



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration**

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Northwest Region
7600 Sand Point Way N.E.
Seattle, WA 98115

Northwest Fisheries Science Center
2725 Montlake Blvd. E.
Seattle, WA 98112

February 17, 2000

Dear Interested Parties:

On November 10, 1999, we announced that we were soliciting nominations for members of a Technical Recovery Team (TRT) to identify recovery goals for threatened steelhead trout and chinook and chum salmon in the Willamette and Lower Columbia River Basins and Southwest Washington. While we have received nominations for several highly qualified individuals, we would like to expand our pool of applicants with additional nominees. This recovery planning area contains three species and five Evolutionarily Significant Units (ESUs), so it is also important that we expand the expertise of the applicant pool to encompass that range. Thus we will continue to accept nominations for this team until March 10, 2000.

To meet requirements of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), recovery plans must contain (1) an assessment of the factors that caused the population to decline and that are impeding recovery; (2) objective, measurable criteria (recovery goals) for determining when recovery is achieved and the species can be de-listed; (3) a description of the site-specific actions needed to achieve the recovery goals; and (4) an estimate of the cost and time required to carry out those actions. In addition, the plans should set priorities for the actions and include a comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan for gauging progress toward recovery.

The first two elements above are largely a technical exercise with policy input, while the last two elements are largely a policy exercise with technical input. The NMFS will address the first two elements by appointing a TRT for each recovery planning area. For the last two elements, NMFS intends to work with state, local, regional, tribal, other Federal, and private entities to craft a recovery planning process suited to each planning area.

We would like your assistance in identifying qualified candidates to serve on the TRT for the Willamette River/Lower Columbia River/Southwest Washington Recovery Planning Area. This team will develop recovery goals for Upper Willamette Steelhead, Upper Willamette Chinook, Lower Columbia Steelhead, Lower Columbia Chinook, and Columbia River Chum. More specifically, the team will be asked to

- Identify recovery criteria for populations and ESUs.
- Identify recovery criteria for habitat.
- Identify factors for decline and limiting factors.
- Identify early actions for recovery.
- Identify research, monitoring, and evaluation needs.
- Serve as science advisors for the recovery planning phase--i.e., advising the groups charged with developing recovery measures.

The TRT will include experts in salmon biology, population dynamics, conservation biology, ecology, and other disciplines relevant to the planning area. At least one member of each team will have experience working in the geographic area in question and extensive knowledge of the area and the 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 salmon biology, status, or habitat.
5. A record of scientific accomplishment documented by contributions to peer-reviewed literature or other evidence of success in 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. The panel will provide a list of qualified candidates to the NMFS Northwest Regional Administrator who—in consultation with the Northwest Fisheries Science Center Director—will make final appointments to the team.

We expect that the TRT will include at least one scientist from the NMFS Northwest Fisheries Science Center (who must meet the same selection criteria as other members) and five to eight other qualified members. A representative from the NMFS Northwest Regional Office will serve as the TRT's recovery plan coordinator to provide ESA policy guidance and ensure that the team receives the administrative support it needs.

We anticipate that members of the TRT will need to devote approximately 25 percent of their time to fulfill their responsibilities. We expect the process of finalizing recovery goals and related tasks for all ESUs within the domain to take up to two years.

We appreciate your interest and assistance in this important effort. Please forward your nominations to Beth Sanderson at the NMFS Northwest Fisheries Science Center (2725 Montlake Blvd. East, Seattle, WA 98112) by March 10, 2000. To facilitate the evaluation, please provide a brief Curriculum Vitae for each nominee, and a short explanation of how the nominee meets the selection criteria.

If you have any questions, please contact Beth Sanderson at the Northwest Fisheries Science Center (206-860-3410) or Patty Dornbusch at the Northwest Regional Office (503-230-5430). Additional information on recovery planning for West Coast salmon is also available on the Internet at the NMFS Northwest Region website, www.nwr.noaa.gov, or at the NMFS Northwest Fisheries Science Center website, <http://research.nwfsc.noaa.gov/recovery/recovery.htm>.

Sincerely,



William Stelle, Jr.
Administrator
Northwest Region



Usha Varanasi
Science Director
Northwest Fisheries Science Center