

2008-09

**HOOD CANAL STEELHEAD
HARVEST MANAGEMENT PLAN**

Joint Report Prepared by:

**Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Point No Point Treaty Council
(for the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe and Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe)
Skokomish Tribe
Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe**

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INTRODUCTION

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Skokomish Tribe, the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe, the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, the Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe, and the Point No Point Treaty Council (representing the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe and Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe), have prepared the following harvest management plan for the 2008-09 winter steelhead accounting period in Hood Canal. There is no current evidence of indigenous self-sustaining summer steelhead populations in Hood Canal. This plan establishes management guidelines for the steelhead resources of streams of Hood Canal, originating in WRIA 14, WRIA 15, WRIA 16 and WRIA 17 and of marine waters of Hood Canal (Marine Areas 12, 12A, 12B, 12C, 12D, 12H) and Port Gamble Bay (Marine Area 9A). Streams in the Skokomish Management Unit include the Skokomish River and its tributaries. Streams in the West Hood Canal Management Unit include the Hamma Hamma, the Duckabush, the Dosewallips, and the Big and Little Quilcene rivers and several independent streams. Streams in the East Hood Canal Management Unit include the Union, the Tahuya, and the Dewatto rivers and several smaller independent streams.

PREMISES AND FISHERY OBJECTIVES

The provisions of this plan cover all Treaty and non-treaty fisheries for steelhead occurring in Hood Canal streams and Hood Canal marine areas. The co-managers agree to a philosophy of cooperation in implementing management programs to maintain, perpetuate and enhance the steelhead resource and the natural ecosystem that supports it.

This plan is intended to ensure that Treaty and non-treaty fishermen, subject to their respective regulatory authorities, shall be afforded the opportunities to harvest their shares as determined in *United States v. Washington*, 384 F. Supp. 312, aff'd 520 F.2d 676 (9th Cir. 1975), cert. denied 423 U.S. 1086, aff'd sub nom *Washington v. Washington State Commercial Passenger Fishing Vessel Association*, 443 U.S. 658 (1979) and other orders under the court's continuing jurisdiction.

The management intent is to preserve harvest opportunity while not impeding recovery of steelhead populations.

The co-managers agree to enact and recommend for enactment by the Pacific Fishery Management Council and the Pacific Salmon Commission, appropriate regulations for marine salmonid fisheries that will provide for adequate escapement of steelhead into the Hood Canal watersheds to achieve the intent and purposes of this plan.

MANAGEMENT PERIODS

The management periods define the time interval during which regulatory actions are directed to meeting conservation and allocation needs of steelhead stocks while taking into account harvest (actual or expected) of steelhead occurring outside of the management periods. Since many runs extend over lengthy periods of time and only a small portion of the population of each run is available at the extremes of its run timing, it is impractical to exercise directed management for non selective fisheries on these portions of runs while continuing harvests of other species or stocks. Effort should be spread throughout the management periods to achieve escapement and catch from all segments of the runs.

Winter Steelhead

| <u>Area</u> | <u>Management Period</u> |
|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Area 9A | November 30 through March 31 |
| Hood Canal Rivers | December 7 through April 15 |

Management periods for winter steelhead were established by reviewing historical information on the timing of recreational catches. The end of the management period was adjusted to match the beginning of the spring Chinook management period.

The catch accounting period for all Treaty Indian and non-treaty fisheries in Hood Canal management areas is November 1 - April 30 for winter run steelhead.

HARVEST MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Harvest Strategy Background

Hatchery reared steelhead smolts were stocked in several of the major Hood Canal streams for several decades to provide recreational and tribal fishing opportunities. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Chambers Creek / Bogachiel / Tokul Creek hatchery winter steelhead stock was used in most streams where hatchery reared steelhead smolts were released. In recent years, all hatchery reared steelhead smolts have been marked with an adipose-fin clip prior to release, in order to enable visual distinction between hatchery-reared steelhead and wild steelhead.

Treaty net fisheries have generally been targeted at earlier returning, often hatchery-reared, winter run steelhead recruits that were expected to return primarily from December through February. Treaty hook-and-line fisheries have extended into March.

In recent years, non-treaty recreational fisheries in Hood Canal streams have been primarily targeted at hatchery-reared steelhead. The recreational fishing season is closed during the spring to protect emigrating steelhead smolts and kelts. The season is open from June 1 through October 31 for game fish and wild (unmarked) steelhead release regulations have been in effect during this period in all freshwater areas since 1992 and in all marine areas since 1993. When hatchery-reared winter run steelhead are expected to return, the recreational winter steelhead season has been open from November 1 through the last day of February. Wild (unmarked) winter steelhead release regulations have been in effect in the Skokomish, Tahuya and Dewatto rivers since 1987, in all other Hood Canal rivers (when open during the winter steelhead season) since the 1994-95 season, and since 1993 in all marine areas. In addition, winter steelhead seasons have been closed in the Union, the Tahuya, and the Dewatto rivers since the 2004-05 season and in the Hamma Hamma, the Duckabush, and the Dosewallips rivers, beginning with the 2006-07 season.

Some additional incidental harvest of steelhead may have occurred during Treaty and non-treaty fisheries directed at harvesting other species of salmon in freshwater and marine areas of Hood Canal.

Table 1 summarizes the implementation dates for steelhead regulations for the recreational fishery and the last year hatchery winter steelhead smolts were released in Hood Canal streams.

Table 1. Implementation dates for wild steelhead regulations for recreational fisheries in Hood Canal streams; all other streams have been closed to all steelhead fishing.
(Source: Thom H. Johnson, WDFW, Hood Canal District Fish Biologist)

| Stream | Winter steelhead WSR regulations implemented a/ | Winter steelhead recreational closure implemented b/ | Last year hatchery winter-run steelhead smolts released c/ |
|--|---|--|--|
| <u>Hood Canal</u> | | | |
| Marine Areas | 04/16/1993 | -- | -- |
| Dewatto R. | 02/01/1987 | 2004-05 season | 1990 |
| Tahuya R. | 02/01/1987 | 2004-05 season | 1994 |
| Union R. | 1994-95 season | 2004-05 season | 1994 |
| Skokomish R. | 01/01/1987 | 2007-08 season | 2004 |
| Hamma Hamma R. | 1994-95 season | 2006-07 season | -- |
| Duckabush R. | 1994-95 season | 2006-07 season | 2003 |
| Dosewallips R. | 1994-95 season | 2006-07 season | 2003 |
| Big Quilcene R. | 1994-95 season | 2008-09 season | 1990 |
| Little Quilcene R. | 1994-95 season | 2008-09 season | -- |
| a/ WSR = wild steelhead release b/ Winter steelhead season = Nov. 1 to Feb. 28 c/ These are only streams with hatchery winter-run steelhead smolts released in Hood Canal. | | | |

Current Harvest Strategy

The release of hatchery-reared steelhead smolts, in Hood Canal streams, has been discontinued, with the last hatchery summer-run smolts released in 1981 and the last hatchery winter-run smolts released in 2004. Few, if any, hatchery winter or summer steelhead adults are expected to return to Hood Canal streams during the 2008-09 season (or in subsequent seasons).

Treaty Indian: Tribal subsistence fisheries have been limited to the Skokomish, the Hamma Hamma, the Dosewallips, the Duckabush, and the Big Quilcene rivers. Commercial fishery openings in these rivers may only be enacted by emergency inseason regulations based on inseason management considerations concerning the status of the stocks. The status of the stocks in 2008-09 does not appear to support commercial fisheries in Hood Canal rivers. A tribal commercial and subsistence fishery for steelhead occurs in Port Gamble Bay (Marine Area 9A). Some incidental harvest of steelhead may also occur during Treaty fisheries directed at harvesting other species of salmon in marine areas of Puget Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

Non-Treaty: All recreational fisheries for steelhead will be closed in Hood Canal rivers during the 2008-09 winter steelhead season. Wild (unmarked) steelhead release regulations will remain in effect in all marine recreational fisheries. The recreational fishing season will remain closed during the spring to protect steelhead kelts, smolts and juveniles from harvest. The season is open from June 1 through October 31 for game fish and wild (unmarked) steelhead release regulations are in effect during this period in all freshwater and marine areas. Some incidental harvest of steelhead may occur during non-treaty commercial net fisheries directed at harvesting other species of salmon in marine areas of Puget Sound.

TREATY and NON-TREATY HARVEST ACCOUNTING

The primary emphasis will be to achieve completeness and accuracy of harvest records. Each agency will be responsible to collect, reconcile, and present its own catch information. Harvest accounting shall include all commercial and recreational harvest of steelhead by Treaty and non-treaty fishers. Accounting will also include ceremonial and subsistence, test fishery catches, and the number of fish taken home by fishermen during commercial fisheries. All steelhead taken during commercial fisheries by tribal members will be reported on Treaty Indian Fish Receiving Tickets. Recreational harvest will be represented by WDFW's Catch Record Card estimate unless creel census information is available. An effort will be made to assess any incidental harvest of steelhead in Treaty and non-treaty commercial fisheries directed at harvesting other species of salmon in marine areas of Hood Canal. The co-managers will develop and utilize methods to estimate unrecorded catches not reported by the above methods.

HARVEST RATES

For each Hood Canal Winter Steelhead Management Unit, the potential combined impacts, from Treaty and non-treaty fisheries, are not expected to exceed 10% of the winter steelhead terminal run size to all Hood Canal marine and freshwater areas (south of the Hood Canal bridge). No freshwater terminal area harvest of steelhead is anticipated in the East Hood Canal Management Unit. It is anticipated that there will be few Hood Canal steelhead harvested in Hood Canal terminal marine areas or in pre-terminal marine area fisheries. Incidental harvest of steelhead in Treaty or non-treaty commercial fisheries directed at harvesting salmon in marine areas of Hood Canal will be included in the estimation of cumulative impacts to Hood Canal steelhead where such catches can be identified.

Since the 1999-2000 season, the estimated terminal harvest rates of winter steelhead, for Treaty and non-treaty fisheries combined, have ranged annually from 0% to 2.8% for the Skokomish Management Unit, from 0% to 9.1% for the West Hood Canal Management Unit, and have been 0% for the East Hood Canal Management Unit (Table 2). These estimated impacts are based on winter steelhead index spawning escapement estimates (Table 3), the reported catch from tribal fisheries, and the estimated recreational catch of unmarked steelhead from Catch Record Cards. In addition, for Hood Canal terminal marine areas, there were no reported steelhead harvests during the 1999-2000 through 2007-08 seasons.

Table 2. Estimated harvest, run size, and harvest rates for Hood Canal winter steelhead.

| Management Unit and River | Fishery | Winter steelhead season | | | | | | | | | Mean a/ |
|----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | | 1999-2000 | 2000-01 | 2001-02 | 2002-03 | 2003-04 | 2004-05 | 2005-06 | 2006-07 | 2007-08 | |
| | | Steelhead Harvest | | | | | | | | | |
| Hood Canal | Treaty | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Terminal Marine Areas | Non-treaty | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| <u>Skokomish MU</u> | Treaty | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 9 | 7 |
| Skokomish River | Non-treaty | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| MU total harvest | | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 9 | |
| <u>West Hood Canal MU</u> | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hamma Hamma R. | Treaty | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Non-treaty | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| Duckabush River | Treaty | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Non-treaty | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| Dosewallips River | Treaty | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Non-treaty | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| Big/Little Quilcene Rivers | Treaty | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Non-treaty | 0 | 4 | 33 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| MU total harvest | | 0 | 8 | 33 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| <u>East Hood Canal MU</u> | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Union River | Treaty | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Non-treaty | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| Tahuya River | Treaty | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Non-treaty | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| Dewatto River | Treaty | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | Non-treaty | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| MU total harvest | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | |
| <u>Skokomish MU</u> | | Estimated Run size b/ c/ | | | | | | | | | |
| Skokomish River | | 263 | 286 | 156 | 127 | 219 | 241 | 225 | 409 | 294 | 352 e/ |
| <u>West Hood Canal MU</u> | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Hamma Hamma R. | | 19 | 19 | 230 | 134 | 214 | 123 | 73 | 193 | 198 | 293 e/ |
| Duckabush River | | 36 | 13 | 16 | 8 | 29 | 10 | 21 | 16 | 18 | |
| Dosewallips River | | 78 | 89 | 52 | 96 | 79 | 79 | 79 | 79 | 79 | |
| Big/Little Quilcene Rivers | | 15 | 12 | 63 | 16 | 36 | 50 | 76 | 39 | 41 | |
| MU total runsize | | 148 | 133 | 361 | 254 | 358 | 262 | 249 | 327 | 336 | |
| <u>East Hood Canal MU</u> | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Union River | | 50 | 73 | 49 | 50 | 58 | 23 | 86 | 21 | 15 | 223 e/ |
| Tahuya River | | 191 | 133 | 97 | 53 | 168 | 91 | 183 | 175 | 144 | |
| Dewatto River | | 23 | 19 | 30 | 18 | 39 | 23 | 53 | 28 | 50 | |
| MU total runsize | | 264 | 225 | 176 | 121 | 265 | 137 | 322 | 224 | 209 | |
| | | Estimated Harvest Rate d/ | | | | | | | | | |
| Skokomish MU | | 0.8% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 1.0% | 3.1% | 2.0% |
| West Hood Canal MU | | 0.0% | 6.0% | 9.1% | 0.0% | 1.1% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |
| East Hood Canal MU | | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% | 0.0% |

a/ Mean of most recent 2 years for Skokomish MU and most recent 4 years for East and West Hood Canal MUs.
b/ (Escapement estimate) + (estimated harvest) = Estimated run size
c/ If escapement estimate not available for some streams in some years (see Table 3), it is estimated based on recent year mean.
d/ (Estimated harvest) / (Estimated run size) = Estimated harvest rate
e/ In addition, steelhead return to tributaries or other independent streams in each MU, but no escapement estimates are available.

Table 3. Spawner escapement estimates for winter steelhead in Hood Canal streams, 1981-2008.

| Year | Winter steelhead spawner escapement | | | | | | | |
|-----------|-------------------------------------|-------------|-----------|-------|------------|-------|--------|---------|
| | Little | | Hamma | | | Union | Tahuya | Dewatto |
| | Quilcene | Dosewallips | Duckabush | Hamma | Skokomish | | | |
| 1980-81 | | | | | | | 94 | 12 |
| 1981-82 | | | | | 822 | | 86 | 34 |
| 1982-83 | | | | | 659 | | 44 | 22 |
| 1983-84 | | | | | 777 | | 172 | 86 |
| 1984-85 | | | | | 968 | | 185 | 102 |
| 1985-86 | | | | | 866 | | 142 | 32 |
| 1986-87 | | | | | 546 | | 119 | 3 |
| 1987-88 | | | | | 742 | | 102 | 23 |
| 1988-89 | | | | | 1444 | | 142 | 22 |
| 1989-90 | | | | | 370 | | 164 | no est. |
| 1990-91 | | | | | 729 | | 122 | no est. |
| 1991-92 | | | | | 172 (min) | | 73 | no est. |
| 1992-93 | | | | | no est. a/ | | 75 | 40 |
| 1993-94 | | | | | 473 | | 77 | 18 |
| 1994-95 | | 79 | | 13 | 398 | | 78 | 22 |
| 1995-96 | | 55 | | 8 | no est. a/ | | 92 | 39 |
| 1996-97 | | 60 | 19 (min) | 35 | no est. a/ | | 144 | 11 |
| 1997-98 | | 49 (min) | 6 (min) | 18 | 373 | 45 | 126 | 28 |
| 1998-99 | 29 | 99 (min) | 29 (min) | 21 | 311 | 65 | 340 | 15 |
| 1999-2000 | 15 | 78 | 36 | 19 | 261 | 50 | 191 | 23 |
| 2000-01 | 8 | 89 | 13 | 3 | 286 | 73 | 133 | 19 |
| 2001-02 | 30 | 52 | 16 | 230 | 156 (min) | 49 | 97 | 30 |
| 2002-03 | 16 | 96 | 8 | 134 | 132 (min) | 50 | 53 | 18 |
| 2003-04 | 36 | no est. a/ | 29 | 214 | 233 | 58 | 168 | 39 |
| 2004-05 | no est. a/ | no est. a/ | 10 | 123 | no est. a/ | 23 | 91 | 23 |
| 2005-06 | 76 | no est. a/ | 21 | 70 | 231 | 86 | 183 | 53 |
| 2006-07 | 39 | no est. a/ | 16 | 193 | 405 | 21 | 175 | 28 |
| 2007-08 | 41 | no est. a/ | 18 | 198 | 285 b/ | 15 | 144 | 50 |

a/ no escapement estimate was made because of high flows and/or poor visibility during surveys
b/ no surveys in North Fork due to poor visibility
Source: WDFW SaSI, updated 9-08, T.H. Johnson, WDFW

RUN SIZE FORECASTS and ANTICIPATED HARVEST RATES

Few, if any, hatchery reared steelhead adults are expected to return to Hood Canal rivers during the 2008-09 season (or subsequent seasons) because, as noted above, traditional hatchery reared steelhead programs in support of harvest were terminated (last hatchery reared steelhead smolt release in 2004) with the last significant hatchery reared steelhead returns occurring in 2006-07.

For the purposes of this plan, the historic annual returns of winter steelhead have been expressed as the sum of index escapement estimates and reported harvest. For the 2008-09 season, the return of winter steelhead was forecast based on the most recent 4-year mean of winter steelhead returns to the West Hood Canal Management Unit and to the East Hood Canal Management Unit. For the Skokomish Management Unit, the forecast is based on the mean of the returns during the 2006-07 and 2007-08 seasons. Similarly, the harvest rate of winter steelhead during the 2008-09 season is forecast based on the most recent 4-year mean of winter steelhead harvest rates for each of the West Hood Canal and East Hood Canal Management Units. For the Skokomish Management Unit, the forecast is based on the mean harvest rate during the 2006-07 and 2007-08 seasons because it better represents the anticipated fishery. Because escapement estimates are based on index area surveys which have not been expanded to obtain total escapement estimates, run size forecasts and anticipated harvest rates for winter steelhead are believed to be conservative.

Based on past management practice, the anticipated harvest and harvest rates are expected to be low during 2008-09. The run size forecasts and anticipated harvest rates for winter steelhead in Hood Canal Management Units during the 2008-09 season are summarized in Table 4. The run size forecast is 352+ steelhead in the Skokomish MU, 293+ steelhead for the West Hood Canal MU and 223+ steelhead for the East Hood Canal MU; the “+” accounts for steelhead runs into streams in each MU other than those shown in Table 2. The anticipated harvest rates are less than 10%, with a 2% harvest rate for the Skokomish MU, 0% harvest rate for the West Hood Canal Management Unit, and a 0% harvest rate for the East Hood Canal Management Unit.

Table 4. Run size forecasts and anticipated harvest rates for Hood Canal winter steelhead Management Units, 2008-09 season.

| Management Unit (MU) | 2008-09 season | |
|----------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|
| | Run size forecast | Anticipated harvest rate |
| Skokomish MU | 352+ | 2% |
| West Hood Canal MU | 293+ | 0% |
| East Hood Canal MU | 223+ | 0% |