SALMON ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON 2011 SALMON METHODOLOGY REVIEW

Members of the Salmon Advisory Subpanel (SAS) have held a number of discussions regarding the tule fall Chinook matrix developed by Mr. Ray Beamesderfer and the Tule Chinook Workgroup (TCW) (Agenda Item C.1.a, Attachment 1) and would like to provide the following recommendations to the Council.

First, the SAS endorses the five principles under which the matrix was developed. These are:

1. Abundance based management approaches are widely employed in salmon management.
2. Lower River Hatchery (LRH) tule forecasts provide a mechanism to develop an abundance-based approach for natural tule management
3. Small changes in exploitation rates can result in substantial changes for fisheries opportunities.
4. Scenarios that reduce risks to natural populations and provide fishery benefits do exist
5. There is flexibility in developing abundance-based scenarios to achieve desired results.

The SAS recognizes that the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) recommends a risk level reduction of no less than 3.5 percent, and accepts that as a minimum. We also are in agreement with the concept of matching risk reduction with harvest improvements, to achieve a Win/Win scenario. We want to go on record as strongly recommending a check-in by the Council at the end of three years to assess what has worked and what has not, where the model could be refined, and what lessons have been learned from its implementation. We also recommend that the list of monitoring objectives provided by NMFS be adopted (Agenda Item C.1.b, Supplemental NMFS Report). It is entirely possible that the matrix may need to be revised at this point and we want to leave that possibility open.

At this time, we are requesting the Council recommend NMFS use alternative number 68h2 from Attachment 1 in developing Endangered Species Act guidance for salmon fisheries in 2012 and beyond. We point out that the risk column shows a 3.7 percent reduction in risk, which is more conservative than the 3.5 percent minimum recommended by NMFS. This same scenario provides a 5.9 percent benefit to fisheries, and puts the risk/harvest in the Win/Win category. There are numerous scenarios that might provide more for harvest, or reduce risk still further, but this is a reasonable and prudent scenario that accomplishes both goals and we believe it should be implemented in 2012.

We would like to point out that this matrix will only work if hatchery production for tule fall Chinook remains the same. Further reductions in hatchery production will necessitate re-examination of the matrix.

PFMC
11/02/11