



Pacific Fishery Management Council *NEWS RELEASE*

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PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL CHOOSES ALTERNATIVES FOR 2011 SALMON SEASON

Vancouver, Wa. – The Pacific Fishery Management Council today adopted three public review alternatives for the 2011 salmon season off the West Coast of the United States. The Council will select a final alternative at their next meeting in San Mateo, California on April 9-14.

“We are glad to see three alternatives calling for much better fishing south of Cape Falcon, due to strong forecasted abundance of Sacramento River and Klamath River fall Chinook,” said Pacific Council Chairman Mark Cedergreen. “While we will have significant ocean seasons off Washington and northern Oregon, we still have some conservation solutions to work on for the salmon stocks in this area.”

Washington and Northern Oregon (north of Cape Falcon)

Sport Season Alternatives

Ocean sport fishery alternatives north of Cape Falcon in Oregon and off the Washington coast have mark-selective coho quotas ranging from 54,600 to 79,800 that start in late June and run into September (last year, the quota was 67,200 marked coho). For Chinook salmon, quotas range from 32,000 Chinook to 52,000 Chinook (last year, the quota was 61,000 Chinook). Two alternatives include a mark-selective Chinook fishery in June, and one alternative includes mark-selective Chinook requirements early in the all salmon fishery. Two alternatives also allow one or two pink salmon to be retained in addition to the standard two salmon bag limit in areas north of Leadbetter Point.

Commercial and Tribal Season Alternatives

Non-Indian ocean commercial fishery alternatives north of Cape Falcon include traditional Chinook seasons between May and September. Chinook quotas for all areas and times range from 25,000-45,000, greater than the 2009 quota of 20,500 but less than the 2010 quota of 56,000. The marked coho quotas range from 10,400 to 15,200 (compared to last year's quota of 12,800). One alternative includes the potential to allow non-mark-selective coho retention in late August or September.

Tribal ocean fishery alternatives north of Cape Falcon have Chinook quotas ranging from 35,000 to 55,000 and coho quotas ranging from 30,000 to 50,000; similar to last year's quotas of 55,000 Chinook and 42,500 coho.

Background for Area North of Cape Falcon

North of Cape Falcon, Columbia River hatchery coho returns in 2010 were larger than forecast, but still below average. Columbia River Chinook returns were generally near or above forecast, and above historical averages.

The 2011 Columbia River tule Chinook forecasts are mixed, but overall above average. The hatchery coho forecasts for the Columbia River are slightly lower than last year while the forecast for Oregon coastal natural (OCN) coho is similar to last year's actual return and the second highest forecast since 1996.

Oregon (South of Cape Falcon) and California

Sport Season Alternatives

Oregon ocean recreational alternatives include both mark-selective and non-mark-selective **coho** fishing seasons starting in June or July and running into August or September.

Ocean **Chinook** fishing alternatives in the Brookings/Crescent City/Eureka area open in May and continue through September 5. For the Tillamook, Newport, and Coos Bay areas, seasons will open March 15 and run through September or October.

Commercial Season Alternatives

Commercial Chinook salmon season alternatives in the Tillamook, Newport, and Coos Bay area will open April 15 and generally run through August, although some alternatives reopen for the month of October. Oregon season alternatives in the Brookings area all have a May 1-31 season and monthly quota fisheries for June, July, and August.

California season alternatives in the Eureka/Crescent City area range from monthly quota fisheries in June through September to entirely closed. All alternatives in the Fort Bragg area include open seasons in August and September, while quota fisheries are included in June and July for some alternatives. All alternatives in San Francisco and Monterey include openings in May, July, August and September, and two alternatives include short openings in June.

There are no alternatives that include commercial coho seasons south of Cape Falcon in 2011.

Background for Area South of Cape Falcon

In 2008, poor Sacramento returns led to the largest salmon fishery closure on record. While the 2009 forecast was better than the previous year's, the season alternatives were extremely limited. In 2010, alternatives improved, with the first commercial fishing season off California in three years. This year, abundance is predicted to increase substantially, sufficient to provide robust fisheries and exceed the conservation goal of 122,000 – 180,000 spawning adult salmon¹.

In 2006, the Pacific Council established a rebuilding plan for Klamath River fall Chinook after three years of low spawning returns. Since that time returns have increased, and in 2010 were sufficient to meet the Council's criteria for declaring the stock rebuilt. The 2011 Klamath River Fall Chinook forecast is near average and will allow opportunity for ocean and river fisheries while achieving the minimum spawning goal of 35,000 natural adult spawners.

¹ The conservation goal, or escapement goal, is the optimal number of adult fish returning to spawn in order to maximize the production of the stock.

Management Process

Public hearings to receive input on the alternatives are scheduled for March 28 in Westport, Washington and Coos Bay, Oregon; and for March 29 in Eureka, California. The Council will consult with scientists, hear public comment, and revise preliminary decisions until it chooses a final alternative at its meeting during the week of April 9 in San Mateo, California.

At its April meeting in San Mateo, the Council will narrow these alternatives to a single season recommendation to be forwarded to National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for their final approval before May 1.

All Council meetings are open to the public.

Council Role

The Pacific Fishery Management Council is one of eight regional fishery management councils established by the Magnuson Fishery Conservation and Management Act of 1976 for the purpose of managing fisheries 3-200 miles offshore of the United States of America coastline. The Pacific Council recommends management measures for fisheries off the coasts of California, Oregon, and Washington.

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On the Web

- Pacific Fishery Management Council: <http://www.pcouncil.org>
- Detailed, final alternatives for 2011 salmon management will be posted on the Council website at the link above within the next few days.
- Geographical points used in salmon management: <http://www.pcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/geosalmon.pdf>
- Explanation of common terms used in salmon management: http://www.pcouncil.org/wp-content/uploads/com_terms_salmon.pdf