

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON FMP AMENDMENT 18 –
UPDATE OF ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT (EFH) FOR SALMON

Mr. Kerry Griffin presented a detailed review of the alternatives under consideration for essential fish habitat (EFH) in Amendment 18 to the Pacific Coast Salmon Fishery Management Plan (FMP) (Agenda Item E.2.a, Attachment 3). Alternatives are organized under thirteen subject areas. The organizational structure and the alternatives were clearly laid out. The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) had previously reviewed many of these alternatives at the September 2012 Council meeting. The SSC has comments on the following specific alternatives, which are labeled as in the document:

Freshwater EFH

Chinook:

- The SSC supports adoption of Alternatives 2B, 2C, and 2D.

Coho:

- The SSC supports adoption of Alternatives 3B and 3C, but with the Pajaro hydrologic unit (HU) (18060002) removed from the list of HUs added to coho EFH in 3B.

Pink:

- The SSC supports adoption of Alternative 4B.

Impassible Barriers

- The SSC supports adoption of Alternative 6B.
- Depending on the disposition of Alternative 5, the SSC supports adoption of alternative 6C (to accompany 5A) or 6D (to accompany 5B).

EFH Descriptions

- The SSC supports adoption of Alternative 8B.

Habitat Areas of Particular Concern (HAPCs)

- The SSC supports adopting the five HAPCs defined in Alternatives 9B – 9F.
- The SSC highlights the particular importance of Alternative 9E: estuaries and estuary-influenced offshore areas. These are utilized by multiple species and support a variety of ecosystem functions.

Fishing Activities

- The SSC supports adoption of Alternatives 10B and 10C.

Non-fishing Activities

- The SSC supports adoption of Alternative 11B. Dam removal should be added to the discussion of dam construction/operation in Appendix A (4.2.2.9).
- The SSC supports adoption of Alternatives 11C1 through 11C10.

Information and Research Needs

- Several data issues constrained the designation of EFH in this document. Research on these topics should be included in the data needs. Examples include: ocean distributions of Puget Sound pink salmon populations, the role of fishing activities in reducing prey availability, and ocean habitat associations.

Procedures for Changing EFH

- The SSC supports alternative 13B.

PFMC
09/12/13