

**Mike Milburn**  
Chair  
Montana

**Doug Grob**  
Montana

**Jeffery C. Allen**  
Idaho

**Ed Schriever**  
Idaho



**Thomas L (Les) Purce**  
Vice Chair  
Washington

**KC Golden**  
Washington

**Margaret Hoffmann**  
Oregon

**Charles F. Sams III**  
Oregon

# Northwest Power and Conservation Council

February 3, 2026

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** **Council Members**

**FROM:** **Maureen Hess and Patty O'Toole**

**SUBJECT:** **Fish and Wildlife Program amendment process update**

### BACKGROUND:

Presenter: Maureen Hess

Summary: Staff will provide a brief update on the current stage of the amendment process, highlighting the public review process and timelines.

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. The draft Program is under public review through March 2, 2026.

Workplan: This work addresses a primary responsibility under the Northwest Power Act and tasks A. 4, 5, and 6 of the 2025 Fish and Wildlife Division Work Plan under the Program Policy and Planning function.

Background: The Council voted to release a draft of the 2026 Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program at the December Council meeting. The public comment period began on December 17, 2025, and continues through **March 2, 2026**. At the February Council meeting, staff will review the amendment process timeline and share information regarding the public review process and public hearing schedule.

More info: Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program amendment [webpage](#)

A scenic view of the Columbia River Gorge. The foreground shows a steep hillside covered in autumn-colored trees (yellow, orange, and red). A winding road or path is visible through the trees. The middle ground shows the wide Columbia River with a small boat on it. In the background, there are more hills and mountains, some with snow-capped peaks, under a dramatic sky with dark clouds and some sunlight breaking through.

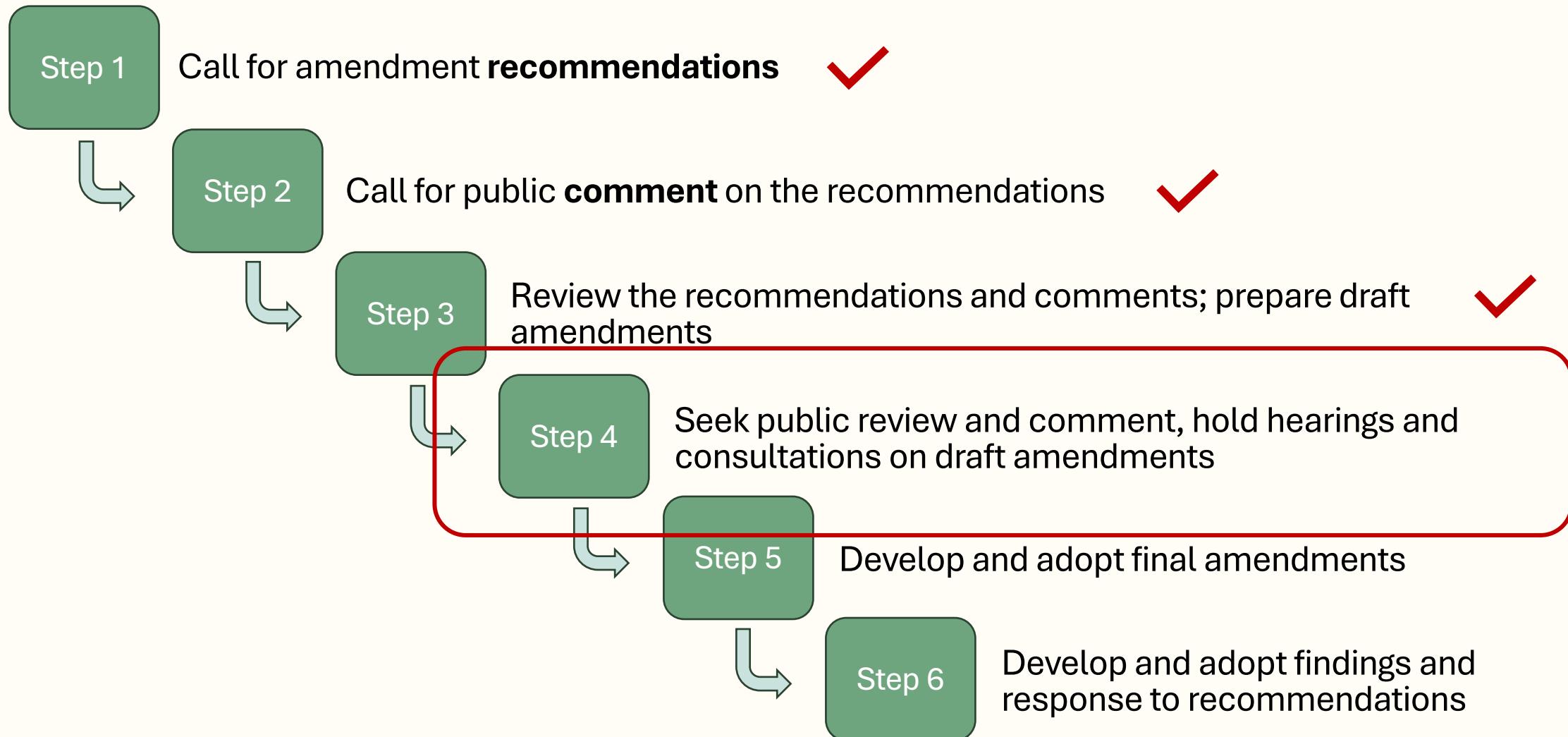
# Draft 2026 Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program Amendment Process

**Council meeting  
February 10, 2026**



**Northwest Power and  
Conservation Council**

# Overview of Fish and Wildlife Program Amendment steps



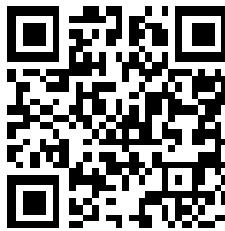
# Public Comment Period – key elements

- Collect written comment through website, email
- Public hearings - collect oral comment
- Consultations with individual entities – collect oral comment, discussion
- Personal discussions, members and staff – all entered into the administrative record



**Comment period ends March 2, 2026**

# Where to find information and submit comments on the draft Program



Details at  
[nw council.org/amend](http://nw council.org/amend)

 Northwest Power and Conservation Council

CONTACT

ABOUT NEWS FISH AND WILDLIFE POWER PLANNING MEETINGS REPORTS AND DOCUMENTS

 Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program

The Council requests public comment on its Draft 2026 Fish and Wildlife Program.

---

### About the amendment process

The Council amends its Columbia River Basin Fish and Wildlife Program every five years based largely on recommendations from the federal and state fish and wildlife agencies and the region's Indian tribes. Other federal and state agencies, the Bonneville utility customers and other regional utilities, other river users, local governments, and the general public may also submit program amendment recommendations that the Council must consider.

In 2025, the Council requested [recommendations](#) in its [January solicitation](#), and [comments](#) on those recommendations in its [May solicitation](#). Since July, the Council has been working to develop a draft amended Fish and Wildlife Program based on the recommendations and comments. [Search all Council meetings](#) to see amendment work sessions.

**Estimated timeline (click for detail):**

Accept recommendations	Public comment on recs	Prepare draft amendments	Public comment & hearings	Develop final amendments	Develop findings, finalize draft power plan
------------------------	------------------------	--------------------------	---------------------------	--------------------------	---

---

### More resources

**Comment on the Draft Program**

The [Draft 2026 Fish and Wildlife Program](#) has been released for public comment through **March 2, 2026**. Read the [Letter from Chair Mike Milburn](#) inviting public comment.

**Attend a hearing!** Public hearings will take place throughout the region in January and February:

- Tuesday, January 13 ([Portland](#))
- Thursday, January 29 ([Kalispell](#) and [Lewiston](#))
- Tuesday, February 3 ([Spokane](#))
- Wednesday, February 4 ([Yakima](#))
- Thursday, February 12 ([Boise](#) and [Bend](#))
- Tuesday, February 17 ([Seattle](#))
- Tuesday, February 24 ([webinar](#))

**Submit an online comment!** Whether or not you can attend a hearing, you can also use our online form to submit comments.

# Public Hearing Schedule

## Completed

<b>JAN 13</b> 4-6pm	<b>Portland, OR</b> Council office
------------------------	---------------------------------------

<b>JAN 29</b> 4-6pm	<b>Kalispell, MT</b> Red Lion
------------------------	----------------------------------

<b>JAN 29</b> 4-6pm	<b>Lewiston, ID</b> Nez Perce Courthouse
------------------------	---

<b>FEB 3</b> 4:30- 6:30pm	<b>Spokane, WA</b> City Hall Council Chambers
---------------------------------	--

<b>FEB 4</b> 4:30- 6:30pm	<b>Yakima, WA</b> Convention Center
---------------------------------	--

## \*Upcoming\*

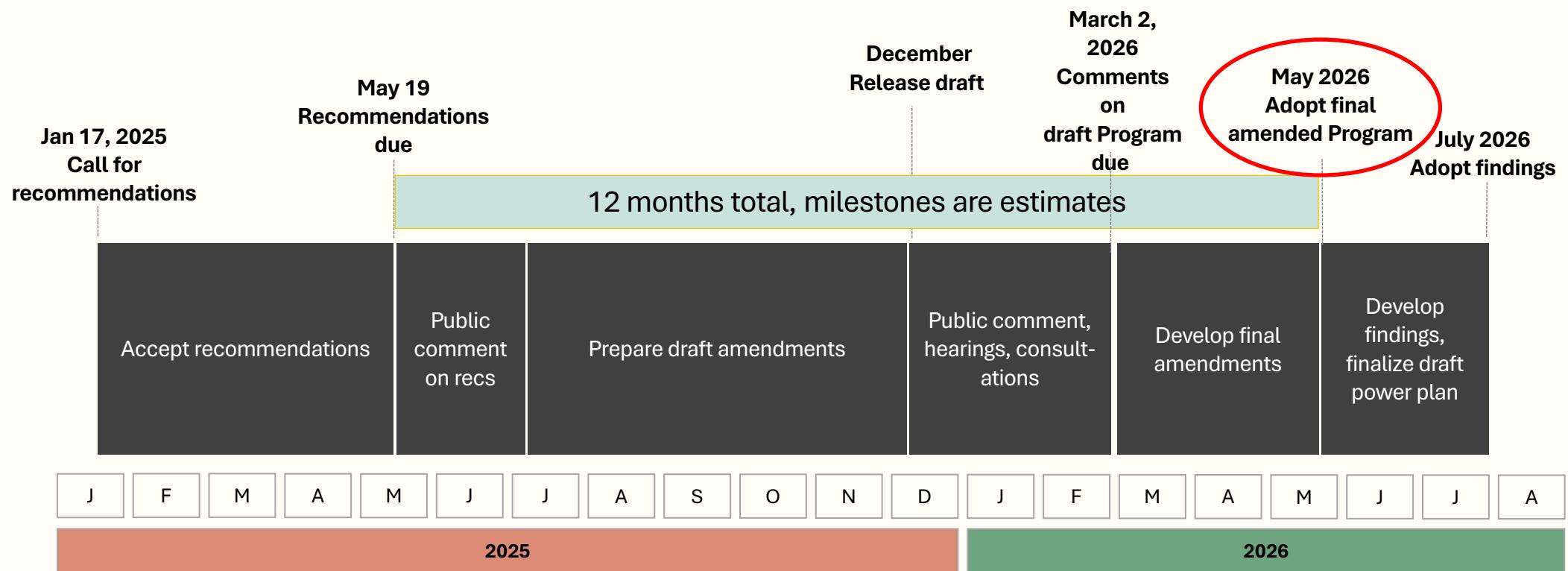
<b>FEB 12</b> 4-6pm	<b>Boise, ID</b> IDFG Headquarters
------------------------	---------------------------------------

<b>FEB 12</b> 4-6pm	<b>Bend, OR</b> OSU Cascades
------------------------	---------------------------------

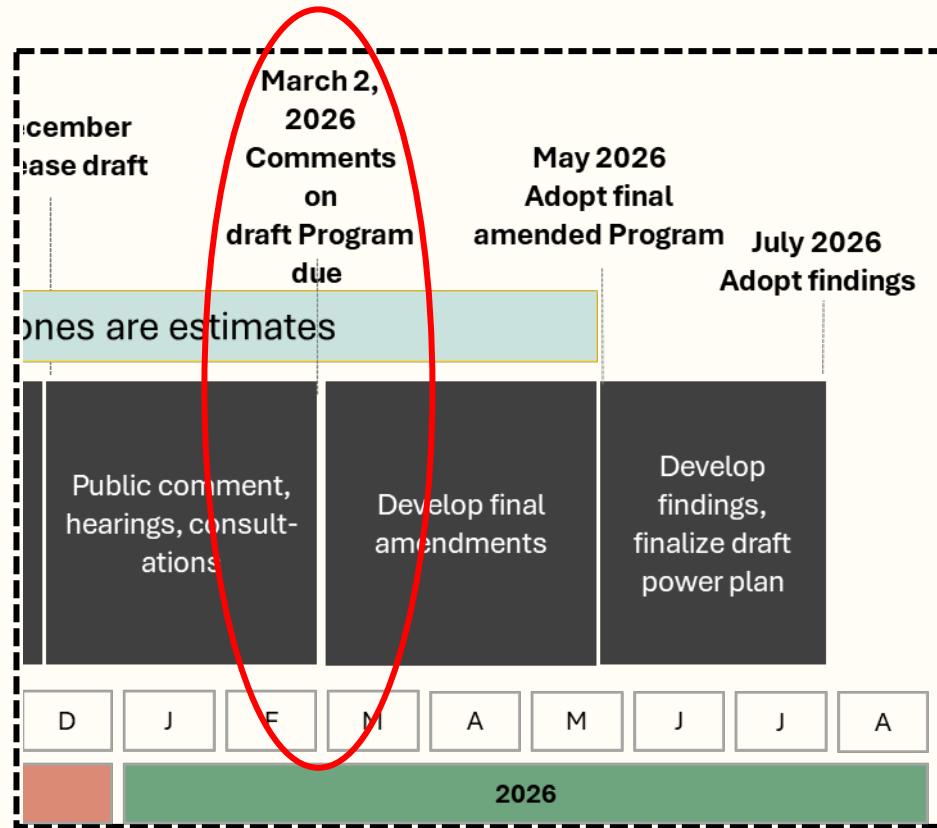
<b>FEB 17</b> 4:30- 6:30pm	<b>Seattle, WA</b> Seattle University
----------------------------------	--

<b>FEB 24</b> 3:30- 5:30pm	<b>Online (webinar)</b>
----------------------------------	-------------------------

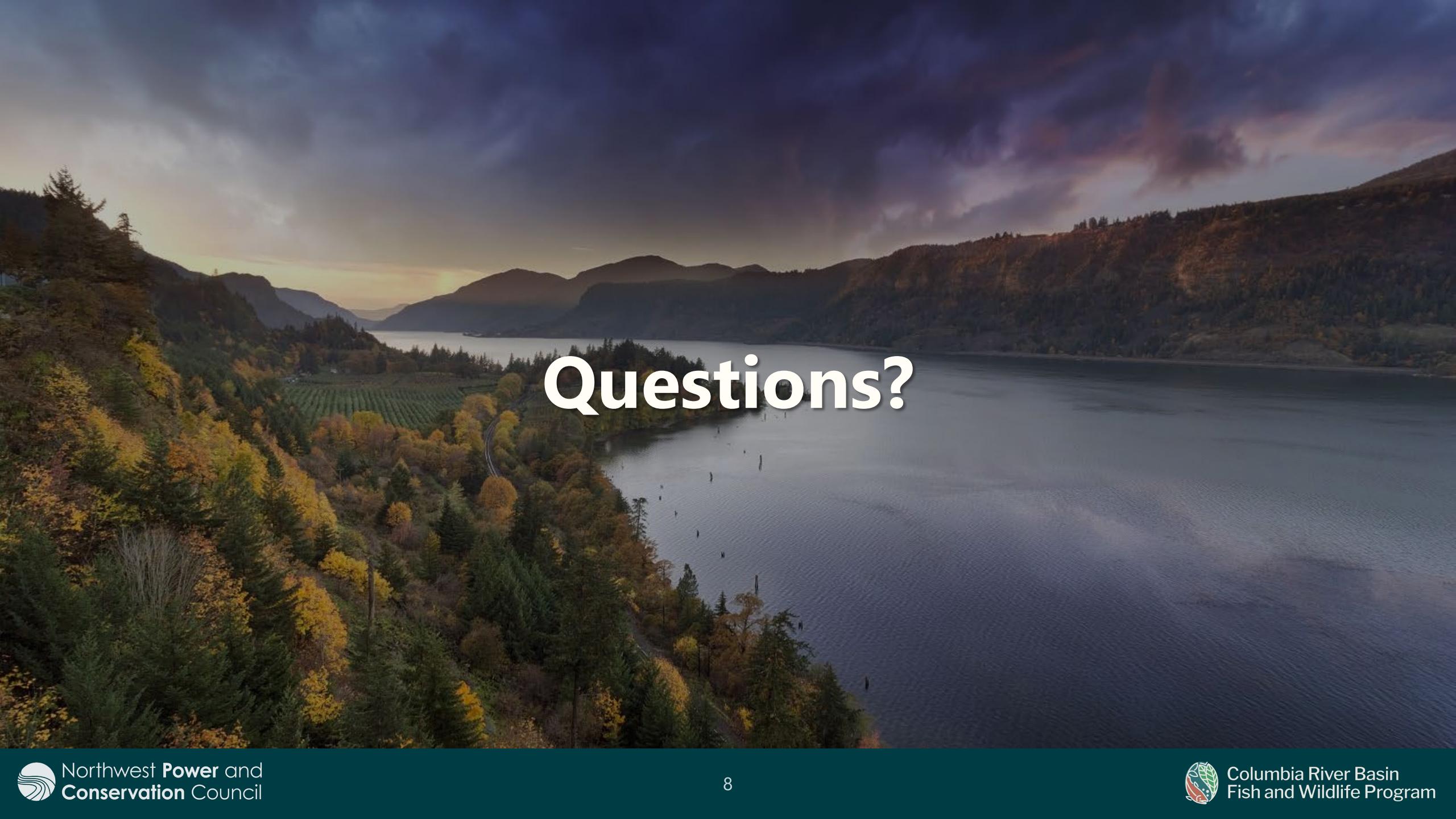
# Estimated timeline for Fish and Wildlife Program Amendment Process



# What to expect at the March Council meeting



- Staff to provide high level summary of comments received:
  - Comment period ends: March 2, 2026
  - Council meeting: March 10-12, 2026
- Post-March meeting:
  - Detailed summary of comments on draft Program
  - Begin incorporating draft amendments as tracked-changes in draft Program



# Questions?