered from future study designs are not well developed. The additional information does not warrant the added time and expense of processing.