



THE LINE.

A PUBLICATION OF THE PACIFIC FISHERY MANAGEMENT COUNCIL
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The Line is a summary of West Coast fisheries news published four or five times per year. This issue reports on decisions made at the April 2015 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 other notices, go to tinyurl.com/3s5edce.

SALMON.

The Council adopted management measures for 2015 ocean salmon fisheries that provides both recreational and commercial opportunities coastwide. Detailed management measures and a press release are posted on the Council's web page at tinyurl.com/mnw3crn.

HALIBUT.

Halibut landing ratios for the commercial salmon troll fisheries will remain in place from May 1-December 31, 2015 and April 1-30, 2016, unless modified by inseason action. The limit is no more than one halibut per each four Chinook, except one halibut may be landed without meeting the ratio requirement and no more than 12 halibut may be possessed or landed per trip.

HABITAT.

The Council is writing three letters on habitat issues: one to the Department of the Interior on water needs to avoid a fish kill in the Klamath/Trinity Basin; one to the California Water Resources Control Board on managing Shasta Dam water discharges to protect 2015 winter-run Chinook salmon; and a third to the Humboldt Bay Harbor District, expressing concerns about the effects of proposed aquaculture projects on eelgrass beds. All letters will be posted at tinyurl.com/7fk7qod when sent.

GROUND FISH.

Widow Rockfish: The Council made a decision on how to reallocate widow rockfish quota shares in the trawl individual quota fishery, now that widow rockfish are rebuilt. Details are online at tinyurl.com/k7efm8o. **Blackgill and Slope Rockfish:** The Council is considering removing blackgill rockfish from the Slope Rockfish complex south of 40° 10' N. lat. and allocating the future harvestable surplus of blackgill rockfish, and the remaining slope rockfish species in the complex, to limited entry trawl and non-trawl sectors, as well as reallocating quota share allocations of these species. The Council will discuss this further in June and

choose a preferred alternative in September.

Inseason Adjustments: The Council recommended instituting big skate trip limits for the shorebased IFQ program of 15,000 pounds for the month of June and 20,000 pounds per two months for periods 4-6. The Council recommended that NMFS issue surplus carryover for all non-whiting individual fishing quota species where the annual catch limit is less than the acceptable biological catch, including sablefish north of 36° N. latitude. **Pacific Whiting:** The Council recommended 1,500 metric tons of Pacific whiting be set aside from the directed fishery allocations to accommodate the expected catch in research activities, as well as the incidental bycatch in non-whiting fisheries.

COASTAL PELAGICS (SARDINES, ETC.)

Based on low numbers of sardines in the most recent assessment, the Council recommended closing this year's Pacific sardine fishery as quickly as possible to stay within the remaining quota. NMFS is working with states to determine a closure date. After the directed commercial fishery is closed, harvest will be limited to Tribal fisheries, incidental catch in other coastal pelagic species fisheries, and the live bait fishery until June 30, 2015. In addition, there will be no directed non-tribal fishery for the 2015-2016 sardine season. The only catch allowed will be Tribal, incidental catch while targeting other species, live bait, research, and other minor sources of mortality.

NEXT MEETING.

The next meeting of the Pacific Fishery Management Council is scheduled for June 2015 in Spokane, Washington. Although the written public comment deadline has passed, public comments are always taken in person at the meetings, and all meetings are open to the public. Briefing materials will be posted in the near future at tinyurl.com/klwotgx. After the June meeting, the next meeting will be held September 11-16 in Sacramento, California.

