



Pacific Fishery Management Council *NEWS RELEASE*

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PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL CHOOSES OPTIONS FOR 2014 SALMON SEASON

Vancouver, Washington – The Pacific Fishery Management Council yesterday adopted three public review options for the 2015 salmon season off the West Coast of the United States. The Council will select a final option at their next meeting in Rohnert Park, California on April 10-16. Detailed information about season starting dates, areas open, and catch limits for all three options are available on the Council's website at www.pcouncil.org.

In general, the news is good, with strong stocks up and down the coast.

Northern Oregon and Washington (north of Cape Falcon)

Sport season options

Ocean sport fishery options north of Cape Falcon in Oregon and off the Washington coast have mark-selective coho quotas ranging from 117,600 to 159,200 that start in late June and run into September (last year, the quota was 184,300 coho). For Chinook salmon, quotas range from 52,000 Chinook to 58,000 Chinook (last year, the quota was 59,100 Chinook). Chinook quotas are limited due to in order to protect lower Columbia River tule fall Chinook, which are listed under the Endangered Species Act.

Commercial and tribal season options

Non-Indian ocean commercial fishery options north of Cape Falcon include traditional

Chinook seasons between May and September. Chinook quotas for all areas and times range from 53,500-67,000, similar to 2014. The marked coho quotas range from 22,400 to 25,600 (moderately lower than last year's quota of 35,200).

Tribal ocean fisheries north of Cape Falcon

Alternative Chinook and coho quotas for tribal ocean fisheries are similar or slightly below 2014 levels. Chinook quotas range from 40,000-66,250 and coho quotas range from 30,000 to 50,000.

Total Returns North of Cape Falcon

North of Cape Falcon, Columbia River coho returns were large, as forecast, at 966,000. Columbia River Chinook returns were also large, with some runs at record levels.

The 2014 Columbia River tule Chinook forecasts are similar to 2014 at 94,900, and combined fall Chinook returns are again expected to be strong. The hatchery coho forecasts for the Columbia River are moderately less than 2014, but still expected to be strong and over 700,000 fish. In addition, the forecast for Oregon coastal natural (OCN) coho is 206,600.

California and southern Oregon (south of Cape Falcon)

Sport season options

California ocean sport fishing options generally provide continuous fishing opportunity from April to October or November. However, one alternative for 2015 takes a precautionary approach due to concerns for future Chinook abundance, particularly Sacramento River winter Chinook.

Oregon ocean recreational options include mark-selective **coho** fishing seasons starting in June or July and running into September. Quotas range from 40,000 to 60,000 coho. In addition, non-mark-selective fisheries are proposed in September with quotas ranging from 8,000 to 15,000 coho.

Options for Oregon ocean **Chinook** fishing in the Brookings area run May through September. For the Tillamook, Newport, and Coos Bay areas, season options range from March to October.

Commercial season options

From the north, commercial Chinook salmon season options in the Tillamook, Newport, and Coos Bay area range from April through October.

Oregon season options in the Brookings area range from May to September with quotas generally improved due to slightly improved abundance of Klamath River fall Chinook in 2015. Commercial ocean salmon fishing seasons off California range from May through September, although all options include a closure between Humboldt South Jetty and Horse Mtn. Opportunity for commercial fisheries in the Fort Bragg and Crescent City areas are also improved from 2014, again largely due to improved expectations for Klamath fall Chinook.

Total Returns in California and Southern Oregon

Central Valley fall Chinook are forecast at over 652,000, providing salmon fishing opportunity while allowing estimated spawning escapements over 300,000. The minimum conservation goal is 122,000 – 180,000 spawning adult salmon¹.

Also in California, the ocean abundance forecast for Klamath River Fall Chinook is nearly 423,000, providing reasonable sport and commercial harvest while meeting the minimum natural spawning goal of 40,700, and the 2015 management objective of an ocean harvest rate of no more than 16 percent.

Management Process

Public hearings to receive input on the options are scheduled for March 30 in Westport, Washington and Coos Bay, Oregon; and for March 31 in Fort Bragg, California. The Council will consult with scientists, hear public comment, and revise preliminary decisions until it chooses a final option at its meeting April 10-16 in Rohnert Park, California.

At its April meeting in Rohnert Park, the Council will narrow these options 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

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.

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>
- Draft alternatives for 2015 salmon management: <http://www.pcouncil.org/2015/03/29477/sal-alt-2015-public-review/>
- Final alternatives and analyses of the biological and socioeconomic impacts will be posted on the Council website: <http://www.pcouncil.org/salmon/current-season-management/#salcurrent>
- Description of 2015 salmon management process: <http://www.pcouncil.org/salmon/current-season-management/salmon-preseason-process-schedule/>