



The LINE. A Publication of the Pacific Fishery Management Council

Volume 1, No. 2, June 2012. www.pcouncil.org | 800-866-7204 | pfmc.comments@noaa.gov

The Line is a summary of West Coast fisheries news, for fishermen, published five times per year. This issue reports on the decisions made at the June 2012 Pacific Fishery Management Council meeting. The Council (www.pcouncil.org) recommends commercial & recreational fishery management measures for Federal waters off the coasts of Washington, Oregon & California. The Council has five public meetings a year. All Council recommendations are subject to approval by National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS). To sign up for our full newsletter and other notices, go to <http://tinyurl.com/3s5edce>.

ROCKFISH, FLATFISH, WHITING AND OTHER GROUND FISH.

General: At its June 2012 meeting, the Pacific Fishery Management Council reduced limited entry sablefish trip limits in the north, and increased limited entry fixed gear trip limits for shelf and bocaccio rockfish south of 34° 27' N. latitude. For more information, see <http://tinyurl.com/75n5hnn>. • The Council adopted final harvest specifications for 2013-2014 fisheries as shown here: <http://tinyurl.com/c3tse65>. • The Council discussed **rockfish barotrauma** (when the swim bladders of incidentally-caught rockfish inflate), and how to safely return them to the deep. The Council will consider catch mortality credits for recreationally-caught cowcod and yelloweye rockfish that are returned to the deep using descending devices (devices that slowly lower rockfish into the sea). This will be discussed further at the November 2012 and March 2013 Council meetings. • Darkblotched rockfish, petrale sole, shortspine thornyhead, longspine thornyhead, cowcod, aurora rockfish, and Pacific sanddabs are recommended for assessment in 2013, along with either rougheye rockfish or yellowtail rockfish. The assessments for bocaccio, and possibly sablefish, are recommended for updates. Data reports are recommended for Pacific ocean perch, canary rockfish, and yelloweye rockfish. • Three exempted fish permits were approved for 2013-2014 fisheries. All take place in the California Rockfish Conservation Area. They relate to jigging for yellowtail rockfish; trolled longlining for chilipepper; and a survey of overfished species. **Quota shares:** Widow rockfish quota shares may be reallocated because the stock is no longer overfished. The moratorium on widow quota share trading was extended through 2013 or when the Council completes the reallocation process, whichever comes first. • The Council will consider shifting from the 100% human observer monitoring requirement (for quota share fisheries) to an **electronic monitoring system** option for some sectors. They will discuss this further in November 2012. • Initial catch share allocations in the mothership and shoreside Pacific whiting fisheries may be changed. The Council will make a final decision in September 2012. Under one alternative (#3), the recent participation period for processors was changed from 2004-2010 to 2004-2007.

SARDINES, ANCHOVIES AND OTHER COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES.

The Council recognized the importance of **forage fish** to West Coast ecosystems, and said it wants to prohibit the development of new directed fisheries on forage species that are not currently managed by the Council or West Coast states. The Council is looking at two ways to do this. One would be through the Fishery Ecosystem Plan, which is under development; the other would be through existing fishery management plans. Any changes would occur after next March. • For the upcoming fishing year, the annual catch limit for mackerel will be 40,514 metric tons (mt); the annual catch target will be 30,386 mt, leaving a set-aside for incidental catch of 10,128 mt. In April 2013 the Council will consider re-allocating the incidental set-aside to the directed fishery.

TUNAS, SWORDFISH AND OTHER HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES.

The Council didn't recommend any regulatory changes in highly migratory species fisheries for the 2013-2014 management period. • The Council recommended against negotiating a reciprocal access agreement with Canada for 2012; the agreement (which stems from the a treaty between the U.S. and Canada) would permit U.S. and Canadian albacore vessels to fish in the other country's waters. Instead, the Council said the U.S. government should focus on reaching agreement on reciprocal access for 2013.

SALMON AND HALIBUT.

The Pacific halibut allocation in the salmon troll fishery has been taken, and retention of halibut is prohibited for the rest of the non-Indian commercial troll salmon season.

TSUNAMI DEBRIS.

More and more debris from the Japanese tsunami is landing on the West Coast. If you find large or potentially hazardous items, in Washington call 1-855-WACOAST (1-855-922-6278); in Oregon dial 211 from any phone (or 800-723-3638); and, anywhere, email DisasterDebris@noaa.gov. If an item can be identified by an owner in Japan, email a photo to DisasterDebris@noaa.gov.

PEOPLE.

Council members reappointed **Dan Wolford** and **Dorothy Lowman** to Council Chair and Vice Chair, respectively, for the 2012-2013 term. **Michael Hendrick** (National Marine Fisheries Service Southwest Region) will serve on the Highly Migratory Species Management Team. **Coreigh Greene** of the National Marine Fisheries Service Northwest Fisheries Science Center will serve on the Habitat Committee. **LCDR Brad Soule** will fill the U.S. Coast Guard District 11 position on the Enforcement Consultants. **Michele Culver** (Washington Dept. of Fish & Wildlife), **Steve Williams** (Oregon Dept. of Fish & Wildlife), **Marci Yaremko** (California Dept. of Fish & Game), **Kevin Duffy** (National Marine Fisheries Service), and **Gregg Williams** (International Pacific Halibut Commission, acceptance pending) will serve on the new South of Humboldt Pacific Halibut Policy Committee. **Mike Okoniewski** will be chair and **Diane Pleshner-Steele** will be vice-chair of the Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel. **Robert Emmett** will be chair and **Briana Brady** will be vice-chair of the Coastal Pelagic Species Management Team. **Yvonne de Reynier** will be chair and **John Field** will be vice-chair of the Ecosystem Plan Development Team.

NEXT MEETING.

The next meeting of the Pacific Fishery Management Council is scheduled for September 13-18, 2012 in Boise, Idaho. The agenda will be available on our website www.pcouncil.org in early August. Comments can be sent to pfmc.comments@noaa.gov. Questions? Call us at 1-800-866-7204.