

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON  
PRELIMINARY REPORT OF THE OREGON COASTAL NATURAL COHO WORK GROUP

Mr. Sam Sharr presented a summary of the draft report of the Amendment 13 review. We did not have time to fully assimilate the information presented, but can offer several observations. The new approach is strong because it is based on a peer-reviewed model and reflects conditions the Council has been facing in recent years. The report presents a major change in the Amendment 13 matrix, extending specification into the low end of both parental spawning escapement and marine survival. The Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC) has not examined the analysis and rationale for the exploitation rate values contained in the matrix.

The matrix specifies a critical cutoff of four spawners per mile in a basin. It is appropriate to specify a critical low spawner escapement level, because extinction risks increase rapidly as spawner densities drop. Any basin with escapements in this range will likely have experienced extinctions of local populations. There is no biological justification for inducing fishing mortality on such stocks. However, it is not clear whether the value of four spawners per mile, as suggested in the review document, provides adequate protection. The SSC has requested an analysis of the risk of low levels of incidental fishing mortality when a stock is near the critical level.

Additional review is needed prior to Council action. The SSC would like to continue our review of this report at the October meeting.

PFMC  
09/12/00