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November 12, 2025

MEMORANDUM

TO: Council Members

FROM: Patty O'Toole

SUBJECT: November Fish and Wildlife Program Amendment Work Session

BACKGROUND:

Presenter: Fish and Wildlife and Legal division staff

Summary: Staff will begin the work session by providing an amendment process check-in, then the rest of the work session is reserved for discussing new and updated draft amendments.

Relevance: Per the Northwest Power Act, the Council must call for recommendations to amend the Fish and Wildlife Program prior to updating its Power Plan. The recommendation period closed on May 19, and the comment period on the recommendations closed on July 3.

Workplan: This work addresses a primary responsibility under the Northwest Power Act and task A. 4, 5, and 6 of the Fish and Wildlife Division Work Plan under the Program Policy and Planning function.

Most of the November work session will consist of review of a draft amended Fish and Wildlife Program. Prior to the meeting, the staff will provide the Council members with draft amendment document for review and discussion. These documents are *pre-decisional* and not shared publicly. Staff recommend that the Council members and staff work through the document during the work session. The staff seeks feedback from members but is not anticipating a final decision at this work session.



Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program Amendments Council Member Work Session

Northwest Power and Conservation Council

November 18-19, 2025

Council members and staff

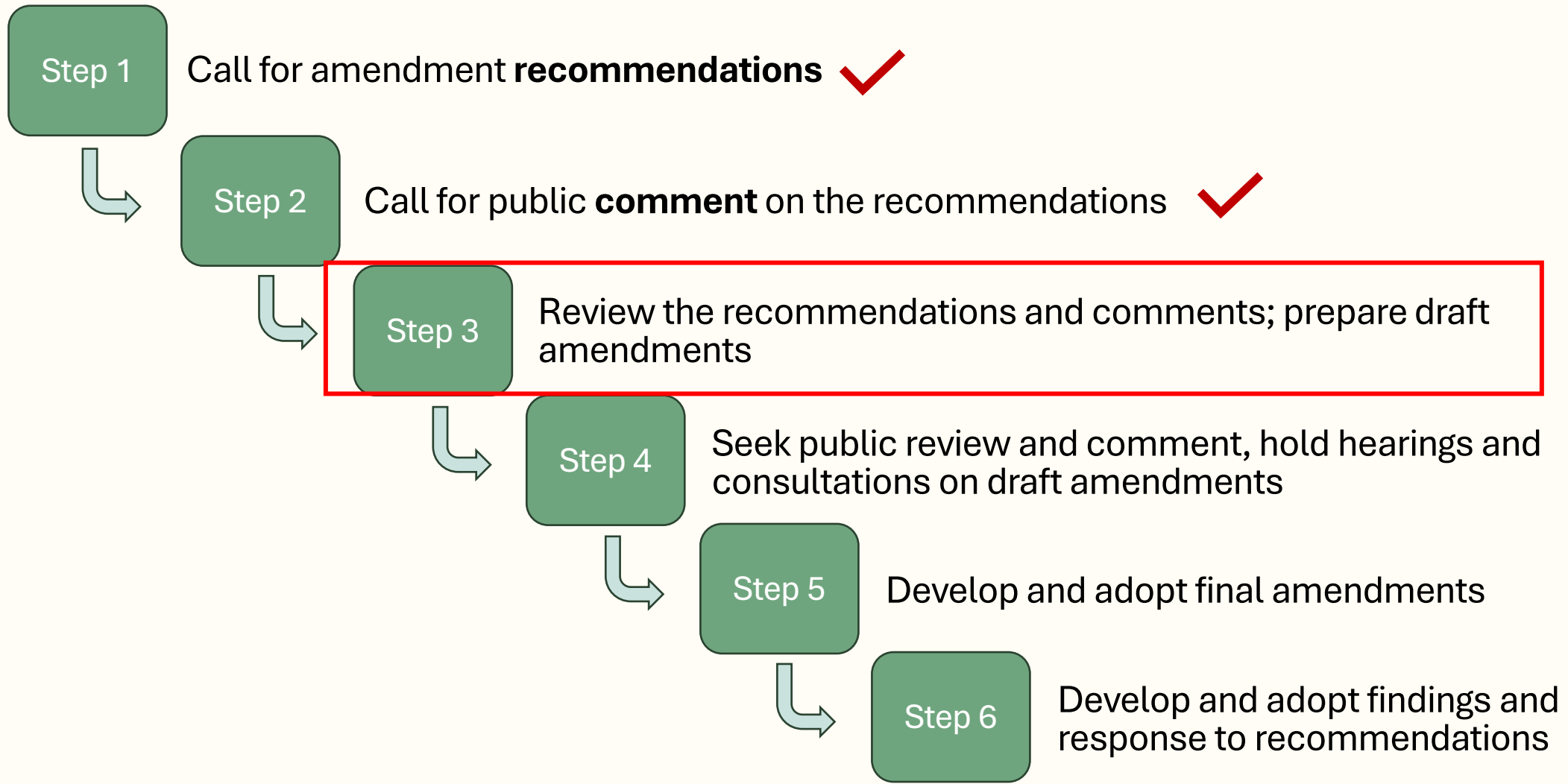


Northwest **Power** and
Conservation Council

Work session topics:

1. Process check-in
2. Discuss draft amended Program

Overview of Fish and Wildlife Program Amendment steps



Planned Fish and Wildlife Amendment work sessions

November 18 – 19

Portland, OR

December 3 - 4

Webinar (possible decision to release draft)

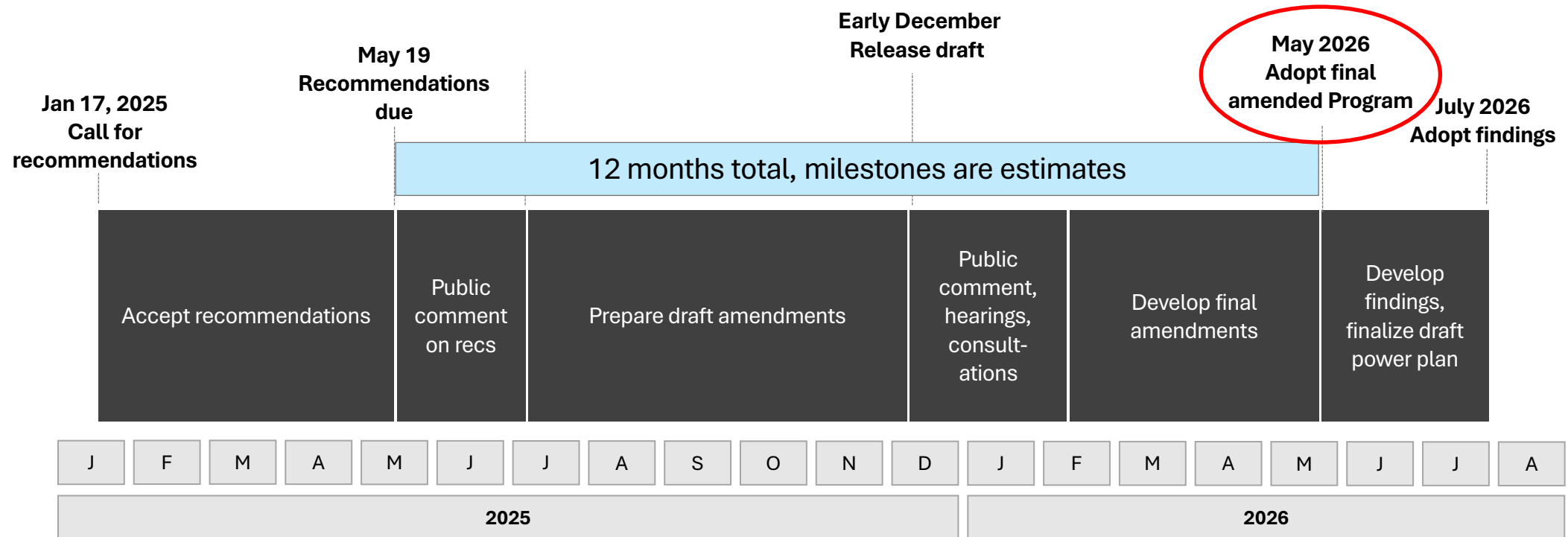
December 16 - 17

Webinar (if needed, decision to release draft)

What happens after decision to release the draft?

- Final edits are incorporated, and draft program is readied for publishing on website
- Notice provided to the region through email, newsletter, social media outlets
- The Council accepts written comment through its website and email
- The Council accepts oral comment at Council meetings during the comment period
- The Council accepts comment through formal public hearings, at least one in each state, and virtual as needed
- The Council accepts comment through consultations

Estimated timeline for Fish and Wildlife Program Amendment Process



Public review consideration

Assumptions:

- Goal for adoption of final Program is May 2026
- Minimum of three months of work sessions to consider comments, adopt final Fish and Wildlife Program

Two variables considered:

- Date of release (early or mid December)
- 60 and 74 day review periods

Schedule options for next steps

Option A (early Dec, 74 days)

- Decision to release draft program: December 3-4, 2025
- Release for public comment: December 8, 2025
- Close of public comment: February 20, 2026 (74 days)

Council meeting: March 10-12

Council meeting: April 14-16

(Hold for extra work session: April 28, 29)

Council meeting – Decision on final Program: **May 12-14**

(Hold for extra work session (if needed): May 27-29)



Schedule options for next steps

Option B (Mid December, 60 days)

- Decision to release draft program: December 16-17, 2025
- Release for public comment: December 22, 2025
- Close of public comment: February 20, 2026 (60 days)

Council meeting: March 10-12

Council meeting: April 14-16

(Hold for extra work session: April 28, 29)

Council meeting – Decision on final Program: **May 12-14**

(Hold for extra work session (if needed): May 27-29)



Discuss draft amendments