



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Sustainable Fisheries Division
7600 Sand Point Way N.E., Bldg. #1
Seattle, Washington 98115-0070

JUN 09 2000

Dr. Don McIsaac, Executive Director
Pacific Fishery Management Council
2130 SW Fifth Avenue, Suite 224
Portland, OR 97201

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JUN 15 2000

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Dear Don:

In response to your request to identify priorities for the SSC review of salmon forecast methodologies, I would like to suggest the decision be based on some simple criteria rather than just choosing from a list.

The criteria I would suggest for consideration would be as follows:

1. Choose stocks critical to ocean management decisions;
 - (a) weak stocks that constrain management actions; and
 - (b) abundant stocks whose management objectives drive ocean management decisions;
2. Choose stocks for which recent forecasts are believed to be the least accurate or reliable.

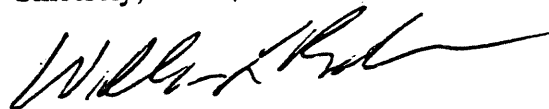
Some stocks that come to mind that meet these criteria include:

1. Lower Columbia River wild chinook salmon (LCRW). LCRW are listed under the ESA, have been constraining the last few years, and may not be as sustainable as we previously thought.
2. Klamath River fall chinook is always a major driver of ocean management decisions.
3. Lower Columbia River and Spring Creek hatchery stocks are major contributors to the ocean chinook harvest, particularly North of Cape Falcon.
4. OCN coho is now the most critical coho stock driving ocean coho management decisions coastwide.
5. Washington coastal coho stocks are a major driver for North of Falcon ocean management decisions.



Finally, I suggest that the SSC limit itself to thorough reviews of a limited number of methodologies rather than spread themselves too thin.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William L. Robinson', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

William L. Robinson
Assistant Regional Administrator
for Sustainable Fisheries

STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

June 27, 2000

Donald O. McIsaac, Ph.D.
Executive Director
Pacific Fishery Management Council
2130 SW Fifth Avenue, Suite 224
Portland, Oregon 97201

Dear Dr. McIsaac:

Thank you for your recent letter describing the Council's intention to review preseason chinook and coho abundance forecasts. WDFW appreciates the Council's commitment to improving the technical basis for our management, and we look forward to having the SSC and STT help us evaluate our methodologies. We agree with your assessment that review of methodologies for all stocks would be a large work load and believe it would be best to approach the task by prioritizing methodologies and taking them on in manageable pieces.

Our intent is to begin compiling documentation for the management units we judge to have the greatest need. WDFW's highest priority for review is the forecast approaches applied to Puget Sound and Washington Coastal coho, specifically methods used to forecast Queets natural, Hood Canal natural and Strait of Juan de Fuca natural stocks. The high priority we attach to resolving methods for these stocks reflects the degree to which forecast uncertainty has influenced the Council's decision process in recent years. The Queets natural coho stock is a perennial driver stock in determining harvest quotas in the North of Cape Falcon management region. For Hood Canal and Strait coho forecasts, WDFW and Puget Sound tribal co-managers have committed to evaluation of methodologies prior to the 2001 season planning process. Documentation of our assessment this year could be provided well in advance of the SSC's scheduled review of methodologies beginning in October 2001.

I look forward to discussing this issue at the June Council meeting.

Sincerely,



Philip Anderson
Special Assistant
Intergovernmental Policy

