



THE LINE.

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The Line is a summary of West Coast fisheries news published four or five times per year. This issue reports on decisions made at the June 2016 Pacific Fishery Management Council meetings. The Council recommends commercial & recreational fishery management measures for Federal waters off the coasts of Washington, Oregon & California. The Council has five public meetings a year. All Council recommendations are subject to approval by National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). To sign up for other notices, go to tinyurl.com/3s5edce.

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES.

Deep-set buoy gear fishery: The Council is encouraging the use of exempted fishing permits to test deep-set buoy gear. Applications will be considered at any Council meeting when a highly migratory species topic is scheduled; applications must be received at least two weeks before the meeting. • **Drift gillnet fishery:** The Council intends to create a Federal permit for the California large-mesh drift gillnet fishery, which would allow the Council to regulate the fishery in the future. Only those already authorized to fish with the gear under California state law could get a Federal permit. This will be discussed further in September. • **2017 management:** The Council is developing management measures for highly migratory species for 2017. Council decision-making occurs at the June, September, and November Council meetings to establish management measures for two years beginning on April 1 of the following year.

SALMON.

Sacramento River winter Chinook salmon are listed as endangered and are harvested incidentally in ocean fisheries, mainly off central California. The Council is looking at the current rule used to manage fisheries for this stock to ensure that it is sufficiently protective.

HALIBUT.

In September, the Council will look at proposed changes for the 2017 Catch Sharing Plan and annual fishery regulations that require only minor allocation changes among areas or gear groups. Final action for establishing the 2017 Pacific halibut fisheries is scheduled for November.

GROUND FISH.

Inseason adjustments: The Council adopted landing limits for the open-access sablefish daily trip limit fishery north of 36° N. latitude of 300 lbs. per day, or one landing per week up to 750 lbs., not to exceed 1,500 lbs. bimonthly, starting September 1 through the end of the year. The Council also adopted landing limits in California north of 40°10' N. latitude for periods 5 and 6 (Sept. 1 - Dec. 31) for minor nearshore rockfish and black rockfish of 7,000 lb/2 months, of which no more than 1,200 lb may be species other than black rockfish. • **EFPs:** The Council approved (for recommendation to NMFS) a Nature Conservancy proposal to test pot gear for selective harvest of lingcod in the non-trawl rockfish conservation area off Washington and Oregon seaward of 75 fm, and approved the San Francisco Community Fishing Association proposal to renew a commercial jig

fishing experiment in the rockfish conservation area off California. • **2017-2018 management:** the Council took final action on 2017-2018 harvest specification and management measures for groundfish. For more, see <http://tinyurl.com/zzarcfv>. • **Flatfish:** Beginning in 2017, retention of flatfish at any depth will be allowed during the seasonal depth closure in Oregon, and retention of petrale sole and starry flounder will be allowed during the seasonal depth closure in California. • **Catch share review:** The Council is reviewing the trawl catch share program. See the catch share review program webpage (<http://tinyurl.com/hjkmvw6>) for updates. Public hearings will be held in nine ports starting at the end of August. The Council is soliciting nominations for a Community Advisory Board for the catch share review. See the announcement: <http://tinyurl.com/92se2lp>. • **Stock assessments:** In 2017, full stock assessments will be conducted for blue rockfish/deacon rockfish, California scorpionfish, lingcod, yelloweye rockfish, yellowtail rockfish, and Pacific ocean perch. Bocaccio, darkblotched rockfish, arrowtooth flounder, and blackgill rockfish will get updated assessments. • **Trawl gear regulations:** the Council made several updates to trawl gear regulations as a follow-up to the trawl catch share program. See <http://tinyurl.com/zzarcfv> (page 7).

HABITAT.

The Habitat Committee heard a presentation on ocean acidification, which is caused when the ocean absorbs excess carbon. Ocean acidification is expected to impact ocean species to varying degrees and can have a dramatic effect on calcifying species like oysters, clams, sea urchins, shallow water corals, deep sea corals, and some plankton. When shelled organisms are at risk, the entire food web may also be at risk. Ocean acidification and hypoxia will have profound ecological and economic consequences for the West Coast, which is particularly vulnerable because of its geography.

APPOINTMENTS.

Herb Pollard (Idaho) was appointed Council Chair and Phil Anderson (Washington) was appointed Vice Chair for 2016-2017. Marc M. Gorelnik (California) was appointed to the Council's at-large seat. Pat Pattillo was appointed to the Groundfish Advisory Subpanel.

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING.

The next Council meeting is scheduled for September 12-20 in Boise, Idaho. The main public comment deadline is August 18; the supplemental public comment deadline is September 6. See this [webpage](#) for complete details on how to submit comments.