

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

Mr. Sam Sharr, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW), reviewed the final draft report "2000 Review of Amendment 13 to the Pacific Coast Salmon Plan" for the salmon subcommittee of the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC). This report thoroughly addresses two items previously identified by the SSC and Salmon Technical Team as critical to the review:

- An assessment of the current status of the Oregon Coastal Natural (OCN) stock towards rebuilding to full seeding of the spawning grounds, and
- A review of the marine survival and parental spawner trigger points in the harvest management matrix.

The SSC encourages the proposed changes to the harvest management matrix, because they are based on a peer-reviewed model, reflect conditions that have been experienced in the 1990s, and provide additional protection to OCN stocks when they are at low levels of abundance. Given the continuing depressed status of OCN stocks, the recommendations to expand the harvest management matrix defined in Amendment 13 to include two new parental spawner categories ("Very Low" and "Critical") and one new marine survival category ("Extremely Low") are warranted. The recommended allowable fishery impacts in the new harvest management matrix are consistent with the historical performance of the fishery and provide escapement levels that are consistent with the goal of full seeding of the spawning grounds. The results from the model are difficult to interpret when parental spawner levels are in the "Critical" category. The SSC stresses that when stocks are in the "Critical" parental spawner category there is no biological justification for allowing harvest.

It is important to note that the risks of extinction used in the 2000 review report do not supercede the previous risk assessment developed for Amendment 13 (Appendix C). Although the extinction risks in the 2000 review were developed with the same model used for the original risk assessment in Amendment 13, they were used only to address issues pertinent to the 2000 review. The assessment developed for Amendment 13 remains the best assessment of the risk of extinction for OCN populations.

Finally, the SSC supports research that focuses on the underlying assumptions of the model, such as ODFW's life-cycle monitoring project. This research, in addition to analyses currently under way, will provide new information that can be incorporated into future reviews of Amendment 13 and the harvest management matrix. We recommend another review be conducted in 2003.

PFMC
10/31/00