

NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE REPORT ON INSEASON ADJUSTMENTS FOR 2015

The final 2015-2016 harvest specifications and management measures will likely be implemented March 1, 2015. Therefore, 2014 harvest specifications and management measures will stay in place for the start of the 2015 calendar year. For harvest specifications, this means that the 2014 ACLs are the limits that we are managing to at the start of 2015. For management measures, this generally means that the seasons and limits that were in place in Jan-Feb 2014 will be in place in Jan-Feb 2015, if no inseason action is taken.

For inseason changes for January 1, 2015, the Council should consider the management measures that were in place in January-February 2014 and whether or not those measures are appropriate for January-February 2015. Inseason modifications appropriate to start 2015 fisheries would keep catches below 2014 ACLs, but would allow harvest opportunities for species with catches tracking below projections during the 2014 fishery. Management measures that are not currently considered “routine”, and were recommended through the 2015-2016 harvest specifications and management measures, will be implemented through the 2015-2016 notice and comment rulemaking.

As noted above, the final 2015-2016 harvest specifications and management measures will likely be implemented March 1, 2015. With regards to management measures implemented through this rulemaking, the Council has an opportunity at the November 2014 meeting to consider adjustments to those “routine” management measures. Inseason modifications appropriate for March 1, 2015 fisheries would keep catches below 2015 ACLs, but would allow harvest opportunities for species with catches tracking below projections during the 2014 fishery. Changes to “routine” management measures for March 1, 2015 should consider recently available fishery information and performance of 2014 fisheries. NMFS advises that any recommended changes for March 1, 2015 be submitted to NMFS during the public comment period on the 2015-2016 harvest specifications and management measures proposed rule. Management measures that are not currently considered “routine”, and were recommended through the 2015-2016 harvest specifications and management measures, will be implemented through the 2015-2016 notice and comment rulemaking.