

HABITAT COMMITTEE REPORT ON  
SACRAMENTO RIVER WINTER CHINOOK (SRWC) UPDATE

The 2014, adult return of Winter-run Chinook experienced highly adverse conditions in the Sacramento River, including high temperatures for adults, egg dewatering, low outmigration abundance, and high in-river outmigration temperatures. Since then, the Council has sent letters to water regulators, and freshwater management may result in better in-river conditions for the 2015 brood. The 2014 brood has now migrated to the ocean and may face further adverse conditions resulting from El Nino. In 2016, the 2014 brood will be susceptible to harvest.

Because the harvest control rule for fishing in 2016 would likely be overly optimistic (because it is based on previous adult returns), precautionary management is warranted, as well as further review of the harvest control rule. There may be opportunity to use 2014 brood as a test for harvest control rules that incorporate brood-specific habitat conditions. Extensive statistical analysis and modeling of winter-run in-river conditions by National Marine Fisheries Service (led by Southwest Fisheries Science Center) may help inform the broader perspective on how brood-specific conditions can improve run forecasts or harvest control rules.

PFMC  
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