

SALMON ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON THE LOWER COLUMBIA COHO
HARVEST MATRIX

The Salmon Advisory Subpanel (SAS) greatly appreciates the efforts of the Pacific Fishery Management Council and the ad hoc Lower Columbia River Natural Coho Workgroup (LRC Workgroup) to develop alternative harvest policy for Lower Columbia River natural (LCN) coho. This is a very important issue to the SAS, stakeholders, and fishing communities of the Columbia River and the West Coast.

The SAS unanimously recommends that the Council request that National Marine Fisheries Service consider replacing the existing harvest matrix for LCN coho under the Endangered Species Act with LRC Workgroup Alternative 5g, including the seeding level option on page 3 of LRC Workgroup Report 2 (Agenda Item F.4.b, LRC Workgroup Report 2). The SAS notes that Alternative 5g meets the objectives of incorporating new information on LCN coho, simplifies harvest policy, and provides moderate increases to harvest opportunity while staying within the stated National Marine Fisheries Service risk tolerance. The SAS worked cooperatively with the LRC Workgroup to develop a wide range of alternatives and spent considerable time working with a variety of fishery interests to find consensus on Alternative 5g.

The SAS is also appreciative of the efforts of States of Oregon and Washington to commit valuable resources to the monitoring of LCN coho. The SAS recommends and anticipates that these monitoring programs will continue to expand our understanding of LCN coho status. The SAS recommends that the Council conduct a review of: new information collected and management performance after three years of implementation of any new harvest matrix (three-year check in).

PFMC
11/16/14