

UPDATE ON MITCHELL ACT FUNDING

At the April 2002 Council meeting, the Salmon Technical Team (STT) and Council Staff were directed to provide an analysis of the impacts of decreasing Mitchell Act funding levels on West Coast salmon fisheries. The STT completed an analysis of the effects on selective fisheries if Mitchell Act facilities did not mass mark coho production. That report was included as an informational report in the June 2002 briefing materials (Exhibit A.3, Mitchell Act Letters, June 2002).

Additional analysis on long term effects of level funding and subsequent program or facility cuts was intended for the September 2002 Council meeting. However, that analysis was dependent on development of goals and objectives for Mitchell Act programs and resolution of the fiscal year (FY) 2003 budget and associated program cuts (if necessary). At this time goals and objectives have not been agreed upon by the parties to U.S. v. Oregon; however, discussions have been held and progress has been made. In addition, the 2003 budget is still being negotiated, and although the Council's letter of support for Mitchell Act programs was well received by the Oregon and Washington congressional delegation, the current Senate version has 2003 at the same level as 2002. Additional analysis of Mitchell Act contribution to West Coast salmon fisheries has been postponed until these issues are resolved.

One note of interest is the Senate Appropriations Committee has recommended the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund specify \$1.1 million for Oregon for conservation mass marking at Columbia River hatcheries, which is similar to the \$1.0 million requested for mass marking in the FY 2003 Mitchell Act budget.

PFMC
08/16/02