

SALMON TECHNICAL TEAM REPORT ON FISHERY MANAGEMENT PLAN  
AMENDMENT 16 - ANNUAL CATCH LIMITS AND ACCOUNTABILITY MEASURES

The Salmon Technical Team (STT) believes that the range of topics described in the scoping report of the Salmon Amendment Committee is broad enough to encompass the options that can reasonably be expected to bring the Salmon Fishery Management Plan (FMP) into compliance with the revised National Standards Guidelines. We believe that at a minimum the alternatives ultimately adopted by the Council must address the requirements of annual catch limits, a description of accountability measures, and specification of biological reference points. It appears likely that most of these required elements can be accommodated with relatively little modification to current management for fisheries north of Cape Falcon. For fisheries south of Cape Falcon it appears that changes to the time-area management system may be required to implement these new requirements.

The reference points considered should include revision of the current status determination criteria of “conservation alert” and “overfishing concern,” to remove ambiguity and provide clear measures of stock status (i.e., overfished or subject to overfishing) without the current delay necessitated by the review process required by the current FMP. The review process should not be eliminated because it is necessary to identify causes and appropriate remedial action when stocks become depressed. However, classification of stock status would be streamlined by eliminating the ambiguity and delay in the current FMP.

The STT does not believe that it is necessary for the amendment to include revisions to the conservation objectives. The FMP currently allows revision of conservation objectives without the need for a plan amendment. We note the objectives for Puget Sound coho stocks may well be updated this year as a result of the methodology review prior to the development of the amendment, and new objectives for Oregon coast Chinook are currently under development. The only conservation objective that currently requires plan amendment to change is that for Klamath River fall Chinook. We also note that with the exception of the Sacramento River Fall Chinook, all conservation objectives currently allow for *de minimis* impacts when stocks are depressed and a “conservation alert” is triggered. While the Council may wish to consider modification of the Sacramento River fall Chinook to allow greater flexibility under the present “conservation alert,” that can be accomplished outside the amendment process, or through modification of the status determination criteria.