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SALMON ADVISORY SUBPANEL REPORT ON 2002 GROUND FISH MANAGEMENT MEASURES

The Salmon Advisory Subpanel (SAS) has developed recommendations for the Council to consider for salmon fisheries; however, because the impacts on groundfish stocks of concern are negligible, implementing regulations for their protection will do little for their recovery. Efforts to educate the fishing community on maintaining an awareness to avoid situations where contact has a greater probability may be more appropriate. As fishermen and women today we all have a responsibility as stewards of all our ocean resources to minimize any impacts on critical stocks.

The SAS supports the following alternatives for salmon troll fisheries:

Washington: Status quo based on minimal impacts on yelloweye and canary rockfish (0.05 mt and 0.08 mt respectively in 2001; Environmental Impact Statement [EIS] Table 3.3.1.3-11).

Oregon: Status quo. The Oregon salmon troll fishery in 2001 would represent about 2% (0.7 mt; EIS table 3.3.1.3-11) of the most conservative OY alternative for canary rockfish.

California: Status quo. The California commercial salmon fishery caught only 0.01 mt of bocaccio, 0.05 mt of canary rockfish, and an unknown but negligible amount of yelloweye rockfish (EIS table 3.3.1.3-11).

The SAS supports the following alternatives for recreational salmon fisheries:

Washington: Status quo plus no retention of canary rockfish with a salmon on board based on low impacts on canary and yelloweye rockfish (1.48 mt and 3.07 mt respectively in 2001; Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife port sampling data and Marine Recreational Fisheries Statistics Survey (MRFSS) average weights).

Oregon: Status quo. Salmon directed trips in Oregon caught 0.14 mt of yelloweye and 0.30 mt of canary rockfish in 2001 (Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife [ODFW] port sampling data).

California: No recommendations, because California SAS members were not present.

Based on an analysis of data collected in an encounter rate study conducted by Lawson (1990), alternatives that require moving gear up in the water column may change the relative encounter rates of coho and chinook. These include alternatives that require a minimum distance between the cannon ball and lower spread for troll gear. These types of regulations could result in loss of opportunity for chinook necessary to provide a similar level of protection for depressed natural coho stocks. The SAS does not support any gear changes that would result in increased coho encounter rates or decreased chinook opportunity.

In order to better understand incidental groundfish catch in salmon fisheries the SAS has the following general recommendations:

1. A coastwide troll gear encounter rate study similar to the Lawson (1990) study off central Oregon.
2. A standardized commercial salmon landing tickets, landing requirements, and accounting methods for all three states.
3. Consistent port sampling programs for all three states.
4. Observer coverage should be provided to evaluate troll regulation changes. If not available, full retention of groundfish should be considered as an option for evaluating the effects of the regulations.

Attached is a correct version of the SAS salmon fishery alternatives developed in ~~June~~ ^{JULY -} The version presented in the EIS table 2.2.2-1b was in error, listing the most conservative alternative as status quo. ^{per Don 9-11-02}