

## SACRAMENTO WINTER CHINOOK MANAGEMENT

**Situation:** This is a two part agenda item which considers the present and future management of listed Central Valley chinook stocks. The first part deals with considering an inseason change to the opening date for the 2002 recreational fishery off California, south of Point Arena, based on our current knowledge of impacts on Sacramento winter chinook. The second part deals with establishing long-term management objectives for listed Central Valley chinook in the salmon fishery management plan (FMP).

### **Inseason Management**

To help accomplish the no jeopardy management standard for endangered Sacramento River winter chinook, the Council has recommended the season opening dates for the 2002 ocean recreational fishery be April 13 between Point Arena and Pigeon Point and March 30 between Pigeon Point and the U.S./Mexico Border. However, at its November 2001 meeting, the Council is to review this decision to determine if earlier openings are possible. Mr. Dan Viele, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), will provide the Council with a review of the winter chinook status and recommendations for the 2002 opening.

### **Long-Term Management Objective**

The current Salmon FMP conservation objective for Sacramento winter chinook is based on the jeopardy standard of the 1997 Biological Opinion (BO) which requires no less than a 31% increase in the adult spawner replacement rate relative to the 1989-1993 mean. The BO also indicated that NMFS would reassess the need for restrictions on ocean harvest after the 2001 season.

Subsequent to the 1999 listing of the Central Valley spring chinook evolutionarily significant units (ESUs), NMFS reinitiated consultation on the Salmon FMP. NMFS issued a BO in 2000 which concluded that ocean fisheries managed under the FMP were not likely to jeopardize Central Valley spring chinook, and no additional Endangered Species Act constraints for that ESU were required. That opinion was based on the fact that existing restrictions for winter chinook under the 1997 BO and the action taken by the California Fish and Game Commission and the Council in delaying the opening of the recreational season provided sufficient protection. A FMP conservation objective has yet to be developed for Central Valley spring chinook.

A comprehensive set of management objectives for winter and spring run chinook could be developed by the Council through the FMP amendment process. The objectives developed in the amendment process could cover a wide range of stock status, including listed, delisted, and recovered. An FMP amendment, on which NMFS would subsequently consult, would provide opportunity for input from resource agencies, user groups, and other affected entities. In any event, a new or interim BO will need be issued prior to the 2002 season to provide a continuation of protection measures until such time as a FMP amendment is completed.

### **Council Action:**

- 1. Consider inseason recommendations to open the 2002 recreational salmon fishery south of Point Arena prior to April 13, based on the latest information on stock status of listed Central Valley stocks and fishery impacts.**
- 2. Consider options for protection measures for listed Central Valley spring chinook and Sacramento winter chinook in an interim BO which will affect 2002 ocean salmon fisheries.**
- 3. Discuss options, scheduling, and personnel needed for a potential amendment process regarding long-term management objectives for Central Valley chinook stocks.**

### **Reference Materials:**

1. Pacific Coast Salmon Plan Amendment Management Objectives for Listed Central Valley Chinook (Exhibit D.4.b, NMFS Report).