



# The LINE. A Publication of the Pacific Fishery Management Council

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*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 November 2013 Pacific Fishery Management Council meeting. The Council ([www.pcouncil.org](http://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>. The public comment deadline for the March Council meeting is February 19; email [pfmc.comments@noaa.gov](mailto:pfmc.comments@noaa.gov).*

## **SALMON.**

The Council approved the 2014 **salmon management schedule** (<http://tinyurl.com/pygaf7q>). The Salmon Technical Team will meet in January to draft the Review of 2013 Ocean Salmon Fisheries, followed by Preseason Report 1 in late February. Public hearings will be held in February and March, with management alternatives drafted in March and finalized in April.

## **GROUND FISH.**

To avoid seabird bycatch, **streamer lines** will be required during setting operations on commercial **longline** vessels 55 feet long or longer, likely starting in 2014. No streamer lines will be required when a gale force wind warning is in effect. • The Council adopted an **exempted fishing permit** application sponsored by the San Francisco Community Fishing Association for 2015 and 2016 for public review. The Council will make a final decision in June. • The Council is reviewing the **sablefish permit stacking** program, looking particularly at the three-permit control limit and electronic fish tickets for nontrawl sablefish deliveries. This part of the review will be complete next spring. • The Council has been looking at restructuring **groundfish stock complexes**. In November the Council decided to remove **spiny dogfish** from the "Other" fish complex and manage it with its own specifications; and designated finescale codling (aka Pacific flatnose), soupfin shark, spotted ratfish, all endemic skates except longnose skate, and all endemic grenadiers as **ecosystem component species**. A final decision on the slope rockfish stock complex is scheduled for April 2014. • Final overfishing limits and stock category designations for **2015-2016 groundfish fisheries** were adopted, along with acceptable biological catches for all stocks except cowcod, and a range of annual catch limits for analysis. • The Council discussed proposed changes to **groundfish essential fish habitat** and adopted a process to amend the groundfish fishery management plan. • The Council is exploring **electronic monitoring** for the groundfish trawl fishery and adopted a range of alternatives to analyze. In April, the Council will consider exempted fishing permit proposals for electronic monitoring with maximized retention requirements. • The Council made changes to 2014 **sablefish trip limits** for the limited entry and open access fixed gear fisheries north and south of 36° N. latitude (see <http://tinyurl.com/npzfnf9>).

## **HABITAT.**

The Council is writing to the California Coastal Commission to express habitat-related concerns regarding the KZO Sea Farms **aquaculture project** in Federal waters off Long Beach, California. • The Council is also commenting on the habitat impacts of **wind and wave energy** projects, and calling for a study of **spill** in the Federal Columbia River hydropower system.

## **COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES.**

The Council adopted **Pacific sardine management measures** for the six-month period January 1-June 30, 2014. Due to concerns about a decline in stock size, the Council set the annual harvest guideline at about one-third of last year's harvest guideline. The January 1-June 30 non-Indian fishery allocation will be 5,446 mt. Other management measures will be similar to the 2013 fishery, except the incidental landing allowance will be set at 45 percent for mixed loads, after the directed fishery closes, and there will be no rollover of uncaught fish from the first six-month period into the following fishing period. • The Council will consider a **sardine stock assessment** in April, and at that point will set a full year of management measures for July 2014 through June 2015. • The Council established a maximum sustainable yield for the northern subpopulation of **northern anchovy**.

## **HALIBUT.**

The Council adopted final changes to the 2014 Catch Sharing Plan and Pacific halibut regulations, including changes to **recreational fishery** management. The South of Humbug Mountain subarea is divided into two new subareas with a new management line at the Oregon/California border, creating separate Oregon and California subareas with their own allocations. The 2014 season dates in the California subarea will be May 1 through July 31 and September 1 through October 31. The new Southern Oregon Subarea, between Humbug Mountain and the Oregon/California border, will receive a small allocation from the Oregon Central Coast subarea. Further, a new nearshore fishery was created in the Columbia River Subarea. More details will be provided in the winter newsletter on the Council website.

## **OTHER.**

The Council sent a letter to Representative Doc Hastings and Senator Mark Begich outlining its priorities for reauthorization of the **Magnuson-Stevens Act**, which is the basis for fishery management in the U.S. Bills to reauthorize the Act are expected to be introduced this fall. • The Council established a tribal government seat on the **Highly Migratory Species Management Team**, and appointed David Bitts as the interim California troll representative on the Salmon Advisory Subpanel after the resignation of Aaron Newman.

## **NEXT MEETING.**

The next meeting of the Pacific Fishery Management Council is scheduled for **March 8-13, 2014**. Tentative proposed agendas for both the March and April Council meetings can be found on the Council website. A draft detailed March meeting agenda will be available in February 2014.