

West Coast Region Report on Salmon Related Management Items

Joint Workshop on California Coastal Chinook

A joint NMFS/CDFW workshop focused on future prospects for California coastal Chinook fishery management was held in Santa Rosa on September 3-4. The overarching goals of the workshop were to (1) identify a level of information necessary to allow for development of an abundance-based management approach, and (2) evaluate whether it would be feasible to collect that level of data in the CC-Chinook ESU. NMFS and CDFW scientists made ten presentations followed by extensive discussions related to the workshop goals. NMFS will provide a report on information considered and recommendations from the workshop and will provide a progress report to the Council at the November 2014 meeting.

Puget Sound Draft EIS

NOAA Fisheries has released for public review a draft environmental impact statement (EIS) for two resource management plans that were submitted by the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Puget Sound Treaty Tribes. One resource management plan discusses hatchery programs that produce Chinook salmon. The other plan describes steelhead, coho, pink, chum, and sockeye hatchery programs. The draft EIS will be available for public comments through Thursday, October 23, 2014.

The resource management plans are the proposed frameworks through which the co-managers would jointly manage salmon and steelhead hatchery programs in Puget Sound while meeting conservation requirements specified under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Individual hatchery and genetic management plans (HGMPs) for each of the hatchery programs are appended to the plans.

Mitchell Act Final EIS

NOAA Fisheries has released a final environmental impact statement (EIS) to guide the annual funding of Mitchell Act hatchery programs in the Columbia River Basin. Under the Mitchell Act, funding is provided to produce salmon and steelhead for fishing and conservation.

The hatchery production of salmon and steelhead in the Columbia River provides benefits to the tribal and non-tribal commercial and recreational fishers in the basin itself and also contributes to ocean fisheries from Northern California to Southeast Alaska. The Mitchell Act, which was passed in 1938, supports roughly 45 percent of all of the hatchery production in the Columbia River. The final EIS evaluates the resource effects of implementing alternative hatchery management strategies, throughout the Columbia River Basin.

While this is a final EIS, NOAA Fisheries will review comments received by November 12, 2014, and consider them for their impact on issuance of a record of decision.

Recreational Fisheries Coordinator

NOAA Fisheries WCR is pleased to announce that Craig Heberer has accepted the offer to serve as the new West Coast Region Recreational Fisheries Coordinator. Craig will continue to serve as co-chair of the HMSMT and as the lead biologist for the HMS FMP until the end of September when he will transition into the new position.