

## CURRENT HABITAT ISSUES

The Habitat Committee (HC) will meet on Monday, March 10, 2008, to discuss Sacramento River salmon habitat issues, Klamath fishery issues, wave energy, and other matters. Two public comment items relating to wave energy are attached.

### **Council Action:**

**Consider comments and recommendations developed by the HC at its March 2008 meeting.**

### **Reference Materials:**

1. Agenda Item E.1.a, Supplemental HC Report
2. Agenda Item E.1.c, Public Comment

### **Agenda Order:**

- a. Report of the HC
- b. Reports and Comments of Advisory Bodies
- c. Public Comment
- d. **Council Action:** Consider HC Recommendations

Stuart Ellis

PFMC  
02/22/08

## HABITAT COMMITTEE REPORT

### **Hydrokinetic Energy**

The Habitat Committee (HC) discussed hydrokinetic (wave and tidal) energy projects. The status of projects off the West Coast follows:

#### *Oregon*

The Reedsport Ocean Power Technologies (OPT) project is in a “settlement” process that includes the State of Oregon, Federal agencies, and others. The purpose of the process is to agree upon needed biological studies as a precursor to OPT’s draft license application to the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. The settlement process is reported to be making progress, but three important areas need to be resolved: 1) species impact studies from electromagnetic fields; 2) a salvage plan; and 3) an adaptive management plan. The adaptive management plan would include indicators and responses to unforeseen environmental impacts. OPT is expected to file its draft license application within a few months, once the settlement process is complete. This will trigger a National Environmental Policy Act process, providing further opportunities for Council comment.

OPT was scheduled to submit a preliminary application document for their proposed Coos Bay project March 7.

#### *Washington*

The Makah Bay wave project received a license to conduct a five-year pilot project.

#### *California*

There are currently six wave energy projects proposed in California, plus one tidal energy project proposed for San Francisco Bay. California is producing a white paper on the environmental impacts of hydrokinetic energy.

### **Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) Process**

The California Marine Life Protection Act (MLPA) process is continuing on California’s north central coast. At a meeting last week, five proposals were narrowed down to three options. The most aggressive proposal covers approximately 30% of state waters in the north central area, and the least aggressive, about 19%. About half the areas proposed within the three options are no-take reserves. There are a range of fishing options in the other areas, primarily for salmon trolling and crabbing. The California Department of Fish and Game will host another two-day meeting on March 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> in San Rafael; afterwards, the proposals go to a “Blue Ribbon Task Force” and eventually to the California Fish and Game Commission, which will select an option.

## **Salmon Spills**

On a successful note, a last-minute agreement was reached between Columbia River managers that allowed for a limited release of water over the spillway at Bonneville Dam to benefit the outmigration of the early release of Spring Creek Hatchery tules last week. These fish are an important component of Washington coastal fisheries, and it has been a continual struggle to get adequate protective measures at Bonneville Dam for these fish. Data from USFWS suggest that fish that outmigrate during spill return at a 20% higher rate than fish that don't receive spill.

PFMC  
03/11/08

Subject: Wave Energy Sites on Oregon Coast  
From: Sharon Price <mvknotless@netzero.com>  
Date: Fri, 30 Nov 2007 12:54:36 -0800  
To: pfmc.comments@noaa.gov

Pacific Fisheries Management Council:

I am a concerned sport fisherman with 2 boats in Charleston Harbor. As a salmon fisherman it is extremely important to address the Electro Magnetic Field effect on Salmon. I would also point out it is very neglectful and probably a violation of the Endangered Species Act to allow any Wave Energy Sites on the Oregon Coast without prior testing of this issue.

How many endangered and threatened salmon will the test site be allowed to disrupt on the Umpqua River; 100, 1,000 or more? All of these salmon are critical and all are supposedly protected by law. Can FERC override all of these protective provisions by whim? This makes no sense at all!

I understand there is no monitoring of the number of salmon that will be deflected from their native salmon spawning grounds. How can this test location be allowed to proceed without the full protection of the endangered and threatened salmon? They have not installed cameras nor are there divers to monitor the disturbance they are causing!

Additionally, there is another potential problem. Do these Wave Energy machines produce sound waves? If they do, then my personal experience is that certain vibrations starting in your boat and transmitting into the water will repel fish. This may disrupt spawning migrations of endangered species. These Wave Energy machines are located right at the mouth of costal rivers.

When fishing off the Southern California Coast, many times we noticed that the sound vibrations coming from our bait tank motor would repel game fish yet it would attract predatory fish. We actually would have to turn the bait tank motor off so that the game fish would go on strike. Has this concern been addressed?

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Pete Price  
P.O. Box 192, Trail, OR 97541  
541-878-2838  
[mvknotless@netzero.com](mailto:mvknotless@netzero.com)

[Received Monday, December 3]

Pacific Fisheries Management Council:

I am a commercial Salmon fisherman, home port is Charleston, Or. I read the November 21, 2007 letter from Council to FERC addressing Council concerns and recommendations for Wave Energy Park siting, and would like to thank the Council for their stance on this issue and the well considered recommendations to FERC.

Please allow me to address the following two issues that were discussed in the letter:

1. The placement of multiple Wave Energy Sites on the Oregon Coast is of great concern to me. The areas under consideration are, at times, very productive grounds for the commercial salmon fleet. There are years when ocean current and temperature dynamics create conditions that concentrate migrating Salmon in these areas and fishermen will spend the majority of a season fishing the same areas that are proposed for Wave Energy Sites. Displacement of the salmon fleet from these areas, the economic impact to the fleet and coastal communities, and the resulting increased fishing pressure on other areas due to the forced shift of effort, should be of prime concern to the Council.

Please include Commercial Salmon Fishing as a current use for the Reedsport OPT area, and any future sites under consideration as Wave Energy Parks. This should be included in the letter to FERC on page 3, in item 3) **Impacts to Fisheries and Species**, and in future communications.

2. On page 8 of the letter to FERC, under **Impacts to Species and Habitat** *b. Electromagnetic fields* :

EMF's DO affect Salmon. All salmon fishermen know this and understand the importance of monitoring and controlling the EMF around our vessels. We, as a fleet, spend thousands of dollars every year to minimize and/or take advantage of the EMF produced by the low voltages produced by the electrical systems on our vessels. Any unwanted electrical leakage in our vessels' systems has a strong negative impact on those vessels' ability to consistently catch fish. These vessel electrical charges and the resulting EMF's are measured in Milli-volts and Milli-amps. The Wave Energy Buoys will be operating at much higher voltage and amperage. All of the concerns about EMF's impacts on the species listed in this section of the FERC letter also apply to Salmon. In addition, I have a deep concern that any unnatural, new EMF created by Wave Energy Buoys will interrupt a Salmon's ability to home on it's natal stream and be detrimental in the fishes' ability to return home for spawning. Most of the proposed Buoy sites, including the OPT site, are adjacent to the mouths of highly productive coastal Salmon streams. The question of Wave Energy Buoy produced EMFs' affects on a Salmon's homing ability **must** be answered prior to siting and placement of buoys.

Please add these two concerns to the letter to FERC and include them in any future communications addressing Council concerns about Wave Energy Parks.

Thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Paul Merz

FV/Joanne

FV/Greyling

P.O. Box 5630

Charleston, Or. 97420

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