

NORTH OF CAPE FALCON

The initial 2002 North of Falcon (NCF) meeting was held at the Portland Airport Sheraton Hotel on March 20th & 21st. Then, the second meeting was held at the SeaTac Holiday Inn on April 2nd through 4th.

The primary purpose of the NCF meetings are to review the range of salmon options adopted during the PFMC March meetings, to begin to incorporate proposed terminal area fisheries, and to develop a package of ocean and terminal area fisheries for consideration at the April PFMC meeting.

The initial NCF meeting was well attended by the various fisheries interest groups from Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and the Treaty tribes. The NCF process is comprised of the states, tribes, federal fishery management entities and also the recreational and commercial fishing interest groups. The meeting is an open public forum, except for the Tribal/State government negotiations.

The three ocean options adopted by PFMC were the results of the preseason forecasts for the Oregon Coastal Natural (OCN) coho and the constraints of the Snake R. fall chinook. Other stocks of concern are the forecasts for the Hood Canal and Stillaguamish coho and Puget Sound Chinook.

The range of options adopted by PFMC for the ocean fisheries establish the "sideboards" for quotas to be considered following public review. The options above are from the most "liberal" to the most "conservative" for the ocean fisheries for the 2002 season. The most conservative option must meet the conservation constraints for the "weakest" stocks of coho and chinook.

The first North of Falcon meeting focused on narrowing the options for the ocean troll and sport fisheries and defining terminal fishing measures that would meet the management objectives for NCF management units. The first NCF meeting concluded with joint Tribal/State input for the second model run assignment to the technical staff. This model run was available to all participants prior to the second NCF meeting.

The second NCF session focused on the Puget Sound management objectives, chinook model runs, and resolution of some of the shaping of fisheries to meet Puget Sound coho stock exploitation rate objectives for 2002, i.e. Hood Canal and Stillaguamish.

Following the second NCF meeting, the options for the 2002 ocean fisheries were narrowed to Option I for the non-Indian recreational and commercial fisheries for both chinook and coho. The Treaty ocean troll fisheries options for 2002 are Option I for chinook and Option II for coho and for the 2002 treaty ocean troll fisheries, Option I for chinook and Option II for coho.

We have spent considerable time in the NCF process defining specific fishing strategies to address conservation concerns for some Puget Sound coho and chinook stocks. We can report considerable success in development of fishing plans for 2002. We are continuing to meet this week and work out some final details and are optimistic a comprehensive set of fisheries both in the ocean and inside areas will fully meet our management objectives.

*Briefly summarized by Jim Harp.
not read into the record.*