WDFW schedules workshop on revisions to Puget Sound chinook fisheries management plan

Local News

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OLYMPIA - State fishery managers will hold a public workshop May 20 in Edmonds to discuss efforts to update the federally approved fisheries plan that guides conservation of Puget Sound chinook salmon throughout their range. The workshop, sponsored by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW), will begin at 9 a.m. at the Edmonds City Hall, 121 Fifth Ave. North. "This workshop is designed to promote public awareness of the plan and facilitate an exchange of ideas about possible updates to reflect current conditions," said Phil Anderson, WDFW interim director.

The current plan - set to expire next April - defines conservation goals for state and tribal fisheries that catch Puget Sound chinook salmon, which are listed for protection under the federal Endangered Species Act. Under that law, no fisheries affecting Puget Sound chinook can occur without a conservation plan approved by NOAA Fisheries. The current Puget Sound Chinook Harvest Management Plan is posted on WDFW's website at http://wdfw.wa.gov/fish/papers/ps_chi ... agement/harvest/index.htm To bring the plan up to date, Anderson said fishery managers are considering changes that would address: The development and implementation of the Puget Sound recovery plan for chinook salmon. The effects of hatchery-reform efforts in Puget Sound that effect the number of hatchery-reared salmon on the spawning grounds. The close connection between salmon productivity and the availability of spawning and rearing habitat. The need to provide additional protection for chronically depressed runs of wild salmon. Changes in fisheries, including those resulting from the Pacific Salmon Treaty approved last year by the United States and Canada. The effect of salmon-management strategies on other federally protected species, such as orcas and rockfish. The workshop will include presentations by WDFW staff members. The department also plans to schedule a follow-up panel discussion among outside experts in fisheries, hatchery management, environmental issues and other disciplines in early June.