

IDENTIFICATION OF STOCKS NOT MEETING ESCAPEMENT GOALS FOR THREE CONSECUTIVE YEARS

The Salmon Technical Team (STT) is responsible for identifying natural salmon stocks with conservation objectives that have failed to achieve their escapement objectives for the past 3 years. Amendment 14 identifies three exceptions to the application of the overfishing criteria, (1) Hatchery Stocks; (2) Natural stocks with low impacts from Council fisheries; and (3) Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed stocks. Hatchery stocks are excepted, because they generally do not need the protection of overfishing criteria and special Council rebuilding programs. Natural stocks with minimal Council impacts are excepted, because the Council's ability to directly affect the escapements of these stocks through harvest restrictions is virtually nil. ESA-listed stocks are exempted, because the Council considers the jeopardy standards and recovery plans developed by NMFS to be interim rebuilding plans. Attachment 1, Table C-2, (reproduced from Table I-2 from Preseason Report I) shows that only one chinook stocks has not met its goals for at least 3 consecutive years: Grays Harbor fall chinook, which has failed to meet its goal for five consecutive years.

This stock is an exception under the second criteria. The STT believes that Council-area fisheries continue to exert exploitation rates below 5%.

Possible causes for the failure of Grays Harbor fall chinook to meet escapement goals are being investigated by state and tribal managers.

PFMC
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