

IDENTIFICATION OF STOCKS NOT MEETING CONSERVATION OBJECTIVES

Overfishing Concern

Each year, exclusive of stocks listed under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), the Salmon Technical Team (STT) must identify any of the natural salmon stocks with conservation objectives identified in the Salmon Fishery Management Plan (FMP) that have failed to meet their conservation objective in each of the past three years (Agenda Item D.2.a, Attachment 1). For any stock so identified that does not meet the exception criteria, an Overfishing Concern is triggered. An Overfishing Concern requires the Council direct the STT and Habitat Committee (HC) to work with State and Tribal fishery managers to complete an assessment of the cause of the conservation shortfalls and provide recommendations to the Council for stock recovery. Based on those recommendations, the Council must take actions within one year of an identified concern to prevent overfishing and begin rebuilding the stock.

In the case of natural stocks which have failed to achieve their conservation objective in each of the past three years, but are exceptions under the Salmon FMP Overfishing Criteria, the STT, HC, and Council should: (1) confirm that harvest impacts in Council fisheries continue to be less than five percent, (2) identify the probable cause of the current stock depression, (3) continue to monitor the status of the stocks, and (4) advocate measures to improve stock productivity.

Table D2_Att_2 (Agenda Item D.2.a, Attachment 2) has been extracted from the STT's Preseason Report I. It indicates that no stock subject to the Overfishing Criteria has failed to achieve its conservation objective in each of the three most recent years. Queets River spring/summer Chinook have not met their conservation objectives in the most recent five years assessed (2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, and 2007), and Quillayute spring/summer Chinook have not met their conservation objective in the most recent four years assessed (2004, 2005, 2006, and 2007). However, these latter two stocks are exceptions under the Salmon FMP Overfishing Concern criteria by virtue of historical harvest impacts of less than five percent in Council-managed ocean salmon fisheries.

Klamath River fall Chinook, which triggered an Overfishing Concern last year, achieved the spawning escapement floor of 35,000 in 2007 with an escapement of 59,731 natural spawning adults.

Preliminary estimates suggest several other stocks that are subject to the FMP Overfishing Criteria failed to achieve their conservation objectives in 2007, including:

- Sacramento River fall Chinook (2007)
- Oregon Coastal Chinook (2007)
- Grays Harbor natural coho (2006 and 2007)
- Queets natural coho (2006 and 2007)
- Quillayute fall natural coho (2006 and 2007)

Conservation Alert

The Salmon FMP (Attachment 1) states that any stock projected to fall short of its conservation objective triggers a Conservation Alert. If the stock in question has not met its conservation objective in the previous two years, the Council shall request the pertinent State and Tribal managers to complete a formal assessment of the primary factors leading to the shortfalls and report their conclusions and recommendations to the Council no later than the March meeting prior to the next salmon season.

In 2008, there are no stocks subject to the FMP Overfishing Criteria that trigger a Conservation Alert in the absence of fishing; however, Sacramento River fall Chinook are close to the trigger point and may provide limited harvestable surplus.

Council Action:

- 1. Identify naturally spawning stocks failing to meet their conservation objectives (exclusive of stocks listed under the ESA).**
- 2. Identify naturally spawning stocks projected to not meet their conservation objectives in 2008 (exclusive of stocks listed under the ESA).**
- 3. Confirm implementation of the actions required by the Council's Overfishing Concern and Conservation Alert procedures in the salmon FMP. (For stocks that are exceptions to the Overfishing Concerns, these actions involve confirming continued low impacts by Council fisheries, identifying the probable cause of the depression, monitoring the status of the stocks, and advocating measures to improve stock productivity.)**

Reference Materials:

1. Agenda Item D.2.a, Attachment 1: Excerpt from the Pacific Coast Salmon Plan – § 3.2. Overfishing Criteria.
2. Agenda Item D.2.a, Attachment 2: Table D2_Att_2.

Agenda Order:

- a. Agenda Item Overview
 - b. Agency and Tribal Comments
 - c. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
 - d. Public Comment
 - e. **Council Action:** Direct Necessary Actions Required by the Salmon Fishery Management Plan
- Chuck Tracy

PFMC
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