

ESSENTIAL FISH HABITAT ISSUES

Situation: The Habitat Committee (HC) will meet Monday, September 9, 2002 to develop recommendations on the following agenda items:

- E.1 Marine Reserve Proposals for Channel Islands National Marine Sanctuary
- E.2 Update on Other Marine Reserves Processes
- C.6 Groundfish Programmatic and Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Fishery Management Plan Environmental Impact Statements

Other issues on the HC agenda include a report from National Marine Fisheries Service on the Columbia River dredging EFH consultation, an update on a Hanford Reach fish stranding study, and an update on a description of fishing gear impacts. In addition, the HC will report on the items below that were assigned at the last Council meeting.

Update on Letter to Army Corps of Engineers Regarding Columbia River Dredging

At the June Council meeting, the Council requested the HC prepare a letter to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regarding Columbia River dredging and to follow up on a similar letter sent in October 1999. That letter has been prepared and is attached (Attachment 1), along with the previous Council letter.

Update on Letter to NMFS Regarding Klamath River Flows Biological Opinion

The Council also requested the HC prepare a letter to National Marine Fisheries Service on their Biological Opinion regarding Klamath River flows and the effect of flow levels on Council-managed species. The HC has postponed the development of this letter.

Update on Letter to Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

A letter to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) regarding hydropower relicensing procedures was sent on May 13. After several attempts to contact FERC, the letter was faxed to Mr. Vince Yearick in their Washington, D.C. office on August 22. As of the briefing book deadline, Council staff are awaiting a response.

The HC's complete agenda is provided in Ancillary D.

Council Action:

1. Consider comments and recommendations developed by the HC at the September meeting.

Reference Materials:

1. Habitat Committee Agenda (Ancillary D).
2. Letter to U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Exhibit B.1, Attachment 1).
3. Public comment (Attachment B.1.c).

Agenda Order:

- a. HC Report
- b. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
- c. Public Comment
- d. **Council Action:** Consider HC Recommendations

Paul Heikkila

PFMC
08/23/02

