



Pacific Fishery Management Council ***NEWS RELEASE***

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Friday, March 24, 2006

Contacts: Dr. Donald McIsaac, Executive Director, 503-820-2280
Ms. Jennifer Gilden, Communications Officer, 503-820-2280

PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL TO MAKE IMPORTANT DECISION ON 2006 OCEAN SALMON SEASONS

The Pacific Fishery Management Council (Council) is set to make important decisions regarding 2006 salmon fisheries at its April 2-7 meeting in Sacramento, California. The decisions come in response to a forecast for diminished numbers of naturally spawning Klamath River Chinook salmon, and could lead to an unprecedented total closure of commercial and recreational ocean salmon fisheries off most of the coast of California and nearly all of the Oregon Coast. It is also possible that greatly restricted fishing may be allowed between the ports of Garibaldi, Oregon to Monterey, California under an emergency rule. Notably, the options for salmon seasons from the ports of Astoria, Oregon north to Neah Bay, Washington do not include a zero fishing option, as Klamath River fish are scarce that far north.

At a recent meeting in Seattle, the Council adopted a set of three options for 2006 ocean salmon fisheries (see links below for further details). On March 27-28, public hearings on the options will be held in Westport, Washington; Coos Bay, Oregon; and Santa Rosa, California. The Council is charged with narrowing these options to a single season recommendation at the April 2-7 meeting in Sacramento and forwarding the decision to National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for their final approval before May 1.

The Council's decision-making process during the week of April 2-7 involves hearing public comment and making a preliminary decision early in the week, consulting with scientists, hearing additional public comment, and revising preliminary decisions until the Council chooses a final option late in the week. The decision-making process for salmon is scheduled to begin mid-morning Tuesday, April 4, when the Council will tentatively adopt a single option of salmon management measures for further analysis by Council advisory bodies composed separately of scientists and fishery/conservation group representatives. Late Thursday afternoon, the Council is scheduled to take final action on the management measures. On Friday, there is an opportunity for the Council to clarify the decision made on Thursday, if necessary. Depending on the amount of public comment, it is possible that the final decision will be made Friday.

A press packet with contacts, background information, a map of affected areas, Council letters on Klamath habitat issues, useful acronyms, and information on economic impacts will be available on the Council website at:

http://www.pcouncil.org/newsreleases/sal06_presspacket.html on March 28.

For more information, please see:

- 2006 Salmon Seasons Press Information Packet (available March 28):
http://www.pcouncil.org/newsreleases/sal06_presspacket.html
- April Council meeting agenda
<http://www.pcouncil.org/bb/2006/0406/aga4.pdf>
- March 13, 2006 press release on salmon options:
http://www.pcouncil.org/newsreleases/pr031306_sal.pdf
- Technical tables showing salmon options:
<http://www.pcouncil.org/salmon/salcurr.html#2006>
- Salmon hearings schedule:
<http://www.pcouncil.org/events/2006/salproc06.html>
- Guide to the Pacific Fishery Management Council process:
<http://www.pcouncil.org/guide/Guide-intropage.html>