

SCIENTIFIC AND STATISTICAL COMMITTEE REPORT ON REVIEW OF 2005
FISHERIES AND SUMMARY OF 2006 STOCK ABUNDANCE ESTIMATES

Mr. Dell Simmons, Chair of the Salmon Technical Team (STT), reviewed the 2005 fisheries and the preliminary 2006 ocean salmon stock abundance estimates for the Scientific and Statistical Committee (SSC). Much of the discussion concerned the Klamath River fall Chinook stock which may constrain Chinook fisheries south of Cape Falcon. The Klamath Ocean Harvest Model predicted a 7.7% age-four exploitation rate in the 2005 fisheries; however the postseason estimate was 24%. This was the third consecutive year that the age-four exploitation rate exceeded 16%. In the absence of all recreational, commercial, and tribal fishing, the 2006 preseason natural escapement estimate is 29,400. If the postseason estimate of natural area spawners in 2006 is less than 35,000, then it would be the third consecutive year of failing to meet the fishery management plan conservation objective for this stock, triggering an overfishing declaration. Ocean fisheries north of Cape Falcon may be constrained by the Endangered Species Act listing of lower Columbia River wild coho stocks and the 10% exploitation cap on the Thompson River coho stock.

The SSC wishes to reiterate a few recommendations it has made in the past to improve the usefulness of STT reports. Tables I-1 and I-2 in Preseason Report I present several years of preseason predictors for Chinook and coho stocks under Council management. The SSC requests the STT add postseason estimates to these tables, where available, to facilitate a reader's ability to compare the abundance predictors with the actual abundance estimates. A graphical representation of the pre and post season stock abundance estimates would facilitate this review.

The SSC would like to see confidence limits for estimates of salmon abundance and exploitation rates. Given the uncertainties in abundance projection and exploitation rate estimation it is difficult to know the likelihood of meeting management objectives or to evaluate whether or not a management goal has been attained. For example, without confidence limits we cannot know if an estimated preseason exploitation rate of 8% is actually different from an estimated postseason rate of 24%. The explicit recognition of uncertainty in salmon statistics would increase transparency in the analytical process.

PFMC
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