

Project Name	2024 Annual Program Review – Hatchery Production
Date Proposal Submitted	9/3/2024
Date of Requested Decision	10/1/2024
Requested By	Eric Shoblom
Date of Decision¹	10/08/2024

¹ Decision will become final if committee members who were not present at this meeting do not oppose this proposed decision within 7 days

FTC Decision and Justification
<p>The FTC supports the following decision based on the 2024 APR process. Tacoma Power will produce the following programs in the Cowlitz Hatchery Complex for brood year 2024 of Coho, fall Chinook Salmon, Summer Steelhead and Cutthroat Trout. Winter steelhead and spring Chinook Salmon goals will take effect in the 2025 brood year as is typical of the 2020 Fisheries and Hatchery Management Update (FHMP) Annual Project Review (APR) process.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall Chinook: 3,500,000 • Spring Chinook: 1,678,000 • Coho: 2,178,000 • Winter Steelhead: 644,500 • Summer Steelhead: 650,000 • Cutthroat Trout: 100,599 <p>Members Present: FTC members present represented WDFW, Ecology, Yakama Nation, Trout Unlimited and Tacoma Power.</p>

Proposed Decision or Consideration
<p>The 2024 Cowlitz Complex hatchery programs are proposed below (Table 1). The programs are in alignment with FHMP transition plans that have been approved by the FTC (DD# 2022 02).</p> <p>Program release numbers and sizes at release remain largely unchanged. However, there is one notable change. If successful, the Mayfield Coho net pen pilot project (brood year 2024, current APR) will transition to a full program in 2025 (brood year 2025, for 2025 APR). If not successful, the FTC shall decide whether to reduce the Coho program in favor of the new, larger sized spring Chinook program or to revert to the prior program goals of the 2022 APR Decision Document (DD# 2022 04). The project background is as follows:</p> <p>In the 2023 APR meeting, the option to increase spring Chinook production within the Salmon Hatchery by shifting a portion of Coho production off site into Mayfield net pens was selected. This option increases the total poundage of the Cowlitz Complex beyond</p>

Tacoma’s responsibilities (i.e. >650k lbs.). To ensure the success of this option, Tacoma will conduct a pre-pilot program in 2024 where brood year 2023 Coho survival will be tested in 4 net pens. Success will be measured by comparing in-hatchery Coho survival to that of the net pens. If successful, Tacoma will move into the full pilot study in 2025 where an entire Salmon Hatchery pond of brood year 2024 Coho (about 250k) will be reared in the net pens as part of this APR (2024). This will allow for space for one additional pond of brood year 2025 spring Chinook at the hatchery. This full, pilot program will occur for one year only. After that time, either the Coho program will need to be decreased and the net pen program discontinued or another, outside funding source will be required to maintain the program.

Table 1 represents the proposed program goals for the 2024 brood year of Coho, fall Chinook Salmon, Summer Steelhead and Cutthroat Trout. Winter steelhead and spring Chinook Salmon goals will take effect in the 2025 brood year as is typical of the APR process.

Note: the 2023 APR Decision Document should have listed 644,500 winter steelhead, not 647,000 as shown. The 2023 program goal was 644,500 winter steelhead, which is the same as the 2024 proposal.

Table 1: APR Decision Years for Hatchery Production

Species	Before 2011 FHMP Update	2020 APR Goal	2021 APR Goal	2022 APR Goal	2023 APR Goal	2024 APR Goal
Fall Chinook	4,800,000	3,500,000	3,500,000	3,500,000	3,500,000	3,500,000
Spring Chinook	959,800	1,738,529	1,738,529	1,738,529	1,678,000	1,678,000
Coho	2,835,000	2,178,000	2,178,000	2,178,000	2,178,000	2,178,000
Winter Steelhead	690,000	647,000	647,000	647,000	647,000	644,500
Summer Steelhead	550,000	625,000	650,000	650,000	650,000	650,000
Cutthroat	160,000	100,599	100,599	100,599	100,599	100,599

Table 2 depicts a detailed breakdown of the proposed programs and their poundage.

Table 2: 2024 APR Details

Location	Species	Seg/Int	Program	Total	FPP	Pounds
Trout Hatchery	Summer Run Steelhead	SEG	650,000	650,000	5.5	118,182
	Cutthroat Trout (FOC)	SEG	10,599	100,599	4	2,650
	Cutthroat Trout	SEG	90,000		4	22,500
	Lower Winter Steelhead	SEG	308,500	644,500	7	44,071
	Tilton Winter Steelhead	INT	100,000		7	14,286
	Upper Cow Winter Steelhead	INT	236,000		7	33,714
Salmon Hatchery	Spring Chinook	SEG	500,000	1,678,000	5	100,000
	Spring Chinook	SEG	603,000		8	75,375
	Spring Chinook	SEG	575,000		12	47,917
	Fall Chinook	INT	3,500,000	3,500,000	80	43,750
	Coho	INT	2,178,000	2,178,000	15	145,200
					Total	647,645

Background

The characteristics (number, size, integration rate, release date, etc.) of the Cowlitz Hatchery Complex program is determined through the APR process, as described in the FHMP.

The 2024 APR was based on data inputs from WDFW and Tacoma Power and public feedback as required in FHMP. All FTC meetings are open to the public. Public involvement included:

- August 6th FTC meeting (public in attendance), feedback requested and discussed at the September 3rd FTC meeting
- September 4th APR meeting (public in attendance), feedback requested and discussed at the October 1st FTC meeting

This document represents the results of the FTC discussion and decision at the October 1st FTC meeting (public in attendance).

Coordination Need

Tacoma, WDFW, and the FTC will coordinate around any changing program needs and limitations due to actual adult returns and other factors. Shortfalls or over production of juvenile hatchery salmonids will be reported to the FTC, as well as the anticipated impacts for adult returns in subsequent years.

The performance of the pre-pilot net pen program will be evaluated by both Tacoma, and WDFW hatchery and pathology staff. This will entail a comparison of Coho survival and fish health metrics between the Cowlitz Salmon Hatchery and the Mayfield Net Pens program.

Two members of the public provided comments regarding APR program changes. The first comment was regarding shifting to a later timed Coho program. This recommendation was considered to have already been implemented via the Transition Plans that call for a single, integrated program that by default incorporates later timed NOR returns. The second recommendation was for reducing the Fall Chinook program in favor of additional Spring Chinook and shifting the broodstock source to Lower Cowlitz Natural Origin stock. This recommendation was not adopted as the FTC maintains that there has not been enough time since the Transition Plans and nearly released M&E plan to evaluate the hatchery program or returning adults from the recent switch to marking at Mayfield. The HOM and M&E groups will return at the next (2025) APR process with a plan and timeline for adequately evaluating these changes.

Summary of Potential Impacts

The hatchery programs have remained static for the past several years, with very few changes to release numbers or size at release.

The net pen project may result in impacts yet unknown and will be monitored regularly, per the established protocols developed jointly by Tacoma and WDFW.