

LOWER COLUMBIA COHO HARVEST MATRIX

Lower Columbia natural (LCN) coho stocks in the Lower Columbia River evolutionarily significant unit (ESU) were listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA) in 2005, and efforts to recover these populations often have a constraining effect on ocean and inriver salmon fisheries. Additionally, stocks on the Oregon side of the river have been listed under the Oregon ESA since 1999. Current and Federal ESA implementation has relied on a matrix approach that considers parental spawner escapement and marine survival as a harvest control rule to determine allowable fishery impacts. New information is available regarding the status of the populations since development of the current matrix control rule; thus, the Council has scheduled a review and possible revision of the matrix in current use.

At its September meeting, the Council reviewed preliminary analyses of a suite of alternatives and provided guidance on a focused set of recommendations and future work. The Council also adopted the following purpose statement for this effort:

Council intent is to incorporate new information on Lower Columbia River natural coho populations and stock status, evaluate the risk of various harvest strategies on populations across the Evolutionarily Significant Unit (ESU), and determine if a revised harvest policy can be developed that simplifies existing harvest rules and optimizes fishing strategies consistent with acceptable conservation risk tolerances in coordination with the applicable state and federal recovery plans.

The Lower Columbia River Natural Coho Workgroup (LRC Workgroup) and the Salmon Advisory Subpanel (SAS) met in a joint session on October 15, 2015 to review Council guidance and to work towards final recommendations to the Council on potentially revising LCN coho harvest policy. The LRC Workgroup has completed a report that provides an overview of the history and status of LCN coho as well as a review of the existing harvest matrix and an assessment of risk associated with a suite of alternative harvest policies (Agenda Item F.4.a, LRC Workgroup Report 1). The LRC Workgroup has also prepared a summary report providing their perspectives and recommendations (Agenda Item F.4.b, LRC Workgroup Report 2). The SAS will be at the November Council meeting and will be developing recommendations to the Council at that time.

Council Action:

- 1. Adopt final recommendations to NMFS on any changes to the LCN coho harvest matrix.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item F.4.b, LRC Workgroup Report 1: Allowable Fishery Impacts to Lower Columbia River Natural Coho: A Review of the 2006 Harvest Control Rule for Possible Policy Reconsideration.
2. Agenda Item F.4.b, LRC Workgroup Report 2.
3. Agenda Item F.4.c, Supplemental SAS Report.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview
- b. Lower Columbia River Natural Coho Workgroup Report
- c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies and Management Entities
- d. Public Comment
- e. **Council Action:** Adopt Final Recommendations for any Changes to the Lower Columbia River Natural Coho Harvest Matrix

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10/21/14