

KLAMATH RIVER FALL CHINOOK CONSERVATION OBJECTIVE

Klamath River fall chinook are frequently a primary constraint for ocean salmon fisheries south of Cape Falcon, Oregon. In 2005, commercial ex-vessel value was projected to be about 30% less than in 2004 for areas south of Cape Falcon, despite a record high projection for Central Valley chinook stocks. Reductions in both commercial and recreational fisheries were necessary to meet the Klamath River fall chinook conservation objective.

The current conservation objective for Klamath River fall chinook as listed in Table 3-1 of the Salmon Fishery Management Plan (FMP) is:

“33%-34% of potential adult natural spawners, but no fewer than 35,000 naturally spawning adults in any one year. Brood escapement rate must average 33%-34% over the long-term, but an individual brood may vary from this range to achieve the required tribal/nontribal annual allocation. Objective designed to allow a wide range of spawner escapements from which to develop an MSY objective or proxy while protecting the stock during prolonged periods of reduced productivity.”

The Salmon FMP also states:

“...changes or additions to the stock complexes and objectives for most natural stocks may be made without plan amendment. An exception is the 35,000 natural spawner floor for Klamath River fall chinook which may only be changed by FMP amendment.”

At its June 2005 meeting, the Council received an analysis of the technical basis for the 35,000 escapement floor from the Salmon Technical Team (STT). The Council gave further direction to the STT to update the Klamath River fall chinook stock/recruitment database and conduct three analyses:

- 1) A Ricker type stock/recruitment analysis, including an estimate of MSY.
- 2) A correlation analysis of river flow conditions during the juvenile freshwater phase with recruitment.
- 3) A correlation analysis of river flow conditions during the spawning period with recruitment.

The STT report is included as Agenda Item G.1.b, STT Report.

The Council intent was to determine if there was sufficient new information to warrant consideration of a Salmon FMP amendment to change the conservation objective for Klamath River fall chinook, including the annual spawning escapement floor of 35,000 naturally spawning adults.

Council Task:

- 1. Determine if there is sufficient information to consider changing the Klamath River fall chinook conservation objective.**
- 2. Provide further guidance for investigating factors affecting recruitment of Klamath River fall chinook.**
- 3. Provide guidance for further consideration of a Salmon FMP amendment.**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item G.1.b, STT Report: Klamath River Fall Chinook Stock-Recruitment Analysis.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agendum Overview
- b. Report of the Salmon Technical Team
- c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
- d. Public Comment
- e. Council Guidance on further Consideration of Amending the Conservation Objective

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