



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Northwest Fisheries Science Center
2725 Montlake Boulevard East
Seattle, WA 98112-2097

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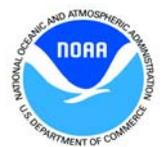
Dear Interested Parties:

We are pleased to announce that the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) is ready to initiate two new technical teams in support of recovery planning for listed salmon and steelhead in the Puget Sound and Olympic Peninsula regions. The first team will support formal recovery planning for the Puget Sound steelhead distinct population segment (DPS), which was listed as threatened under the U.S. Endangered Species Act (ESA) in May, 2007. The second team will provide ongoing technical support for implementation of recovery plans for the Puget Sound Chinook, Hood Canal summer chum, and Lake Ozette sockeye ESUs. This Puget Sound recovery implementation technical team essentially will continue and extend the work of the Puget Sound Technical Recovery Team, which is completing its work in December 2007.

We are asking for your help in this effort. At this time, we are soliciting nominations for (1) a steelhead Technical Recovery Team (TRT) to develop population and DPS viability criteria for Puget Sound steelhead and (2) a Puget Sound Recovery Implementation Technical Team (RITT) to provide review of products related to recovery plans and technical guidance for strategy development and adaptive management. Below is a description of the recovery planning process for West coast salmon and steelhead in general, information on the specific tasks these new technical teams will be asked to complete, and the criteria for nominees.

NMFS believes it is critically important to base ESA recovery plans for Pacific salmon on the many state, regional, Tribal, local, and private conservation efforts already underway throughout the region. Local support of recovery plans by those whose activities directly affect the listed species, and whose actions will be most affected by recovery requirements, is essential. NMFS therefore supports and participates in locally led collaborative efforts to develop recovery plans, involving local communities, state, Tribal, and Federal entities, and other stakeholders. NMFS reviews any locally produced recovery plans to determine whether adoption is merited and to identify any needed additions or qualifications.

For each of several geographically based recovery domains, NMFS convened a TRT to develop recommendations on biological viability criteria for ESUs and their component populations, to provide scientific support to local and regional recovery planning efforts, and to provide scientific evaluations of recovery plans. The intent in establishing these TRTs was to seek unique geographic and species expertise and to develop a solid scientific foundation for the recovery plans. Although NMFS has encouraged the TRTs to develop regionally specific approaches for evaluating viability and developing other relevant analyses, each TRT has worked from a common scientific foundation to ensure that the recovery plans are scientifically sound and based on consistent biological principles.



The TRTs have primarily focused on three major tasks: 1) identifying populations within ESUs, 2) developing ESU and population level biological viability criteria, and 3) providing scientific support and review for development of recovery plans. The Puget Sound steelhead TRT will be formed to address the first two elements above for the Puget Sound steelhead DPS. The latter element will be addressed in Puget Sound for steelhead, and continue to be addressed for other listed Puget Sound salmonids, through the RITT.

The Puget Sound steelhead TRT and RITT will both work in coordination with the Recovery Implementation Science Team (RIST), an additional new regional technical team NMFS is initiating to assist with salmon recovery plan implementation. The RIST will be an umbrella science team to assist with science needs for recovery implementation throughout the Pacific Northwest. It is intended to replace the existing TRTs as recovery plans for each domain are finalized. The RIST will be able to initiate or work with local technical teams, including the Puget Sound steelhead TRT and the Puget Sound RITT, to develop products that rely on local expertise and knowledge but that are technically consistent across the Pacific Northwest. Both the Puget Sound steelhead TRT and the RITT also will coordinate with the Puget Sound Partnership to ensure that their products and technical guidance are consistent with regional needs for ecosystem-scale planning, in addition to salmonid recovery. More information about the RIST, including a solicitation for membership nominations, and a complete description of the tasks for the Puget Sound steelhead TRT and the RITT can be found at the NWFSC salmon recovery web site: <http://www.nwfsc.noaa.gov/trt/index.cfm>.

At this time we would like your help in identifying qualified candidates to serve on the Puget Sound steelhead TRT, the Puget Sound RITT, or both.

The TRT and RITT will consist of experts in salmon and steelhead biology, population dynamics, conservation biology, ecology, and other disciplines relevant to Puget Sound recovery planning. At least one member of each team will have experience working in Puget Sound and extensive knowledge of the area and anadromous salmonids that inhabit it. Also, each member must meet the first three criteria below (numbers 1-3) and at least one of the remaining three criteria (numbers 4-6).

1. High achievement in a relevant discipline, which may include ecology, genetics, fisheries, hydrology, river geomorphology, or other appropriate disciplines.
2. High standards of scientific integrity, independence, and objectivity.
3. A demonstrated interest in and ability to work effectively in an interdisciplinary team setting.
4. Extensive knowledge of West Coast salmonid biology, status, or habitat.
5. A record of scientific accomplishment documented by contributions to peer-reviewed literature or other evidence of success in a creative scientific endeavor.
6. A demonstrated ability to forge creative solutions to complex problems.

An independent panel will evaluate all nominations to ensure that they meet the above criteria. Scientists who already have been selected for other NMFS TRTs will not need to be evaluated again, and thus automatically are eligible for consideration. The panel will provide a list of qualified candidates to the Science Director of the NMFS Northwest Fisheries Science Center who—in consultation with the NMFS Northwest Regional Administrator—will make final appointments to the team.



We expect that the TRT and the RITT each will include at least one scientist from the NMFS Northwest Fisheries Science Center (who must meet the same criteria for membership), at least one member from the Puget Sound TRT for Chinook, Hood Canal summer chum, and Lake Ozette sockeye, and five to eight other qualified members. The other members could come from state or other Federal agencies, tribal agencies, academic institutions, industry, the environmental community, or other groups. A representative from the NMFS Northwest Regional Office will serve as a liaison to both teams to provide ESA policy guidance.

We anticipate that members of the TRT and the RITT will need to devote approximately 25 percent of their time to fulfill their responsibilities. We expect the process of developing viability criteria and related tasks will be completed within a year of the TRT's inception. The tenure of scientists on the RITT will be longer (on the order of 3-4 years), and staggered terms for members will be established at the outset of the team's formation. There is no compensation offered for these positions.

We appreciate your interest and assistance in this important effort. Please forward your nominations for either of these technical teams to Michael Ford at the NMFS Northwest Fisheries Science Center (2725 Montlake Blvd. East, Seattle, WA, 98112) or by email to Nwfsc.PugetSoundTeams@noaa.gov by November 9, 2007. To facilitate the evaluation, please provide a Curriculum Vitae for each nominee, the technical team for which he/she is being nominated, and a short explanation of how the nominee meets the selection criteria. Self-nomination is acceptable.

If you have any questions, please contact Michael Ford at the Northwest Fisheries Science Center (206-860-5612), or Elizabeth Babcock at the Northwest Regional Office (206-526-4505). Additional information on recovery planning for West Coast salmon is also available on the internet at <http://www.nwr.noaa.gov/Salmon-Recovery-Planning/index.cfm> and <http://www.nwfsc.noaa.gov/trt/index.cfm>.

Very truly yours,



D. Robert Lohn
Administrator
Northwest Region

and



Usha Varanasi, Ph.D.
Science and Research Director
Northwest Fisheries Science Center

