



**NOAA
FISHERIES**

West Coast
Region

West Coast Region Updates

**Pacific States Marine Fisheries
Commission**

August 2015 Meeting

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NOAA Fisheries West Coast Region

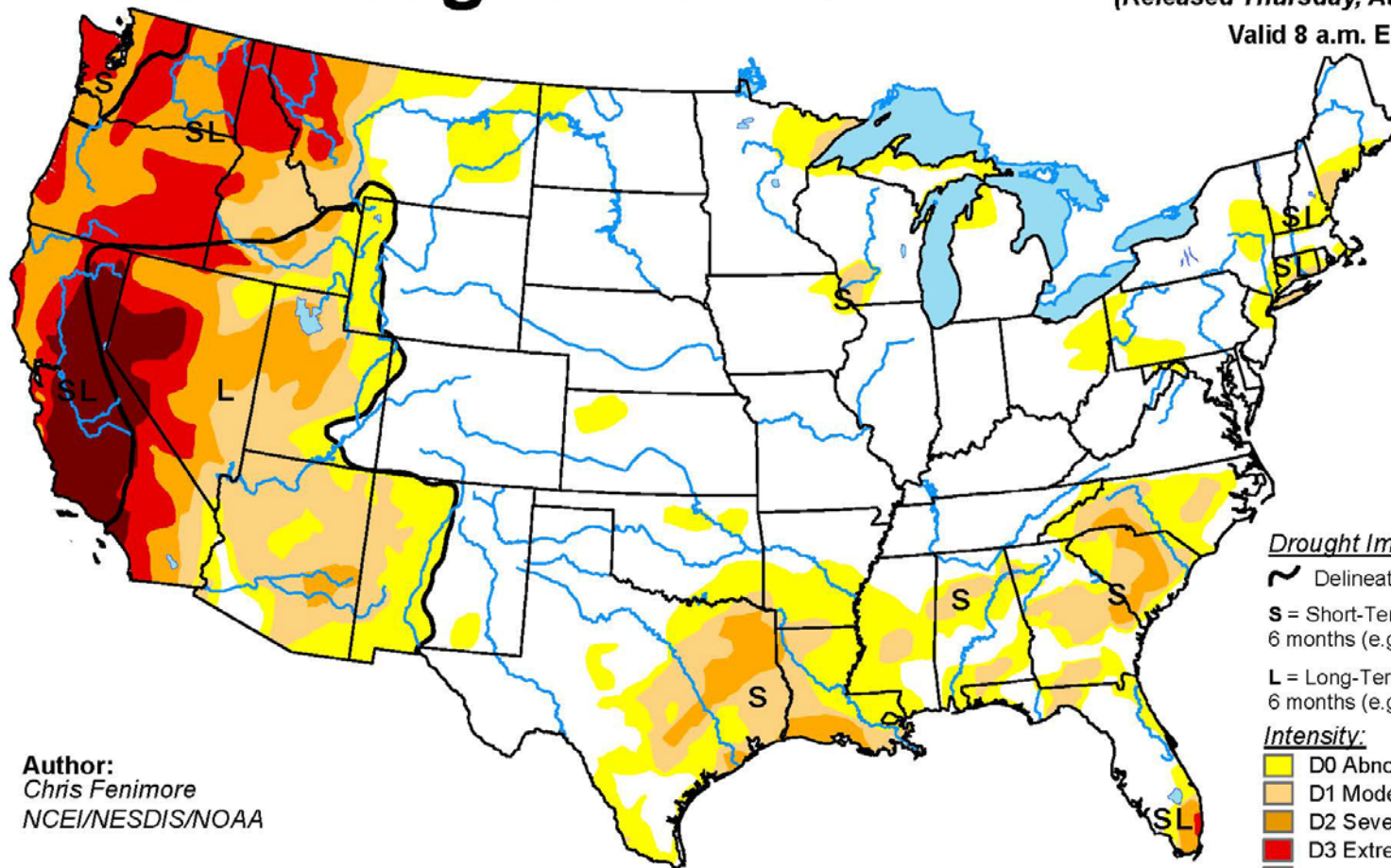
Outline of Topics:

- I. West Coast Drought
- II. West Coast Whale Entanglements
- III. Columbia River Treaty
- IV. Pinniped/Salmonid Interactions at Bonneville Dam
- V. Long-term Columbia Basin Salmon Goals
- VI. ESA Salmon Recovery Plans




U.S. Drought Monitor

August 18, 2015
(Released Thursday, Aug. 20, 2015)
Valid 8 a.m. EDT








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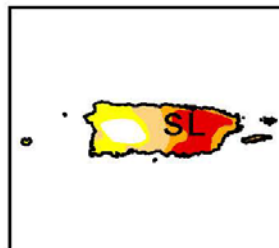
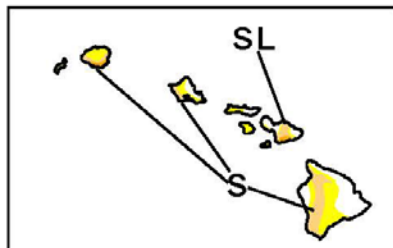
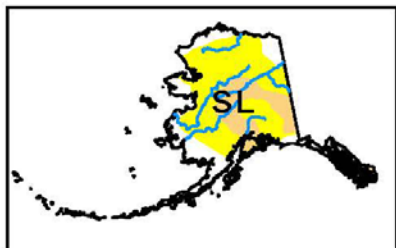
Drought Impact Types:

-  Delineates dominant impacts
- S** = Short-Term, typically less than 6 months (e.g. agriculture, grasslands)
- L** = Long-Term, typically greater than 6 months (e.g. hydrology, ecology)

Intensity:

-  D0 Abnormally Dry
-  D1 Moderate Drought
-  D2 Severe Drought
-  D3 Extreme Drought
-  D4 Exceptional Drought

The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. See accompanying text summary for forecast statements.



<http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/>

California Drought:

2015 Drought Strategy

- 2009 biological opinion anticipated need to adjust in major drought
- Strategy to operate Central Valley and State Water Projects to meet human health and safety, lessen economic losses, control saltwater, and maintain adequate species protection
- Continue “adaptive management”--expanded field surveys and real-time decision-making

2015 Drought Operations

- Concurrence that 10 adjustments consistent with biological opinion
- Voluntary Drought Initiative: in-stream flow agreements w/ willing landowners; approach to ESA enforcement

Current Concerns:

- Limited ‘cold water pool’ in Shasta; difficult choices about releases to cool Sacramento River for winter run Chinook spawning and rearing



Klamath Basin Drought:

2015 Conditions Grim

- Historic low tributary flows, exceedingly high water temps, record levels of toxic algae
- Stress increased susceptibility of salmon to disease--high rate of infection

Operational Flexibility

- Achieved through continued execution of NMFS/USFWS joint biological opinion (2013)
- Optimized limited water supplies for listed species; provided limited, but predictable, supplies to farmers

Current Circumstances

- Releases from Iron Gate Dam will stay consistent with 2013 biological opinion
- Trinity releases increased from minimum (450 cfs) to 2,650 cfs for 7 d. in mid-August for tribal trust; will also benefit lower Klamath salmonids through reduced water temps
- Reclamation (coord. w/ NMFS, affected tribes, and USFWS) is deliberating on a proposal to augment flows following the tribal trust flow release.

PNW Drought:

Statewide drought in WA;
drought in $\frac{3}{4}$ of OR counties

- Working to ensure FCRPS provides good passage:
 - Cool water releases from Dworshak moderate temps in lower Snake
 - Sockeye transport around Lower Granite by IDFG
- ~ 200,000 sockeye lost from all sources (heat, hydro, and harvest) in the lower Columbia
- > 90% of Snake River sockeye thought to have been lost in the Columbia and Snake

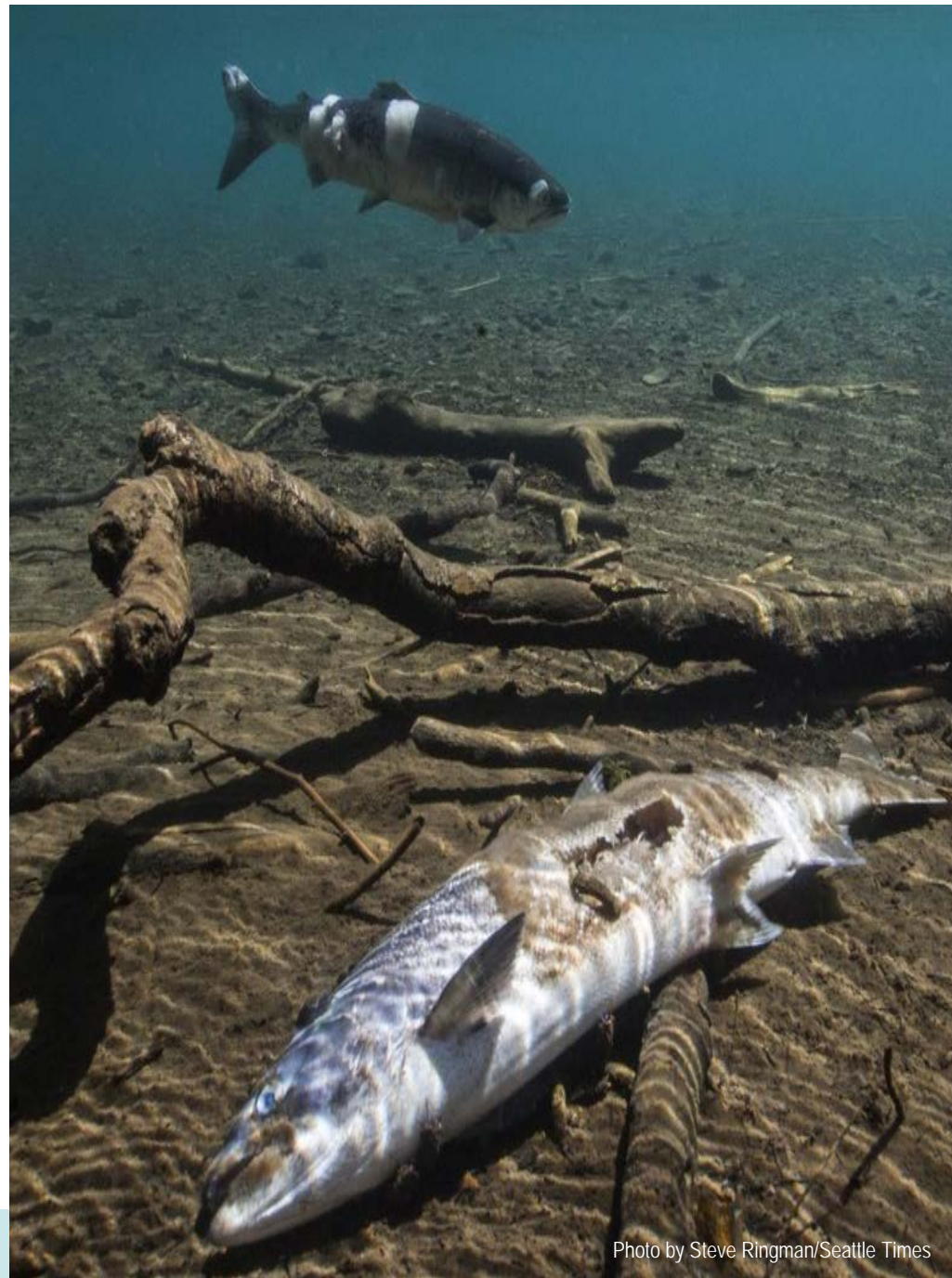


Photo by Steve Ringman/Seattle Times

WC Whale Entanglements:



- Increased over past 2 yrs.; main source of entangling gear likely from pot and trap fisheries (incl. Dungeness crab)
- NMFS expanded disentanglement efforts through WC network
- Supporting states, Dungeness Crab Task Force, fishing industry, and stakeholders to seek solutions
- State of CA hosted a workshop on August 20th in Oakland to discuss issue



Columbia River Treaty:

1964—U.S. and Canada agree on CRT; governs hydropower and flood control

September 2013— first opportunity to submit a notice of intent to renegotiate

December 2013—U.S. Entity submits treaty recommendation to State Dept.; produced from extensive review with stakeholders & tribes

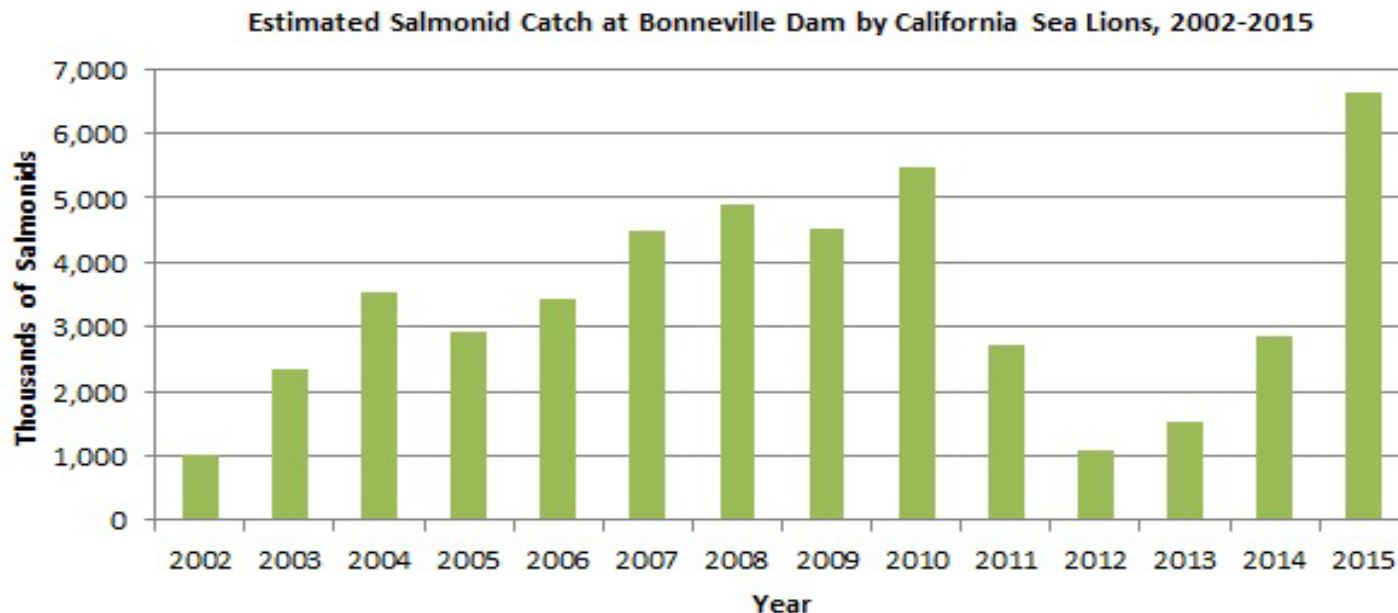
May 2015—State Dept. and Natl. Security Council continue gathering input from other govt. agencies; ecosystem-based function included in draft U.S. negotiating position.

No timeline yet to start discussions with Canada.



Pinniped/Salmonid Interactions:

- CSLs ate ~46,000 salmonids within ¼ mile of Bonneville from 2002-2015.
- Research suggests loss rate of 10-45% of returns between Columbia R. estuary and Bonneville (146 mi.).
- 32 CSLs removed in 2015.
- Expanded to Willamette: 30 CSLs consumed ~6,000 steelhead in 2015 (10-year average of winter run steelhead passing Willamette Falls: ~5,800 fish)



Long-term Columbia Basin Salmon Goals:

- NMFS Situation Assessment (2013) confirmed regional support for long-term goals to balance conservation and fishing in Columbia Basin.

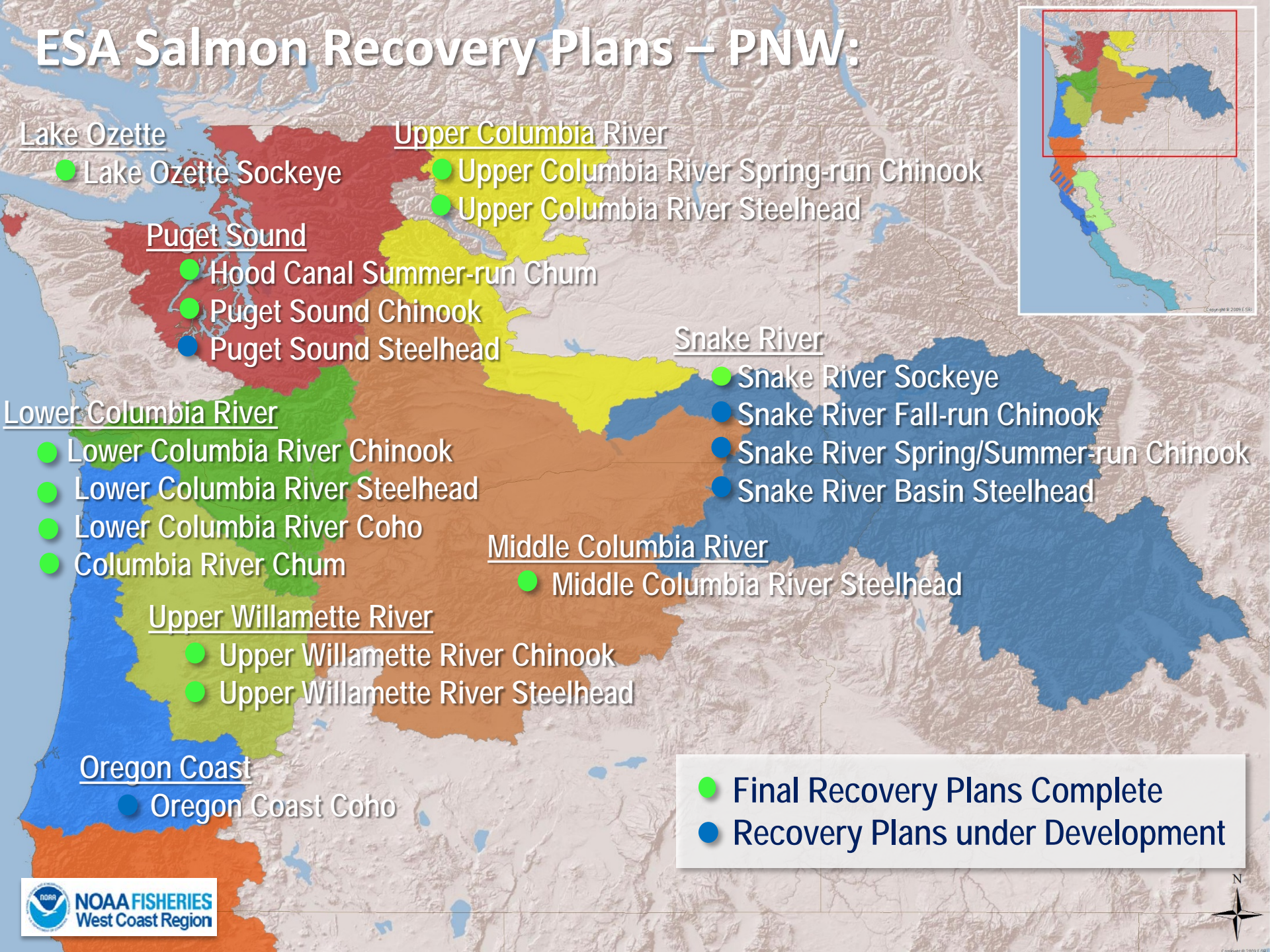
Approach

- Generate quantitative abundance goals for listed and unlisted stocks to address conservation and harvest aspirations
- Consider existing goals across the Basin and how they are related
- Secure active participation by stakeholders and sovereigns in shaping and overseeing a regional process

What's Next

- Continue to collect existing information
- Kick off sovereign/stakeholder group this Fall

ESA Salmon Recovery Plans – PNW:



ESA Salmon Recovery Plans – CA:

Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast

- Southern Oregon/Northern California Coast Coho

Central Valley

- Sacramento River Winter-run Chinook
- Central Valley Spring-run Chinook
- California Central Valley Steelhead

North-Central California Coast

- California Coastal Chinook
- Northern California Coast Steelhead
- Central California Coast Coho
- Central California Coast Steelhead

South-Central/Southern California Coast

- South-Central California Coast Steelhead
- Southern California Steelhead

- Final Recovery Plans Complete
- Recovery Plans under Development





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QUESTIONS?