



Pacific Fishery Management Council *NEWS RELEASE*

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PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL CHOOSES OPTIONS FOR 2014 SALMON SEASON

Sacramento, Cal. – The Pacific Fishery Management Council yesterday adopted three public review options for the 2014 salmon season off the West Coast of the United States. The Council will select a final option at their next meeting in Vancouver, Washington on April 5-9. Detailed information about season starting dates, areas open, and catch limits for all three options are available on the Council’s website at www.pcouncil.org.

“The news is generally good for ocean salmon seasons this year,” said Council Chair Dorothy Lowman. “Most of the key salmon stocks are strong up and down the coast, and all three options provide reasonably good fishing opportunities while still meeting conservation goals for weak stocks.”

“While we have heard a lot about the negative effects of the drought in California on juvenile salmon migrating to the ocean, the older salmon that have been in ocean for the past few years seem to be enjoying excellent growing conditions,” said Council Executive Director Donald McIsaac.

Northern Oregon and Washington (north of Cape Falcon)

Sport season options

Ocean sport fishery options north of Cape Falcon in Oregon and off the Washington coast have mark-selective coho quotas ranging from 159,600 to 193,200 that start in late June and run into September (last year, the quota was 74,760 coho). For Chinook

salmon, quotas range from 47,500 Chinook to 60,000 Chinook (last year, the quota was 48,000 Chinook). Chinook quotas are limited due to in order to protect lower Columbia River tule fall Chinook, which are listed under the Endangered Species Act.

Commercial and tribal season options

Non-Indian ocean commercial fishery options north of Cape Falcon include traditional Chinook seasons between May and September. Chinook quotas for all areas and times range from 47,500-57,500, a moderate improvement from 2013. The marked coho quotas range from 30,400 to 36,800 (considerably higher than last year's quota of 14,220).

Tribal ocean fisheries north of Cape Falcon

Alternative Chinook and coho quotas for tribal ocean fisheries are at or above 2013 levels. Chinook quotas range from 55,000-67,500 and coho quotas range from 47,500 to 60,000.

Background for Area North of Cape Falcon

The 2014 Columbia River tule Chinook forecasts are improved from 2013 at 110,000, and combined fall Chinook returns are expected to be over a million fish. The hatchery coho forecasts for the Columbia River are greatly improved from 2013. In addition, the forecast for Oregon coastal natural (OCN) coho is 230,000.

North of Cape Falcon, Columbia River hatchery coho returns were 316,000, well below the forecast of 525,000. Columbia River Chinook returns, however, were among the highest on record, and upriver fall Chinook returned at levels nearly double the expected levels.

California and southern Oregon (south of Cape Falcon)

Sport season options

California ocean sport fishing options generally provide continuous fishing opportunity from April to October or November.

Oregon ocean recreational options include mark-selective **coho** fishing seasons starting in June or July and running into September. Quotas range from 50,000 to 80,000 coho. In addition, non-mark-selective fisheries are proposed in September with a quota of 20,000 coho.

Options for Oregon ocean **Chinook** fishing in the Brookings area run May through September. For the Tillamook, Newport, and Coos Bay areas, season options range

from March to October.

Commercial season options

From the north, commercial Chinook salmon season options in the Tillamook, Newport, and Coos Bay area range from April through October. If sufficient marked coho quota remains after the mark-selective sport fishery on the central Oregon coast, incidental coho retention may be allowed in the September commercial fishery.

Oregon season options in the Brookings area range from May to September with quotas lower than in 2013 due to reduced abundance of Klamath River fall Chinook in 2014. Commercial ocean salmon fishing seasons off California range from May through September, although all options include a closure between Humboldt South Jetty and Horse Mtn. Opportunity for commercial fisheries in the Fort Bragg and Crescent City areas are also reduced from 2013, again largely due to reduced expectations for Klamath fall Chinook.

Background for California and Southern Oregon

Central Valley fall Chinook are forecast at over 630,000, providing salmon fishing opportunity while allowing estimated spawning escapements over 300,000. The minimum conservation goal is 122,000 – 180,000 spawning adult salmon².

Also in California, the ocean abundance forecast for Klamath River Fall Chinook is nearly 300,000, providing reasonable sport and commercial harvest while meeting the minimum natural spawning goal of 40,700, and the 2014 management objective of an ocean harvest rate of no more than 16 percent.

Management Process

Public hearings to receive input on the options are scheduled for March 24 in Westport, Washington and Coos Bay, Oregon; and for March 25 in Eureka, California. The Council will consult with scientists, hear public comment, and revise preliminary decisions until it chooses a final option at its meeting April 5-10 in Vancouver, Washington.

At its April meeting in Vancouver, the Council will narrow these options to a single season recommendation to be forwarded to National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for their final approval before May 1.

² The conservation goal, or escapement goal, is the optimal number of adult fish returning to spawn in order to maximize the production of the stock.

All Council meetings are open to the public.

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 3-200 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>
- Draft Alternative for 2014 salmon management are currently posted: <http://www.pcouncil.org/2014/03/29477/salmon-alternatives-for-2014-now-available-tables/>
- Final Alternatives and analyses of the biological and socioeconomic impacts will be posted on the Council web page by March 24: <http://www.pcouncil.org/salmon/current-season-management/#salcurrent>
- Description of 2014 salmon management process: <http://www.pcouncil.org/salmon/current-season-management/>