

KLAMATH RIVER FALL CHINOOK OVERFISHING ASSESSMENT PROGRESS REPORT

At its March 2007 meeting, the Council confirmed that Klamath River fall Chinook (KRFC) had failed to meet the 35,000 natural spawning escapement objective for the third consecutive year, triggering an Overfishing Concern as specified in the Pacific Coast Salmon Plan (FMP). The Council directed the Salmon Technical Team (STT) to develop an assessment of the KRFC stock, as required by the FMP, in coordination with the Hoopa and Yurok tribes, the Habitat Committee, and other relevant state and federal agency personnel. The assessment should determine the cause of the conservation shortfalls and provide recommendations to the Council for stock recovery. Based on those recommendations, the Council must take actions within one year of an identified concern to prevent overfishing and begin rebuilding the stock.

Subsequent to the Council's determination of an Overfishing Concern, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) notified the Council on April 10, 2007 that KRFC were declared overfished according to the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA) (Agenda Item I.2.a, Attachment 1), and that an amendment to the FMP or regulations to rebuild KRFC would be required within one year of the letter. In its April 27, 2007 regulation transmission letter for 2007 Ocean Salmon management measures (Agenda Item I.2.a, Attachment 2), the Council response to NMFS was that the FMP requires the completion of the Overfishing Assessment before the Council develops a rebuilding plan, and further, that the management measures adopted in 2007 anticipate achieving the KRFC conservation objective. The Council's transmission letter (Attachment 2) also noted some ambiguity in determination criteria referenced in the NMFS letter (Attachment 1), which may be a topic for Council discussion.

The STT designated a subcommittee to work with tribal and other agency personnel to complete the Overfishing Assessment. The subcommittee met on May 23, 2007, to initiate the process, and has developed an initial draft report for review by the Council and its advisory bodies at this meeting (Agenda Item I.2.a, Attachment 3). This draft assessment focuses on the factors responsible, and those not responsible, for the shortfall, but does not include a comprehensive discussion or set of recommendations. It is anticipated that those components will be developed in the final draft of the assessment, which will be presented to the Council at the March, 2008 meeting. This draft is still very preliminary, and the STT subcommittee and contributing authors have not yet had an opportunity to meet as a group to discuss the contents of document. In particular, any conclusions that may appear in this draft should to be considered very preliminary. Therefore, this agenda item is intended primarily to provide an opportunity for review of the science used to assess stock status and to determine the scope necessary to address the cause of the spawning shortfall in 2004, 2005, and 2006.

Council Action:

- 1. Provide direction to the STT for completing the Overfishing Assessment.**
- 2. As appropriate, discuss issues associated with overfishing declarations and development of rebuilding plans.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item I.2.a, Attachment 1: April 10, 2007 letter from D. Robert Lohn (NMFS) to Donald Hansen (PFMC).
2. Agenda Item I.2.a, Attachment 2: April 27, 2007 letter from D.O. McIsaac (PFMC) to Robert Lohn (NMFS).
3. Agenda Item I.2.a, Attachment 3: Klamath River Fall Chinook Overfishing Assessment.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview
- b. Report of the Salmon Technical Team
- c. Agency and Tribal Comments
- d. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
- e. Public Comment
- f. Council Review and Guidance

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