

2014 PACIFIC SARDINE STOCK ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT,
INCLUDING TRIBAL SET-ASIDE

The start date for the Pacific sardine fishery is moving from January 1 to July 1. This change was adopted by the Council at the June 2013 meeting, and will take effect July 1, 2014. This means that the Council must adopt an interim set of harvest specifications and management measures for the January 1 through June 30, 2014 time frame. To inform this decision the Southwest Fisheries Science Center (SWFSC) has developed a projection biomass estimate, based on the most recent full stock assessment (2011), updated with catch and survey information (Agenda Item E.5.b, Supplemental Attachment 2). A full stock assessment will be conducted and reviewed by the Council at the April 2014 meeting, at which time harvest specifications and management measures will be adopted for the fishing year that will run July 1, 2014 through June 30, 2015.

The projection estimate being considered by the Council at the November 2013 meeting is based on the 2011 full assessment, updated with new abundance data from four indices of relative abundance: the SWFSC's daily and total egg production estimates of spawning biomass off California, the industry-led aerial sardine survey, and acoustic-trawl survey (A-T) estimates of biomass along the west coast. The A-T estimates used survey data from the SWFSC's spring and summer surveys. The summer survey was a joint hake-sardine coastwide research cruise, covering the entire west coast from the Mexico border to the northern tip of Vancouver Island.

At the November Council meeting, the SSC will review the projection assessment and make an overfishing limit (OFL) recommendation on which to base management measures. The Council will consider a range of acceptable biological catch (ABC) levels associated with various P* (risk of overfishing) alternatives, and will establish harvest measures, including an annual catch limit (ACL) and an annual catch target (ACT). In making these decisions, the Council should consider the Quinault request for a sardine harvest allocation (Agenda Item E.5.a, Attachment 1), and the Northwest Aerial Sardine Survey, LLC notice of intent to conduct EFP research (Agenda Item E.2.a, Attachment 1). The prior year's EFP proposal is also included electronically (Agenda Item E.2.a, Attachment 2).

Council Action:

- 1. Approve the Pacific Sardine Projection Assessment and Pacific sardine OFL.**
- 2. Adopt final P*, ABC, ACL and, if appropriate, ACT specifications and management measures for January 1-June 30 2014, including consideration of a Quinault Tribal allocation and EFP proposals**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item E.5.a, Attachment 1: Letter from Ed Johnstone, Quinault Fisheries Policy Spokesperson, regarding the Quinault Indian Nation's intent to establish a tribal allocation and to participate in the January-June, 2014 Pacific sardine fishery.
2. Agenda Item E.5.b, Supplemental Attachment 2: SWFSC projection biomass estimate

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview
- b. Survey and Assessment Report
- c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- d. Public Comment
- e. **Council Action:** Adopt Final Pacific Sardine Stock Assessment and Management Measures for January through June 2014.

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10/10/13