

From: Willamette-Lower Columbia-Technical Recovery Team and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife

To: Potential WLC viability criteria reviewers

Regarding: Review request

Date: April 1, 2006

The Willamette/Lower Columbia Technical Recovery Team (WLC-TRT) and Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) are requesting comments on the draft document "Revised Viability Criteria for Salmon and Steelhead in the Willamette and Lower Columbia Basins". The document is available on the internet at http://www.nwfsc.noaa.gov/trt/trt_wlc.cfm. This document is a revision of the viability criteria report produced by the WLC-TRT in 2003 and is intended to inform the development of delisting and recovery goals for listed WLC Pacific salmonids.

The WLC-TRT was appointed by NOAA Fisheries Service (which also appointed a TRT for each of three other geographic recovery domains in the Pacific Northwest.) NOAA Fisheries Service asked the TRTs to develop recommendations on biological viability criteria for ESUs and populations, to provide scientific support to local and regional recovery planning efforts, and to provide scientific evaluations of recovery plans. The TRTs include scientists from NOAA Fisheries Service, other federal agencies, state, tribal, and local agencies, academic institutions, and private consulting groups. TRT recommendations are used by NOAA Fisheries Service and local planning groups to develop goals for recovery plans. As the agency with ESA jurisdiction for salmon and steelhead trout, NOAA Fisheries Service makes final determinations of ESA de-listing criteria.

At this time, the WLC-TRT is seeking external scientific and management review of this document. We are targeting our request for review to scientists outside of the WLC-TRT and ODFW with expertise in the topics addressed in this report and to resource managers and other policymakers involved in recovery planning in the Willamette and Lower Columbia river basins. The report provides scientific advice to NOAA (as opposed to policy advice) and review of the report should focus on the scientific soundness of the analyses.

This document is a working draft and the TRT is still developing complete reference documentation and revised spatial structure criteria. Nevertheless, we believe that review of the document in its current form will provide valuable input and allow us to meet recovery planning timelines.

Please send comments on this report to Paul McElhany (paul.mcelhany@noaa.gov) by April 28, 2006. Also, please forward this notice to others who may be interested in providing comments. We thank you in advance for helping us improve this report so we can more effectively recover salmon and steelhead in the Willamette and Lower Columbia Basins.