



## Pacific Fishery Management Council *NEWS RELEASE*

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### **COUNCIL ADOPTS GENEROUS SALMON SEASONS COASTWIDE**

SEATTLE, Wa. – The Pacific Fishery Management Council today adopted a set of ocean salmon seasons that provides both recreational and commercial opportunities coastwide. California and Oregon fishermen, in particular, will benefit from higher-than-usual salmon returns in the Sacramento and Klamath Rivers this year.

The recommendation will be forwarded to the National Marine Fisheries Service for approval by May 1, 2012.

“Everyone is pleased to see such a strong abundance of the major Sacramento River and Klamath River work-horse stocks,” said Council Chairman Dan Wolford. “After achieving all the conservation goals for weak stocks in 2012, both recreational and commercial ocean salmon fishermen should enjoy a good season this summer.”

#### **California and Oregon South of Cape Falcon, Oregon**

The largest number of returning Sacramento River fall Chinook since 2005 will fuel ocean salmon fisheries off California and Oregon. Fisheries south of Cape Falcon, in northern Oregon, are supported by Sacramento River fall Chinook. In 2008 and 2009, poor Sacramento returns led to the largest ocean salmon fishery closure on record. The abundance forecast of Sacramento River fall Chinook in 2012 is 819,400, far above the number needed for optimum spawning this fall (122,000-180,000 fish).

The Klamath River fall Chinook forecast for 2012 is about four times greater than average and the highest forecast on record since 1985.

The Oregon Coast natural coho forecast in 2012 is about 290,000, the largest forecast since at least 1996.

### *Recreational Fisheries*

Recreational fisheries in southern Oregon and California are for Chinook only and run from May 1 through September 9 in the Brookings/Eureka/Crescent City area, and from April 7 to at least October 7 in areas further south. The minimum size limit will be 24 inches in the San Francisco and Monterey areas from April 7 to July 5, but otherwise 20 inches in California.

Recreational fisheries off the central Oregon coast will allow Chinook retention and run from March 15 through October 31. Coho fisheries consist of a mark-selective coho quota fishery in July (open from Cape Falcon to the Oregon/California border), and a non-mark selective coho quota fishery in September, open from Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain.

### *Commercial Fisheries*

Commercial fisheries from Cape Falcon to Humbug Mountain, Oregon will be open from April 1 through August 29 and September 5 through October 31. Fisheries in the Humbug Mountain to California border area will be open in May, June, July, August, and September, with Chinook quotas in June (2,000), July (1,500), August (1,000), and September (1,000). Fisheries from the California border to Humboldt South Jetty will be open September 15-30 with a 6,000 Chinook quota.

Between Horse Mountain and Point Arena (in the Fort Bragg area), commercial Chinook salmon fisheries will be open July 11 through August 29 and September 1 to 30, seven days per week.

In the area from Point Arena to Point Sur (San Francisco), the season will be open May 1 to June 4, June 27 to August 29, and September 1 to 30. From Point Sur to the Mexico border, the Chinook season will be open May 1 to August 29 and September 1 to 30. There will also be a season from Point Reyes to Point San Pedro, open October 1 to 5 and 8 to 12.

## **Washington and Northern Oregon (North of Cape Falcon)**

Fisheries north of Cape Falcon (near Nehalem in northern Oregon) depend largely on Columbia River stocks. Columbia River fall Chinook returns in 2011 were above average, and 2012 forecasts are similar. Columbia River hatchery coho returns are below average and less than 2011 returns, but Washington coastal and Puget Sound stocks are mostly above average.

North of Cape Falcon, there is an overall non-Indian total allowable catch of 99,000 Chinook and 83,000 marked hatchery coho.

### *Recreational Fisheries*

A mark-selective Chinook season north of Cape Falcon begins June 9 off the Columbia River and Westport, and June 16 off La Push and Neah Bay. This fishery ends June 22 off the Columbia River, June 23 off Westport, and June 30 off La Push and Neah Bay, or when 8,000 marked Chinook are caught in all port-areas combined. The Chinook season will be open seven days per week, two fish per day, with a 24-inch total length minimum size limit.

All salmon seasons are divided into four port-areas. Seasons begin June 23 off the Columbia River, June 23 off Westport and July 1 off La Push and Neah Bay. These fisheries end September 30 off the Columbia River and September 23 off Westport, La Push, and Neah Bay, or when Chinook or coho quotas are reached. The preseason coho quota for all port-areas combined is 69,720. For details, please see the season descriptions on the Council website at [www.pcouncil.org](http://www.pcouncil.org).

### *Commercial Fisheries*

Non-Indian ocean commercial fisheries north of Cape Falcon include traditional Chinook seasons in the May-June timeframe and all-salmon seasons in the July-to-September timeframe. The Chinook quotas of 31,700 in May-June and 15,800 in the all species fisheries are about 50 percent higher than the 2011 quotas. The coho quota of 13,280 is similar to 2011's quota of 12,800.

Tribal ocean fisheries north of Cape Falcon are similar to recent years, although Chinook quotas are higher than in 2011.

## **Process**

The Council developed the management measures after several weeks spent reviewing three season alternatives. The review process included input by Federal and state fishery scientists and fishing industry members, public testimony, and three public hearings in coastal communities. The Council received additional scientific information and took public testimony before taking final action. The decision will be forwarded to the National Marine Fisheries Service for approval and implementation.

In addition, the coastal states will decide on compatible freshwater fishery regulations at their respective Commission hearings.

## **Council Role**

The Pacific Fishery Management Council is one of eight regional fishery management councils established by the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 for the purpose of managing fisheries miles offshore of the United States of America coastline. The Pacific Council recommends management measures for fisheries off the coasts of California, Oregon, and Washington.

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## **On the Web**

- Pacific Fishery Management Council: <http://www.pcouncil.org>
- More detailed information on seasons will be posted on the Council website shortly.
- Geographical points used in salmon management: <http://www.pcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/geosalmon.pdf>
- Glossary of terms used in salmon management: [http://www.pcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/com\\_terms\\_salmon.pdf](http://www.pcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/com_terms_salmon.pdf)