

WASHINGTON DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE REPORT ON
CHANGES TO ROUTINE MANAGEMENT MEASURES FOR
HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) would like to introduce the concept of placing a per trip limit on the Washington recreational albacore tuna fishery. The Pacific Fishery Management Council considered this in 2006 and decided to maintain status quo (i.e., no recreational bag limit). WDFW had committed to work with the Westport and Ilwaco charter associations to pursue legislation to limit the number charter licenses for albacore. We were successful in 2007; since then, a WDFW salmon charter license (which is limited in number) is required to take passengers for hire to fish for albacore tuna.

However, since 2006, there was a new albacore stock assessment, which indicated that overfishing may be occurring and, in response, commitments were made by the U.S. in international forums regarding limiting effort to current levels. While discussions are ongoing relative to limiting the commercial albacore fishery, we believe it would be prudent for the Council to again consider placing a per angler trip limit on the Washington recreational albacore fishery.

WDFW had an initial meeting with recreational representatives in Westport, and will have subsequent public meetings to develop a range of alternatives for Council consideration at its September 2010 meeting.