



The LINE. A Publication of the Pacific Fishery Management Council

Volume 3, No. 2. July 2014. www.pcouncil.org | 866-806-7204 | pfmc.comments@noaa.gov

The Line is a summary of West Coast fisheries news, for fishermen, published four or five times per year. This issue reports on the decisions made at the June 2014 Pacific Fishery Management Council meeting. The Council 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 September Council meeting is August 15; email pfmc.comments@noaa.gov.

HIGHLY MIGRATORY SPECIES.

Drift gillnet fisheries. The Pacific Fishery Management Council aims to reduce bycatch in the California drift gillnet fishery through the use of hard limits (caps) on marine mammals and sea turtles, and measures to reduce discard of other species. If hard caps are reached during a fishing season, the fishery would be closed. The Council called for more observers, full monitoring starting in 2016, and regular reviews of the fishery. A control date of June 23, 2014, was created for a possible drift gillnet limited entry program. *Exempted fishing permits.* EFP proposals are being solicited to test alternative gear types or new approaches for using pelagic drift gillnet gear. Proposals are due August 15 and will be reviewed in September, with final decisions in November. All EFP activities should be designed for 100 percent monitoring, and applicants should comment on their willingness to test electronic monitoring systems and their willingness and ability to pay the costs associated with observer coverage. For more information, see <http://tinyurl.com/pjpmekl>.

GROUND FISH.

Electronic monitoring. The Council is developing options for an electronic monitoring program for catcher vessels in the groundfish trawl catch share program. In September, the Council will consider final action on alternatives for any sector that are considered sufficiently developed, and will consider a schedule for the rest of the alternatives or sectors. For details, see <http://tinyurl.com/o7rxffq>. *Inseason adjustments.* For the limited entry fixed gear sablefish fishery north of 36° N. latitude, trip limits were increased to one landing per week of up to 1,000 lb., not to exceed 3,000 lb. per two months. For the open access fixed gear sablefish fishery north of 36° N Latitude, trip limits were increased to 350 lb. per day, or one landing per week of up to 1,600 lb., not to exceed 3,200 lb. per two months. *Exempted fishing permits.* The Council approved five exempted fishing permit proposals: one proposal to test a vertical hook-and-line gear configuration within the non-trawl Rockfish Conservation Area in waters off central and northern California to selectively target yellowtail and chilipepper rockfish, and four proposals to test electronic monitoring in the groundfish trawl shorebased IFQ fishery. *Sablefish.* Electronic fish tickets will soon be required for all limited entry and open access landings that include sablefish (limited entry permit numbers will be included on the electronic fish tickets). The rules limiting the number of limited entry fixed gear sablefish permits a person controls will be slightly liberalized. *Omnibus.* The Council began a process to determine the new management measures it will consider in the coming year(s) and adopted a list that includes 42 new candidate issues (see <http://tinyurl.com/mqtul3f>) for prioritization at its September meeting. It is likely that the Council will be able to take up only a few of the issues.

COASTAL PELAGIC SPECIES.

Pacific mackerel. The Council adopted a Pacific mackerel catch-only biomass projection estimate of 157,106 mt, and an overfishing limit of 32,992 mt. If the directed fishery meets the annual catch target (24,170 mt), the fishery will close and shift to an incidental-only fishery, with a 45 percent incidental landing allowance when Pacific mackerel are landed with other coastal pelagic species (CPS), with the exception that up to one metric ton of Pacific mackerel could be landed without landing any other CPS. The Council may consider reallocating a portion of the set-aside to the directed fishery if the fishery meets the annual catch target. These harvest specifications apply to the fishing year running from July 1, 2014 to June 30, 2015.

HABITAT.

The Council is sending four comment letters related to habitat. One calls for sufficient Klamath water flows to protect salmon; the second comments on the California Bay Delta Conservation Plan; the third comments on the Northwest Power and Conservation Council's Fish and Wildlife Program; and the fourth comments to the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management on Principle Power's proposed offshore wind energy project. The letters are all posted online at <http://tinyurl.com/7fk7qod>. The Gulf of the Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuaries are proposing to expand. The Council is sending a letter expressing concern; see the Council website.

APPOINTMENTS AND COMMITTEE OPENINGS.

Dorothy Lowman was reappointed as Council Chair, and Herb Pollard was reappointed to Vice Chair for the 2014-2015 term. Alan Byrne was appointed to the Idaho Department of Fish and Game seat on the Scientific and Statistical Committee. Dave Bitts was appointed to the California Commercial Troll seat, and Greg Johnson was appointed to the Commercial Gillnet seat, on the Salmon Advisory Subpanel for the rest of the 2013-2015 term. The Council is seeking nominations for the Charter/Sport seat on the Coastal Pelagic Species Advisory Subpanel and the Southern Processor seat on the Highly Migratory Species Advisory Subpanel.

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING.

The next meeting of the Pacific Fishery Management Council is scheduled for September 2014 in Spokane, Washington. A proposed agenda summary will be available on the Council website during July 2014, and a draft detailed proposed agenda will be available on the Council website (www.pcouncil.org) by late August.

