State of Washington
Governor's
Salmon Recovery
Office

2004 State of Salmon in Watersheds Report

Governor's Salmon Recovery Office
PO Box 43135
Olympia, WA 98504-3135
www.governor.wa.gov/esa

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COVER ARTWORK

Andrea Biddle
8th Grade student from
Gig Harbor

RIGHT PAGE ARTWORK

Jordan Spliethof
9th Grade Student
from Everett

PROJECT PHOTOS

Courtesy of Salmon Recovery Funding Board

EDITOR

Chris Drivdahl
Governor's Salmon Recovery Office

PRODUCTION TEAM

Bruce Crawford
Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation

Steve Leider
Governor's Salmon Recovery Office

Phil Miller
Governor's Salmon Recovery Office

Dave Price
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

Carol Smith
Washington Conservation Commission

Luis Prado
Graphic Designer

Contents

Vision: Restore salmon, steelhead, and trout to healthy harvestable

GOAL AND STRATEGIES

GOAL

Wild salmon populations will be productive and diverse

STRATEGY

- Sustain salmon productivity by providing wild spawner escapement, conserving genetic diversity, and meeting basic needs of salmon for spawning, rearing and migration in watersheds and ecosystems. Stewardship of salmon will be the first priority in managing the resource.
- Meet the goal of the Endangered Species Act to return endangered and threatened species to the point where salmon no longer need the statute's protection.

GOAL AND STRATEGIES

We will have coordinated, science-based salmon recovery efforts

- Achieve cost-effective salmon recovery and use government resources efficiently.
- Use the best available science and integrate monitoring and research with planning and implementation.
- Ensure that citizens, salmon recovery partners and state employees have timely access to information, technical assistance and funding they need to be successful.

levels and improve habitats on which fish rely.

GOAL AND STRATEGIES

Our habitat, harvest, hatchery, and hydropower activities will benefit wild salmon

- Freshwater and estuarine habitats are healthy and accessible.
- Rivers and streams have flows to support salmon.
- Water is clean and cool enough for salmon.
- Hatchery practices meet wild salmon recovery needs.
- Harvest management actions protect wild salmon.
- Compliance with resource protection laws is enhanced.

GOAL AND STRATEGIES

Citizens and salmon recovery partners are engaged

- Create partnerships among governments and citizens. Provide leadership, coordination and technical assistance to create agreements on salmon recovery decision-making frameworks and recovery plans. Integrate scientific data with local knowledge and build in local flexibility and control.
- Inform, build support, involve and mobilize citizens to assist in restoration, conservation and enhancement of salmon habitat.

GOAL AND STRATEGIES

We will meet Endangered Species Act and Clean Water Act requirements

- Strengthen land, water, and fishery management policies, programs, and activities to avoid, minimize, and mitigate human impacts on salmon populations and their habitat.
- Seek Endangered Species Act compliance for state guidelines, regulations, and plans; permitting activities; funding of projects/activities; and state lands, facilities, and infrastructure.

Salmon Recovery Milestones 1990-2004

1990 | 1991 | 1992 | 1993 | 1994 | 1995 | 1996

1990 Ocean and Puget Sound marine coho and chinook fishing restrictions are underway to address coho population declines coast-wide.

Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups are created by the Legislature.

1991 Federal government lists Snake River sockeye salmon as endangered.

1992 Federal government lists Snake River summer and fall chinook salmon as threatened.

1993 **Wild Stock Restoration Initiative and Wild Salmonid Policy** adopted by Department of Fish and Wildlife.

The Columbia River hydropower **biological opinion (BiOp)** is issued by federal agencies.

1994 The federal government adopts the **Northwest Forest Plan**.

A federal court rejects the 1993 BiOp.

1995 The federal government initiates overhaul of the way the federal power system is to be operated on the Columbia River.

1996 Department of Natural Resources adopts a **Habitat Conservation Plan** for 1.4 million acres of state-owned forestland.

1997 Governor Locke brings together the state agencies that most affect salmon management in a forum called the **Joint Natural Resources Cabinet**.

The federal government lists Snake River steelhead as threatened and Upper Columbia steelhead as endangered.

1998 Governor Locke and Canadian Fisheries and Ocean Minister Anderson reach agreement to reduce fisheries.

The Legislature establishes the **Governor's Salmon Recovery Office**.

The **Independent Science Panel** is appointed by the Governor from recommendations by the American Fisheries Society.

Watershed Planning Units are created by the Legislature.

Lead Entities are also established by the Legislature.

The **Forests and Fish Agreement** is signed.

Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board is established by the Legislature in Clark, Cowlitz, Lewis, Skamania, and Wahkiakum counties.

Federal government lists Lower Columbia River steelhead, and Upper Columbia, Northeast Washington, Lower Columbia, and Snake River bull trout as threatened.

1999 Locke/Anderson re-negotiate the landmark **Pacific Salmon Treaty**, providing a federal fund from which salmon restoration activities are to be paid.

The **Forests and Fish Agreement** becomes state law.

The **Salmon Recovery Funding Board** is established by the Legislature.

The **Statewide Strategy to Recover Salmon: Extinction is Not an Option** is completed.

Washington, Oregon, four Columbia River Treaty Tribes, and the federal government sign the **Columbia River Accord**.

Federal government lists Puget Sound Chinook, Hood Canal summer chum, Washington Coastal Lake Ozette sockeye, Lower Columbia River Chinook, Lower Columbia River chum, and Middle Columbia River steelhead as threatened. In addition, Upper Columbia spring Chinook is listed as endangered.

ESA listings of Chinook, coho, chum, and steelhead stocks in Washington now cover over 75% of the state.

2000 Congress creates a federal hatchery reform initiative and establishes an independent **Hatchery Scientific Review Group**.

National Marine Fisheries Service and US Fish and Wildlife Service re-issue Biological Opinions for Federal Columbia River Power System operations.

The first **State Agency Action Plan**, a biennial implementation plan for the Statewide Strategy, is published.

The state's performance management system—**Salmon Recovery Scorecard**—is published.

The first **State of Salmon Report** is published.

2001 The Legislature mandates development, of a **Comprehensive Monitoring Strategy** and action plan for watershed health with a focus on salmon recovery

2002 **Recovery Plan Model** is published.

2002 State of Salmon Report, the 2001-2003 State Agency Action Plan, and the 1999-2001 Action Plan Accomplishments are released.

The Comprehensive Monitoring Strategy is developed for consideration by the Governor and Legislature.

2003 **Regional Salmon Recovery Organizations** receive funding from the Salmon Recovery Funding Board to develop salmon recovery plans for listed salmon. These groups, working closely with local citizens, are the only organizations developing recovery plans for the purposes of the Endangered Species Act.

A federal judge hands back the 2000 Biological Opinion on operation of the Federal Columbia River Power System for salmon and steelhead to NOAA Fisheries. The federal agency was told to resolve several deficiencies, including reliance on federal mitigation actions that have not undergone section 7 consultation under the Endangered Species Act, and reliance on range-wide off-site non-federal mitigation actions that are not reasonably certain to occur. A new Biological Opinion is expected in September.

The Governor's Salmon Recovery Office produces the **2003-2005 State Agency Action Plan,** the third biennial implementation plan for the Statewide Strategy to Recover Salmon.

2004 The Governor signs Executive Order 04-03, creating the **Governor's Forum on Monitoring**. This Order establishes a coordinating body for monitoring salmon recovery and watershed health.

All Washington sub-basins submit their draft **Fish and Wildlife Sub-basin Plans** to the Northwest Power and Conservation Council on time. Collectively, the plans represent the largest compilation of data on fish, wildlife and environmental conditions ever in the Columbia River Basin.

The federal government issues a **Draft Hatchery Policy**, indicating how hatchery fish will be considered in salmon recovery, and revises its Status Reviews for listed fish in Washington. The latter proposes to down list Upper Columbia steelhead from endangered to threatened, and lists Lower Columbia coho for the first time as threatened. All other listings in Washington are proposed to remain as previously listed.

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission approves a 50-year **Mid-Columbia Habitat Conservation Plan** as part of the relicensing process for three mid-Columbia dams.

The Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board completes the **first salmon regional recovery plan** in Washington.

The Governor's Salmon Recovery Office publishes the **2004 State of Salmon in Watersheds Report**.

A letter from the Governor

STEFANI ALLISON

Dear Reader:

Washington residents are surrounded by the beauty of mountain ranges, rocky beaches, woodlands, and arid flatlands, making our state a wonderful place to live. The landscape is so spectacular that at times we fail to notice that some of our fellow inhabitants are struggling for survival.

In 1991, there was a telling sign that the balance between humans and nature had shifted. In that year, the federal government listed the first Pacific Northwest wild salmon as near extinction under the Endangered Species Act. By 1999, wild salmon disappeared from about 40 percent of their historic breeding ranges in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and California. In Washington, the numbers had dwindled so much that they had become a faint remnant of once-thriving populations, and were listed as threatened or endangered in nearly three-fourths of the state.

Amid growing concerns that Washington State might lose this icon, and that federal listings might limit development, result in lawsuits, or cripple many Washington businesses, we decided to take matters into our own hands and tackle the issue head on.

We began working together — governments, individuals, and businesses — to restore and protect this precious resource. International treaties were renegotiated to protect the most endangered fish and more fairly distribute the catch for fishers in the United States and Canada. By working with our neighbors in Idaho and Oregon, we established conservation goals in shared rivers. Studying our hatcheries helped us determine how to improve them. And examining our rivers with a focus on improving habitat for salmon led to eliminating barriers that keep salmon from making the pilgrimage from river to ocean and back again. We also planted trees to provide cooling shade and worked to rebuild new habitat statewide.

In every area of the state, we've brought people together to talk about the future of our watersheds, backing discussions with funding and resources to turn their vision into reality. Today, every watershed with salmon has at least one citizens' volunteer group working to

"More than ever, the environmental legacy we leave our children and grandchildren depends on the decisions we make today. By understanding our place in sustaining our environment, and by continuing our commitment to improving it, we can and will succeed in restoring our wild salmon populations."

restore and enhance habitats on which the fish depend. These groups donate over 145,000 hours each year and have been involved in over 480 local projects. The Salmon Recovery Funding Board has provided more than $165 million to support these efforts, and the local funding match exceeds $60 million.

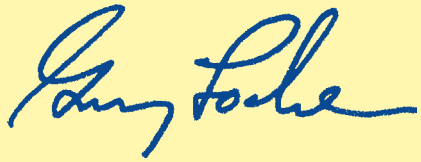
We are making progress and have seen a slowdown in the decline of our salmon populations, thanks to these many years of hard, innovative work, and with the help of improved ocean conditions. By removing blockages that for many years prevented fish from accessing rivers and streams, we've opened more than 1,600 miles of habitat. And we have approved and funded protection and restoration for over 11,000 acres of land that will improve conditions for salmon when they return to their native streams.

It is important that we recognize and celebrate our progress, while continuing our efforts. Increased numbers of salmon returning to our waters indicates success, however, we must remember that many of these are hatchery fish. Wild fish still need places to spawn and young salmon still need good habitat in which to grow.

Building on newfound alliances between businesses and farmers, fishers and photographers, and elected officials and citizens, we must proceed with the work that is helping to ensure recovery of our watersheds and our salmon.

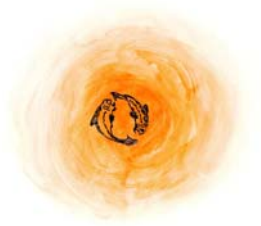
More than ever, the environmental legacy we leave our children and grandchildren depends on the decisions we make today. By understanding our place in sustaining our environment, and by continuing our commitment to improving it, we can and will succeed in restoring our wild salmon populations so that they no longer need protection under the Endangered Species Act.

Sincerely,



GARY LOCKE
WASHINGTON STATE GOVERNOR
DECEMBER 2004

Together, We Will Make a Difference

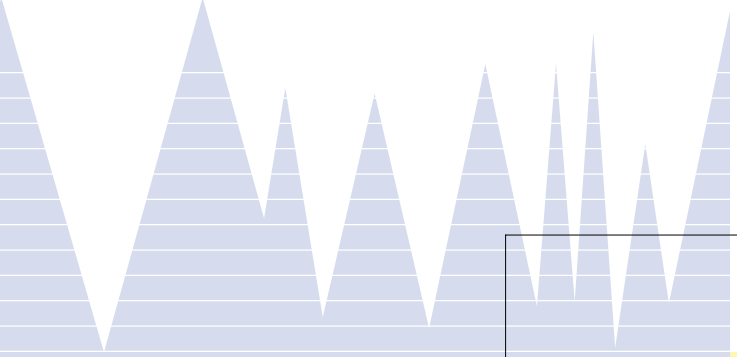


Salmon in Washington are in trouble. Since the National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA-Fisheries) listed the first salmon in 1991, thirteen more salmon species have been added and another is proposed for listing by next year.

The Washington Governor's Office and Legislature have responded by creating programs and providing funding to begin the task of recovering these icons of the Pacific Northwest. We are closely watching certain indicators that will likely give us information over time that will help us make good decisions about salmon and their habitats. These indicators are telling us we have reason to be cautiously optimistic in some areas, and that we have much work to do in others.

We know:

- That salmon need sufficient water in rivers and streams for migrating, spawning, and rearing, and that we have returned more than 300,000 acre-feet of water to streams where salmon need it. That's enough water to support the population of Washington for more than four years.
- That salmon need cool, clean water to survive, and that we have completed more than 560 projects to address water quality problems in our watersheds. 57% of our watersheds have a good index of water quality for salmon.
- That salmon need to return to the streams where they were born to spawn, and that since 1999 we have removed more than 1,480 barriers and opened more than 1,600 miles of streams for spawning.
- That our hatcheries should complement needs of wild salmon, and that they have undergone a thorough scientific evaluation of their practices. Today, 64% of our hatchery programs meet the requirements of the Endangered Species Act.
- That our fishing actions should protect wild salmon, and that last year, nearly all of these harvest actions met goals set to comply with the Endangered Species Act.
- And, perhaps most importantly, we know that people in Washington are engaged in the important task of salmon recovery. Last year, they donated more than 150,000 hours of their spare time to serve on task forces, restore salmon habitat, and contribute to many other worthwhile endeavors.



Fluctuations in sea surface temperature affect how well the young and growing salmon survive during the years they are at sea.

The Effect of Ocean Conditions

The North Pacific Ocean is the "grazing" area for our salmon and steelhead. Juveniles migrating from streams where they were born must move through many types of environments, from estuaries, along coasts, to the high seas. Variations in climate affect where, what kind, and how much food is available for them and the predators that feed on these young fish as well. Fluctuations in sea surface temperature affect how well the young and growing salmon survive during the years they are at sea. These fluctuations are known as the Pacific Decadal Oscillation (PDO) and tend to occur every twenty years. When sea surface temperatures are cooler than normal off the coasts of Washington and British Columbia, more salmon survive. Although there can be years in the trend where the temperature may go higher — the so-called "El Niño years"— generally between 1979-1999 warmer surface temperatures prevailed and our fish survival while at sea was low. Since 1999, the sea surface temperature has cooled and Washington salmon and steelhead populations have increased returns to freshwater. With increasing global temperatures, scientists do not know if the 20-year cycle will continue, nor can they say how many years of El Niños will interrupt the cooler ocean temperatures. Thus, it is not possible to predict how many years of good ocean feeding conditions salmon will have before they again face a warmer cycle and depleted food sources during their growing years.

We hope these good news notes will help us overcome some of the more sobering facts:

- That of the 14 fish species listed in Washington, in the last 10 years we only have met our goals for the number of spawners for two of them once, for others never, and for some we don't have information.

Together, we have made a very significant start down the long path to recovery.

- That stream habitat quality for salmon remains poor in half of our watersheds.

- That production — that is, the number of juvenile salmon produced by adults — of our salmon appears to be on the rise, but for all listed species remains below a level that is needed to ensure survival of salmon for the next 100 years.

Detecting verifiable trends in productivity of our watersheds is essential for us to know with reasonable assurance that we are spending our money wisely. Yet, with an animal that is born in our streams then disappears into the ocean for 3 or more years before returning, monitoring success in early stages is challenging. With the introduction of Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Funds from the federal government in 1999, we have begun funding salmon recovery projects in earnest. Offspring of Chinook salmon spawning that year would have returned only one or two years ago, thus, it is really very early to know if our efforts are having the desired results. Complicating analysis is the effect of conditions in the ocean on salmon.

Biologists are fond of saying, "It took a hundred years for us to create the problems these fish face, and we're not going to fix them overnight." This is probably true, but Washingtonians care about these Northwest icons and have thrown their hearts and backs into solving the problems. Together, we have made a very significant start down the long path to recovery.

A Readable Dashboard

Measuring progress towards a goal is fundamental in business, in government, in our lives. We are constantly checking a variety of indicators each day, whether it's the Dow Jones averages, the "carb" content in a mid-day snack, or the dashboard on our car. We want to know when we should make changes based on what is before us. But, choosing the right indicators for our objectives is neither simple nor easy.

The multi-habitat, multi-government, multi-needs world of salmon presents an especially vexing problem for those trying to define indicators to measure progress in salmon recovery. This we know: the dials on our dashboard for salmon recovery must be understandable, must be objective, should measure status and trends of things people want to know, and must help tell the stories people want to hear.

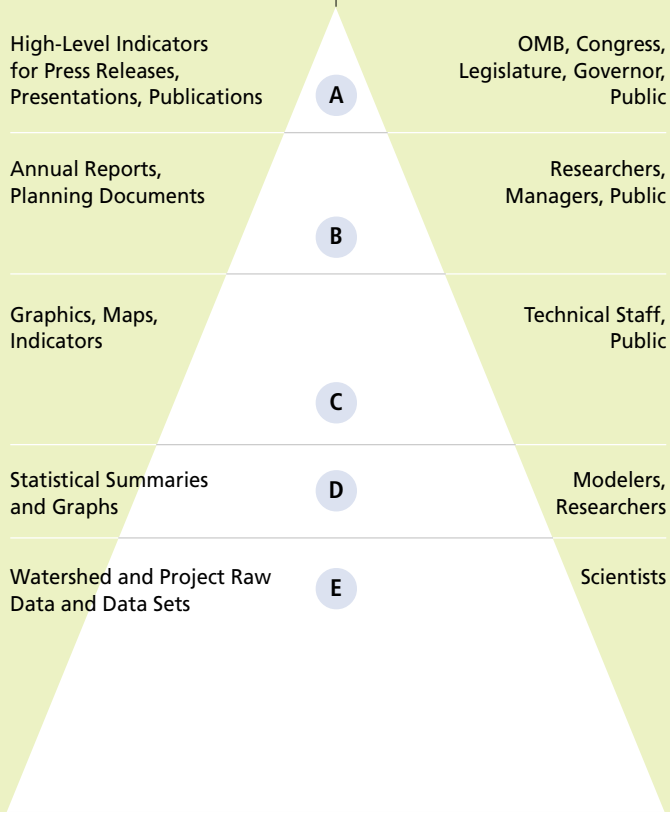
To do these things, in 2000 the Joint Natural Resources Cabinet — a group appointed by Governor Locke that included directors of the natural resource agencies — developed the Salmon Recovery Scorecard after almost a year of work with local, state, federal, and tribal governments. This scorecard, an adaptation of the Harvard-developed "Balanced Scorecard," contained the top 36 biological and administrative measures that state resource managers said should be tracked to ensure we had the information necessary to make decisions about salmon recovery. Unfortunately, there wasn't enough money to implement tracking of all the measures, but in 2002 reports on the 18 highest priority indicators were published.

In 2001 the Legislature asked that we develop a monitoring strategy and action plan would promote coordination of existing activities and would ensure monitoring of the most relevant actions for watershed health and salmon recovery were addressed. In 2002 that Comprehensive Monitoring Strategy and Action Plan were published. These reports used the biological indicators in the original scorecard and recommended additional monitoring to meet more scientific needs. In 2003 the Salmon Recovery Funding Board began to fund some of the highest priority items identified in the Action Plan, including the state's first comprehensive project effectiveness monitoring efforts. This monitoring addresses different types of SRFB-funded projects across the state and will begin to establish a network of watersheds where we can better understand the responses of fish to our salmon recovery actions. The initial results from those projects will be available in 2005.

We have simplified and reduced the number of indicators to a short and easy-to-understand set — the top of the data pyramid. Here, indicators must relate to statewide questions of greatest interest and provide a quick snapshot of where we are and how we are doing.

Monitoring is expensive and hard, and requires extensive cooperation across all agencies and groups to be efficient and effective. Indicating his interest in ensuring this occurs, Governor Locke in 2004 signed an Executive Order on Monitoring Salmon Recovery and Watershed Health.

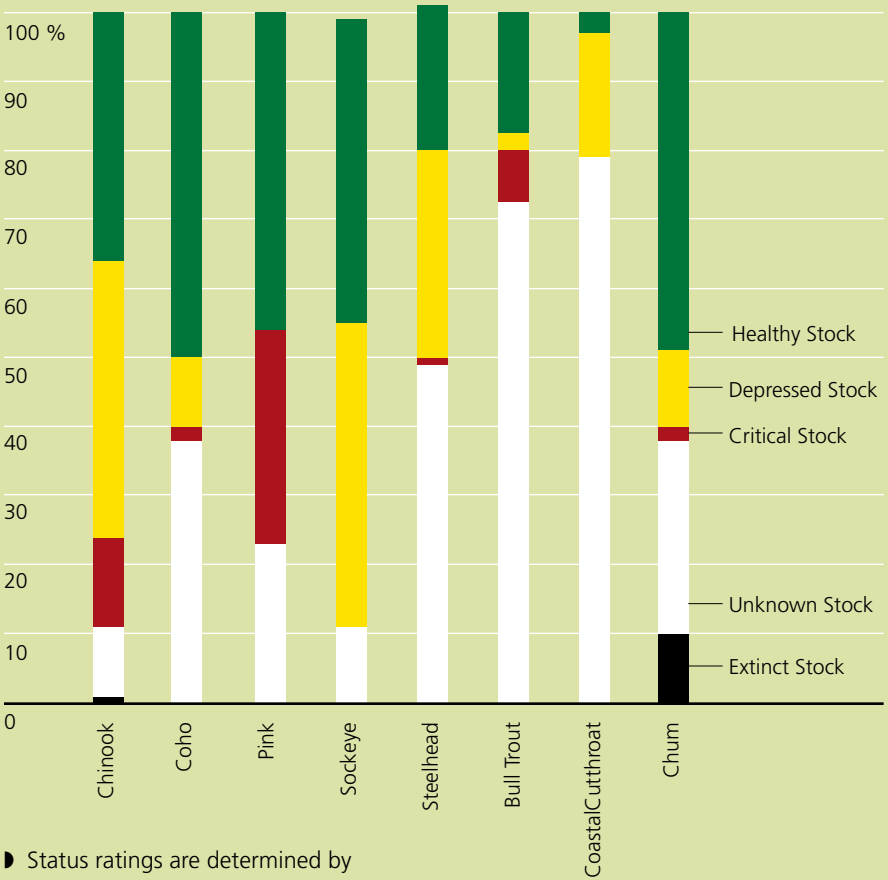
This order created the Governor's Forum on Monitoring and directed state agencies to reach out to others and cooperate in developing, in addition to other tasks, a broad set of measures that will convey results and progress on salmon recovery and watershed health in ways that are easily understood by the public, legislators and Congress.



The Governor's Salmon Recovery Office has continued to collect information from agencies on the original salmon recovery scorecard, pending changes that may stem from the Forum's work. We have simplified and reduced the number of indicators to a short and easy-to-understand set — the top of the data pyramid. Here, indicators must relate to statewide questions of greatest interest and provide a quick snapshot of where we are and how we are doing.

These are the basic "dials" on the dashboard for those "driving" the vehicles of statewide salmon recovery. Wild salmon did not become threatened or endangered overnight; their plight is a result of many decades of decline caused by many factors over more than a century of activities in a growing state. And recovery, too, will take decades. Eventually, as we get better at knowing what to monitor, how, and where, we expect to be able to use more direct indicators. The more detailed underlying information that connects the dials to the lower levels of the pyramid exists in a wide range of technical reports, agency databases and other documents. These are accessible via a data portal at www.swim.wa.gov.

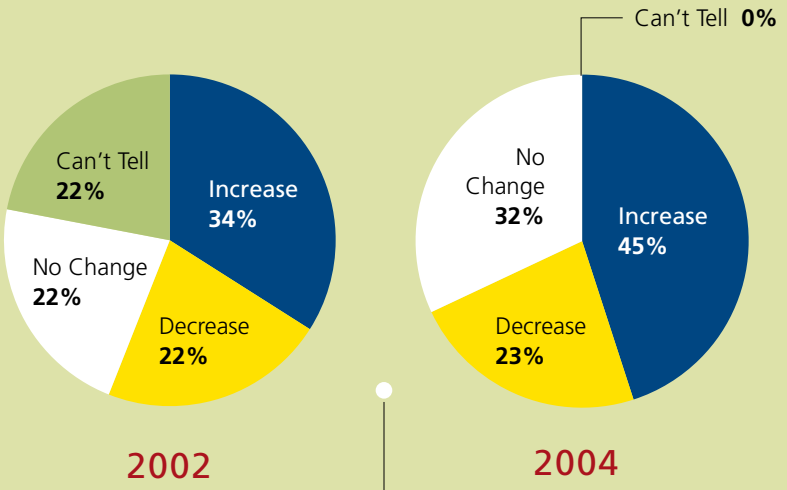
Fish Status Summary



- Status ratings are determined by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and tribes.
- Summary is for 2004.

DATA SOURCE: WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Trends in Wild Juvenile Salmon Production



- Pie charts represent 32 sampled stocks of all species statewide whose trends were increasing, decreasing, not changing, or unknown.

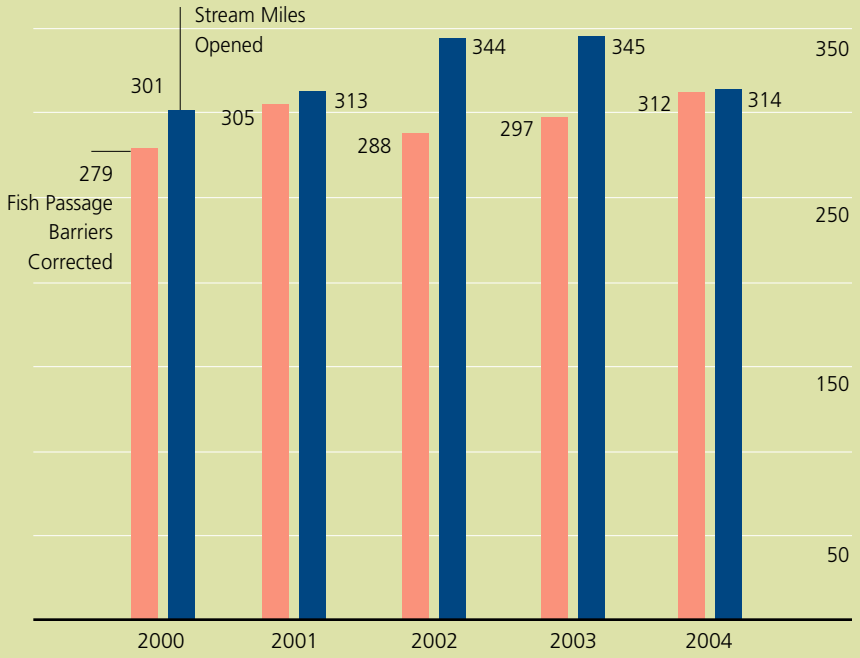
DATA SOURCE: WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Water Quality in Watersheds

- Water quality is measured by **Water Quality Index (WQI)**. This is a number that aggregates water quality data at a monitoring station for temperature, pH, fecal coliform bacteria, dissolved oxygen, nutrients, and sediments over a 12 month period.
- 88 sampling stations are monitored statewide in 62 watersheds.
- A water year runs from October 1 until September 30.
- This graph varies slightly from previous years due to the past inclusion of inappropiate sampling stations. This error has been corrected and all years now reflect accurate information.

DATA SOURCE: WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY.

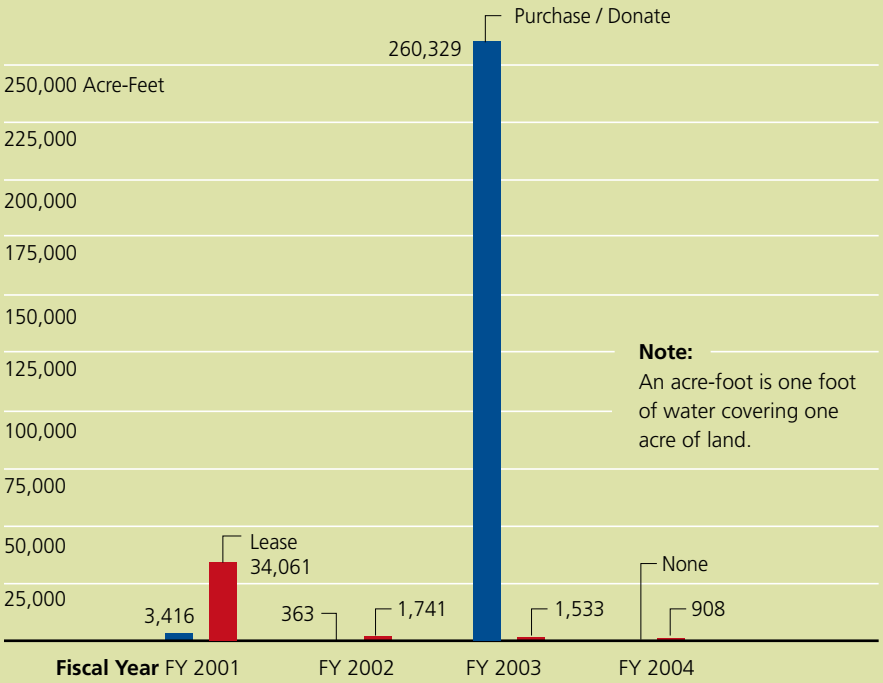
Fish Passage Barriers Corrected and Stream Miles Opened



- Number reflects the estimated number of barriers corrected statewide in a given year. Because of incomplete reporting, these numbers are expected to be lower than actual values.
- Miles reflect the number of miles that are estimated to be opened as a result of barrier correction by year.

DATA SOURCES: WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE, WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES, WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, SALMON RECOVERY FUNDING BOARD, FORESTS AND FISH, TRIBES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENTS (US FOREST SERVICE DATA ARE NOT INCLUDED).

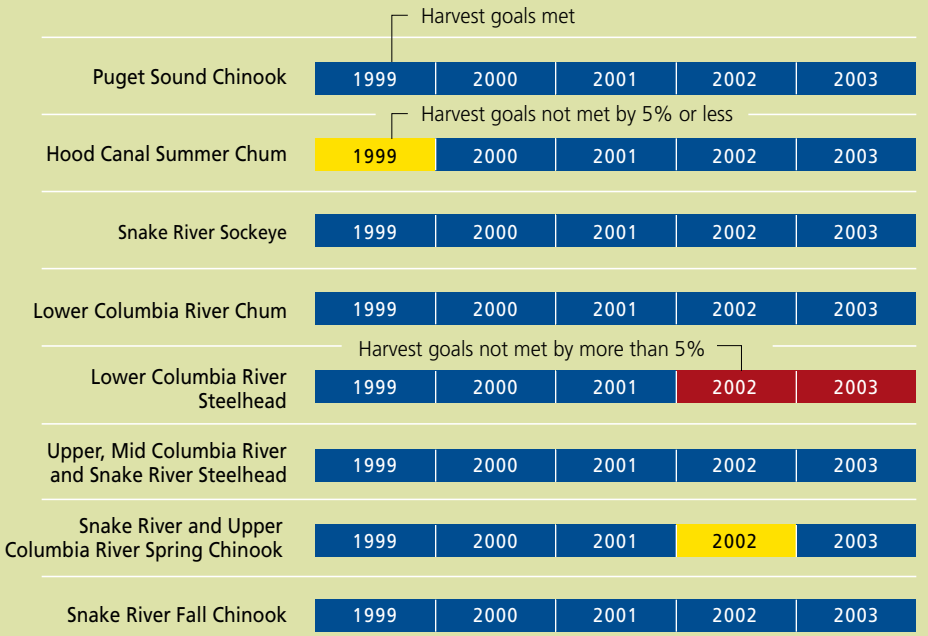
Acre-Feet of Water Restored to Streams



- **Restored water** includes water from purchases, donations, or leases. The focus is on summer low flow periods and instream reaches where water availibility is a limiting factor for fish.
- FY2003 represents a major commitment of federal funds to the Yakima River Enhancement Project.
- 300,000 acre-feet is almost 100,000 billion gallons—enough water to support the population Washington for almost 4 years.

DATA SOURCE: WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY.

Endangered Species Act Compliant Harvest Goals

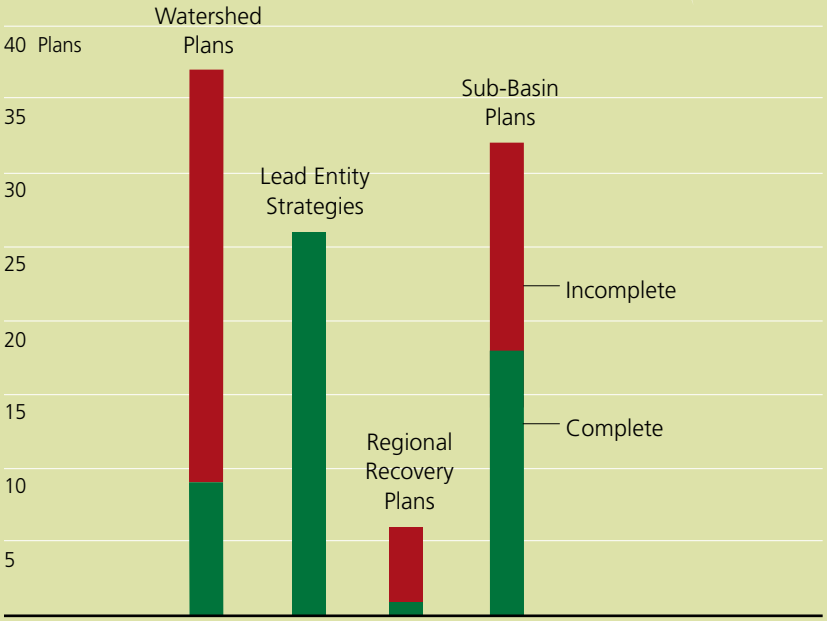


- Data are for non-tribal fisheries.
- NOAA-Fisheries has determined that established harvest protection goals do not negatively impact stocks or the ability to recover them.

- Fisheries met ESA harvest goals approved by NOAA-Fisheries.
- Fisheries exceeded ESA harvest goals approved by NOAA-Fisheries by up to 15%.
- Harvests exceed compliance with NOAA-Fisheries goals by less than 5%.

DATA SOURCE: WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Salmon Recovery Plan Status



- Watershed plans are developed under the Watershed Planning Act (RCW 90.82). A completed plan is one that has been approved by planning units prior to November 4th.
- Lead Entity Strategies are developed under the Salmon Recovery Act (RCW 77.85). A strategy is a habitat protection and restoration action plan for a watershed(s).
- Regional recovery plans are developed under the Salmon Recovery Act (RCW 77.85) and are due December 2004-June 2005; they include one sub-regional (ESU) plan.
- Sub-basin plans are done under the Northwest Power and Conservation Council. A completed plan is one that has been scheduled for adoption by December 4th by the council.

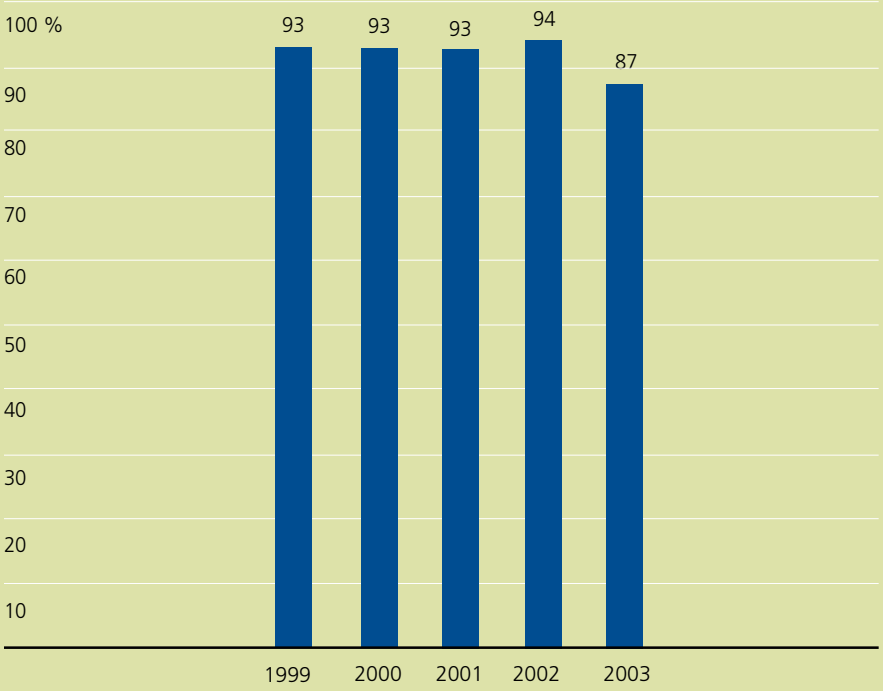
DATA SOURCE: GOVERNOR'S SALMON RECOVERY OFFICE

Acres Acquired for Salmon Restoration (Proposed)

- Funding by Salmon Recovery Funding Board.
- Acres have been approved for purchase but actual numbers may be less.

DATA SOURCE: INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION.

Average Compliance Rate for Salmon and Steelhead Fishers



1999 Compliance based on 2,506 arrests and written warnings during 35,548 contacts.

2000 3,570 arrests and written warnings during 49,603 contacts.

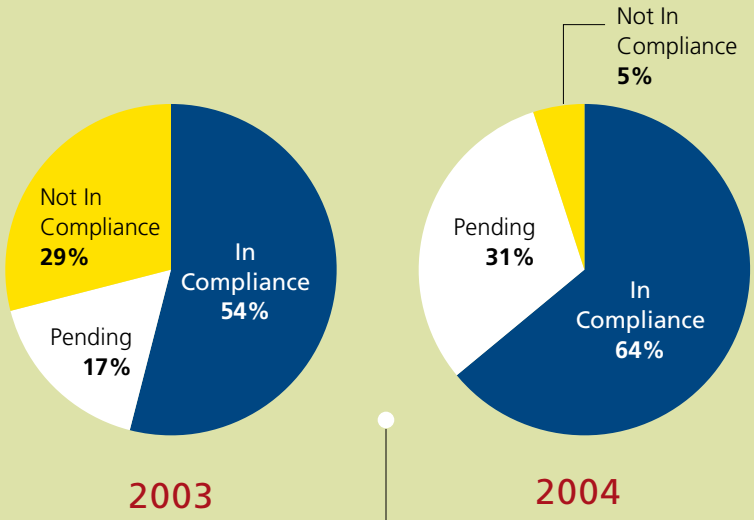
2001 4,168 arrests and written warnings during 57,035 contacts.

2002 2,749 arrests and written warnings during 46,343 contacts.

2003 6,768 violators during 53,189 contacts. **Note:** 2003 data differ from previous years and are reflective of a new activity reporting system for officers and revised definition of "violators."

DATA SOURCE: WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Hatchery Management Plans Meeting Endangered Species Act



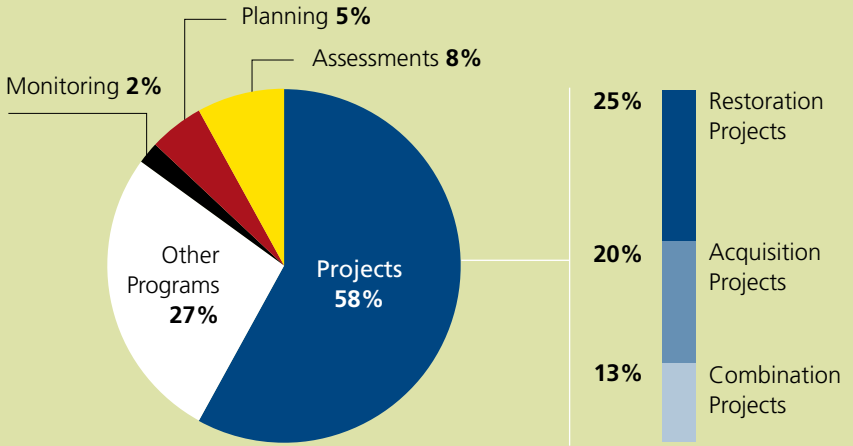
- ESA compliance is measured by Hatchery Genetic Management Plans approved by NOAA-Fisheries and USFWS; a hatchery in compliance with ESA is consistent with wild salmon recovery.
- 418 hatchery programs included.

DATA SOURCE: WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Volunteer Hours in Watershed and Salmon Recovery Activities

DATA SOURCES INCLUDE WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE, REGIONAL FISHERIES ENHANCEMENT GROUPS, WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY, PLANNING UNITS, REGIONAL PLANNING ORGANIZATIONS, AND CONSERVATION COMMISSION.

Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) Grants



- Combination projects include both acquisition and restoration work.
- Other programs include those required or recommended by Congress, the Legislature, and NOAA-Fisheries, including Forests and Fish implementation, fish marking, lead entity support and other agency programs.
- FY2000-FY2003
- FY2000-10/11/04 total expenditures $165.1 million not including sponsor matches.
- Sponsor matches exceed $60 million.

DATA SOURCE: INTERAGENCY COMMITTEE FOR OUTDOOR RECREATION.